

School Consolidation Task Force  
Teachers and Staff Subcommittee Meeting Minutes  
September 11, 2017 from 5pm–7pm  
Colonial School District Office Building

**Members present:**

Dusty Blakey, Chair  
Jeff Taschner, Deputy Chair  
David Davis, DSEA Administrator  
Mary Cooke, Director of Human Resources, Capital School District  
Tammy Croce, Executive Director, Delaware Association of School Administrators  
Christine Smith, Director of Human Resources, Red Clay School District  
Emily Falcon, Chief Financial Officer, Colonial School District  
Angeline Rivello, Associate Secretary, Delaware Department of Education  
Loretta Greig, Lake Forest School District parent  
Nacole Gardner, Brandywine School District parent

**Members absent:**

Gerald Allen, Director of Human Resources, New Castle County Vo-Tech  
Matthew Meyer, New Castle County Executive

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 PM.

Dr. Blakey, the sub-committee chair, asked the sub-committee members to introduce themselves. He also welcomed the members of the public in attendance and asked them to introduce themselves, as well.

Members of the Public Present were: Kristen Dwyer, Delaware State Education Association (DSEA), Karen Lantz, Brandywine School District parent, and Robert Overmiller, Governor’s Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC).

The chair indicated that the meeting would be recorded, and that Michelle Kriss would be taking the minutes for the meeting. He advised everyone to sign-in on the sheets if they had not already done so, and to take an agenda with the packet of the foundational information.

**II. Discussion of Goals**

The chair referred to the packet of information he brought for the sub-committee members (attached at the end of these minutes). He reminded the sub-committee to stay focused on the goals of the larger task force as the members work on the sub-committee’s topics. He then had the sub-committee turn to the 2<sup>nd</sup> page of the packet titled “*Goals & Purpose of the Taskforce (In accordance with HCR39, Line 34-39)*” and read the following:

- 1) Examine issues and existing research related to the consolidation of school district;
- 2) Study and make finding related to the financial feasibility and impact of school district consolidation;
- 3) Study implementation challenges associated with school district consolidation;
- 4) Examine and identify incentives that may be used to encourage schools district to consolidation or reorganized; and
- 5) Make recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly concerning a proposed direction for public education consolidation based upon its findings.

Additional documents in the packet included the four task force sub-committees, a list of the Delaware public school districts and 2016 enrollment, and House Concurrent Resolution No. 39. He announced that there is an online survey that you can access that will allow you to give your opinion about school consolidation. He encouraged everyone to complete the survey if they had not already done so, and said he would provide the web address to everyone. He said it is important to give your input and communicate your opinion one way or the other regarding consolidation, and that the larger committee will use that to guide its overall direction. The chair said he would like to get the members' thoughts on the direction the sub-committee should go in the context of the larger task force goals. He said the committee is looking at the teachers and staff that are included in the operation of the state's school districts. He said our task at hand is looking at all of the various groups and look at what it is going to take in terms of consolidation with some direction of the Structure committee to determine what that would like and if there are going to be any financial costs or savings, but take a full picture of what it would take to outfit a school district and make it functional with all the staff that would be inclusive of it. The Chair asked the sub-committee to provide any additional thoughts they can focus on as it relates to the goals and mission of this sub-committee. No further comments made from the committee.

### **III. Review and Discussion of All Staff Groups for Inclusion**

The chair explained that this agenda item is to review and discuss all the various groups for inclusion. He thinks it is important the public is aware that this is bigger than just teachers or administrators. There are many other groups of people that make a school district run such as: custodial maintenance, transportation, food services, administrators, secretaries, paraprofessionals, technology staff, teachers, and related services. He said that the sub-committee needs to discuss collective bargaining groups and non-collective bargaining groups, and how there are a mixture of both in some places. He said that as the sub-committee breaks out these various groups of staff, they may want to consider using a state salary scale structure as part of the definition or process to make it easier to determine a group. The sub-committee felt that whoever it impacts will need to be considered, and that people should receive a notice of this type of change if it were to happen. It was also noted that there is a population of reported time folks who are not collective bargaining such as recess monitors, public safety officers, constables, and some casual seasonal workers, and that that some folks are salaried. The discussion then moved to collecting information and documents needed for the sub-committee's review.

#### **IV. Discussion of Documents Needed for Committee Review**

The sub-committee requested a listing of all employee groups by districts with some specific information about each. Mrs. Rivello said that she would have her data fellows create an inventory of positions spreadsheet with the work locations for each of the 19 Districts. She said each district could be e-mailed a spreadsheet to complete, and that she would flag this request to the Human Resource Directors at the upcoming bi-annual meeting. The sub-committee members asked that the spreadsheet include the identification of who is included or excluded from a collective bargaining agreement. Mrs. Rivello said that she would work on obtaining that information for the sub-committee to review. Jeff Taschner, sub-committee deputy chair, noted that this sub-committee's work is driven in large part by the Structure Sub-Committee's recommendations. The chair said all possible groups, who will vary from District to District, should be reviewed, and get more direction from the Structure Sub-Committee. He explained that this would help the Teachers and Staff Sub-Committee move forward more efficiently, and suggested the appropriate process in terms of teacher and staff assignments, salaries, and contracts, and therefore, knowing who we have where will allow us to make a recommendation that would make the Structure sub-committee's recommendation effective. Mrs. Rivello explained that the data team would be able to add additional columns to input additional information as needed for each district. The chair said once the positions are identified, and members collect any additional information, then the sub-committee will be able to delve deeper. The chair said this could be figured out once all the personnel costs information is received. The sub-committee members also discussed using personnel codes from the data service center, but it was noted that not all districts use the data service center to run their human resource models, and that there is a fee to use this service. The chair said we also need to collect necessary documentation such as Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs), and look at all of the nuances of each one, regarding what is or is not covered. He referred the sub-committee to the handout showing the map of the districts with the breakdown of the student enrollment as of September 2016 as an idea of the numbers of employees that may exist in certain districts. He commented that we also have some unit count guidance in the Delaware Code that will help to determine what is earned and not earned. He added that the Structure Sub-Committee will give the sub-committee further guidance on what models of consolidation will be researched. The deputy chair said he could provide a list of teachers and other units that they represent for distribution to the sub-committee, as well as share local salary scales, collective bargaining agreements, tuition reimbursements, and other local data points. The sub-committee would like the deputy chair to work on pulling as much info as possible. Other discussions from the sub-committee included the consideration of legal documents from a labor law perspective that could have an impact if consolidation were to take place. It was also noted that all districts now participate in the health care plan for State employees. The chair informed the sub-committee that Representative Jaques said at the initial meeting that it is the job to focus on what is in the best interest of kids. The chair said we need to stay focused on that as the sub-committees give their recommendations.

There was some discussion about historical information regarding consolidation, and how to retrieve that information. Emily Falcon said the school's Chief Financial Officers have

put together several documents that have been used at various points in time related to the consolidation of services, procurement efficiencies, and that she can provide them to the chair for distribution to the sub-committee. The chair recommended putting some of this information on google drive so everyone has access to it, and said that would make it easier to locate.

The chair reminded the sub-committee to complete the survey online. The sub-committee discussed collecting data from other states, and being cautious when doing comparable studies. The chair said it is going to take some effort for the sub-committee to be able to categorize or label people appropriately with all the variances. He said it will be challenging to categorize and classify the information we collect and put something forward that makes sense. The sub-committee agreed that the research needs to be done accurately and that data needs to be collected before moving forward. The chair said once the Structure Sub-Committee has provided some information, the Teachers and Staff Sub-Committee will have a better idea of how to move forward. The chair asked the sub-committee members if anyone had any further questions or comments. No further comments were made.

**V. Selection of Future Meeting Dates**

After some discussion, the sub-committee decided to tentatively go with Tuesday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> from 5:00-7:00 PM. Mary Cooke volunteered the Capital School District board room for the meeting.

**VI. Public Comments**

The chair opened the floor for public comments. Robert Overmiller, Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC), said the sub-committee may want to take a look at the website for Legislative Hall for this resolution since it provides meeting dates and locations, and would be helpful when planning this sub-committee's upcoming meetings so that they do not overlap with other meetings.

**VII. Adjournment**

The chair made a motion to end the meeting, and it was seconded by Christine Smith. The meeting adjourned at 6:09 PM.