



Task Force for Universal Afterschool Access
March 8, 2021, 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Draft Meeting Minutes

Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting

Call In: 1-802-552-8456

Conference ID: 793 793 344#

Per H.969 of 2020, Sec. B.1120.1, a [Task Force for Universal Afterschool Access](#) was created to consider and make recommendations on the framework for, the costs of, and related long-term funding sources for access to universal afterschool programs.

Task Force (TF) Members Present: Representative Kelly Pajala; Senator Perchlik; Jess DeCarolis, Director, Agency of Education (AOE); Geoffrey T. Pippenger, Senior Advisor to the Commissioner, Department for Children and Families (DCF); Matthew DeBlois, (Vergennes Union Elementary School), Vermont Principals' Association (VPA); Retta Dunlap, President, VT Home Education Network; David Woolpy, Executive Director, Vermont Boys and Girls Clubs of Rutland County; Heather Moore (Franklin County), Afterschool Program Representative; Christy Gallese (Chittenden County), Afterschool Program Representative; and Holly Morehouse, Executive Director, Vermont Afterschool, Inc.

Others: Lynne Robbins; Kendal Smith; Allison Keating.

Call to Order, Roll Call/ Amendments to Agenda/ Review of the Task Force's Legislative Tasks

Co-Chair Perchlik called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m. He said that Kendal Smith from the Governor's Office would speak during the public to be heard. There were no amendments to the agenda.

Approve Minutes from February 10, 2021 Meeting

Co-Chair Pajala moved to approve the minutes; Morehouse seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed.

Opportunity for Public to be Heard

Kendal Smith, Governor's Office, Director of Policy Development and Legislative Affairs: Smith spoke about a significant amount of COVID-19 relief funds that will be able to be used for summer enrichment activities such as afterschool/summer programming. As part of the Governor's Education Recovery efforts, he has asked to have a small working group stood up to decide how to deploy the significant federal funds that will be received. The federal spending bill still needs to be signed and it is hoped that this work will be jumpstarted this summer. This will be one-time money for one-time services this summer and could also be foundational/part of a longer-term effort.

Discussion: How to Support Students with Disabilities (SWD)/Universal Access and Equity

Co-Chair Perchlik introduced this item and said there is interest in clarifying this topic and that the challenge of the TF is to address equity and the challenges of equity for those with disabilities.

Dunlap shared that she spoke with the Icelandic embassy and she shared Iceland's focus on parental involvement to reduce substance abuse and that this needs to be better addressed in the draft report. There was discussion on aligning with prevention, adding parental engagement to the program elements section, equity within the programs and equity in the system, staffing in rural areas, priority funding for programs with challenges, using public funds to develop capacity, highlighting that we have had successful large programs, having a lessons learned section, highlighting funds that braid funds at the local level, focus on "every child," prioritizing successful programs, separate/additional funds to serve students with disabilities, existing high-quality programs have been impacted, supporting structured systems that will need this due to COVID-19, federal and state regulations, reconnecting with COVID-19 impacted parents, coaching/mentoring potential applicants, rural challenges, immediacy of providing services, building capacity where needed, not discounting non-traditional programs that might lack expertise, being explicit about funding categories, including examples of 21C and Afterschool for All programs, Iceland puts more emphasis on non-governmental entities (NGOs) and business/community supports, getting outside the box of the public school system, the immediate recovery period (this summer), coaching on not just the front end but the back end as well, potential to rise to the occasion, rurality and regional coaching with unique needs, public money should go to the public, whether we have the same reach when holding private entities accountable in administering a public program, common quality standards for afterschool, COVID-19 impacts, importance of community partnerships, staffing shortages, defining terms for the general population, infrastructure considerations, naming the youth worker as an education-related profession, destabilization of the existing system, being deliberate in seeking additional opportunities to address racial inequities, connecting to existing initiatives, using the social equity tool, being sensitive to working with diverse populations, staff mirroring the populations they serve, program evaluation, and resource support to connect with community members,

Funding Transportation

Cannabis Money and Other Funding Streams

Co-Chair Perchlik said that in preparation for this, he is hoping to work on some draft language, based on the draft report to address long-term funding because it would be good to present this at this time. There was discussion on assumptions in the report (% of participants, matching funds, and operational funds vs. one-time funds), program fees, undermining program effectiveness, and equity vs. equality. Morehouse identified costs as operational, coaching/professional development and administration. There was discussion on ensuring sustainability without reliance on long-term funds, targeting funds to kids vs. infrastructure, 21C programs, fees standing in the way of universal access, messaging around fees, Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP), payment/income sources, naming bills in progress, protecting privacy of those who pay and how much they pay, supporting the connection between cannabis funds and afterschool programs, acknowledging incoming ESSER monies, identifying predictable funding sources, connection to community recovery, potential for this to be a model program, repurposing language from an Alaska bill, additional investments are needed, examining what California and some other states do with state funding for 21C, designing for the future, being mindful of remediation needs, and being firm on protecting the Education fund.

Report with Findings and Recommendations to the Governor and the House and Senate Committees on Education (due on or before 4/15/2021)

Co-Chair Perchlik thanked Morehouse for her time and effort on the draft report and asked what she needed from the TF. Morehouse talked about process and sending any edits to her so that some parts of the report (upfront sections, priorities, etc.) could be finalized so that there could be focus on the sections discussed today. Any feedback on those beginning sections should be sent to her by March 12, 2021. She also suggested an appendix. DeCarolis advised that the TF should be prepared to adjust to fill in gaps and meet all the components of the equity tool. There was discussion on parallel work on drafting final report and using the equity tool. DeCarolis, Perchlik and DeBlois will use the equity tool. Morehouse will work on finalizing the draft and send notes to the group working with the equity tool. There was discussion on Open Meeting Law, conflicting comments received, opposition to basing afterschool programs in the schools (Dunlap), the Icelandic model, afterschool programming not being required to be connected to schools, TF's scope of work, prevention model, parental involvement/engagement and its challenges and incorporating this into the report.

Next Steps, Preview of Next Meeting

Co-Chair Perchlik asked the TF for preferences on the next meeting being March 22 or March 29, 2021. There was discussion on when to meet next. It was decided that the extra time would be helpful. Chair Perchlik announced that the next and final meeting of the TF would be March 29, 2021 from 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Adjourn

Co-Chair Perchlik adjourned at 2:03 p.m.

Meeting minutes prepared by Maureen Gaidys.