



JOINT EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

MINUTES

April 18, 2019

Chair Cupp called the JEOC Committee to order at 10:05 am on April 18, 2019. The roll of the members was called, and a quorum was present. The minutes from the December and March JEOC meetings were approved.

Chair Cupp explained that JEOC will be hearing about different aspects of the Ohio Report Card over the next several months and concluding in mid-July. The April 18th meeting is the first of the series. To accomplish this task, JEOC will meet two or more times per month.

Chair Cupp called upon Erica Gray, who joined the committee by computer via a GoToMeeting session. Ms. Gray presented about the research she did using an online survey between November 30th and December 12th 2016. The survey was conducted with a representative sample of 620 parents of school-aged children in Ohio who were recruited by a professional market researching firm. The research was conducted in Ohio, along with similar research in other states as part of an effort by Learning Heroes, a non-profit organization, to understand state report cards across the country. Although Ms. Gray's research covered many areas, her presentation to JEOC focused on what the survey revealed about parent reactions to Ohio School Report Cards.

Ms. Gray reported that many parents who participated in the survey knew of the report cards but had not seen one. As a part of the survey, a one page image of Ohio's report card was provided to respondents to allow them to answer the questions. Fewer respondents thought the report card was helpful than thought it was easy to understand.

When asked about which parts of the report were most useful and which were least useful, parents of elementary school age children and middle school age children, found the "progress" (42%) and "achievement" (30%) items to be most useful, with "gap closing" (39%) least useful. For parents of high school age children, "prepared for success" (35%) was generally stated to be the most useful and "gap closing" (39%) was least useful.

Ms. Gray's research resulted in several recommendations to Ohio including: putting disaggregated data in a context, prioritizing measures that parents want to see, including both academic and non-academic measures, and explaining how data will be used to lead to future school improvements.

Following Ms. Gray's presentation, **Senator Brenner** asked about the statistical significance of the survey, what percent of parents had students in K-3 (with regards to the negative impression of the K-3 measure on the survey), and whether the low usefulness of "gap closing" may be due to the fact that the parents answering the questions had students that were not behind their peers.

Ranking Member Fedor asked Ms. Gray to elaborate on her statement that the report card has room for improvement.

Senator Sykes asked about the reliability of the survey, specifically asking about the demographics of those who declined to participate.

Chair Cupp asked who commissioned this study, if the ODE and State Board of Education had been informed of this work, and if the report card tested in this survey was just the overall one page noted in the PowerPoint slides accompanying her presentation.

Representative Jones asked if the number of people shown was the number who participated or completed, and whether those who had not seen a report card before were dropped from the survey.

Representative Sobecki asked whether any work had been done to include stakeholders who were not parents.

Next, Chairman Cupp called upon Dr. Martin Saperstein to address the committee. Dr. Saperstein presented his research to the committee which was based on a study of six focus groups comprised of parents also conducted in late 2016.

Dr. Saperstein explained that his report was more qualitative and not quantitative. Dr. Saperstein and his team conducted six two-hour focus groups in four communities in Ohio. Each focus group had eight participants who were parents of children in school. Together the 48 participants represented 36 different Ohio public school districts.

Like Gray, Saperstein found that while most parents knew about the report card, few had actually seen one. For the purpose of the focus groups, parents were provided copies of 13 of the 25 pages of a school report card to review.

From the overview page, focus group members cited that the report card contains too much information and is confusing. Specifically, Dr. Saperstein cited confusion surrounding Gap Closing. Although the focus groups were reviewing printed copies of the report card, Dr. Saperstein cited the conclusion that accessing the report card online as opposed to on paper would be preferable.

Chair Cupp asked if something that a user could click on to see more explanation might be helpful.

Senator Brenner asked if renaming Gap Closing to Annual Growth Measure would be helpful.

Dr. Saperstein went on to point out that parents also did not like that the building level report cards followed the same template even when some of the indicators didn't apply. Next, Dr. Saperstein discussed what parents thought of the Achievement Component. Some of the comments included: the

pie chart was redundant, they did not understand where the 120 [the base number for computing percentiles] came from, and they wanted to see results over time.

For the Progress Component, Dr. Saperstein reported these comments by parents: although this measure is informative it is not useful, progress is not apparent because no starting point is defined, the meaning of the grade was unclear, and last year's data were not shown. Generally, parents in these focus groups did not understand the numbers or where they came from.

For the Gap Closing Component, Dr. Saperstein reported comments from parents included: the definition of gap closing is confusing, uncertainty as to who are the most vulnerable students, the subgroups here were not as intuitive as in the previous measure, and how can a district or school get an F here but a B in progress? Dr. Saperstein emphasized that better explanation of this indicator was very important as there were no positive comments indicating correct understanding of this measure.

Dr. Saperstein reported that parents did not understand the 5-year graduation rate. They did not understand how a school can get an A with a five-year graduation rate. Parents said they wanted to see the graduation rate for the school as compared to the district and the state. According to Dr. Saperstein's research, parents in the focus groups seemed to react positively to the K-3 measure, and that parents thought the sentences that explained the data were clear and helpful. But, Saperstein also reported, they found the information on the details of the measure to be less clear.

The Prepared for Success Component was the most valued according to Dr. Saperstein's research. Parents did not like the title, though, and wanted to see measures of success that were not test-based. Further they wondered whether the measure meant that 43% of students are prepared for success in the sample they looked at.

Dr. Saperstein's study looked at six other pages of the report card printout. For the School Details page, parents felt the breakdown of student population by demographics was neither helpful nor appropriate. For both the Attendance Rate and Mobility pages, parents indicated that the only useful number was the one for all students; Dr. Saperstein reported that parents did not like the demographic breakdown here, either. On the Teachers page, Dr. Saperstein reported that parents wanted to see the teacher-to-student ratio and the number of substitute teachers used in a year. They also found some of the labels on that page confusing. Dr. Saperstein reported that parents also found the Teacher Evaluations page confusing. Parents stated that it was not clear to them who or what was being evaluated or what the levels meant or why wellness and physical education were included. Parents also seemed confused that 98.6% on this scale translated to only Moderate Success.

Senator Brenner asked, now that the report card has been around for two years, have these views changed at all and whether Dr. Saperstein found any recommendations for how to alter the underlying calculations for any of the components.

Senator Sykes asked about what parents want to know and how we could present that to them.

Dr. Saperstein talked about the Fiscal Data page and reported that parents thought it was valuable but not clear and wanted to see comparisons over time.

Finally, Dr. Saperstein spoke about the suggestions that parents gave him about what to include in the report card that was not there. Suggestions included: comparisons with other schools in the same district, percent of parents involved in school, the percent of graduates who went on to college, the average class size, the teacher-to-student ratio, the teacher demographics, and teacher tenure data.

Dr. Saperstein reported that parents were also asked to consider fourteen other measures suggested by ODE. Of these, four seemed interesting to the parents in the focus groups. These were:

1. A comparison of student performance to the national average on the Nation's Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).
2. For high school, the percent of students enrolled in AP, IB, and college credit plus.
3. The amount of money spent per pupil, broken down by local, state, and federal funds.
4. Information about teacher credentials and qualifications, including how many are inexperienced and not certified in the subject they are teaching, broken down by high and low poverty schools.

Dr. Saperstein concluded by saying that the report card has two different audiences: the technical academic audience and the voters. The voters need to be able to get some understanding of the information even if it is not as deep as you like.

Chair Cupp asked about how many parents know about the NAEP.

With the business of the Committee for this meeting being completed, the meeting was adjourned at 11:41 AM.

Chair Cupp

Date