

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Dial in Number: 802-552-8456

Conference ID: 688 568 972#

June 1, 2020

Present: Tim Vincent, Vermont School Board Insurance Trust (VSBIT); Jeff Francis, Vermont Superintendents Association (VSA); Melissa Horwitz, Human Rights Commission (HRC); Sue Ceglowski, Vermont School Boards Association (VSBA); Jeff Fannon, VT-National Education Association (VT-NEA); Jay Nichols, Vermont Principals' Association (VPA); Dan French, Agency of Education (AOE); Lucie Garand, Government Relations Specialist, Downs Rachlin Martin PLLC; Mara Iverson, Outright VT

AOE: Suzanne Sprague

Agenda:

1. Discussion of Secretary French's response and indications to the question of disbanding the Harassment, Hazing and Bullying Prevention Advisory Council (HHB)
2. How the HHB Prevention Council will make decisions
Consensus, Majority, etc.
3. HHB future direction and activities
4. Other?

The meeting convened at 2:34 p.m.

Chair Vincent reviewed the agenda. He asked if there were any other items to add to the agenda. Nichols said he would like to discuss the recent changes to Title IX and the implications on Vermont school leaders.

Chair Vincent began discussion of the first agenda item. He reviewed the questions sent to Secretary French regarding the HHB Advisory Council and additionally, reviewed Secretary French's response. The transcription is below.

Chair Vincent - 1) Do you believe the authorizing statute for the HHB Prevention Advisory Council should be repealed resulting in the disbanding of the Council?

Secretary French - No, I do not support repeal and disbanding of the group. From my perspective as a former principal and superintendent, it has been very helpful to educators to

have a single entity convening regularly on this topic to highlight awareness and to provide a means of sharing best practices.

Chair Vincent - 2) If not, then what do you envision as the future direction and activities of the Council?

Secretary French - I think the group's continued and future work falls into two categories: 1) Identify the extent to which HHB is a concern in our schools, and 2) Advise the Secretary on what to do about it - e.g. revisions to regulations, new technical guidance, professional development, etc.

In terms of #1, the group should review data (e.g. Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) results, conduct focus group meetings, etc.) and then provide an interpretation of the data to describe the current state of the issue. The group should then move to formulating recommendations as formal advice to the Secretary. I suggest there should be a logical connection between the findings from the data analysis of the "current state" and an evaluation of the current regulatory framework - are new rules required? revisions? additional technical guidance?

Discussion followed regarding recommending changes to the current model policy, data collection, Clery Act and how it does not apply to K-12 public institutions, Combined Incident Reporting Software (CIRS) and its data feeding to the U.S. Department of Education, how the data is used by Vermont, climate survey being on hold, YRBS, Vermont's Annual Snapshot's Safe and Healthy Schools section not fully populated, and the effectiveness of the HHB.

Chair Vincent asked for discussion on the second agenda item which is how the Council will make decisions regarding ideas and projects moving forward. He offered some possibilities such as consensus, quorum, majority rule or unanimous agreement for or against and described each possibility. Iverson suggested using the consensus model as it seemed to work more equitably. Fannon and Horwitz agreed. Nichols wondered if it was possible for one person or organization to block everyone else. Discussion followed regarding creating new versions of the idea, guidelines to outline process, consensus being more responsive to people's needs, advisory to the Secretary of Education and what the Council recommends to him. Chair Vincent said that unless there is disagreement, the Council will use the consensus decision making process going forward.

Chair Vincent asked the Council for discussion on its future direction and activities. Discussion followed regarding cyberbullying issues, how to reach out to the Council, race and the AOE releasing a statement on the George Floyd issue.

Nichols said that Title IX has been updated. The updated version contains a change that is worrisome. Nichols said that the investigator must be a separate entity from the decision maker. He is concerned about available resources and advised new trainings are needed. Chair Vincent offered to have a legal review of the changes to Title IX and will report back to the Council at its next meeting. He added that an interim meeting will be scheduled if action is required prior to the Council's next meeting.

The next meetings are below.

July 27, 2020

September 28, 2020

November 30, 2020

The July 27th agenda items include a discussion on Title IX, potential future activities related to cyberbullying and reaching a consensus on listening tours. Secretary French suggested adding an agenda item related to COVID-19 planning and supports for students.

The meeting adjourned at 3:48 p.m.

Minutes recorded and prepared by Suzanne Sprague.

DRAFT