



**ESSA Task Force Meeting #10
May 1, 2018 at 6:00 PM
441 4th Street NW, Room 1117
Washington, DC 20001**

Minutes

Attendance:

ESSA Task Force Members:

Present:

Lannette Woodruff (Task Force Co-Chair and Ward 4 Representative, State Board of Education)
Josh Boots (Executive Director, EmpowerK12)
Samantha Brown (Special Education and Reading Teacher, Calvin Coolidge High School)
Yolanda Corbett (Co-Chair, Parent Advocate Leaders Group)
Hannah Dunn (Student at Wilson High School)
Laura Fuchs (WTU Board Member and Teacher, HD Woodson High School)
Juliana Herman (Deputy Chief of Policy, DC Public Schools)
Anne Herr (Parent and Director of School Quality, FOCUS)
Erica Hwang (Instructional Coach, Brightwood Education Campus)
Erin Kupferberg (Senior Manager of School Quality and Accountability, DC Public Charter School Board)
Jacque Patterson (DC Regional Director, Rocketship Public Schools)
Richard Pohlman (Executive Director, Thurgood Marshall Academy Public Charter School)
Daniel Rodriguez (Student, Benjamin Banneker High School)
Alex Rose-Henig (Dean of Students, BASIS DC)
Sheila Strain-Clark (Parent and Chief of Programs, Sasha Bruce Youthwork)
Jhonna Turner (Parent Engagement Program Coordinator, Washington Lawyers' Committee)
Joe Weedon (Ward 6 Representative, State Board of Education)
Suzanne Wells (Founder, Capitol Hill Public Schools Parent Organization)
Karen Williams (President and Ward 7 Representative, State Board of Education)

Absent:

Allyson Criner Brown (Ward 7 Education Council Member and Associate Director, Teaching for Change)
Deborah Dantzer Williams (Head of School, Inspired Teaching Public Charter School)
Dan Davis (Student Advocate, State Board of Education)
Ramona Edelin (Executive Director, DC Association of Chartered Public Schools)
Donald Hense (Chairman, Friendship Public Charter Schools)
Jack Jacobson (Vice President and Ward 2 Representative, State Board of Education)
Maya Martin (Executive Director, Parents Amplifying Voices in Education)
Elizabeth Primas (ESSA Program Manager, National Newspaper Publishers Association)



Presenters:

Justin Tooley (Special Assistant for Legislation and Policy, Office of the State Superintendent of Education)

Naomi Watson (Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the State Superintendent of Education)

Chloe Woodward-Magrane (Interim Director of Communications, Office of the State Superintendent of Education)

Sharona Robinson (Community Action Team Coordinator, Wards 7 & 8, District of Columbia Public Schools)

Also Participating:

Donna Johnson (Director of Accountability, Office of the State Superintendent of Education)

Kerry Savage (Policy Analyst, Parents Amplifying Voices in Education)

SBOE Staff:

John-Paul Hayworth, Executive Director

Miguel Agüero, Staff Assistant

Dyvor Gibson, Administrative Support Specialist

Paul Negron, Public Affairs Specialist

Matt Repka, Policy Analyst

Kit Faiella, Policy Fellow

Abby Ragan, Policy Fellow

Executive Summary

At the tenth meeting of the ESSA Task Force (TF), members heard an update from the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) on feedback related to the draft citywide school report card design, and a presentation on family engagement from the team of District residents that attended the Teach to Lead Summit. TF members then split into four subcommittees - school resources and funding equity, leadership, school climate, and academic rigor - and discussed next steps for their respective groups. The TF reconvened at the end to briefly discuss lessons learned and objectives for the next TF meeting on June 5.

Welcome

Dr. Woodruff welcomed attendees to the tenth meeting of the ESSA Task Force. The TF will meet once more in the current school year, to be held in June; it will reconvene on the first Tuesday in September. Dr. Woodruff introduced Ms. Johnson to the TF in her new role as OSSE's Director of Accountability, and reminded the TF about the equity definition the group had previously agreed upon, reiterating how important equity issues were in ESSA implementation.

Update: Report Card Design Feedback

Ms. Woodward-Magrane, Ms. Watson and Mr. Tooley presented an update to TF members on the public feedback received thus far to the design of a citywide school report card. Ms. Woodward-Magrane said that mockup was a first pull of the data, and the final report card design was subject

**State Board of Education of the District of Columbia**

441 4th Street, NW ~ Suites 530S & 723N ~ Washington, DC 20001 ~ (202) 741-0888

www.sboe.dc.gov ~ sboe@dc.gov ~ [@DCSBOE](https://facebook.com/dstateboard)



to change pending additional input. She reminded the group that Friday, May 4 was the end date for the next phase of feedback on the report card.

A TF member asked if there would be further iterations after the deadline in the case of surveys that come in late. Ms. Watson said that TF members should still submit the surveys to OSSE, but that the agency could not commit to incorporating feedback into the final design once the deadline had passed.

Ms. Woodward-Magrane said that the agency had heard comments from over 800 people since April 27 on the draft report card layout. Ms. Wells asked about the ratio of online to paper feedback; Ms. Woodward-Magrane said that most of the feedback had been online, but some feedback was submitted via paper forms. She noted that the majority of respondents were parents and most live in Wards 4, 5, and 6. Comparatively fewer responses have come from Wards 2 and 3. OSSE plans to conduct more outreach to families in Wards 7 and 8, including targeted social media outreach and work with community-based nonprofit organizations.

A TF member asked about the breakdown of responses by demographics and how that social media targeting would take place; Ms. Woodward-Magrane said that while it was not her area of expertise, she would follow up with more information on how that was occurring. Another TF member explained more about geotargeted advertising methods.

A TF member asked OSSE to consider posting on several community organizations' Facebook pages. He asked if the agency had more specific ward-level data on respondents; Ms. Watson said that they would follow up with a more final report-out at a later date.

Ms. Woodward-Magrane said that overall, most stakeholders said they agree with the draft organization and layout. She presented the top five measures requested in feedback for the purposes of comparing schools: school programs, grades served, teacher information, PARCC scores, and the STAR rating.

A TF member asked about comments that related to the heading section of the report card (the top banner section of the first page) and that there was not originally a place to put them. Ms. Watson said they were still processing a sizeable amount of the feedback and that she wasn't sure she could speak to specific themes or categories yet.

Ms. Woodward-Magrane presented aggregated responses to some of the survey questions. She asked the group again for feedback by the end of Friday, May 4, and said that representatives from OSSE were also available to pick up surveys or otherwise coordinate with TF members if they can help out. OSSE will return for the June ESSA Task Force meeting to provide a final update before the summer break.

A TF member asked what OSSE had done to analyze the STAR rating, and whether they had done any modeling of what schools' STAR ratings would look like in the first edition of the report cards, given the potentially large repercussions for schools once the ratings are made public. Ms. Watson said that some modeling had been done based on historical data, and that they would be performing



a number of internal analyses to make sure that the data are valid before the official release of any ratings. OSSE plans on communicating with schools prior to and after the release of the report card. A TF member said that there is currently not enough understanding of how the algorithm for the STAR rating works, and Ms. Watson responded that OSSE plans on making this an important part of their messaging around the release of the report cards (e.g. making sure parents understand what a school's rating means for them) and creating supplemental informational resources that focus on these topics.

Dr. Woodruff closed the discussion because of time constraints. She said it was very important to keep discussing this topic and to promote a greater understanding of ratings and performance metrics, not just how they are intended but how they will be popularly understood by District residents. Ms. Woodward-Magrane said that she did not mean to create the impression that they had not heard from anyone in Wards 2 and 3, but rather that they had heard comparatively less than from residents in other Wards.

Presentation and Q&A on Family Engagement Summit Dr. Woodruff introduced Ms. Robinson to present on the Teach to Lead Summit and her team's family engagement efforts. Ms. Robinson suggested that OSSE connect with family collaborative nonprofit organizations to further their feedback-collecting efforts, and she thanked Dr. Woodruff for the opportunity to present. Ms. Robinson explained the purpose of the Teach to Lead Summit: to meet other practitioners from across the country and to share information across sectors and geographic locations. The family engagement team sought to address the problem of historic challenges to educational access in Wards 7 and 8 that made it more difficult for families to make better-informed decisions. The team sought to ensure that families better understand DC's ESSA plan, as well as the federal law itself, in order to increase student and parent engagement and amplify parent voice.

In order to do this, the family engagement team will undertake several strategies. They plan to inform families directly about ESSA through social media campaigns, meetings hosted at schools and other public locations in Wards 7 and 8, school-level communications like robocalls and emails, hosting office hours about ESSA in libraries and recreation centers, and canvassing in specific neighborhoods. Ms. Robinson stated the goal was to promote a collaborative approach that involves parents so that schools and parents can advocate for themselves.

A TF member asked Ms. Robinson about historical challenges to canvassing in Wards 7 and 8. Ms. Robinson said that canvassing was not the immediate priority of the team, and that they were more interested in school-based meetings and outreach as primary forms of engagement. Dr. Woodruff said that educating school leaders on ESSA and putting things in clear terms was important as well, to make sure those leaders know how to address educational challenges and work towards equity. She suggested the group use the full name of the law (Every Student Succeeds Act) rather than the acronym, ESSA, as a start.

A TF member thanked the family engagement team for their work and emphasized his belief in the importance of parent voice. He noted that another member of the TF had a similar engagement effort underway and said he wanted to take care not to duplicate efforts. That TF member said that



her group and Ms. Robinson's group had run into each other previously and that she supported that because it meant everyone was on the same page. TF members recommended that the groups conduct outreach to clarify for parents and families that the STAR rating does not encompass everything about a school. One TF member was concerned that students will be negatively impacted by the idea that their school is underperforming.

Dr. Woodruff said that the presentation was a good reminder of the importance of the TF's ongoing work, stating that policy changes recommended by the group will affect the experience of families at schools across the District.

Committee Breakout

The TF split up into four committees, each with the ongoing task of tackling a specific education issue area.

The **Academic Rigor Committee** watched a selection from a National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) webinar entitled "Leveraging ESSA's Title II for Job-Embedded Professional Development." The discussion focused on three main topics:

- 1) Professional development as a potential path to increasing academic rigor for students in the classroom;
- 2) How the Early Development Instrument (EDI) data can be leveraged for their work;
- 3) Consensus on what academic rigor means to them.

Committee members agreed that they would have preferred more of a focus on middle school. The group largely agreed that the main problem in the District of Columbia as it relates to academic rigor was not about defining it, but rather about closing the gaps between subgroups.

The **Leadership Committee** also watched a selection from a NASBE webinar entitled "Exploring State Policies That Support Effective Professional Learning Under ESSA." The group also referred to an Education Commission of the States document that references leadership standards. The committee discussed how specific stakeholder groups - students, parents, teachers, principals, district- and state-level personnel, and community members - could demonstrate leadership and effectively advocate. The group discussed what sort of challenges and supports the groups would face, and resolved to continue the discussion online via a shared Google document, with a self-imposed deadline of May 8, one week from the meeting date.

The **School Resources and Funding Equity Committee** discussed school data availability and budget transparency. The group worked to define transparency and its implications for students, families, teachers, administrators, and community members. Committee members identified issues with school data being difficult to compare in an "apples-to-apples" fashion, e.g. large differences between traditional public and public charter school funding streams make comparing budgets and expenditures difficult. The committee brainstormed the education officials and policy experts they would like to interview to further discuss funding equity.

The **School Environment Committee** narrowed the focus of their committee from the previous session to focus on a question: *what does access to opportunity mean for various stakeholders?*



The previous session had narrowed the scope of the committee to three buckets, in addition to changing the committee's name from "School Environment" to "School Climate."

The three areas of focus were:

1. Providing feedback on what parents want out of school surveys
2. Providing guidance about what metrics are important related to access and opportunities
3. Providing suggestions about best practices in thinking about school environment

During this session, the committee decided to focus on the second bullet point moving forward and engage stakeholders about what they see as "access to opportunities" within in a school.

Committee Report Out The committees came back together to share out some major takeaways from their discussions. Ms. Williams, from the Academic Rigor Committee, said that the group had expanded their thinking to include teacher professional development and its role in informing academic rigor, while looking in particular at how North Carolina and Delaware – the two states examined in the webinar – had defined academic rigor. She said the group also inquired about what supports the District could provide to at-risk and SPED students, among other subgroups, to ensure academic rigor.

Mr. Tooley presented for the School Climate Committee, stating that the committee had reviewed the three major buckets of work from the previous meeting - providing feedback about surveys, providing feedback about things that are important to stakeholders, and best practices for impacts on school committee metrics.

Ms. Turner discussed the School Resources and Funding Equity Committee's conversation. She said they had discussed the nature of budget and funding transparency and how best to ensure transparency for students, parents, teachers, and community stakeholders. She said that they would interview representatives from DCPS' central office, a charter school LEA, and an outside budgeting expert, like Mary Levy.

Mr. Pohlman said that the Leadership Subcommittee had discussed how students, parents, teachers, principals, LEAs, and SEAs can be leaders in equity. The group talked about what supports each group would need, but that they would need to combine their notes together and circulate them back to the task force as a whole.

Dr. Woodruff said that the work of the committees was very important and thanked the TF members for the work that they have done in a short amount of time.

Next Steps and Adjourn

At 8:03 PM, Dr. Woodruff adjourned the TF until its next meeting on Tuesday, June 5, 2018, from 6:00 – 8:00 PM at 441 4th Street NW, room 1117.

