



Hillsborough

Classroom Teachers Association

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EET Representative Council Forum January 30th, 2012

Location: ISCC Building

Panel:

- MaryEllen Elia, Superintendent
- Dan Valdez, Deputy Superintendent
- David Steele, Director of EET Project
- Stephanie Woodford, Director of EET/Peers & Principals
- Anna Brown, Director of EET/Assessments
- Jean Clements, President HCTA

Moderator:

- Stephanie Baxter-Jenkins, Executive Director of HCTA

Note:

This is a “content” transcript. It focuses on capturing the key content of the Q&A session and not on verbatim transcription of the entire session.

Content Transcript

CLEMENTS: We’re here again to talk face to face with the Superintendent regarding your concerns. How many of you were here for the December meeting when we had the last forum? We had some items that we were going to get reports back on, so the Superintendent and Dr. Steele will provide answers to questions that remain from the last meeting. We will follow the same format as last time in terms of reading questions that were provided prior to the meeting and then giving the audience the opportunity to ask questions. Our fabulous Executive Director, Stephanie Baxter-Jenkins, will be our facilitator and moderator again. We have a huge pile of questions left from the last time, so we will go over those first. We will continue to have these meetings regularly and give you the opportunity to ask questions directly to the Superintendent.

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BAXTER-JENKINS: As Jean Clements said, we will follow a similar format to last time and cover the questions that remained from the last meeting and then give you the opportunity to ask additional questions. So now I'll turn it over to the Superintendent.

ELIA: I have four things left from our last time. So I'll start with those four and then go into other questions. Mr. Valdez will be here later and we have other staff members here who will be able to answer your questions.

First, several teachers expressed concern about ratings in Domain 4, specifically about using things like attendance and comp time as a negative. Schools we know about specifically were contacted and asked to revise their procedures. So it has been addressed, but Stephanie Woodford also has a principal's meeting this Wednesday and they will have an extended conversation about best practices for ratings in Domain 4. We will use examples and non-examples, so principals understand the appropriate use of Domain 4 for different components and a variety of topics. We're working to get a better understand of what's appropriate. If you have an issue or problem, call Jean Clements, Stephanie Baxter-Jenkins or email us. We have had further discussion about your feedback and are now ramping up training for peers and principals. A week ago one hundred peers, mentors & principals took training in conversation and feedback strategy. We really took that seriously and want to make sure we get better at that.

Another issue had come up regarding informals and it remains a hot spot: lack of notification. So now peers are providing at least a one day window for their visit. They may or may not get to you in that window, but you know it's a possibility. What it does is it allows you to have a feeling that you can breathe in between time, if you were stressed about it. This change is a major adjustment in the schedules for the peers, but I think that was a fair thing.

One last thing - really important - is the issue of calibration of anybody coming in to do an observation. Some people say, "If I was at another school and gave the same lesson my score would be different". So we are stepping up external calibration; it is going on right now. There is always concern that all observers will rate the same lesson the same way. So we bring in people who are experts and have them go back out with the peer to help them ensure they are doing it correctly. It comes down to inter-rater reliability and Cambridge comes back in and helps with that. We get data on comparison of peers and principals to look at and see if anyone is way out in left or right field. If it's not in line with how others

evaluated the same lesson, we know we need to do something. Each peer is calibrated for two lessons and depending on the results they may need to re-test.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: You said that you collect data and review it. What kind of data? Is it in the form of average scores or looking at particular observations, like how many are “Accomplished” or how many “Exemplary”?

ELIA: We’re doing both. We look at how many overall for the district for each category and then look at each level to see if they are out of the realm of everyone else.

STEELE: We look at each observer to see how often they mark each category. We have to be careful because each one is different – different days, different lessons, etc. At the end of the year we’re all looking at same body of knowledge for evaluations. Part of each principal’s and peer’s evaluation is how well they correlate with each other. Principals may work with anywhere between five and fifteen peers. Peers work with up to 35 principals. So there is a correlation that becomes part of their evaluation too.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: For certain evaluators or observers...how can you know which one is the one that should be recalibrated?

STEELE: We recalibrate everyone throughout the year. Cambridge is doing it now and if the peer doesn’t pass they go back to training. But everyone gets recalibrated.

BAXTER-JENKINS: Follow-up on calibrations: one thing people ask about is whether there are differences in the calibrations for peers and administrators.

WOODFORD: It’s the same when they go through calibration through Cambridge. We get ratings and feedback from outside evaluators. The difference with peers is that we are calibrating constantly. The average now is eighteen times. That means eighteen times that they went out and calibrated the peer. Its successful if less than three components are marked differently. They’re calibrated in the classroom all the time and you have two people in your classroom then - your assigned peer, the one rating you, and the other one, the calibrator, who is just doing it for comparison. Teachers said, “I want to know if the peer is accurate. I don’t want to wait to find out they were out of whack.” So if they are at the same site at the same time, they recalibrate. We are putting together communication to explain, “This is what a calibration looks like and this is what it does not look like”.

BAXTER-JENKINS: What is best practice and protocol regarding conversations between peers and principals?

WOODFORD: The peers are taught that there is no conversation with principals until the cycle is completed. The only time I would have a conversation with the principal is if I feel like additional support needs to be provided to that teacher. I mean, we don't want to leave a teacher without support if we feel they need it. Another time I might talk with a principal is if I have twenty teachers at one site and I see a trend that would benefit from some additional support. I might say, "You should bring someone in for training for things like questioning techniques." But there is a clear protocol with the principal if the principal tries to say who they think is good or not in their building. The peer will not have that conversation. We do have peers that leave a report to say things like, "This is my experience here and this is where you could focus on additional support or training". We also do occasionally have principals request to talk to a peer. When that happens, I talk with them to make sure it's an appropriate conversation.

BAXTER-JENKINS: A lot of people say peers suggest specific literature, like "Teach Like A Champion" when they do post-conference. Does the district have a plan to make sure everyone gets copies of those?

WOODFORD: Every site should have "Teach Like A Champ" at their site. We also offer training for it. It's a fine line when a peer makes suggestions. We try to only recommend documents that we've read or training that we've gone to. Teach Like A Champion is a district level training. The book should be at your site currently; at least 2 or 3 copies.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Is there a reason it's not in our electronic library?

ELIA: Some publishers don't permit that. We'll check.

BAXTER-JENKINS: This is a similar question on training and suggestions. A number of people have asked about the fact that they attended district trainings and implemented strategies related to those and then had a peer or principal comment negatively on their implementation of that. Is there a place people can go to get questions answered about things like this?

WOODFORD: Please send feedback or specific questions to GreatTeachers. We send it out to specialists in the appropriate area who can best answer the question. It's

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hard to comment in general, but we can follow up with the trainer, curriculum supervisor, etc.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Let's say you follow up and the trainer says I implemented it right. How come there's no way to fix the scoring rubric after the peer has already scored it wrong?

WOODFORD: The dilemma is that a teacher may say how it was implemented and a peer says they saw it implemented differently. Two people in the same room and they are both asking other people to provide remarks about who was wrong. We focus on having someone talk with you about what happened and see where the issue was. If the issue results in a need for additional curriculum support, etc., we want to help with that. We look at those one on one.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: What is the district doing to ensure that trainings that are being offered through professional development match the Danielson framework, so that the trainings match and are specific to what our needs are? Also, has each peer and mentor had the Teach Like A Champ training?

WOODFORD: Not every peer has had that training, but most have. Professional Development is reviewing every course and re-writing courses that aren't in alignment. It is an ongoing effort and they are committed to that. We've also offered training on how to read and understand the rubric. Sometimes if you don't know what you don't know you think you understand it, but you might miss things. So rubric training has been great for helping everyone understand how the rubric works.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Are we doing the same thing with curriculum? For example, elementary schools have very specific curriculum for subjects like math and science and the peer may not be familiar with it.

WOODFORD: Yes. If the peer is not in alignment with the curriculum, we provide training. The supervisor comes out and does training for kindergarten, reading, etc. and works with peers and mentors who do know the curriculum to train other peers.

Note: A question was asked at this point that was related to cross curriculum and reciprocal teaching, but we were not able to capture the complete question for transcription.

ELIA: I will tell you that the reading strategies you're talking about are cross-curriculum. That's one that needs to come through GreatTeachers, so we can make sure that it's all aligned correctly. I know we just had the new standards implemented and you all are aware that common core is on its way and one of the most important concepts in common core is that the common reading strategy is extremely important to the cross-curriculum.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: The teacher personally responded to her evaluation and never got feedback.

ELIA: All of you representing groups in the schools please make sure if there are specific issues like this that you get them to us through GreatTeachers or CTA.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: When we call professional standards to come out to do reciprocal teaching they say, "We haven't written it yet". How can you be assessed on something that's not being taught in the district?

ELIA: Someone has been teaching it, so we need to address your issue. Reciprocal teaching and reading strategy was an important issue for us.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Does common core have any effect on value-add scores?

STEELE: The whole testing landscape is going to change in the next few years. For value-add scores, we work with an external partner, the University of Wisconsin because they are the experts in that. But we will go from FCAT 2.0 to PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) assessments. The folks at University of Wisconsin will have to calibrate a different set of scores. However, it will be easier to transition from value-add than from what we originally started out with.

BROWN: I would add that, as common core comes on line, we will transition into a new state test and it will be what we will incorporate into our value-add. We will not use data from interim tests.

BAXTER-JENKINS: Mr. Steele, when we met the last time people had questions about the perception of scores being lower overall this year. Have you seen any trends in the data to support that?

STEELE: We are seeing, as the training gets done more, that both peers and administrators are better equipped to evaluate “Exemplary”. We still mark Exemplary more often in the district than other researchers who doing similar evaluations. Training has emphasized the finer points and observers are doing better job of picking out the differences. We have the overall district data so you can see the distribution for every component district wide and the overall scores district wide. We’ll have that available in the next day or two.

BAXTER-JENKINS: People are often told “Exemplary” isn’t a place where people reside – they only visit. Have we considered basing overall scores on something less than 100%? Why use “Exemplary” if that’s a place people will rarely get to?

STEELE: We absolutely already do that. I’ve said over and over again and I’ll say it once more. I wish we had not made the score “out of a 100” because people then look for percentages. We could have invented a scale score, but it would have added more complexity. We have no cut scores for different levels because we have to look at the frequency table. What’s a master or advanced teacher look like? We need two years of data in order to begin determining that. On an individual component it’s difficult to get more than 40 out of 60. On the 100% scale, 11% scored 71.5 or higher. Those were the top marks and we understand that. One principal, when they got their score of 88, their first inclination was to feel awful. But it was the highest score in the district, so it’s all relative. We take into account that “Exemplary” is hard to achieve. Thirty-one percent made it two years ago and this year it was around 66 or 67 percent.

BAXTER-JENKINS: Can you explain exactly what the Bucket consists of?

WOODFORD: The Bucket has several sections. The peer or mentor puts in data for formals and informals in the electronic portfolio. The administrative team principal or AP, put in their formals and informals. What is not in there are details from department heads, pop-in walkthroughs, etc. You can put in additional items, such as awards you’ve won, some type of accolade you received, committees you served on, certificates of trainings. What we don’t recommend you put in are lessons plans. The plan itself - it’s impossible to know if it was effective if not seen. You can also respond to areas that need clarification, that you feel weren’t rated correctly. Keep in mind there is no notification to the administrative team or peer when you add something to the Bucket, so you need to email that. The Bucket is looked at just before final evaluation is done. We print it out and every journal, note, etc., including all of the ratings, is read. So that completes a Bucket.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: So before the final evaluation, the journal will be looked at?

WOODFORD: Yes, a truck delivers the Buckets here. Boxes and boxes of them and we meet here for weeks with peers and administrators. They read and highlight and look for trends. We train every peer and mentor and administrator about how to look at a Bucket. We don't want someone to just A, A, D, D; they need to look at evidence that draws you up or down.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: How do you know they look through the journal?

WOODFORD: I promise you that we do read through all of that.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: So if you don't enter anything...

WOODFORD: The majority of teachers do not write in their Bucket. About 20% did, with pretty extensive responses. You have to remember to make it public, which just means that both evaluators, peer and administrator, can read it.

BAXTER-JENKINS: What is the schedule protocol for flow of pre-observation, observation and post-observation? Is it appropriate to have them all in one day?

WOODFORD: It is not the norm, but it is requested by some teachers. They don't want to wait for the post-observation; they want it later that day. But it's different depending on the peer. If I'm an elementary peer with multiple teachers at 15 schools, my schedule is very different than a music peer who covers 45 schools. Peers can schedule it all in one day of that's the teacher's request and it can be worked into the peer's schedule. If peer requests it, it's up to the teacher. But it is not our norm. Many teachers request the pre-observation before the school day begins, then they have the observation and have the post-observation at the end of the day.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I had my observation before the winter holiday and have had no follow-up yet. This is my administrator evaluation. Is there a limit to the length of time they have to get back to us?

WOODFORD: The protocol is five days; ten days is allowable. I would be happy to look into that situation for you. If it's been extremely long, there are instances where we have requested to redo the observation if the teacher requests it.

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AUDIENCE MEMBER: We had someone who had their formal principal observation half an hour later the peer came in. Would it have been okay to say, "I'm having formal today, don't come"?

WOODFORD: That's a great question and one we didn't foresee because in our mind we're done with formals and have moved into the informal portion. We didn't realize a lot of administrative formals are still going on in schools. There is no formal protocol for the length of time between observations, but peers don't want to go in on top of someone else either. However, the teacher might be fine with it, so it's up to them.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: This teacher told the peer, "I just finished my evaluation", but she didn't want to say, "No I'm not ready for you", so she let them stay.

WOODFORD: Now we're starting to see issues we need to address. We do realize we need to coordinate better and we're talking about how to do that.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: A lot of teachers are stressed about informals. For example, if you aren't on schedule, say you're not doing math at math time, does that go against you? Also for unusual things, like a custodian is leaving, so we're writing thank you letters and it spills over into math time?

WOODFORD: The issue of teaching something different than what's on the schedule is something we will address this Friday. If the peer shows up and you're doing reading instead of math, we will observe what you are teaching and there's no penalty for that. As far as letter writing goes, you could address that with the peer, let them know what's going on and I assume you would still be making it academic related, so they'll observe anyway. Remember these peers were in classrooms too, so they know that these things happen.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I was given a five day window and never observed. How will that be handled?

WOODFORD: That's part of the difficulty of scheduling. Let's say we're estimating that we can do four informals per day. So I think I can see four each day over a two day period. But there might be people out unexpectedly those days, so I overschedule because I still have to get eight done. We knew we would have to do that. If at the end of the two days I got most of them, then I will just need to re-schedule the rest. We know it's not perfect, but two or three day windows are better than a whole window for a whole

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semester. Many peers had planned out their whole semester schedule and last Friday they were re-planning their whole schedule because of the changes regarding notification. I understand that if you get window and it doesn't happen it's frustrating, but also understand the scheduling issues that go on with informals.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can they give us a preview of which Domain they are coming to observe... 2 or 3?

WOODFORD: We talked about that last Friday. A lot of feedback is, "I want both done when you come". Peers are going in doing Domains 2 and 3 at the same time. If they don't see particular areas – did not observe – it doesn't count against you. It just provides more opportunity to have additional information in your Bucket. We don't have great communication between your peer and your administrator that makes it clear to both how much of each Domain has been covered. So they cover both to make sure you have nice sampling in your Bucket.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: In middle school and high school sometimes there may be a need to split a class. So when they come in for an informal I could have split kids, who aren't regularly mine. So if it's in the window when a peer is scheduled to come in and someone says, "Hey, take my kids", I'm like, "I don't want your kids".

WOODFORD: We have had that happen and it shouldn't be an issue because teachers have a plan for that. And it has benefited teachers for how they handled it. As a principal I did that all the time, having to split classes. It has potential to be a great benefit for you based on how you handle it.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Are they going to get an "x" because they have additional kids there?

WOODFORD: The situation has happened and it hasn't been an issue so far. If it is, please email GreatTeachers.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: We have received notices for Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade and there are three schools on email's notice.

WOODFORD: Peers are going to multiple schools on multiple days. It wouldn't work if you're at a school and I email you a one day window and I email someone else a four or five day window. We have to allow for things like lock downs. The windows

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ensure that they are going out a consistent number of days. It is still notification by group at schools. But if you have something specific that you would like to email me, I will look into it.

BAXTER-JENKINS: Or email us as well.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: The state has mandated a new evaluation system for all the districts. I know our district and CTA had a lot of people on committees to help get this together. Are modifications being made as things are seen? Is there an ongoing committee to look at the tweaks and modifications that are needed or is emailing GreatTeachers the way to go?

BAXTER-JENKINS: There are a lot of answers to that. There is a Teacher Advisory committee, which is the big overarching committee, but then there are specific ones on evaluation, the different parts of the process, peer and mentor issues. There are quite a few different committees.

CLEMENTS: We have had, since the beginning of the grant allocation, a teacher advisory group. Many of you sat on focus groups and survey groups. We bring new people in all the time because people leave, retire etc. In fact, we're adding people right now. That group has been meeting at least monthly for the past 2 ½ years. The teach evaluation group has been meeting for a year and a half. There are also teachers on the principal evaluation committee. Most of the committees are long-standing committees, but new people do come in. We look for people who have really good burning questions. Our commitment to looking at the problems and finding solutions is very strong, so bringing on people who have specific ideas is something we've been doing all along.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Is there a set amount of time we will be informally observed? A peer at my school said they were actually going to be observing multiple times.

WOODFORD: There is a chart. For the informal, there should be two by the peer, unless you have an intern, which I handle. That is only adjusted if you were on leave for an extended amount of time, but I handle those as well. And interns do affect the number of observations. Sometimes we're asked to do additional ones for particular reasons. For the most part peers are doing two informals.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Here's my concern about the five day window for notification. The five day window is fine, but we had a peer come in and observe one teacher. People called each other to tell them that the peer was on campus and she got upset and left the school. You're already giving five day window warning, so why did she leave?

WOODFORD: Be patient with us. We're figuring out how to make it work the best for the peers and you too. Talk to me after the session. I know one peer left because of a death in the family and another peer got sick.

BAXTER-JENKINS: How much research does a peer do before just dropping in? For example, in reading there may be a lot of diversity in where the children are at. And there are different situations. How much does the peer need to know about the program and the kids in order to make an objective evaluation of what's happening?

WOODFORD: That's why we do the formal first, so the peer has a feel for the teacher, the class, and the school. They may be assigned to a number of teachers at one school for that reason. The hope is that, since they've been there, they have foreknowledge when they do the informals. Most research may come afterwards if the peer is not familiar with something you did or taught. For example, at a middle school they had a program I wasn't familiar with, so afterwards I searched out the supervisor for the department and asked questions to learn more about the program.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: What is the objective of informals?

WOODFORD: We're doing it for a lot of reasons. A lot of teachers said, "I'm good at this, so just come watch me teach" and with informals we thought we would see more authentic teaching. We want to see multiple things in the classroom. A teacher may try things on a formal evaluation that they don't normally do. With informals, what we see is a moment of hesitation, but then they just move on and we see great teaching in informals. There's no gotcha...how do you catch someone who does a great job every day? The responses I've gotten are that the majority of teachers say, "I preferred the informal". It's another thing we'll talk about at the end.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Very valuable information comes in that email afterwards. The first time you may see upper level stuff. The second time you may see lower level stuff. Part of the research is what you can provide in the email afterwards.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: If I had my administrative post-observation and haven't received feedback and it's been more than 10 days, almost a month. Is that an issue?

WOODFORD: Yes, a month is too long. We need to look into it. Each one of these issues is handled individually and there are circumstances that can't be helped. We had a principal out for surgery, for example, so the post-observations were delayed. So it may be for unforeseen reasons.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: We have a large ASD group at our school. ASD teachers say they don't feel like they're being fairly judged because the person has no background in ASD and doesn't understand the protocol.

WOODFORD: I will look into that. Anyone who covers an ASD classroom was trained by someone who has ASD experience. Email me specific examples.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: How are itinerant teachers being observed? If I teach at multiple schools and was evaluated at one and would like to be evaluated at a different one, can that be done?

WOODFORD: We would be happy to evaluate at a second school.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: When are formals and informals ending?

WOODFORD: They will be done all year. Most of the formals are done though. They have the whole year to see you.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Back to the questions about unforeseen circumstances, like the letter writing - you said let peer know. But peers say they don't want to hear from us.

WOODFORD: You can let them know what's going on, but we've found that teachers stop teaching and try to explain. So don't stop teaching, follow-up afterward with an email.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: But you said, "Talk to them when they come in".

WOODFORD: I'm not saying either or. If you're teaching the lesson, keep going, don't stop. If you're not teaching a lesson and something else is going on, yes, explain it.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Is there a window if you're emailing them after the observation? We've been told to email in 48 hours or else it's no good.

WOODFORD: Yes, that is our protocol. If you were out sick we'll look into that. And we will address that with peers at the next PLC.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: If peers see five different teachers in a given day they may not get to their room at a specific time. Is the protocol the same for informals for VE teachers that may have something particular planned, but the peer isn't there during the time the teacher is teaching the lesson? How is that handled?

WOODFORD: The ESE peers met on Friday to look at unique situations. We developed a protocol that, if the lesson didn't lend itself to a particular domain, we will still view the lesson. For example, if we showed up and the ESE teacher is there, but the co-teacher is not - we look at that. But if that's the schedule and the teacher is assigned to that classroom then it's possible that we will show up.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: If it's marked "not observed" it's not supposed to be a negative. But the EET liaison at our school is saying it's a penalty mark against you. Who is training the EET liaisons?

WOODFORD: It is absolutely not a negative rating. If your peer, mentor, principal or AP gave you a negative rating, let us know. I'm not sure why they would.

ELIA: Share the circumstances and we'll check into it.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm a resource teacher. Last year we were told the process would catch up this year, but some of us are starting to get concerned that we'll be two or three years behind everyone else and eventually the questions will be, "Where have been all this time?".

WOODFORD: We're currently working on a rubric for you. We're just about to start pulling in teachers to work on it. We have the framework from working with a consultant and have worked on getting the framework rolled out to supervisors and we're now working on rolling it out to teachers. We will also offer training on the current rubric so you can support the teachers.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: A peer came and stayed forty to forty-five minutes for a couple of teachers for the informal. Isn't that too long based on the protocol?

WOODFORD: That came up on Friday too. The peer said "I was in a co-teach classroom and the teacher I wasn't evaluating was giving a lesson. The one I was there to evaluate was about to start teaching finally after I had been there twenty-five minutes and I didn't know if I should stay". I told her to stick to protocol unless you ask the teacher and the teacher is fine with you staying.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Several times it has happened where they came in and saw only ten or twelve minutes and then it was time for the class to leave for lunch. So then they came back after lunch and saw a full lesson on something.

WOODFORD: Definitely tell the peer if you only have ten minutes left of a class. We've asked for updated schedules, so we can try to avoid those situations, but there are a lot of schools. We do recommend that you let them know right away, "Hey, we go to lunch in ten minutes", so the peer can move on.

BAXTER-JENKINS: We've spent a lot of time on informals, so we're going to take a few other questions and then we can go back to informals. Who has a question that is not related to informals?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Our ELL department is concerned about the final evaluation they received culminating with all the stuff last year. They felt the formal didn't show them well. The problem was that LYA students did not show very much in terms of gains. The teachers were dispirited. Is there a correlation of written scores and value-add for ELLs?

BROWN: We always give consideration for LYA because we do comparisons. What you're describing – we did not see that in our first run analysis and I would love to know your school, so I can look at it. Overall in the district we saw a strong correlation between value-add and higher written scores. We definitely want to continue improving and look for anomalies like this.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: We have a new teacher and this is the second time it has happened where a peer names another teacher in her post-observation written notes...like she was confused.

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WOODFORD: Email me.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I did.

WOODFORD: I don't recall...

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Just now. I just emailed it. The first time it happened she was thinking it was simple mistake, but it happened again.

WOODFORD: I'm going to have five hundred emails to respond to when we leave here with you all sending me emails right now. I'll get back to you on that.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: About Domain 4 – I know CTA worked hard to make sure the amount of paperwork we do is limited to just the essential things we need to do. But we're getting a lot sent to us now, saying it's optional, like a six page backward lesson plan, all kinds of student process information, etc. When we ask about it we're told, "Yes, it's optional, but you can't get more than "Developing" if you don't work towards Domain 4".

WOODFORD: That's a good example to bring to us, so we can figure out what's going on.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: We were told in the first meeting in the fall that no one can get anything but "Developing" in Domain 4 if they don't show something in every single section.

WOODFORD: That is not correct. We look at the preponderance of evidence and we're training principals on that too.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm a teacher at an adult education school and we're concerned about assessments. None of the teachers know what our assessment tool is going to be.

BROWN: That is a very valid concern. The reason you don't know is because we are taking every avenue to look at different paths. Because the adult world is very different than K-12 and we're striving to make sure that when we come to the table, that we have a good framework for you.

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AUDIENCE MEMBER: We would like to have them done, but we know there's lots of discussion and we need to talk about it, so it isn't going as fast as we would like, but it's better to be slow than to put in something that will cause teachers a lot of angst. Better than safe than sorry.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I think teacher's main problem is that no one is letting them know what's going on.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I have a question outside of EET. Sites are guaranteed to have reasonable access to and use of copy machines and paper. But what if the administrator puts a limit at 10,000 copies and then you're cut off for remainder of the year. What do you do?

ELIA: Come up after the meeting and share that with me. I'm equally concerned. We'll address that.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I have two questions. The first is about extenuating circumstances. Is there a definition available for teachers? When I got it I didn't know what the criteria was. Second question is about attendance and value-added scores. Attendance is marked present at home room or 1st period. In a school such as mine, there's a high incidence of skipping or coming to home room and then leaving. And second period has high attendance absenteeism because students are in the office, in time out, at court, skipping, are out for behavior issues, etc. So according to value-add they're present, but according to my individual attendance they aren't there. Are we going to eventually take that into account?

BROWN: It's a difficult balance. We want accuracy, but on the flip side – back to paperwork issues – having to do period by period attendance would be very difficult. We already use prior year attendance to identify trends. If you have a student who is out a lot, we get those trends and use that in value-add. We're looking at using current year value-add, but that could also lead to something we don't want - a teacher to tell a student to stay home.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pretend I'm a 5th grade science teacher. FCAT for me is based on K-5th. During a formal I may add a 4th grade standard in because I know what it is and I know my students need it and now I'm "Requires Action" because "I don't know my own grade level standards". Really effective teachers know when they need to go back

over something from a prior year in order for their students to get the current year standard.

BROWN: There's a lot to be said about this because generalization can occur. We really talk about the knowledge of the students. If you're teaching the prior year's standard to students who need it – good. But if you're just doing it because you think “all my kids will all need it every year” – that's not good.

WOODFORD: I would hope that if you communicate that with the peer in post-conference, they will understand that you're teaching the standard because they need it. It's also different if you teach it to the whole class, who may not need it, instead of one student who might not get it.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm a VE teacher, music and the only ESE teacher in my school and I cover all 5 grades. For evaluation I'm considered a classroom teacher, but I don't have a classroom; I have a rolling cart that goes with me. I can't post stuff on the walls, so I can show things like “Developing Cultures”. I'm a square peg in round hole. How can I meet these criteria in the rubric?

WOODFORD: We have a lot of teachers who float and peers have communicated that it's not an issue. What's important is what you bring with you and how you utilize it. Many peers have not had classrooms as well, so they understand it. We can easily use that rubric on teachers who float. I would be happy to talk with you about it more after the meeting.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: My question is about value-add for kindergarten. When they come in, we have no idea where they are until we start testing. If they have not been tested, but they have a disability, they aren't going to be weighted the same as students in 1st, 2nd, etc. who are already rated for that disability. If you get a lot of them it can affect the teacher's score.

BROWN: We have a few things in the model to help with that. Sometimes the RTI process takes more than one year. If a teacher does get through testing the first year and the student is identified then it's taken into account because we review during the summer. The strongest portion of our model is “previous achievement”. Statisticians say that, even though data is numbers, encapsulated in those numbers are the details of the student. Initial score carries great weight in the model. We're not saying it is perfect, only

one measure, reading, is used, so we're looking to incorporate other subjects. More information strengthens the model as well.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: During formal observations, are administrators allowed to make blanket statements to the staff that they want them all in one particular subject area.

WOODFORD: Yes, the principal can ask for a specific subject. They do that try and see the trends in the school from grade to grade.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: In the grant language it refers to incentives to teach high needs students. Would ESE be considered high needs? If we have Level 1 and 2 students, would they be considered high needs and would we be eligible for those incentives?

ELIA: All of the high needs students are at renaissance schools. We have differentiated salaries at renaissance schools because of that. We have not gotten to where we can identify all of the high needs students in a high school.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: So the only incentive is at a renaissance school where base pay is higher?

ELIA: It isn't necessarily only level 1 and 2. We have not done high needs as level 1 and 2 yet.

STEELE: There are a couple of renaissance schools. I think Spoto, Middleton, and Leto are renaissance schools. Part of EET regarding incentives is about the levels that make a school a renaissance school. The levels for renaissance schools have been lowered to 86% for middle schools and 75% for high schools. Regarding the level 1 and 2 bonuses, we have discussed those in the teacher advisory committee. It's a good idea, but hard to put into practice. Elementary, for example: for a level 1 reader we stress that everyone teaches reading. So if you're in a classroom, you could have eighteen students you could affect and potentially have a bonus. But if you're the PE at the same school you have potentially six hundred students. That would be a lot of bonus money for the PE teacher. Advanced placement teachers get a \$50 bonus for each student that passes the College Board AP test. That's still on the table but we're wrestling with how to bring it to life.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: So ESE would not fall under those definitions?

STEELE: No.

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AUDIENCE MEMBER: In elementary schools, as teachers we feel like teaching is way down on the list. Filling out forms, passing out tests, grading tests, prepping homework, reviewing homework... is there ever going to be anything to happen to make it so we can accomplish what we need to, so we don't have to take it home and work four hours a night?

ELIA: You can come and work at 6am with me.

AUDIENCE MEMBER(S): We do!

ELIA: I didn't mean to say that you don't. I meant to say that I'm there with you and I understand it. We're trying to figure out what we can do to help you. There is an enormous amount of required testing. FAIR testing is state mandated and it is difficult, particularly for elementary schools. For middle and high school, you have least support at AP level. I think it's important to address this. We're trying to get something rolled out so we'll have someone there to help with the testing, so that it's not all on you. It is not taking testing away. It also won't grab enormous amounts of time for you, but we're trying to figure out resources to help that problem. Right now you're on an eight hour day. What can you do...

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Another planning period.

ELIA: Agreed; not arguing about that. This has been an issue. It's not the same in high school, middle school and elementary schools. So one problem is you need more time. We do understand that. I can't extend the day, so we're trying to figure out what we can do. Testing is very specific one in elementary. In high school, yes, you give the test, but we put someone in to help at the high school level. If you have ideas please share them. Right now is not the time we can add another person, but we're trying to fig out how we can do it short term for elementary. We're trying to focus on what we "don't have" to take. So email GreatTeachers with any ideas or suggestions.

BAXTER-JENKINS: Copy us too.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: What is the timeline for pay for performance?

STEELE: We're in the infant stages of mapping out pay. This year's contract and salaries were agreed to on August 31st, so it's difficult to project two years out and tell you

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what the salaries will be. Our second semester project in my division is to map that out. But it's difficult because we don't know what the state of Florida is going to do.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: What is the alternative in the State of Florida? Can you provide a contrast?

ELIA: If this were next week I could give you a lot more information. I'll be spending 2 ½ days this week with all of the other superintendents. But here is what I'm hearing. First of all, a lot of districts implemented the required new rubrics and evaluations with very little training. So staff people who are doing them are being told, "You have to do this with very little training"; not like what you've heard about here today. So you have a new rubric and a new evaluation with anticipation that it won't have the spread of the old one with a high percent of teachers scoring close to 144.

The second thing is that their model is 50% student driven, so when there are issues with student data points, 50% is on that. Some of the nuances that could come out with the use of evaluations or a rubric won't happen as easily in a district that is stretched thin. The 50% on student driven data is non-negotiable in other districts. We're the only exception because we had that in the contract already. We have a different model. I will suggest to you that the issue of having peers be part of evaluation was really something that came from the teachers union fifteen or so years ago. It developed out of conversations between USF with union leadership at that time.

One of the problems other districts have is that principals are not as well-trained. They are handed a rubric, told to watch a video and told to make sure you don't have a lot of teachers who are scoring too high. And then they have 50% based on value-add score. The work we're doing with the University of WI, the best group with the most experience with this, allows ours to have many factors in it. That is not the case with the value-add for the rest of the state. It's different.

So if you're in another county you have a new rubric, new evaluator, one or maybe two evaluations, then the whole issue of value-add which is different and 50% students score. Three things are very different here than the rest of the state. Districts are finding it very difficult to implement the new rubric and are not able to do the kind of training that they need to so they understand what the rubric is and how it all aligns. It's a very different place outside of Hillsborough.

It's important to realize that the fact that we have legislature in our state that set this up means it is that or what we've set up. I'm sure many of you know teachers in other places. Talk to them and get their feedback. We need to keep that in mind when we ask, "How is this getting played out?"

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Teachers are complaining that we can't get subs. We've asked why, since we have subs in at least three days out of the week, we can't have a permanent sub at our site? We're told there are no funds for that.

ELIA: Let me know your specific situation. I can't guarantee anything can be done. The issue really is the cost. We have two hundred and fifty schools, so the cost of permanent subs for all school would be very high.

CLEMENTS: There is one other difference between us and all of the other districts. That is the fact that the legislature did away with tenure. They also mandated that the new evaluation would be put in place and that, in 2014, a new salary schedule has to be in place that corresponds to the new evaluations and that any teacher must forfeit tenure. In Hillsborough we made sure every teacher who was about to get tenure got it and we also developed a "non-probationary status" that gives the same benefits and rights, so we have in our contract same rights and protections, so that new people will get the same rights and privileges. If you choose to move to new salary schedule, by our exception in the law, you do not have to give up tenure. That is huge, especially with the changes going on across the country and this state. These things are still in place here and always will be in place because we got it into the contract.

BAXTER-JENKINS: Thank you. We need to wrap this up because another group needs the space. Check your email - we sent out the written notes from the last meeting today. We will schedule another meeting for the future. If we didn't get to your question, please send it to us and we will continue to try and keep those lines of communication open.