

**Minutes**  
**State Board of Education Task Force on Family Engagement in Learning and  
Deeper Learning Grant**  
**Wednesday, April 11, 2018**

The Task Force on Family Engagement in Learning and Deeper Learning Grant (Task Force) met Wednesday, April 11, 2018, in the Arkansas Department of Education Big Mac Building Auditorium. The meeting was called to order at 2:33 p.m.

Present: Mireya Reith, Co-Chair; Charisse Dean, Co-Chair; Geania Dickey, Facilitator; Meghan Ables; Kim Wright; Courtney Cochran; Dr. Geraldine Mallette; and Freddie Scott

Absent: Jennifer Dedman; Dr. Mike Hernandez

**Consent Agenda**

Ms. Dickey motioned to approve the consent agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

Items included in Consent Agenda:

- Minutes –March 9, 2018

**Action Agenda**

**Debrief on First Coalition Meeting**

The Task Force discussed the Leadership subcommittee of the Family and Community Engagement coalition.

**Successes.**

Mr. Scott said both parents and students felt like they were part of the process of the Leadership subcommittee meeting.

Ms. Wright said a member from Independence County said her organization used state education data in their work. She said the right people were included in the subcommittee.

Mr. Montemayor said the subcommittee members engaged in difficult, critical thinking during the multiple discussions. He said everyone came to work.

Ms. Reith said everyone felt comfortable diving into the conversations. She said it was a great positive example of stakeholder engagement. She said the language sent to

stakeholders was accessible enough for people to feel comfortable. She said the regional meetings might require a different level of work to ensure that the conversations at the regional meetings are as critical as the ones at the state meetings.

Ms. Dickey said the group's preparation process is a model for what comes next. She said the agenda was thoughtful. She said the room arrangement, flowers, and hosts were all welcoming. She said it was clear that a considerable amount of time and attention had gone into putting together the list of people. She said it was impressive that all but one person showed up for the meeting, and that one person cancelled in advance. She said people were energetic throughout the session. Ms. Dickey said two-way communication is something that had been integrated throughout the stakeholder engagement process.

Dr. Mallette said the groups were persistent, and the students represented in the coalition demonstrated leadership.

Ms. Ables said there was alignment between the coalitions and the work the Leadership subcommittee expressed. She said there was a lot of excitement in the room.

Ms. Dean said the facilitation was a highlight because it included elements that were visual, discussion-based, writing-based, and categorization/organization-based. She said the group was diverse. She said the event was well-organized logistically.

### **Challenges.**

Ms. Ables said it is important to follow-up with the specific interests of the Leadership subcommittee members. She said there is a lot of exciting follow-up from the meeting.

Mr. Montemayor said there was a healthy skepticism at the Pine Bluff meeting of whether the conversations and work would continue, and it is important that the Task Force progress. He said the Leadership subcommittee meeting was a good continuation of the work. He said skepticism is a good accountability measure.

Mr. Montemayor said there would need to be a human connection to communicate the work of the whole coalition, especially for families who are harder to reach via social media and website postings.

Ms. Dickey said purposeful and meaningful outreach from students is important. Ms. Ables said the Task Force would need to be intentional about using building principals to communicate with parents and students who are harder to reach in order to get them to engage in the upcoming regional meetings.

Ms. Reith said the community organizations could be partners in the future for providing funds to offset transportation costs for families so that they could engage in the process. She said in some communities, schools provide many wrap-around services. She said it is important not to ask too much from schools, but to invite other community organizations to take part in addressing the needs of students and families.

Ms. Wright said the way that roles are defined in each subcommittee (i.e. Leadership, Culture, Talent Development, and Instruction) came from the family and community engagement team members of the Arkansas Department of Education. She said the

standards examined in the Leadership coalition meeting were sampled from other states but not organized like those standards.

Mr. Montemayor said it is important not to have too many people involved at the wordsmithing level when drafting the final standards.

Ms. Dickey said it is good to have a robust set of goals, but it will be important to have more specific, concrete goals as time goes on so that the work is properly addressed.

Ms. Dean said there were many slips of paper involved in getting all of the ideas together and organized from small group conversations. The Task Force discussed how to address the tediousness of paper management during subcommittee meeting brainstorming sessions.

Mr. Scott said there were no representatives from the faith-based or higher education communities. He said families and homes have touch-points with faith-based communities. He said it would be best not to just invite faith-based community members into the coalition, but to go to those communities in-person to share what is happening in the coalition and solicit engagement. Task Force members agreed that it would be beneficial to share at a faith-based conference or meeting.

Ms. Reith said the subcommittee work could improve by understanding what they are doing in these meetings and why. She said it is important for all of the coalition members to understand how the work that they do ties into the bigger picture of creating standards.

#### **What to change.**

Ms. Dean said the subcommittee members needed more time to talk amongst peers. The Task Force agreed to change the schedule to allow for 30 minutes of registration and meet-and-greet at the beginning of all future sessions.

Mr. Scott recommended that honing in on the coalition model would be good to emphasize at the end of subcommittee meetings so that members could return to their regions with best practices on how to take the Task Force's model back to their regions to create their own family and community engagement stakeholder groups.

Ms. Reith said the Task Force should consider how to structure the standards synthesis process in way that is meaningful. She said before diving into specific standards, the organization of the meetings should include more consideration on how to make the state standards processing portion of the meetings manageable.

Ms. Ables said the Department could provide toolkits with best practices for family and community engagement throughout the standards-creation process. Ms. Dickey said the toolkit for districts is important because it communicates what is important and effective, and why it is important and effective.

Mr. Scott recommended that Task Force emphasize the diversity of the group (i.e. career, background, region, etc.) to subcommittee members. Ms. Dickey said it may help to add a printout in the packets with the life identities represented in each of the subcommittees and the coalition overall.

Mr. Montemayor said the group should condense the opening introductions to give more time for the processing activities.

Ms. Wright said the group should create a contact list of the subcommittee members to share internally among the groups.

### **Update on Regional Meetings' Progress**

Ms. Wright said a distribution list would be created and an email would be sent by region. She said the email would ask for recommendations on time and location. She said the subcommittee members would be asked to be ambassadors and reach out to people in their regions.

Ms. Wright said the goals of the regional meetings should be clearly defined in advance.

Ms. Wright said pushing regional meetings into June 2018 is a challenge due to summer schedules and the loss of communication avenues like schools and cooperatives. She said the goal should be to have the regional meetings in the fall.

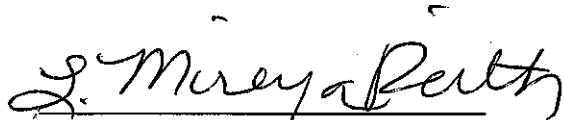
Ms. Reith recommended setting an additional Task Force meeting in April to help plan the regional subcommittee meetings. The Task Force agreed to meet on April 30, 2018 at 12:30 p.m. with the location to be announced.

Mr. Montemayor said his commitment to this project would terminate with the April 12, 2018, subcommittee meeting. Ms. Wright said the internal team would explore funding options to enable the support of Mr. Montemayor's technical assistance as part of the Intercultural Development Research Agency Equity Assistance Center- *South* (IDRA EAC-*South*).

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:09 p.m.

*Minutes recorded by Kelicia Hollis*



Mireya Reith, Co-Chair



Charisse Dean, Co-Chair