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U.S. Department of Education

The Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities
Advisory Committee Meeting



Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Advisory Committee Meeting February 20-21, 2007

U.S. Department of Education
Barnard Auditorium
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

AGENDA

Tuesday, February 20, 2007:

- 8:30-9:00 *Breakfast and registration*
- 9:00-9:05 Opening Statement and Announcements
- 9:05-9:35 Review of “Building on Results: A Blueprint for Strengthening
the No Child left Behind Act”
- 9:35-9:40 Introduction of Data Panel
- 9:40-10:40 Panelist Presentations:
Mike Herrmann, executive director, Office of School Health
Safety and Learning Support, Tennessee Dept. of
Education
- Howell Wechsler, Director of Division of Adolescent and School
Health,
Centers for Disease Control
- Doug Hall, Senior Vice President, PRIDE Surveys
- Deborah Rudy, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, U.S
Department of
Education
- 10:40-11:10 Questions & Answers:
- 11:20-12:30 Discussion and Closing Remarks

Wednesday, February 21, 2007:

- 8:00-8:30 *Breakfast*
- 8:30-8:40 Opening Statement
- 8:40-9:15 Public Comment
- 9:15-9:45 FERPA Presentation -- LeRoy Rooker, Director of the Family
Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education
- 10:00-11:25 Discussion
- 11:25-11:30 Closing comments and Adjourn

Members Present

David Long (Chairman) Superintendent, Riverside County Public Schools

Kim Dude Director of the Wellness Resource Center, University of Missouri-Columbia

Frederick Ellis Director of Office of Safety and Security, Fairfax County Public Schools

Michael Herrmann Executive Director for the Office of School Health, Safety and Learning Support, Tennessee Department of Education

Montean Jackson Safe and Drug Free Schools Coordinator, Fairbanks North Star Borough School District

Russell Jones Professor of Psychology, Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University

Sheppard Kellam Director of the Center for Integration Education and Prevention Research in Schools, American Institutes for Research

Tommy Ledbetter Principal, Buckhorn High School

Michael Pimentel Chief, San Antonio Independent School District Police

Hope Taft First Lady Emeritus of Ohio

Deborah A. Price Assistant Deputy Secretary for the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, U.S. Department of Education

Ralph Hingson (Feb. 21 only)

Director, Division of Epidemiology and Prevention Research Branch
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

Susan Keys Chief of the Prevention Initiatives and Priority Programs Branch, SAMSHA

Dennis Romero Acting Center Director of the Center for Substance Abuse and Prevention at SAMSHA

Belinda E. Sims Researcher in the Division of Epidemiology, Services and Prevention Research at NIDA/NIH

Howell Wechsler Director of Division of Adolescent and School Health at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Also Present:

Donni LeBoeuf, representing Robert Flores of the US. Department of Justice

Catherine Davis, Designated Federal Officer and Executive Director of the Committee

Tuesday, February 20, 2007:

Opening:

David Long welcomed all to the meeting.

Presentation:

Building on Results: A Blueprint for Strengthening the *No Child Left Behind Act*
Holly Kuzmich, Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy and Programs
Department of Education

Holly Kuzmich presented and discussed the policy summaries presented in *Building on Results*. These summaries were grouped as follows:

- Every child performing at or above grade level by 2014
- Flexibility for innovation and improvement
- Challenging our students and preparing them to succeed
- Helping teachers close the achievement gap
- Strengthening public schools and empowering parents

Holly Kuzmich said the Department was reiterating its commitment to standards being set by states, but with greater transparency in how states set those standards. States, she said, should include their NAEP scores and self-assessment scores when reporting; she stated that the Department believed the appropriate place to debate standards was within individual states. On innovation, Kuzmich said the Department was supporting use of growth rather than cohort models; five states were taking part in pilot programs. Kuzmich noted that, at present, a school that missed a single Adequate Yearly Progress [AYP] target was designated as under-performing: the Department believed greater flexibility was needed: a school should be able to focus its tutoring and other resources on a subgroup in need.

On Safe and Drug-Free Schools [SDFS], Kuzmich said the State Grants program had not been included in the budget request for the past several years because it was viewed as an inefficient way to distribute money. With re-authorization, she added, the Department position was that funds needed to continue to go to states for technical training and best practices information. To this end, a formula grant would be made to every state, rather than every LEA; states could use this money at the state level or to target high-need districts. Kuzmich noted that those national programs that were competitive were aligned around four areas – emergency planning, drug use, school climate and emerging needs. These would provide larger grants to districts so they could undertake better planning.

Kuzmich said the Department as yet had no position on Persistently Dangerous Schools [PDS], but was interested in hearing the committee's views during re-authorization. She noted that establishing a definition of 'persistently dangerous' was difficult.

Holly Kuzmich addressed competitiveness in high schools. The Department would ask states to use four-year graduation rates; at present, states set their own

definitions for graduation: often, these were other than the proportion of 9th graders entering. Further, the Department would ask states to work with the higher education community to develop standards on what students needed to enter college or the workforce: an additional \$1.2 billion was being sought in this area to raise the level of rigor in high schools.

Kuzmich said the Department would continue support for research-based reading instruction and the Math Now program; NCLB, she noted, required all students to be at grade level in science by 2020. Kuzmich said the Department would support an assessment of incentive-based pay models, both for highly-effective classroom teachers and those teaching in high-need subject areas.

Holly Kuzmich noted that 1,800 of the nation's 95,000 schools were in restructuring, having failed to make AYP five consecutive years. NCLB offered five options for restructuring; including 'other,' under which 87 percent of restructurings were occurring. The Department favored dropping that option and 'beefing up' two others: city or state takeover; and, conversion to a charter school. Related to restructuring, Kuzmich said it was proposed that superintendents who wished to move staff during restructuring, but could not do so because of collective bargaining agreements, be authorized to move staff.

Holly Kuzmich said that while the Department would, during reauthorization, address other matters, the points she had identified would be focus of its efforts.

Discussion:

Tommy Ledbetter asked if funding for the Striving Readers program would increase. Holly Kuzmich said the program's allocation had been \$38 million; the Department would seek \$100 million, as it had sought the past several years. Ledbetter said many students were not reading at grade levels; low funding levels made it difficult to remedy this. Kuzmich said Striving Readers was new; there might be hesitancy about expanding it rapidly: she thought the program would benefit by being more clearly linked to the issue of adolescent illiteracy. Ledbetter said perhaps 70 percent of incoming 9th graders were not reading at grade level; further, that as most high schools were not part of the Title I program, resources were lacking. Kuzmich said this was why the \$1.2 billion increase was going to high schools.

Fred Ellis commented that the committee had taken a clear position that 'persistently dangerous school' [PDS] was a bad name: why was the Department struggling with this? He asked, further, for the current and requested SFDS funding.

Holly Kuzmich thanked the committee for its work on PDS. She said her presentation was on 'big picture' issues; the Department lacked a consensus on including PDS in the policy booklet. She said she did not believe the Department disagreed with any of the group's recommendations, but had not addressed how to place them into legislative language.

On budget, she noted that all programs wished to see their funding increased; resources, however, were limited. Rather than eliminate the State Grants program, the Department recognized the need to provide grants to states. The budget request for State Grants was \$100 million; the current year was \$346 million.

Hope Taft expressed satisfaction that State Grants had not been eliminated. She relayed, however, the comment of an LEA-level SFDS coordinator that once schools

were required to apply for grants, many would not get one: this would be the end of the program. If local programs ended, Taft added, to whom would the states give technical assistance? Kuzmich commented that over half the districts were receiving less than \$10,000 annually; limited funds made this a difficult issue. Taft also expressed concern about terminating funding for science-based programs. Kuzmich said this would be discussed with Congress. Taft commented that when she entered the Department of Education building, she notice the value statement about equal access; she felt many children were not getting what they needed.

Mike Herrmann asked whether the \$59 million listed for drug programs was separate from or part of the \$100 million going to states. Holly Kuzmich said the \$59 million was new money. Herrmann asked if, therefore, the current \$346 million was being replaced by \$100 million plus \$59 million. Kuzmich said that was correct. Herrmann said local districts were ‘the losers’: \$10,000 to \$20,000 might be a small amount, he said, but such sums paid for services vital to individual districts.

Howell Wechsler asked what ‘emerging need’ referred to. Holly Kuzmich mentioned Project Serv, which created the ability to respond to events around the country. Deborah Price made reference to Emergency Crisis Grants, which had been established after the Columbine shootings. Bill Modzeleski noted that, on pandemic influenza, the Department had created the authority to act, rather than seeking authority after the fact.

Susan Keys asked if there was support for growth models; who would do the data models. Holly Kuzmich said there was no specific funding for growth models. She noted that \$50 million was requested for statewide longitudinal models. Kuzmich added that pilot efforts were under way in five states that had received waivers: Tennessee, North Carolina, Delaware, Arkansas and Florida. The Department was proposing that no waivers be required in the future. Keys asked what parental consent might be required to track individual student performance over time; Kuzmich said states were not tracking any information beyond what they were already doing: further, states could assign students random un-trackable ID numbers.

David Long reiterated Hope Taft’s statement that the committee appreciated the Department’s work; further, he noted that re-authorization was a work in progress. However, a \$100 million States Grants program equaled about \$1.50 per student; such an amount would not go far. On incentive-based pay, he said he philosophically understood the issue, but a \$700 million proposal in California had been ‘shot down in flames’ – teachers’ unions were very strongly opposed: he thought offering funds for superior teaching was ‘very tricky.’ On restructuring, he noted the suggestion that mayors might take over school districts, commenting that mayoral expertise was not necessarily in areas appropriate to that; he suggested intermediate agencies might be better suited. Finally, Long said it was important how things were marketed: the topic of vouchers had not been raised; when it was, he said, they tended to become the focus of discussion. Holly Kuzmich said she believed the department had learned from programs that had not worked in individual states. She observed that the Federal ‘footprint’ in education was only nine percent of total expenditure; significant funds went to a short list of programs: Title I, Pell Grants and Special Education.

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Panelist Presentations:

Mike Herrmann, executive director of the Office of School Health Safety and Learning Support, Tennessee Department of Education

Howell Wechsler, Director of Division of Adolescent and School Health, Centers for Disease Control

Doug Hall, Senior Vice President, PRIDE Surveys

Deborah Rudy, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, U.S. Department of Education

Presentation summaries:

Bill Modzeleski: [NOTE: Bill Modzeleski substituted for Deborah Rudy.]

Bill Modzeleski described the number of data systems now in use, noting that the data used for Persistently Dangerous Schools [PDS] calculations were taken from data already derived. Modzeleski noted data systems were not incident-based; the Department has been pressured to create a mandatory incident-based system. Incident-based systems showed if crime was rising or falling, though not why.

Bill Modzeleski discussed the Uniform Management Information and Reporting Systems [UMIRS], which states had responsibility to implement. At the building level, it required collection of data on truancy rates, and on suspensions and expulsions related to drug use and violence. Third, data was gathered of perceptions of risk and disapproval associated with drug/alcohol use. Finally, the SFDS supported activities were identified.

Bill Modzeleski discussed the Uniform Data Set Project, an attempt to achieve common definition of truancy and expulsion. Adoption of uniform data sets, he said, should raise comparability of data. Modzeleski noted that when NCLB was created, data collection was little discussed. In consequence, the Department lacked authority to direct how states collect data. Modzeleski observed that variability in data collection made it difficult to determine in the State Grants program which schools were in greatest need. Modzeleski said two paths were being pursued: first, to ensure that current NCLB data requirements were adhered to; second, to determine during reauthorization what additional data requirements should be considered.

Mike Herrmann:

Mike Herrmann addressed UMIRS system data efforts. He said it was very difficult to collect data on the first UMIRS element: truancy. It had taken Tennessee attendance workers two years to define truancy: the question was complicated by excused v. non-excused absences, which were varyingly interpreted at the school building level. Eventually, the definition had been fixed at five or more unexcused absences a year.

Second element: frequency of violence and drug-related offenses leading to suspension or expulsion. Herrmann said inconsistencies in definition and enforcement made this data more valuable in indicating statewide trends than district-to-district comparisons. He noted there was a 'pushback' from districts that were antagonistic to additional data collection.

Third element: provision of programs and services. Herrmann said Title IV programs did a poor job of capturing the scope of their activities.

Fourth element: student perceptions of risk and disapproval related to drug use and violence. Herrmann said information was generally obtained through surveys, which many LEAs thought difficult to implement and costly to assess; further, many parents opposed having children queried about sex and drugs.

Howell Wechsler:

Howell Wechsler noted that the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance [YRBS] focused on seven behavioral risk areas; an increasing number of states participated in YRBS' sex-related aspects, Wechsler said, showing an increased understanding of its importance. Wechsler noted that the survey could be conducted in a single class period, which made it acceptable to administrators and teachers. Maintaining that time limit, he added, meant that adding a new question required deleting an existing one. Wechsler said YRBS focused only on behaviors, with no questions on beliefs, knowledge or attitudes; he affirmed that participation was voluntary. Wechsler presented data on frequency of fighting; drug sale or transfer; students avoiding school due to safety concerns, and various ways this data could be broken out.

Howell Wechsler presented information on School Health Profiles, conducted by state and local education and health agencies. He commented that the low level of funding made it unrealistic to make schools responsible for changing student behavior; he believed schools should be responsible, however, for making use of evidence-based programs. He noted great geographic differences in the survey results: e.g. in Los Angeles, 93 percent of schools had nurses; in Memphis, 9 percent.

Doug Hall:

Doug Hall presented the history of the Pride Survey, noting that 10 million students had participated since 1982. The cost to schools was \$1.35 per student; participating schools received the results in three weeks. He noted that while the Pride Survey and Monitoring the Future used different methodologies, their results were similar. Hall agreed with Howell Wechsler that getting clearance to conduct an in-class survey was difficult.

Doug Hall noted that the surveys showed drug use was far more common outside school than in; the same was true for drug trafficking or handgun possession: comparatively speaking, schools were safe and healthy environments. He noted that 8th graders self-reported much higher levels of drug and alcohol use than their parents reported suspecting. Hall noted that the staff version of the survey identified training needs among teachers and school staff, including: how to locate and use community resources; how to recognize signs and symptoms and training in violence prevention and conflict resolution.

Discussion:

Russell Jones asked about the relationship between data collection and outcome measures. Bill Modzeleski said no data collection related back to a specific program; data showed if crime was increasing or decreasing, but not why. Jones asked whether the lack of such relationship was for methodological, philosophical, financial or other

reasons. Modzeleski said: all of the above. Modzeleski added that prolonged efforts by the Department demonstrated that it was virtually impossible to use data to determine the impact of a discrete program; one could show how many schools used a particular program and how many did so with affinity, but that was the limit. He noted, further, that if YRBS showed a decline in drug use, SDFS was inclined to take credit for it. However, data on drug use followed a trend line; he would not want to be put in a position that said rising use meant proper programs had not been out into place; many factors were involved. Modzeleski said establishing which outcomes followed from which programs would be difficult and expensive; it was more cost effective to identify which programs generally produced results.

Hope Taft noted the 'seven topics' Wechsler had presented included drug use, but not alcohol use; Wechsler said alcohol use fell outside his department's primary area of responsibility; he said some included items reflected the interest of underwriters.

Sheppard Kellam said obtaining long-term results required measuring the same student, over time. If, he added, one proceeded on a growth curve basis, some students could take an innovative program; others not: over time one could determine the program's value.

Dennis Romero asked Doug Hall what was the major stumbling block to gathering data. Hall said it was the 'perceived' administrative burden of conducting the survey in a classroom. With this in mind, Hall said, his agency had developed a four-page rather than 12-page questionnaire; schools preferred the shorter version six-to-one.

Susan Keys asked if the growth model contained other than academic factors. The response was that it did not.

Hope Taft asked whether information that identified schools as being in need was tied to funding decisions. Bill Modzeleski said it was: all discretionary grant applications required information on need; need was measured differently in different applications, but was important to all of them. Modzeleski noted that funding from the state-level down was not formula-driven; money went to LEAs based on criteria; 'need' was one criteria. Deborah Price noted that, generally, securing a grant was closely tied to community collaboration. Taft said there was much good data; how did the Department use it to make decisions? Price said the data was used to the Department's best ability. Modzeleski noted that funds often went to elementary schools; these did not have 'need' as defined by high drug or alcohol use. Further, he said, there was great variability in data received; this underscored the need for devising common core data.

Russell Jones asked how the Department's work on developing data sets proceeded. Modzeleski said regular meetings occurred on developing core data; second, he noted measures related to alcohol, drug use and violence that were being used as standards for assessing the effectiveness of State Grants. Modzeleski noted recent data that 21 school-associated violent deaths had occurred this year; these, he said, were high visibility, prompting calls for more police, installation of cameras, etc. He noted, however, that hundreds of thousands of students may have been ridiculed or harassed: he was concerned that the more shocking activities took attention away from the more pervasive.

Russell Jones asked how data informed evidence-based intervention strategies. Lowell Wechsler said data of relative risk was intended to guide broad policy decisions, not to create intervention programs: he believed that defining effective practice would

permit better program design. Jones asked whether data was used within the Department and SFDS to design programs. Mike Herrmann said LEAs were required to do needs assessment; further, LEAs were asked to show a connection between the needs identified and the expenditure of Title IV. Herrmann added that he believed that the field was near a new plateau in data use: historically, data collection centered on a specific problem; now, the field was moving toward a data management program that centered on the student.

Tommy Ledbetter noted the statement that school administrators opposed data collection. Accountability within the school, he said, began with the principal, who held teachers accountable. Teachers wanted to protect their instructional time; therefore, administrators sought to protect teachers' instructional time. This was truer than ever, given the emphasis on testing. From the perspective of a building principal, a 25-minute survey was much better than a 45-minute survey. Doug Hall said he was aware of the concern about time away from task.

David Long urged committee members to consider what recommendation should be made on data; he invited comments on the material thus far presented.

Hope Taft urged, on data, that the Department act in cooperation with other agencies to develop an agreed-upon set of federal-level data requirements. David Long polled the committee and learned that no member came from a state that consolidated its data; this, he said, suggested the difficulty of consolidating data nationally. Russell Jones urged creation of a framework on what different data sets were used, how they were linked, and the connections between data and policy and intervention. Sheppard Kellam said creating an integrated data system around children's learning and development was a huge, powerful idea; it was, he said, what Secretary Spellings asked about when she was present. Integrating data systems would, he said, create almost a new science: the committee's task was to create a framework to bring data and policy making together.

Kim Dude said, as a prevention person, she felt those working in the field were being set up for failure. Typically, she said, the 'prevention person' wore many hats, but received limited funding. They were expected to change the behavior of a young person who, since birth, had been inundated with contrary messages. She believed behavior changed not because of specific events, but through an accumulation of 'aha!' moments over time, from sources difficult to determine. She believed that while the classroom was a great setting for prevention activities, it was difficult to get into the classroom – in consequence, prevention became an after-school or lunchtime activity. High schools were urged to partner with colleges, but most did not have a college available; people were urged to engage researchers, but researchers commonly pursued interests of their own. She noted that prevention workers were given limited funds; when they failed to show results, funding was decreased.

Hope Taft said that, in Ohio, the threat of reduced funding prompted many SDFS coordinators to seek other employment; should funding be re-established, considerable time and expense will be required to train new leadership. Mike Herrmann said he agreed with what had been said. He agreed that the situation was frustrating, but said the committee should still regard it as an opportunity to move things forward.

The committee broke for lunch at its research trip to Fairfax County, Virginia

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Session of Wednesday, February 21

David Long, chair, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Public comment:

There was no public comment.

Committee Discussion:

Discussion ensued on the committee's meeting schedule. David Long noted the February meeting was originally to have been a conference call; it had been changed to face-to-face to hear the report on NCLB reauthorization: did the committee wish its March meeting to be a conference call? Deborah Price said March had been the expected time for the committee to 'put meat' on its recommendations. The process might be: Bill Duncan would supply a draft; email traffic would address areas of concern; a conference call would resolve remaining issues.

Hope Taft suggested discussion would be more productive if committee members had a document in hand; she suggested members be emailed recommendation they could consider prior to a March conference call. Mike Herrmann agreed on not meeting face-to-face until April; he wished recommendations could be made quickly, as he believed many matters were up in the air. Sheppard Kellam asked to what extent the group had a shared vision about what it wished to say, and how that might fit with the Secretary's charge to the committee. Among other things, he believed any committee statement urging integration of theory and practice in research would be valuable.

Susan Keys said she was reluctant to forego the scheduled March face-to-face meeting, as it wasn't clear what work lay ahead. Montean Jackson suggested, first, that the committee receive a preliminary draft prior to its March meeting; second, that it revisit the breadth of the SFDS mission v. the resources available for addressing it; and, third, that the committee clarify the extent to which evidence-based programs were actually being used. Fred Ellis also urged holding a March face-to-face meeting, which he said was needed: first, to address the charge from the Secretary; second, to discuss use of longitudinal studies; and, third, to consider funding. Ellis commented that the Administration budget request would likely be revised; he noted that persons other than the Secretary would read the committee's report and learn of its views.

Howell Wechsler questioned whether the group's thinking was sufficiently advanced for the writer to have much to present. Susan Keys identified the two preliminary reports as starting points. Russell Jones said the committee's report should parallel the Secretary's expectations, adding that nothing was worse than 'a sharp image of a fuzzy concept.' Hope Taft said the Secretary had constituted the advisory committee because it was mandated. Congress, she noted, had other interests: e.g. that the

Department integrate its anti-drug efforts with those of others. She suggested that while the committee was advisory, its report would resonate.

Tommy Ledbetter said it would be difficult to make progress without a written statement in hand. Belinda Sims endorsed Ledbetter's view, adding that a March meeting was appropriate. She suggested committee members review their notes, and called attention to discussion of the need to streamline data systems and to practitioner comments that the program was worthwhile but under-funded. David Long said he would welcome a series of bullet points to help frame subsequent discussion. Long, noting that the March meeting was to take place in 18 business days; asked Bill Duncan if a draft could be assembled in that time. Duncan affirmed that it could.

Hope Taft suggested a one-day meeting in March, 1.5 days in April. David Long suggested an 8 a.m. as opposed to 9 a.m. starting time. Long said the April meeting could be conditional on the outcomes of the March meeting. The meeting dates of March 19-20 were affirmed. Catherine Davis suggested that a one-day 8-6 meeting provided almost as much meeting time as a 1.5 day meeting. Russell Jones and Dennis Romero, pleading conflicts, asked if the meeting dates could be changed. Deborah Price noted dates had been known for some while; as the Federal Register notice needed to be issued the following day, a decision was needed.

Discussion was tabled.

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Presentation:

LeRoy Rooker
Director, Family Policy Compliance Office
Department of Education

Summary and Discussion:

LeRoy Rooker discussed the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act [FERPA], noting that it ensured parents the rights to inspect and review educational records; to seek to amend educational records; and to have some control over the disclosure of information from educational records. These rights transferred to the student when the student turned 18. Rooker discussed Disclosure Conditions, Exceptions to those conditions, and noted that a school official who received student information for a legitimate reason was not authorized to pass that information on. Rooker defined conditions in which prior consent was noted required. He noted that schools needed to define their legitimate interests; e.g. law enforcement officials employed by a school could be said to have an educational interest.

Mike Herrmann asked if this specifically meant school district-based law enforcement agencies, or also those agencies with which schools had a memorandum of understanding. Rooker said it the former, but could mean others if it was clear that they were serving as the school's law enforcement official. If the latter, he added, they lacked authority to supply records to a wholly external police agency. He said every school district could have a law enforcement unit; a school principal could be the law enforcement person, provided he/she was so designated.

LeRoy Rooker described the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment [PPRA], particularly as it related to student participation in surveys. He observed that eight ‘protected areas’ – e.g. a student’s political affiliation -- were excluded from questioning; noting that all eight were non-academic. Sheppard Kellam said the effect of federal legislation was to promote partnership between researchers, school district and families; his research teams in Baltimore were formally part of the school district. If researchers were unable to obtain active parent consent, it suggested they had not done their ‘homework’ with the families. He did not regard FERPA as an imposition on researchers; rather, it created guidelines for what researchers working with children could do. Susan Keys said FERPA appeared to relate to requests for use of existing records; PPRA governed collection of new information. Rooker termed that an apt summary: FERPA dealt with educational records; PPRA with surveying.

Deborah Price asked what standards applied to voluntary surveys. LeRoy Rooker responded that ‘voluntary’ was not a defined term; he noted an instance in New Jersey where every student who missed the ‘voluntary’ survey was brought in to take it later. He also noted that, because of PPRA, there was a question of at what point did ‘volunteering’ become a decision the student was allowed to make.

Dennis Romero asked if written notifications to parents were given in languages other than English; LeRoy Rooker said the Department did not issue such notifications, though some school districts with large non-English speaking populations did so.

Russell Jones asked if these guidelines superseded HIPAA [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996] guidelines with reference to medical records. Rooker said FERPA applied to medical records held by schools; records subject to FERPA were not subject to HIPAA.

Dennis Romero asked if a research effort was approved by the Institutional Review Board [IRB], could he assume all guidelines had been met. LeRoy Rooker advised against assuming, but noted that the IRB and the guidelines were subject to both of the laws. Rooker stressed the importance of obtaining signed consents. Deborah Price noted the Department had staff members whose task it was to respond promptly to all questions in this area. Rooker emphasized noted the Department greatly preferred being involved before the fact: it was, he said, far easier to avoid possible difficulties in advance than to resolve them after the fact.

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Committee Discussion [resumed]:

David Long directed committee attention to its meeting schedule. Mike Herrmann said he favored a one-day meeting, March 19, with travel the following day optional. By show of hands, Long established that 16 present preferred March 19th and a like number preferred an 8-6 meeting time. Long added that a 1-2 page document expected from Bill Duncan would frame discussion.

Russell Jones spoke on student trauma, which he considered a major impediment to children being ready to learn. He said the nation’s schoolchildren were not routinely screened for trauma; that trauma rates were higher in urban settings; and that trauma led

to decreased IQs and increased rates of absence and expulsion. He believed trauma lay behind the 'bleak reality' that African-American and Hispanic students trailed their white counterparts in achievement. He presented a series of trauma-related recommendations from a meeting of the National Center for Children in Poverty. These included: build statewide and tribal-level trauma coordinators; build the capacity of schools and child care settings to develop a trauma-informed culture; develop a mechanism for training teachers and administrators on how to recognize trauma; examine unintended consequences of NCLB; revitalize support for the Safe Schools/Health Students initiative; establish a set of principles to which school administrators and community mental health partners would adhere, relative to roles and responsibilities. Dennis Romero noted that SAMSA had recently made a commitment to bringing the issue of childhood trauma to the forefront in student services.

Montean Jackson suggested that the document prepared for the group by Bill Duncan be in matrix form, showing how the group's views matched with the charge given the committee. David Long suggested the committee identify whatever else it might need prior to convening on March 19th.

Sheppard Kellam said the committee had received three charges; no discussion had occurred as to how its response might bridge those charges. The question of information systems, he thought, could not be addressed separate from questions of program and policy. Belinda Sims said she would welcome a written summary of what the committee had established thus far; she did not think the committee had treated its areas of charge as silos. Further discussion ensued on the nature of the document to be submitted to the committee; Deborah Price said she thought Bill Duncan was entirely capable of meeting the group's wishes.

Hope Taft asked if recommendations would be made on data. David Long said yes; several people had stressed the importance of a common and coordinated data system. Taft urged the group to recommend that federal-level departments establish common terminology.

Ralph Hingson commented that much data was limited to occurrences during school hours; what happened outside school hours was equally important. He called attention to federal legislation mandating that autopsies of all 'unnecessary' deaths of persons under age 25 include a check for alcohol; this, he believed, had led to a decline in alcohol-related deaths. Second, he suggested surveys of youth behavior should ask about second-hand effects of alcohol – e.g. someone assaulted by an intoxicated student. Third, he noted the 2005 youth survey no longer included questions on academic performance; these should be included.

Russell Jones presented several recommendations. First, he urged that a critical analysis be made of current data collection methods. Second, he urged that the relationship between various data models used within NCLB and SDFS be clarified, as they related to policy assessment and intervention efforts. Third, he urged the cost effectiveness of data measurement systems be studied. Fourth, he urged devising a conceptual and empirical framework to assess strategies currently in use. Fifth, he urged that 'systems of care' be reviewed to determine how well they were responding to partnership-based initiatives. And sixth, he urged creation of an assessment tool to determine how knowledge could be transformed into evidence-based practice.

Mike Herrmann said he doubted data collection had kept pace with the expanding scope of SFDS; many things had been added to its original charge, including disaster planning, pandemic influenza. He believed there was a pressing need to re-visit the program's responsibilities.

Sheppard Kellam noted that many data gathering organizations had been created, with some success but at great expense. First, he urged recognition that these systems had not reached full utility; second, he urged recognition that data systems were expensive – therefore, they should be integrated. He doubted sufficient attention had been paid to the developmental data each individual school gathered, e.g. absences and expulsions; with proper safeguards, such information could be integrated into data management systems. A partnership created within FERPA guidelines would allow information to be gathered over time about each student; such a system could show what educational approaches were working with each child. Kellam said the major research frontier was not how to identify a program that worked, but how to replicate that program; most people in the 'front lines' would not deploy a program with fidelity unless they were monitored. He believed these steps all followed logically from what the field had established.

Kim Dude said survey questions focused on the negative; she suggested adding questions that allowed respondents to identify positive steps they had taken. Russell Jones agreed that trauma researchers tended to be negative; in contrast, he noted how individuals had reported that Hurricane Katrina helped them realize they could do more than they had thought, feel closer to their neighbors, and to God.

Howell Wechsler said state-level people might not wish to hear about the need for common data: their concerns, he said, were secondary: it was essential to use similar measures across the states. He called attention to one panel's report that the most important thing to measure was student perception of school climate. He believed it was fair to ask whether SFDS 'moved the dial' on school climate; further, he believed SFDS should be accountable on whether an increasing share of schools used research-based practices.

Susan Keys said Sheppard Kellam's recommendation on data was a bold move, which she favored. Keys thought the committee should recommend the Secretary use her authority to convene a Secretarial-level conversation on how this data organization could go forward.

Tommy Ledbetter said the data discussion overlooked the current climate within education. Within the next five years 40 to 50 percent of building administrators would reach retirement age. It was acknowledged that data was useless unless it was interpreted; who was going to train the large number of new building level administrators in data analysis? Absent such training, discussion of data was meaningless. Ralph Hingson agreed about the importance of data interpretation, but called attention to a second need; namely, that researchers had to become aware of what data might be useful to the goals of public education. He urged the group recommend that a continuing dialog between these parties occur. Mike Herrmann expressed agreement with Tommy Ledbetter: NCLB had promoted an entire profession of data gathering and interpretation; the committee needed to work to make the connection between this and practice.

David Long commented the type of conversation the group was now having was the type it needed to have for a full day on March 19th. He adjourned the meeting at 11:15 a.m.