

Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting
Call In: 1-802-828-7667
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DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Present:

Xusana Davis, Executive Director of Racial Equity, Chair; **Lynn Currier-Stanley**, Vermont Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), Co-Chair; **Cammie Naylor**, Vermont Legal Aid (VLA)/Disability Law Project (DLP) Staff Attorney; **Heather Lynn**, Vermont School Boards Association (VSBA), Attorney; **Sarah Robinson**, Vermont Network Against Domestic & Sexual Violence, Deputy Director; **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 (joined at 4:17 p.m.); **Courage Pearson**, Outright VT, Director of Organizing (joined at 4:07 p.m.); **Amanda Lucia Garces**, Vermont Human Rights Commission (HRC), Director of Policy, Education and Outreach.

AOE: Emily Simmons, Meghan Laird, Maureen Gaidys.

Members of the public/others: Representative Elizabeth Burrows; Rea; Representative Sarita Austin; Addie Lentzner, Vermont Student Anti-Racism Network (VSARN); Kari; Mary Gannon.

Call to Order/Introductions Roll Call/Amendments to Agenda/Minute Taker

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m. There were no amendments to the agenda.

Approval of [January 16, 2024 Meeting Minutes](#)

Davis asked for a motion to approve the draft minutes. Naylor asked to have the minutes corrected to reflect her title is staff attorney and not project director. Currier-Stanley moved to accept the meeting minutes with this edit; Robinson second. There was no discussion. The meeting minutes were approved with the correction of Naylor's title. Bouchey abstained.

Public to be Heard

There were no members to be heard.

Review/Finalize/Vote on January 15, 2024 Report to the General Assembly

Davis said the purpose of this meeting is to discuss the most recent final version of the draft report that was distributed to WG members and asked if members were prepared. Myers asked if WG members would have access to the feedback received so that they could make informed decisions about the language in the report.

Davis shared that she received feedback from [AOE/Interim Secretary Bouchey](#), from [Vermont School Boards Association/Vermont Principals' Association/Vermont Superintendents Association](#), and [Vermont-NEA](#), and took the [Human Rights Commission version of the draft](#) as their feedback.

Nichols asked what the process was going to be going forward to vote on the proposed draft. He said he believes there are aspects of the document that many are uninformed on. He discussed this with his executive council and VPA cannot support any new legislative recommendations that will open up schools/school employees to more potential civil liability without understanding the consequences thereof. He would rather the WG agree on what can be agreed on and leave the rest to the legislature. If this cannot happen, then VPA will likely need to withdraw and submit a separate report of their own or with others, who represent schools and school members.

Davis offered to walk the WG through the revised draft report.

H. Lynn also expressed that she had concerns similar to Nichols'. She has strong opposition to the proposed statutory changes and suggested that the WG focus on charges 2 and 3 as she believes that representation of the WG's work to date on the legislative proposals are not being accurately portrayed and the content of the explanation is factually and legally inaccurate.

Davis shared the draft report as it is in progress and explained how she got to this version of the draft report.

There was discussion on the section that addresses S.103 and when it was included in the proposal, needing to be factual with this representation, continued debate over when this topic came up, group engagement on specific language, WG acting beyond its charge, disagreement among WG members on if S.103 is related to the WG's charge, not conflating ideas with proposals, noting that the group grappled with various approaches and there was no consensus proposal, adding language that is clear on consensus/no consensus and where that lies, companion reports, having a multiplicity of voices, agreeing to disagree, "any other legislative action" is a catch-all provision and leaves this wide open, understanding of areas of agreement (eliminating severe and pervasive) and disagreement ([16 V.S.A. § 570](#)), and decision making challenges for this group.

Robinson suggested removing the entire side-by-side chart and noting lack of consensus on charge one and allowing WG representatives to submit individual memos on this specific charge that addresses their position. These individual memos would need to be submitted by the end of the week.

Davis asked for WG members to weigh in on removing the side-by-side section and allow member organizations to submit their own appendices. In agreement: Naylor, Bouchey, Sparks, McBroom, Robinson, Myers, Nichols, Garces, Currier- Stanley, H. Lynn, and Pearson. Davis asked if appendices could be provided to her by noon Friday, January 26, 2024. There was discussion. Appendices are due by noon on January 26, 2024. She will submit the report to the General Assembly by the end of the day Friday, January 26, 2024.

The WG worked on reviewing, editing, and finalizing the remainder of the document.

There was discussion on having a description of the level of disagreement in the report, defining protection in positive terms, use of the Chat function in this discussion, providing examples in the report, using proactive measures schools should take, school climate, citing statute, compulsory attendance, mental health issues, replacing “justice” with “practices,” integration with Educational Support Teams (ESTs), and community partners.

Davis asked for public comment.

Mary Gannon: commented on the process of the work of this group and an earlier comment around the tone and culture of the WG. At times it was ironic that this WG speaks to issues of bullying and harassment and yet she witnessed/observed some of that happening here. As a member of the public, watching this and recognizing that we are trying to center the wellbeing and care of our students and seeing some of those dynamics play out in this WG was painful. She recommended a debrief for this WG and working to recognize that different representations of work and perspectives in this WG and create a process for this honoring as some folks brought some lived experiences to these meetings.

Addie Lentzner, VSARN, Co-Executive Director: spoke about the need to have student participation as they have their own expertise and day-to-day experiences to offer. She asked about including a student voice in this group as they would have a lot of perspective to contribute. Davis agreed and explained that this WG was ending but encouraged that there would be other opportunities for student voice.

Davis asked if the WG would vote in agreement to submit this revised report, as edited in this meeting, and with the additions of individual organizations’ addenda to the General Assembly. Myers moved; Nichols seconded. There was no discussion. Davis called the vote. The motion carried. There were none opposed and no abstentions.

Davis will distribute the finalized report to WG members upon completion and await a request for testimony on the report from the legislature. WG members expressed appreciation for Davis’ leadership.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes recorded by: Maureen Gaidys