

High School Graduation Requirements Task Force Meeting #7
November 8, 2017 at 6:00 PM
441 4th Street NW, Suite 842
Washington, DC 20001

Attendance

High School Graduation Requirements Task Force Members:

Present:

- **Markus Batchelor** (Task Force Co-Chair, State Board of Education, Ward 8)
- **Erin Bibo** (Deputy Chief, College & Career Programs)
- **Tom Brown** (Executive Director, Training Grounds, Inc.)
- **Julie Camerata** (Parent, DC International, Executive Director, DC Special Education Cooperative)
- **Latisha Chisholm** (Special Education Coordinator, Anacostia High School)
- **Jerome Foster II** (Student, Washington Leadership Academy)
- **Cara Fuller** (Principal, Ballou STAY High School)
- **Kimberly Martin** (Principal, Wilson High School)
- **Shenita Ray** (Director of Online Operations, Georgetown University School of Continuing Studies)
- **Karla Reid-Witt** (Parent, Banneker High School)
- **Cathy Reilly** (Executive Director, Senior High Alliance of Parents, Principals and Educators)
- **David Tansey** (Teacher, McKinley Technology High School)
- **Justin Tooley** (Special Assistant for Legislation & Policy, Office of the State Superintendent of Education)
- **Laura Wilson Phelan** (Task Force Co-Chair, State Board of Education, Ward 1)

Absent:

- **Celine Fejeran** (Deputy Director, Raise DC)
- **Larry Greenhill, Sr.** (Vice President, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers)
- **Cosby Hunt** (Teacher & Senior Officer of Teaching & Learning, Center for Inspired Teaching)
- **Senovia Hurtado** (School Counselor & Parent, School Without Walls)
- **Dwan Jordon** (Senior Advisor, Friendship PCS)
- **Sandra Jowers-Barber** (Director, Division of Humanities, University of the District of Columbia College)
- **Sanjay Mitchell** (Director of College & Alumni Programs, Thurgood Marshall Academy PCHS)
- **Carol Randolph** (Chief Operating Officer, DC Students Construction Trades Foundation)
- **Naomi Rubin DeVeaux** (Deputy Director, DC Public Charter School Board)

- **Jimell Sanders** (Parent, Houston Elementary School)
- **Jahari Shelton** (Student, Sidwell Friends School)
- **Jane Spence** (Deputy Chief, Secondary Schools, DC Public Schools)

SBOE Staff:

- **John-Paul Hayworth**, Executive Director
- **Sabrina Hernandez**, Policy Fellow
- **Paul Negron**, Program Support Specialist
- **Matt Repka**, Policy Analyst
- **Maria Saliccioli**, Policy Analyst
- **Alexandria Smith**, Communication Fellow

Executive Summary

The High School Graduation Requirements Task Force (TF), led by Ms. Wilson Phelan and Mr. Batchelor, held its seventh meeting on November 8, 2017. Ms. Wilson Phelan opened the meeting by sharing updated language around the purpose of a high school diploma. The TF then split into four groups to react to a “straw man” set of requirements – proposed changes to high school graduation requirements designed to ensure the District diploma fulfills its intended purpose. After each TF member had had an opportunity to suggest further edits to the requirements, the TF conducted a gallery walk, where TF members indicated which of their peers’ changes they liked, disagreed with, or wanted more information about.

After the gallery walk, TF members were asked to indicate two things: areas where they would like more research or to hear from experts, and personal commitments to engage with their constituent groups and get feedback on an updated straw man set of requirements.

Once TF members had shared their questions and made their commitments to engage with the community, the TF adjourned until its eighth meeting on December 13, 2017.

Agenda Items

Welcome and Purpose

Mr. Batchelor called the meeting to order, thanking TF members for reviewing the straw man graduation requirements over the last two weeks. He introduced the plan for the next 75 minutes: members of the TF would work in groups to reflect on sections of the straw man requirements. After reflecting together and coming to some consensus, each group of TF members would record their perceptions of each section’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. They were also asked to indicate their proposals for further changes.

Ms. Wilson Phelan explained that groups could either record edits using the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, and proposals format, or they could edit the straw man language directly. She explained that the goal of the exercise was to produce a strong draft at the end of the meeting. She added that each table also had a copy of the updated

language on the purpose of the diploma, and TF members could feel free to edit it while in their groups. Following the editing process, the TF would then walk around the room, looking at the edits to each section of the straw man regulations, and note where they agreed or disagreed with the feedback.

The updated language defining the purpose of a diploma was as follows:

The purpose of the District of Columbia diploma shall be to prepare students to succeed in the 21st century careers of their choice and lead civically engaged lives. Please see below for definitions.

When used in this chapter, the following terms shall have the ascribed meanings:

“21st century careers” – careers that meet existing needs in the world, as well as jobs that will solve as-yet unidentified problems. These careers may require post-secondary education and/or specialized training. To be able to succeed in any of these careers, and to be able to move freely between them, students need effective communication, time management, teamwork, and social-emotional skills. Students also need academic preparation in high school that will allow them to perform well in coursework at two- or four-year post-secondary institutions of their choosing or workforce programs directly following graduation.

“civically engaged lives” – graduates proactively engage in their communities and have developed the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to want and be able to positive influence the lives of others.

Café Input

TF members worked in groups to critique the proposed updates to the requirements. Each group started at a station evaluating one of the following sets of changes to the requirements: English/math, electives/arts/world language, science/PE/health, consistent credit and college level and career preparatory (CLCP) classes, and social studies/arts/music. Each group of TF members then rotated to stations on the other sets of proposed changes to ensure that every TF member was able to weigh in on all proposed changes.

Gallery Walk

After each TF member had an opportunity to provide feedback on each of the proposed changes, Ms. Wilson Phelan and Mr. Batchelor provided everyone with nine stickers: three red, three yellow, and three green. TF members were instructed to walk around and look at everyone’s input on the proposed changes; the stickers would be used to weigh in on that feedback. TF members were asked to put red stickers next to input they disagreed with, green stickers next to input they agreed with, and yellow stickers next to items that were unclear or about which they wanted more information.

Input on Further Research and Individual Comments

Once all TF members had placed their stickers, Mr. Batchelor called the group back to attention and introduced the closing activity. He asked each TF member to use post-it notes to indicate at least two topics about which they would like more information. That information could come in a variety of formats, and TF members were encouraged to make note of information they wanted to read about, people they wanted to hear from, and specific questions they hoped to ask. He also asked them to make outreach commitments: SBOE would produce a new draft straw man in the days following the meeting, and he asked TF members to commit to engage their communities around the new draft by December 6. TF members were asked to indicate whom they would reach out to and when they would conduct the outreach.

Ms. Wilson Phelan outlined the proposed sequence of upcoming meetings: TF members would hear from experts who could answer their questions at the next meeting, after which SBOE would develop a new draft. TF members would be asked to share this draft with their communities, and the TF would engage with further expert testimony and iterate on the draft until they came up with a final set of recommendations.

Dr. Bibo asked if she had missed the conversation around the final purpose, and Ms. Wilson Phelan explained that there were draft statements of purpose on each table, but the purpose might continue to change as the group gathers input and takes part in further conversation. Dr. Bibo said this was reassuring.

Ms. Reilly noted that even within her discussion group of three people, there were differences of opinion. She asked when these might be ironed out. Ms. Wilson Phelan noted that the last three meetings were scheduled to help the group build internal consensus, but more meetings may be needed - after each conversation with experts during TF meetings, there will be time to talk about shifts of opinion and questions/concerns. She hoped that the group would distill the primary areas of disagreement each week, which would allow subsequent efforts to focus more closely on those areas. She added that SBOE staff would write a report that would capture minority opinions in those areas where only a few TF members differed in opinion from the group.

Closing

After TF members indicated areas where they desired further research and made their individual commitments to connect with stakeholders, they left the meeting. The group will hold its next meeting on December 13, 2017, from 6:00 – 8:00 PM.