

**Minutes of the Meeting of the New Jersey State Board of Education
In the Conference Room on the First Floor
100 River View Executive Plaza
Trenton, NJ
April 5, 2023**

Presiding: Kathy Goldenberg, President

Secretary: Angelica Allen-McMillan, Acting Commissioner

Present Constituting a Quorum

Mr. Andrew Mulvihill
Mrs. Elaine Bobrove
Mrs. Mary Beth Berry
Mr. Jack Fornaro
Mr. Arcelio Aponte
Mrs. Sylvia Sylvia
Dr. Ronald Butcher
Dr. Joseph Ricca
Dr. Nedd Johnson

Absent

Mrs. Fatimah Burnam-Watkins
Mrs. Mary Beth Gazi

Convening

State Board of Education President Kathy Goldenberg convened the public meeting at 9:15 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 ensure 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 (Department), 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 April 5, 2023, was 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 April 5, 2023.

Reconvening

President Kathy Goldenberg reconvened the open meeting at 10:24 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

President Goldenberg welcomed the public to Trenton and thanked those who are participating either in person or virtually.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice President Mulvihill.

Approval of Minutes of The Meeting

On a motion duly seconded and carried, the State Board members approved the minutes of the public meeting conducted on March 1, 2023. State Board member Dr. Ricca and Dr. Johnson abstained.

President's Reports

Public Testimony

This month the State Board will receive written public testimony on the draft Religious Holidays Calendar for 2023-2024. For the month of May, the State Board will receive open topic public testimony in addition to testimony on the revisions to the draft New Jersey Student Learning Standards in Mathematics and English Language Arts and the rules proposed for the readoption with amendments to Chapter 7, Managing for Equality and Equity in Education.

Report of the Permanent Student Representative

President Goldenberg introduced the State Board of Education's permanent student representative, Miss Lauren Knopp. Miss Knopp is a senior at Ocean City High School in Cape May County. She asked Miss Knopp to present her report for the month of March.

Miss Knopp spoke about her time serving as a permanent student representative and introduced the incoming permanent student representative, Nilanjana Ghosh, a sophomore from West Windsor-Plainsboro High School North, who will assume the role in July.

Resolution in Recognition of the Month of the Military Child

President Goldenberg requested that the State Board adopt a ceremonial Resolution in Recognition of the Month of the Military Child. The State Board unanimously adopted the following resolution read by President Goldenberg recognizing the Month of the Military Child.

Resolution in Recognition of the Month of the Military Child

Whereas, the month of April 2023 has been designated nationally as the Month of the Military Child by the Department of Defense to underscore the important role military children play in the armed forces community; and

Whereas, the New Jersey State Board of Education and the Department of Education aims to ensure, through the policies established, that all students are challenged to maximize their potential and to excel academically, socially, emotionally and physically for college, career and throughout life; and

Whereas, the Department of Education encourages school districts to provide support to children of service members as they transition between schools to address their distinct needs and prepare them to graduate as well-rounded citizens; and

Whereas, the physical, social and emotional well-being of children in military families is essential to their success and has a direct impact on the resiliency of military families serving our country; and

Whereas, these efforts and supports can improve the lives of military children and help pave the way for future generations; and

Whereas, it is both fitting and proper that special recognition be given to ensuring military children feel safe and supported in our schools and communities, so that their parents can focus on the challenges and missions they face in the line of duty; now, therefore be it

Resolved, that the New Jersey State Board of Education and the Acting Commissioner of Education recognize April 2023 as the Month of the Military Child in New Jersey.

Resolution in Recognition of School Library Month in New Jersey

President Goldenberg requested that the State Board adopt a ceremonial Resolution in Recognition of School Library Month in New Jersey. The State Board unanimously adopted the following resolution read by Sylvia Sylvia recognizing April as School Library Month in New Jersey.

Resolution in Recognition of School Library Month in New Jersey

Whereas, the month of April 2023 has been designated nationally as School Library Month by the American Association of School Librarians; and

Whereas, the New Jersey State Board of Education recognizes the unique contributions of school libraries in providing materials that reflect equity, diversity, and inclusion to meet the individual needs, varied interests, abilities, socioeconomic backgrounds and maturity levels of the students they serve; and

Whereas, school libraries provide open access to both print and digital collections that educate students on the ideas and beliefs of religious, social, political, historical, and ethnic groups and their contributions to the American and world heritage and culture; and

Whereas, school libraries serves as a point of voluntary access to information and ideas and as a learning laboratory for students as they acquire critical thinking and problem-solving skills that will be needed for their future in a pluralistic society; and

Whereas, school libraries provide resources and a physical space that nurture the social and emotional needs of students, which helps them feel safe and included; and

Whereas, school library media specialists provide opportunities for students to develop an appreciation of literature and recreational reading honoring students' right to read; and

Whereas, school library media specialists collaborate with teachers to integrate instructional activities designed to equip students to bridge the digital divide and to utilize the power of the Internet to locate, evaluate, and use a broad range of ideas effectively; and

Whereas, school library media specialists provide instruction in information literacy to help students to discern between misinformation, disinformation and malinformation, which prepares them to participate in a democratic society; and

Whereas, school libraries and certified school library media specialists are instrumental in helping school districts to not only meet New Jersey Student Learning Standards, but also to fully prepare New Jersey students for postsecondary success; and

Whereas, it is both fitting and proper that special recognition be given to school libraries and the role of certified school library media specialists in ensuring that all students in New Jersey have equitable access to a high-quality education and are able to achieve academic success; now, therefore be it

Resolved, that the New Jersey State Board of Education and the Acting Commissioner of Education recognize April 2023 as School Library Month in New Jersey.

Resolution in Recognition of Better Hearing and Speech Month in New Jersey

President Goldenberg advised that this agenda item would be held until the May business meeting due to illness.

State Board Committee Reports

Policy Committee

Ms. Elaine Bobrove, chair of the Policy committee, stated that the committee met with Department staff four times since the last monthly business meeting. She also stated the first of these was March 8, 2023 where the committee discussed Chapter 14, Special Education, and the draft revisions to the New Jersey Learning Standards for English Language Arts. She further stated the second meeting was on March 13, 2023 where the committee continued to discuss the draft revisions to the New Jersey Learning Standards in English Language Arts.

Ms. Bobrove stated at the last two meetings on March 23, 2023 and April 3, 2023, the committee discussed draft revisions to the New Jersey Learning Standards in Math. She also stated the reason for so many meetings is that the draft revisions to the Learning Standards in English Language Arts and Math are works in process. Ms. Bobrove further stated the Department of Education will present more details about the process of putting the standards together as well as what they contain at today's meeting.

Social Emotional Committee

Fatimah Burnam-Watkins, chair of the Social Emotional (SEL) committee was not present, therefore, President Goldenberg (ex-officio) stated that the committee met with Department staff on March 29, 2023. She also stated the Department provided the committee with an update on the Department's multi-pronged approach to increasing mental health services for students. She further stated they discussed the Strengthening Youth Mental Health Initiative, which was

launched last summer to enhance school-based mental health services and implement SEL for school leaders and the Youth Suicide Prevention and Awareness Campaign.

President Goldenberg stated the committee discussed the School-Based Mental Health Services Grant, which is a five-year, \$14 million dollar grant to support increasing the number of school-based mental health professionals in school districts demonstrating increased need. She also stated the Department presented on the New Jersey Comprehensive Mental Health Resource Guide, which provides a roadmap to assist school staff in developing, implementing, and evaluating mental health supports and services. She further stated the Department mentioned its partnership with the Departments of Children and Families, Human Services, and Health to develop a coordinated system of care to support youth facing mental health challenges. She stated the focus on student mental health and supporting school districts in this area is encouraging and they look forward to future updates.

Assessment Committee

Arcelio Aponte, chair of the Assessment Committee, stated that the committee met with Department staff on March 31, 2023 to discuss the decision to end the administration of the Start Strong Assessment. He also stated they also discussed the cut scores for the New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment for students in the classes of 2024 and 2025, who are current juniors and sophomores, respectively. He further stated they discussed the cut scores for the alternative assessments, like PSAT, SAT and ACT, that students can use to meet the graduation assessment requirement. Mr. Aponte stated the committee discussion correlates to the last item on today's agenda, so he will forgo extending his report.

Commissioner's Reports

New Jersey Amistad Commission Presentation

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan introduced Dr. Patrick Lamy, Executive Director of the Amistad Commission, who provided a presentation about the core mission and goals of the Commission.

Early Childhood Education Landscape in New Jersey

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan introduced Ms. Kimberly Friddell, Director of the Office of Preschool Education and Mr. Chris Huber, Chief of Policy, who provided an overview of the landscape of early childhood education in the state of New Jersey.

2021-2022 School Performance Reports and Graduation Data Presentation

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan introduced Mrs. Kathy Ehling, Assistant Commissioner for the Division of Educational Services, and Ms. Jessica Melville, Director of the Office of Performance Management, who presented an overview of the data included on the 2021-2022 School Performance Reports including graduation rates for the Class of 2022.

In Case You Missed It

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan provided an update on the New Jersey Partnership for Student Success (NJPS). She stated the Department continues to engage in structured and targeted outreach to ensure volunteers are kept engaged, informed and interested in the emerging opportunities available through NJPS. She further stated that last week a survey was conducted through the Office of Field Services Coordination to identify specific needs for schools and

districts seeking volunteers for student support, and that large organizations, including nonprofits and institutions of higher education, are currently being queried to determine the nature and scope of service that each may be willing to provide. She stated once school and district needs are determined, the matching of volunteers and organizations to districts will commence in the coming weeks. She further stated she will continue to provide updates to the Board on the status of volunteer submissions as the Department receives them and is pleased to continue our partnership with the National Partnership for Student Success.

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan stated that she joined Governor Murphy at Montgomery Upper Middle School in Skillman to highlight the \$20.5 billion in the Governor’s Fiscal Year 2024 budget proposal to support New Jersey schools. She stated funding will help grow New Jersey’s education workforce, support academic recovery, increase the availability of college-level courses in high schools, and advance the Governor’s universal preschool goal. She further stated the proposed budget will provide historic levels of School Aid, with an increase in \$1 billion over the prior year for a total of \$20.5 billion in school funding, and that this amount includes pre-K funding, pension and benefits funding for school staff, and an increase in \$832 million in total K-12 formula aid.

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan stated as part of March’s Women’s History Month, she provided a special video message for the Second Annual Women’s Leadership Conference, presented by the Newark Board of Education and Newark Deputy Superintendent Nicole T. Johnson. She stated this year’s conference theme was “Celebrating the Women Who Tell Our Stories,” and featured small group sessions such as “The Empathetic Leader: Keep Yourself in Your Own Shoes,” and “Courageous Leadership” to support and encourage women who are leaders in education. She further stated she also provided opening remarks at the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association’s Annual Membership Meeting and Legislative Conference in March, and the opportunity allowed her to speak with leaders in education about her vision for New Jersey students, the challenges facing our schools, the work the Department is doing regarding learning acceleration, assessments, and addressing the teacher shortage.

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan stated she was excited to enjoy National Read Across America Month and National Read Across America Day and Dr. Seuss’s Birthday on March 2 in classrooms across the State by reading some of her favorite books to students. She stated she visited North Brunswick Township Early Childhood Center, John P. Holland Charter School in Woodland Park, Mount Horeb School in Warren, and Marie H. Katzenbach School for the Deaf in Ewing in celebration of the benefits that reading has for students.

She further stated she hopes everyone enjoyed following along on the Department’s social media posts for Women’s History Month along with other notable events including Social Emotional Learning Day on March 10 and Pi Day on March 14. She further stated this month we recognize Autism Awareness Month, Military Child Appreciation Month, Week of the Young Child, School Library Month, and Child Abuse Prevention Month. She stated the Department will also be joining school districts throughout the State in celebrating Earth Day 2023, and the Department will be reaching out to school districts through our county offices to learn how they will be celebrating Earth Day and raising awareness about climate change.

Items for Consideration

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

***A. Appointments**

- Approved the following appointment pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:4-32-35 and N.J.A.C. 6A:2-1.1 et seq.:

- Mr. James Thompson, Director, Office of Career Readiness, Division of Teaching and Learning Services

***B. Certification of School Districts**

- There were no districts for certification.

***C. Chapter 9, Professional Standards**

- Adopted the readoption with amendments to the rules pertaining to educator preparation, certification, and professional development at N.J.A.C. 6A:9, Professional Standards, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:4-15, 18A:6-34, 18A:6-38, 18A:26-2.7; and P.L. 2013, c.68.

***D. Chapter 9A, New Jersey Educator Preparation Programs**

- Adopted the readoption with amendments to the rules pertaining to educator preparation and certification at N.J.A.C. 6A:9A, New Jersey Educator Preparation Programs, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:4-15, 18A:26-2.7 5; and P.L. 2012, c. 11.

***E. Chapter 9B, State Board of Examiners and Certification**

- Adopted the readoption with amendments to the rules pertaining to educator certification at N.J.A.C. 6A:9B, State Board of Examiners and Certification, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:4-15, 18A:6-34 and 38, and 18A:26-1, 2.7, and 10; and P.L. 2012, c. 11.

***F. Chapter 9C, Professional Development**

- Adopted the readoption with amendments to the rules pertaining to amendments to the rules pertaining to professional development at N.J.A.C. 6A:9C, Professional Development, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:4-15, 18A:6- 128, 18A:26-2.7 and 10, and P.L. 2012, c. 11.

G. Resolution to Adopt the New Jersey Student Learning Standards

- Discuss the resolution pertaining to the readoption of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards as revised for Mathematics and English Language Arts, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:8-2.1(a).

H. Chapter 14, Special Education

- The State Board tabled the discussion of this item until the May 3, 2023 meeting.

I. Resolution Establishing Proficient Level Cut Score Standards for the New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment (NJGPA): Mathematics and English Language Arts

- Discussed new proficiency level cut score standards for the New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment Mathematics and English Language Arts, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:8-4 and N.J.S.A. 18A:7C-1.

New Business

Public Testimony

For the month of April, the State Board received written public testimony on the draft Religious Holidays Calendar for 2023-2024.

Adjournment

On a motion duly seconded and carried, the State Board of Education adjourned its April 5, 2023, public meeting at 3:53 p.m.

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