

Public Schools of Brookline
Climate and Sustainability Task Force
March 1, 2024
4:00pm to 5:10pm
Remote via Zoom
~Meeting Summary~

The work group leaders of the Climate and Sustainability Task Force met for a coordination meeting on Friday, March 1, 2024. In attendance were: Steven Ehrenberg, Natalia Linos, Roger Grande, Sasha Palmer, Deane Coady, Christi Electris, Rebeca Salguero and Eric Colburn.

The four work groups of the Task Force are:

- Work Group 1: Education and Engagement (Roger Grande)
- Work Group 2: Energy, Buildings, and Outdoor Spaces (Christi Electris)
- Work Group 3: Food Services and Waste (Deane Coady)
- Work Group 4: Transportation (Eric Colburn)

The goal of the meeting was to check-in on progress for Phase 1 (*inventory town assets - initiatives, organizations, activities, investments, funded positions - already working in the area, identifying those that PSB can partner with, leverage, or scale to achieve relevant objectives of the Sustainability Policy*) and discuss the steps for Phase 2 (*issue recommendations for PSB actions - such as further policies, coordination mechanisms, or investments - to achieve relevant objectives of the Sustainability Policy*).

Mr. Grande provided an update on the Education and Engagement Work Group. The group has finalized a staff survey, and with the assistance of the Office of Teaching and Learning and the Brookline Educators Union they will be distributing it to all educators in the district. The survey has about 10 questions; they are hoping for a robust response from a diverse set of educators across the district. The survey was shared and discussed.

Mr. Colburn provided an update on the activities of the Transportation Work Group. The group has surveyed students and staff to gather data on how they get to school, and the group has also been looking at bicycling data and information. They have not yet been successful in meeting with the PSB transportation coordinator to gather bus information. They met with a group in Newton who has been working to electrify the Newton Public Schools bus fleet; that group shared challenges in the process, including the high cost of building the charging infrastructure. The group discussed the advocacy work of Safe Routes to School.

Ms. Electris provided an update on the activities of the Energy, Buildings and Outdoor Spaces Work Group. They have been identifying and gathering publicly-available data on school utility usage. School Committee member Helen Charlupski, Chair of the Capital Subcommittee, has been very helpful in this work. Ms. Charlupski arranged for the work group to tour the Pierce School (an older school that is about to be rebuilt) and the new Driscoll School. The group will be meeting with Charlie Simmons, Director of Public Buildings for the Town of Brookline. The group has also been discussing solar options.

Ms. Coady presented an update on the activities of the Food Services and Waste Work Group. She shared the group's draft Inventory Report. In preparing the inventory the group has relied upon several district and town policies related to food and waste, including the PSB Wellness Policy, the PSB Sustainability Policy, the draft 5-year plan of the PSB Food Service department, and Warrant Article 8.2 (Sustainable Food Containers and Packaging). The student members of the work group also launched a survey to ascertain high school students' breakfast and lunch preferences, dislikes, and suggestions for improvement. Ms. Coady shared an inventory grid, which captures (at each school): availability of a dishwasher, use of reusable trays and utensils, whether composting is being done in the kitchen (back-of-the-house) and in the cafeteria (front-of-the-house), whether a food rescue/share table is available, and whether the school has an outdoor garden, an indoor garden, and a garden coordinator.

The Task Force will meet again in about 2 weeks (date TBD) to continue to finalize the inventory phase of the work. Dr. Ehrenberg will share a template for the Work Group recommendations. The group discussed the possibility of holding a weekend session for all Work Group members.

The meeting adjourned at 5:10pm.

A recording of the meeting is available at this link:

https://brooklinema.zoomgov.com/rec/share/3fsFmAtcfYuk3XRwGR26a0BMrjipGUkGBoiVSDjsVmJ9KTBA8gc-W_TOgJXfPzmJ.sJYOS9EopfNwjPc