



## COVID-19 After Action Review Task Force Meeting Summary

January 26, 2023 | 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM | Virtual

Attendees are included in Attachment A.

### Opening Remarks & Review of Agenda:

Kevin Harris welcomed the participants to the meeting. Kevin reviewed the meeting's agenda and the general timeline. Kevin introduced Heather Erb of the AIHC.

### Report Structure:

Nathan Weed reviewed the report structure. The report will include lived experiences, lessons learned, emergent themes, stories, and data. Operational recommendations will be nested in broader, foundational recommendations. Equity will be at the center of all recommendations.

- Melanie Bacon: It sounds like you're looking for statewide recommendations. I have identified recommendations for local governments.
- Nathan Weed: The report will be designed for the legislature. The recommendations will be focused on state and local governments. We will bring different ideas together.
- Theresa Adkinson: I'm thinking about the state's response. The report is about how the state's response impacted the local level.
- Nathan Weed: The report will be focused on the higher level, but local experiences will inform the report's recommendations.
- Kevin Harris: We could discuss this idea in the report. The report will be designed for the legislature, but there will be many other readers.
- Angie Hinojos: I would caution against minimizing the recommendations by saying, "This wasn't experienced by every local area."

### Focus Area Workgroup Updates:

- **Workgroup B:** A workshop was held on October 20<sup>th</sup>. The workshop was attended by representatives from state agencies and commissions, local governments, economic development organizations, and business/trade organizations. The workshop resulted in seven recommendations, including:



- Establish a mechanism for the state’s business community to provide immediate feedback into emergency response planning and operations
  - Strive for consistency and transparency when issuing public health closures and safe operating guidance
  - Ensure public health mandates coincide with adequate resourcing to the business communities that will be most impacted
  - Support and grow initiatives that help improve access to economic relief programs for businesses from historically marginalized communities
  - Institutionalize emergency lending structures that are rapidly deployable and scalable to meet the unique impacts of future disasters
  - Make sure that outreach and guidance for communities with limited English proficiency is released simultaneously to new funding opportunities
  - Invest in local economic development organizations to build their capacity to manage large economic recovery funding initiatives
- **Workgroup C:** A workshop was held on October 27<sup>th</sup>. The workshop was attended by representatives from state agencies and commissions, local governments, rent assistance grantees, and community-based organizations. The workshop resulted in ten recommendations, including:
    - Increase state investment in community-based organizations to improve their capacity to coordinate state and federal relief funding in their communities
    - Reform state procurement, contracting, and auditing processes to alleviate the burden put on local governments and community-based organizations
    - Develop a repeatable, scalable structure for emergency rental assistance funding that provides a standard process across all jurisdictions in WA
    - Ensure future efforts to scale up rental assistance are accomplished without impacting other critical processes such as homelessness response work and other public health activities like isolation/quarantine and vaccine distribution
    - Ensure funding guidance is released concurrently with funds



- Provide feedback to federal funding entities to simplify and standardize reporting for emergency funding
- Clarify and simplify efforts to package rental assistance, landlord and tenant rights, and dispute resolution
- Explore the relationship of landlords in future eviction moratoriums and emergency rental assistance
- Release eviction moratorium extensions in greater advance of the proclamation's expiration date
- Document the applicability of future eviction moratoriums for hotels
- **Workgroup D:** Recommendations will not be provided today, but options are emerging. It would be valuable to improve the relationship and communication between state and local entities. It would also be valuable to have a “menu” of options for local entities. Using the term “regional” has been triggering. The term “regional” refers to localized structures and services, not regional agencies.
- **Workgroup E:** Two surveys were sent to a variety of organizations. Combined, the surveys received 111 responses. Additionally, five meetings were held where 40 communities and organizations were represented. The surveys and meetings focused on volunteer management administration, volunteer burnout, a lack of medical reserve corps, and a lack of qualified volunteers. Recommendations are being finalized.
- **Workgroup G:** The data is being coded and analyzed. The data was gathered through surveys, interviews, and focus groups. Equity was integrated into the survey questions and the research approach. The Pandemic Response Inventory Tool was used to develop precise survey questions. Draft recommendations will be presented to the Task Force.
- **Workgroup H:** Interviews were held with 75 individuals representing different organizations. The themes identified during the interviews were distilled into eleven recommendations, which have been submitted to the Task Force Steering Committee. These recommendations include:
  - Prioritize in-person learning
  - Should closures be necessary, prioritize full closure over remote/hybrid learning
  - Improve planning and preparation for remote learning



- Ensure provision of school meals to all K-12 students
- Improve planning and preparation for return to in-person learning
- Adequately resource systems and strategies to accelerate post-pandemic learning and recovery
- Augment requirements for comprehensive safe schools planning
- Consider expansion of the emergency preparedness and response role of Washington's nine educational service districts
- Strive for timeliness, consistency, and transparency when providing updates and/or issuing public health requirements for K-12 schools
- Strengthen systems of financial support for school districts
- Establish, and consistently communicate, clarity of decision-making authority from the beginning of a pandemic

### **Lessons Learned Breakout Groups:**

Phyllis Shulman invited the participants to discuss the following questions in breakout groups: What are the most important pandemic lessons you've learned and feel are necessary to convey to leaders and other report readers? Why are these lessons the most important? What details are important to include with each of these lessons?

Notes from the breakout groups can be viewed on Slides 10 – 14.

### **Focus Area Workgroup Discussion:**

- Angie Hinojos: The impacts of post-secondary enrollments are important. These enrollments will impact communities of color and workforce diversity.
- Winona Hollins Hauge: Equity was not mentioned in some updates. Funding for rental assistance came through the Seattle Foundation, the Urban League, and other entities. There should be a chain of command that prevents people from becoming entangled in this process. Our efforts won't be effective without public policies.
- Winona Hollins Hauge: Territorialism needs to be discussed in regard to Focus Area H. The pandemic uncovered areas where people were already low-resourced. We should



look at the gaping holes that have been created across communities. Our findings should be acted upon through public policies.

- Martin Mueller: Many things that occurred during the pandemic were already there. Those things are still ongoing. We need to find our way out of this.
- Faatima Lawrence: Was anything done to connect with students in Focus Area H? We tend to miss students' perspectives. We should talk to students about their experiences.
- Martin Mueller: I didn't directly connect with students, but students' perspectives were discussed with teachers and principals. That's a hole in the data collection. There is a Safe Schools Advisory Committee with a Youth Subcommittee. Members of the Subcommittee have shared their thoughts about the pandemic.
- Kevin Baker: The pandemic revealed existing issues. It's important for the Focus Areas to have equity themes. The recommendations for Focus Area H were broader, institutional recommendations. How do the recommendations consider equity? Were smaller, community-based organizations brought into the conversation?
- Martin Mueller: I didn't engage community-based organizations. I focused on administrators and teachers. My work was framed around equity.
- Winona Hollins Hauge: When we removed the bandage, we revealed a gaping wound. The disparities and marginalization are still here. We need to inform interagency communication and ensure people's needs are met. There was a report by the Institute of Medicine called, "Unequal Treatment Confronting Racial and Ethnic Disparities." The report discussed the ways in which we don't address core issues. We need to incorporate a policy position into our recommendations.

### **Call for Contributions:**

Kevin Baker asked the participants to send stories for the report. Kevin invited the participants to attend the upcoming Equity Gatherings on February 15<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **Closing Remarks:**

Kevin Harris thanked the participants for attending the meeting. Kevin reminded the participants of the next meeting on Thursday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> from 9:00 – 12:00.



## Attachment A: Attendees

<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Adams	Joy	Washington State Employment Security Department
Adkinson	Theresa	Grant County Health District
Allen	Tristan	Washington State Department of Commerce
Bacon	Melanie	Island County
Dolack	Kerstyn	Washington State Military Department
Elsenboss	Carina	Seattle and King County Public Health
Erb	Heather	American Indian Health Commission
Evans	Rayanna	Washington State Office of Financial Management
Ezelle	Robert	Washington State Military Department
Fox	Chandra	Spokane County Emergency Management
Heshmati	Nariman	Everett Clinic
Hinojos	Angie	Centro Cultural Mexicano
Hollins Hauge	Winona	Central Area Senior Center
Jaffe	Darcy	Washington State Hospital Association
Lawrence	Faatima	Catholic Community Services
Linares-Hengen	Travis	Washington State Department of Health
McCluskey	Brendan	King County Emergency Management
McPherson	Amber	Washington State Department of Health
Mueller	Martin	Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Nichols	Travis	Washington State Department of Health
Peaks	Nomi	Washington State Department of Health
Probasco	Brianne	Washington Association for Community Health
Shannon	David	Washington State Department of Social and Health Services
Stoutenburg	Matt	Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner
Turk	Rosalinda	Washington State Department of Health
Weaver	Ron	Washington State Department of Health
Weed	Nathan	Washington State Department of Health
Wilburn	Hazel	The William D. Ruckelshaus Center

### **Facilitators:**

Kevin Baker, Kevin Baker Consulting  
Kevin Harris, The William D. Ruckelshaus Center  
Phyllis Shulman, The William D. Ruckelshaus Center  
Christina Sanders, WSU Division of Governmental Studies and Services