



**Task Force on Equitable and Inclusive School Environments  
Subcommittee #1 - Best practices, defining behaviors, other states  
October 27, 2021, 2021, 12-1:00 p.m.**  
1 National Life Drive, Davis 5, Room 532  
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501

Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting  
Call In: 1-802-828-7667  
Conference ID: 725 287 081#

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

**Present:** Marianna Donnally, Department of Mental Health; Sandra Cameron, Vermont School Boards Association; Meaghan Morgan-Puglisi, Vermont-National Education Association; Marilyn Mahusky, Legal Aid Disability Law Project; 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; Steven Perrin, Vermont School Board Member; Christine Kilpatrick, appointed by the Vermont Family Network; Ana Lindert-Boyes, Twinfield Union High School, Vermont Principals' Association/UP for Learning; and Justin Picard, Vermont School Counselor Association.

**Members of the public/others:** Susan Aranoff  
**Agency of Education (AOE):** Maureen Gaidys

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

The meeting was called to order at 12:07 p.m.

**Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes**

Moved by Marianna Donnally; seconded by Sandra Cameron. The vote passed to approve the minutes.

Conversation about what is allowed in subcommittee meetings.

There are ten people in the committee, we think, Maureen will look at how many people are in the subcommittee and how many will make a quorum. There are 11 people in this subcommittee; a quorum would be 6.

**Shared Document**

We can work on the Shared Document in the meeting, but it will not be posted as a Google document (because of Open Meeting Laws). Small groups that do not constitute a quorum of this subcommittee can work together on this document outside subcommittee meetings.

There are great resources in the document, but we want to be adding to these best practices.

Justin added resources with what he's come across and research from various tools and trainings (might be too broad for what we are doing).

Marilyn: Should we include subheadings for Restorative Practices and those relating to other ideas?

Marianna: “My understanding was looking at models and community supports rather than the specific interventions that make up those models.”

Amy Wheeler-Sutton: Maybe in this table just have “Utilize Restorative Practices” and have the specifics other places

Steven Perrin: How do schools determine success? What are schools basing that on?

Marilyn: If there are evidence-based practices, we should go from there. Keep that in mind.

Lindsey reminds us that Restorative Practices (RP) are more of a mindset. For example, look at U-32 and what data they have. Getting specific examples so we can reference them and research them. We want to talk to people in the field. If we can't find information, we should do more research. Maybe “Alternatives to Detention,” and have the information there. I think we are trying to understand what are evidence-based practices that are alternatives to traditional discipline. People should be able to see and go to resources.

Marianna: Are evidence-based practices different from best practices? We might need to clarify somewhere, is this an evidence-based practice or just a best practice; also, is it trauma responsive?

Could we create a repository of resources? Sandra suggests the Task Force recommend the AOE create a repository and maintain it. Amy says that there is already a virtual library of [resources for Restorative Approaches](#) and that can be found here: <https://vtrac.org/resources/>. Marianna asks what the goal is? Marilyn agrees that we are to inform policy; Lindsey says it is perhaps both to collect information and make specific recommendations to the legislature. Presumably we also want money to implement these.

Christine and Marianna say they could gather information from parents, etc. (Sandra reminds that the surveys need to be fully accessible to all families). Amy says there are students on our larger task force, and they may or may not have had experience with exclusionary discipline, but it would be helpful to have that voice here. Administrators could also think of students they could bring in. The legislature wants to learn what we see as best practices.

Justin asks if we expected to collect new data. Since we weren't given a lot of data on alternative discipline and practices, how do we make a recommendation? Can we bring in research from other states?

Marilyn: We need to address both preventative and reactive. RP is focused on reactive.

Meaghan: Restorative should be 80% focused on preventative. It is an umbrella term.

Lindsey: As a group we should check our own biases and our own areas of expertise; the goal is equity when reacting proactively and reactively. Restorative is a mindset and paradigm shift. We are making recommendations for them to change mindsets, so all young people feel valued.

Justin: Since subgroup 4 has been included, we need to also carve out time for other tasks, like defining what the most extreme behaviors are.

Steven wants to talk to sources around the state to talk about what we need to do to change mindsets, etc. Vermont Principals' Association (VPA) puts out a weekly newsletter and will ask school leaders what suspendable offenses are, and what best practices are (what are restorative practices in your

school), what are objective criteria, and how to measure them. Urge the group to think about what is meant by Restorative Practices.

Marilyn agrees that Restorative Practices has become a nebulous, umbrella term. We need a common language and what we want in this system. At some point down the road, we should look at how often people choose to participate in the Restorative Practices. Steven says we also need to consider current school board philosophy.

### **Other Items**

#### **Next Time:**

Start next meeting with looking at what other states are doing.

Meaghan will look at developing a definition of Restorative Practices. If people have things they want to add to the document, email Lindsey with what you think is relevant. You can make a copy of the document so you can make notes in your own. We are not just looking at RP. If it isn't exclusionary, it is a practice we should be looking at. Email Maureen to add items to the agenda.

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

None.

#### **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

Meeting minutes submitted by: Meaghan Morgan-Puglisi