



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
www.cityofmadison.com

Meeting Minutes - Draft EDUCATION COMMITTEE

*Consider: Who benefits? Who is burdened?
Who does not have a voice at the table?
How can policymakers mitigate unintended consequences?*

Wednesday, January 11, 2023

5:30 PM

Meets 2nd Wednesday of the month at 5:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Linda Vakunta; Tag Evers; Richard Gregory; Nichelle Nichols; Maia E. Pearson; Jacob Wright and Heidi Wegleitner

Absent: 1 - Charles Myadze

Others Present: Mary O'Donnell, Tariq Saqqaf, Shelley Weiss (Sun Prairie Schools), Greg Markle (Operation Fresh Start)

Nichols called the meeting to order at 5:34 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Wright, seconded by Evers to approve minutes with update to Janet Dyer's last name. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. [75403](#) Public Comment Jan 2023

None.

DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

2. [75405](#) Chairs' Report on Follow Up Items and Developments

Nichols discussed ongoing committee work: Education Committee membership, Education Committee name change and ordinance update, Driver's Education programs and defining committee focus on a quarterly basis. Next steps for Driver's Education work are gathering updated information and reaching out to DPI.

3. [75406](#) Discussion on Sun Prairie Driver's Ed. Program - Shelly Weiss from Sun Prairie Areas School District

Nichols introduced Shelley Weiss, Director of Summer School at Sun Prairie School District.

Weiss discussed the current Sun Prairie School District Driver's Education Program. The classroom portion runs during the summer with teachers online

via google classroom. The use AAA program for curriculum. Behind the Wheel portion is offered before, after school, and on weekends. Challenges include lack of certified teachers for the behind the wheel portion. Driver's Education programs offered in a school setting with school funds require licensed certified teacher that is also certified in Driver's Education through Southwest Tech via three classes and nine credits at the cost of \$1,400. Instructors at private driving schools that operate outside of schools only need to be 18 years old, have a driver's license and pass a test after 40 hours of training.

Pearson left the meeting.

Weiss continued that 300 students finished the classroom portion. Limitations on two students per driver with 6 hours of driving and 6 hours of observation cause additional delays. Driver's Education does not fit in a regular school day with block schedules and semesters or trimesters. Both parents and students want to complete as many credits as possible for graduation and access to post-secondary education.

Updating licensing and certification requirements for programs at schools must happen at a legislative level. This is a national level issue. Collaboration with private agencies and schools to provide behind the wheel services is another option.

Weiss further discussed that pay incentives have not increased interest in Behind the Wheel through the schools. Time is the biggest barrier. Teachers, students and parents have full schedules with work, school and other activities. Licensed retired teachers could teach Behind the Wheel, but they need to coordinate with Wisconsin Retirement System on the time limit before returning to school to work. Retired teachers could however, take the training through Southwest Tech during the time they are eligible to return to teaching. The school would cover the cost of the training in this case.

Sun Prairie leases vehicles from Zimbrick so maintenance and cost is lower. Insurance is part of the overall school insurance.

One final barrier is the requirement that students need 50 plus hours with a parent or caregiver. Families may not have a suitable vehicle or licensed driver in the house.

Students that are 18 years old can go to the DMV to get their license without the Behind the Wheel requirement. The written test is still a requirement.

4. [75407](#)

Discussion on Driver's Ed. Program - Greg Markle from Operation Fresh Start

Greg Markle, Executive Director of Operation Fresh Start (OFS) discussed the OFS mission to help emerging adults increase self-sufficiency. A driver's license is second only to a GED for securing employment. OFS collaborates with 4 Lakes Driving School for Behind the Wheel class. Those over 18 only need to pass the written test. OFS also has a vehicle participants can use to take the driver's test. Often families do not have a vehicle or one that will pass the requirements. There is a shared staff agreement between OFS and 4 Lakes Driving School. Contract for certain hours and certain days. They are 4 Lakes employees that OFS pays to provide Behind the Wheel instruction.

Markle suggests schools reintegrate driver's education as part of the regular school day. Include the classroom portion as part of the Personal Finance classes that are required. Students with a driver's license and vehicle are more employment ready, Budgeting for gas, insurance and vehicle expenses could also be part of the updated course. Schools could contract with 4 Lakes Driving school or another private company to provide Behind the Wheel portion before and after school and on weekends.

Saqqaf discussed this being a national issue. He suggests incorporating the Vision Zero Initiative with expansion of Driver's Education as an additional safety measure to reach vision zero goal. It would be interesting to determine how many traffic accidents and deaths involve a non-licensed driver.

Next Steps

Nichols reviewed the next steps:

- Connect with Legislature

- Connect with DPI

- Planning meeting next week for staff and co-chairs to finalize the agenda and the best way to move forward.

5. [75408](#) Check in on Future Agenda Items

Nichols discussed the Driver's License Program will remain a current item. The committee will review budget schedules and plan accordingly for any budgetary items. Evers would like an update on the call for volunteers in schools. Nichols can have MMSD staff provide an update. There will be an update on the City's Guaranteed Income Pilot and additional items as needed.

6. [75409](#) 2023 Meeting Schedule

Nichols discussed April meeting. The second Wednesday of April falls on Passover and the committee cannot meet then. Each member has prescheduled meetings for with their own entities. Committee members will receive a Doodle poll for potential dates.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Evers, seconded by Wright to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 pm.
Motion passed.