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Condition of Education Task Force

Final Report

Peter Flynn, Chair

Presented To
Dr. William L. Lepley
Director of Education
State of Iowa

December, 1989

3-5/3

Recommendations Condition of Education Task Force

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of the Condition of Education Report is to describe a component of the status of education in Iowa and to reflect the change in the status across time. A careful selection of educational indicators can be used to reflect this status of education. These indicators can provide insight into the condition and effectiveness of the educational system. Indicators were classified into three specific areas which account for all aspects of the educational system. These include the areas of: 1) inputs - those indicators which are somewhat fixed by external constraints, such as the students attending a particular school district, the staff of the district and the finance plan which generates dollars for school districts; 2) processes - those indicators which to some extent can be manipulated by the school district, examples include policies, programs and expenditures; and 3) outcomes - those indicators which are a result of the planned programs and efforts of a school district and include such things as reflected in student achievement, attitudes, aspirations and behaviors.

Summary of Procedures used in Identification of Indicators

Based upon background information delivered to the Task Force on the purpose of using indicators to reflect the Condition of Education, a review of what other states have produced in Condition of Education Reports, and a review of the charge to the Task Force, the Task Force generated a sizeable list of educational indicators. Task Force members then rated the indicators using screening criteria which included: 1) appropriateness for inclusion in a statewide report; 2) commonality in terms of most or all districts having such information available; 3) enduring in terms of being available for repeated status measures across time; 4) feasibility in terms of cost and effort needed to secure the information; 5) statistical considerations including validity and reliability; 6) usefulness in terms of impacting policy and 7) overall importance when compared to other potential indicators.

The indicators were rated by Task Force members, discussed and debated in group sessions and a priority list of input, process and outcome indicators was evolved. At this point a special subcommittee of the Task Force with research and development expertise was asked to further delineate and define the indicators and to suggest specific data items which would appropriately reflect the desired input, process and outcome measures suggested by the Task Force.

The work of the R&D subcommittee resulted in a proposed outline of indicators for the Condition of Education Report. The Task Force then reviewed and discussed the proposed outline of indicators and reached consensus in the identification of initial report and future report indicators.

Section 280.18 & 280.12 and the Condition of Education Report

Since the information recommended for inclusion in the State Condition of Education Report, for the most part, comes directly from information currently provided by local school districts, the report will provide a natural baseline of readily available information to which local districts may choose to make internal comparisons on specific indicators. Individual comparisons like these will

be useful for local school districts when communicating information to district constituents regarding the relative status of their district in relation to statewide figures on a particular indicator.

Further it is suggested that the Condition of Education Report provide some analysis on the basis of enrollment and socio-economic categories. This would give individual districts the opportunity for more specific comparisons of their data to both state level figures and data from groups of districts with similar enrollments and socio-economic levels.

While the origins of local district reports to school patrons and the State Condition of Education Report are quite different, with the former originating from legislative mandate, and the latter from a Department of Education initiative, there exists a strong potential for the sharing of common information and purpose. Both efforts share the focus on accountability and strive to assess growth and change as it relates to the attainment of educational goals.

Charge to Task Force

At the opening meeting of the Condition of Education Task Force appointed by William Lepley, Director of Education, the task force was charged with presenting recommendations for the content and the process for this report. The Director stated that the rationale for the report was to provide a mechanism for accountability between the statewide system of public education and the concerned public, including the legislature. The Condition of Education Report could provide the leverage for future change in education. The Condition of Education Report should examine what exists in the state and in so doing, point to what should exist. Based upon this charge and the intended rationale for the report we, the members of the Condition of Education Task Force, respectfully propose the recommendations outlined below.

I. Report Format Recommendations

- That the Condition of Education Report include the following:
 1. Preface/Forward
 - Describe the purpose of the report and how it will be used.
 - Describe the work completed by the Task Force
 - Include a Task Force Membership list with member affiliations indicated.
 2. Iowa Education Section
 - Include a general description of local school districts, AEA's Community Colleges and the Department of Education.
 3. Reform Efforts
 - A. Standards
 - Include a description of standards to be met by Iowa schools, highlighting the newly required standards.
 - B. Sharing Arrangements
 - Include an historical description of sharing arrangements including those between public and non-public schools.
 - C. Educational Excellence Program Accomplishments
 - Include a description of Phase I, II and III efforts.
 4. Past Achievements
 - Include a description of efforts that Iowa Schools, AEA's and Community Colleges can look to with pride.

5. **Accountability Efforts of Iowa Schools**
 Include a description of what local school districts are doing with respect to 280.18 and 280.12.
 Describe innovative approaches to education extant in Iowa, e.g. successful development of a method for ascertaining the achievement of students with techniques other than standardized tests or development of new and effective ways of demonstrating accountability to constituents through providing information on growth and change related to student outcomes.
6. **Indicators**
 Consideration should be given to inclusion of a broad representation of indicators including the primary categories of inputs, processes and outcomes.
7. **Future Visions - Areas for Further Study and Consideration**
 The following areas require further study before inclusion in future Condition of Education Reports. Consideration should be given to methodologies for data collection, data burden on school districts and planning before implementation occurs. Consideration should also be given to inclusion of these areas in currently existing D.E. data collection documents such as the BEDS and SAR documents where appropriate.
 - A. Median class size
 - B. Plant Maintenance / Facilities Improvement
 - 1) Dollars used for building code compliance
 - C. Talented and Gifted Program Expenditures
 - D. Latchkey Programs
 - E. Student Mobility Rates
 - F. Community Involvement and Economic Support
 - 1) Parent - Teacher Conference attendance
 - 2) Business/Community/School Partnerships
 - G. Student Achievement
 - 1) National Assessment of Educational Progress Data
 - H. Extra/Co-Curricular Participation Rates
 - 1) Suggest repeat of the 1985-86 school year survey reported on the SAR, omitting the financial aspect of the survey.
 - 2) Explore the possibility of using information from the boys and girls High School Athletic Associations
 - I. At Risk Students
 - J. Technology

II. Report Scope and Content Recommendations

- That the scope and content of the Condition of Education Report include the following indicators representing measures of input, process and outcomes:

- A. Student achievement
 - Iowa Tests of Basic Skills Scores
 - Iowa Tests of Educational Development Scores
 - American College Testing Scores

Comment: Efforts should be made to allow for comparisons by minority and majority groups and by socio-economic groups in future years. The focus should be on growth.

- B. Special Achievements and Awards
 - 1. District recognition
 - 2. Student recognition

Comment: Although there is no centralized collection of all such information, efforts should be made to identify and report information in this area which is reasonably accessible and which does not require collection of additional data from LEA's. Suggest achievement and awards include, FINE Foundation awards, Teacher of the Year awards, Administrator of the Year awards, Presidential Academic Fitness Program awards, National Merit Scholar awards and National School Recognition awards. Suggest the development of a larger data base in this area for future years.

- C. Enrollment
 - 1. Public schools
 - 2. Non-public schools
 - 3. Special education
 - 4. Limited English proficiency students
 - 5. Bilingual/ESL students

Comment: Consideration should be given to displaying information by ethnic groups and socio-economic status in future years.

- D. Upper Level Course Enrollment
 - 1. Mathematics
 - 2. Science
 - 3. Foreign Language
 - 4. Advanced Placement

Comment: Consideration should be given to involvement of existing state level subject matter organizations or specialists in helping to identify upper level courses in these areas. Consideration should be given to expanding upper level course identification to other curricular areas in future years.

E. Vocational Course Enrollment

Comment: Consideration should be given to involvement of existing state level vocational organizations or specialists in helping to identify upper level courses in these areas.

F. Preschool/Kindergarten Programs

1. Preschool programs
 - a. Number of pupils
 - b. Hours of programs
2. Kindergarten programs
 - a. Type of program

Comment: Suggest inclusion of the number and percent of students being served and the hours of attendance for pre-school programs and the kindergarten days of attendance .

G. Dropout Rate/Attendance Rate/Graduation Rate

Comment: Suggest that the dropout and graduation rates be calculated according to the new definitions currently under development by the National Center for Education Statistics Task Force when available. Until such time use current dropout and graduation rates. The attendance rate should be calculated by dividing ADA by ADM.

H. College Bound/Post Secondary Attendance

Comment: Suggest using current graduate follow-up D.E. survey to collect information. Further suggest that in the future information be gathered prior to students leaving school. This would greatly increase the number of students included. This has been done by at least one large Iowa school district and has been demonstrated by a follow-up study that student intentions prior to graduation closely correspond to post high school choices. This methodology would require a variation in the administration of the existing D.E. survey. Until such time as this is achieved it is suggested that the current information be used.

I. Community Involvement/Economic Support

1. Bond Issue Status
2. Levies voted

Comment: Suggest looking at this information with respect to socio-economic status if possible. Suggest looking toward future efforts to identify income distribution differences for adults without children versus adults with children. Suggest the future use of per capita income for this aspect if available.

- J. Expenditures
 - 1. Object categories
 - 2. Program categories

Comment: Suggest per pupil expenditures and expenditures as a percent of total expenditures.

- K. Plant Maintenance/Facilities improvement
 - 1. Per pupil expenditure
 - 2. Expenditure as a percent of total expenditures

Comment: Suggest additional information, such as money used for asbestos abatement or code compliance be accumulated in future years but not be included in the initial report.

- L. Revenue/Assessed Valuation
 - 1) Assessed valuation per pupil
 - 2) Revenue per pupil

- M. Staff
 - 1. Pupil-teacher ratio
 - 2. Teacher demographics
 - a. Experience
 - b. Age
 - c. Gender/Ethnic Group
 - d. Major
 - e. Degree status
 - f. Teaching load
 - g. Salary
 - 3. Support Service Personnel
 - a. Ratio to pupils/teachers

- N. Curriculum Offerings
 - 1. Total unit offerings
 - 2. Units offered by curriculum area

Comment: Suggest that the range of offerings be shown, along with enrollments by gender and in the future by ethnic group.

III. Report Procedure Recommendations

- That each indicator reported reflect measures for current status, previous status and change in status wherever possible.
- That information not currently available be gathered through a survey or other means and be included in future Condition of Education Reports.
- That the current Task Force be maintained and be included in the planning for future Condition of Education Reports to provide for continuity.
- That the initial Condition of Education Report be considered as a pilot report and that work on development and refinement efforts be continued and an openness with respect to reformulation of the report in future years be maintained.
- That future Condition of Education Reports retain a common core of information across time to allow for appropriate comparisons.
- That dissemination of the Condition of Education Report be directed to all LEA's, AEA's, professional educational organizations, Board of Regents, and Area Community Colleges.
- That every attempt be made by the Department of Education to protect against misinterpretation of this information included in the Condition of Education Report.
- That the Condition of Education Report be drafted with the idea that it will serve various audiences and therefore stress clarity and understandability.
- That the Condition of Education Report include clear graphic representations of information wherever possible to aid in the interpretation of indicator data.
- That the Condition of Education Report not include district-by-district comparisons on indicators.
- That the Condition of Education Report make comparisons, where appropriate, for groups of school districts of various sizes and for groups of school districts with various levels of socio-economic status.
- That the personnel from the Iowa Testing Program be requested to develop information on ITBS and ITED for inclusion in the Condition of Education Report and that such information developed be focused upon changes or growth in achievement.
- That as critical needs are identified during this assessment process the report should delineate what direction the state educational establishment should take, suggest what might be needed to pursue such an undertaking in terms of time and resources, and define leadership parameters of such an endeavor.

APPENDICES

- A. Task Force Membership
- B. Special Committees (Membership, Responsibilities, and Functions)
- C. Meeting Dates and Summaries

Appendix A
Condition of Education
Task Force Membership

David Alvord	Consultant, Division of Planning and Accountability Department of Education Grimes State Office Building Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Wayne Bauman	Counselor Douglas Elementary School 3800 E. Douglas Des Moines, Iowa 50317
Phil Berrie	Assistant Director of Educational Services Area Education Agency 11 6500 Corporate Drive Johnston, Iowa 50131
Tom Budnik	Coordinator Area Education Agency 11 6500 Corporate Drive Johnston, Iowa 50131
Dwight Carlson	Chief, Bureau of School Administration & Accreditation Department of Education Grimes State Office Building Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Marilyn Charging	Director of Indian Education and Affirmative Action Career Education Center 1121 Jackson Street Sioux City, Iowa 51105
Dick Clark	Principal Fort Dodge High School 819 N. 25th Street Fort Dodge, Iowa 50501
Ginny Clark	Principal Solon Elementary School Solon, Iowa 52333
Gary Croskrey	Superintendent North Tama Community Schools 605 Walnut Traer, Iowa 50675
The Hon. Rep. Horace Daggett	House of Representatives R. R. 1, Box 90 Kent, Iowa 50850

Greg Dunn	Research Consultant Area Education Agency 10 4401 - 6th Street Road, SW Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52404
Peter Flynn	Superintendent Davenport Community Schools 1001 Harrison Street Davenport, Iowa 52803
Bob Forsyth	Director, ITED University of Iowa Iowa Testing Program 334 Lindquist Center Iowa City, Iowa 52242
Dave Frisbie	Assistant Director, ITBS University of Iowa Iowa Testing Program 334 Lindquist Center Iowa City, Iowa 52242
Liz Goodwin	Vice President Iowa Parent Teacher Association 3800 Merle Hay Road Des Moines, Iowa 50310
Julie Grotewold	Instructional Consultant Area Education Agency 15 Rt. 5, P. O. Box 55 Ottumwa, Iowa 52501
Dick Hanzelka	Director of Educational Services Area Education Agency 9 729 - 21st Street Bettendorf, Iowa 52722
Rafael Hernandez	Equity Coordinator, Iowa City Schools Northwest Junior High School 1507 - 8th Street Coralville, Iowa 52241
Gil Hewitt	Consultant, Planning and Evaluation Waterloo Community Schools 1516 Washington Street Waterloo, Iowa 50702
Phil Hintz	Superintendent Newton Community Schools 807 S. 6th Avenue W. Newton, Iowa 50208

H. D. Hoover	Director, ITBS University of Iowa Iowa Testing Program 334 Lindquist Center Iowa City, Iowa 52242
Bill Jacobson	Principal Thomas Jefferson High School 1243 - 20th Street, S.W. Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402
Carolyn Jons	IASB Board of Directors 2916 Forest Hills Drive Ames, Iowa 50010
Patricia McClure	Superintendent Starmont Community Schools P. O. Box 40 Strawberry Point, Iowa 52076
Marian McQuaid	Teacher Midland Community Schools Wyoming, Iowa 52362
The Hon. Sen. Larry Murphy	Senate 531 - 6th Street, N.W. Oelwein, Iowa 50662
The Hon. Rep. Art Ollie	House of Representatives 413 Ruth Place Clinton, Iowa 52732
Jackie Pelz	Director of Curriculum Ankeny Community Schools 306 SW School Street Ankeny, Iowa 50021
W. Ray Richardson	Executive Director, School Community Services Waterloo Community Schools 1516 Washington Street Waterloo, Iowa 50702
Doreen Rick	Teacher Roosevelt Middle School 303 Fifteenth SE Mason City, Iowa 50401
Ted Stilwill	Administrator, Division of Administrative Services Department of Education Grimes State Office Building Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Leland Tack

Administrator, Division of Planning, Evaluation
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The Hon. Sen. Ray Taylor

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Roger Wendt

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Morris Wilson

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Appendix B
Special Committees
Membership, Responsibilities and Functions

Steering Committee Membership

1. Peter Flynn
2. Phillip Berrie
3. Morris Wilson
4. Leland Tack
5. Ted Stilwill
6. David Alvord

Responsibilities and functions of the Condition of Education Steering Committee include:

1. Planning meeting activities;
2. Coordinating and facilitating activities during and between meetings;
3. Development of draft and final documents based upon Task Force input and concerns and
4. Drafting of final recommendations

Research and Development Subcommittee Membership

1. Peter Flynn
2. Morris Wilson
3. Jackie Pelz
4. H.D. Hoover
5. Dave Frisbie
6. Philip Berrie
7. Gil Hewitt
8. Greg Dunn
9. Robert Ziomek
10. Leland Tack
11. Ted Stilwill
12. David Alvord

The Research and Development Subcommittee responsibilities include:

1. Translating Task Force indicator input into measurable data items;
2. Determine the viability of indicators for use in the Condition of Education Report and
3. Suggest procedures for framing each indicator in terms of measurability, method for display, precautions to follow, background information necessary for interpretation and suggested analysis procedures.

Appendix C
Condition of Education
Task Force Meeting Dates and Summaries

Meeting Dates

April 25, 1989

May 31, 1989

June 28, 1989

September 22, 1989

**CONDITION OF EDUCATION REPORT -
ADVISORY TASK FORCE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION - STATE OF IOWA
MEETING SUMMARY
APRIL 25, 1989**

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Peter Flynn and following a brief welcome each member of the Advisory Task Force introduced herself or himself. Director of Education, Bill Lepley, spoke on the issue of accountability and on the charge of the Advisory Task Force. Dr. Lepley stated that it was his belief that the Condition of Education Report for the state of Iowa was necessary in order to maintain the support of the public for education. The task of the advisory group is to identify multiple indicators of performance of school districts, and then to address the question of how this Condition of Education Report can be an enabling force for policy makers. He hopes that we will be able to state not only what we are doing but where we want to take the system. Management Information Systems can be the forces for leveraged change. Dr. Lepley made reference to a speech that he gave recently to a higher education group that embodied his concept of what a school district would look like in the year 2010. Dr. Lepley also has hopes that a Condition of Education Report could be used to free up school districts from regulations. Finally he charged the committee with looking not only at what issues we are currently using to assess performance in our school districts, but what we ought to be looking at in the future to assess the condition of education in the state.

Dave Alvord spoke to the group regarding the services and staff that would be available to the Advisory Task Force. The Department of Education staff present at this meeting included the Director of Education, Bill Lepley, Lee Tack, Dwight Carlson, Ted Stilwill and Dave Alvord. Several examples of the school district and state education report were available for the perusal of the membership.

The agenda was then highlighted including a review of the objectives for the meeting: a) each member will have a common understanding of the scope of the task of the group, b) each member will experience a sharing of information on the issues involved in the concept of a Condition of Education Report, c) members of the task force will have an awareness of some experiences with similar reports in other states, d) the task force will explore and define some alternative positions on a key issue involved with this type of report, e) members of the Advisory Task Force will have a sense of involvement in the decision making process at the state level and f) the meeting will adjourn on time.

Dave Alvord gave a brief presentation on what is happening in Illinois and other states in their use of a school district report card. Illinois is using a report that is generated from the state based upon data submitted by school districts. This report is sent back to the school districts and then made public. Wisconsin is requiring school districts to generate a report and asking them to be proactive about its dissemination. The state monitors this report every two years.

The charge of the task force was then reviewed by Peter Flynn. The Advisory Task Force will be responsible for making recommendations regarding the format, structure, and content of the Condition of Education Report. In addition the Advisory Task Force will be responsible for recommending specific representative indicators for each of the indicator areas. Final recommendations resulting from the Advisory Task Force Reports are expected by the fall of 1989. For further elaboration of the charge of this task force see the remarks of Director of Education, Bill Lepley, above. The task force will not deal with the content,

structure and format of local school district reports although that is a related matter being addressed by another committee. The recommendations of this Advisory Task Force will be submitted to the Director of Education.

Three key issues involving a Condition of Education Report were explained as follows:

I. Content

A. Categories of Indicators

1. Input indicators - the "Givens", fixed inputs into the educational setting, revenues, staff and student characteristics.
2. Process indicators - variables within the educational setting which to some extent can be managed/manipulated/controlled.
3. Output indicators - variables which represent outcomes of the educational programs. (measures of the effectiveness/efficiency of the educational process) Results

B. Background information necessary for the reader. This would include information necessary to make interpretations regarding output indicators. Example: Output indicators on student achievement need to be considered in light of information known to explain some portion of the variation in student achievement (such as socio-economic level.)

C. Basic content vs information which may be interesting to share.

II. Audience and Use (Structure)

A. Today we begin to examine the content as explained by Dave and Morris. We will be looking at Input, Process, Output data and trying to determine what the various interested publics might want to see in a statewide "condition of education" report.

B. "For whom should the report be written -- who are our target audiences? WHO ISN'T? Certainly the parents, students, educators, citizens... Our charge is to shape the data that will be most meaningful to the various audiences.

C. What data is already available

1. BEDS
Program data
Student data
Staff data
Policies/Procedures
2. SAR
Valuations
Enrollment figures
Expenditures
Revenue

All of which can be put together in various
Formats

3. Budget File

All LEA budgets

D. What data is desired but not available

1. How important is the data?
2. How can it be obtained?
3. Could BEDS/SAR/Other be changed to accommodate the inclusion?
4. Bottom line -- don't create a hardship on the LEAs!

III. Format

Peter Flynn explained the following questions and subtopics for the issue of Format.

- A. Should the format lend itself to showing a relationship between what is reported and some goals that have been established on a state level. We often talk about what is interesting for students to learn, what is important for school districts to teach, and what is necessary for students to know in order to graduate. These goals might be the basis for reporting about what school districts are doing and what the state is doing.
- B. Will the format allow us to show the growth of students over time, or will it show the results of a measure of students ability at a point in time?
- C. Will the format lend itself to comparisons? If it will, will there be consistent definitions used for such indicators as a drop out rate?
- D. Will the data be stated in such a way as to point to school improvement?
- E. What will be the length of the report? Will there be an executive summary?
- F. Will there be a balance between numbers and narrative, statistics and description?
- G. Will the fact that all of this information will be public information have a bearing on the format,
- H. Will this Information as provided in a Condition of Education Report be easy to understand and yet not over simplified?
- I. Will the Condition of Education Report present information on the district and building levels?
- J. Will there be allowance for reporting of special achievements by school district and by states?

Following the description of issues, the large group divided into three small groups and defined the content that might be considered for a Condition of Education Report. The indicators were divided into Input - those things over which school districts have no control; Process - those activities, events and procedures used by school districts to facilitate its mission; and Outcomes - for the results and products which show the success of the school district. Following small group discussions the large group reconvened for a sharing of the various lists generated by the three discussion groups (the steering committee combined three lists where there were duplications, eliminated those duplicates and refined slightly some of the terms that were recommended so as to have three discreet lists of Input, Process and Outcome. Those lists will be sent out with the meeting agenda shortly before May 31st.

The focus of this Advisory Task Force is on the conditions under which we must work which, of course, includes to a large degree those resources that are available to us. The task force also looks at what we do in order to achieve success, and finally we focus on the indicators of success or how do we know we did what we were supposed to do.

The work of this task force is truly an opportunity to become involved in shaping the Condition of Education Report for the state of Iowa so that it can be used in the best interest of the state of Iowa and its school children.

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE CONDITION OF EDUCATION REPORT ADVISORY TASK FORCE WILL BE ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 31, 1989 AT STARLIGHT VILLAGE DOWNTOWN DES MOINES BETWEEN 2ND AND 3RD NEAR 1-235 NORTH OF VETS AUDITORIUM. TAKE THE 9TH STREET EXIT. WE WILL BEGIN AT 8:30 WITH COEFEE AND REFRESHMENTS. THE MEETING WILL BEGIN PROMPTLY AT 9:00 A.M., LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED AND WE WILL CONCLUDE AT APPROXIMATELY 2:00 OR 2:30 P.M.

Condition of Education Task Force

Meeting Summary

May 31, 1989

The Task Force met at the Starlite Village Motel in Des Moines at 9:00 a.m. Peter Flynn, Task Force Chair, reviewed activities of the previous meeting on April 25, 1989, and outlined the planned activities for the days meeting.

Prior to the meeting, members were mailed sets of indicators identified during the previous meeting and were asked to work through the set of indicators focusing on a set of criteria:

Using the following criteria members rated each indicator. Criteria included: 1) Statewide relevancy (refers to the appropriateness of an individual indicator for use in reflecting status on a statewide report); 2) Commonality (refers to the commonality of an indicator across districts. If a given indicator isn't common to all or most districts it will be difficult to use at the state level); 3) Enduring features (an indicator must be one which is present in school districts on a continuing basis); 4) Feasible (an indicator must be feasible in terms of time, expense and personnel needed to collect data on the indicator); 5) Statistical consideration (an indicator must possess generally agreed upon validity and reliability); 6) Understandable (an indicator must clearly communicate its meaning); 7) Usefulness (an indicator must have utility - if acquisition of the information has little or no consequences in terms of what can be done with the information then it is of limited value to collect).

Members were also asked to review indicators with respect to refining each indicator since many indicators were too general in nature to allow for measurement.

The task force worked in three groups to derive a list of indicators which met the screening criteria and which were considered most important.

CONDITION OF EDUCATION TASK FORCE

DATE. July 5, 1989
TO: Condition of Education Task Force Committee
FROM: Peter Flynn, Chairperson
SUBJECT: UPDATE OF TASK FORCE ACTIVITIES

It has been more than a month since our last meeting and I wanted to bring you all up-to-date on some things that have been going on. At the close of our last meeting in May, we had settled on 38 indicators that should be considered for the Condition of Education Report. These indicators were referred to a sub-committee of 12 people, most of whom are involved in research and development work.

This sub-committee met on June 28 and began working on the indicators to determine the viability of certain indicators which might be used in a state-wide report on the Condition of Education in Iowa. By the end of the meeting on the day of June 28, the subcommittee had, in fact, substantially completed the selection and framing of indicators which the committee deemed to be most feasible for our report. The framing of such indicators addressed measurability, method for display, safeguarding precautions, necessary background information, and an example of how the indicators should be shown in a report.

Although general agreement was arrived at regarding a set of indicators, there are a few steps left to be completed before we can reconvene the total committee. There is some writing to do on the part of sub-committee members and that will take place over the next two weeks.

Originally, we had hoped to get the total group together during the week of July 17. Right now, it does not look as though that will be possible. We are hoping to call a meeting of the total committee some time in August. At that point, we will present the conclusions of the sub-committee and explain the rationale for arriving at those conclusions regarding the selected indicators. We will also explain in more detail the process that we used to arrive at these indicators. We will hope to achieve consensus from the group on the selection of these indicators. We will, of course, give people an opportunity to state a case for additional indicators, if they believe there should be additional indicators.

CONDITION OF EDUCATION REPORT TASK FORCE MEETING

MEETING SUMMARY

SEPTEMBER 22, 1989

Approximately 24 members of the Task Force gathered at the Heartland AEA at 9:30 a.m. Peter Flynn, chair of the Task Force, reviewed what had taken place since the May meeting, including a description of the process used in June to deal with the 38 indicators that were being considered by the Task Force. Following a description of the work of the subcommittee on the viability of the indicators, the committee as a whole began dealing with a proposed outline of content for the Condition of Education Report. The remainder of this summary is a reflection of the consensus, unless noted otherwise, of the group on what should go into the Condition of Education Report.

PREFACE/FOREWORD — The Report should begin with a description of what has happened in terms of process to bring this report about. This description should also include the purpose of the report and the intended audiences. The Task Force membership should be described, along with the number and type of meetings held by the Task Force.

Early on in the report, there should be a description of Iowa Education, which should include the numbers and types of school districts, the function of AEA's and the number of them, a brief description of Area Community Colleges, and a description of the Department of Education's role in education in Iowa. The Condition of Education Report should make mention of the standards and how recently they have been updated, outlining some of the requirements of the standards and there should also be a section that outlines the past achievements of the State of Iowa.

The section on achievement should be handled very carefully in that the achievement scores from ITBS and ITED should be shown in terms of progress or growth over the last year or the last two years, depending upon what data is available. Whenever possible, the data should show the progress of cohort groups. These scores should be disaggregated, in terms of minority and majority achievement scores and other pertinent data such as socio-economic status, if that is available. In this section of the report, there also should be some mention of the extent to which school districts are using alternative forms of assessment. As part of this section, we could also state a challenge to school districts to seek objectives-based education, the use of portfolios or any other alternative modes which give a more holistic picture regarding the progress of students.

A section of the Condition of Education Report should be devoted to special achievements and awards. In this section, statewide and national recognition should be delineated. For example, the accomplishment of F.I.N.E. Foundation awards in schools or programs, national Teacher of the Year or Administrator of the Year finalists, our Presidential Academic Fitness Program and the National School Recognition Program should be narratively described. The number of merit scholars and presidential scholars in colleges might also be included.

A section of the report should describe in detail the enrollment of schools in Iowa, not only public but private or non-public schools. Special education population should be identified along with those students participating in bilingual or ESL programs. A breakdown of the enrollment by ethnic groups and socio-economic status, if available, should also be looked at. If possible, a mobility rate should be calculated. It is important to gather information regarding higher level courses. This will be relatively easy in math and science or in those courses designated advanced placement. It was generally agreed that any course above Algebra II would be considered an upper level math course.

[Perhaps specialized groups, such as A.S.C.D. or National Council of Teachers of Math or National Council of Teachers of English could tell us a good definition for upper level courses and vocational courses.] The B.E.D.S. report might be useful in gathering information regarding students enrolled in college level or upper level courses. It might also be useful to gather information about the number of students who take four years of a language or any other subject.

Extra-curricular activities should be described for the State of Iowa, perhaps repeating part of the survey that was attached to the S.A.R. in 1985-86 or looking at the offerings of extra-curricular activities and the number of students participating in those offerings. In terms of vocational enrollments, the number and percent of students enrolled and the number of units that they are taking is available on the B.E.D.S. report and should be included.

Early Childhood Education should be reported, including the number and percent of students being served and the number of hours in attendance in preschool programs. The kindergarten structure for school districts in Iowa should be described. Any at-risk, latchkey, or other supportive type programs should be included in this section. Much of this information is available through the B.E.D.S. report.

Statistics should be gathered on the number of dropouts and the dropout rate, along with the attendance rate and graduation rates in the State of Iowa. The dropout rate should be calculated according to the new definition being developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers. The graduation rate should also be calculated in the same manner. There needs to be a very specific statement directing school district when to count a dropout. In some school districts, students have to "drop out" in order to enter an alternative education program. In other school districts, students who fail to show up at the beginning of the school year, even though they were enrolled in the prior year, are not counted as dropouts. A standardized definition of what a dropout is and when a district counts that individual as a dropout is important and should be developed. The graduation rate should be broken down by ethnic groups, socio-economic status where available and should also notate where there are other diplomas issued, such as in the area of special education. The attendance rate should be equal to the average daily attendance divided by the average daily membership. We have trend information available through our S.A.R. as far back as the 1970's.

For college bound and post-secondary attendance, we should gather the information prior to graduation. This would increase the number of students included and at least one study has shown that students' intentions closely correspond to what students actually do, related to their high school choices. This may require a slight variation in the administration of existing form now administered by the Guidance Services section of the Department of Education.

In community involvement and economic support, much data can be gathered. However, the committee felt as though there were three steps which should be carried out.

- 1) Information regarding parent conferences.
- 2) Any business community/school partnerships.
- 3) The use of the Schoolhouse Levy or other recent bond referenda or any other type of levy.

It should be noted that although the committee feels that socio-economic status measures should be looked at, including free and reduced lunch and A.F.D.C. counts, it would also be good at some point in the future, to define what the income distribution is across Iowa, whether there is a difference with parents versus adults without children.

Socio-economic status and income distribution, especially if it defines per capita income, which would be available from the Department of Revenue, should be included in a different section of the report.

As best as possible, expenditures shown in relation to the number of students and as a percent of total expenditures, should be shown by object categories and special programs, for example — talented and gifted and at-risk students. This kind of data is available from the S.A.R. back to the early 1970's. Plant maintenance and facilities improvement can also be shown by the object codes. Any additional information, such as money used for asbestos abatement or code compliance should be accumulated in future years, but not for the initial report.

It is important to demonstrate the amount of money that is behind the education of each student. Some assessment should be made of the ability for school districts in Iowa to pay for education, this calculation might be used upon personal income, unearned income and the value of real estate. Then, an estimate should be made as to the amount of revenue that could be generated, given current tax rates, based upon this income and real estate value. This figure should be compared to the amount of money that is being generated, using the current tax rates that are in place, including optional tax levies, such as the Schoolhouse Fund. On a statewide basis, this report could indicate the number of school districts that are funding schools in keeping with their potential. This issue and statement should be clustered with other issues about money. There should also be some reference as to the number of school districts in Iowa which have established Foundations as an alternative method of funding for school districts. The assessed valuation per pupil, which is available from the School Budget master file, should also be notated in this section.

It will be useful to gather information statewide on the median class size and the number of classes above 30 and below 15, by grade level.

A section should be devoted to teacher demographics, using a wide range of data currently available from the B.E.D.S. report, including salary, experience, degree status, age, sex, ethnic group, assignment major, and teaching load. This section could allow us to project future needs if we knew, for example, the number of certificated social studies teachers who are within the age range of 60 to 65.

Although we think it would be important to comment on the use of technology, such as computers and other audio visual devices, we do not feel it would make sense, at this juncture, to have a permanent section of this report that would reflect a gathering of information on technology in education.

Sharing arrangements in use should be described, including those between public and non-public schools.

Statewide curriculum offerings that are taught should be described. This information can be taken from the B.E.D.S. report. Where possible, it would be useful to spell out the number of students enrolled, male and

female, minority and majority, if that's available. At the least, we should show the range of offerings and as descriptive as possible.

A final section of the report should be devoted to reform efforts. The descriptive items in this section of the report would change each year. For example, current reports would describe the status of the Phase III program. Next year's report would describe open enrollment efforts and any other reforms that could be tied back to the standards should also be listed.

The Condition of Education Report should conclude with some challenges for the Director of Education, the State Legislature, school superintendents, board members, and all those involved with and in support of education across the State of Iowa. These challenges should address the needs that are identified through the Condition of Education Report and be the basis for forming a vision for the Future of Education in the State of Iowa.

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WITHIN A WEEK TO TEN DAYS WE WILL HAVE FOR EACH MEMBER OF THE
CONDITION OF EDUCATION TASK FORCE A DRAFT OF OUR RECOMMENDATIONS. WE
WILL THEN CONTACT YOU FOR YOUR REACTION A FEW DAYS LATER. WE ARE
HOPING TO COMPLETE OUR TASK AND PRESENT OUR FINDINGS TO BILL LEPLEY,
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, NO LATER THAN THE MIDDLE OF NOVEMBER.
IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THE MEETNG SUMMARY OR ANY OTHER
ASPECT OF OUR WORK, PLEASE CALL ME AT [319] 323-1756.
THANKS FOR ALL YOUR HELP.

Peter Flynn
10/18/89

Condition of Education Task Force Members

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Wayne Bauman	Des Moines Independent School District
Phil Berrie	Heartland Area Education Agency 11
Tom Budnik	Heartland Area Education Agency 11
Dwight Carlson	Department of Education
Marilyn Charging	Sioux City Community Schools
Dick Clark	Fort Dodge Community Schools
Ginny Clark	Solon Community Schools
Gary Croskrey	North Tama Community Schools
Horace Daggett	Iowa House of Representatives
Greg Dunn	Grant Wood Area Education Agency 10
Peter Flynn	Davenport Community Schools
Bob Forsyth	Iowa Testing Program
Dave Frisbie	Iowa Testing Program
Liz Goodwin	Iowa Parent Teacher Association
Julie Grotewold	Southern Prairie Area Education Agency 15
Dick Hanzelka	Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency 9
Raphael Hernandez	Iowa City Community Schools
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Phil Hintz	Newton Community Schools
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Art Ollie	Iowa House of Representatives
Jackie Pelz	Ankeny Community Schools
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