

House Bill 516

Workgroup to Study the Implementation of Universal Access to Prekindergarten for 4-Year-Olds

Meeting Notes: July 10, 2017

Nancy S. Grasmick State Education Building
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore St., Baltimore, MD 21201

Purpose: House Bill 516 “Workgroup to Study the Implementation of Universal Access to Prekindergarten for 4-Year-Olds,” was passed by both chambers and enacted under Article II, Section 17(b) of the Maryland Constitution – Chapter 25. The workgroup will “study and make recommendations regarding certain matters; requiring the Workgroup to report its findings and recommendations to a certain Commission) on Innovation and Excellence in Education) on or before September 1, 2017.”

Meeting Outcomes:

Build whole group consensus on funding structure and cost drivers

Meeting Notes:

Members in attendance: Elizabeth Kelley (Chair), Honorable Eric Ebersole, Stacey Henson, Simeon Russell, Christina Peusch, Jackie Grant, Clinton MacSherry, Sharon Vance, Honorable William Ferguson, Steven Hicks, Sharon Vance, Crystal Barksdale, Honorable Vanessa Atterbeary, Ginny Simoneau, Senator Jim Rosapepe, Claudia Simmons, Angela Card, Debra Barrett, Cathy Spencer

Members not in attendance: Becky Yackley, Shari Sierra, Karen Karten, Michele Dean, Elise Burgess, Flora Gee, Kelly Hall, Rachel London, Esq., Tracy Jost, Toby Harkleroad

Welcome and Introductions by Workgroup Chair

Elizabeth Kelley, Acting Assistant State Superintendent for the Division of Early Childhood Development, welcomed the workgroup. The Workgroup members introduced themselves. Ms. Kelley provided an overview of the agenda and meeting outcomes for the day.

Review Notes

Meeting notes were accepted with no changes.

Lessons Learned from West Virginia’s Universal Pre-K Roll Out

Dr. Michael Martirano, Interim Superintendent, Howard County Public Schools

Dr. Martirano provided an overview of lessons learned from Universal PreK roll out in West Virginia during his tenure there as the Superintendent. Dr. Martirano began by sharing some seminal research on the importance of the early years and access to high quality early experiences. He then provided some background on West Virginia’s process and key priorities when rolling out universal PreK. West Virginia used the NIEER Quality Standards and Benchmarks as a framework for establishing quality standards for universal PreK. West Virginia prioritized the importance of access and ensuring that every eligible child

is offered placement in a PreK program. Universal Pre-k included public schools, private programs, and religious settings, as well as leveraging Head Start funding. Dr. Martirano highlighted West Virginia's focus on access for all eligible children, equity in programs (high performing PreK programs), and collaboration. Collaborative teams (hubs) were established in all regions/geographic clusters to ensure PreK was fully implemented with community partners. West Virginia required 50% collaboration with community partners. The hubs in each geographic cluster helped to advance collaboration between public and community partners. The instructional plan consisted of 4 days per week (1500) minutes with day 5 of each week used for home visits and professional development for teachers. In order to review and respond to data, West Virginia considered the relationship to data on 3rd grade literacy as well as additional data components including school attendance, ESY & extended day learning, school readiness, and high quality instruction. West Virginia had an 81% participation rate in universal PreK. Dr. Martirano concluded by highlighting the importance of collaboration and ensuring an intentional and well-planned roll out process.

Build Whole Group Consensus on Funding Structure and Cost Drivers

Dr. Simon Workman, Associate Director, Early Childhood Policy Center for American Progress

Dr. Workman presented information regarding cost drivers and explained the cost drivers that were considered in the Pre-K Adequacy Study. The general cost drivers identified were qualifications, ratios, and time. Salary & benefits accounted for 60% of the total expenses in a program. Dr. Workman also highlighted non-personnel expenses that were considered in the study as well as other considerations including calculating the cost per child and a sliding scale family contribution.

Senator Jim Rosapepe raised questions about the disparity in pay between teachers in community-based settings and public schools, disparity in cost per child for each setting (public vs. private), and other cost drivers that were used in the study

Delegate Ebersole raised the point that there should be a clear case as to why the recommendation will be to increase funds for PreK (cost per child); and the return on investment. Delegate Ebersole also stressed that we must be clear on policy questions vs. funding questions. Policy recommendations inform the funding formula outcome. This workgroup will be the "ceiling" and should aim high. The Kirwan Commission recommends and the Legislature ultimately decides.

Other members of the Workgroup raised the following considerations regarding funding and cost drivers:

- Transportation and construction costs
- Layering funding similar to the Head Start–Child Care partnership model
- Building on the existing Pre-K Expansion (PDG) model
- What are the complexities of a sliding fee scale?

The Workgroup presented/discussed four (4) funding models for consideration and further discussion (attached). Ms. Kelley informed the Workgroup to be prepared to discuss the funding model options at the next meeting.

Clinton MacSherry stated that he will go back to the Kirwan Commission to find out what questions does the Workgroup definitely need to respond to in order to present a product that will be useful to the Commission.

Adjournment

Ms. Kelley thanked participants for attending and announced that the workgroup will meet again this month on July 26, 2017, 12:00 noon to 3:00 pm, MSDE, 8th floor, room 6.