Day with GaPSC Remarks – Pioneer RESA

Spring 2017

**Greetings and Introductions**

Thank RESA Director/RESA for hosting GaPSC and introductions of who will be representing GaPSC today.

**Topics**

Today I am going to focus my comments on the Teacher Shortage and recommendations to address it, followed by a few updates and reminders regarding ESSA, reporting of UnSATs, and Professional Learning Reform. I will leave time for questions.

**Teacher Shortage**

I have had numerous conversations on this topic with K-12 superintendents and HR directors as well as preparation program and certification officials and it has been of great interest to the media over the past year.

Although teacher shortage does not look the same in all school systems, and presents different issues and needs in different school systems, what we can say is that it is real and it impacts teaching and learning in our state. Numbers in teacher preparation programs, both nationally and in our state, are down. There are a large number of unfilled teaching positions in our state, last year approximately 2,500, and virtually every system we have spoken to reports difficulty employing teachers in one or more fields. And, as funding is restored, and the economy continues to improve, the shortage of teachers will probably worsen. More teaching positions will be created, retirements will increase and the possibility of returning to lower, mandated pupil teacher ratios becomes more likely. It has been estimated that if districts were required to employ on the mandated pupil teacher ratios now allowed to be waived, we would need to employ 20,000 new teachers for the next school year. Putting that in perspective, over the past 3 years we have employed an average of 8,000 new teachers each year.

Next, let’s look at why we have a teacher shortage. Certainly, we could produce more teachers in both our traditional and alternative preparation programs. And, to be sure, we could do a better job producing teachers in the most needed fields. And, we need to fully support “grow your own programs.” But, the real problem rests with attrition. We lose approximately 44 percent of newly employed teachers in their first 5 years. And, we lose approximately 50 percent of newly employed minority teachers in their first 5 years. And, these numbers are even higher in urban districts and low socioeconomic rural districts. We must make a reasonable improvement in retention if we are to successfully address teacher shortage. Teacher attrition in the first 5 years means that we are losing teachers before they have maximized their potential – teachers that we have expended significant time and money to prepare.

Teacher attrition costs school districts big dollars – nationally over 2 billion dollars a year according to Richard Ingersoll, a leading researcher in this field..

Attrition impacts student learning. A study from the National Bureau of Economic Research looked at the actual impact of turnover on test scores and found significantly lower student achievement in schools where there was high turnover – even after accounting for school and demographic affects.

Why do teachers leave?

* Leadership
* Accountability and Testing
* Lack of influence/control
* Compensation
* Lack of support

We know why teachers leave – we have just chosen not to address those issues. Here are some of my thoughts on what we should do:

1. Fund high quality support for induction teachers. We now have the data and tools to individualize support from both the district and the program provider for newly prepared teachers. Studies consistently show that high quality induction support works. We need to commit to this work.
2. Create yearlong pre-service experiences – In a survey we conducted about 4 years ago, one question asked to teacher education graduates was what would make your program better and more fully prepare you? Almost all respondents said make our pre-service field experiences longer. Give us more “real-world” experiences.
3. Focus on leadership development – Teachers leave for several reasons, none more prevalent than leadership. As a state our efforts for the past decade or more have focused on “fixing” teachers. I think we got the cart before the horse – but in any event, today there should be a strong emphasis on leader preparation. I know some good work has gone on in our state on this, such as the development of performance based leadership prep programs, but we have much more to do. And, we must recognize, and this is difficult, that it is more important for a leader to have the needed dispositions than it is for them to be an expert in facilities, finance or law.
4. Utilize the power of teacher leadership – Teacher leadership is a powerful tool for both instructional improvement and teacher retention. It would help to have tangible rewards for lead professional teachers.
5. Improve compensation – This is never at the top of the list of why teachers leave but it always makes the list. I know there are tremendous pressures on the state budget every year and many critical competing demands. But if it’s at all possible, let’s look for a way to fund a significant teacher raise and reflect the raise in the state salary schedule.
6. Make it a priority to implement the new professional learning rules. These rules will provide a framework for support for all teachers.

As we move forward in addressing the issue of teacher shortage, the temptation is to focus on recruitment and production. These are important, but putting more people in a system that needs repair will not solve the long term issue. Let’s focus much of our attention on teacher retention – not only for the purpose of addressing teacher shortage, but also for improving the daily work experiences of all teachers throughout our state.

**Update on ESSA**

* Working collaboratively with multiple stakeholders, the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) is leading the plan development in our state.
* As an update, the input collected in Fall 2016 from the online feedback survey and the 8 face to face Stakeholder Feedback Sessions held throughout the state is available on the GaDOE website.
* Currently, six working committees continue their work on the draft plan, informed by the collected feedback. This draft will be presented to the state’s ESSA Advisory Committee, and a public comment period is scheduled for June 2017. The state plan is due to be submitted to USDOE on September 18, 2017, for approval.
* Up-to-date information on Georgia’s ESSA work, timeline, and plan is posted on the GaDOE website at [www.gadoe.org](http://www.gadoe.org).
* Questions about ESSA can be directed to GaDOE and can be sent to ***essa@doe.k12.ga.us***

**Reminder on Reporting Unsats**

A reminder regarding unsatisfactory, ineffective, and needs development evaluation, and remediation plans:

* All Superintendents, HR Directors, and others have received instructions on reporting these to the GaPSC as required by law for the 2016-2017 school year.
* Meeting the deadline of June 30th to report unsatisfactory, ineffective, and needs development evaluations to the GaPSC is very important.
* Successful completion of remediation plans is also due by June 30th and must be reported to the GaPSC.
* School systems that fail to report in a timely manner risk having the certificate of the responsible person sanctioned.
* The TAPS summative data component will continue to be the sole measure for ratings reported to GaPSC for certification purposes. (LAPS for principals and assistant principals). And, with the passage of 364, I think we will continue to use TAPS summative data only for the foreseeable future.
* For questions, email unsat@gapsc.com.

**Reminder of Professional Learning Reform**

* As you know, GaPSC has been traveling the state over the past two and half years providing training on the significant changes that are coming regarding professional learning. In fact, every RESA hosted a training event on these coming policy changes.
* This past summer we began a targeted focus on preparing educational leaders for this work, which is scheduled to become effective July 1, 2017, and will impact educators whose certificates expire June 30, 2018, and after. As you know, state legislation eliminated the need for PLUs for those renewing June 30, 2016, and June 30, 2017.
* The focus is shifting from isolated workshops to working on real instructional issues in schools and classrooms and from a bureaucratic, compliance model to a model that requires that the identified individual needs of the educator be met.
* Job-embedded learning becomes the primary vehicle for professional learning. Job-embedded learning takes place in a professional learning community where educators who all share responsibility for student learning can work together to address problems of practice.
* This Professional Learning reform provides a pivotal opportunity in our state to use pre-service data and experiences, such as edTPA, to provide a roadmap to inform Professional Learning Plans (PLPs) that meet the individual needs of Induction Level teachers. This reform also provides an avenue for effective teacher leaders who can inform, guide, and deliver this individualized professional learning based on needs and goals.
* The GaPSC Rule 505-2.36 RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS, which has been adopted, but is not effective until July 1, 2017, is available at [www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com).

**Celebrating Georgia Teacher Candidates’ Performance**

* In closing, I’d like to share how extraordinary our teacher preparation completers (who are now working in your schools or may soon working in your schools) are performing on the edTPA, which is content pedagogy assessment that helps ensure readiness to teach on Day One.
* The edTPA measures competencies across three main tasks: planning, instruction, and assessment, with a fourth task in Math for Early Childhood Education (P-5). Across all tasks, Georgia candidates are meeting or exceeding the national mean performance scores. To give this perspective, there are over 38 states with some level of edTPA use.
* Your role in working with your EPP partners to place and support student teachers in your schools greatly contributed to this success.

**Q&A**