

Minutes
**State Board of Education Task Force on Family Engagement in Learning and
Deeper Learning Grant**
Friday, February 9, 2018

The Task Force on Family Engagement in Learning and Deeper Learning Grant met Friday, February 9, 2018, in the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality Room E109. The meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m.

Present: Mireya Reith, Co-Chair; Charisse Dean, Co-Chair; Geania Dickey, Facilitator; Meghan Ables; Kim Wright; Courtney Cochran; and Dr. Geraldine Mallette. Guest facilitator Mr. Aurelio Montemayor joined via conference call.

Absent: Freddie Scott; Dr. Mike Hernandez; and Jennifer Dedman.

Consent Agenda

Ms. Dickey moved, seconded by Ms. Ables, to approve the consent agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

Items included in Consent Agenda:

- Minutes –January 12, 2018

Action Agenda

Debrief February 7th Stakeholders Meeting

Ms. Wright said retired teachers, White Hall, Dollarway, and Stuttgart educators attended the Family and Community Engagement Stakeholder Meeting on February 7th after seeing an announcement in the local newspaper. She said weather impeded many people from attending.

Mr. Montemayor said public relations staff members in the districts could send information out to local communities about future meetings.

Task Force members agreed that the Family and Community Engagement Stakeholder Meeting was successful overall. Ms. Dickey said the atmosphere was welcoming.

Themes

Ms. Reith said she and Ms. Wright reviewed the list of invitees and attendees for the February 7th stakeholder event. She said the northeast and southeast communities were not well represented in the invitation list. She said the Asian community was also not well represented. She said teachers and students were not represented for obvious timing-related issues. She said "just parents," or parents who are not also members of educational, policy, or advocacy groups were not well represented. Superintendents, school board members, and legislator representation was also not present.

Overall Lessons Learned for Future Events

Mr. Montemayor said that working with local schools and offering community service hours for participating in regional meetings is a good approach for including student voices.

Ms. Wright said utilizing Zoom or another platform to have students work through discussions at the same time as the in-person meeting is another strategy that the group could use in the future.

Ms. Ables said the Department may consider having creative events to reach communities such as community walks or a community breakfast.

Dr. Montemayor said he has offered meetings at three meeting times with the same content in order to capture participants with varying schedules.

Ms. Dean said she discussed having community businesses come together and offer time off for parents who want to engage in school-related engagement with Mayor Stoodola. She said Mayor Stoodola looked favorably on this idea.

Ms. Reith said the task force would need to find champions in local communities who would own the work. She said the task force would need to create those spaces. Ms. Ables said the task force could consider creating a team in each region who would reach out to media outlets, businesses, schools, and other stakeholders. She said this model would put the power in the hands of the local community and not overly extend the task force or core team members.

Ms. Wright said the coalition list would be completed by March 1st, and the first regional coalition meetings would occur in April 2018.

Ms. Reith said the regional coalition meetings should happen in places with schools that are under the former classifications of academic distress.

Coalition Selection

Ms. Wright said the task force would need to create a rubric to determine who is invited to the regional coalitions. She said the rubric would ensure diversity. She said students

and educators should be included. Ms. Wright said the task force should focus on the quality of individuals as opposed to the number of people in the regional coalitions.

Ms. Wright said she generated a feedback synopsis sheet for review. She said the group would do an in-depth look at the feedback from the event in a core team debrief meeting.

Mr. Montemayor said one of the biggest barriers to family engagement in schools within Texas is the first interactions between families and school office personnel.

Ms. Dickey said the task force would have to be clear on the level of participation required. She said there are sub-categories to the roles stakeholders will play. She said half of the participants in regions may be subject-matter experts, but the other half may represent end-users (e.g. students, businesses). She said age, gender, race/ethnicity, and geography may all come into consideration. Ms. Dickey said there would need to be a clear articulation of not only why some people were picked, but why others were not picked. She said the selection process must be consistent.

Mr. Montemayor said there were people who were knowledgeable about educational systems. He said the task force needs to reach out to blue collar parents. Ms. Dean agreed and said the task force must remember the main point of the task force is to engage families. She said the task force should engage families who are already involved in their communities and utilize them to engage other families.

Ms. Dickey said finding families through parent involvement coordinators at local schools will be an asset to identifying local families who are involved in their schools.

Ms. Reith said the task force should consider themselves as capacity-builders for districts. She said members of the coalition should have at least a basic knowledge on the systems in place in order to engage.

Mr. Montemayor said it is not hard to bridge the gap between involved family members and the systems in which they are operating if the language used by the task force and other stakeholders is clear and plain. He said engaged families will understand the work and will not need much explanation.

Ms. Dickey said the task force may consider a sequence of coalition groups that focus on target-areas that work on specific aspects of family and community engagement. For example, one coalition group may work on dual communication, another group may work on the frameworks, and another group may work on another target area. She said there must be end users (e.g. businesses, students) in each coalition. She said there would be future opportunities to engage in the process in targeted areas.

Ms. Wright said the work could be done in three age categories: K-5, 6-8, 9-12. She said there are existing family and community engagement standards in the state for kindergarten- 8 year olds developed by Arkansas Head Start.


Ms. Dickey said the timeline moving forward is 1) to have core team look through the feedback, and 2) schedule a call with the Department core team to move forward in creating regional coalitions.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:23 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Kelicia Hollis


Mireya Reith, Co-Chair


Charisse Dean, Co-Chair