

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Dial in Number: 802-552-8456

Conference ID: 595 083 955#

September 26, 2022

Present: Henri Sparks, Burlington Schools; Amanda Garces, Human Rights Commission; Curtiss Reed, Vermont Partnership for Fairness and Diversity; Jeff Francis, Vermont Superintendents Association (VSA); Bernice Garnett, Associate Professor, UVM; Ken Canning, Vermont School Boards Insurance Trust (VSBIT); Jay Nichols, Vermont Principals' Association (VPA); Sue Ceglowski, Vermont School Boards Association (VSBA); Daniel French, Vermont Agency of Education

AOE: Suzanne Sprague

Others: Meg Cline

Agenda:

1. Draft Updates to Model HHB Policy and Procedures Presentation – Tracy Watterson, VTmtss Program Manager
2. Sustainability of the HHB Advisory Council
3. Other Items
4. ?

The meeting convened at 2:31 p.m.

Chair Sparks made a change to the agenda and removed item one. The group's discussion will focus on the future of the HHB Prevention Advisory Council.

Chair Sparks led the discussion. He has concerns that the Advisory Council has not done much to prevent the harassment, hazing and bullying of students. He wondered if the Advisory Council should exist or perhaps a change is needed in its membership and focus. He added the Advisory Council's creation and charge is in statute ([16 V.S.A § 570](#)). He said the Advisory Council is advisory to the Secretary. Garces shared a draft letter with the group. It includes problems with how the Advisory Council has worked in the past and solutions going forward and poses the question of whether the HHB Prevention Advisory Council is the right group to handle the work.

Discussion followed regarding the charge and membership as described in statute and that any changes should be directed to the General Assembly (GA), changes can be included in the annual report, Secretary French taking on the leadership role of the Advisory Council, student voice and membership, providing recommendations to Secretary French, change focus to advocate on behalf of students and families instead of administrators, need for the Advisory Council, structure should be sharpened and work in partnership with districts, resolution of data issues, revisit membership to include those who want to be on the Advisory Council and those that can commit to schedule of work, adding points in the letter to the report to the GA, data that is required versus the data that is available, state school climate survey, holistic approach, Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) and Combined Incident Reporting Software (CIRS), primary prevention, adding additional Agency of Education members to the Advisory Council, issue of culture in school districts, accountability, and clear next steps for the Advisory Council.

Secretary French explained that the Agency of Education is promoting revisions to the HHB Model Policy and Procedures and has a draft that he would like to share with the Advisory Council for its feedback.

The Advisory Council members will provide updates and changes to the draft letter provided by Garces by October 14, 2022. Garces will update for consideration at the next HHB Prevention Advisory Council meeting. The document will be shared in advance of the meeting.

Meg Cline, parent, addressed the Advisory Council and shared her experience of moving to a new district and how the HHB Model Policy and Procedure was not followed specifically pertaining to the intersection between disability and discipline. She said the reports were clear and included specific mention around sexual identity and the use of racial and homophobic slurs. Restorative practice techniques are always listed as the outcome. She added that parents need to be educated of their rights.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 28, 2022.

The meeting adjourned at 3:39 p.m.

Minutes recorded and prepared by Suzanne Sprague.