

Session: Overview of Task Force Deliverables and Working Groups

Deputy Commissioner Kelvey Oeser thanked the chair, Mr. Tamarez Torres, and the Commissioner for their comments earlier in the day. Deputy Commissioner Oeser shared the purpose of this session was to preview working groups and deliverables that will ultimately be produced by the Task Force.

Deputy Commissioner Oeser introduced herself, her previous professional experiences, and her current role overseeing the Office of Educator Support. She previewed the types of resources and recommendations the Task Force will produce (see slide 5). She mentioned draft recommendations will be regularly published to the Task Force websites for districts, the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC), the State Board of Education (SBOE), and legislators along the way. These recommendations will be gathered into a final report.

Deputy Commissioner Oeser reviewed what will be included in the report (see slide 6). She mentioned the Task Force will focus on the prioritized challenges and recommendations related to teacher vacancies. The recommendations will likely be categorized by considering the audience, type of change, and the entity involved in making that change. These recommendations might fall into statutory changes, regulatory change, state-level practice changes, and district-level practice or policy changes.

Deputy Commissioner Oeser reviewed the role of Task Force members, TEA Staff, and the Commissioner of Education (see slide 7). She then asked participants to join breakout groups to discuss questions they had about the Task Force and additional norms, structures, and procedures that would be helpful for the Task Force. Volunteers from the breakout groups shared their responses.

The first group asked about the parameters the Task Force members should consider in working together. The group representative discussed some specific challenges their district has faced (e.g., hold harmless, declines in student enrollment). The group discussed the desire for action to be taken as a result of this Task Force.

The second group commented on the diversity of their group (elementary and high school teachers, a superintendent). The group was wondering how the information from the Task Force could be shared back with members' districts. The group discussed how the diversity of the Task Force will help address the range of challenges districts face and the quality of the recommendations developed.

The third group discussed that Task Force members may not always agree but that the Task Force should be productive and develop recommendations that would benefit the state. The group discussed the need to focus on state-level issues. The group would like to ensure there is enough time for Task Force members to work in groups.

The fourth group commented that it was a diverse group and was wondering where their recommendations will go. The overarching concern of the group is who would listen to the Task Force recommendations. The group was wondering if they could meet with other working groups over the course of the year. Similar to the third group, they want to be able to engage with one another in the development of recommendations.

The fifth group was wondering about how the recommendations would be shared with decision-makers, and another member mentioned that this information would be shared on the Task Force website. The group also discussed interest in continuing to consider class sizes and teacher compensation.

The sixth group discussed several points that were surfaced by other groups, including questions they had about class sizes and compensation.

The seventh group discussed the possible need for working groups to meet more frequently. The group discussed opportunities to strengthen communication to ensure information is readily available to stakeholders. The group also discussed a central location to house information for Task Force members would be helpful. A cheat sheet about who holds different decision-making powers would be helpful.

The eighth group discussed the need to have toolkits and resources that are used by educators.

The ninth group mentioned that much of what was discussed by the group was already shared by other members. The group wants to ensure that all the recommendations are heard and considered by others.

Deputy Commissioner Oeser shared that TEA staff will continue to consider this input and use it to design future Task Force sessions. Finally, she shared that TEA has already received and reviewed substantial stakeholder input for the Task Force to consider (see slide 9). She reviewed the working groups, which she mentioned could be fluid over time. The stakeholder input reviewed by TEA helped identify the initial working groups. She reviewed working group operations (see slide 11). Finally, she reviewed logistics for breaking out into Working Group time for the afternoon.