

THIS MEETING CONTAINED A PRESENTATION – DISCUSSION AND UPDATES

JJPOC Suspension & Expulsion Workgroup

July 11, 2022

11:00am-12:00pm

Web-Based Meeting – Zoom

Meeting Summary:

- Presentation & Discussion with Bellwether
 - This meeting will be spent focused on decisions about processes and goals/purposes of the group, next meeting the group will be making some decisions
 - Bellwether presented five proposed norms for this group
 - Using time productively and effectively
 - Treat this as workplace
 - Attend all meetings
 - Be accountable for commitments
 - Monitor your own use of space
 - The group agreed with the norms that were presented
 - This group has 5 meetings left with Bellwether; Bellwether would like to have the group make 10 to 13 decisions within these meetings
 - Bellwether summarized the June meeting focusing on the feedback they had heard from group members, such as everyone thinks exclusionary policies are harmful, the report last year was not successful, this group was assigned to complete a specific task, and more
 - Bellwether reiterated what they proposed last meeting, they shared the themes that were heard surrounding the recommendation, such as being practical moving forward, the PK-2 report did not have the effect it was supposed to have, and more
 - A more comprehensive approach
 - Trying to use a “yes, and...” approach with this group
 - Bellwether proposes that the group develop recommendations that are connected to policy pathways for three grade bands, looking to implement practical guidelines that can be sustained across each grade band, planning on looking at legislation, resources that are currently available and what is currently working in communities
 - The group needs to decide on recommendations that are sustainable
 - Looking at the current political viability of some recommendations, as well as looking at the priorities of SDE and what they would be able to get behind, for example data SDE may not have the capacity right now to collect and process data in the way that some would like so recommending expanding that capacity would be useful
 - Looking at what policies are currently in play and where this group can align with some of those
 - It was noted that the group should not just focus on suspension and expulsion but should be proactive with focusing on all the steps before suspension and expulsion

- It was clarified that the law never intended to bring this report to the legislature directly, it was to bring it to the JJPOC to see what they thought of the recommendations first
- There are eight points that needed to be in the report to the JJPOC, these should be included in the updated recommendations
- The report is much more comprehensive addressing what are the consequences and what are the know alternatives, how can Connecticut move towards the alternatives
- This group needs to work to define exclusionary discipline, although kids aren't suspended or expelled, they can still be excluded
- Decision making: Finding the right strategy
 - The success of this group is based on the ability to balance efficiency, quality, and practicality
 - There are many things that this group has met a conclusion on, the group should work to act on those topics, not continuing to address them
 - Suggesting that there does not need to be 100% agreement to move forward, it is hard to come to 100% agreement
 - Bellwether recommends using a modified version of a consensus, which includes creating a minimum level of agreement for all
 - It was asked that if someone can't live with a decision what happens and if someone ends up changing their view after stakeholder have given their opinions
 - The group will be using a 1-10 voting system, proposing setting the agreement level at 5 ("I can live with it")
 - For example, if stakeholder input was given, and someone moved below a five the question what you need to move on would be asked
 - Goal at that there are places where people may give as well as get
 - The chat function will be used to do this, and the group will be reminded of the scale each time
 - Bellwether presented the draft of the topics for each month and the conclusions that the group should come to at the end of the meetings
 - The report will contain more information, including research and the recommendations, there will be a draft in October
- Purpose and position
 - The group needs the align its purpose and position
 - Bellwether presented a scale that ranged from the current situation, to what is the ultimate impact that the group is contributing too
 - The framework describes a process to make decisions, prioritize actions, and support stakeholder understanding
 - This group is focused on the left side of the framework, the intended impact, the theory of action which is how this group will achieve its intended impact
 - JJPOC as a whole is focused more on the ultimate social change
 - Bellwether created an intended impact of this group as well as the theory of action

- For the last intended impact clarification was asked about if schools are supposed to create more social emotional supports or if students are supposed to participate more, wanted to focus on schools
- There were some issues with the language used in the TOA, some felt that the word disciplinary is too limiting and were confused about what eliminating exclusionary policies meant, there was a general agreement that the group should focus on the non-punitive approaches in addition to the punitive
- It was felt that jumping right to fixing exclusionary policies seemed to ignore creating a foundation that supports healthy development
- Bellwether stated that they will take the feedback given and make refinements in the language
- It was asked if this is an equation that everyone can agree on
- There was concern that focusing on 5-8 would remove focus on 9-12, suggested that maybe focusing on older versus younger kids would be more helpful since there is only so much time
- Some felt that really focusing on recommendations for the PK-2 then building from that
- Bellwether explained that the group should be looking to make three sets of recommendations, one set per grade band
- It was asked how people can be held accountable for implementing the recommendations, suggested that some language could be changed to make this clearer for educators
- There was consensus that this equation can be used
- Next Steps
 - In between the monthly meetings there will be optional discussion sessions, these will be held if at least two group members can attend