



MEETING MINUTES

MINUTES UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED AT THE COMMISSION MEETING ON Aug. 26, 2020.

AUDIO IS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST (CAITLIN.SHAUCK@DC.GOV)

AGENDA

Healthy Youth and Schools Commission Meeting

June 18, 2020

3-5 p.m.

Welcome and Introductions

Recap of the Previous Commission Meeting

Approval of Minutes

Update from OSSE

General Announcements

Fiscal Year 2021 Budget

COVID-19 Response

American University Presentation on DC Nutrition Education

Updates from Strategic Plan Working Groups

Comments from Commissioners on Current Work

Final Discussions, Closeout, and Priorities for Next Meeting

Healthy Youth and Schools Commission Meeting

June 18, 2020

3-5 p.m.

Meeting Summary

This meeting summary serves as a review of the June 18, 2020 Healthy Youth and Schools Commission Meeting held virtually. An audio recording is available upon request (Caitlin.Shauck@dc.gov). The purpose of the Healthy Youth and Schools Commission is to advise the Mayor and DC Council on health, wellness, and nutritional issues concerning youth and schools in the District of Columbia.

Commissioners in attendance: Jeff Travers, Heidi Schumacher, Audrey Williams, Kafui Doe, Kristy McCarron, Akeem Anderson, Charneta Scott, Beverley Wheeler, Taryn Morrissey, William Dietz

Welcome and Introductions

- Chairman Jeff Travers opened the meeting at 3:05 p.m.
- Chairman Travers thanked everyone for attending and also for all of their work over the past few months.

Recap of the Previous Commission Meeting

- Chairman Travers asked commissioners to review the minutes from the February 20 meeting.
- Commissioner William Dietz motioned to approve the minutes, Commissioner Audrey Williams seconded, and the minutes were unanimously approved by the commissioners.

Update from OSSE

- Commissioner Heidi Schumacher provided updates from OSSE.
- Commissioner Schumacher provided an update on the Fiscal Year 2021 budget.
 - OSSE's budget hearing was two weeks ago.
 - Significant financial impact of COVID-19 has required District government to make unanticipated and difficult sacrifices.
 - As of May, it is projected that the District will lose approximately 722 million dollars in revenue in Fiscal Year 2020 and 740 million dollars in revenue in Fiscal Year 2021.
 - Those impacts will probably be through Fiscal Year 2024 or even beyond.
 - District government has taken steps this year to reduce spending, including hiring and spending freezes.

- The Mayor has prioritized saving government positions and to the extent possible focusing on maintaining core government functions that focus on the health and safety of residents.
- The proposed budget maintains the strong investment in education, including a three percent increase to the Uniform Per Student Funding Formula. It also includes important expansions in IT devices, creating early childhood seats, and modernizing schools and libraries.
- The cuts of the most relevance are a cut proposed to the Healthy School Fund that would revert funding for the Healthy Schools Fund to the Fiscal Year 2019 spending levels.
- There were some other local funding cuts, including a cut to planned build out of the Orchard system, but the nutrition team did a phenomenal job of securing multiple millions of dollars of federal funding last year, so they are still on-track with that investment to move forward and modernize their nutrition platform.
- Generally, given the continued budget restrictions and acknowledging that school and childcare operations are going to look different next year, they are re-evaluating their external grants portfolio and trying to think critically about how they achieve the most impact with less money.
- Cuts are always painful, but they are confident. Their amazing team is sustained, and they are really well-positioned to achieve their strategic goals in partnership with all of the agencies and organizations like yours.
- Chairman Travers read a question from a meeting attendee: Can you provide details on OSSE cuts in health and wellness, especially school gardens and farm field trips?
 - Commissioner Schumacher responded that they know that revenues are reduced because of significant loss of tax revenue. That, plus the operational realities of schools and childcare, is causing them to really rethink their external grant portfolio. At this point, until they have the final budget numbers, anticipated in July, they do not have a firm statement yet on the future of each individual line within their budget. It will really depend on how the final numbers shake out.
 - Chairman Travers responded that he thinks the point about schools looking different in the fall is even if you had all the money in the world for farm field trips, they are probably not going to be happening any time soon.
 - Commissioner Schumacher commented that DC Health released Phase 2 guidance, and OSSE is in the process of updating their equivalent OSSE guidance for schools and

childcares. There are almost certainly for the start of school and probably throughout most of next year significant restrictions on group gatherings and the ability of groups to intermix on time and buses. Their work is administered on external visitors coming into school buildings. There is almost certainly to be restrictions there. So all of that is practical implications. She is really proud to see how OSSE grantees, partners, and the team has pivoted where they can leverage virtual opportunities to really get to the spirit of the work, even in this new and different climate in which they are working.

- Commissioner Schumacher gave an update on COVID response.
 - OSSE is taking the lead on drafting, in very close partnership with DC Health, guidance for schools and childcare, particularly as we move through the phases of reopening and recovery.
 - The biggest provisions that are still in the works and things as recently as yesterday being updated, are the group size restrictions. Currently the childcare guidance articulates no more than ten total individuals in a group, children and staff. Schools were able to be a little more flexible with 12 total individuals in a group, children and staff. There are pretty significant and strict restrictions on not having groups intermix, no field trips, no external visitors, et cetera. They will be working with DC Health about future states when they hope they'll be able to be a bit more flexible, especially as they see data and how this whole thing goes.
 - OSSE is working actively with schools to figure out the schedule that makes sense for them in terms of bringing kids in person to the building and how total programming will be operated. They will include links to the [DC Health guidance for phase two](#) and the most recent [OSSE guidance](#). They will be updating the OSSE guidance in the coming days to align the new set of guidance materials from DC Health.
 - The second thing related to safety guidance is immunization compliance. Immunization delivery in the last number of months has been limited both in the District and nationwide. The ordering of vaccines by physicians is way down. Rates of kids in the District and across the country who are fully immunized are way down. That has real implications for the possibility of not just COVID and flu in a school building but some other vaccine preventable diseases.
 - There is active work happening about how they plan to work collaboratively across District government, with DC Health taking the lead, but with the schools supporting in terms of

how they can use schools as a lever to engage families to increase immunizations compliance.

- Commissioner Dietz asked what OSSE is thinking about in terms of immunizations. Is it still physician based in the office, or is there an opportunity to immunize kids as they come into school?
 - Commissioner Schumacher responded that the reality is physician offices have capacity. It is that families either do not know that they can go to the doctor or they do not feel safe going. What they are really talking about is how they can build a robust communications campaign that helps demystify some of that and helps to bring folks first and foremost back to their medical homes so that they can not only get their immunizations but also all the other preventative services. The concern is bringing back an under-immunized population into a congregate setting. Even if fewer kids are in the building, any groups in the building present some risk. They are trying to work through how they can use this summer to significantly boost rates and get as close to herd immunity as possible.
- Commissioner Taryn Morrissey commented that she would imagine that data is hard to get because parents are not going to submit their health forms, so it is going to be unclear exactly how many kids have seen their doctor recently and gotten immunizations.
 - Commissioner Schumacher responded that they do have the immunization registry, but that does not always have folks who may seek care outside the District.
- Commissioner Dietz asked if we have an early warning system that could detect a rising rate of under nutrition? He is really concerned that we are going to start seeing under nutrition without having a mechanism to detect it. If people get to their pediatricians, we could begin to see changes in the height and weight curves.
 - Commissioner Beverley Wheeler responded that she is concerned whenever children are not being fed. She does not know of an early warning system, but she loves the idea. She wants to talk more about it and how they might be able to support that by looking at food insecurity.

- Commissioner Dietz asked if there is a mechanism to alert pediatricians to report significant weight loss to some kind of central reporting station.
 - Commissioner Schumacher responded that this is the challenge that many families are not going to the doctor because they do not feel safe. So when they are not going to the doctor, you lose the opportunity. Data trends are showing that the last few months the reporting of many things have gone down dramatically because either schools or healthcare providers have been positioned to identify some of those early warning signs. The concern is real. She is not aware of a mechanism for pediatricians to report significant weight loss other than through the universal health certificate, which would go to the school. The fundamental question is how we can get them to the doctor in the first place to be able to trigger.
 - Commissioner Kristy McCarron asked Commissioner Dietz if he thinks this would be a better response than the food screening questions that doctors ask.
 - Commissioner Dietz responded that the food screening questions only detect food insecurity; they do not assess nutrition. What worries him is it is going to be isolated case findings rather than some kind of built in mechanism for reporting. The Health Department might be the place to go for that.
- Lindsey Palmer, director of nutrition programs at OSSE, provided an update on meals service throughout COVID-19.
 - Additional information is available in the slides.
 - Commissioner Wheeler commented that OSSE, DHS, and DC Health have been fantabulous in responding in a way that said we care, we are here, and we got this. It was wonderful to see.
 - Lindsey Palmer responded that there was help from other folks spreading the word. They were instrumental in getting the word out there.
 - Tia Brumsted, Deputy Assistant Superintendent of Health and Wellness at OSSE, provided an update on school mental health during COVID-19.
 - Additional information is available in the slides.
 - Chairman Travers asked if there has been a demand for virtual services.
 - Tia Brumsted responded that most of the LEAs have been able to get their providers up and running on

telehealth platforms and services have been taking place, as well as clinicians that work for schools participating in mental health expansion. There has been a need to support families with understanding what telehealth looks like at home, being comfortable with telehealth, and having access to technology and a quiet, safe, and consistent place to engage. Some of the direct clinical work has shifted to a lot of parent support, coaching, and case management, but there is still some really strong clinical work happening.

- Chairman Travers shared another question from an attendee: What kind of guidance is being given in terms of ventilations systems?
 - Commissioner Schumacher responded that there are specific provisions around systems and water safety especially for buildings that have been closed for long periods of time. It is all included in the OSSE guidance, and they have gotten a few more technical questions from schools that they have been working with individually.
- Chairman Travers asked if there is any conversation about providing some support in terms of childcare if students are going back to school part time.
 - Commissioner Schumacher responded that there are discussions happening as LEAs work on their final schedules. During the emergency period, they did stand up emergency childcare for first responders and healthcare workers.

American University Presentation on DC Nutrition Education

- Dr. Stacey Snelling, Robin McClave, and Melissa Hawkins from American University presented on the Health Schoolhouse 2.0.
 - Additional information is available in the slides.
 - Commissioner Schumacher asked about how they built buy-in from school leadership.
 - Dr. Snelling responded that they were lucky and got into a school with a principal who believed in the work. They then asked her for recommendations for other principals. They were also asking for professional development for teachers, which is unique because most people want access to the kids. Principals are busy so they do ask for a champion. They meet the principals where they are and try to be flexible.
 - Chairman Travers asked if the data on fruit and vegetable consumption tracks what we know about the schools in the rest of the city as well.

- Commissioner Wheeler commented that they are devastated by the cut in the school breakfast budget because we know children really need to get fed, particularly in this COVID time and as we are looking at racial justice. They are doing a full court press to try to identify replacements for this money because we know how important it is.
 - Commissioner Dietz commented that the Redstone Center provided testimony supporting the restoration of those cuts.

Comments from Commissioners on Current Work

- Commissioner Schumacher commented that OSSE will have updates in terms of reopening schools and childcare and around immunizations and meals for the next meeting.
- Commissioner Audrey Williams had to leave for a COVID-19 planning meeting, but provided an update via Chairman Travers: The Public Charter School Board has been supporting charter schools with Internet and hotspot delivery to families, working with OSSE on meal sites, and working on a number of working groups around student safety, mental health, and family resources. They are also working closely with the Department of Health, OSSE, and the Deputy Mayor for Education on school re-opening.

Final Discussions, Closeout, and Priorities for Next Meeting

- Chairman Travers closed the meeting at 4:37 p.m.