

SECC – Common Themes from Each Advisory Group

Superintendent Group

Accountability

1. The data collected for the CCRPI does not accurately represent school quality and cannot be used to compare schools.
2. The data collected for the CCRPI includes too many indicators and should be simplified to make it more understandable.

Assessment

1. Minimize the importance of testing as a summative, punitive measure. Instead, use data as a formative measure, to inform instruction.
2. Local leaders should have the ability to make decisions on the assessments offered and used to make decisions.

Educator and Leader Development

1. Need to ensure that all students have access to higher-level courses through innovative means. Use technology to strengthen the quality of instruction, especially in small, rural districts.
2. Need to figure out ways to help small, rural districts recruit highly qualified teachers and to incentivize applicants to work with the students who are most at-risk.

Federal Programs to Support School Improvement

1. Need to better understand how federal funds are and can be distributed across the state to fee up flexible funding for districts and schools that are most in need.
2. Need more options for models of school improvement and to increase capacity through expansion of government, non-profit, private, and business partnerships with local education systems.

Education of the Whole Child

1. Provide emotional and intellectual support for students to build social skills in conjunction with academic skills.
2. Implement project-based learning within the community.

Teacher Group

Accountability

1. Current rating system does not accurately reflect performance at the school level. CCRPI focuses too much on assessment data and does not provide schools with opportunities to show true growth, struggle and presence.
2. Data collected is not reliable. Rating system should focus on other measures that are more important for understanding a school, such as education of the whole child, school culture and environment, parent involvement, extracurricular activities offered, school vision and mission, and leadership capabilities.

Assessment

1. Assessments are not measuring the right things. For teachers, assessments should be used to measure mastery, effectiveness of teaching, and provide data on areas for goal setting and instructional improvement. For students, assessments should be used to measure critical thinking skills and making connections to the real world.
2. The process by which assessments are administered should be improved. Some suggestions include timing of the assessment (i.e. not having them all on the same day), providing students with pretests, allowing modifications for students with special needs (i.e., allowing verbal responses).
3. Assessments should not be used for high-stakes decision making.

Educator and Leader Development

1. Schools and districts face significant barriers to ensuring that students have equal access to effective teachers and principals. To overcome these barriers, districts should consider incentives such as pay, more support and mentorship for teachers, providing teachers with a professional learning community, revising the structure for preparation programs and student teaching.
2. Teachers place value on more intangible qualities to define effective teachers and leaders—centering around passion, drive, and empathy.

Federal Programs to Support School Improvement

1. To ensure continued improvement, teachers named several supports that have worked in their schools, such as: bringing in business partnerships, performing needs assessments to identify areas for improvement, and providing more emotional and academic supports to students.
2. The state should consider ways to leverage available funds to help build capacity at the local level to sustain school improvements. For example, many teachers cited more funding for technology and the arts, as well as providing districts the opportunity to form cross-district partnerships.

Education of the Whole Child

1. Focus less on testing and assessments, and more on building relationships with teachers and their peers, as well as fostering enrichment beyond the school day.
2. Provide students with more access to technology in the classroom and leverage community partnerships to foster student connections between learning and real-world applications of knowledge.
3. Ensure that schools have all the necessary information about the student (i.e., IEP data) when they transfer.

Middle School Student Group

Accountability

1. Students could not answer the question on how their school's state report card reflects performance at their school. When asked to name the most important things for others to know about their school, students focused on areas related to: discipline and culture, resources and amenities, and academic needs.
2. Students offered varied suggestions on how to better measure school success and failures, focusing on methods that provide a global perspective on the school culture, such as surveys, examples of student work, measures of growth and progress, and school resources and amenities.

Assessment

1. Students named several types of assessments that are most useful to them, when receiving feedback on their learning, mostly focuses on tests that provide multiple data points, such as pre- and post-tests that show growth and improvement over time.
2. Students offered varied suggestions to improving statewide testing, including shortening the length of assessments, individualized based on learning needs, and providing questions that make connections to real-world knowledge.
3. Students also offered suggestions for other ways to show their learning beyond state assessments, including art, projects, classroom tasks, and one-on-one interactions with teachers.

Educator and Leader Development

1. Students place value on more intangible qualities to define effective teachers and leaders—centering around passion, drive, and empathy.
2. Students do not have equal access to effective teachers and principals, and they should. Districts should consider incentives improve this, including: better preparation for teachers, increasing teacher pay, and more principal involvement in the classroom.

Federal Programs to Support School Improvement

1. Provide students with more opportunities to engage in hands on activities and community-based learning.
2. Provide students with more opportunities to use technology in the classroom.

Education of the Whole Child

1. Students offered varied responses when asked about what makes them excited to learn, however many of the responses did focus on one of three main themes:
 - a. Use of technology to learn
 - b. Engage in learning with other students through hands on projects
 - c. Making connections between learning and real-work applications of knowledge
2. Students would like to see more comprehensive services at their schools, including: health services, learning social skills, more support for social emotional needs, and opportunities to engage with local businesses and the community.

High School Student Group

Accountability

1. A little over half of the students could not answer the question on how their school's state report card reflects performance at their school. When asked to name the most important things for others to know about their school, students focused on areas related to discipline and culture, resources and amenities, and academic needs.
2. Students offered varied suggestions on how to better measure school success and failures, focusing on methods that provide a global perspective on the school culture, such as surveys, examples of student work, measures of growth and progress, and school resources and amenities.

Assessment

1. Students named several types of assessments that are most useful to them, when receiving feedback on their learning, mostly focuses on tests the ask more direct questions, provide opportunities for free response, and are individualized based on learning styles.
2. Students offered varied suggestions to improving statewide testing, including eliminating or reformatting end of course assessments, switching to paper assessments instead of electronic, and revising assessment questions to address what was learned versus what is supposed to be learned.
3. Students also offered suggestions for other ways to show their learning beyond state assessments, including art, projects, classroom tasks, and regular check-ins with teachers.

Educator and Leader Development

1. Students place value on more intangible qualities to define effective teachers and leaders—centering around passion, drive, and empathy.
2. Students do not have equal access to effective teachers and principals, and they should. Districts should consider incentives to improve this, including: better preparation for teachers, increasing teacher pay, and more principal involvement in the classroom.

Federal Programs to Support School Improvement

1. Students provided insight into the types of learning that helps them best. Some examples include individualized instruction based on learning styles, use of technology, high-quality textbooks, and projects-based learning.
2. Students offered several suggestions for ways in which the community can support their school improvement efforts, such as providing students with learning opportunities, volunteer at local schools, provide schools with sponsorships, and host career fairs for students.
3. The state should utilize multiple methods to collect useful feedback from stakeholders, including social media, surveys and focus groups, and more open communication.

Education of the Whole Child

1. Provide more programs that are designed to fit the unique needs of students.
2. Provide students with more opportunities for work-based learning that prepares them for the real world.
3. Provide students with more resources to address social and emotional needs.

Parent Group

Accountability

1. The current accountability index does not capture school growth and improvement well enough.
2. The current accountability index should include more measures of school culture.

Assessment

1. Assessments should provide more insight into what the students are actually learning, and what areas they need to focus on to improve.
2. Schools and districts should revise the format by which assessments are administered and the timing of assessments in the school year.
3. Schools/districts should provide parents with a more user-friendly way to access data.

Educator and Leader Development

1. More intangible qualities are identified as the most important for effective teachers and leaders—passion, drive, empathy.

2. School and district culture is a significant barrier to attracting effective teachers.
3. Districts need to offer teachers and leaders more resources and incentives to work in the areas they are needed most.

Federal Programs to Support School Improvement

1. Stronger engagement with parents and the community to provide services for school improvement.
2. Provide more education to parents on career paths for students.
3. Provide more support to teachers in understanding the context and culture of students —homelessness and poverty, for example.

Education of the Whole Child

1. Provide better social emotional learning support and programming for students.
2. Ensure that programs are designed to differentiate for diversity/be individualized for a variety of student needs.
3. Provide interventions that use technology efficiently and provide students with a better understanding of technology.