Cross-Sector Collaboration Task Force
At-Risk Working Group Off-Cycle Call
October 13, 2017, 12:00 pm

Attendees:
Karen Williams | Ward 7 Representative, State Board of Education (SBOE)
Darren Woodruff | EL Haynes PCS, Benjamin Banneker HS parent ; Chair, Public Charter School Board (PCSB)
Amanda Alexander | Deputy Chief of Elementary Schools, District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)

Call Summary:
- Ramin Taheri [Facilitator] reviewed process for prioritizing recommendations and previewed agenda items
    - We're moving from our current phase to presenting to the community in focus groups, getting and incorporating feedback.
    - Then we will make a final report to the Mayor.
- Task Force: Community engagement is key.
- Facilitator: We will refine our recommendations and present to the full Task Force, which moves us into the phase of bringing draft recommendations to the community and incorporating feedback for our report to the Mayor.
    - Starts with this group going through the list we've come up with so far. There are 26 possible recommendations.
- Task Force: This seems like a lot. Say we keep all of them, are there clusters we should highlight or give a header so people are clear what we're talking about?
    - Facilitator: Excellent point, we've attempted to build that internally. We will have headers with broad strategy, then under that, sub-points. We're going to do that.
        - Consider this raw data, a list of 26 things we've all talked about. On the 24th when we meet, we need to start compartmentalizing and organizing these in a digestible and useful way. With Off-Cycle calls, didn't want people to miss the information. Want you to get a jump to start thinking about this and give constructive feedback on the 24th.
- Facilitator reviewed the goals for the meeting.
    - Reviewed September meeting (slide 5)
    - Task Force: With the first bullet about at-risk preference, I think a primary goal of having the preference is to encourage the schools with relatively fewer at-risk students to take more on and make it easier for those students. We will more widely distribute the percentage of kids at risk across the city. If the school already had 70% at-risk kids, I would hesitate to say you could also have at-risk preference. Schools with high percentage of at-risk kids tend to underperform. Don't want it to be a burden for academic success. Schools with 30-40% of at-risk students should take more. For me, we should raise the ceiling higher than 25%.

- o Task Force: Good point. Currently, academic achievement is proportionate to the number of at-risk students. If a school puts more resources in the schools with mostly at-risk students, that's fine, but without more resources, it won't work.
  - o Task Force: Agreed.
  - o Facilitator: Maybe 25% isn't the right number, but we need a safeguard built in.
  - o Task Force: Across the city, 25-50% students are considered at risk. That would suggest that schools with 40-50% or less would be the ones to target. If we agree more at-risk leads to poor academic outcomes, want to see schools with fewer at-risk take on more.
  - o Facilitator: When looking at language for the report, we should think about what implementation considerations are. Think of all points you raised over the next couple of meetings.
  - o Task Force: I formally recommend we raise that cap to 50%.
- Facilitator: Remember the list of recommendations is raw data, might not want to recommend all of them. Need to decide and bring to full Task Force and convince them they should go into report to the Mayor.
- Group moved to handout – list of possible recommendations.
- Facilitator: Now is the time to start thinking carefully about the recommendations. We can go through each and start thinking for the 24th. Starting at the top (see separate document).
- Facilitator: The first recommendation comes from the meeting with Raise DC: information exchange, school-to-school data sharing. The Bridge program is currently middle and high school, maybe it should be extended to elementary school.
  - o Task Force: What kind of data would be shared?
  - o Facilitator: Maybe about special education services or more informally, like about relationships with adults in the building. Reactions to discipline attempts. Anything related to academics.
  - o Task Force: This is important because if we move forward with preference, there's no guarantee the schools know how to provide effective services and supports to those students. How do we make sure schools are getting data and information on best practices to meet the needs of the kids? Supports to schools working with at-risk students could be the header. How to work effectively with the kids when they change schools.
  - o Task Force: It should be prior to beginning of the school year, so the school can prepare.
- Facilitator: Recommendations are in boxes and grouped; the first three are related to data sharing. With all three, we're envisioning they will fall under something broadly about ensuring information flows from school to school to assist transition of at-risk students.
  - o Task Force: You're on the right track clustering them that way.
  - o Task Force: Agreed.

- o Facilitator: We can ensure schools are prepared to receive these students is the high-level idea.
  - o Task Force: Need to make sure our recommendations are in different categories. We don't want unintended consequences; that's my concern. We need to have those two categories, about distributing at-risk students and supporting schools that receive at-risk students.
- Facilitator: It's more than just getting data and information to schools, we need to know when the data is coming, what to do with it, etc. Someone needs to coordinate technical assistance, so schools are using data well.
  - o Task Force: Lots of data out there and people don't know what to do with it. OSSE might provide professional development.
  - o Task Force: They might already be doing teaching and learning.
- Facilitator: Third point in the first box, who are we asking to take the lead? OSSE? DME? Separate entity?
  - o Task Force: It feels more like a DME/OSSE function vs. cross-sector.
  - o Task Force: Does DME have the bandwidth to monitor and host this?
  - o Facilitator: One concern is bandwidth; the other is we're a political office. Not sure if administration officials should do this, but we can think about how DME could coordinate.
  - o Task Force: That's essential- we need to think about how recommendations will be enforced.
- Facilitator: On the 24th, we will identify higher-level language for each category. We can see what looks right and what more we need.
  - o Task Force: Is there a recommendation around sharing best practices?
  - o Facilitator: There are a number of issues, the real problem being no structure for people to share their knowledge about what works. To the extent we don't think that's articulated, we should make sure we do that.
  - o Task Force: Since we have many schools with high portions of at-risk kids, there must be things they can share with the other schools.
- Facilitator: In the next box, these came out broadly about attendance. The second one about collaborating came from when DME staff came to present about Every Day Counts. During that conversation, we thought we should have a mechanism for school practitioners to talk about what's working.
  - o Task Force: That's something OSSE could facilitate through new teaching and learning division. Is that office really going to open? Maybe it's just generating a list of asks and content related to professional development we'd like them to provide.
  - o Facilitator: We're going to start identifying a wish list for different agencies.
- Facilitator: Let's move to the first on the list in the second box.

- o Task Force: Do we need this? Since we have 26, I think we should look at things that don't apply. I think we should take it out
- o Task Force: Attendance is important; missing so many days of school impacts students' ability to learn.
- o Task Force: We had a Ward 7 education meeting on attendance and tardiness and how it impacts students' ability to perform.
- o Task Force: Can we be more specific? This sounds like we're just supporting Every Day Counts. We should do something about how it applies to attendance challenges of at-risk kids. If we know at-risk kids are more truant, the language should be part of that.
- o Facilitator: We could remove or adjust the language.
- o Task Force: It's an important component how we're addressing it. If we're providing support for schools that take at-risk students…
- Facilitator: Let's look at the third one in the box on barriers to attendance refers to at-risk student population. We can make sure the attendance initiatives focus on at-risk students.
  - o Task Force: Works for me.
- Facilitator: The next one came out of Graduation Pathways presentation (4th point in the second box). Regarding anchors – graduation pathways noticed in their research students with the best outcomes had a positive adult relationship in school. The group wanted to explore and replicate, plus devote resources to figure out how this works well.
  - o Task Force: I would say that's an example that could be under resources to support at-risk students' success. It's important they are organized together so they don't see random. If we have half a dozen recommendations to improve learning of at-risk kids, they're more likely to accept all of them.
- Facilitator: The fifth one could be in support of the others. Check and Connect is related to finding out what schools are doing now that works and get the information out more broadly. This could be under attendance or sharing of best practices. Does this rise to the level of recommendation?
  - o Task Force: No objections.
- Facilitator: Next box (3[rd box]). These are related to finding schools beating the odds for at-risk students and getting the word out.
  - o Task Force: I'd put that at the top of the category of resources for schools to support at-risk kids. The rest are subsets of this.
- Facilitator: Next on the list is the 3rd box, My School DC is looking into this now. It's making sure parents know what each type of school is.
  - o Task Force: That's something they're working on?
  - o Facilitator: Will check with MSDC because we wouldn't need to recommend it.
  - o Task Force: Agree. I'm afraid if we throw everything at the wall and the Mayor sees over 20 recommendations, people won't appreciate the nuances of picking specific ones. This strikes me as not important. Almost like less is more, if we had

10 tight recommendations directly leading to better support for at-risk kids, I like that better than 25-30.
  - Task Force: Nothing more to add, that's the right approach.
- Facilitator: On the 24th, I don't want to start striking, but we'll be thinking about how report shakes out. We need an overarching strategy with recommendations for how to get there, plus implementation considerations. Check and Connect is very specific, might be under a larger recommendation.
  - Task Force: It would take us a long time to go through these all again. I suggest sending out to the rest of the committee to talk about what we agreed to and start categorizing and striking.
  - Facilitator: Sounds great. I can send a follow up email to that effect – read through before the 24th. We need to get it into shape for full Task Force.
  - Task Force: The ones on the last page are bigger ticket items, they may need to rise to the top.
  - Facilitator: Let's start with those on the 24th.
  - Task Force: It includes the third one, establishing the at-risk preference. Plus pre-K kids who may be at risk, we need to identify them. I would vote for having these at the top for the Mayor to take on.
- Facilitator: There's still more to go through but on the 24th, we can start with the last page. We can all come in with a framework or rubric to organize into top-line messages, plus more specific considerations. We'll also make sure it's a meaningful list that can move forward.

Meeting adjourned at 12:52 pm.