



Communication and Engagement Subcommittee - Commission on the Future of Public Education in Vermont

October 2, 2024, 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting

Call In: 1-802-828-7667

Conference ID: 630 978 692#

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Subcommittee Members: Meagan Roy, Chair; Oliver Olsen, Vermont Independent Schools Association; John Castle, Vermont Rural Education Collaborative; Jeff Fannon, VT-National Education Association; Jay Nichols, Vermont Principals' Association.

Agency of Education (AOE): Zoie Saunders, Rose Neddo, Maureen Gaidys.

Others: John Clifford, Allen Gilbert, Matthew DeGroot, Elizabeth Burrows, Chester Telegraph, Craig Miskovich, Meghan Metzler.

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

Chair Roy called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. and took roll call: Castle, Olsen, Roy, Nichols. There were no amendments to the agenda.

Approve [Draft Minutes from September 16, 2024](#)

Castle moved to approve the minutes; Olsen seconded. There was no discussion. Chair Roy called the vote. The motion carried.

Public to be Heard

There were no members of the public to be heard.

Planning Session: October 21, 2024 Community Forum

Chair Roy said it is likely that the Community Input Session will be at the Randolph Technical Center and thanked superintendent Michael Clark. Additional details are forthcoming. She suggested that the subcommittee should discuss how to push that date out for visibility.

Castle spoke about the [draft agenda and the goals of community engagement document](#) being two-way engagement and needing to figure out how much information to provide while being thoughtful with length and depth of the presentation.

There was discussion on the need to hear from the public, having a recording in advance to

make available, ensuring complexity of information is shared, wanting to be asset-based and honest about challenges, and asking what people value about Vermont education.

The subcommittee discussed the goals drafted in the [draft agenda and the goals of community engagement document](#) and combined/narrowed the goals to three. Discussion continued on the advantages for and challenges of hybrid meetings, engagement, chat function, transparency, accessibility, all virtual option, a slide deck for the Commission and its organization/guiding principles, slide decks from Joint Fiscal Office (JFO) on the education funding system, importance of grain size, nesting of broad brush strokes to provide clarity that is complemented with handouts, difference between local and state, one-pagers with links, less time telling and more time listening, asking what people value about our current finance system, having Q&A/dialog interjected throughout, having prompts that challenge people, having faith in the public to ask tough questions, generating handouts/links to references, and posting links to helpful background information on the Commission's webpage.

Next steps: Chair Roy will work on draft handout with links, slide decks (to be distributed to subcommittee for review), and work with AOE to share communication/press release of engagement session. There was discussion on the potential value of a local facilitator/moderator, facilitation and duties/assignments of subcommittee members.

Confirm Next Meeting/Meeting Schedule

The next subcommittee meeting will be October 21, 2024, at 8:00 a.m.

Chair Roy shared appreciation for AOE and for getting the [Request for Proposals \(RFP\)](#) out last week. This is an ambitious timeline that could potentially result in naming a consultant by mid-November. The subcommittee meeting scheduled for November 18, 2024, will have this subcommittee reviewing the RFPs and Chair Roy will share more information about that process.

Public to be Heard

John Clifford: offered feedback on this being an input session and suggested making it clear in communications that this is a question-and-answer session about the role of the Commission and their work and not the minutiae of local budget challenges. For a meatier session, involvement of school board members/superintendent might add value.

Allen Gilbert: asked what "asset-based" means and said use of terms like that turns people off immediately; that educators are sometimes the least able to communicate with public audiences at their level, language used is a lot of shorthand that is hard to follow; hope that meeting content is accessible to the average person who might attend these meetings.

Adjourn

Olsen moved to adjourn; Nichols seconded. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Maureen Gaidys.