**Statewide Afterschool Initiative Learning Task Force**

Friday, September 23, 2016

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

William A. Carter Partnership Center

The Owens Campus

Delaware Technical Community College

Seashore Highway

Georgetown, DE 19947

**Meeting Attendees:**

**Task Force Members:**

**Present:** **Title/Organization**

Jack Polidori Chair

Rep. Valerie Longhurst State Representative

Mike Jackson Deputy Controller General

Amelia Hodges Department of Education

Jim Kelly YMCA

John Fisher-Klein Newark Day Nursery

Sheila Bravo DANA

Carol Scott Delaware Afterschool Network

Frederika Jenner DSEA

Susan Bunting Superintendent, Indian River School District

Rep. Timothy Dukes State Representative

**Absent:**

Sen. Nicole Poore State Senator

Michelle Taylor United Way

Cynthia McKenzie Principal

Rich Heffron State Chamber of Commerce

Dusty Blakey Superintendent, Colonial School District

Ashley Biden Delaware Center for Justice

**Staff:**

Lauren Vella House of Representatives

Geoff Heath House of Representatives

**Attendees:** **Organization:**

Rep. Quinn Johnson State Representative

Janelle Cousino Afterschool Alliance

Kimberly Gomes The Byrd Group

Melissa Hopkins Rodel Foundation of Delaware

Chair of the Statewide Afterschool Initiative Task Force, Jack Polidori, called the meeting to order at 9:58 a.m. He asked the task force members and public to provide a brief introduction.

The members of the Statewide Afterschool Initiative Task Force and the public introduced themselves and their titles related to their respective organizations.

Jack Polidori asked if there were any alterations to the meeting minutes presented to the task force members. Frederika Jenner, President of DSEA, motioned to approve the meeting minutes from the August 30, 2016 meeting, which was seconded by Susan Bunting, Superintendent of the Indian River School District. The meeting minutes were unanimously approved by a voice vote and are officially on public record.

Jack Polidori stated that the next Statewide Afterschool Initiative Task Force in October should serve as an opportunity to have an open discussion about potential options for future recommendations, given the data and documents provided.

Jack Polidori recognized Mike Jackson, Deputy Controller General at the Office of the Controller General, who discussed state and local resources and current match efforts from local funds pertaining to financial resources. Mike Jackson summarized the last task force meeting discussion, which focused on funding in the state budget that is directed toward schools and that there is no direct appropriation for afterschool programs in Delaware’s state budget, but that school districts do have the ability to exercise a match tax for extra time funding. Mike Jackson noted several questions proposed by task force members, including details about grant-in-aid funding for afterschool programming, available federal resources for afterschool programs, and allocations from school district funds generated from the match tax. He stated that the Superintendents of the school districts were to help provide additional information regarding the extra time funding from the match tax.

Susan Bunting, Superintendent of the Indian River School District, added that the information is due on September 28th, 2016.

Jack Polidori asked if the Superintendents of the school districts had a discussion about the match tax funding following the initial task force discussion.

Susan Bunting explained that there was a brief discussion and that there is an upcoming meeting in October.

Mike Jackson referenced a comprehensive list of afterschool programs receiving grant-in-aid funding, whether direct or indirect, for Fiscal Year 2017. He stated that over 440 applications were received in hard-copy and that there is no electronic database filing this information. When examining certain agencies, there are difficulties determining if all of the funding is being allocated toward the program listed or if it’s used to support other initiatives, so the Controller General’s Office must call the agency for further specific information. He stated that there are certain agencies on the list that clearly have stated that the funds are going toward an afterschool program, giving as an example the Breaking Barriers afterschool program for at-risk youth and youth who are disabled in the City of Wilmington.

John Fisher-Klein of the Newark Day Nursery stated that the grant-in-aid applications used to be broken down by program. He added that if there are multiple programs being funded in the grant-in-aid process, then there should be a description of each program.

Mike Jackson responded that there is a description of each program, but the funding amount varies. He noted that the writing of grant-in-aid applications vary upon the organization.

Jack Polidori asked if the grant-in-aid application is devised by the Office of the Controller General.

Mike Jackson stated that the application is devised by the Controller General’s Office and that the process now will be available online, which will allow the Office to determine if an application should be accepted based on how it is written, and whether to press for further clarifying information. The online application will be available for Fiscal Year 2018.

Jack Polidori asked about the categories listed for each agency’s programs in the grant-in-aid review, and whether it will be added to the online form.

Mike Jackson noted that there are several categories listed in the grant-in-aid application and review, including neighborhood and community services, family and youth services, and alcohol and drug abuse. He added that the online feature won’t include the ability to view a category-specific application list. He emphasized that the $2,190,298 listed at the bottom of the summary is not the amount available for afterschool programming in grant-in-aid and that it is important to decipher the actual amount, which depends on the applications and follow-up discussions with the various agencies and organizations submitting these applications.

Jack Polidori reiterated that the current accounting systems presently make it difficult to determine the exact funds going toward afterschool programs.

Carol Scott of the Delaware Afterschool Network added that it depends on the criteria of afterschool programs.

Vice-Chair of the Statewide Afterschool Initiative Task Force, State Representative Valerie Longhurst, stated that it may be based on hours.

Mike Jackson answered that it was not clearly defined and the Office of the Controller General examined current systems in place to assist children beyond the normal school day.

Carol Scott highlighted the difficulties when examining youth development and afterschool programs and that there is a struggle to broaden various activities and that clarification is needed after stakeholder discussions.

Mike Jackson continued with a presentation pertaining to federal resources, which are matched with state funds to support childcare for certain families. He stated that $33,824,541 is budgeted from the state toward Purchase of Care (POC), which provides support for families with children to enable the caretaker to hold a job, obtain training, or meet special needs of the parent or child. The Purchase of Care programs has match funds of $33,512,054 from the federal government, which when combined with state funds, total $67,336,595.

State Representative Timothy Dukes asked if the federal funding for Purchase of Care is capped at a certain level.

Mike Jackson responded that the funds are driven by a formula based on the number of children and families and income.

Jack Polidori added that there is a strong possibility that the funding is likely capped by appropriation under the authorization bill.

State Representative Quinn Johnson discussed a market survey system administered by the State of Delaware to determine the average rate for the Purchase of Care program, which utilizes the 75th percentile in each of the three respective counties for various age groups. He stated that funding has increased to 65 cents to the dollar, with the dollar representing the average market rate. The rates currently being utilized are from 2011 and won’t be adjusted, so the State of Delaware is falling behind. He stressed the impact on low-income communities where facilities service clients through Purchase of Care, which has an afterschool component with gaps in services due to affordability concerns. He added that the STARS system has helped to get facilities closer to the market rate, but reimbursement has also declined to about 92 cents on the dollar.

John Fisher-Klein added that Purchase of Care primarily serves as a system that employs adults, and isn’t necessarily focused on serving children. If the parent loses their job, the child may no longer be eligible for the services.

State Representative Quinn Johnson also mentioned that the cost to Delaware would be an appropriation and it wouldn’t be automatic that federal funding would be available. Without federal assistance, it would cost $32 million to reach the 2015 rates.

Jack Polidori asked if Delaware is doing better than before.

State Representative Quinn Johnson responded that the state is doing worse without the ability to keep up with the rates.

Jack Polidori asked if it is significant or marginal when examining appropriation levels.

State Representative Quinn Johnson clarified that it would be $65 million to the federal $33 million and that it is the state’s choice to set that goal.

Janelle Cousino of the Afterschool Alliance added that 40 percent of the child care development funds are used for school-aged children around the country.

Mike Jackson discussed the federally funded Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) at $3,756,915, which provides assistance to States and local communities, working through a network of Community Action Agencies (CAA) and other neighborhood-based organizations for the reduction of poverty, the revitalization of low-income communities, and the empowerment of low-income families and individuals to become fully self-sufficient. He stated that the First State Community Action Agency (FSCAA) receives $179,000 in CSBG funds and leverages $185,000 in funding from other sources, with support going to various afterschool programs.

Mike Jackson referenced information about the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which is federally funded with the goal of enabling low-income families to buy a variety of foods that are intended to provide the basis for better nutrition. He stressed that these benefits support food purchases and cannot be used for childcare.

Mike Jackson continued by highlighting the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, which is a cash assistance program with a small funding component coming from the federal government. He stated that individuals can receive benefits for 36 months, but individuals must work or participate in work-related activities for 30 hours a week to receive a TANF check.

State Representative Valerie Longhurst asked if Purchase of Care could be added to TANF.

Mike Jackson answered that he believes Purchase of Care could be added.

State Representative Quinn Johnson mentioned that Purchase of Care is a gradual scale based on a parent’s income, so it may vary for fees.

State Representative Valerie Longhurst asked Mike Jackson if he could review any information about whether programs are used to supplement Purchase of Care.

Mike Jackson stated that he would see what information is available regarding State Representative Valerie Longhurst’ request.

Jack Polidori asked if the programs listed were administered through the Department of Health and Social Services.

Mike Jackson responded that every program he mentioned is administered through the Department of Health and Social Services.

State Representative Timothy Dukes clarified that most individuals he knows who use TANF use it for survival and not childcare.

For purposes of group understanding, Jack Polidori asked Mike Jackson to define what the acronym, ASF, stands for in the TANF handout provided to the task force.

Mike Jackson clarified that ASF stands for Appropriated Special Fund.

Mike Jackson referenced information provided about extra time revenue collections, with specific attention toward the amount received by each school district and their current tax levy status. Currently, $2,892,763 is levied across the state in local taxes that support extra time funding. In addition, he also noted revenues generated to pay for reading and math specialists totaling $4,610,772, which is utilized during the school day. He stated that the initial category, extra time funds, are more appropriate to consider.

Jack Polidori asked how the individual school district match tax is constrained by the Delaware Code.

Mike Jackson clarified that the tax is at the level that was available for each school district prior to the program’s removal from the state budget in Fiscal Year 2009 and the amounts were capped as that point.

Jack Polidori asked if a change in the funding scheme for extra time resources would require action by the General Assembly.

Mike Jackson responded that the information is in the budget epilogue with any changes thus requiring legislative action.

Jack Polidori asked Susan Bunting about a survey distributed to the school chiefs.

Susan Bunting stated that the survey parallels the provided chart.

Mike Jackson concluded by noting that funding is available in the Grant-in-Aid bill, and local money is being collected. He highlighted the importance of collaboration with non-profit organizations and various entities to bring together all of the issues discussed.

Sheila Bravo of the Delaware Alliance for Nonprofit Advancement (DANA) asked if arts organization not being listed was part of a previous discussion.

Jack Polidori stated that it was not a part of a previous discussion.

By way of example, Shiela Bravo added that the Music School of Delaware has afterschool programming and that it might be helpful to examine this information.

Amelia Hodges from the Delaware Department of Education referenced the funding universe of 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) and cohorts listed (presently cohorts 10 through 14. The 21st CCLC primarily serves elementary students at a rate of approximately $1700 per pupil.

Jack Polidori asked for clarification regarding the current cohorts and the span of five-year funding periods applicable to each cohort.

Amelia Hodges clarified that the cohort number, in this case, Cohort 10, refers to the cohort number, which includes a group of CCLC grants over a five-year period, and not simply a single fiscal year.

Jack Polidori referenced information provided in the first task force meeting, in which the Delaware Department of Education discussed that the 21st CCLC awards providing funding for a 3 to 5 years period, and asked if it was possible to tell which cohort is in a given funded year.

Carol Scott of the Delaware Afterschool Network answered that Cohort 10 is in the fifth year of funding.

Jack Polidori asked if a program would be up for renewal or if they have to go through the competitive process an additional time upon the expiration of their first funding award.

Amelia Hodges stated that continuation grants are data-driven and that states can discontinue grants if targets or provisions aren’t met.

Jack Polidori asked if data is available from the program’s inception.

Amelia Hodges responded that the approval process is conducted utilizing a rubric of factors, but will have to reexamine the program data to answer Polidori’s data about historical data.

Lauren Vella from the House of Representatives asked if there was any consideration for the number of students and if there was a per student funding calculation.

Amelia Hodges answered that a program applies and generates funding through its grant application and award based on the number of children the entity projects to serve.

Amelia Hodges continued to discuss the Delaware 21st CCLC sub-grantees and their applicable program descriptions through Cohort 14.

State Representative Quinn Johnson stated that a cost per pupil is important since each program’s goal is different.

Jack Polidori agreed with State Representative Quinn Johnson and believes that having a good evaluation mechanism in place will help when making future decisions.

Amelia Hodges noted that 21st CCLC funding varies depending on the programs listed and the number of grants receiving reduced payments due to their year in the program.

Jack Polidori asked when the amount was available to be awarded for Cohort 13.

Amelia Hodges stated that the funding was awarded for Cohort 13 in Fiscal Year 2015.

Jack Polidori inquired about when an applicant would file an application for the 21st CCLC funding in this cohort.

Amelia Hodges clarified that the RFP is released in October, applications are in January or February and grant awards are made in May.

Jack Polidori asked if the $683,630 for Fiscal Year 2015 was awarded.

Amelia Hodges referenced data from Cohort 13, which shows, for example, that Red Clay School District’s SMART Academy and the East Side Charter School received funding.

Jack Polidori asked if the $1,308,263 awarded for Cohort 14 – Year 1 was awarded.

Amelia Hodges stated that the grant awards will be made in May 2016.

Jack Polidori, referencing the $683,630 amount available awarded for Cohort 13, asked when the funds were given to the grant recipient.

Amelia Hodges stated that the funds were given to a direct recipient for use on May 1, 2015.

Susan Bunting stated that it might be easiest to examine Fiscal Year 2017.

Jack Polidori referenced the $2,659,999 amount available to be awarded for Cohort 15 in Fiscal Year 2017, and whether that money has been granted to various programs.

Susan Bunting responded that a new program is in effect for the current 2016-2017 school year and was available to help fund a summer program.

Amelia Hodges stated that the Fiscal Year 2017 funds were awarded May 1, 2016.

Susan Bunting stated that the Indian River School District worked on the application last school year for the programs beginning summer 2016.

Janelle Cousino of the Afterschool Alliance explained that the federal government delays the allocation to the state by 9 months, so there are different fiscal years.

Jack Polidori asked what will be available for competition on May 1, 2017.

Amelia Hodges explained that in Fiscal Year 2018, Cohort 11 would be finished their 5 years of funding.

Jack Polidori asked if the best estimate for competition would be approximately $1 million, given the Cohort 11 total of $1,017,203.

Amelia Hodges stated that other factors could impact the available funds, including whether or not a program uses all of the allocated resources.

Jack Polidori noted that there is a high degree of variance when analyzing available funds.

Janelle Cousino added that the funding is steady between the first and third years; however, the fourth and fifth years are at lower levels based on sustainability factors.

Jack Polidori raised concerns about the unmet need in the market when looking at the number of children served over time and issues pertaining to available resources.

Jim Kelly of the YMCA of Delaware stated that there are consequences when making program funding decisions, whether discontinuation or extended funding for a given program. He mentioned the unintended consequence of having to eliminate staff.

Jack Polidori asked the task force members to consider the importance of geography when examining unmet need in Delaware.

Mike Jackson asked if there was any issue with supplementing funds federal funds.

Amelia Hodges stated that it is governed by federal law and regulations and that only federal funds can supplement that program.

Amelia Hodges responded further that only state funds could be supplemented, but she isn’t sure about existing grantees in districts and that further discussions with individuals at the federal level would be required to provide a clear answer. She highlighted that it might be difficult to obtain this information with the new ESSA law, which might not be available until 2017.

Amelia Hodges referenced a breakout by grade level of students served in grades 3 through 6 who regularly attend programs. For comparative purposes, students at these grade levels have higher percentages in terms of attendance than those students at higher grade levels where the attendance is lower.

Susan Bunting stated that there is less interest in some of these afterschool programs for older children when they are exposed to other opportunities.

State Representative Valerie Longhurst noted the increase in homework at this age and the importance adjustment to student completion of homework with the necessary study habits that occurs as students move into the later elementary grades. She added that additional resources should be available for children who aren’t interested in just sports, but other activities such as music and arts programs.

Frederika Jenner of DSEA added that there is a move from recreational sports to competitive teams in middle school and some students may not get the opportunity to take part in some programs.

Amelia Hodges mentioned 2015-2016 student demographics, as demonstrated through the state’s unit count funding system, which provides details about the poverty rate in order to understand the current demographic characteristics of students. She highlighted that school-wide Title I schools would be denoted as schools with over 40 percent low-income students.

State Representative Valerie Longhurst discussed the qualifications of Title I schools, noting the large numbers of schools that met the 40 percent poverty threshold.

Amelia Hodges responded that Title I school qualifications are based on a federal formula; however, there is some level of decision making at the local education agency (LEA) about receipt of funds at the school level.

Jack Polidori asked if over half of the total schools listed had a 40 percent or more low-income student population.

Amelia Hodges stated that 97 of the 184 schools listed are at the 40 percent or more low-income student population level.

State Representative Quinn Johnson asked about the specifics provided in the 2015-2016 unit count enrollment demographics.

Amelia Hodges stated that Title I schools vary year by year and that 40 percent is a trigger for Title I schoolwide status.

Jack Polidori thanked Amelia Hodges for highlighting where the high concentrations are for low-income students in Delaware.

Jack Polidori referenced the meeting agenda and asked if Janelle Cousino of the Afterschool Alliance could present next. He asked the task force members to reexamine lines 27 through 33 of House Resolution 39, which discusses the focus of the Task Force’s study, findings, and recommendations. He raised concerns about the assessment task but noted that it is important to address. He asked for the task force members to consider various options before the next meeting.

Janelle Cousino of the Afterschool Alliance discussed her background and her work with all of the state networks. She referenced information given to the task force regarding state afterschool legislation, per pupil information, and definitions of afterschool programs. She discussed a national definition from the America After 3 PM, which defines after school as a program that a child regularly attends that provides a supervised, enriching environment in the hours after the school day ends, typically around 3 p.m. An additional definition from the 21st CCLC found that community learning centers should assist students with academic enrichment activities, help students during non-school hours, and offer families of student’s meaningful engagement opportunities in their children’s education.

She continued to discuss state-specific initiatives, most notably those undertaken by California, Connecticut, New York, and Minnesota. California’s Prop 89 and the Afterschool Education and Safety Program focused on educational and literacy components and enrichment opportunities focused on early education initiatives in low-income communities. She noted Connecticut’s efforts to provide grants to local and regional boards of education, municipalities, and not-for-profit organizations by complimenting 21st CCLC funding. Furthermore, Janelle Cousino discussed New York’s efforts to allocate $24.3 million for a competitive grant pool focused on school safety and extended days. The programs in New York must offer a minimum of 2 hours per day 3 days a week. Minnesota had a community education levy that varied district-by-district, which served as a base for support. She stated that programs in Minnesota are used for coordinators to ensure that programs are aligned. Janelle Cousino also discussed initiatives from Massachusetts and Tennessee that focused on supplemental grants, community partnerships, enrichment needs, and flexibility opportunities.

Amelia Hodges stated that it seems the majority of grants seem to be competitive and thus are additional options that do not seem to hinder opportunities with programs that are funded with federal dollars.

Janelle Cousino added that an online and free source is available that highlights various afterschool initiatives, programs, and studies that expand opportunities and outcomes across the United States. She stated that a STEM version will be published and readily available in March 2017.

Jack Polidori asked if there is information available summarizing afterschool program design.

Janelle Cousino responded that she would examine whether there is a memorandum outlining afterschool program design. She asked the task force members to review information available at http://www.expandinglearning.org/expandingminds.

Jack Polidori reiterated the importance of having a document outlining afterschool program designs well ahead of any future legislative consideration.

Janelle Cousino outlined the Every Student, Every Day initiative, which encourages student attendance. The study found that students will be behind by Grade 3 given various factors and that the intervention of having added afterschool programs is a suitable option. She added that the transition between Grades 5 and 6 is very difficult and that student engagement is vital for success. She mentioned the difficulties of transitioning between Grades 8 and 9, as children begin thinking about dropping out of school by Grade 8.

State Representative Valerie Longhurst highlighted the difficulties of Grade 4 for many children in Delaware.

Janelle Cousino noted the importance of age appropriate programming for afterschool initiatives.

Jack Polidori asked if Janelle Cousino would be able to attend the October 28th Statewide Afterschool Initiative Learning Task Force meeting.

Janelle Cousino stated that she would inform the task force if she can attend; however, has a prior commitment.

Jack Polidori asked the Delaware Department of Education to review other state decisions to see what might work in Delaware and to include the superintendents in the discussion. He asked Amelia Hodges to write a brief outlining community learning centers and the interconnections with law and regulations.

State Representative Valerie Longhurst indicated that the length of future meetings might have to be adjusted to accommodate all of the items listed on the agenda.

Jack Polidori asked the task force members to consider the issues surrounding funding resources prior to the next meeting in October.

Jack Polidori adjourned the Statewide Afterschool Initiative Learning Task Force meeting at 11:37 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Geoff Heath