

Disproportionate Discipline Task Force
December 12, 2023, 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Invitation for Zoom meeting will be shared by Tricia Walz (walz_T@cde.state.co.us)

Agenda

- 3:00 pm:** Welcome
- 3:05 pm:** Introductions
- *Approval of Agenda & Minutes*
 - *Announcements:*
- 3:09** ***Public Comment***
- 3:10 pm:** 2024 Legislative Overview:
Jack Johnson - Disability Law Colorado
Bridget Anshus - Mental Health Colorado
Wendy Loloff Cooper - Generation Schools Network
- 3:55 pm:** Disproportionate Discipline - definition review & discussion
- 4:55 pm:** Next Steps
Next meetings: January 9th, January 23rd
We are looking for panelists who want to present on two topics: we want to hear about what works, thinking about different contexts and spaces (including urban/suburban/rural and district size/make-up etc)
- 4:58 pm** **Public Comment**
- 5:00 pm:** **Adjourn**
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Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Zoe O'Donnell, Chair; Elie Zweibel, Co-Chair; Lisa Schlueter, Nicole Alvarado, Sara Pielsticker, Mike Claudio, Lisa Humberd, Sierra Agens, Dawn Fitz, Angelina Sandoval, Bridget Anshus, Anne Keke, Floyd Cobb,

Public Attendees & Staff: Johann Liljengren, Jewel Sale, Tricia Walz, Jen Gallegos, Danielle Ongart, Dr. Jose Silva, Wendy Loloff Cooper, Jack Johnson, Amber Minogue, Andrea Wilkins

Announcements: Johann Liljengren notified the group that CDE will permit payment of honorariums to youth speakers or panelists who the Task Force invites to share information and lived experience.

Meeting Called to Order:

- Chair Zoe O'Donnell called the meeting to order and the meeting facilitator verified the presence of a quorum.
- Chair O'Donnell called for a motion to approve the November 28th meeting minutes. Motion was moved by Elie Zweibel and 2nd by Dawn Fritz. Minutes were approved.
- Chair O'Donnell called for a motion to approve the December 12, 2023 agenda. Motion was made by Sara Pielsticker and 2nd by Dawn Fritz. Agenda was approved.

Call for public comment: No comments received.

Legislative Overview:

Jack Johnson, Disability Law Colorado

- Disability Law will be running 2 bills during the 2024 Legislative session
 - Representative English and Senator Buckner will co-sponsor a bill to ban use of seclusion rooms throughout K-12 schools
 - Representative Young will introduce a bill to improve governance around what is appropriate when abbreviating the school day for students with disabilities including requiring better data collection.
- Disability Law will be able to share bill language with partners and stakeholders in December, reach out to [Jack Johnson](#) for more information.

Bridget Anshus, Mental Health Colorado:

- Bridget shared Mental Health Colorado’s legislative initiatives for 2024. Their focus will include expansion of SB23-184 which extends access to behavioral health for children covered under Medicaid. This year’s effort will expand to include children covered by commercial insurers. The legislation will also bring in parity language to align with Federal guidance issued in the summer of 2023. For more information about this bill and the rest of their legislative agenda, or to be included in the stakeholder process, reach out to [Bridget Anshus](#).

Dr. Jose Silva & Wendy Loloff Cooper, Generation Schools Network:

- Dr. Silva and Wendy provided context about the Justice Engaged Youth Bill of Rights legislation they will be running this year. Their bill will seek to codify improvements to the different systems that justice engaged youth interact with, including related to substance use, education, juvenile justice. The bill intends to reduce barriers for justice engaged youth to reintroduce, integrate, support and complete their education. Legislation is sponsored by Representative Jennifer Bacon. To participate in the stakeholder engagement, reach out to [Wendy Loloff Cooper](#). *Presentation slides forthcoming.*

Disproportionate Discipline - Definition Discussion:

Group review and discussion on the draft definition developed during 11.28.23 meeting and the personal characteristics identified by the Task Force relating to groups for which data collection recommendations may be needed to assess disproportionality. Factors to be decided by task force:

- Which elements of definition are important to codify?
- Which elements should take the form of a Task Force recommendation?
- Which elements should be addressed through the administrative/rule making process?

Draft definition: *Disproportionate discipline is when a minority group of students (based on any personal characteristic) is represented at a significantly higher or lower rate within discipline actions than their representation in the student population.*

Personal Characteristics: *These personal characteristics should include racial/ethnic categories, gender, grade level, individual program service types (homeless, foster care, multilingual learners, students with disabilities, migrant) even if they are not currently specifically connected.*

Task Force Discussion Points:

- There are varying perspectives as to whether to include the list of personal characteristics within the definition itself or to define these characteristics through administrative rule or include within a values statement in the final Task Force report. Further discussion needed.
- Data collection recommendation(s) may be needed to assess disproportionality within the groups included in the “personal characteristics” categories.
- Overarching definition of discipline is not currently defined in state statute. (Expulsion and suspension are defined however.) Does the Task Force want to explicitly define ‘discipline’ or ‘discipline action’? What is the response to discipline and are there data collections that track those responses? Are there changes to how schools should be allowed to use discipline based on those definitions and responses? The Task Force will consider whether they want to develop a definition.
- Does the Task Force want to define “significant” as it pertains to the definition? The Task Force will consider whether it is sufficient to rely on the definition of significant as it is commonly understood in a statistical context (no further definition provided in disproportionate discipline definition) or if we want to define the risk ratio more specifically within the overarching disproportionate definition. (Refer to [other state examples in resource](#) provided by Education Commission of the States)
- Some Task Force members would like to change the term “minority” in the definition to “marginalized.” **CDE staff note: white males are disciplined at the highest rate among any group and they are neither a minority or marginalized population. Inclusion of “marginalized” in the definition could have unintended consequences that the Task Force should consider.*
- Task Force members agree that the draft definition and personal characteristics are a good starting point. Group will continue to refine as more information and discussion take place in January.
- Task Force would like to hear more perspectives from school administrators, school counselors, SpED coordinators and other staff, about the impact of specific state and federal laws on discipline implementation in schools. (i.e. ERPO expansion, Claire Davis Act)
- Task Force would like to learn more about promising practices to changing school environment and keep students engaged in school. (Possible CDE presentation on

best practices?)

Possible Recommendations:

- Task Force recommends that within any recommendation, we ensure that actions taken are developmentally appropriate.
 - *Relevant Task Force Duty:* Determine whether CDE’s plan and progress in standardizing discipline data should include reports of alternative disciplinary measures taken prior to a student’s suspension or expulsion.
- Task Force recommends required training for educators and administrators about the impacts of discipline.
 - *Relevant Task Force Duty:* Review best practices identified by the Department concerning dropout prevention and student re-engagement.

Draft Recommendations to Date:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1WBD9nSm1GxbkX0puHpp6JT475nzJzMURGQC-hAdSt_g/edit?usp=sharing

Next Steps:

Task Force members are encouraged to suggest speakers (including themselves!) who can speak to what is working in Colorado schools in terms of student engagement and alternative discipline practices, as well as community members (school administrators, parents, students, etc.) who can share perspectives on systemic disproportionality.

Next meeting to take place Jan. 9, 2024 @ 3:00 pm via Zoom.

Call for public comment: No comments received.

Meeting Adjourned