

Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting
Call In: 1-802-828-7667
Conference ID: 247 187 708#

Advisory Committee (AC) Members: **Monica Hutt**, State Chief Prevention Officer; **Janet McLaughlin**, Commissioner for Children and Families designee; **Ilisa Stalberg**, Commissioner of Health designee; **Laurel Omland**, Commissioner of Mental Health designee; **Alison Thomas**; Secretary of Natural Resources designee; **Nate Formalarie**, Secretary of Commerce and Community Development designee; **Nicole Miller**, Vermont Afterschool Executive Director; and **Kendal Smith**, Governor's Office.

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

AC Members Present: Janet McLaughlin, Deputy Commissioner, Child Development Division; Ilisa Stahlberg, Director of Family and Child Health (left at 12:00 p.m.); Laurel Omland, Director of Child, Adolescent and Family Unit; Alison Thomas; Director of Outreach Division; Nate Formalarie, Secretary of Agency of Commerce and Community Deputy Commissioner of Housing and Community Development; Nicole Miller, Vermont Afterschool (VAS) Executive Director; Kendal Smith, Governor's Office.

Agency of Education (AOE): Zoie Saunders, Interim Secretary of Education; Heather Bouchey, Deputy Secretary of Education; Johannes Haensch, Program Manager; Emma Pearson, Data Management and Analysis (DMAD); David Kelley, DMAD Supervisor; Maureen Gaidys, Administrative Services Coordinator.

Members of the public/others: Tara Howe, Vocational Rehabilitation Regional Manager.

Call to Order, Introductions and Roll Call, Amendments to Agenda

Smith called the meeting to order at 11:34 a.m. and took roll call. She said there was an issue with scheduling and the youth subcommittee update might need to be postponed. She invited Deputy Secretary Bouchey to introduce Interim Secretary Saunders.

Saunders spoke to her excitement about this work and her passion for out-of-school time programs, experience with many such programs that involved housing authorities, place-based programs, non-profits and parks and recreation department settings. She said she has found these programs can be very effective in driving high academic achievement and is proud of the parental engagement she has been able to support. She is excited about the state's vision for universal access and an important opportunity to build integration and address some of the current resource constraints and target opportunities where needed most.

Interim Secretary Saunders asked AOE Staff to introduce themselves: Johannes Haensch, Program Manager, Expanded Learning Opportunities; Emma Pearson, Data Management and Analysis Division DMAD), Act 78 Data Analyst; David Kelley, DMAD Supervisor. Smith noted that Tara Howe and Ali Thomas had joined the meeting.

Approve Meeting Minutes from February 2, 2024

McLaughlin moved to approve the minutes; Stahlberg seconded. There was no discussion. Smith called the vote. The minutes were approved.

Public to be Heard

There were no members of the public to be heard.

Work Updates – Recent Act 78 Grant Awards and Youth Subcommittee Update

Smith said she had shared [the Governor's and Interim Secretary Saunders' Press Release of Afterschool Grant Recipients](#) with AC members and asked AOE to highlight some of the great programs that are being funded on a multi-year cycle.

Interim Secretary Saunders offered that Deputy Secretary Bouchey would provide a broad overview of types of programs funded and Haensch would speak to the details for the grant review process. Later the AC will discuss lessons learned and the vision moving forward.

Deputy Secretary Bouchey reviewed the process and how a lot of time was spent thinking about why we are doing this work – improving outcomes (social-emotional wellbeing, fun, academics, engagement, food security). She talked about the prevention of core outcomes of substance misuse disorder, disengagement from school/community and underachievement. In addition to outcomes, the AOE is working to establish universal access and it is important to collectively strive for high-quality opportunities with an equity lens. Another goal identified is to have workforce opportunity and economic development for Vermont.

Next steps involve revisiting this framework with a focus on multi-year grants for sustainability including regional approaches, alignment with other funding opportunities (Community Schools), high-impact tutoring, college and career opportunities, maintaining opportunities for arts enrichment and STEAM programs, and focusing on outcomes.

Interim Secretary Saunders said there was a diversity of programs funded geographically and that was by design and intentional to identify the AS deserts in the state. She asked Haensch to speak to reinforce the priority areas of the review process and recount the number of applications received and number of grants awarded.

Haensch identified the three specific priority areas, based on legislation: programs serving areas without significant services already available, programs deliberately expanding access/opportunities for historically marginalized youth, and programs that deliberately and intentionally design around partnerships between schools and community organizations. Applicants needed to meet at least 2 of these 3 priority areas. There were 59 applications received, representing 56 organizations. Of the 59, 56 were deemed complete and sufficient to be scored. Each application was read by three different, independent readers; scores were returned, and a fiscal analysis was performed. Of the 56 applications, 17 received awards (representing 16 unique entities); 9 went to school districts and 7 to private entities.

There was discussion on multi year awards, sustainability, data collection (number of students being served, number of weeks added, increase in program offerings, access, learning gains, etc.), and partners involved.

Howe provided an update from the Youth Engagement Subcommittee. She said the subcommittee's work has been very thoughtful about opportunities for middle and high school students. She discussed summer job opportunities, resources for employers, other ways to move things forward, last summer's pilot on curriculum that focused on career exploration with middle-school students, post-high school exploration, another pilot this summer with 3 sites (Central Vermont Supervisory Union, King Street Center, Missisquoi Valley Union High School), using feedback received to create/modify curriculum, collaboration with Community College of Vermont (CCV) and Advance Vermont, and creating community connection as early as possible.

There was discussion on highlighting these opportunities and if the timing is right for showcasing this work, engagement of employers, praise for Katie O'Shea's (VAS) hard work, extended pilot project with Windham Central Supervisory Union from last summer, Department of Aging and Independent Living (DAIL) summer career exploration program, and a youth business advisory council to be explored at next subcommittee meeting.

Legislative Session Debrief

Smith recapped the legislative debate that ensued in February around delivery setting. The original concept was for a mixed delivery system. This year this cleared up a bit and there was push for Act 78 monies to go through schools and for schools to contract out with partners/other entities. That ended with preservation of a mixed delivery system for now; debate will likely come up again next year and having data on outcomes/progress by January will be important.

Next Steps on Planning and Deployment of Funds Available

Smith shared that another \$2 million was awarded to the Special Fund through the Budget Adjustment Act (BAA) and for this coming year another \$4 million was allocated for FY 25, however cannabis receipts will likely exceed that by \$4-5 million. The estimate is about \$11 million to invest in AS for the next FY. Once cannabis revenues level, the projected income from this source is estimated at about \$7 million. Smith said with this investment available next year, it will be important that AOE and the AC have a plan for that money. She opened discussion on how the AC can best support the AOE for consideration and/or further exploration on investing this money.

Smith shared some ideas (see below) from Deputy Secretary Bouchey to inspire discussion.

- Still want to focus on multi-year grants for sustainability, including regional approaches
- Link with other programmatic investments (e.g., community schools, high-impact tutoring, targeting college and career readiness, etc.)
- Increase opportunities for arts enrichment and STEM education.
- Focus on outcomes, outcomes, outcomes for participants

There was discussion on broad based strategic planning process at AOE, positioning AS in a way that addresses deficiencies and where funds will best serve Vermonters, might be different awards based on areas of need, wraparound services, aligning technical assistance to further outcomes for students, adjusting the focus from service to support, capacity building, funding supplementary programs, and demand for historical grant-making. Miller shared areas identified by VAS's strategic planning process: making sure programs are able to focus on their best work vs. the grant treadmill, mental health and wellbeing as a consistent theme, college and career readiness and career exploration, workforce (new and existing), importance of flexibility in funds, and keeping the vision on how funds can be steered where they are most needed. Discussion continued on how to better address mental health needs, partnership with Wallace Foundation to help aggregate data across multiple streams to address capacity to better target efforts, transportation, full summer coverage, aligning this with workforce/family needs, identifying gaps (tweens) for vulnerability/risk of drop out, how older youth are counted in ratio counts, delays in background checks, and requirement for separate background checks for each state agency/department.

Howe shared via the meeting chat the last three years of data from the [HireAbility Summer Career Exploration Program](#) as of January 2024. Last year's numbers were affected, as many programs were scheduled to start right when the flood happened:

- Number of students served in last three years statewide: 366
- Number of employers: 286
- Percentage of students offered a competitive job afterward: 24%
- Percentage of students engaged with HireAbility, 1-year post program: 85%

Smith said if AC members had any other ideas to reach out directly to Interim Secretary Saunders or Deputy Secretary Bouchey. Interim Secretary Saunders said the AOE is actively engaged and excited about this work.

Smith advised members to stay tuned for an upcoming Doodle poll to determine the next several meetings and they will likely be once a month through the fall and winter.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:32 p.m.

Meeting Minutes recorded by: Maureen Gaidys