



Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting  
Call In: 1-802-828-7667  
Conference ID: 307 554 469#  
1 National Life Drive, Room 532  
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501

### DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

**Present:** Marianna Donnally, Department of Mental Health; Sandra Cameron, Vermont School Boards Association; Steve Perrin, Vermont Principals' Association; Meaghan Morgan-Puglisi, Vermont-National Education Association; Catherine Gallagher, Vermont Superintendents Association; Marilyn Mahusky, Legal Aid Disability Law Project; Karen Price, Vermont Family Network; Amy Wheeler-Sutton, Building Effective Strategies for Teaching Students Project at the University of Vermont; Lindsey Halman, Vermont Restorative Approaches Collaborative; Chris Sheehan, teacher, appointed by the Vermont-National Education Association; Kym Asam, Vermont Independent Schools Association; Ana Lindert-Boyes, Twinfield Union High School, Vermont Principals' Association/UP for Learning; and Justin Picard, Vermont School Counselor Association.

**Absent:** Heather Bouchey, Deputy Secretary, Agency of Education; Darren McIntyre, Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators (VCSEA)

**Members of the public/others:** Susan Aranoff (VT Developmental Disabilities Council), Jeff Maling

**AOE:** Chris Case, Kate Rogers

#### **Call to Order/Roll Call/Amendments to Agenda**

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m.

#### **Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes - October 14, 2021**

Motion to approve: Meaghan Morgan-Puglisi

Minutes approved

Sandra Cameron abstained – was not at the meeting

#### **Opportunity for Public to be Heard**

- 1) **Susan Aranoff** – would like to see the Dashboard include disability data (coming soon), appreciation for the work that has happened/ the education from the practitioners, request to put in the final report for the Developmental Disabilities Council to have a seat in subsequent

Task Force work, wondered if Karen Price could update the Special Education Advisory Council to tie these groups together

- 2) **Jeff Maling:** [Shared a diagram](#) to describe his thinking on the process before and after Act 35 - wanted feedback from the TF – also referenced progressive discipline policies with automatic suspensions; should consider language of reengagement vs. reentry; considerations of due process
- 3) **Chris Case:** document is being drafted within the AOE imminent harm terminology, information about best practices for preventing exclusionary discipline, pathway for getting the document back to the TF is not fully clear yet
- 4) **Kate Rogers:** document also includes guidance for PreK – wants to ensure that the TF is looking at the inequities that Act 35 has created for reporting between public and private PreK

### Report from Subcommittees

#### #1- Best practices, defining behaviors, other states, and services for students under age 8 (Amy Wheeler-Sutton)

Amy shared draft of the initial report: noted that referencing the WHY as to these recommendations seems to be an important point to share in the report

- 1) Understanding what other states have done:
  - DE: for schools that have high suspension states or gaps for 3 years, they require a review and request to revise their continuous improvement plan
  - CA: no longer can be expelled for disruption or defiance
  - OH: extensive bill – every institution that provides a teacher prep program to include a course on positive behavior interventions, SEL, trauma
  - Shared out on a few other examples from other states
  - Should also look at Baltimore, Philly, Burlington School District

Cat shared that LNSU has worked with Jon Kidde, Heather Hobart, and Reclaiming Futures on chronic absenteeism; student engagement specialist; redefining truancy

Sandra – asked for Sub-Committee to reference private PreK and Independent Schools are also addressing exclusionary discipline

Committee’s Task was also to: Define the “Most Serious Behaviors” – data sources from Steven Perrin (survey from principals), Cat Gallagher (2019 Superintendent survey)

Cat – commented School Boards are always involved when expulsion is a possibility – School Boards need to take into account the full narrative

AOE – is developing guidance around the recommendation sharing

-Sandra – would like the committee to consider “safety of who” when people are observing unsafe behavior

-shortened school days (not official suspensions) need to be addressed

-Marilyn, Kym, Kheya – made comments

- important to distinguish between "mis" behavior and "stress" behavior – we need to be realistic what schools are experiencing today vs 2 years ago
- Meaghan - The committee found it was easier to develop a list of what should not get a student excluded
- Subcommittee is also working on recommendations for educator best practices

## #2- School staff, Professional Development, Training

- any practice listed, if it does not have equity at the center, can be harmful
- reviewed the MTSS survey data sent out to principals (*Chris: VTmtss state survey is school level. It's revised annually to reflect priority AOE/MTSS questions, which may include exclusionary discipline, this year.*)
- important to understand the schools that are using the Pyramid Model
- defined restorative approaches – proactive and reactive – whole school proactive – it is a multitiered framework
- “Whole-school restorative approaches build healthy school climates by creating space for people to understand one another and develop relationships; when things go wrong, restorative approaches create space to address needs, repair relationships, and heal...Proactive practices intentionally build trust and understanding within the community to ensure a healthy supportive climate and environment. When things go wrong, restorative practices engage those affected and create space so that individuals and communities can effectively identify, understand, and address harms and needs—this facilitates healing” (Kidde, 2017, Pg. 3-4).*
- “The aim of restorative practices is to develop community and manage conflict and tensions by repairing harm and relationships. The fundamental hypothesis of restorative practices is that human beings are happier, more cooperative, more productive and more likely to make positive changes in their behavior when those in positions of authority do things with them rather than to them or for them. The nature of the process, not the outcome, make a response restorative or not” (Costello, Wachtel, & Wachtel, 2019, Pg. 47).*

Marianna – get clear with what this Task Force means by what it means to provide supports to school, rather than add more demands to school – holistic approach to this issue

## #3 – AOE Dashboard (Marilyn)

- [Vermont Education Dashboard \(VED\)](#) – notes were shared with the Task Force prior to the meeting
- does not include disability data (is coming)
- can see data by state, district, or school
- reviewed definitions on the dashboard as a subcommittee
- school conduct reflects lots of different behaviors – very broad

### Questions and Important Considerations:

Kym: how do we understand the cultural context and how behavior is being interpreted by the adults -- what bias is being activated?

Meaghan: 0% is misleading and possibly a problem when looking at equity. For example, if you have two students of color in a supervisory union who are repeatedly suspended when there are only 10 students of color in the district, they won't show up.

Sandra - will need to cross check interplay of laws and rules addressing hazing, harassment, and bullying, weapons/firearms, drugs/alcohol, special education manifestation hearings

What happens when “all other alternatives and supports” are not very comprehensive at a certain school?

Staffing, training, and funding are big concerns

Reflective supervision is important

### **Working Session**

#### **Next Steps, Topics/Dates for Next Meeting**

- how can we authentically bring youth voice to this work?

-Will need to schedule a meeting for both December and early January – initial report is due on January 15<sup>th</sup>

-Sub Committee #2 will need to meet again in early December - Amy requested a Doodle to be sent to the Subcommittee members

#### **Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn: Marianna

Second: Meaghan

The meeting adjourned at: 10:01 am

Meeting minutes submitted by: Lindsey Halman and Amy Wheeler-Sutton