

**Redding Consortium for Educational Equity
Settlement Work Group
May 3, 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.

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

II. Legislation Updates

Aaron provided updates on the legislation that were 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 was been introduced.

III. Updates from Consortium Meeting

Chuck Longfellow, co-chair of the Settlement Work Group, reviewed the information that was presented to the Consortium on April 29. The Consortium endorsed the group's equity statement recommendations.

Aaron stated that the Ombudsperson program RFP has been released by the Department of Education. The schedule for the RFP has been adjusted as follows:

- Deadline for Questions: May 13, 2021
- Response to Questions posted by May 20, 2021
- Deadline for Receipt of Proposals: June 2, 2021
- Estimated notification of Award: July 2021

A member of the Consortium is expected to be on the RFP committee.

IV. Path Forward Discussion

Chuck reviewed the portions of the settlement that are currently in motion, including the Opportunity Fund, the K-3 basic special education bill, which is ahead of schedule, the Ombudsperson program, and the Equity statement requirement. Sufficient funding to be considered for the independent funding assessment is still needed for FY 2022 settlement compliance.

Aaron opened discussion about the path forward for the work group. He said that the group should be as proactive as possible and continue to have conversations with community stakeholders, the Governor's office, and the Department of Education.

Teacher Recruitment and Retention

Work Group members discussed the path forward for recruitment and retention of educators as required by the settlement.

Gary spoke about his research in Tennessee and how every successful school reform effort had a strong component of teacher recruitment and retention. Further evidence is needed from other states about what strategies have been successful.

Kristin Dwyer, Work Group member, said that she is interested to hear what ideas the Department of Education already has about teacher recruitment and retention so that the conversation can be collaborative. She is interested in examining the results of previous efforts, such as the Talent Cooperative. She noted that it is important to look to how other states' work with their teachers' unions to develop successful recruitment and retention strategies.

Aaron said that targeting recruitment strategies towards educators of color, especially men for younger students, would be instrumental in seeing systemic change to the current recruitment and retention attitudes. Monique Martin, Work Group member, agreed, adding that while having linguistically diverse educators is good, recruiting and training culturally competent educators is needed to improve retention. She said that Betsy Fleetwood of Colonial School Districts uses cultural competency as an approach towards professional learning.

Chuck Longfellow, Work Group Co-Chair, asked what kind of metrics should be used to evaluate different strategies, since test scores do not always tell the whole picture.

Delaware Secretary of Education Susan Bunting suggested that Jon Neubauer attend a future meeting to discuss the strength of the teacher pipeline and strategies for increasing participation in current recruitment and retention initiatives.

Aaron asked Secretary Bunting if there are any plans to interview current educators to understand what types of benefits they value and would encourage them to not change schools. Secretary Bunting said that there are no programs like that from her office. She also noted the Educator Work Group's findings that emphasize school leadership in addition to pay drive teacher retention.

Shelley Rouser, Work Group member, noted that whatever action is taken must be rooted in the Delaware context. Monique said that the educator mobility survey cited lack of support and leadership as a major reason for leaving a school, in addition to a lack of cultural competence and responsiveness. The plan is to survey educators more frequently with a focus on educators of color and who reflect diverse dimensions. Kristin added that additional in-school supports,

such as those proposed in House Bill 100, reduce the burden on teachers and encourage them to stay in schools. Teachers also leave due to poor facilities and burnout.

Gary said the Tennessee teacher retention survey found that safety, administrative support, salary, and consistent enforcement of discipline were the most important factors for teachers. Raushann Austin, Work Group member, said that in meetings with Delaware Diversify the Educator Workforce, educators have cited not feeling valued and student loan burdens as a reason for changing schools.

Aaron asked Secretary Bunting if there is timeline for the Department of Education to act on the recruitment and retention settlement requirements. Secretary Bunting said that she has not been involved in any conversations about it yet, and the Department's focus right now is on distributing American Rescue Plan funds.

Gary said that research shows that "one size fits all" policies for districts do not work. Kristin said she would be interested in seeing Gary's research in other states to see what can be done in Delaware.

Independent Funding Assessment

Kristin said that the Work Group needs to know about DOE's timeline for completing the funding assessment. Chuck agreed, and expects it to be part of the January 2022 budget presentation for the FY 2023 budget. Aaron asked Secretary Bunting if there is a timeline for the funding assessment. She said she can provide a more specific timeline in the future.

Gary said that periodic assessments should be instituted, like in Maryland. Delaware needs to be wary of the handful of nationwide organizations that complete these assessments all the time and do not take an individualized approach for each state. A goal for the Work Group may be to lay out 8-10 important research questions that should be prioritized in the funding assessment.

Chuck said that the work would need to be done ahead of the January 2022 budget presentation. He suggested that the work could be done in conjunction with the Funding & Governance Work Group. Aaron said that the group should have a proposal done by October.

The group collectively agreed to have another meeting to continue the conversation on the Independent Funding Assessment and the Opportunity Fund.

V. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

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

Attendance

Work Group Members

Aaron Bass, Co-Chair
Chuck Longfellow, Co-Chair
Raushann Austin
Kristin Dwyer
Shannon Griffin
Tika Hartsock
Monique Martin
Shelley Rouser
Laurisa Schutt
Cliffvon Howell

Members of the Public

Susan Bunting, Delaware Secretary of Education
Brendan Laux
Haley Qaissaunee
Kelly Sherretz