

Agency of Education
219 North Main Street, Suite 423
January 30, 2018

Present: Bernice Garnett, UVM; Kathy Johnson, Self & Anti-Defamation League; Bor Yang, Human Rights Commission; Jay Nichols, VPA; Michael Dreiblatt, standuptobullying; Dana Kaplan, Outright VT; Mara Iverson, Outright VT
AOE: Suzanne Sprague

Agenda:

1. Legislative issues
2. School resources for bullying prevention
3. Other?

The meeting convened at 2:31 p.m.

Chair Garnett began the meeting asking for introductions. She asked the members to share something about themselves or their organization, which could be positive or negative, that they are doing for the prevention of hazing, harassing and bullying. Topics discussed were a student-led research project on anti-racism work with Edmunds Middle School, SUs having more services or programs for students with disabilities outside of school, empowering teachers, Montpelier High School and the Black Lives Matter flag, teachers perpetrating harassment, what works and why it works and qualitative versus quantitative metrics.

Chair Garnett said the groups represented on the Council are doing amazing work. She asked the group to share an asset or skill set, either as individuals representing themselves or their organization, that they bring to the Council which contributes to the prevention of hazing, harassment or bullying. Topics included integrating a curriculum for grades K-12 through a transdisciplinary lens, students being agents of change, opportunity to make change, playing out situations in a safe environment and preparing students and staff, training opportunities, being proactive instead of reactive, high-functioning schools versus low-functioning schools, developing student leaders, youth empowerment, and families and family support.

Chair Garnett asked if there were any legislative issues that pertain to the Council. Johnson said that S.281 was issued by the Senate to create a commission called the Racial Justice Mitigation Review Board that would parallel the work of the Human Rights Commission. She said the specific charge would be to assess where systemic racism is across state systems, gather data, and propose solutions so that there is something systemic in place to try and address systemic racism. Johnson said that Karen Richards, Executive Director of the Human Rights Commission,

testified in favor of creating the board. She said that Curtiss Reed, Executive Director of Vermont Partnership for Fairness and Diversity Race & Diversity in VT-Adult Education, testified in opposition to the new board and said it could be achieved through an executive order. Johnson said that Reed wondered why an executive order had not already been issued to all Vermont agencies. Nichols said the board is called the Systemic Racism Mitigation Oversight and Equity Review Board and will be comprised of 11 committee members with terms of 4 years. Discussion followed on the documentary named "13th", revising ethnic studies curriculum, white privilege and privilege walks, implicit bias, and the goal of the Council and its effectiveness.

Yang addressed agenda item 2 and said that the right to an independent review with the AOE is an option missing for kids who are bullied. She said that the Council could advise the Secretary to offer the option. Yang said that independent reviews are available for harassment which is different from bullying. She continued that the HRC and AOE turn bullying cases away to outside resources. Yang said she does not see a negative. Johnson added that if every family that received an outcome other than what they wanted from their case, requested an independent review, it could be a large number of requests. Discussion followed.

The next meeting is March 27th at the Agency of Education in room 423 from 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Future agenda items include Building Effective Strategies for Teaching (BEST), Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), Combined Incident Reporting Software (CIRS) and restitution for parents.

The remaining meeting dates for 2018 are below.

Tuesday, March 27, 2018

Monday, May 21, 2018

Monday, July 30, 2018

Monday, September 24, 2018

Monday, November 26, 2018

Adjourn:

The meeting adjourned at 3:59 p.m.

Minutes recorded and prepared by Suzanne Sprague.