

New Jersey State Board of Education
Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the New Jersey State Board of Education
March 3, 2021

Presiding: Kathy Goldenberg, President

Secretary: Angelica Allen-McMillan, Ed.D., Acting Commissioner

Present Constituting A Quorum

Mrs. Mary Beth Berry

Mr. Arcelio Aponte

Mrs. Elaine Bobrove

Mr. Jack Fornaro

Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Gazi

Dr. Nedd Johnson

Mrs. Fatimah Burnam-Watkins

Dr. Ernest Lepore

Mr. Andrew Mulvihill

Mrs. Sylvia Sylvia-Cioffi

Absent

Dr. Ronald Butcher

Dr. Joseph Ricca

Convening

State Board of Education President Kathy Goldenberg convened the public meeting at 9:14 a.m. with the reading of the statement pertaining to the public session of the State Board meeting as it complies with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act.

The Open Public Meetings Act was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meeting of public bodies at which any business affecting their interest is discussed or acted upon.

In accordance with the provisions of this Act, the State Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time and place thereof posted in the Department of Education, Secretary of State's Office and notice also having been given to the State House Press Corps, the Governor's Office and the State Board agenda subscribers.

And seeing there was a quorum, the meeting of March 3, 2021 called to order.

Adjourn to Executive Session

President Goldenberg then read the resolution pertaining to the executive session of the State Board meeting as it complies with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Whereas, in order to protect the personal privacy and to avoid situations wherein the public interest might be disserved, the Open Public Meetings Act permits public bodies to exclude the public from that portion of a meeting at which certain matters are discussed, now therefore be it

Resolved, that consistent with the provision of N.J.S.A. 10:4-12.b, the State Board Education will now adjourn to executive session to discuss personnel and legal issues. The State Board immediately adjourned to executive session on March 3, 2021.

Reconvening

President Kathy Goldenberg reconvened the open meeting at 10:03 a.m. with the reading of the resolution pertaining to the resumption of the public session of the State Board meeting as it complies with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Whereas, consistent with the provision of N.J.S.A. 10:4-12.b, the State Board will now adjourn from executive session to resume the open session of this meeting.

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes of The Meetings

On a motion duly seconded and carried, the State Board members approved the minutes of the public meeting conducted on February 3, 2021. Arcelio Aponte, Fatimah Burnam-Watkins and Nedd Johnson abstained.

President’s Reports

President Goldenberg welcomed everyone to the State Board’s virtual meeting and extended her best wishes on behalf of the State Board that all are safe and healthy.

Public Testimony

President Goldenberg stated that the State Board would accept written public testimony on Chapter 16, Programs to Support Student Development. She also stated that in April the State Board would accept written testimony on the Religious Holidays Calendar Resolution for the 2021-2022 school calendar year.

Report of the Permanent Student Representative

President Goldenberg introduced and welcomed the State Board of Education’s permanent student representative, Sabrina Capoli. Sabrina is a senior at Seneca High School in Burlington County. Sabrina talked to the State Board about the New Jersey Student Councils virtual winter workshop series occurring on Tuesday nights via Zoom. She stated that these workshops are available to any student interested in attending, even if their school is not a member of the NJASC organization.

State Board Committee Reports

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Committee

Mary Beth Berry, chair, Career and Technical Education Committee, stated that the CTE Committee met with Department staff on February 17, 2021.

Mrs. Berry stated they followed up on discussion items from January regarding P-Tech and CTE month. She stated the Department shared what is going on with CTE education and CTE grant opportunities, and that the Department will be applying for all grant opportunities that makes sense to our schools. She also stated the Department is commitment to increasing career exploration grants among our middle school population. She further stated that the committee had a discussion around career thinking in the middle school will give children more exposure to what is available to them.

Mrs. Berry stated the committee discussed industry credentials and receiving training to get the certificates they need to become fully employable. She also stated that industry certification exams will still be available with some in secondary spaces, and there will be grace periods offered to students to ensure students can finish the education they have started.

Mrs. Berry stated that beyond the committee meeting, she and President Goldenberg were also fortunate to have a conversation on February 18 with six CTE superintendents. She stated that these superintendents continue to make sure that all their students are actively engaged. Mrs. Berry stated they explained how CTE is alive in our schools, and also how our teachers, superintendents, and students are doing their very best every day.

Policy Committee

Elaine Bobrove, chair, Policy Committee, stated that the Policy Committee met with Department staff on February 17, 2021.

Mrs. Bobrove stated that they discussed Chapter 32, Chapter 6 and the Bridge Year. She stated they discussed amendments to Chapter 32, which is scheduled to sunset on January 16, 2022, and will be presented at the April Board of Education meeting.

Mrs. Bobrove stated that Chapter 6, State Board Rulemaking, establishes the rules to follow to submit a petition to adopt a new rule or make a change in an existing rule. She stated the Ad Hoc Committee reviewed the State Board Rulemaking regulations prior to sending these regulations to the Policy Committee. She stated they been through all levels of review and will be submitted to the full Board for consideration in April.

Mrs. Bobrove stated that the Bridge Year Pilot Program was signed into law late June 2020 and will sunset in June of 2023. She stated the purpose of this law is to provide students in the graduating class of 2021 and 2022 with the opportunity to offset disruptions to learning opportunities and participation in extra curricula activities that might have resulted from the closure of schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic. She stated the guidance and law can be found on the Department of Education website or at a local high school.

Assessment Committee

Arcelio Aponte stated that the Assessment Committee did meet with the Department staff on February 17 and March 1, 2021, to discuss the topics to be presented today, and rather than report out, he would like to allow the Department to present their findings and recommendations on the Start Strong assessment and the Road Forward.

Commissioner's Reports

Honoring New Jersey Department of Education Retiring Employees

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan stated that it is important to acknowledge the service of New Jersey Department of Education retiring employees who have dedicated themselves to advancing educational outcomes for students across our great state. She stated that today she will acknowledge three employees who made the momentous decision to retire.

Richard Simpson, Marie Katzenbach School for the Deaf, Division of Student Services, September 2002 – February 2021, 18 years of service.

Darlene Lenhardt, Office of the Commissioner, Division of Academics & Performance, August 1976 – March 2021, 44 years of service.

Margaret McDonald, Assistant Commissioner, Division of Student Services, February 1990 – March 2021, 31 years of service.

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan requested that the State Board also honor Dr. Peggy McDonald, Assistant Commissioner of the Division of Student Services, with a ceremonial resolution for her dedicated years of service to the State of New Jersey.

On a motion duly seconded and carried, the State Board unanimously approved the following resolution read by State Board member Mary Beth Berry:

Resolution to Honor Assistant Commissioner Margaret McDonald, Ed.D.

Whereas, Dr. Margaret “Peggy” McDonald has served with distinction as an employee of the New Jersey Department of Education for 31 years and is being honored for her notable tenure of service; and

Whereas, Dr. McDonald has been a strong leader at the Department of Education as evidenced by the numerous senior-level management positions she has held, including Assistant Commissioner of the Division of Student Services from October 2019 to the present, Acting Assistant Commissioner, Deputy Assistant Commissioner, and Director of the Office of Special Education; and

Whereas, as Assistant Commissioner, Dr. McDonald assisted school districts in navigating the provision of services to students with disabilities during the extraordinary disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic; and

Whereas, Dr. McDonald’s work as Assistant Commissioner also included the administration of critical federal laws such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Every Student Succeeds Act, and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, and programs for bilingual education and migrant students; and

Whereas, as Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Dr. McDonald lead the development and implementation of the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports, which is the State’s framework

for academic and behavior support and intervention and resulted in the receipt of a Federal grant in the amount of over \$5 million dollars to support the implementation of NJTSS in New Jersey schools.

Whereas, as Director of the Office of Special Education, Dr. McDonald ensured that students with disabilities had access to high-quality instruction and all of the programs and services offered to all students; and

Whereas, Dr. McDonald began her career in New Jersey public schools as a teacher of deaf or hard-of-hearing students at the elementary and middle school levels and served for many years as an adjunct instructor educating the next generation of teachers of deaf or hard-of-hearing students; and

Whereas, the New Jersey State Board of Education recognizes and appreciates Dr. McDonald's sincere manner and thoughtful demeanor that accompanied her unwavering belief that all of New Jersey's students are capable of greatness; now therefore be it

Resolved, that it is both fitting and proper that the New Jersey State Board of Education express its sincere gratitude to Dr. McDonald for her dedication to the students of New Jersey; and be it further

Resolved, that the New Jersey State Board of Education hereby honors Dr. McDonald for her esteemed record of service to the New Jersey Department of Education and extends best wishes for success and happiness in her retirement and future endeavors.

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan stated that she had the pleasure of working with and learning from Dr. McDonald, and that she has the uncanny talent of coming into a conversation with the exact point needed to be raised to amplify our way forward.

On behalf of herself and her colleagues at the Department, Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan thanked all retirees for their dedication, commitment and hard work over the years. She also wished them all the best of health, happiness and good luck in retirement.

Resolution in Recognition of Gifted and Talented Students Month in New Jersey

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan requested the State Board consider the following ceremonial resolution recognizing March as Gifted and Talented Students month in New Jersey.

President Goldenberg introduced and welcomed Michelle Falanga from the New Jersey Association for Gifted Children to receive the following resolution in honor of Gifted and Talented month.

On a motion duly seconded and carried, the State Board unanimously approved the following resolution read by State Board member Mary Beth Gazi:

Resolution in Recognition of Gifted and Talented Student Month in New Jersey

Whereas, gifted and talented children and youth demonstrate high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific

academic fields, and need services and activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities; and

Whereas, the Strengthening Gifted and Talented Education Act was signed into law by Governor Murphy on January 13, 2020; and

Whereas, the New Jersey Department of Education (Department) established the Strengthening Gifted and Talented Education Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee), comprised of five sub-committees that provide recommendations and guidance on: the law's implementation, identification of students, programming, the intersectionality of cognitive and affective needs, and professional development; and

Whereas, gifted and talented education is needed to provide education for advanced students, to teach gifted and talented students the skills needed in their careers and lives, to meet social and emotional needs of students, and to keep them engaged in school; and

Whereas, longitudinal research has shown that gifted and talented programs have a positive effect on students' post-secondary plans, including a higher rate of advanced college degrees and involvement in creative productive work following college and graduate school; and

Whereas, the New Jersey State Board of Education and the Department support Statewide and local education agencies' efforts to meet the needs of gifted and talented and twice-exceptional students and to ensure they are appropriately identified and provided the opportunity to fulfill their potential; and

Whereas, the Department and the Advisory Committee will continue support for gifted and talented students by developing resources for school districts to enhance the gifted and talented continuum of services, policies, and procedures implemented in school districts, as well as professional development for teachers, educational services staff, and school leaders; now, let it be

Resolved, that the New Jersey State Board of Education and the Acting Commissioner of Education recognize the month of March as "Gifted and Talented Students Month in New Jersey" to honor the gifted and talented students of New Jersey, as well as their parents, teachers, and school leaders who are working to ensure that these students have equitable access to the resources and opportunities they need to achieve their full potentials.

Resolution in Recognition of Social and Emotional Learning Day

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan requested the State Board consider the following ceremonial resolution recognizing March 26 as Social and Emotional Learning Day in New Jersey.

President Goldenberg introduced and welcomed Christy Tighe-Biedron, a trustee member for SEL4NJ and Director of Education at Junior Achievement of New Jersey to receive the following resolution in honor of Social and Emotional Learning Day in New Jersey.

On a motion duly seconded and carried, the State Board unanimously approved the following resolution read by State Board member Fatimah Burnam-Watkins:

Resolution in Recognition of Social and Emotional Learning Day in New Jersey

Whereas, the last Friday in March has been designated internationally as the second annual SEL Day by SEL4US and the Urban Assembly; and

Whereas, social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions; and

Whereas, SEL supports individuals and communities coping with significant challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, to build protective factors for mental health and wellness, develop resiliency skills, seek help when needed, and exhibit care for fellow citizens; and

Whereas, SEL competencies develop throughout people's lives – from early childhood, through adolescence, and beyond – and are essential to success in schools, workplaces, homes, and communities; and

Whereas, a stronger and fairer New Jersey relies on citizens who exhibit the knowledge and skills encompassed in New Jersey's SEL competencies and sub-competencies, which include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, responsible decision-making, and relationship skills; and

Whereas, the New Jersey State Board of Education and the Acting Commissioner of Education continue to recommend school districts implement the *New Jersey Social and Emotional Learning Competencies* to promote safe, supportive, and challenging learning environments in schools; and

Whereas, SEL competencies enhance educators' capacity to navigate stressors, foster positive learning environments in any setting, and

Whereas, SEL advances educational equity and excellence through authentic school-family-community partnerships to establish learning environments and experiences that feature trusting and collaborative relationships, rigorous and meaningful curriculum and instruction, and ongoing evaluation; and

Whereas, SEL can be incorporated into different subject matters and seamlessly embedded in everyday instruction, including in-person and remote; and

Whereas, New Jersey schools, families, and communities must be consciously engaged to enhance the strength, depth, and pace of acquisition of SEL competencies; and

Resolved, that the New Jersey State Board of Education and the Acting Commissioner of Education hereby recognize March 26, 2021, as SEL Day in New Jersey.

Career and Technical Education

Student Learning Showcase Video

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan stated that Career and Technical Education Month®, or CTE Month®, is a public awareness campaign that takes place each February to celebrate the value of CTE and the achievements of CTE programs across the country. She stated that throughout the month of February, the Department used our social media accounts to highlight the scholarly work of various students, promising secondary schools career cluster programs of study, and CTE educators. She stated that in addition, the February DOE Digest Podcast facilitated by Dr. Ken Bond showcased the voices and perspective of CTE students and educators. She stated that today she is delighted to share a short video that highlights CTE students from the STEM Innovation Academy in the Orange Public Schools.

Logo Contest Winner

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan stated that in December 2020, the Department invited career and technical education (CTE) students in the Graphic Design Arts Program within the Audio-Visual Technology Communications Career Cluster® to participate in our CTE Redesign Logo Contest. She stated that today she is pleased to announce the winner of the logo contest, Neshawn Perkins.



New Jersey Department of Education

Career and Technical Education Logo Design Contest

Awarded to

Neshawn Perkins

Newark Vocational High School

Newark Board of Education

Newark, New Jersey

For Your Exemplary Design of the NJDOE

Office of Career Readiness State CTE Logo

March 3, 2021

Dr. Angelica Allen-McMillan

Acting Commissioner

Kathy Goldenberg

Start Strong Assessment Presentation II

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan provided the second of two presentations intended to deliver information regarding the Department’s implementation of the Start Strong Assessments in the fall of 2020. The presentation included observations and data analyses from the administration of the assessments, as well as considerations for future use.

The Road Forward

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan announced a series of coordinated initiatives that will pave the way forward for our education community by investing heavily and identifying and addressing the academic and health impacts of COVID-19 on our students and educators in the spring and beyond.

Items for Consideration:

**Items scheduled for a vote are marked with an asterisk.*

***A. Appointments**

- There were no appointments.

***B. Certification of School Districts**

- Approved for a period of three years, those school districts recommended by the Commissioner, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-14.a and b.

Districts	County
Hopatcong Twp.	Sussex
Estell Manor	Atlantic
Barnegat Twp.	Ocean
Berkeley Twp.	Ocean

C. Religious Holidays Calendar Resolution

- Discussed the resolution pertaining to the annual calendar of religious holidays for the 2021-2022 school year as established at N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3(j), pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14-16.

New Business

There was no new business.

Public Testimony

The State Board accepted written testimony on Chapter 16, Programs to Support Student Development, readoption with amendments.

Adjournment

On a motion duly seconded and carried, the State Board of Education adjourned its March 3, 2021, public meeting at 12:50 p.m.

Angelica Allen-McMillan, Ed.D., Acting Commissioner
Acting Secretary, N.J. State Board of Education