

City of Lynchburg
Task Force on the Future of Education in the City of Lynchburg: PreK-12 and Beyond
February 27, 2020 Meeting Notes,
Central Virginia Governor's School - 1:00 P.M.

Members in attendance

Dr. Michael Gillette, Chair
Mr. Randy Nelson
Ms. Susan Morrison
Dr. Roger Jones
Dr. Steve Smith
Ms. Pat Price
Ms. Elise Spontarelli
Dr. Rachel Gagen

Mr. Kimball Payne

Unable to attend

Ms. Gloria Preston, Co-Chair
Ms. Kathy Williams
Dr. Atul Gupta
Mr. Charlie White
Dr. Owen Cardwell
Mr. Joe Tucker
Ms. Julie Doyle
Mr. Beau Wright

Staff Present

Dr. Reid Wodicka, Deputy City Manager
Dr. Ben Copeland, Deputy Superintendent
Ms. Alicia Finney Campbell, Administrative Support

Review of Re-ordered Questions and Assignment to Specific Committees

As a result from the previous Task Force meeting, questions regarding the focus of the subcommittees were formulated. Dr. Gillette and Mr. White reordered these questions chronologically and the Task Force then reviewed (Attachment A). In an effort to help guide the future course of the Task Force, the questions were grouped together in four steps: Defining the Vision; Who Are the Consumers; How Are Services Going to be Delivered; and Finances. The Task Force spent some time discussing and clarifying these questions.

- Step 1: Defining the Vision

The group discussed Lynchburg City Schools' already defined mission statement, vision statement, and core values. For reference, they are as follows:

- a. LCS Mission Statement
Every Child, By Name and By Need, to Graduation.
- b. LCS Vision Statement
A Tradition of Excellence for All.
- c. LCS Core Values
We believe...
INTEGRITY is doing the right thing in an ethical and transparent manner.
RESPECT is valuing self and others.
TEAMWORK is collaborating and communicating to work together in accomplishing a common goal.
LEARNING is acquiring and applying knowledge and skills in an effort to grow and develop.

The group entertained a conversation about whether there should be an evaluation of the mission statement, vision statement, and core values. The question was raised that if contradicting claims within the statements were found during the course of the subcommittee's work, how should these values be parsed out and the conflicting values addressed? For example, although implied, values such as equity, inclusion, and health are not currently and explicitly mentioned in the statements or values. It was decided that each subcommittee, while conducting their work, will a) be looking at value identification and how what recommendations subcommittees make are already tied into existing core values, and b) if they are not tied in, what would be a new core value to extend in the subcommittee recommendations?

As a result of the discussion on defining the vision, the following amendments were made to the guiding questions:

1. What are the core values of the Lynchburg City School system., ~~and is there a need to revise the system's mission statement?~~ Are there any policies or procedures that need to put into place to support that mission?
2. What efforts must the City Schools make in order to advance ^/other important values such as/ ~~efforts at equity, and inclusion~~^/, and health/ (which are not currently mentioned in the mission, vision, or values statements)?

- Step 2: Who?

The group discussed Step 2 as being in the Enrollment Trends and Demographics purview and the following amendments regarding the guiding principle were made:

3. Over the next twenty years, how many students are we likely to have in Lynchburg, where will they live, and what will their demographic composition be? ^/How many will attend public schools?/

- Step 3: How?

The group discussed the guiding questions numbers four through eleven and offered the following suggestions and dialogue:

The Task Force decided that this guiding principle number 4 would require a concerted effort between the LPUE, OFC, and ETD subcommittees.

4. Given pedagogical and demographic trends, what should the major foci be in our educational plan? What new programs will we need to prioritize in order to meet our student's needs, considering both brick and mortar resources along with new potential pathways of learning?

The Task Force decided that this guiding question number 5 would be posed to all subcommittees during the course of their work.

5. What are the most challenging trends that we can currently identify and what must the school system do to mitigate or reverse them?

The following changes were made to construct question number 6 more positively. Dr. Gillette will restructure to include language regarding equity. The Task Force decided that this guiding question would be assigned to the PCO and LPUE subcommittees.

6. ^{^/How/} have the City Schools been partnering ~~appropriately~~ with area businesses, faith communities, institutions of higher education, and local government, and what ^{^/are} some opportunities for enhancement/ ~~can we do to enhance interaction~~ among these parties? Do other stakeholders need to be invited to the table?

The group reviewed the fundamental value: how do we perceive education? Are other education sources our competitors, partners, or just separate entities devoid of interaction with our school system? The group discussed the apparent dichotomy at hand; is the goal to enroll as many students as possible into our school system or is the goal to have as many successfully educated children as possible? The Task Force decided to craft guiding question number 7 to include language indicating LCS as an excellent option, not necessarily the best option for every student. The Task Force decided that this guiding question would be asked at the Task Force level and not at the subcommittee level.

7. How can the City Schools properly fit within a broader educational environment that includes public, private, home-school, and regional magnet or specialty program options?

The Task Force decided that guiding question number 8 belonged to the OFC subcommittee in conjunction with the ETD subcommittee. The group decided that this guiding question was relevant to guiding question number 3.

8. How will answers to questions [^](3)/ (5), (6) and (7) inform decisions about the possible need for attendance zone readjustments or other mechanisms for assigning students to particular schools?

Regarding question number 9, the group reiterated the flexibility outlined in the desegregation order, as long as the intent of the order is maintained. This question is a subsidiary question of guiding question number 8 and will be taken under advisement of the OFC subcommittee.

9. Would it be appropriate to request removal from the current desegregation order?

The OFC subcommittee recommended changing the twenty-year timeframe in question number 10 to reflect a twenty-five-year timeframe.

10. Over the next [^]twenty-five/ ~~twenty~~ years, how many school buildings will we need and where should they be located? Do we need to plan for new construction, demolition, or consolidation? What about deferred maintenance on existing structures?

Guiding question number 11 belongs to the TM subcommittee and there were no fundamental changes made to the question.

11. Workforce

- i) Are current Lynchburg City Schools efforts to recruit, retain, and professionally develop our education workforce sufficient, and what specific recommendations can [^]/we/ ~~you~~ make to improve all three components of a healthy workforce?
- ii) Do changes need to be made to the structure of faculty/staff compensation?

- Step 4 – Finance

Each subcommittee will have to route their findings through the Finance subcommittee in Stage 4 of the process, per guiding question number 12. There were no revisions identified with this question.

12. Is the School System currently managing its financial resources to maximal effect and are there any strategies that could be employed to improve efficiencies and effectiveness? How much money will it cost to meet the priority needs identified by the other committees (e.g. resources for changes in educational plan, restructuring or constructing buildings, changes in compensation), and what sources and strategies are available to help us meet those needs?

Weldon Cooper Report

The ETD subcommittee received a draft report from the Weldon Cooper Center; Dr. Wodicka gave a brief overview of the content provided by the firm. The draft report consisted of: short, medium, and long term projections for enrollment over a ten year period; regional k-12

enrollment trends over time; metropolitan area private school enrollment; home school enrollment; regional births and how that's changing over time; new home construction in the city; local 4-year college enrollment; employment; and total population. Ms. Doyle and Dr. Wodicka are currently culling through the report and asking Weldon Cooper for clarification on existing items, as well as, the addition of some data like child poverty rate trends over time. A more robust, final report is due in April. Mr. Payne asked if all subcommittees could have access to the draft report prior to the finalization. Dr. Wodicka clarified that once the additional information has been provided in the draft report the document will be made available to the Task Force and all subcommittees.

Committee Reports

The subcommittee chairs gave a brief overview of their work completed over the last few weeks and gave a look into what they hope to accomplish going forward.

- Enrollment Trends and Demographics (ETD); chair, Ms. Julie Doyle: Ms. Doyle was unable to attend the meeting, so there are no updates to the ETD subcommittee currently.
- Operations, Facilities, and Consolidation (OFC); chair, Mr. Kimball Payne: Mr. Payne and the OFC subcommittee will be conducting a SWOT analysis at its next meeting.
- Leading Practices in Urban Education (LPUE); chair, Dr. Roger Jones: Dr. Jones spoke of emerging themes the LPUE subcommittee had begun to identify, and how some have direct connection to other subcommittees. Ultimately, the themes captured will be linked to the schools' strategic plan.
- Programming and Collaboration Opportunities (PCO); chair, Dr. Owen Cardwell: Dr. Cardwell was unable to attend the meeting, so there are no updates to the PCO subcommittee currently.
- Talent Management (TM); chair, Ms. Pat Price: Ms. Price updated the Task Force on a survey being created by the TM subcommittee and City staff. The survey will be sent to all full-time teachers.
- Finance (FIN); chair, Ms. Kathy Williams: Ms. Williams was unable to attend the meeting, so there are no updates from the Finance subcommittee currently.

Plan for Interim Report to City Council and the Lynchburg City School Board

In preparation of the Interim Report, Dr. Gillette asked subcommittee chairs to prepare a brief executive summary to include in the report outlining their work conducted and their path going forward. The charter states that the report will be given by April 15, 2020, however, due to scheduling conflicts the report will not be given until early May, pending the consent of the Lynchburg City School Board and the Lynchburg City Council.

Scheduling: Next Meeting

March 31st at 1pm at the Central Virginia Governor's School, 3151 Wards Ferry Road, Lynchburg, VA 24502.

Adjourned
2:24 p.m.

Meeting Notes prepared by: Alicia Finney Campbell