

**Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting**

**Call In:** 1-802-552-8456

**Conference ID:** 612 032 371#

**DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**

**Present:**

- **Council Members:** Gwen Carmolli, Cynthia Gardner-Morse, Darren McIntyre, Dan French, Bev Davis, Donald Tinney, Jen Farnsworth, Martine Gulick, Ana Kolbach (for Jacqui Kelleher), Susan Gray, Julia Spaulding
- **AOE Members:** Suzanne Sprague, Emily Leute, Pat Fitzsimmons, Lori Dolezal, Emily Lesh
- **Others:** Sandra Chittenden

**Council Work (1:00)** – The meeting was called to order at 1:04 p.m.

- Welcome
- Roll Call and Share – share 1 glimmer of hope as we work toward our goal of increasing literacy outcomes for all Vermont students
- Updates – Revisions to Compiled Input #1
  - Written input was added by Cynthia Gardner Morse from Brenda Peters (NE IDA), Laura Quinn (Stern Center), and Janna Osman (Stern Center)
  - A resource was added by Don Tinney from National Education Policy Center
  - Public comment that is written and sent in will be summarized in the notes

**Approve April Meeting Minutes (1:20)**

- Motion and Vote – approved

**Hear Public Comment (1:25)**

- Written comment
- Christine Driver, Mount Mansfield Title 1 teacher wondering if the state is going to be legislating evidence based or research based (already in our requirements at the federal level – evidence based) – Will Council be recommending a particular curriculum? (no, but perhaps elements of) Will Council recommend screeners? (maybe in general, but not a specific one)
- Cynthia Gardner-Morse had a question about teacher prep programs – Jess DeCarolis mentioned REL report that is forthcoming

**Hear and Discuss Prioritized Selections (1:35)**

- Discuss narrowing selection process
  - Strengths
    - Structured literacy and six areas named in Blueprint
    - Assessment
    - MTSS
      - Gwen Carmolli – selected based on input from curriculum leaders, as they are implementing and developing MTSS systems, having the Blueprint aligned was helpful
  - Implementation
    - Resources
    - Assessment
      - Cynthia Gardner-Morse – Diagnostic, screeners, and progress monitoring are all very important components of assessment
    - Professional development and professional learning
      - Bev Davis – NE Kingdom hiring folks who have not gone through teacher prep program and we need to be able to support them as much as we can; as many and as varied opportunities as possible, in many formats
    - Gwen Carmolli – Made a note that Council has discussed that we are early in implementation so we want to keep in mind that the field may not be as far along as the Blueprint had hoped.
    - Susan Gray – Created survey for feedback from constituents – data says about 30% of teachers in independent schools are still using whole language or balanced literacy; some schools are still using Fountas and Pinnell – would there be a time to share the results of this survey?
      - Discussion about what it means to be “evidence based”
  - Changes
    - Remove header “Balanced Literacy”
    - Change focus from “struggling learner” to “all students”
    - Focus on classroom instruction – lots of recommendations
    - Susan Gray – thinks these changes will have a huge impact; hard to synthesize all of these comments, glad these rose to the top
  - Additions
    - Explicit instruction
    - Writing
    - Resources
      - Gwen Carmolli – some excellent resources linked and included
    - Evidence based instruction, programs, and practices
    - Assessment
    - Gwen Carmolli – largest number of selections; also, Council had discussed the need for a brief overview of the Blueprint

- Cynthia Gardner-Morse – add morphology and spelling
- Share & discuss prioritized selections - each member is invited to share 1 comment on selections
- Share summer sub-committee work to identify connections to legislation/requirements, & evidence to support recommendations
  - Three members have indicated interest in summer work so far
  - Subcommittee work needs an agenda posted ahead of time, keep minutes and have them approved at Council meeting
  - Fewer than a quorum in order for it to count as subcommittee work
  - Members can't be paid for more than eight meetings in one year
  - Susan Gray – What is the time commitment involved?
    - Gwen Carmolli– Up to four half days with some work in between; work might be split amongst members; open to folks participating virtually
  - Gwen Carmolli – Fill out the survey or send an email

### Reflection (2:30)

- What has gone well with our work this year?
  - Martine Gulick– Learned a lot about literacy
  - Darren McIntyre– Learned a lot as well; appreciates summaries of feedback on priority areas
  - Cynthia Gardner-Morse– Discussion among a variety of experts
  - Julia Spaulding – Talking more about foundational skills, including spelling
  - Jen Farnsworth– Great to hear everyone's perspectives and build awareness of what's going on at the legislative level; great exposure to the Blueprint
  - Don Tinney – Great opportunity to have discussions about literacy
  - Bev Davis– Taking a deep dive into the Blueprint and eliciting feedback from many stakeholders
  - Susan Gray – Loves the work that we are doing; applauds what Vermont is doing in having these meetings
  - Gwen Carmolli – Healthy dialogue around different perspectives and resources, learning from each other; people are comfortable asking their questions and sharing their opinions
- What is 1 thing you hope to accomplish next year?
  - Cynthia Gardner-Morse– Hope we can get a recommendation to the legislature for specific improvement; agrees about need for a brief document
  - Martine Gulick– Looking forward to getting the Blueprint more widely known, understood, and implemented across the state
  - Darren McIntyre– Building awareness of the Blueprint is so important – hopes for that 1–2-page summary to build awareness, include resources and a plan to implement
  - Julia Spaulding– More discussion about the social emotional impacts that a lack of literacy skills can have on students

- Jen Farnsworth – Blueprint needs to be presented in a way that is accessible to all educators (1–2-page version); thoughtful plan about how we are going to use educators’ time
- Don Tinney– Important to have discussions at local and state level around literacy; haven’t talked about all the factors outside of school that have an impact; need to find a balance in terms of our recommendations (don’t get so prescriptive that we are not respecting the educators in our schools in using professional judgement)
- Bev Davis– Having trouble wrapping head around intended audience of the Blueprint; provide links to something useful (even if the Blueprint itself isn’t useful to classroom teachers)
- Susan Gray – Hopes that Vermont can be a leader in addressing the crisis of literacy; hopes to see children make dramatic improvements; maybe address older students down the road
- Gwen Carmolli– Hopes for clear recommendations on how to revise the Blueprint and add clear resources between revision cycles; make sure it’s clear, concise, and aligned to evidence; how do we think about the impact on the student? How do we help students who are struggling at any level?
- Don Tinney – Do we have the mechanism to ask teachers who are doing this work what they need (considering resources, class size, etc.)? How will we know what we need to tell the legislature teachers need (what they need money for, etc.)?
  - Gwen Carmolli– Could we “assess” the needs of the field? Perhaps this could be added to the Council’s recommendations about assessment
  - Cynthia Gardner-Morse – Could we conduct a statewide survey?

**Wrap Up (2:50)** – The meeting adjourned at 2:26 p.m.