Virtual Education Advisory Committee Meeting Information

Date: June 28, 2017
Location: Natrona County School District #1 Central Services Building located at 970 N. Glenn Road in Casper
Presentation: Meeting Slides
Time: 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Attendees: Shelley Hamel, Jed Cicarelli, Kim Morrow, Leslie Zimmerschied, Laurel Ballard, Robin Grandpre, Lori Thilmany, Amy Starzynski, Richard Parker, Laurie Davis, Angelique Littlejohn, Summer Stephens, Nick Bellack, and Katie Swistowicz
Guests: Tanya Sisernos and Bob Jensen

Agenda

Time	Agenda Item
9-9:30	Welcome and Overview
9:30-10	Review of Chapter 8 emergency rules revisions
10-10:30	Review of Chapter 41 emergency rules revisions
10:30-10:45	Break
10:45-11:15	The WSN course submission requirements and process
11:15-11:30	Definition of full-time virtual education for assessment subgroup reporting
11:30-12	General definition of virtual education
12-1	Lunch (on your own)
1-2	General definition of virtual education continued
2-2:30	District responsibilities when delivering full-time or part-time virtual education

2:30-3	District responsibilities when monitoring students in part-time virtual education
3-3:15	Public comment
3:15-3:30	Next Steps and Future Meetings

Notes

Chapter 8 Emergency Rules Revisions
- ADM is no longer calculated using milestones and will instead be calculated based on participation
- Attendance has been intentionally removed in reference to virtual education and replaced by participation requirements
- Virtual education students will be dropped from membership if they are not participating for more than 10 consecutive days Angelique asked when the first day of "school" starts in a virtual education course.
  - Answer - The first day the student the student starts meeting participation requirements.
- Katie asked how membership days are counted when the student starts a course in the fall then finishes it at the beginning of the next semester. Answer -
  - Membership is accumulated on an aggregate at the end of the year
  - If the two weeks into the next semester are in addition to another course, there is only membership days for one course
- Angelique asked what happens when a student completes a grade 2 course before the end of the year and then starts a grade 3 course but doesn't finish. Then they finish the grade 3 course in the next school year and finish it early and don't continue to take another course, do they get a full ADM for the grade 3 course?
  - Answer - If they are full-time, yes.
- Part-time (one or two courses) virtual education course ADM will be combined with brick and mortar ADM. (Section 9.(f)(i) of Chapter 8 Rules)
- Summer asked if the district that is paying tuition to another district for a course will still receive the ADM for that course. The answer is yes but Kim pointed out that when the course load is over 50% in one virtual education program, the district with that program will receive the full ADM.

Chapter 41 Emergency Rules Revisions

- Summer asked if milestones could be replaced with course benchmarks. Laurel explained that right now we are only making changes that need to be made.
- Katie and Angelique also suggested using another word to replace milestones.
- Katie pointed out that resident and nonresident district needs to be changed in regular rules.
- Summer asked if it was possible for districts to submit courses for the 2017-18 school year if they've missed the May 1 deadline.
  - Answer - There currently isn't an application for the districts to complete but a waiver process will be developed for emergency situations such as the circumstances Summer described.
- There was discussion about Section 4. (i)(C)(vi) being modified to increase the ratio during the regular rules revisions process.
- There was discussion about Section 6. (c) re the military family students being able to continue in virtual education until just the end of the school year. The Committee wants to consider extending that time in the regular rules revisions and to also consider allowing students of non-military families attend school through a virtual education program when parents/guardians maintain Wyoming residency.
  - Angelique expressed concern about families who submit documentation that they are Wyoming residents but they are living elsewhere since in some cases it is difficult to verify they are residents.
  - Another challenge in these situations is the requirement that online students still need to take all statewide assessments that require they travel to Wyoming for the testing periods.
- Katie recommended that there be policy and a form created/mandated (the WDE provides) when there is a request for a student to transfer to another district to participate full-time in virtual education. This can be addressed outside of emergency rules.
- Summer and Katie asked about the type of documentation that is going to be needed for the ADM tracking between districts when students are taking a class between districts.
  - The discussion centered around the issues surrounding concurrent enrollment when it is another district providing the course.
  - Putting the process into application and making sure that each district has the documentation they need and can submit effectively for reporting.
  - This process will be implemented outside of emergency rules revisions.
- Discussion around the MOUs
  - The district that is providing the virtual education program (or part-time brick and mortar classes) has to initiate the MOU (tuition agreement).

- ○ When more than 50% of a student's education is coming from one virtual education program, the enrollment of the student automatically goes to the district with the VE program and that district receives the full ADM. No MOU is allowable between districts once a student is taking more than 50% of their courses from one virtual education program.
    - ○ Laurie asked if a district is only offering courses within district, would they be required to offer courses outside the district.
        - ■ The answer is no.
- ● Participation requirements discussion
    - ○ Discussion around the specificity of the requirements for each course - Summer stressed that we don't want to make this so specific that it is difficult for people to engage in providing virtual education courses
    - ○ Discussion about the participation records that need to be maintained for how long
        - ■ Jed recommended 7 years because the DOA usually conducts audits 2 school years previous
    - ○ Angelique asked Jed about extreme health issues a virtual education student may have where they can't get online for more than ten consecutive days, would they still have to be dropped from membership.
        - ■ The answer is yes.
    - ○ Leslie asked if students who finish virtual education courses early would still be included for assessments.
        - ■ The answer is yes. There is a way to enroll a student in an SIS and keep them even if they aren't in any section data (listed for courses).

Virtual Education Subgroup Definition
- ● Summer asked if the student who is taking more than 50% of their courses online, but not from one program, would be included in the virtual education subgroup.
    - ○ The answer is no because the subgroup only consists of students taking more than 50% virtual education classes from one program.
- ● Laurel said that the subgroup reporting for assessment will begin with the 2016-17 school year.
- ● The accountability virtual education sub reporting won't start until the 2017-18 school.

The WSN Course Submission Requirements
- ● The group reviewed the fields included on the spreadsheet listing of WSN program courses and the proposed WSN course form.

- The course listing and course forms will be submitted annually for review and each Nov/Dec for courses anticipated to be delivered the next school year.

WSN Course Spreadsheet:
- The ParticipationRequirements field will be changed to codes that correspond to the following options with descriptive text displayed on the WSN website:
  - Recorded by the LMS
    - Logged active time in the course
    - Coursework submissions as required and recorded by the LMS
    - Synchronous class or one-on-one time recorded by the LMS
    - Communication logs between the student and teacher or learning coach and teacher recorded by the LMS
    - Text field for "Other" variables built into the LMS that are set to be automatically recorded such as the percentage of the course completed, percentage of competencies being met, etc.
  - Recorded and verified by the teacher
    - Participation logged in a course gradebook or attendance log
    - Coursework submissions as required and recorded by the teacher
    - Synchronous class or one-on-one time recorded by teacher
    - Group project time logged by the teacher or instructional coach
    - Offline time recorded by the learning coach and submitted to the teacher
    - Communication logs between the student and teacher or learning coach and teacher
    - Text field for "Other" participation elements required by the virtual education program to be recorded by the teacher
- A "ParticipationFrequency" field will be added to indicate the frequency participation will be tracked/logged - daily, weekly, at least once every 10 days
- DeliveryMethod "Notes" section to include that the majority delivery method.
- ParticipationDescription can include mandatory synchronous participation that isn't scheduled on a regular basis, the communication requirements and other relevant information districts and families will need to evaluate courses for their students.
- A "Curriculum" field will be added to indicate vendor name and/or district developed curriculum

WSN Course Form:
- Add the ContentArea element
- Add the Curriculum element

- Summer had concern about the Timeline section and asked if brick and mortar are required to complete the same information. The answer is yes. The same form is used for submission of Hathaway Success Curriculum courses to be reviewed by the WDE Standards Team.

Virtual Education Working Definition
- Virtual education courses include the following criteria:
  - A live teacher is providing instruction primarily through technology.
  - The teacher providing the instruction through technology and the student are rarely or never in the same physical classroom.
  - Virtual education teachers must be Wyoming certified.
  - Virtual education courses must be aligned to Wyoming Content Standards.
- Much discussion centered around instances where districts contract with out-of-state virtual education providers to deliver courses that include a live teacher on the other end. In the instances discussed:
  - The out-of-state providers are not WSN approved and the courses they deliver haven't been submitted to the WDE for review and approval.
  - The students take these courses in a brick and mortar setting and are assigned a teacher of record.
  - It is unknown whether or not the live teacher providing the instruction through the course (technology) is certified to teach in Wyoming.
  - It is unknown whether or not the courses align to Wyoming Content and Performance Standards.
- There was discussion of a possible waiver process to be developed in collaboration with PTSB to accommodate special circumstances when a virtual education teacher is not certified to teach in Wyoming and no teacher is available in that content area.
- The Chap 41 rules state that the teachers teaching virtual education courses must be employed by a Wyoming school district but it is unclear what constitutes "employed by" and whether or not contract employment meets this requirement. WDE will get clarification on this.
- Angelique asked about instances of a student taking more than 50% of their classes from an out-of-state provider given enrollment and ADM transfers to another district when students are taking more than 50% virtual education courses from one provider. A: The full ADM stays with the district the student is enrolled in.
- Rather than districts having to apply to become virtual education program, Summer suggested that all districts be automatically granted virtual ed program status so they can

contract with out-of-state vendors in when there is a short timeline to meet student needs and submit the courses for review.
- The working definition of virtual education needs some revision to include a definition for physical classroom and whether or not that can include school campus.

Summary and Other

There was a brief discussion of the responsibilities of districts that provide virtual education but the topic of conversation returned to points raised during while discussing the definition of virtual education. There are certain aspects of the virtual education laws that may constrain or limit opportunities for students due to program and course approval requirements. As regular rules revisions and writing policy develops, the challenges and barriers will be addressed in a manner that is conducive to virtual education being a manageable process for all parties concerned.

Action Items

- ❏ WDE will research all of the questions raised during the meeting discussions to better inform the VEAC rules and policy development work.