

Whole Child Task Force

Agenda

Thursday, October 28, 2021

2-3 p.m.

<https://transcripts.gotomeeting.com/#/s/f0a070150549289b4675daf962ddc34400b7f9de5e0412327d08bfcfa0fe16a8>

Whole Child Task Force members present:

- Karyn Aguirre, *Chicago Public Schools*
- Kristine Argue-Mason, *Partnership for Resilience*
- Maryam Brotine, *Illinois Association of School Boards*
- Dr. Colleen Cicchetti, *Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago*
- Sandy De Leon, *City Colleges of Chicago*
- Jaime Guzman, *Illinois State Board of Education*
- Dr. Colandra Hamilton, *Midlothian School District 143*
- Dr. Lori James-Gross, *Unity Point School District 140*
- Dr. Shaniqua Jones, *Thornton Chicago Public Schools Township High School District 205*
- Victoria Mikos, *Schaumburg Consolidated School District 54*
- Krish Mohip, *Illinois State Board of Education*
- Barbara Outten, *East St. Louis School District 189*
- Lauren Pett, *Chicago Public Schools*
- Courtney Pharms-Marks, *Bloomington School District 87 (arrived at 2:11)*
- Dr. Kennedi Strickland-Dixon, *Oak Park River Forest High School*
- Jocelyn Vega, *Illinois Collaboration on Youth*
- Ann Whalen, *Advance Illinois*

Whole Child Task Force members absent:

- Bessie Alcantara, *Alternatives Inc.*
- Sheila Ashby, *Kaskaskia Special Education 801*
- Avery Bourne, *State Representative, 95th District*
- Dr. Terri Bresnahan, *Elk Grove School District 59*
- Chris Bridges, *Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights*
- Dr. Maria Del Carmen Robles Sinkule, *Illinois Association of School Social Workers*
- Dale Fowler, *State Senator, 59th District*
- Maria Gandara, *Chicago Public Schools*
- America Gutierrez, *Student Advisory Council*
- Dr. Jody Lack, *Southern Illinois University School of Medicine*
- Kimberly Lightford, *State Senator, 4th District*
- Rita Mayfield, *State Representative, 60th District*
- Dr. Tiffany Nelson, *Illinois Association of School Social Workers*
- Alisa Seo-Lee, *Chicago Public Schools*

ISBE Staff present:

- Krish Mohip, *Deputy Operational Education Officer*
- Cara Wiley, *Director for Wellness Department*
- Athanasia Albans, *Assistant to Deputy Operational Education Officer*

Chair: Krish Mohip

Vice Chair: Victoria Mikos

I. Welcome/Roll Call

Mr. Mohip brought the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was present.

II. Approval of Minutes

- a. August 12, 2021
- b. September 23, 2021

Dr. James-Gross made the motion to approve the August 12, 2021, and the September 23, 2021, meetings minutes. Ms. Outten seconded the motion. No members expressed any objections or proposed any amendments.

III. Updates on Subgroups

Ms. Mikos stated that in the lead/co-lead meeting it was discussed that an equity component be added to all recommendations because equity and trauma go hand-in-hand, and it's imperative to stress the importance of it through the recommendations. She added, in addition to embedding equity into the proposed recommendations, equity information would also be included in the background section of final report.

Mr. Mohip stated that equity is a big part of the work, and it should be included in decisions that are made. He added that there may be an instance where equity is not part of a recommendation, but very likely that would not occur often. He stated that when task force members are writing the recommendations, they must consider what actions, shifts, changes, or additional factors need to be inserted. They want to ensure that when a recommendation is enacted it is equitable and we are thinking about the diversity of students in our state.

a. Subgroup 1 – Training and Resources

Ms. Brotine provided an update. The subgroup has met three times and the members have been looking at training resources. The primary resource they have explored was the Lurie online training that's currently being offered through ISBE to educators. The subgroup members are currently taking that training and are looking at other training opportunities in order to be more comprehensive. Additionally, the subgroup members have started looking at trainings that are available for parents and community members to increase literacy pertaining to mental health and trauma needs.

Ms. Brotine stated that the subgroup members are currently looking at recommending that trauma-informed practice be a required portion for preparation programs for people entering education, social work, mental health, and pediatrics. It seems that a lot of people who are trained in trauma practices do this only after they are in the field and only when they take it upon themselves.

Lastly, Ms. Brotine suggested all Whole Child Task Force members watch the “Paper Tigers” documentary.

Mr. Mohip asked if the subgroup has identified any recommendation yet.

Ms. Brotine answered, not formally yet. But the subgroup members are leaning toward recommending that educator preparation programs require that, in order to be a certified teacher, candidates get trauma-informed training and education before entering a classroom -- not just as a continuing education requirement for a current teacher. Additionally, they feel this should be a requirement for social workers and for medical students. Ms. Brotine added that one subcommittee member is a pediatrician in the Chicago area and is informed about trauma. She tries to train people under her and/or expose medical students to it, but it's not a specific part of the medical programming. Ultimately, there needs to be a lot of education required in all fields to make this a core component or at least a required component of any sort of professional licensure.

Dr. Cicchetti stated that Golden Apple has done a lot of work in this area in its scholarship program; therefore, she suggested reaching out to that organization because it trains teachers from every college across the state.

Ms. Brotine thanked Dr. Cicchetti for the suggestion.

Ms. Whalen stated that it would be best to begin thinking about federal dollars after they are gone and what are the full-time equivalency and resource needs within a school that we would want to see as a state in order to be able to have a schools with enough resources to move along that continuum. In the Resilience Education to Advance Community Healing (REACH) pilot, a part of that assumption is to work with a leadership team and help leverage existing assets. Ms. Whalen suggested that it may be worth thinking about the opportunity with recommendations to look at the Evidence-Based Funding model. Let's see what would be an appropriate or an evidence-based ratio for being able to be fully staffed in order to have the resources to be successful at the local school and district levels.

Ms. Brotine thanked Ms. Whalen. She added there is a need to have mental health workers in every school building in the state. There are swaths of hundreds of square miles where there's one social worker and one mental health worker to service thousands of students; therefore, we should be recommending something along those lines because there's definitely a shortage of support personnel and of teachers.

Ms. Brotine mentioned funding and explained that in order for educators and other people in the community to maintain the level of care that's needed to be able to provide trauma-centered care, there is a need to revamp the continuing education system so that it's not a patchwork structure. The trainings must be more meaningful so as to lead to meaningful change. She provided examples, such as changing the school calendar to allow for more teacher training and more planning time for teachers so that they can more accurately or effectively focus the resources and time they have on the needs.

Ms. Mikos suggested exploring resources for individuals with disabilities.

b. Subgroup 2 – Process Development

Dr. Strickland-Dixon stated that she was unaware that other subgroups met prior to today but felt confident that she and her subgroup members will develop a strong recommendation. She provided an outline of the direction the subgroup will take.

Ms. Argue-Mason added that members will look at the criteria of the Illinois Association of School Boards as a professional development starting point.

c. Subgroup 3 – Data

Ms. Whalen stated that the subgroup members have met and are looking at data through four different lenses.

1. Data around need: Data and information to measure student or community exposure to trauma as defined by our task force.
2. Data around resources: Data and information to better understand resources to invest in and to support anti-racist trauma responses.
3. Data around progress: Data and information to measure school and district progress along the trauma-responsive and healing-centered continuum, as well as the anti-racist continuum. For example, this is leveraging some of the work being done through the REACH pilot and self-assessment tool. This is the potential kind of school designation idea that we heard about at our last meeting.
4. Data around evaluation: Data and information to measure impact, the state and federal and local resources, and investment into the system.

Ms. Whalen stated that the subgroup developed questions:

1. What is the state already collecting both by ISBE and by other state agencies that we can leverage in this conversation?
2. What other potential additional data should be added? And if it is, how could it be collected and for what purpose? We don't want to add data for data's sake but ensure that there are clear rationale and use cases for any data that we propose to include.

3. What should be public and how do we make it so? We are very conscientious, and we want information to be transparent and accessible, but we also know that some of this does come with privacy safeguards. We don't want to have unintended consequences, so we're making sure we're asking those questions as we go along.
4. What are other states and communities doing that we can learn from?
5. Thinking outside education, make sure we are thinking about mental health, medical practices, and wellness data.
6. Learn more about the REACH pilot and the REACH expansion evaluations, and what that data is going to reveal. The questions the subgroup is hoping to learn will likely be more apparent after this task force is done, but it would be helpful to better understand evaluations that are currently underway.

Ms. Brotine suggested looking at the Illinois Department of Public Health. It has a lot of data queries online that might be a resource for data. For example, the Department of Children and Family Services would be a resource for data on trauma.

d. Subgroup 4 – Timeline

Ms. Mikos provided an update. The group members met and discussed adopting a theory of change. She spoke about the long-term goal of the task force and other conditions that need to be in place to achieve that goal. The subgroup members wanted feedback from all members about whether this is something to add to the report or if that's something that the timeline subgroup should work out. Other than that, the subgroup acknowledge that many aspects of the timeline are impacted by the work of the other subgroups. The subgroup will create shells to present, but will be flexible based on everything that's going to come out of all of the work of the other subgroups.

Ms. Mikos added that all the work of the task force and what will be asked from districts is going to be a work in progress. There will not be an endpoint. The subgroup members are not looking for an end product, but rather for progressive movements across the state and within districts and other environments.

Ms. Mikos stated that the subgroup does not have specific recommendations at this time, but instead has shells of what it is leaning toward. The subgroup discussed not mandating anything for districts but rather having it more as an opt-in because they would lose a lot of people if it was a mandate. The subgroup agreed that there should be a variety of achievable steps throughout the timeline, rather than having strict deadlines. The achievable steps would begin with using the trauma-responsive school's implementation assessments and then moving on from there. In addition, the subgroup discussed the possibility of districts creating and submitting an action plan. Members also discussed who would be monitoring and re-evaluating districts' progress.

Ms. Mikos continued by stating the subgroup discuss the possibility of providing labels or awards once a district reached a milestone. By doing this, it allows districts and/or schools to have control of their movement. Finally, Ms. Mikos added the idea of whether to tie any sort of benefits to achieving a certain level.

Dr. Cicchetti stated these are exciting recommendations. She reminded the task force members that there is a part of the REACH project that is developing some sort of designation that we will be engaging in. A lot of the things that have been discussed should be considered. It would be great to have a subgroup member weigh in on some of that and to get some feedback. That is one of the deliverables that we've been asked to do in the next year and a half. Whatever recommendations are borne out of this group would be highly valued.

e. Subgroup 5 – Restorative Practices/Justice

Ms. Aguirre provided an update. She stated their subgroup is using the guiding tool from Thornton Township High Schools District 205, which the district of Dr. Jones. The biggest recommendation to come forward is that restorative justice should be mandated across the state for all schools. Justice has to be within all of us, and it has to be something practiced in the buildings in order to assist with the work being done.

Dr. Jones stated that the hope was to home in on having a universal definition of restorative justice and restorative practices because people use those two terms interchangeably, but they have two separate meanings. She explained the legalities in

terms of Senate Bill 100 becoming Public Act 99-0456, so that people understand not just the life application perspective, but that we are supporting this from a state level. She further stated that understanding a restorative mindset moves us in the right direction toward equity. Restorative justice must be interwoven into the fabric of every aspect of the school, climate, and culture. More importantly, restorative justice is a way of life, as it promotes the purpose of the Whole Child Task Force.

Dr. Jones stated that she created a district restorative justice plan that can be utilized in any capacity whether it's from an organization outside of the educational walls or an educational institution itself. The language is conducive to meet the needs of the people that are served in any capacity.

Mr. Mohip ask if the subgroup has looked at exclusionary practices, the number of suspensions, and the types of services being provided to children while on suspension. He also mentioned expulsion and whether that is something to continue because there are other alternatives to expulsion to look at.

Dr. Jones agreed and added that over the years she was able to home in on what the research supports in terms of what happens here in the State of Illinois. There are 21 states and the District of Columbia that have enacted school-based restorative justice legislation. In terms of alternative approaches, that is the reason why it's so important to determine what the unified message is as to how we define restorative justice. We continue to see things coming from across the spectrum as they relate to disciplinary infractions; the consequence of those disciplinary infractions; and what the alternative and equitable opportunities that are being provided, if there are any.

Ms. Aguirre stated that when she started with Chicago Public Schools, her first school was at the Juvenile Detention Center. A young lady who was a student at Spelman College was doing a research project, and she mentioned there is data indicating the rate of juveniles that are coming in and are detained is declining because they have put restorative justice practices in place. The hope is to gather that data because what other group is more trauma-imposed than juvenile delinquents?

Mr. Mohip stated that Molly Uhe-Edmonds, director of Student Care at ISBE, also can add to the conversation. She and her team are creating a template for districts that have been identified with chronic rates of suspensions and expulsions.

Ms. Aguirre stated that she would be interested in seeing that data.

Mr. Mohip suggested he would be willing to join the subgroup's next meeting along with others to help navigate the conversation.

Ms. Brotine stated that the federal Office for Civil Rights and the U.S. Department of Education have a data collection online. They only have data through the 2018 school year, but you can enter a specific school or a district and a discipline report for that school or district can be compiled. You can see if that particular school or district implemented restorative justice and also compare the changes over time. Either annually or every couple of years they require districts to submit their discipline data.

Ms. Mikos thanked the members who spoke and stated that this is an aspect that she'd like to see mandated because it provides guidance to continue the timeline discussion.

Ms. Vega stated when it comes to adults within schools or in school settings or educational settings causing harm directly to students, we need to think about how to help the students help one another and not so much the adults who are causing harm.

Dr. Jones thanked Ms. Vega and explained that the draft document she submitted to her subgroup addresses relationships that are not specific to sexual misconduct, but rather that of which students have with all stakeholders (janitor, bus driver, bus monitor, community providers). The mission and vision of all stakeholders should be in alignment with the restorative justice and restorative practices, as well as how is it conducive to meet the needs of the students that we serve and the people that are connected to those students.

Dr. Jones added that it's not just a matter of the interactions the students have, but rather that the overall individual humanizes those experiences that are all happening.

Ms. Argue-Mason stated in terms of restorative practices and restorative justice, she wondered if there was a way to connect that with the training resources. Specifically, there was conversation pertaining to preservice educators. There is nothing in the programs connected to being trauma-responsive; therefore, is there a way to highlight the necessity for those entering into the profession to have a true understanding of the pedagogy of restorative practices and restorative justice? Additionally, since there are adults who are in the space where our students are learning, to somehow ensure through funding that all staff are educated and given the skills to participate in a community that is considered to be restorative.

Ms. Aguirre stated that as the two subgroups meet more often, there will be some collaboration when it comes to putting forth the recommendations. Currently, the training is in the beginning of the year in most districts. The subgroup members hope to recommend that restorative justice is ongoing where educators receive the initial training, create curriculum and documentation, and update it as changes occur.

Ms. Brotine agreed to collaborate. She added creating a condition for teachers and other staff to be able to learn. It should be meaningful, but also something to build upon itself so that it's not just training that they take every year.

Mr. Mohip stated that the task force members will be receiving the equity statements for each recommendation along with the timeline.

Mr. Mohip stated that Senator Lightford shared that she would be able to get the task force more time. He met with the leads and will send out a full document that explains where the task force is with the recommendations and the final report. The hope is to have draft recommendations done by December 17 and finalized by January 4. The meeting on January 4 will be a timely meeting during which all of the recommendations are read and voted upon. It is important that everybody has an opportunity to voice their opinions on these through a vote. As far as the report goes, a final report needs to be done by mid-February, so the goal is to have the first draft of the report done by mid-

January. A special writing committee will be formed that would take the month of January to really get this draft completed.

Mr. Mohip stated that task force will receive a calendar invite for a special meeting that will occur around January 14.

IV. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

V. New Business

There was no new business.

VI. Adjourn

Ms. Aguirre made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Whalen seconded the motion.

Dates, times and locations are subject to change at the direction of the chair. Please check www.isbe.net/wholechild for official meeting postings.