

**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
January 17, 2024**

Presiding: Kathy Goldenberg, President

Secretary: Angelica Allen-McMillan, Acting Commissioner

Present Constituting a Quorum

Mr. Andrew Mulvihill
Dr. Ronald Butcher
Mrs. Mary Beth Berry
Mr. Jack Fornaro
Dr. Nedd Johnson
Mrs. Sylvia Sylvia
Mrs. Elaine Bobrove
Ms. Fatimah Burnam-Watkins
Ms. Mary Bennett
Ms. Jeanette Peña

Absent

Mr. Arcelio Aponte
Dr. Joseph Ricca

Convening

State Board of Education President Kathy Goldenberg convened the public meeting at 9:30 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 January 17, 2024, 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 January 17, 2024.

Reconvening

President Kathy Goldenberg reconvened the open meeting at 10:35 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

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Nilanjana (Nillie) Ghosh.

Swearing In of State Board Member(s)

President Goldenberg introduced the Honorable Robert Lougy, a judge of the New Jersey Superior Court in Mercer County. Judge Lougy administered the oath of office to new State Board members Mary Bennett of Irving, Essex County, and Jeanette Peña of Union City, Hudson County. Ms. Bennett's term expires June 30, 2024. Ms. Peña's term expires June 30, 2028.

Welcome

President Goldenberg welcomed the public to the meeting and thanked those who are participating. She stated the State Board meetings are accessible to the public for viewing on YouTube Channel and would like to advise that YouTube provides readily accessible language translation options for closed captioning. She further stated if you are viewing this simulcast now, you can use the settings option in YouTube for information about sub-titles, auto translations and closed captioning in multiple languages.

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 December 6, 2023. State Board members Fatimah Burnam-Watkins, Mary Bennett and Jeanette Peña abstained.

President's Reports

Public Testimony

President Goldenberg stated that for the month of January, the State Board will receive public testimony on the second discussion level amendments to Chapter 22, Student Residency and proposal level discussion of Chapter 3, Controversies and Disputes. In addition, the State Board has also scheduled Open Topic public testimony, meaning any registered member of the public may

provide written testimony on any educational topic of choice. For the month of February, the State Board will receive public testimony on second discussion level amendments to Chapter 12, Interdistrict Public School Choice and Chapter 23A, Fiscal Accountability.

Welcome of the Permanent Student Representative

President Goldenberg introduced the State Board of Education's permanent student representative, Miss Nilanjana (Nillie) Ghosh. Miss Ghosh is a rising junior at West Windsor Plainsboro High School North.

Ms. Nilanjana Ghosh stated that on December 11, 2023, she attended the NJASC monthly executive meeting. She stated the state officers decided which office they will run for, and they also reviewed applications and chose recipients for awards presented at the Winter Convention being held today, January 10, 2024. She further stated she had the opportunity this past month to be interviewed by NJ Spotlight for a story on trailblazers in New Jersey. She stated she spoke about herself and expanded on her December Board report with her message of hope pertaining to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.

Policy Committee

Elaine Bobrove, chair of the Policy Committee met on December 12, 2023 to discuss Chapter 12, Interdistrict Public School Choice. She stated this chapter relates to the fact that different schools may have different curricula. She further stated that for example, School A may offer instruction in Russian and Chinese among their foreign language choice, and a neighboring School B may not include Russian or Chinese but has the languages of Spanish and French. She stated if School A has openings for other students in Russian, School A may advertise they have seat room for additional students. She further stated School B has a student who wants to learn Russian may want to attend School A. Ms. Bobrove stated if there is room in the class, the parents may want their child to transfer to School A. Ms. Bobrove stated this Chapter will be on today's Agenda and the Department will discuss the minimal prospective changes to the Code Policy.

Ms. Bobrove stated the Policy Committee met again on January 5, 2024, to discuss the proposed readoption with amendments to Chapter 23A, Fiscal Accountability, Efficiency, and Budgeting Procedures. She stated the chapter is divided into two parts: Subchapters 1 through 15 are under the Commissioner's authority while Subchapters 16 through 24 fall under the State Board's authority. She further stated today, the Department will discuss prospective changes to Subchapters 15 through 24.

Resolution in Honor of New Jersey School Board Recognition Month

President Goldenberg requested that the State Board adopt a ceremonial Resolution in Honor of New Jersey School Board Recognition Month. The State Board unanimously adopted the following resolution read by State Board member Nedd Johnson recognizing January as School Board Recognition Month. State Board members Mary Bennett and Jeanette Peña abstained.

Resolution in Honor of New Jersey School Board Recognition Month

Whereas, the New Jersey State Board of Education has established rigorous standards through its promulgation of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards, which set the expectations of academic achievement for nearly 1.4 million public schoolchildren; and

Whereas, New Jersey’s locally elected and appointed boards of education play a vital role in ensuring that their local school districts meet state standards and adhere to state and federal education statute and regulations, with the goal of preparing all students for college and the workplace, thereby enabling them to compete in a global economy; and

Whereas, New Jersey’s 5,000 non-partisan local board of education members and charter school trustees are public servants who dedicate their time, without pay or benefit, to the oversight of school district operations, through sound financial practices and comprehensive policies on curriculum, staffing and other areas to ensure the well-being and academic achievement of all students in the district; and

Whereas, local boards of education, in conjunction with state education officials and local educators, have built a foundation of success that has led to New Jersey’s status as a leader in student achievement, as evidenced by the National Assessment of Educational Progress scores; and

Whereas, the New Jersey School Boards Association has declared January 2024 to be School Board Recognition Month; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the New Jersey State Board of Education recognizes the contributions of our state’s local boards of education to the academic success of its public school students and expresses its sincere appreciation to local board of education members for their continued focus on the achievement of children throughout New Jersey; and be it further

Resolved, that the New Jersey State Board of Education encourages qualified New Jersey citizens to consider serving as members of their local school boards.

Recognition of New Jersey Education Professionals

President Goldenberg presented opening remarks to the honorees and special guests invited in recognition of New Jersey’s exemplary teachers and administrators which included the Superintendent of the Year, Dr. Nicholas Bernice, Ms. Amy Lerner, School Business Administrator of the Year, and Dr. Mindy Milavsky and Mr. Carlos Granata, Jr., Visionary Principals of the Year.

Commissioner’s Reports

In Case You Missed It

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillian stated that in addition to acknowledging the many holidays celebrated throughout the month of December, the Department of Education employees were extremely generous as individuals delivered their gifts for children to the Homefront Family Campus in Ewing. She stated touring the facility was a bonus for several members of our staff as we learned first-hand how families in nearby communities are supported to meet their unique needs. She further stated she visited Barringer High School in Newark to learn about the success and expansion of their Career and Technical Education program that included visiting music production rooms, carpentry shops, and even a mock courtroom set-up for students to practice for future careers in the legal field was enriching for our team. She stated also in December, we announced the reissue of the High-Impact Tutoring Notice of Grant Opportunity, as well as releasing the Notice of Funding of round two for the Preschool Expansion opportunity. She further stated these opportunities are aimed to improve and expand capabilities in the early grades

to enhance learning as well as make preschool programs available to more residents. Acting Commissioner stated her final campaign as the head of this agency began before the holiday break which was titled “DOE Reads Aloud.” She stated every month, an individual or individuals from our agency will choose a children’s book to read aloud for viewing on our YouTube channel by students and their families. She further stated she read *The Day the Crayons Quit* and *Rosie Revere, Engineer*, both of which are now available to enjoy as we promote literacy acquisition in all its forms.

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan stated that this month she is excited to visit each of the 2023 Lighthouse Award recipients to congratulate them and celebrate this achievement with their school community. She stated the five local educational agencies are Middlesex County Vocational and Technical School District; Morris County Vocational School District; Palmyra Public School District; Philips Academy Charter School and Union County Vocational-Technical School District, and that the five winners are recognized for their outstanding efforts towards educational improvement and equitable outcomes for students.

Acting Commissioner stated that as she reflects on her 3 years and 3 months in the role of Acting Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Education, she is most proud of the evolution of this agency to respond to a public health emergency in ways previously unimagined while simultaneously innovating in each of the seven divisions created with the support of the State Board of Education. She stated reopening schools, addressing learning loss, enhancing mental health supports, and expanding universal preschool are the tip of the iceberg. She further stated the people at this agency represent 80% of the iceberg you do not see as it is their tremendous grit to ensure we continually improve and ask others to do the same. Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan stated that her amazing Cabinet comprised of executive directors who support the work of each assistant commissioner who lead the seven divisions within this agency – Dr. Jordan Schiff, Mrs. Kathy Ehling, Dr. Chris Irving, Mrs. Secil Onat, Mr. Cary Booker, and Mr. Chris Huber, - all synchronized by our dynamic and incomparable chief of staff, Dr. Julie Bunt, create a workspace where risks are taken and rewarded. She further stated that together we honored the voices of all students across our state represented in the 1400 art submissions from all 21 counties: “The enthusiastic response from students shows their resiliency as they persevere through the challenges they continue to face as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Each submission reflects the young artist’s hope for the future.” Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan stated it was her pleasure to serve at the request of Governor Murphy and that she served to the best of her ability.

Items for Consideration

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

***A. Appointments**

- Approved the following appointment(s) pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:4-32-35 and N.J.A.C. 6A:2-1.1 et seq.:
 - Ms. Michele Mickey Ronan-Grosshtern, Executive Director, Division of Early Childhood Services.

State Board members Mary Bennett and Jeanette Peña abstained.

***B. Certification of School Districts**

- There were no districts for certification.

C. Chapter 22. Student Residency

- Discussed the proposed readoption with amendments to the rules at N.J.A.C. 6A:22, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:38-1.1.

D. Chapter 23A, Fiscal Accountability, Efficiency and Budgeting Procedures

- Discussed the proposed readoption with amendments to the rules at N.J.A. C. 6A:23A, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:4-15, 18A:36A-18, 18A:36C-7, and 18A:46-15.

E. Chapter 12, Interdistrict Public School Choice

- Discussed the amendments to the proposed readoption with amendments repeals, and new rules at N.J.A.C. 6A:12, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36B-14 through 24.

New Business

President Goldenberg stated she has the distinct honor and privilege of requesting that the State Board consider a ceremonial resolution in honor of Acting Commissioner Dr. Angelica Allen-McMillan, who has recently announced her retirement after many years as an educator.

Resolution in Honor of Acting Commissioner Angelica Allen-McMillan, Ed.D.

Whereas, Dr. Angelica Allen-McMillan has served with distinction as New Jersey’s Acting Commissioner of Education from October 2020 to the present, and is being honored for her tenure of service; and

Whereas, Dr. Allen-McMillan has devoted her professional career to the betterment of public education, having previously served as a substitute teacher in Essex County, founder of the Marion P. Thomas Charter School in Newark, assistant principal and principal in the South Orange-Maplewood School District, assistant superintendent in both Irvington Public Schools and Newark Public Schools, and as Interim Executive County Superintendent for Morris County; and

Whereas, Dr. Allen-McMillan, a parent of three, also served on the Montclair Board of Education and volunteered as a PTA Executive Board member while her children were in elementary school, has served as a board of education member of the Morris County Vocational School District and as a trustee for the County College of Morris; and

Whereas, Dr. Allen-McMillan took the helm as Acting Commissioner of Education during a time when schools throughout New Jersey were transitioning to the return of in-person instruction in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and, as such, she unveiled “The Road Forward” policy initiative to serve as a road map to identify and address the academic and mental health impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic had upon students and educators; and

Whereas, Dr. Allen-McMillan continued to champion efforts for educational recovery in the post-pandemic world through efforts such as serving as the architect of the New Jersey Partnership for Student Success, a multi-pronged effort designed to accelerate learning, build partnerships between

schools and volunteers, address youth mental health, empower educators, and promote universal preschool; implementing grants and programs to address student learning acceleration; strengthening the pipeline of school-based mental health personnel, publishing a school-based mental health resource guide, and launching the Enhancing School Mental Health Services Project; and

Whereas, Dr. Allen-McMillan saw other major milestones during her tenure as Acting Commissioner, such as the instruction of climate change across multiple content areas in the New Jersey Student Learning Standards, a return of full local control to Paterson Public Schools in January 2021 and Jersey City Public Schools in 2022, a student art installation that helped students express their post-pandemic feelings through art, and efforts to address the challenges of the teacher shortage; and

Whereas, Dr. Allen-McMillan provided leadership for the Department to take on numerous initiatives to foster equity, such as the development of resources and regulations encouraging diversity, equity and inclusion; a pilot program and accompanying funding to encourage restorative justice programs in schools; encouraging diversity in the teacher workforce through initiatives such as the “Men of Color Hope Achievers” partnership to recruit and place men of color in teaching positions; and working across State agencies to establish guidelines to address bias in K-12 schools and discrimination in school discipline; and

Whereas, that after a professional lifetime dedicated to the betterment of education, Dr. Allen-McMillan is retiring from her post as New Jersey’s Acting Commissioner of Education; now therefore be it

Resolved, that it is both fitting and proper that the New Jersey State Board of Education express its gratitude to Dr. Angelica Allen-McMillan for her years of dedication to the service of students in New Jersey and to her leadership as Acting Commissioner; and be it further

Resolved, that the New Jersey State Board of Education hereby honors Dr. Angelica Allen-McMillan for her service to the State and extends best wishes for her success and happiness in her new endeavors.

Adjournment

On a motion duly seconded and carried, the State Board of Education adjourned its January 17, 2024, public meeting at 1:58 p.m.

Christopher Huber, Acting Commissioner
Acting Secretary, N.J. State Board of Education