



Harassment, Hazing and Bullying Prevention Advisory Council

Agency of Education
219 North Main Street, Suite 304
November 28, 2016

Present: Ken Page, Vermont Principals' Association; Mill Moore, Vermont Independent Schools Association; Karen Richards, Human Rights Commission; Emily Simmons, Vermont School Boards Association; Lucie Garand, Parent; Chris Killoran, Student; Rebecca Holcombe
AOE: Suzanne Sprague

Agenda:

1. Legislative Report/Update
2. Update – Karen Richards, Human Rights Commission
3. Task Force Agenda – year-long plan
4. School Discipline
5. Other?

The meeting convened at 2:36 P.M.

Page began the meeting addressing agenda item 1. He stated that he doubted topics relating to suspensions and expulsions would be addressed at the legislature. Page continued that the reports produced last year by the AOE were great. He hoped the AOE would supply the reports again so the council could continue to review the data. Secretary Holcombe said that the AOE is working on the reports. Secretary Holcombe added that the reports may be produced at the supervisory level to protect the schools and not violate student privacy.

Secretary Holcombe said that the council's conversation on restorative processes and practices has been helpful. She continued the hope is to use federal streams to help support restorative practices. Page said that he appreciated the work of AOE employee, Tracy Watterson. He said Tracy developed a consistent user-friendly approach to complete the Critical Incident Report. Secretary Holcombe explained that CIRS (Critical Incident Report Systems) is the portal used to report and supply discipline data. She continued that the data is not on the website due to FERPA issues.

Richards said that a recurring topic at the Human Rights Commission (HRC) is the lack of places for parents to go when they are dissatisfied with the outcome of bullying complaints. Note: AOE Attorney confirmed that Richards is correct with respect to bullying. This is a topic the HHB task force might like to further discuss.

Richards thanked Secretary Holcombe for the recent memos she supplied. She continued that the HRC created a document (attached) for new Americans to help them understand their rights and advise how they are protected. Richards said the document was sent to AALV to be translated in Nepali, Swahili, Arabic, Somali, French, Spanish, Kirundi, Burmese and Vietnamese. She continued it explains how people are protected and includes their general civil rights and rights in schools. Richards said the document will be posted on their web site in all the languages.

Richards said the HRC receive complaints from undocumented people and there has been no push back regarding the undocumented status. She added that people are given pseudonyms to help protect their identities. Richards asked if the HHB Council would be willing to offer forums to new American communities to answer questions and supply information. She will take the lead and encouraged others to be included. Richards added the potential forum areas are Burlington, Winooski, Rutland, Bennington, Brattleboro, Hartford, Barre as well as rural areas with migrant worker populations such as Addison and Franklin Counties.

Page requested the 2017 HHB Meeting dates.

January 30th, 2017

March 27th, 2017

May 29th, 2017

July 31st, 2017

September 25th, 2017

November 27th, 2017

Page moved to agenda item 3. Secretary Holcombe suggested public outreach to new Americans should be on the agenda. In addition, she added by the next meeting a draft of the Discipline Report should be available for review and will provide a comparison of data from this year to last year.

Page moved to agenda item 4. Secretary Holcombe said school discipline is like equity in that it is not just a technical problem with a solution but a cultural problem that also needs a cultural solution. Page added that there has been a push among administrators to search for alternatives to suspension. Secretary Holcombe said that some technical assistance and direction may be required with respect to suspensions.

Adjourn:

Page moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:25 P.M.