

**DRAFT Minutes of Vermont Child Poverty Council
Meeting of Full Council
Room 10**

Meeting Date: 9/16/16, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Members in Attendance

Representative Jill Krowinski, Co-Chair
Representative Diane Lanpher, Co-Chair
Representative David Sharpe
Mathew Barewicz, designee for Commissioner Annie Noonan
Hal Cohen, Secretary, Agency of Human Services
Pam Dalley, designee for Commissioner Ken Schatz
Carlen Finn, Voices for Vermont's Children
Dr. Amy Fowler, Deputy Secretary, Agency of Education
Karen Lafayette, Vermont Low Income Advocacy Council
Jean Murray, Vermont Legal Aid
Ilisa Stalberg, designee for Dr. Breena Holmes

Members Absent

Senator Claire Ayer
Senator John Campbell
Senator Ann Cummings
Jeff Francis, Vermont Superintendents Association
Dr. Breena Holmes, Department of Health
Annie Noonan, Commissioner, Department of Labor
Ken Schatz, Commissioner, Department for Children and Families

Other Participants

Dr. Ben Allen, Department for Children and Families
Jay Diaz, American Civil Liberties Union - Vermont
Karin Edwards, Agency of Education
Molly Goldberg, Voices for Vermont's Children
Karen Joyce, Agency of Education
Matt Levin, Vermont Early Childhood Alliance
Marianne Miller, Capstone Community Action/Vermont Head Start Association
Mary Mulloy, State Director of Title 1, Agency of Education
Beth O'Brien, Richford Junior Senior High School - via phone
Jessica Oski, Necrason Group
Andrew Paciulli, Academy School, Brattleboro - via phone
Karen Price, Vermont Family Network
Melissa Riegel-Garrett, Department for Children and Families
Courtney Quinlan, Parent
Robert Stirewalt, Agency of Education
William Talbott, Agency of Education
Sarah Teel, Voices for Vermont's Children
Karen Vastine, Department for Children and Families
Tracy Watterson, Agency of Education
Jonathan Wolff, Primmer and Piper

Steve Zind, Vermont Public Radio
Catherine McLinn and Marjorie Zunder, Legislative Council

Topics Discussed

○ Chronic Absenteeism

The Council heard testimony from Jay Diaz, Poverty Law Project Fellow, American Civil Liberties Union – Vermont, on absenteeism, truancy, courts and diversion programs. Tracy Watterson, Multi-tiered System of Supports Program Manager, Agency of Education, testified on the Agency's work concerning chronic absenteeism. Andrew Paciulli, Principal, Academy School, Brattleboro, and Beth O'Brien, Principal, Richford Junior Senior High School, testified by phone on how chronic absenteeism is addressed in their schools.

○ Special Education

The Council heard testimony from Karen Joyce, Special Education Program Manager, Agency of Education, and Karin Edwards, Director for Student Support, Agency of Education, on data collected by the Agency on children in poverty who need special education. Karen Price, Director of Family Support, Vermont Family Network, and Courtney Quinlan, Parent, testified on the services needed to educate a child with autism in Vermont schools including truancy issues.

○ Federal Funding

The Council heard testimony from William Talbott, Deputy Commissioner and Chief Financial Officer, Agency of Education, and Mary Mulloy, State Director of Title 1, Agency of Education, on Title 1 federal funding for Vermont schools, how this funding is used and federal requirements that accompany it.

○ Voices for Vermont's Children

The Council heard testimony from Molly Goldberg, Research Associate, Voices for Vermont's Children, and Sarah Teel, Research Director, Voices for Vermont's Children, who reviewed the June 2016 report prepared by Voices for Vermont's Children on the impact systemic inequity has on Vermont children.

○ Head Start

The Council heard testimony from Dr. Ben Allen, Vermont Head Start Collaboration Director, Department for Children and Families, and Marianne Miller, Director, Head Start, Capstone Community Action. They defined services

provided by Head Start in Vermont and their benefits for Vermont children. They also discussed the partnerships between Head Start and Vermont public schools.

○ **Council Discussion and Next Steps**

- Need to document prior interventions by state agencies that serve children in poverty to improve subsequent efforts
- Need to shift from the district or school level (where data is not available) to the supervisory level for data reporting and data analysis
- Need to increase awareness of all services available for children in poverty
- Need to reduce controversy between agencies over services for children with special needs and children in poverty
- Need for better understanding of special education regulation and funding
- Need for better school outcomes for special needs and low income students
- Need for alternatives to fines for school truancy
- Need for two generational approach to serving children in poverty, coordinating AHS, AOE and DOL services and collaborating with community partners. Families in poverty should be treated “wholistically” to enable them to be stable and self-sufficient.
- Need for equity in services for children in poverty with better budgeting of available resources and less “siloing” of funding streams
- Need for appropriate services to meet the needs of all families
- Need for revised policies, based on research and data, for discipline, exclusion and restraint in schools
- Need for investment in afterschool and school vacation educational opportunities for Vermont children

○ **Motions**

No motions were offered.

○ **Adjournment** at 12:15 PM

Minutes prepared by Marjorie Zunder, Legislative Council