



**ESSA Task Force Meeting #9
March 6, 2018 at 6:00 PM
441 4th Street, NW, 1117
Washington, DC 20001**

Minutes

ESSA Task Force Members:

Present:

Lannette Woodruff (Task Force Co-Chair and Ward 4 Representative, DC State Board of Education)
Yolanda Corbett (Co-Chair, Parent Advocate Leaders Group)
Allyson Criner Brown (Ward 7 Education Council Member and Associate Director, Teaching for Change)
Deborah Dantzer Williams (Head of School, Inspired Teaching Public Charter School)
Dan Davis (Student Advocate, State Board of Education)
Laura Fuchs (WTU Board Member and Teacher, HD Woodson High School)
Juliana Herman (Deputy Chief of Policy, DC Public Schools)
Anne Herr (Parent and Director of School Quality, FOCUS)
Jack Jacobson (Vice President and Ward 2 Representative, State Board of Education)
Erin Kupferberg (Senior Manager of School Quality and Accountability, DC Public Charter School Board)
Maya Martin (Executive Director, Parents Amplifying Voices in Education)
Elizabeth Primas (ESSA Program Manager, National Newspaper Publishers Association)
Daniel Rodriguez (Student, Benjamin Banneker High School)
Alex Rose-Henig (Dean of Students, BASIS DC)
Sheila Strain-Clark (Parent and Chief of Programs, Sasha Bruce Youthwork)
Joe Weedon (Ward 6 Representative, DC State Board of Education)
Suzanne Wells (Founder, Capitol Hill Public Schools Parent Organization)
Karen Williams (President and Ward 7 Representative, DC State Board of Education)

Phone:

Josh Boots (Executive Director, EmpowerK12)
Ramona Edelin (Executive Director, DC Association of Chartered Public Schools)
Jhonna Turner (Parent Engagement Program Coordinator, Washington Lawyers' Committee)

Absent:

Samantha Brown (Special Education and Reading Teacher, Calvin Coolidge High School)
Hannah Dunn (Student at Wilson High School)
Donald Hense (Chairman, Friendship Public Charter Schools)
Erica Hwang (Instructional Coach, Brightwood Education Campus)
Jacque Patterson (DC Regional Director, Rocketship Public Schools)
Richard Pohlman (Executive Director, Thurgood Marshall Academy Public Charter School)
Shana Young (Chief of Staff, Office of the State Superintendent of Education)



Presenters:

Justin Tooley (Special Assistant for Legislation and Policy, Office of the State Superintendent of Education)

Naomi Watson (Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the State Superintendent of Education)

Chloe Woodward-Magrane (Deputy Director of Communications, Office of the State Superintendent of Education)

SBOE Staff:

John-Paul Hayworth, Executive Director

Dyvor Gibson, Administrative Support Specialist

Matt Repka, Policy Analyst

Maria Saliccioli, Senior Policy Analyst

Kit Faiella, Policy Fellow

Abby Ragan, Policy Fellow

Executive Summary

Dr. Woodruff welcomed Task Force (TF) members to the ninth ESSA Task Force meeting. She opened the meeting by sharing the final draft of the TF's guiding equity principles, after which she introduced representatives from the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). OSSE shared their progress on creating the state report card, asked TF members to share which stakeholders they could engage to gather feedback on the draft, and allowed the TF to provide feedback through an online survey. TF members then broke into their subcommittees – Academic Rigor, Equal Resources and Funding Equity, Leadership, and School Climate – to narrow the focus of the recommendations they will make in the coming months. Each subcommittee reported the outcomes of their conversations to the whole group, after which Dr. Woodruff adjourned the TF until May 1, 2018.

Agenda Items

Welcome

Dr. Woodruff welcomed TF members to the meeting, thanking members for the work they had accomplished over the previous eight meetings. She called TF members' attention to the agenda and said that the meeting would begin with a conversation on the ESSA equity principles that had been developed over the last several sessions.

Equity Discussion

Dr. Woodruff shared two updates to the guiding equity principles. The first was that a reference to "eliminating disparities" was changed to "reducing disparities," acknowledging that schools are one component in a complex system that seeks to reduce gaps and increase opportunities. Second, she let them know that she had reviewed their exit slips from the previous meeting and based on their



responses, the group had moved to call the language its “guiding principles” rather than an “equity definition.” Dr. Woodruff thanked Ms. Herman for gathering DCPS staff members’ feedback and shared that this additional feedback was included at the bottom of the agenda. Dr. Primas read the guiding principles aloud for TF members, and each TF member was given a copy of the guiding equity principles for future reference.

School Report Card Design Testing

Ms. Woodward-Magrane updated the TF on new developments in the report card creation process since OSSE’s presentation at the March ESSA TF meeting.

First, she shared feedback she heard from the TF in March:

- The search and comparison feature is an important place to engage parents.
- We should engage parents around the location and display of the STAR rating.
- The school finance section doesn’t make sense on the front of the report card.
- Streamline the language and questions in the activities themselves.
- It’s crucial to ensure that language on the report card is clear and accessible.

Ms. Woodward-Magrane noted that in response to this feedback, OSSE had moved the school finance section and focused their toolkit on a few high-quality questions and activities. She added that OSSE has now created draft layouts for the report card but will be engaging more deeply on report card language over the summer.

Ms. Woodward-Magrane shared the pathway to building the report card:

- Build a wireframe: a basic mock up of the website layout.
- Create data visualizations that communicate your message.
- Write language accessible to your audience.
- Add colors and styling.
- Test your website.
- Launch!

She noted that the first two steps are currently in progress, and she indicated multiple ways to engage – TF members should ask their networks to take the survey online and host in-person sessions. She said that the online survey could be found at: bit.ly/reportcarddesignsurvey

Ms. Woodward-Magrane then presented an overview the toolkit for in-person sessions, saying that it was a similar sequence of events and set of materials as was used in the first phase of engagement on the report card. The computer sessions and pen-and-paper sessions both include facilitator scripts and sample power points. Mr. Rose-Henig asked if it worked well on mobile phones, and Ms. Woodward-Magrane said it did. Ms. Watson said that survey participants can stretch their screens to enlarge the text because the website is mobile-responsive.



Ms. Watson asked the TF for their help, saying that phase one engagement was so successful, with such a high response rate, because of the TF leveraging their networks and holding feedback sessions. She asked for the same level of support for phase two. She said that TF members who could host sessions should email Ms. Saliccioli with details. TF members should take the survey today, and they should be communicative about the supports they need to hold successful sessions. Ms. Watson said that there is a lot of information online to support successful session facilitation – sample tweets and Facebook posts, supplemental power points, and a contact form on the OSSE website to ask for support.

She displayed the calendar of scheduled sessions and asked if the TF members could go around the table and share how they would ideally engage with their networks, as well as what OSSE could do to support these sessions. She added that the last date to accept feedback would be May 4, 2018.

TF members shared their plans for upcoming sessions – both online and pen-and-paper – as well as the networks with which they could share the survey link. TF members shared ideas and concerns, which were:

- OSSE should make sure to follow up with the initial 1900 respondents
- TF members had issues with the translation quality of the first set of materials, and they offered to test them and suggested different translation services that could be used
- Some TF members asked for OSSE presenters or OSSE staff on-hand to answer in-depth follow-up questions
- TF members wondered if LEAs could push the survey out to parents

Ms. Watson told TF members OSSE could support them with materials, language, computers, translations, and answering questions, and she expressed appreciation for their help.

TF members then tested the online survey.

Committee Framing

Dr. Woodruff said she wanted to bring more detail into the purpose of subcommittee work. The subcommittees are designed to focus on areas that will help the TF advance the objectives of the ESSA plan, particularly targeting areas of inequity in our school systems. The ESSA plan is a set of guidelines, but the purpose of the ESSA TF is to go beyond the written plan to ensure that it meets the needs of District students.

She told TF members that each of them had copies of the selections of the ESSA plan that connected to their subcommittees' work, but she added that they should consider the language in the plan as a starting point. She noted that each subcommittee would find a description of its scope in the area where they would be working. These definitions, developed by the TF in January, represent the first draft of what each subcommittee could address. She added that subcommittees would use their time together to clarify and focus the scope of their work, based on the needs they have identified in



DC schools that relate to equity. Dr. Woodruff asked that by the end of the meeting, each subcommittee:

- Select a chairperson to guide discussions and follow up with SBOE staff on research needs
- Give clarity to their focus. For example, make sure each subcommittee is well defined and that subcommittee members are clear on what falls under the heading
- Create a laundry list of what schools and systems need in each subcommittee's focus area
- From the laundry list, identify 2 - 3 possible areas the subcommittee will focus its recommendations on during the May and June ESSA meetings.

She added that the expectation between meetings is for subcommittee members and SBOE staff to identify articles, webinars, and relevant data that can strengthen each subcommittee's eventual recommendations. Each subcommittee will present its draft recommendations to the TF at the June meeting, and the rest of the TF will help each subcommittee refine its recommendations.

Committee Breakout and Report Out

Each subcommittee gathered to clarify its focus and generate a list of areas for potential recommendations. After the groups were given time to hold their discussions, the whole TF reconvened to share what they had discussed during the meeting.

The School Resources and Funding Equity subcommittee explained that they had expanded their laundry list and had then refined it to three focus areas: funding transparency, community and parent engagement, and programs and opportunities. Ms. Turner will serve as subcommittee chair.

The School Climate subcommittee decided to focus its recommendations on the metrics currently in the STAR framework, rather than on the report card or what would ideally be in the STAR framework. They plan to address the school climate surveys that the District pledged to administer in its ESSA plan, and they also plan to address "access and opportunities," which is referenced in the ESSA plan but is currently an undefined bucket of work. The subcommittee name will change to the School Environment subcommittee, which reflects the language used in ESSA. The subcommittee will start its work on school environments, focusing on elements that are part of the STAR framework, and will then and move its focus toward the elements of school environment – parents, students, teachers, staff – that go beyond what is referenced in the STAR framework. Mr. Rose-Henig will serve as subcommittee chair.

The Leadership subcommittee will focus on ways to support leaders in engaging with their school communities and solving problems that affect the District's schools. They plan to address best practices in teacher retention and turnover best practices, with a goal of understanding how the District can help leaders keep strong teachers in the classroom. The subcommittee also discussed how to empower leaders to reduce suspensions and methods of empowering parents and school communities. The subcommittee also hopes to analyze attendance issues. Mr. Weedon will serve as subcommittee chair.



The Academic Rigor subcommittee focused its conversation on the definition of academic rigor for much of the breakout time. The subcommittee members decided that since the Common Core State Standards define academic rigor from Pre-K to 12th grade, and they also provide a definition of college and career readiness, the subcommittee will use those definitions but will clarify what rigor looks like at different grade levels. The subcommittee wants to identify how District schools assess mastery, whether the city is doing that well or should do it differently, what it means when students do not master topics, and what interventions schools should have access to. Subcommittee members talked about academic rigor as an equity issue and discussed how the city can devote the right resources to help schools provide a well-rounded education. Subcommittee members have ideas for research they would like to see and ways to engage parents, and they plan to look at frameworks from early childhood to high school, focusing their recommendations on what the city could do to drive equity forward. Ms. Herr and Mr. Rodriguez will serve as subcommittee co-chairs.

Next Steps and Adjourn

Dr. Woodruff said the subcommittees were moving in the right direction and added that she was glad District schools could benefit from the knowledge in the room. She asked the members to share any resources that relate to their subcommittee topics with her and Ms. Saliccioli so that SBOE can make sure all materials have been disseminated among subcommittee members. She thanked TF members for their time and adjourned the meeting.

The TF will meet again on Tuesday, May 1, 2018, from 6:00 – 8:00 PM at 441 4th Street NW, room 1117.