

MEMORANDUM

TO: Hazing, Harassment and Bully Prevention Advisory Council
FROM: Daniel M. French, Secretary
SUBJECT: Future Work of the Council
DATE: May 17, 2021

Chair Sparks and I met to discuss the possible future work of the Council. As a result of that meeting, I offered to put forward some ideas to help inform the Council's thinking in this area.

As we emerge from what has been an unprecedented public health emergency with the COVID-19 pandemic, we are beginning to make plans for the next phase of our emergency response in education, what we have termed the "recovery phase." Basically, we believe the impact of the emergency on our students will be long-lasting and will continue to affect them from an educational perspective after the public health risks from the virus subside. We also believe students who were at-risk before the pandemic are likely to be more at-risk now.

To guide the planning for the recovery phase, we are requiring school districts to have recovery plans. These recovery plans must address three focus areas: 1) student social and emotional well-being, 2) re-engagement and truancy, and 3) academic success and achievement. We do not necessarily see these areas as being hierarchical, but we do believe there should be some emphasis on #2 – re-engagement first since such re-engagement is a necessary precondition to make progress in the other areas.

As much as the Council had an earlier trajectory and purpose to its work, I think will be useful and necessary for the Council to consider the recovery context as the primary context for its work in the coming months. In particular, I think the Council should consider authoring a report to the General Assembly for January that highlights issues relative to HHB and the impact of the pandemic on students. To do so, the Council could consider, among other things:

- Student perspectives, observations, and stories
- District recovery plans and how they address the needs of vulnerable students
- District implementation of educational support teams relative to Act 173
- Educator workforce considerations
- The use of School Resource Officers
- Integrated social service and education delivery models in all regions
- How are schools including HHB in their recovery planning?
- The role of Title XI