

Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting
Call In: 1-802-828-7667
Conference ID: 489 069 133#

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Present:

Lynn Currier-Stanley, Vermont Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), **Heather Lynn**, Vermont School Boards Association (VSBA), Attorney; **Sarah Robinson**, Vermont Network Against Domestic & Sexual Violence, Deputy Director; **Xusana Davis**, Executive Director of Racial Equity; **Rebecca McBroom**, Vermont-NEA, General Counsel; **Chelsea Myers**, Vermont Superintendents Association (VSA), Associate Executive Director; **Jay Nichols**, Vermont Principals' Association (VPA), Executive Director; **Henri Sparks (Sparks)**, Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying Prevention Advisory Council (HHB), Chair; **V Pearson**, Outright VT, Director of Organizing; **Amanda Garces**, Vermont Human Rights Commission (HRC), Director of Policy, Education and Outreach; and **Tracy Watterson (Heather Bouchey)**, AOE, Interim Secretary of Education's Proxy).

AOE: Maureen Gaidys.

Members of the public/others: Addie Lentzner, College Student and Executive Director of the Vermont Student Anti-Racism Network; Mary Ross, Elementary Principal; Harrison Shulman, Principal of Manchester Elementary Middle School; Rebecca Fillion, VPA President; Mary Gannon; Cara Zimmerman, VSBA; Jeff Francis, VSA; Carolyn Parillo; Representative Elizabeth Burrows;

Call to Order/Introductions Roll Call/Amendments to Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m.

Approval of [Draft Minutes from the November 20, 2023 Meeting](#)

Motion to approve the minutes – Amanda Garces, Seconded by Sarah Robinson
Unanimous approval

Public to be Heard and Community Stories

Rebecca Fillion, VPA President, Principal of Twin Valley Elementary School (TVES) – Desire of administrators to support students and prevent Hazing, Harassment and Bullying (HHB); shares story of one example of HHB case that has accumulated over 100 hours in administrator time.

Heather Lynn – Asks Rebecca if a position to support this work will be helpful.

Rebecca Fillion – They have been thinking about adding this position, but funding is a concern. Feels that it is a better investment to support the Inclusion, Belonging and Climate Coordinator. Don't know how small rural communities will pay for that position. Would like to see more funding going to mental health.

Addie Lentzner, College Student and Executive Director of the Vermont Student Anti-Racism Network – Knows students that have dropped out of school due to HHB, hears that racial slurs are being used often, don't want the bulk of the work to fall on students.

Mary Ross, Elementary Principal – Principals want to support students in their growth and learning. Administrative work takes days to complete one investigation. The administrative work hours to follow the law take time away from other important work of principals. Hope that reducing administrative burden will allow principals to allocate more of their time towards supporting students and families.

Harrison Shulman, Principal of Manchester Elementary Middle School – The HHB process is incredibly time consuming. Role is to support staff to the best of his ability, if spending a lot of time on HHB, unable to do that. In terms of having a specific role to support this work, doesn't know it would be effective in every place depending on geography, size, etc.

Summary of Feedback from Parents and Families – Amanda Garces

Amanda Garces presents Storytelling Campaign results.

Finalize Recommendations and VOTE

JN – Feels that some of the recommendations can be combined and included in guidance form from the AOE.

AG – Wants to add a recommendation that more representatives from school settings, caregivers, and students be included on HHB Council. Have specific recommendations for the makeup of the HHB Council.

TW – Recommendation that the HHB Council be expanded. There are other areas of possible legislation around attendance that the group be aware of, for example chronic absenteeism and truancy, so that the work can be coordinated.

XD asks for working group members to rank their top four.

JN asks about a previous assignment for Sarah Robinson, Heather Lynn, and V Pearson to work on draft language for 'severe and pervasive.'

SR – HL and SR met to reach an agreed proposal about 'severe and pervasive'

HL – Recognized that the terms severe and pervasive can be unhelpful. Proposal is to 1. Add a definition of 'hostile environment' for sexual harassment in statute. 2. Statute on civil suit claims should remove severe and pervasive.

AG – Wants to have the opportunity to bring this back to HRC and to students and families to get their opinions on this.

SR – Recommendation to put this recommendation aside for now until people have time to read the proposal.

XD – Rank our top priorities on the board to get the idea of what are top priorities for the group to start drafting the report.

TW – Asks about the desire to add funding for a building position to manage HHB, wonders about schools that have specific ways to coordinate this work and not being too prescriptive about the position

SR – We should get more specific about this

AG – Is adding a position just reinforcing the current system or should we be focusing on transforming the system?

HS – We have to be absolutely clear on what this ask is because if the state gave schools money and said figure it out, that would not be the answer. Need to make sure that it is not just added to someone with a lot of responsibilities plate. We need to have people with the time to do this work.

VP – “Creating” is key to this recommendation so that we put direction towards this work.

Draft assignments for January 15, 2024 Report to the General Assembly

TW – Ancillary work on mental health being done and can be summarized for report.

SR, CN, CM – Work on the drafting for the positional support recommendation; will send to a few others for review. Combine funding for schools recommendations and draft language.

LC and AG – Work on drafting for the support for mental health and community organizations

Everyone – review proposal on severe and pervasive

Next meeting: Finalizing recommendations

Worktime for Drafting Report (if available)

Public Comment

Mary Gannon – Provided a final public comment about her experience with schools and asks that there be student-centered policy recommendations and attention to leadership of schools in efforts of climate and culture.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Meeting Minutes recorded by: Chelsea Myers