

MINUTES
STANDARDS RECOMMENDATION COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 20, 2015

The Standards Recommendation Committee met for its regularly scheduled meeting at the Tennessee School Boards Association office at 8:00 am CST.

Present.....10

Absent.....0

- Dr. Lyle Ailshie**
- Mr. David Pickler**
- Dr. Shirley Curry**
- Ms. Darcie Finch**
- Dr. Sharen Cypress**
- Ms. Tracy Franklin**
- Ms. Amy Gullion**
- Mr. Doug Hungate**
- Ms. Cathy Kolb**
- Ms. Shannon Duncan**

Chairman Ailshie welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

Ms. Laura Encalade called roll for attendance of committee members.

Chairman Ailshie asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

ACTION: **Mr. Pickler** moved acceptance. **Ms. Duncan** seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Ailshie and **Mr. David Pickler** discussed standards review process, updates on work by educator review committee.

Ms. Encalade talked about the November meeting. She detailed upcoming feedback reports from higher education faculty, SREB, regional sessions, and the creation of potential recommendations. For the December meeting, the board will bring feedback from the website and regional sessions. **Ms. Encalade** discussed the website and public feedback collection.

Mr. Pickler suggested partnering with public access television to promote the feedback website

The educator advisory committee members who revised the standards were introduced. Members from the ELA team presented on their revisions in the morning.

Ms. Shannon Jackson gave an overview of the ELA revisions. She explained the norms and guiding questions the committee utilized in its work. She explained the learning progression and restructuring of standards.

Ms. Melanie Maxwell and **Ms. Susan Dold** presented on the ELA revisions for grades K-5. They discussed the revisions to the different strands of standards. In particular, they elaborated on the Foundational Literacy strand and rationale for the change. They explained the language standards and

how they will help Tennessee students read better. They emphasized that not all of language is written; oral language is hugely important.

Chairman Ailshie asked a question regarding the foundational literacy/foundational standards. He mentioned that some of those standards are not listed twice. He asked if these are embedded in other standards. **Ms. Maxwell** and **Ms. Dold** confirmed that they are embedded.

Mr. Pickler said he loves talking about students using oral communication. He asked what concerns we have for making sure that the assessment tools check that teachers are actually implementing these standards. **Ms. Jackson** responded that we need to get the standards right and then address the assessment later. She said that the educator teams are thinking about the students and focusing on the standards themselves.

Mr. Pickler followed up with a question to the SBE. He asked how assessment models are built. He also wondered how we are going to bridge that gap, to make sure we have an appropriate accountability model. **Dr. Sara Heyburn** responded that we know we need to make adjustments to the assessments, not backwards for the standards. **Dr. Tammy Shelton** elaborated, saying that her assessment team at the TDOE is following the work of this team very closely. She said they are already looking at a timeline, talking with the testing vendor (Measurement Incorporated). She said that the state will have an assessment aligned with these standards.

Mr. Pickler followed up with another question regarding the mechanism for assessing oral instruction. **Dr. Shelton** responded that we are not assessing speaking and listening at the state level. She said that it's a unique challenge to do this across the state. She said Tennessee is in the same boat as other states to figure out how to do this. **Ms. Dold** said that we cannot test fluency either, even though it affects comprehension. **Dr. Shelton** said these standards are assessed in classrooms with teachers and at the district level, but the state is looking into the technology to utilize for these assessments. She said that because this is one-on-one, it's hard to do on a large scale.

Ms. Shannon Duncan stated that these are K-2 standards, and we don't assess until 3rd grade. She said this isn't for assessment, but for building a foundation so that they are prepared for 3rd grade assessments. She said that teachers are assessing their students every single day; these standards are providing support and less confusion, because they are clear. She said teachers will know how their students are doing.

Ms. Tracy Franklin said that as an administrator, she loves this. She supports embedding informal assessments in teaching, and not to worry so much about the formal assessment. She said that we're not teaching to the test. She supports creating these standards first, then basing the assessment on this natural learning progression.

Ms. Darcie Finch said this is exactly what she wants for her son. But, she is concerned about whether we know if this is happening in all classrooms. She said this is what we want to see, but are students getting it across the board. She said that without professional development, it's going to be done in isolation.

Ms. Amy Gullion said that the accountability piece must be there. She wants to make sure that every kindergartener in the state receives this level of instruction. She said there is critical accountability before 3rd grade.

Dr. Heyburn explained that the SBE passed optional growth measures for early grades. She said we are encouraging professional development with that rather than state level assessment. She also said that the state has an RFP in development for an optional grade 2 assessment. She said that between those two, we can address some of these concerns.

Ms. Duncan suggested standards-based reporting on students in early grades (not just “plays well with others.”) She said this would be fairly smooth to implement, with clearly articulated standards.

Dr. Shirley Curry countered that should be a local decision, that’s not a state decision.

Ms. Maxwell said the professional development issue did come up in their discussion. She said the educator teams hope to work with TDOE when professional development is rolled out.

Dr. Sharen Cypress asked that we please include higher education in the professional development suggestions. She said that teacher education is where it all starts. She wants to be sure higher education is with them. She said that teachers will go to higher education for resources, and they need to be able to help.

Dr. Curry said that much needs to be done in college preparation for teachers.

Mr. Pickler said that if we are going to embrace rigor and relevance of the standards, perhaps there needs to be an assessment for grades K-2 for greater accountability to see if teachers are teaching the standards. He said literacy in these first few grades is so important. **Dr. Heyburn** responds that the law won’t allow testing below grade 2.

Ms. Duncan and **Ms. Franklin** discuss methods of formative and continuous assessments. They say it’s not just numbers or data, it’s also writing and journals and one-on-one with teachers.

Dr. Curry emphasizes that she doesn’t want more testing. She said that they need to be careful and relieve the public of that pressure.

Ms. Susan Groenke and **Ms. Tequila Cornelious** presented revisions to grades 6-8. **Ms. Tammy Marlow** and **Ms. Brandi Blackley** presented revisions to grades 9-12.

Ms. Gullion questioned the use of the word “or.” She said teachers are more black and white—what should they do? **Ms. Cornelious** said the intent is for students to be able to get those sentences out in complete thoughts, while teachers have autonomy to teach that in varied kinds of ways. **Ms. Cornelious** said students can practice skills orally before progressing on to writing. She said either way is fine, and that the scaffolding is built in.

Ms. Finch noted how students are often grouped, but they aren’t really talking. She questioned how you can create rich conversations in a classroom. In the standards, she saw that students must prepare for collaborative discussions, not just engage in them—and she loves that. **Ms. Blackley** responded that it’s about preparing a student for lifelong learning and for what they do once they leave school. **Ms. Jackson** also mentioned linking standards.

Chairman Ailshie said that he loved the layout of the slides, with side by side original and revised standards. He asked if cornerstone standards be color coded or noted.

Dr. Curry suggested that it would be nice to have a list of cornerstone and foundational standards, for ease of reading.

The room at large applauded the work of the ELA team.

In wrapping up the ELA session, **Chairman Ailshie** said he really liked the labeling of the standards to make them uniquely Tennessee's. He said it shows that this is an independent process of whatever standards were there before. He liked the progressions all on one page. He noted that additional resources can be built upon this, for professional development and assessments.

[Lunch Recess]

The educator advisory committee members who revised the standards were introduced. Members from the math team presented on their revisions in the afternoon.

Dr. Joseph Jones, chair for the math committee, offered an introduction to the math revisions. He explained the public feedback and how his team interpreted comments. He said that his team sought to revise for clarity; they wanted to make it so your everyday person can better understand what the standards mean. He also explained the structure of the standards.

Dr. Cypress thanked **Dr. Jones** for emphasizing that this is not dictating *how* teachers teach, but rather just *what* students have to know. She also liked the structure.

Ms. Duncan asked where she could find the flow chart from the PowerPoint presentation. **Dr. Jones** responded that it is not in the standards, but should be used for professional development. **Ms. Duncan** said she likes the idea of professional development for grades K-2. She said that we will also have to emphasize professional development, support, and preparation for administrators.

Chairman Ailshie was impressed with how deep the committee has dug in. He appreciated their diligence and hard work. He asked if the team considered a different numbering system for the math standards. He said he knows that teachers are used to seeing these standards, but we also have to think long term. Down the road, he said it might be a way to make things flow and go together better, particularly for new teachers coming in. **Dr. Jones** said that **Dr. Stephanie Kolitsch** and **Mr. Cory Concus** will talk about coding later. He said the coding still allows teachers to do some searching online, and the standards still have similarities. But, he said it might be better to consider revising the coding though.

Mr. Pickler expressed concern for financial literacy. He was interested in the new Applied Mathematical Concepts. Still, he worries we have not prepared kids sufficiently for the world.

Ms. Stacey Roddy, along with **Ms. Jamelie Johns** and **Dr. Holly Anthony**, presented on the revisions to the grades K-5 math standards. **Dr. Anthony** discussed public feedback data and the types of revisions the team made. She emphasized that they worked to simplify language, make the standards consistent, remove redundancy, and split up long standards.

Ms. Roddy discussed highlights of the grades K-2 changes. She said the team added standards for money and changed standards with fluency expectations. **Ms. Johns** discussed highlights of the grades 3-5 changes.

Mr. Doug Hungate expressed appreciation for the intentionality of the standards changes.

Ms. Finch asked a question about using mental strategies in Kindergarten. She wonders if teachers will understand that these are mental strategies, or will they use other tools. The math team said that more information will be provided in a supplemental document, explaining what all the terms mean.

Dr. Ailshie thanked the team for the intentionality and work to fill the gaps. He appreciated the process used to identify gaps, like money, which have caused teachers to struggle. He also liked that they removed strategy language, so teachers are now empowered to decide how to teach.

Ms. Holly Pillow and **Ms. Sherri Cockerham** discussed changes to the grades 6-8 math standards. **Ms. Cockerham** started with public feedback data. She explained that high level changes included adding new standards, revisions for clarity/consistency, removal of select standards/examples, relocation of some standards, and new emphasis on a different part of a standard.

Ms. Pillow and **Ms. Cockerham** explained that the standards written by the committee aimed to maintain the integrity of the standards progression. The team recognized the need for students to be college and career-ready. They said their work aimed to strengthen, not overburden students. They acknowledged that students need to be statistically savvy, which is why statistics is incorporated throughout these grades.

Dr. Ailshie questioned what would this look like when it is assessed. **Ms. Pillow** and **Ms. Cockerham** said their team has notes to add to the supplemental document, as well as suggestions for professional development.

Dr. Ailshie expressed the need for vertical alignment. He reminded everyone that we don't want to forget about the middle grades, which are the crucial transitions between elementary and high school. He said it is so important to focus on this work.

Dr. Jones responded with a sincerity of concern over what their team did. He said that the team wanted to get this right; they aimed to give teachers a level of autonomy, but clarity at the same time.

Mr. Pickler asked if there was any consideration of applying applied mathematical standards at the middle school level, for financial literacy. The team replied that it may be up to a school. However, they said if that were added to the standards, it would be hard to fit in and might cause the course to be a mile wide and an inch deep.

Mr. Hungate mentioned that high schoolers are required to take a personal finance course. Also, he said that personal finance is integrated in their curriculum throughout schooling.

Mr. Pickler countered that students may not take the course until their junior or senior year and worries they are unprepared for what might come *before* that. He said that the earlier they can pull in real-world, real-life applications, the better.

Dr. Jones suggested possibly bringing this into the supplemental document. He said there are mental strategies and fluency throughout, including in middle school, but there is a need to strengthen this for middle schoolers, too.

Dr. Anthony said that the foundations for financial literacy are there already; real-life problems could be applied to these lessons that are already being taught. She said there is a need for authentic word problems, including business and financial problems that students might face in real-life.

Ms. Cockerham added that there is a 7th grade standard for sales tax and interest.

Ms. Finch stated that the standards do allow teachers to go the route of financial problems if they so choose.

Dr. Kolitsch told the committee that much of this personal finance work is continued into high school.

Dr. Curry said she is glad that the standards are now something that parents can understand.

Dr. Kolitsch, along with **Ms. Meagan Miller** and **Mr. Concus**, presented the revisions to the grades 9-12 math standards.

Ms. Miller discussed that many standards are repeated in grades 9-11 math courses. She said that college and career-readiness is especially important for high school teachers. She said the team continually asked themselves whether a standard will make students college and career-ready; if the answer was no, then the standard got moved. She also discussed public feedback.

Ms. Miller explained the two pathways: traditional & integrated. She said they're all the same standards, just organized differently. She said the team deleted additional content, and changed or embedded it to either focus or supporting standards.

Mr. Concus discussed changes to specific standards. He said the team changed wording to enhance clarity, alignment, and consistency. He said the team sought clear delineation between courses and they added new examples for coherence. He said they shifted some standards to more appropriate courses.

Dr. Kolitsch discussed recommendations for fourth-year math courses.

Dr. Cypress asked if they found anything that might be controversial during their work. **Dr. Kolitsch** responded that there have been many misconceptions about Common Core. She said we don't need to limit kids, because they can do it. She said the older kids get, the more they lose curiosity, which is why there has been pushback. However, she said this isn't a test and this isn't a curriculum; these are math standards. She thinks this process demystifies a lot of this.

Ms. Miller said that the coding is the same as Common Core, which is not ideal. But, she said it allows teachers and students to Google the standard and link to resources nationally. **Mr. Concus** also mentioned the need for supplemental documents to go deeper into the standards and help show teachers what exactly we mean inside the standards.

Ms. Duncan discussed differences between curriculum and standards. She emphasized that it's huge to clarify and simplify things so people realize these are just standards.

Dr. Curry said the biggest jump is to sell the public on what we're doing and make sure they understand and buy into it. She said if it looks like we're just glossing over it but it's the same thing, that may not be enough. She emphasized the need to ensure that the public has a voice and does take part. She also stated that it's hard to explain to the public that we are not the curriculum.

Mr. Pickler said that it begins with us. He reminded everyone that [tonight] the website will reopen to gather feedback. He said this is effectively a PR campaign: we want your input, your engagement, your ownership. He wants everyone to have been given the opportunity to participate. He said people need to know now to give input before November.

Ms. Gullion explained that one of the biggest part of the parental misconception is mathematics. She said that we are now teaching the importance of conceptual understanding (which is not what many of us got). She said parents aren't going to understand that because they don't have conceptual understanding. She said that we aren't making it more difficult; we're just trying to make sure students understand.

Dr. Cypress suggested creating a flyer, to explain why this is important. She wondered how much information to put on it.

Ms. Encalade explained the various upcoming regional feedback sessions the State Board would be hosting, to gather feedback from educators and parents across the state.

Mr. Pickler suggested making a video to share on social media to encourage feedback. He wanted to utilize technology to leverage the message.

Ms. Finch commented on ACT prep. She commended the HS team for making the progression and alignment better.

Dr. Kolitsch said that **Dr. Shelton** & Virginia Mayfield (TDOE) are working to confirm that standards align with the ACT.

Dr. Ailshie said he appreciated the different pathways. He said he looks forward to supplemental documents, because it's likely some teachers don't know what literacy in math might look like. He said we need to be sure that we capture all of these things, and we don't miss anything from the committee's work. He reminded his fellow committee members that these standards are the baseline, and we have to be very careful to consider all students—many can go far beyond this. He emphasized the need to make sure that it's understood that kids can go further. He said that of course we need to support all kids, but we also need to challenge the best and brightest to go further, including gifted students. He said we need a clearer pathway on not just providing basic standards, but also higher levels of learning.

Chairman Ailshie entertained a motion to adjourn.

ACTION: **Ms. Duncan** motioned for acceptance. **Dr. Cypress** seconded.

MEETING ADJOURNED