

AVATAR Meeting Notes

Meeting:	AVATAR PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING		
Date:	September 12, 2011		
Start Time:	1:45 P.M.		
Location:			
Participants:	Jean Keller, Mary Harris, Chris Kanouse, Marilyn Kolesar-Lynch, Kathy Wright-Chapman; Francine Holland		
Meeting Purpose:	Provide program updates		
Preparation Required:	Participation in group meetings		

Topic	Discussion Leader	Feedback
Meeting outcomes	Jean Keller	<p>Jean stated the desired outcomes of the meeting are agreement about the training model, the MOUs, and the pilot partnership timelines.</p> <p>We discussed the MOUs, working from a sample provided by Jean, and it seemed that a term like “letter of agreement,” might be easier to work through the different systems. Our goal is that leaders in each organization be involved in these agreements to support and sustain these alignment pilot efforts, but we do not view these as legally binding. Work for more consistent language was suggested. Jean said there will be agreements with the Tarrant and Dallas County groups but not with the S. F. Austin University group, which has already accomplished much of this agenda. Jean asked the others to review the language of the draft and send suggestions to her. What deliverables should be included as expectations? Our expectations focus on cross-walks of standards, activities, resources, and recommendations for local assessments.</p>
Needs	Jean Keller/Kathy Wright-Chapman	<p>There is need for a PowerPoint that presents the project to district and IHE leaders. Cathy and Jean said they would work on this. Cathy has an immediate need as she approaches the FWISD team for assistance. Messages to be included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons to work together across levels of education • Importance of building genuine relationships if work is to be sustained • Shared information about our common students as a baseline for action • Curriculum alignment work is on-going and gains power over time • Implementation of the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STARR) has important implications for IHE placement decisions • Goals and outcomes of AVATAR project

Evaluation	Mary Harris	<p>Thinking about evaluation, Mary asked what kinds of baseline data partners could bring to the table at the start. The following were suggested.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College readiness data from district or high school • Math and ELA placement information from IHEs • Data provided by participating faculty about how certain content or skills are evidenced by their students in assignments or in rubrics used to assess assignments • Statements by faculty about how their practice has been changed by participation in curriculum alignment work. 								
Logistics	Kathy Wright-Chapman	<p>Cathy said that she plans to administer a response to the training instrument at the end of each day of training as a means of collecting formative feedback. Do we want to add an evaluation question to each of these?</p>								
	Jean Keller	<p>We addressed the question of who is going to do what with the pilot teams. Cathy is the facilitator for the Region 11 based team, and Chris, for the Region 10 based team. The Region 11 focus is on English 3 and 4 as related to initial college literature and composition and on chemistry (Chem 1411), how high school chemistry aligns with the course taken by college science majors. The Region 10 team is focused on chemistry, also, and on algebra 2 as it related to college algebra. The common course numbers are: ENGL 1301 and 1302; Math 1314 or 1414; and CHEM 1311 and 131.2 Each pilot team must include school leaders as well as faculty from high school, community college, and universities. In Region 10, for example, Chris imagined 1 administrator from the Dallas ISD, 6 high school faculty representing 2 schools and 2 subjects, and 5 higher education faculty representing 3 colleges and 2 subjects. The make-up of the teams might vary, however. Also, business partners would be identified for each team at the start and would be expected to share perspectives and results but not to participate in the entire alignment process.</p> <p>By the end of September, we need lists of all participants, agreements about outcomes and deliverables, and meeting timelines. It is not necessary for the two pilots to follow the same meeting schedules. In fact, it is desirable to pilot different alternatives. Cathy plans for the Region 11 team to meet during school hours with the use of substitutes. Chris expects that the Region 10 team will meet on Saturdays. The training design developed by Cathy so far expects five days 7-hour days of training.</p>								
Funding	Jean Keller	<p>Jean stated the funding associated with the various participation groups through December as follows:</p> <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 20px;">Region 10</td> <td>\$3,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DCCD</td> <td>6,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DISD</td> <td>4,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FWISD</td> <td>6,000</td> </tr> </table>	Region 10	\$3,000	DCCD	6,000	DISD	4,000	FWISD	6,000
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		<p>TWU 4,000 TCCD 6,000 Region 11 5,000 UNT 10,000</p> <p>The people at the table were satisfied with these amounts and with the understanding that Cathy is leading development of the training curriculum; Chris will implement with flexibility the curriculum developed by Cathy.</p>
Course Ref Profiles	Jean Keller	<p>Marilyn asked about reference course profiles, and Jean explained how to access them on a website provided to use by THECB. We agreed that the templates for any we prepare through this project do not need to be the same as there are disciplinary differences in expectations.</p>
Pilot Training Modules	Kathy Wright-Chapman	<p>Kathy walked the group through an outline for the planned pilot training modules. Preparation for their use would need to include creation of share points, making copies and binders, including live binders. As we looked at the templates, AVATAR Secondary Course Profile Alignment Template and AVATAR Postsecondary Course Profile Alignment Template, several suggestions were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key concepts should be replaced by Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's) for higher education • The order of Assignments/Activities and Instructional Strategies could be reversed • We liked that the two templates are similar and would like them to be as similar as possible. • There is need for workforce consideration on the templates. • There is need to consider evidences of student readiness for college and careers and their response to AVATAR interventions as deliverables. For example, how about bringing student work that illustrates certain cross-disciplinary competencies?
Deliverables	Jean Keller	<p>Deliverables for the first semester need to be submitted by December. We agreed that the product will be the template as modified and response to an evaluation survey that might be primarily qualitative in approach. (Will there be a pre-training survey, as well? What evidence do you have of horizontal alignment of the current curriculum? What evidence do you have of vertical alignment?)</p> <p>Our work at this point shows fairly clearly where we hope to be at the end of one semester with the pilots, but where are these groups headed in the second semester? Avatars walking. Jean said she would pull what she could from the proposal related to this question, which needs to guide the earlier training plan to some extent.</p> <p>The MOU (Letter of agreement) needs to be placed on UNT letterhead and sent to TJ and White High Schools.</p> <p>This core planning group needs to meet again in mid-October.</p>

