

**Redding Consortium for Educational Equity
Settlement Work Group
April 12, 2021 5:00–6:30 p.m.
Meeting Minutes**

I. Welcome

Aaron Bass, Co-Chair of the Settlement Work Group, welcomed everyone to the meeting and presented the meeting agenda.

Kristin Dwyer, Work Group Member, moved to approve the previous meeting minutes. Gary Henry, Work Group Member, seconded. The minutes were approved as submitted.

II. Legislation Updates

Aaron provided updates on the legislation that was recommended by the Consortium. Senate Bill 56 was released from the House Education Committee and is ready to be heard by the House. House Bills 86 and 100 are assigned to the House Appropriations Committee. An amendment to House Bill 100 is expected to be introduced soon.

III. Ombudsperson Presentation

Shannon Griffin, Work Group member, discussed the proposed Ombudsperson Program framework that was distributed to members before the meeting. The framework was put together after a breakout meeting taking feedback from Consortium members and other stakeholders. The proposed framework is designed for the Ombudsperson program to be a proactive force for ensuring educational equity.

The settlement mandates that the Ombudsperson program be an independent entity. The framework outlines measures for this independence to be maintained while also holding the program accountable. The recommended budget for the program is \$2 – 2.5 million with the new recommendations, an increase from original estimates.

Aaron said that he has been meeting with Secretary Bunting and other state officials about the Ombudsperson program. The state does not have an RFP or proposed framework for the work group to compare with. The goal of the work group is to proactively build a framework for the Department of Education to consider.

Shannon added that the RFP is framed such that a history of providing the appropriate services in Delaware has the strongest weight, as well as the organization's plan to measure and evaluate their work.

Kristin asked if the settlement mandates a specific ombudsperson or an ombudsperson office. Shannon said that the idea was always for it to be a full office, but the settlement is more

vague, utilizing the language “an Ombudsperson program in each county to assist students and their families.”

Chuck Longfellow, co-chair, commented that the proactive work on the ombudsperson program is a testament to the agility of the work group and its members.

IV. Equity Statement Presentation

Chuck reviewed the revision to the Major Capital Improvement Program that requires an equity statement with the certificate of necessity, in line with the settlement’s requirements. He reviewed the discussion and recommendations from the 3/22 Work Group meeting. He believes that transparency is an absolute necessity along with other accountability measures.

V. Breakout Discussions – Equity Statements and Ombudsperson

Work Group members discussed the equity statement and ombudsperson programs in breakout rooms with the goal of making recommendations to the full Consortium.

The equity statement breakout group recommended transparency requirements, an alignment with a greater equity commitment at DOE, inclusion of standards and metrics for what the equity statement should look like, defining the needs of historical renovations versus renovations that build equity, and requirements for auditing facilities.

The Ombudsperson breakout group recommended that DHSS and the Governor’s Family Service Cabinet Council are listed for the program, that there is an adequately large staff to handle the volume of cases, that data be leveraged and published to measure the success of the program, that monitoring and technical assistance be included along with other accountability measures, and that a member of the Consortium be on the RFP committee for the program.

VI. Finalize Recommendations for April 29 Meeting

Aaron said that he and Chuck would digest the group recommendations and send them to work group members for comments and suggestions, and to approve the recommendations for consideration by the full Consortium on April 29.

VII. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

The Settlement Work Group will be meeting on May 3, May 24, and June 14 at 5:00pm.

Attendance

Work Group Members

Aaron Bass, Co-Chair
Chuck Longfellow, Co-Chair
Kristin Dwyer
Shannon Griffin
Tika Hartsock
Gary Henry
Shelly Rouser
Laurisa Schutt

Members of the Public

Dawn Alexander
Raye Jones Avery
Dwayne Bensing
Jason Bourke
Tammy Croce
Matthew Denn
Karen Eller
Dorrell Green
Cliffvon Howell
Brendan Laux
VJ Leonard
Haley Qaissaunee
Cassandra Richardson
Jon Sheehan
Kelly Sherretz
Alethea Smith-Tucker