

Meeting conducted via teleconference due to COVID19

March 11th, 2021

Present: Amanda Garces, Mara Iverson, Mark Hage, Xusana Davis, Michael Martin, Chelsea Myers, Cynthia Reyes, Heather Bouchey, Asma Elhuni, Bruce Panday, Infinite Culcleasure, Heather Lynn, Mia Schultz

Members of the public: Erin Adams, Eric Lopez, Neil Richardson, Aileen Lem,

Call to Order/Amendments to Agenda/Introductions

The meeting convened at 5:05pm.

Review and Approve Minutes from

There were no changes made to the agenda.

Opportunity for Public to be Heard

Eric Lopez and Aileen Lem are working group within Strafford, VT and spoke about their experience coming to Vermont. They are working with the Supervisory Union and helping to create a diversity policy for the district.

Agenda item 1: EQS

- The subcommittee who is working with the literacy section of Vermont Literacy Standards reported. This is being looked at through a lens of instructional practice. There is a bill right now surrounding dyslexia and how this bill intersects with the Literacy Standards.
- There are intersections between the bills and how data collected once desegregated is disproportionately affected marginalized and special education students. The literacy instruction isn't accessible for these students.
- Hearing from parents of students who have struggled with reading is important (some who had and had not been diagnosed with dyslexia) We need to find out if it is an issue of instruction or that it wasn't detected on students who were struggling.
- messaging and what language is used is important to get people to understand why this needs to be addressed, especially surrounding marginalized students.
- There is a need to see if Jordan Gillihan is actually effective. face to face interactions with students and their parents might be effective.

- intersection between literacy and ELL: Conversations should happen with the following people: teacher of the year for Vermont is an ELL teacher.
- Jess from AOE who was at the last meeting.
- Also, in determining grant allocations in the House and Senate they now have a clause that requires them to look at ELL standards. Cynthia is currently working on a grant for ELL learners. There are not enough teachers in the area who work with ELL due to how rural it is (one ELL teacher per 4 schools). There is also an issue with getting information on student success because the University of Wisconsin keeps all of that data, even when formally asked for. There is a barrier with FERPA for getting this information.

The committee looked at a document that showed a rulemaking processes from the Vermont Board of Education. For every recommendation this group makes to the state board, it will take about a year in process. There was a suggestion to form a group (who are already people doing this work) surrounding cultural appreciation in the classroom to help go against how standardized testing is geared for white students. We would share out EQS with them and see their thoughts/opinions and invite them to a meeting to discuss the EQS.

Agenda item 2: Legislative Update

An assignment in a school was reviewed that implied immigrants are terrorists. These assignments did not seem to be made by a teacher but rather by a publisher. The administration and community members found reasons to justify the assignments and referenced how this material was used to teach implicit bias. However, the harm was not acknowledged.

There was a discussion of how we need to be aware with what this group puts out so that they don't use outdated information like this which causes harm for students. This could either be because the teacher doesn't know the harm that it will cause or that they are uneducated themselves. The teacher training that will come out of this will be so important surrounding how to have conversations like these.

There are ways to discuss the bad approaches without doing the bad approach.

Agenda item 3: Agency of Education Programs Question

There was mentions to bring Jess from the AOE back and why it would be good to talk with her. Possibly having her talk about the work that the Agency has done around equity and related issues. Also, talking to the state agency to discuss data and how that would help us, and the conversations were having and how AOE grants work.

A link on literacy grants <https://education.vermont.gov/student-learning/flexible-pathways/2019-2020-equity-literacy-grant>

Agenda item 4: State Board of Education Timeline

1. Stakeholder groups and/or AEO develop intel proposals new or revised rule (3-18 months)
2. State Board of Education reviews various proposals, invite public to input, build census on proposed rule (2-5 months)

3. Board adopts proposed rule and submits it to the Administrative Rule to begin formal APA rule-making process, then the board conducts public hearing to gather more public input (5 months)
4. Post public input, the board adopts the final rule and submits it to the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules, after reviewing the new rule becomes official and the APA process concludes, and the new rule goes into effect (3 months)

Agenda item 5: Grants and Community Building Discussion

Regarding the survey that has been sent out, an intern will work with the data and anyone else who would like to dissect and write a report on the data. Need support on the ground by administrations, students, families, how do we do that?

A meeting was held with a possible funder for 2 major projects who could bridge this group and the larger ethnic social justice coalition and sponsor focus groups around the state. This also speaks to the funding for pedagogical support (San Francisco University).

A discussion about having some sort of community aspect to the group and to publish about the group to show that this is more than just workers.

A discussion about the Education Quality Standards and how it is an incredible ask for the State of Vermont and how this is going to require a campaign and what kind of political support will be needed in and out of the legislature. How will we make the most compelling argument to endorse the most important aspect of the revisions? Need to start thinking and planning. There is still so much work to be done. The state board is not going to be fast; this will be a long process.

A proposal for this group to get in front of education leaders in from the state to start a face-to-face dialogue and what work is happening at the local level and how it all fits in.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30