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Minutes

Blue Ribbon Task Force on Student Screen Time October 3, 2024

The seventh meeting of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Student Screen Time began at 4:00 p.m. on October 4, 2024. The meeting was virtual. There were 25 members of the task force in attendance.

Co-Chairs: Principal Brian Houghton and Student Ava Gustin.

Statement of Purpose

Develop guidance/recommendations, based in research, on:

- students' personal device use in school,
- screen time and mental health, and
- parental oversight of district-owned devices.

Welcome from Commissioner Watson

Dr. Watson welcomed the members of the task force and explained that after having read the book, *The Anxious Generation*, hearing research, hearing from several experts on the three topics, it is now time to focus for two weeks on policy. Once the policy is decided, the report will be written and approved by the members. Today will focus on the process by which the task force will discuss and vote on policy guidance. This taskforce will provide recommendations to the Kansas State Board of Education. The State Board serves as guidance for the local school boards and districts across the state.

Starts at
04:30

Student Co-Chair Ava Gustin shared the schedule for the remaining time:

October 3: Outlining the process moving forward
October 10: Personal Devices recommendations
October 17: Mental Health recommendations
October 24: Parental Oversight recommendations
October 31: No Meeting, read draft report
November 7: Present final report and voting
November 12 or 13: Report presented to State Board of Education

Schedule
07:30

Ava shared the outline of the report:

- The introduction will have some information about the purpose of the task force and how it was created.
- The definitions section will explain how certain words in the report are being used, such as “personal electronic devices” or “bell-to-bell policy.”
- There will then be a section on research for each of the main topics, which will summarize main points from the pre-readings from each week, *The Anxious Generation*, weekly presentations, or other nationally recognized publications.
- Finally, the recommendations section will contain all the recommendations that are successfully voted on by this group.

Ava stated it would be best if the body of the report is less than 10 pages, not including the appendix. One thing to note is that the task force’s responsibility is to decide what content and recommendations go into the report. The KSDE communications team is going to be responsible for the formatting and layout of the report, and the KSDE staff will focus on the technical writing process. The members of the task force will have the opportunity to leave comments on the drafts of each section, but we want these comments to focus on the substance of the text, not verbiage or sentence structure.

Co-Chair Principal Houghton explained that by the end of the day Monday each member will receive an email with a list of recommendations for each topic. This list will be created based on common points from the breakout rooms over the last several weeks, *The Anxious Generation* book, and presented research. We will have you fill out a poll on which of these recommendations you want to discuss as a whole group and bring to a full vote. There will also be a fillable box for you to type additional recommendations that may have been missed when creating the survey. Please have this filled out by Wednesday. When we begin the discussion for each of the topics, we will present the list of recommendations pertaining to that topic, as well as how many people voted to discuss it.

Student Ava continued to share the role of the breakout discussions. She shared there will be short breakout sessions each week to discuss the list of recommendations and give people the chance to explain why they agree or disagree with certain ideas, discuss pros and cons, unintended consequences, and who the audience should be. For example, there might be different recommendations for different age groups of students, or different recommendations given to superintendents, principals, and parents. The point of the breakout groups will just be to have specific discussions about the proposed policies, not to reach a consensus among the group.

Principal Houghton laid out the voting process. After everyone has had the chance to discuss the different policy recommendations in the breakout groups, all will come back to the main room. Anyone on the task force will then be able to make a motion to vote on one of the recommendations, which will then need a second from another member. Once

someone has made a motion, we will move into discussion as a whole group, which will be no longer than 10 minutes.

At this point, there will be a vote on whether to adopt the recommendation. The voting will be done through a poll on Zoom, and each member will have the option to vote yes, no, or abstain. If a recommendation gets a majority of yes votes, it will then be included as a recommendation in the final report. If the losing side of a vote had at least 25% of members' support, but is not able to reach a majority, it will be included as a minority opinion in the report. Once voting is complete for that motion, a new motion would be in order, and the process will be repeated. Please note that members must be present at the meeting to cast votes.

Student Ava finished explaining the process by discussing post-meeting drafts and comments. Once the meeting is finished, if the group voted to add recommendations to the report, each member would receive a draft of the appropriate section to review. All members will be able to add comments to this draft if there is something that needs to be edited. As a reminder, these comments should be about the substance of the text. There will be a couple of days to provide comments, and then the updated version of the draft will be shared again with the group.

Principal Houghton invited the group to practice the voting process by accepting the procedures that he and Ava have laid out. Someone will need to make a motion, and then another will second the motion.

Tonya Merrigan moved to use the procedures for the task force's voting process and final report creation that were just presented to the committee. Carol Budde seconded the motion. The motion carried 20-2-2.

Motion
18:00

Senator Blasi asked whether Robert's Rules of Order would be used or just the set process explained today. For instance, can there be substitute motions? Gabrielle Hull answered that each motion will be brought to a vote, and a substitute motion can be made after.

Principal Houghton thanked everyone, went over the procedure for the survey, and adjourned the meeting.

Adjourn
28:00