

Louisiana Advisory Council on Student Behavior and Discipline

Friday, December 2, 2016
Claiborne State Office Building
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Official Minutes

The December 2, 2016 meeting of the Advisory Council on Student Behavior and Discipline was called to order at 11:10 a.m. by Ms. Jennifer Coco, council chair. Members present were: Ms. JoAnn Achord, Ms. Jennifer Coco, Mr. Michael Comeaux, Mr. Julie Comeaux, Mr. Shawn Fleming, Mr. Larry Gage, Ms. Liz Gary, Mr. Rachel Gassert, Mr. Kevin George, Mr. Roy McCoy, Mr. Brad Prudhomme Ms. Angela Reams-Brown, Ms. Daphne Robinson, Mr. Rob Schlicher, Mr. Al Simmons, Judge Kim Stansbury, Ms. Prudence Spooner, and proxy for Ms. Diane Smith, Ms. Debbie Schum.

Mr. Greg Gauthier, Ms. Shawn McCants, Mr. Michael Ortego, Mr. Scott Richard, Ms. Sherlyn Shumpert, and Ms. Debra Weinberg were absent.

Public comments were received from Mr. Frank Pasqua, Mr. Derek Shanman, Ms. Toni Robinette and Ms. LaKeisha Beachum.

- 1 A motion was made by Mr. Gage to approve the minutes from the September 16, 2016 meeting, seconded by Mr. Prudhomme. The minutes were approved without objection.

- 2 Ms. Gassert moved to allow public comment after each topic of discussion on the agenda. The motion was seconded by Ms. Reams-Brown, and was approved without objection.

- 3 A motion was made by Mr. Prudhomme to allow council members to send a non-voting proxy to attend meetings in their absence. The motion was seconded by Mr. Simmons and approved without objection.

- 4 Ms. Robinson moved to receive and discuss discipline policies and reports. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gage and approved without objection.

The chair reminded the council that an annual report, which should outline the activities of the council and any recommendations, is due prior to the end of the calendar year. Given the timeframe, the Department of Education staff support required by law, and the interest of some council members, the chair recommended that a small working group of council member volunteers work with her and Department staff to draft and finalize the report, which will be emailed to all council members, posted on the Department's website, and made available at the next meeting of the council.

5 A motion was made by Mr. Fleming to approve membership of a subcommittee to draft a report, with final approval from the full council for the legislature and BESE. The subcommittee members are Mr. Prudhomme, Ms. Robinson, Ms. Comeaux, Mr. Fleming, Ms. Spooner, Mr. George and Mr. Gage. The motion was seconded by Mr. Prudhomme, and was approved without objection.

The chair, Ms. Coco, facilitated a conversation among council members relative to the discipline codes and data provided by the Department.

6 A motion was made by Mr. George to request the LA Dept. of Education to provide information on how they currently validate data received from districts. The motion was seconded by Mr. Prudhomme, and was approved without objection.

7 Mr. Prudhomme moved to request that the LA Dept. of Education review the discipline code “assault and battery” and separate them into two distinctly defined discipline codes. Mr. McCoy seconded, and was approved without objection.

8 Mr. Prudhomme moved to create a subcommittee to work with the LA Dept. of Education on reviewing the discipline and expulsion codes, and consider separating them under larger categories such as “violent”, “non-violent”, “technology”, etc... The motion was seconded by Mr. Fleming and approved without objection. The subcommittee was not assigned membership at this time.

Ms. Coco reviewed the Department of Education draft ESSA framework and discussed non-assessment measures for school and district accountability, research based data recommendations and school climate resources for discipline and attendance. The council discussed how to measure school performance using non-assessment indicators in ESSA and noted that many states are planning to address chronic absenteeism instead of school climate surveys. Training for cultural diversity for teachers was also discussed as a need and best practice. Council members indicated a desire to continue reviewing and discussing options available to strengthen Louisiana’s state plan under ESSA, and the Department will update the council on any future developments.

The council discussed priority issues, requested additional data from the Department, and expressed support for the chair’s suggestion to invite speakers who can share best practices on discipline and mental health. The council also discussed corporal punishment and noted challenges with the state’s current discipline statutes.

9 A motion was made by Mr. Prudhomme to adjourn and seconded by Ms. Gassert. The motion was approved without objection. The meeting was adjourned at 4:03 p.m.