



**Task Force on Equitable and Inclusive School
Environments – Subcommittee #3
AOE Dashboard
November 3, 2021, 2-3:00 p.m.**

Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting
Call In: 1-802-828-7667
Conference ID: 606 365 969#
1 National Life Drive, David 4, Room #532
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Present: Heather Bouchey, Deputy Secretary, Agency of Education; Marianna Donnally, Department of Mental Health; Catherine Gallagher, Vermont Superintendents Association designee; Marilyn Mahusky, Legal Aid Disability Law Project.
AOE: Chris Case

Call to Order/Roll Call/Amendments to Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. The subcommittee asked for nominations for Chair of this committee. Marilyn Mahusky was nominated by C. Gallagher and motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes from October 19, 2021, Meeting

Deputy Secretary Bouchey made a motion to approve minutes from the October 19, 2021, meeting. Marilyn seconded the motion. Minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

Working Session

The subcommittee members identified the task of the Task Force (TF), and subcommittee as follows:

Subject to federal and state privacy laws, review, on a school district and approved independent schools basis, the readily available data and the data collection processes regarding suspensions and expulsions and review additional data necessary to inform the work of the TF including:

- Total number of suspensions and expulsions in each grade operated by the district/approved independent school (AIS)
- Total number of students in each grade who were expelled or suspended and the number of instances for each student
- Duration of each instance of suspension and expulsion
- The infraction for which each suspension and expulsion was imposed

- Each instance of referral to local law enforcement authorities, juvenile justice system, community justice center, State’s Attorney’s Offices, Department for Children and Families, or other juvenile justice-related authority
- Each instance in which an excluded student received re-educational services, as well as the duration of educational services per day, per week, and per month

All this data shall be in disaggregated format by the subgroups and categories listed below.

Members are seeking to define: What constitutes exclusionary discipline? Suspension? Expulsion? How do schools and agencies interpret it? What actions have been documented in statewide reports that lead to suspension and expulsion? Chris Case offered to send us language that is in **draft** form on possible definitions of suspension and expulsion that the AOE is currently working on in the event that might be useful to this group.

The subcommittee agreed that we will get these answers from the AOE Dashboard once it is ready for release. Deputy Secretary Bouchey will ask later today when the Dashboard will be available. The majority of the questions we are tasked with answering will be found on the Dashboard.

Deputy Secretary Bouchey noted a requirement under IDEA to report exclusionary discipline for students on IEPs. A question was posed to Chris Case whether any other existing pre-K data collections have information about exclusionary discipline. Chris answered that there is data, but it is not always reported, and there might be inconsistencies in how it is reported. For example, a student may be moved to another program because the existing one may not be the best fit. Is that really a “soft expulsion”? Similarly, when a student exhibits challenging behaviors and the school requests that a caregiver pick the student up from school because it would be “better for the student”, is that a kind of suspension? Also, how is attendance tracked. If a student leaves school every day after lunch because of behaviors, is attendance counted for the day? (Yes) What does that really mean about attendance and access to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)?

The group also discussed the potential importance of anecdotal data, even if we don’t have direct evidence. Anecdotal data can highlight potential trends and patterns that might lead to questions that give us meaningful data.

The group articulated action steps to achieve before the next meeting, to include:

Review and analysis of the two Holcombe reports we have been sent. We can also use these reports as a potential format to use in responding to the Legislature.

Reviewing data from the Dashboard when it is released.

Anecdotal responses from 19 superintendents in chart

Review of Federal Reports from Deputy Secretary Bouchey

Anecdotal evidence Marilyn may be able to pull from VRN, Federation, etc.

The group set a tentative next meeting date of November 17 from 1:30-2:30, depending on member availability and whether Dashboard information is available, understanding the bulk of our work will be review of the Dashboard.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Meeting minutes submitted by: Catherine Gallagher

DRAFT