

Minutes
**State Board of Education Task Force on Family Engagement in Learning and
Deeper Learning Grant**
Friday, August 11, 2017

The Task Force on Family Engagement in Learning and Deeper Learning Grant met Friday, August 11, 2017, in the Arkansas Department of Education Auditorium. Co-Chair Ms. Reith called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Present: Mireya Reith, Co-Chair; Charisse Dean, Co-Chair; Geania Dickey; Meghan Ables; and Courtney Cochran, 2017 Arkansas Teacher of the Year.

Absent: None

Action Agenda

Recap of Deeper Learning Grant

Ms. Reith said she has found great partnership and engagement in her involvement with the Deeper Learning Grant. She said the group will look at how to utilize remaining funds.

Outline Vision for Task Force on Family Engagement in Learning

Ms. Reith said there has been much conversation on family engagement in learning within the ADE and different organizations across the state.

Ms. Dickey said she works for Arkansas State University and her focus has been on early childhood, organizational management and systems building, and supporting leadership within those roles. She said she is consulting with ForwARd Arkansas. She said part of her role with ForwARd has involved the role of families in education.

Ms. Dean said parents are their child's first educator and it is important to advocate this message. She said her experience homeschooling her children factors into her background and interest in this work.

Ms. Ables said the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) has asked Arkansas to create school standards for their engagement with communities as part of the State Consortium on Family Engagement Initiative. She said the Family Engagement Initiative is in collaboration with the National Association of Family, School, and Community Engagement.

Ms. Cochran said she understands that there are current practices that are effective and others that are ineffective in engaging families in student learning. She said educators need to take responsibility for reaching out to parents.

Ms. Dean said there is a disconnect between information sent by the ADE and the receipt of this information by parents. She said many parents lack information. Ms. Dean said "parental PD" is needed. She said parents need mentors and there should be mentoring systems.

Ms. Reith said there is an opportunity to create a process and standards. She said the language used to communicate should be in everyday language. She said the task force can seek to understand the diversity of families and possibly reach out to families using different strategies.

Ms. Ables said she wants schools to be excited about a bank of best practices or a set of standards for family engagement in learning. Ms. Cochran said the task force can reach out to parental engagement leaders and have that filter to teachers to ensure engagement happens.

Ms. Dickey said creating standards, a bank of best practices, and making families feel welcomed could be part of what the task force accomplishes. Ms. Dickey said task force members can divide based on these different potential goals. Ms. Dickey shared a resource called "Four Important Things to Know about the Transition to School." She shared "The Arkansas Guide for Promoting Family Engagement."

Ms. Reith said the question between the August and September meetings is "How do we get the ball rolling on community engagement?" She said each task force member can do research in their respective communities.

Ms. Dickey said there will be a convening on a community engagement project sponsored by Winthrop Rockefeller, Kellogg Foundation, and partnered with the Clinton School of Public Service on April 5, 2018. She said there will hopefully be a policy recommendation. She said there may be an opportunity for synergy between this work and the work happening on the Task Force.

Ms. Reith said there are funds left in the Deeper Learning Grant to be mindful of as the task force considers the future.

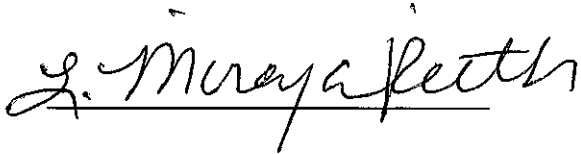
Examine other State Agencies' Approach to Family Engagement in Learning

Ms. Dickey said the work that Ms. Ables is doing with CCSSO will be an interesting opportunity to see how other states address family engagement in learning.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:24 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Kelicia Hollis

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mireya Reith". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Mireya Reith, Co-Chair

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charisse Dean". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Charisse Dean, Co-Chair

