

Adult Education PMF Task Force Meeting Notes

April 22, 2016 | DC PCSB | 12:00-2:00pm

Attendees:

DC PCSB: Sareeta Schmitt, Naomi DeVeaux, Rashida Tyler, Erin Kupferberg, and Adam Bethke

Academy of Hope: Patricia DeFerrari, Marcos Pantelis, and Julia Conte

Briya: Jody Burkey, Karen Hertzler (phone), Shamika Hapuarachi, and Christie McKay

Carlos Rosario: Patricio Sanchez and Ryan Monroe

Community College Prep: Shannon Webster, Rachael Premdos, and Alfons Prince

LAYC Career Academy: Nicole Hanrahan

Maya Angelou PCS – YALC: Sarah Navarro and Nora Shetty

The Next Step PCS: Julie Meyer and Melvin Freeman

YouthBuild PCS: Alexandra Pardo, Janalee Jordan-Meldrum, and Kia Higgins

FOCUS: Anne Herr

Meeting Notes:

Agenda & Objectives

- Sareeta reviewed the agenda and objectives and highlighted two key topics for today's meeting:
 - Floor and target for the GED Subject Test Achievement measure
 - Schools' tiering proposals for the AE PMF
- Reminder that we are moving into the data collection phase for the 2015-16 AE PMF, so the task force will not meet again until the fall.

GED Subject Test Achievement Measure

- OSSE announced that DC would align GED Testing Service's (GEDTS's) recommendation moving a passing GED score from 150 to 145.
- The AE PMF will align with this as well, and the DC PCSB will work on updating the 14-15 AE PMF given the guidance to make this change retroactive.
 - DC PCSB will reach out to affected schools individually.
- Sareeta reviewed the updated metric based on schools' feedback to include students who took the GED (and passed) but did not take the GED Ready test or did not have a "likely to pass" score.
 - With OSSE's new GED regulations DC residents seeking to take the GED must either have a "too close to call" score, a "likely to pass" score, or a letter from GED preparation program in order to sit for the test.
 - The group had a short discussion on situations when students might take the GED test without a "likely to pass" score.
 - Academy of Hope: Are you saying we should recommend students who are "too close to call" on the GED Ready?

- Sareeta: No, we're not saying that. This measure does not include anyone who scored at "too close to call," only "likely to pass." Schools use their own discretion in recommending students.
- Another school suggested that schools can send a recommendation letter if they believe that a "too close to call" student should take the GED test, and DC PCSB agreed that this would work given the language of the business rules.
- The Next Step: How will you know if we recommended someone to take the GED?
 - Sareeta: Since OSSE's new regulations set up a process to collect letters from programs, PCSB will work with OSSE to get the information.
- Schools asked to see the final regulations from OSSE.
 - DC PCSB agreed to follow up on where/whether they are posted on OSSE's website.
 - *Update 4/28/16: They are posted in the DC Register [here](#).*
- Carlos Rosario brought up the question of whether there is a difference between the Spanish GED and English GED.
 - Sareeta shared that she spoke to GEDTS, and they did not recommend making any distinction between the two. The tests are comparable, ceteris paribus. DC PCSB did not feel comfortable going against the publisher's guidelines.
- Carlos Rosario, The Next Step, and YouthBuild shared that they are seeing the difference between Spanish GED and English GED results. They believe there's a difference between the two tests.
- Sareeta shared that the national data show slightly lower pass rates on the Spanish GED, but GEDTS noted that there are confounding factors such as Spanish GED test takers tending to have fewer years of formal education than English GED test takers. If two people with similar educational backgrounds and preparation take the test in Spanish and in English, then they have the same chance of passing.
- The discussion continued with different examples, and the group agreed to table the conversation to cover other agenda items and to return to it at the end of the meeting.

GED Subject Test Achievement Floor and Target

- The group reviewed the slides with the schools' 15-16 data on GED Ready and GED tests.
- Sareeta shared that these data helped make the case that a floor of 70 is too high and that there should be some flexibility on students who cannot take the actual GED even after scoring "likely to pass" on the GED Ready.
- In looking at the national data on people who score "likely to pass" but do not take the actual GED, Sareeta noted that the GEDTS cannot tease out non-testing populations (e.g. teachers taking tests).
- Adam: Note, these rates aren't reflective of your exact rates, this is an apples-to-apples comparison of available data for the given date ranges.

- The Next Step: It's important to note that there are going to be some artificially high rates, because the self-selection happens at the next level of decision making (GED, not GED Ready).
- Sareeta presented the updated proposal of a floor of 40 and a target of 100.
 - YouthBuild: Is this target attainable or aspirational?
 - Sareeta: It's aspirational right now, but we think it's eventually attainable given the reported national data.
 - YouthBuild: We need to keep in mind that this affects the tiering — it makes it harder to be Tier 1.
 - Naomi: The point isn't to earn 100% of the points. It's to earn a strong number of points, not all of them.
- Sareeta went over the added business rules to exclude students in certain situations who could not take the GED test.
- Academy of Hope: Can we add that a person has to be working toward earning a GED?
 - Academy of Hope noted that they have some students who may take a GED Ready test before deciding to go into the NEDP track.
 - Sareeta: Yes, this is part of the full business rules.
- Youthbuild: If a student transfers into a degree granting institution, then can we exclude those students from the measure since they're no longer pursuing a GED?
 - Naomi/Sareeta: Yes, as long as you have documentation of the enrollment into a degree-granting institution.
- Maya YALC: What about ID requirements?
 - Sareeta: We're talking to OSSE; this is an opportunity for advocacy, not to lower the goals for the PMF.
 - Maya YALC: This is a real issue. She shared a story about a student who could not get an ID because the DMV would not accept his/her birth certificate because it was too folded.
 - Academy of Hope: Can you broker a meeting between the testing office and us? We're trying to get students there, but we really need help moving them.

Tiering

- Key things to think about: why does it strengthen what we already have? What's the rationale behind doing it this way?
- Academy of Hope shared their proposal.
 - Goal: To promote excellence in schools and to give us ways to evaluate whether excellence is being achieved.
 - As is, each indicator doesn't necessarily serve every student. As a result, we think it's problematic to base the whole score on the one area in which we're the weakest.
 - We looked at weighting, but that's problematic too. If you look at Achievement, it's a small number of people who end up scoring "likely to pass" in a given year. Secondary credentials are a multi-year effort, so it's difficult to give a single weight to an effort.
 - Questions:
 - What's the rationale behind 20%?

- You can have two Tier 3 indicators and still be Tier 2, why?
 - Naomi: My takeaway is that this just lowers the performance thresholds.
 - Patricia: This may not be perfectly designed, so we're open to some flexibility in the proposal.
 - Naomi: I understand that schools have said that it's unfair that you can be Tier 1 in 3 of 4 indicators, but Tier 3 in one, and be Tier 3 overall as a result.
 - Marcos: Yes, we'd hope that this proposal would be more responsive to a long-term trend; we'd hope that seeing the relationship between multiple indicators would show overall performance.
- Carlos Rosario shared their proposal.
 - Very similar rationale to Academy of Hope's proposal
 - This doesn't change much of what's already in place with the tiering system, but it creates one exemption from Tier 3 to be Tier 2.
 - Questions
 - Rashida: Do you have the opportunity to balance a Tier 3 indicator with at Tier 1 indicator if there are only three applicable indicators in your PMF?
 - Patricio: Yes.
 - Sareeta: Why did you choose to use the same general structure we have now, instead of using an overall score?
 - Patricio: I wanted to respect the current system and not make the calculations more difficult.
- LAYC Career Academy shared their proposal.
 - Rationale: At last meeting, Sareeta presented the rationale about why the tiering system was designed the way it is. Overall, we note that not every measure affects all students. One of the four indicators is largely self-reported. At the same time, that pulls in the reverse. The school could be Tier 1 in an area that's self-reported, but it could also be that the school is Tier 3 in that self-reported measure. There's also a weighting issue, wherein there are different numbers of students in different levels.
 - Goal: We wanted to balance all of these factors.
 - Proposal Summary:
 - Average the lowest scored section with the average of the other three.
 - Maintain the 50% threshold for contacting students.
 - Questions:
 - Rashida: Why did you choose to do the average of the top three and the lowest?
 - Nicole: We didn't want to base it on the one indicator, and we still wanted to create a way that concentrates the lowest score impact but then also rounds it out.

Summary of 2016-17 AE PMF Proposals

- The group briefly walked through the overview handout of the PMF proposals from November to now.

Return to conversation on Spanish vs. English GEDs

- The group returned the earlier conversation of Spanish vs. English GEDs.
 - The Next Step: One thing we notice with the Spanish GED is that the social studies test is really hard for our Spanish-speaking students because they didn't grow up here in the United States.
 - Sareeta: Do you imagine that it is easier for a student from Ethiopia taking the social studies test in English?
 - The Next Step agreed it is likely not.
- Carlos Rosario: The other thing is that we're advocating for ELLs to have accommodations — if HS students are getting accommodations for being ELL, the comparability should be the same.
- Carlos Rosario raised a question about the predictive value of the GED Ready and asserted that they do not believe it is the same in Spanish and English.
 - Carlos Rosario: One thing I'd flag is that the translation doesn't necessarily mean all of the psychometrics will be the same. They say it's a translation, so there may be a difference. In making assessments, the best practice is to make two versions simultaneously, not to translate the English into the Spanish.
- Carlos Rosario: We're not dealing with a theoretical population — our students do tend to come from less formal education. Our Spanish GED students tend to be older, to have attended just elementary school or less, and they've had a lot of interrupted education. The other thing is that our students have a very limited exposure to technology; skills that the typical GED student in the national data has. For those reasons, I feel that it's not predicting to the same degree as the English test.
- The Next Step: I don't think it's easy for any of us to say why that's the case. In Carlos Rosario's case, the students who are taking it in English are also immigrants, so it's very difficult to explain why there's still a difference in predictive value.
- Sareeta: My understanding from GEDTS is that they would not say there is a fundamental difference, but that differences are going to be observed because students are coming from different educational backgrounds or other confounding factors. This is something that we can and should ask GEDTS about.
- The Next Step: The thing is that you're asking the GEDTS to admit that they have a flawed predictive model.
- Academy of Hope: The thing I'd like note is that there's a worthwhile distinction between what GEDTS is telling you based on their philosophy and based on the data.
- Naomi: We're not going to be able to get any further unless we're not hearing the same thing from GEDTS. If you want us to hold off on the technical guide, we could do that, but we need you to ask us to do that. The timeline is really driven by you so that we can get you a final technical guide by the time the program year begins.

Next Steps

- Feedback forms are due COB Friday, April 22 to ensure time to get recommendations in the 2016-17 PMF Policy and Technical Guide.
- Schools and DC PCSB would like to talk with OSSE about precisely what types of identification are accepted for students to take the GED test.
- Schools and DC PCSB would like to talk with the GED Testing Service to better understand whether there is a difference between the GED Ready predictions in the English and Spanish versions of the test. *Update 4/29/16: Julie Meyer and Ryan Monroe will join Sareeta on a call with GEDTS on Monday, 5/2*
- DC PCSB will work with OSSE to make sure that all schools have the final GED regulations. *Update 4/28/16: They are posted in the DC Register [here](#)*