RESULTS OF COLLABORATION MEETING BETWEEN CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS, K-12 LEADS, AND HIGHER EDUCATION LEADS ON MARCH 20, 2013

Key Decisions: Sustainability, Initial Achievement Level Descriptors, and College Content-readiness

Sustainability. A major element of the agenda was discussion and deliberations on these three key decision points. Sustainability refers to business planning for the future of Smarter Balanced after the end of the federal grant that funds activities through September 30, 2014. The Smarter Balanced Sustainability Plan that was shared with states includes the following elements:

- A mission, vision, and value proposition for the organization.
- A set of core services and delineation of Smarter Balanced and state responsibilities with associated cost estimates.
- A proposed organizational model based on affiliation with a public educational organization and recommendation to enter into negotiations with the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST) at UCLA to serve in that capacity.
- Draft proposed adjustments to the Smarter Balanced governance structure.
- Draft staffing model for the organization.

The Governing States approved the plan and authorized the Executive Director to enter into negotiations with CRESST/UCLA and to finalize the governance structure and staffing plan.

Initial Achievement Level Descriptors. The Initial Achievement Level Descriptors are very familiar to this group. With the understanding that the initial ALDs will continue to be refined as data are collected during the pilot and field tests, and that the Reporting ALDs to be drafted in 2014 will form the basis for messaging to students and parents, the initial ALDs were approved by the Governing States.

College Content-Readiness. The College Content-readiness Policy was discussed at length. In particular, discussion centered around a set of proposed revisions offered by a group of Midwestern states. After considerable discussion, states decided that they were not in a position to vote on the proposed language since the state had decided to support the existing language and there was not adequate time for in-state deliberation and discussion of the proposed changes. Three states voted against the College Content-readiness Policy. According to the Smarter Balanced Governance Document, when a policy change does not receive unanimous approval, staff meet with the states that did not approve the policy to understand their concerns and seek ways that those concerns might be addressed. Any proposed revisions to the policy are then circulated and reviewed by the other states and a second vote is taken. A two-thirds majority is required on this second round of voting. The schedule for this process is as follows:
- Week of March 25 – Discussion with affected states
- Week of April 1 – Circulation of any proposed policy revisions to all governing states for review
- April 9 – Discussion at Governing States meeting
- April 10 – Discussion at Higher Education Leads meeting
- April 11-12 – Revisions to the College Content Readiness Policy as needed
- Week of April 15 – Second round of voting