

City of Lynchburg
Task Force on the Future of Education in the City of Lynchburg: PreK-12 and Beyond
August 28, 2019 Meeting Notes,
Central Virginia Governor's School - 2:00 P.M.

Members in attendance

Dr. Michael Gillette, Chair
Ms. Gloria Preston, Co-Chair
Mr. Randy Nelson
Mr. Beau Wright
Ms. Susan Morrison
Dr. Atul Gupta
Dr. Roger Jones
Ms. Julie Doyle
Mr. Charlie White
Dr. Owen Cardwell
Dr. Steve Smith
Ms. Pat Price
Ms. Elise Spontarelli

Unable to attend: Dr. Rachel Gagen and Mr. Joe Tucker

Staff Present

Dr. Reid Wodicka, Deputy City Manager
Ms. Alicia Campbell, Administrative Support

Introductions

According to the Charter, the Task Force will be composed of sixteen total members including the Steering Committee. During a previous closed session, the Steering Committee selected ten members that would complete the makeup of the Task Force. Of those ten, only nine members were able to serve. Discussions of a tenth member will commence during closed session. The Task Force will serve as a high level strategic visioning and recommending body for the School Board who will ultimately discuss any final decisions with City Council. Dr. Gillette reiterated that the Task Force will have no authority to make any final decisions, will not be able to write policy, and will make no personnel decisions.

Dr. Gillette reminded the Task Force members that they have been appointed through a local governing body process; all Task Force meetings are official and are subject to the Freedom of Information Act and all correspondence is discoverable, even if unsolicited.

Review of Charter: Goals and Schedule

Dr. Gillette reviewed the scheduled timeline in the Charter and reiterated two upcoming dates; the interim report due mid-April of 2020 and the final recommendations due mid-November of 2020. The Task Force discussed the expectation that the work done by the subcommittees will be conducted in the fall of this year and well into the next year. The Task Force will reconvene

in the spring once all data and information has been presented by the chair of each subcommittee to the Task Force. The Task Force will combine these findings and will draft an official status report in the form of the Interim Report due in April of 2020. The Task Force will continue to work in the fall to gather a cohesive set of recommendations that they will then present to the School Board in November of 2020.

There was discussion among the group regarding Task Force member's ability to serve on a subcommittee; there was a consensus that members should be able to join a subcommittee if they so choose.

There was discussion among the group about proper protocol for sharing information with both governing bodies (School Board and City Council) and with other subcommittees. It was determined the Task Force should speak as a body with respect to status updates as requested to outside sources, but members should willingly share and work together with other subcommittees as needed.

Review of Information Gathered: Dropbox (now OneDrive)

Dr. Wodicka and Ms. Morrison reviewed the additional information previously requested. Dr. Wodicka discussed the creation of a shared OneDrive folder for use by Task Force members during this process.

The additional information gathered is as follows:

- Enrollment projections – Dr. Wodicka discussed working with the Weldon Cooper Center to obtain a 10 year projection; a proposal and scope of services was provided to the Chair of the Enrollment Trends and Demographics subcommittee
- Collaborative Efforts – Dr. Wodicka provided a list of existing support programs managed by City departments in collaboration with Schools personnel. This includes both direct student/community service delivery efforts and corporate functions like procurement and health insurance.
- Comparative performance measurements from other school systems – Dr. Wodicka provided a list of communities from which data has been gathered, including Amherst, Bedford, and Campbell, and from several Virginia cities (Charlottesville, Roanoke, and Harrisonburg). The Department of Education is developing a portal that would simplify the comparison of data between school divisions, and should be accessible in fall of 2019.
- List of existing support programs managed by City departments that address special needs for students
- Historical trends of children who require special services – Ms. Morrison indicated that this information has been provided by the Lynchburg City Schools and is available in the OneDrive.
- Underlying financial data beyond the published budget – Ms. Morrison noted that this information will be made available by the Lynchburg City Schools soon.
- History of deferred maintenance by building – Ms. Morrison noted that this information will be made available by the Lynchburg City Schools soon.

Dr. Gillette reviewed a list of previously received information:

- Current Lynchburg City Schools (LCS) Budget
- 2012 School Efficiency Study
- Individual School and Division-Wide Demographics and Performance Data
- School Zones: Lists and maps of school attendance zones; relevant regulation regarding attendance zones; full report on the 1993 rezoning effort.
- Miscellaneous: Final report from the Heritage High School Task Force, 2011
- Task Force Charter

The Task Force asked for the following additional information (will be provided in the OneDrive):

- Blueprint for Change, authored by Dr. Roger Jones
- After-School School System, research conducted by Dr. Owen Cardwell
- Include a subfolder in OneDrive for research and publications
- Any regulations that could confine recommendations, more specifically court ordered desegregation
- Professional development funding for the City versus other localities; where does Lynchburg stand compared to other benchmarks communities?

There was discussion among the group for the need to have a proper conduit in place for gathering the information that subcommittees will need. The Task Force decided that the requests for information will be fulfilled as follows:

- Subcommittee chair will prioritize requests and send to the Task Force leaders (Dr. Gillette or Ms. Preston)
- Task Force leaders will check for duplication among requests
- Requests will then be funneled to the City Staff Liaison (Dr. Wodicka) for cataloging and tracking
- City Staff Liaison will direct requests to the proper channel to be fulfilled

The Task Force reached consensus to offer the school administration the opportunity to appoint a staff liaison equal to the City Staff Liaison. Ms. Morrison will address this request.

Discussion of Subcommittees: Refinement of the Charge to the Committees

The Task Force reviewed and refined the charge of the committees and offered the following revisions to their descriptions:

Enrollment Trends and Demographics: chair, Julie Doyle

- Share information between this subcommittee and the Operations, Facilities and Consolidation subcommittee as to how demographics affects infrastructure.
- Project where in the City students will live, not just how many students there will be in the system. This will require collaboration with the City's Planning Division.
- Consider parental school placement choices outside of the public schools.
- Engage in surveys or other mechanisms to gain insight not only on our own residents, but also those who have chosen not to stay in the City.

Operations, Facilities and Consolidation: chair, TBD

- Remove indication that consolidation is pre-supposed; emphasize evaluating the issue of potential consolidation to determine its advantages and disadvantages
- Include transportation operational consideration

Leading Practices in Urban Education: chair, Roger Jones

- “Review” research rather than “conduct” research
- Add study emerging trends in preK-14 urban education
- Address the opportunity gap
- Work closely with Programming and Collaboration Opportunities

Programming and Collaboration Opportunities: chair, Owen Cardwell

- Add after school programs and community coordination
- Coordination of other resources, both public and private sector
- Consideration of sustainability of these efforts
- Change vocational training to career tech
- Developing opportunities to reach the benchmarks outlined in Leading Practices in Urban Education subcommittee

Finance: chair, TBD

- Most of this work is contingent on other subcommittees work; may start their work later than other committees
- Change language to make recommendations that would “inform” a 15 year CIP rather than “create”

Talent Management: chair, Pat Price

- Maintain highly effective educators and staff
- Salary issues will be addressed
- Specify the phrase ‘support talented educators’ to mean professional development.

Discussion of Committee Member Recruitment Plan

Dr. Wodicka provided an overview of the website. Task Force members had the following recommendations:

- Add a ‘Volunteer’ application
- News & Advance community notes

Executive Session

The Task Force convened in closed session to discuss an additional Task Force member, Finance and Operations chairpersons, and discussion of possible committee members.

Next Meeting Date

October 1st, 2019 – 1:00 p.m., Central Virginia Governor’s School

Adjourned

4:15pm

SCHOOL TASK FORCE MEETING OF AUGUST 28, 2019

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// On motion of Councilmember Nelson, seconded by Ms. Price, The Task Force on the Future of Education in the City of Lynchburg: Pre-K-12 and Beyond by the following recorded vote elected to hold a closed meeting to discuss and consider prospective candidates for appointment to the Schools Task Force Steering Committee, as Finance and Operations Chairpersons, and as possible Committee members pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A.)(1) of the Code of Virginia.

Ayes:	Gillette, Preston, Nelson, Wright, Morrison, Gupta, Jones, Doyle, White, Cardwell, Smith, Price, Spontarelli	13
Noes:		0
Absent:	Gagen, Tucker	2

// The meeting was re-opened to the public.

// Councilmember Nelson made the following motion:

WHEREAS, the Task Force on the Future of Education in the City of Lynchburg Pre-K-12 and Beyond has convened a closed meeting on this date, pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of The Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the task force that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Task Force on the Future of Education in the City of Lynchburg Pre-K-12 and Beyond certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the task force.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Price and the task force by the following recorded vote adopted the motion:

Ayes:	Gillette, Preston, Nelson, Wright, Morrison, Gupta, Jones, Doyle, Cardwell, Smith, Price, Spontarelli	12
Noes:		0
Absent:	White, Gagen, Tucker	3