Stakeholder Survey

This brief will first provide an overview of the stakeholder survey, administration process and respondents, then present initial findings for: (1) the definition of college and career readiness, (2) staff attraction and retention, (3) perceptions of the funding system, (4) areas of concern related to education resources and funding in the state, and (5) needed resource areas not addressed in the matrix.

Overview of Stakeholder Survey, Administration Process and Respondents

In order to engage stakeholders in the study process, the study team created an online survey that was available to all educators and the broader community. The survey was open from September 3rd-18th (formally closed on the 21st). To publicize the survey, the study team distributed a notice to: (1) all superintendents and charter system directors, who were invited to take the survey and distribute it to their staff and families, (2) all state educator professional associations, and (3) all newspapers in the state, using a media contact list provided by ADE. Two online survey versions were created: a detailed educator survey, and a more streamlined community survey for parents, students, business leaders and community members.

A total of 3,025 individuals participated in the stakeholder survey, roughly split equally between educators and community members, from over 170 different districts/charter systems. The public stakeholder survey was intended to provide an opportunity for stakeholder engagement, much like public testimony or open listening sessions, and as such the intent was not to have perfect representation or be a statistical sample, but to get feedback from those that were interested and willing to participate. However, the study team examined who participated to understand how it may impact the results. Educator responses were more weighted toward larger, urban districts in the Central region, so in the final report, the study team will examine if responses varied by locale (as rural districts tend to be smaller and more decentralized). For community responses, there was a high level of participation in less than 10 districts and in one charter system (representing about 50% of parent and student responses), so the study team examined results with and without the charter system.

Initial Stakeholder Survey Results

Definition of college and career readiness: both educators and community members highly rated the inclusion of the following in a career readiness definition: (1) developing behavioral skills such as dependability, perseverance, working effectively with others, adapting, and managing stress, (2) learning capabilities such as critical thinking, collaborative problem solving, as well as information and technology skills, (3) participating in career exploration and planning, (4) developing financial literacy, (5) receiving college and career advisement, (6) participating in career and technical education (CTE)/career-focused courses, (7) learning academic content

knowledge, (8) being prepared to enter a postsecondary institution without needing remediation, and (9) meeting assessment benchmarks, such as those measured by the ACT. Of these, skills and capabilities were the components with the highest agreement, and assessment benchmarks had the lowest.

Staff attraction and retention: the factors that the highest percentage of educators said positively influenced attraction were: relationship with/proximity to teacher preparation programs, available coaching/mentoring and working conditions (workload/caseload/class sizes), while the factors that the highest percentage of educators said negatively influenced attraction were all salary related: starting salaries, salaries in relationship to neighboring states and potential for salary growth. The factors that the highest percentage of educators said positively influenced retention were: support from administration/leadership, available professional development, available coaching/mentoring and working conditions (workload/caseload/class sizes), while the factors that the highest percentage of educators said negatively influenced retention were similarly all salary related: salaries in relationship to other professions/industries, salaries in relationship to neighboring states and potential for salary growth. When educators were asked if there were any specific position areas that are difficult fortheir district or charter system to attract and retain staff, the highest rate of responses were for special education teachers, math teachers, and science teachers.

Perspectives on the funding system: The majority of educators agreed that the system was responsive to the different needs of specific student groups, but disagreed that it ensured similar education opportunities for all students, responds to the different needs of school districts due to certain characteristics, or equitably distributed funding to school districts. Community responses tended to lean towards positive agreement compared to educator responses; however, when student responses were excluded, they tended to be more negative. A majority of educators agreed that the schools and districts spend resources efficiently, while disagreeing that (1) where a student lives does <u>not</u> determine the quality of their education, (2) taxpayers are treated equally across the state, and (3) it is easy to understand how funding is determined and allocated. Community responses were consistent with educator responses when student responses were excluded.

Areas of concern related to education resources and funding: Educators and community members provided feedback on many different areas. For educators, the top three response areas were: educator salaries or experiences, class sizes and student support resources, while for community members the top three areas were school safety, student support resources, and resources for specific student groups.

Needed Resource Areas in the Matrix: The most frequently noted resources that educators thought should be addressed in the funding matrix that are not currently included: (1) student mental health, (2) school resource officers (SROs) and school safety/security, and (3) dyslexia support. Other areas noted by multiple respondents included: assistant principals, gifted, interventionists, preschool, special education, support staff, and technology (including wifi/broadband).