

**THIS MEETING DID NOT CONTAIN A PRESENTATION – DISCUSSION AND
UPDATES**

JJPOC Suspension & Expulsion Workgroup

June 8, 2022

12:00am-1:00pm

Web-Based Meeting Zoom

Meeting Summary:

- Bellwether Presentation & Discussion of Draft Workplan
 - It is recommended that this group stay with the PK-2 grade span but eye towards policies that can grow
 - There is a large agreement that kids in these grades should not be excluded from educational settings, even though they often are
 - Important to acknowledge that for many younger kids this may be their first interaction with teachers or formal school due to the pandemic, and that exclusion can have long term and compounding effects on youth
 - Bellwether is looking for reaction and recommendations from group members to help to refine ideas
 - There was appreciation that there is an acknowledgement that many agree on the principle, it is more about role out and implementation
 - It was brought up that it feels like the group is not getting to the direction that it wants to be in, this year kids have been regulated more and teachers are overworked, making it important to make sure implementation is done at a practical level
 - Recommendations were made for PK-2, and some are not sure that the recommendations will get further since they were not implemented this past session
 - Some felt there was a need to make a public case that these exclusionary policies are harmful, since there is not agreement on legislation if and how to present exclusion policies
 - It was brought up that there is a need for social emotional learning to help to support kids, the legislature has done some and will continue to do more work around SEL
 - It was asked if this group still functioning under the public act, the group is still functioning under the public act
 - The question was asked if the group is still in phase 1 (PK-2), as phase 2 was going to focus on older grades by 2023, but it was noted that the work can be adjusted because this group was not successful in phase 1
 - Since last session recommendations that were made were not passed, the goal is to get those recommendations passed next session
 - There is not equal education for all, the highest need communities don't get equal educational opportunities which harms them
 - 13% of students in PK-2 are black, 34% of suspensions in those grades are black students, it was asked how this group should frame legislation to reduce this disparity not just ban or reduce exclusionary policies
 - It was noted that to reduce disparities it is important to address biases, implicit or not

- The importance of acknowledging what the nature of the problem is and what are the needs of kids that they aren't getting was brought up, how is this dealt with and what can this workgroup do about it
- There needs to be a shared definition of what the problem is, what does the outcome look like and what steps need to be taken to get there
- Since there is an expected large increase in the number of students excluded from school this year, it may be worthwhile to look at why an increase in exclusion has occurred
- It was suggested that it may be helpful to step away from agree and disagree, to look back at what is the legislative mandate of this group
- Recommended that there be a continuance of the PK-2 group in addition to the new recommendations
- Members of this workgroup would like to see preliminary numbers from SDE on suspensions and expulsions to help to better address the issues at hand
- If this group plans to add a recommendation that didn't succeed (ban for PK-2), how would the recommendation be made differently this time to make it more compelling
- It was acknowledged that the PK-2 group is crucial, it is important to intervene early on and reduce exclusion
- It was asked what the alternatives are that can be offered to students who can't be in traditional school
- Coming to place that PK-2 is critical importance, but what isn't wanted is to be constrained to this group to recommendations that were not originally passed
- Two theories were presented:
 - Theory of change: what needs to be different about systems to get to the ideal future, this is the important place to start
 - Theory of action: what does this group do that contributes to the theory of change, how will this group make change
- When the recommendations for this committee were passed in 2021 it was huge, but the time frame that this committee is given is short to come up with recommendations, it was asked if maybe the task is too large for the time frame
- It was brought up that maybe the JJPOC should not be leading the group and that maybe the education committee in the legislature should
- If the tasks were transferred to the education committee the JJPOC would still help to push recommendations
- The group should figure out what are the partners that should be included in this getting done and what entity would be best fit to address these issues
- It was noted that there will be a ripple effect from the pandemic, which is why focusing on the PK-2 group is very important
- The group should not just come up with a resolution of the what but a resolution of the why, what is this group doing to change the lives of people
- There are so many reasons why kids get disengaged, but there aren't investments on all levels to prevent disengagement, there needs to be investment in other areas, which needs to be said when making the recommendations
- Educators feel that resources will not come if there is a total ban, there is not adequate funding and support to bring those resources to all schools

- It needs to be clear about who is not doing this well, that information should be public, and those who are not carrying out these practices well should be held accountable
- Part of the recommendations working is about resources, what incentives and disincentives and how are programs going to be enforced that work, there need to be reasons to comply
- The possibility of building on existing structures was mentioned, improving the structures to function in a better fashion
- Some felt that the workgroup should work on what they were tasked with for this year, which would mean not focusing on the PK-2
- It was brought up that including more data and numbers should be used making the recommendation easier to understand and more compelling
- Bellwether was thanked for the framework they presented, it was stressed that the group would like to implement the recommendations, but then make sure they are sustained, making sure that people can be held accountable for implementing
- It was suggested that there will need to be a modified consensus, meaning on a scale on 1-10 and looking for can you live with it, since there is no large-scale agreement, some agreement is needed in places
- Next Steps
 - An email will be sent out to create a consistent schedule of meeting times for this group

Next Meeting: TBD