



PreKindergarten Education Implementation Committee – Meeting

September 26, 2023: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Microsoft Teams Virtual
Meeting Call In: 802-552-8456
Conference ID: 802 040 904#
[Meeting Link](#)

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Present: **Heather Bouchey**, co-Chair, AOE, Interim Secretary of Education; **Janet McLaughlin**, co-Chair, AHS, DCF Deputy Commissioner; **Erica McLaughlin**, Vermont Principals' Association; **Jeff Francis**, Vermont Superintendents Association; **Sandra Cameron**, Vermont School Board Association; **Colin Robinson**, Vermont National Education Association; **Pam Reed**, Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators; **Theresa Pollner**, Vermont Curriculum Leaders Association; **Morgan Crossman**, Building Bright Futures; **Renee Kelly**, Head Start Collaboration Office; **Sherry Carlson**, Let's Grow Kids; **Nicole Miller**, Vermont Afterschool, Inc.; **Sharron Harrington**, Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children; **Korinne Harvey**, Building Bright Futures Appointee; **Chris Wells**, Building Bright Futures Appointee; **Rebecca Webb**, Regional Prekindergarten Coordinator

AOE: Suzanne Sprague, Meg Porcella, Leslie Freedman, Tammy Bates, Amy Murphy, Michele Johnson, Katie McCarthy, Wendy Scott

Others: Jay Nichols, Vermont Principals' Association; Matt Levin; Kendal Smith, Governor Scott's Director of Policy Development and Legislative Affairs; Representative Jessica Brumsted; Sheri Hill; Andrea Sambrook; Carlin Molander; Tanya LaChapelle

Deputy Commissioner McLaughlin called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. She asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. There were none. AOE will document the meeting minutes. Reed made a motion to approve the [minutes from the July 14th meeting](#). Robinson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion carried. Webb abstained since she was not at the meeting.

Committee members introduced themselves.

Deputy Commissioner McLaughlin provided an update on the missing members on the committee. Porcella, AOE Director of Student Supports Services, provided an update on

the Request for Proposal (RFP) for a meeting facilitator, assisting in the report writing and recording meeting minutes. Bids are due on October 2. The process should be completed by the beginning of November. Discussion occurred regarding the process for selecting a proposal, committee members being included in the review, following AOE process, transparency, sharing the RFP with the committee, timeline, state procurement process and appropriation is included in Act 76.

Crossman provided background on Building Bright Futures (BBF) and [shared resources](#) that can be used to assist the committee members in becoming more familiar with the work to help inform decision making related to Act 76. The resources include: 1) Memo to Senate Education Committee that provided an overview of what information and data should be reviewed and discussed in order to improve Universal PreKindergarten (UPK); 2) S.56 Stakeholder feedback that captured stakeholder feedback on the policies and priorities originally proposed in S.56 and much of the feedback was related to UPK and a mixed delivery model; 3) Data needed to inform decision-making that outlines the questions/data that would be important to have relevant to the future of UPK; and, 4) Vermont UPK data, publications, reports and resources which is a compilation of most recent data and information on UPK.

Discussion followed regarding expanding and implementing prekindergarten in Vermont, intended outcomes, information to help inform, preparing for meetings, submit missing documents to data@buildingbrightfutures.org, recommendations from national perspective, complexity of universal prekindergarten law, varying levels of understanding of the law and the need to level-set, misconceptions that need correcting, conclusions reached by BBF's analysis of collected data, concerns with missing data, pros and cons with Act 166, AOE early education presentation to include Child Development Division (CDD).

Deputy Commissioner McLaughlin shared this [presentation](#). She reviewed the committee members' responses to the survey that was intended to inform the planning of the committee. She said the high priority themes are: 1) access and equity; 2) funding; 3) staffing concerns; 4) family needs, choice, and cost; and 5) implementation and logistics.

Interim Secretary Bouchey lead discussion on proposed workgroups. She reviewed the committee's legislative charge and identified three potential working groups for the committee to consider. The workgroups include: 1) Systems-level considerations; 2) Capacity and funding; and 3) Program quality. She reminded the committee members that the workgroup meetings will need to follow the Open Meeting Law. She additionally reviewed how the workgroups were conceptualized.

Discussion followed regarding the need for workgroups to help complete the work, communication between workgroups, facilitator contract to include staffing workgroups, cadence of workgroup meetings and regular meetings, challenge of picking one workgroup, balancing time commitment, workgroup's product is brought back to the full committee for consideration, two co-chairs and three suggested workgroups, two workgroups instead of three and managing expectations.

Public Comment

Andrea Sambrook, Hinesburg, addressed the committee.

Matt Levin, Vermont Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance, addressed the committee.

Representative Jessica Brumsted addressed the committee.

Further discussion continued pertaining to the workgroups. Topics included final discussion and vote at the next meeting to formalize the committee's decision, rethinking the work without workgroups, using a two-workgroup approach, and delaying the meetings until a facilitator is determined. A straw poll was taken regarding interest in a two-workgroup approach which was confirmed and preferred by committee members. A second straw poll was taken asking if the committee members would like the co-chairs to develop new categorizations for the two workgroups. This was confirmed by committee members. Interim Secretary Bouchey said this will be included on the next agenda and will be warned as a vote of the committee.

Interim Secretary Bouchey led the discussion on future meetings. Discussion followed regarding reimbursements, Act 76 indicates no more than 18 meetings, administrative allocation, in-person meetings, standing meetings work best, Doodle Poll to try and identify a standing meeting time and not waiting a full month until the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.