

Agency of Education
One National Life Drive, Davis 5, Room 513
Montpelier, VT 05620

November 25, 2019

Present: Tim Vincent, VSBIT; Jeff Francis, VSA; Henri Sparks, Burlington Schools; Melissa Horwitz, Human Rights Commission; Jay Nichols, VPA; Jeff Fannon, VT NEA; Lindsey Halman, Up for Learning; Tracy Harris, Agency of Education; Daniel M. French, Agency of Education

AOE: Suzanne Sprague

Agenda:

1. Listening tours
 - a. Up for Learning
 - b. Planning & Process
2. Other?

The meeting convened at 2:35 p.m.

Chair Vincent asked for introductions. He welcomed Lindsey Halman from Up for Learning. Vincent said at the last meeting discussion occurred regarding identifying student leaders, informal leadership and attracting students to participate on the HHB Prevention Council. Council members suggested inviting someone from Up for Learning to help inform the conversation. Halman addressed the Council and gave a brief background of Up for Learning. She explained that the work is focused on the relationship between young people and adults in the school building in order to create change. The way it happens is based on the schools' needs. They use participatory action research in order to gather data to then engage multiple stakeholders in dialogue about the data which leads to changes in the school that are learner and youth-centered changes. Halman said that currently the work is focusing on restorative practices. She explained some of the programs offered by Up for Learning. She added that all their work includes youths and adults working together sharing responsibility in decision-making.

Vincent said the Council has been discussing revisiting the listening tours. He explained the past process and purpose. Vincent said the discussion has raised some questions such as 1) what is the Council trying to accomplish; 2) what to do with the data and information; and, 3) since the Council is advisory to the Secretary, how does the interplay work? Sparks said to add student voice to the process. The Council has not had student members for some time.

Discussion followed regarding past student engagement. Halman suggested getting students back to the Council to have their input. She added that to attract students the Council should make sure the meetings are at a time that are accessible to youth, allow a virtual option, have the meetings at different locations and supply compensation such as a proficiency-based graduation credit or an independent study credit. The compensation will make the student feel valued.

Vincent said that at the prior listening tour, principals chose the students and there may have been bias in their selections. The Council wants marginalized, suspended and expelled students to be included as well. Halman suggested asking schools for a representation of the entire student body, reaching out to students themselves and contacting community justice centers. Sparks said there are two separate pieces. The first is to have student representation on the Council and the second is student involvement in the listening tours. Vincent summarized the options for the listening tours that have been discussed but not decided on by the Council. The options are 1) two focused forums, one for students and one for principals; 2) day long summit; and 3) follow the prior listening tour format. Discussion followed on the Council's mission, informing the work of the Secretary, Act 1 intersection, delay of the School Climate Survey, Youth Risk Behavior Survey, students who do not participate, inviting youth to be part of the Council and convening a statewide forum.

Lengthy discussion occurred regarding attracting students to the Council. Sparks wants to reach the bullies and those that were bullied as well. Halman offered suggestions on the process of youth – adult partnerships. Discussion followed regarding joining other groups' discussions. Some possible youth conferences that were suggested are Beyond Bullying, Power Squared Conference and Vermont 9 – 26 Coalition gathering. Sparks asked Halman if Up for Learning could assist in incorporating youth to the Council. She said they could support the work if that is what the Council decided. Further discussion occurred regarding the listening tours, meaningful interaction with kids, Rowland Foundation, being a welcomed participant at various organizations' conferences and reaching students who have been bullied or victimized.

Vincent said at the next meeting the Council will decide whether to pursue the listening tour and how the Council will attract students to become members of the Council. Additionally, the Council will review its mission and vision.

The next meetings are below.

January 25, 2020
March 30, 2020
June 1, 2020
July 27, 2020
September 28, 2020
November 30, 2020

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.
Minutes recorded and prepared by Suzanne Sprague.