

**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
February 5, 2025**

Presiding: Nedd Johnson, Vice President

Secretary: Kevin Dehmer, Acting Commissioner

Present Constituting a Quorum

Dr. Joseph Ricca
Ms. Elaine Bobrove
Ms. Mary Bennett
Ms. Mary Beth Berry
Mr. Arcelio Aponte
Mr. Jack Fornaro
Ms. Elaine Bobrove
Ms. Jeanette Peña
Dr. Claudine Keenan
Mr. Ahmed Shehata

Absent

Kathy Goldenberg

Convening

State Board of Education Vice President Nedd Johnson 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 February 5, 2025, was called to order.

Adjourn to Executive Session

Vice President Johnson 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 February 5, 2025.

Reconvening

Vice President Johnson reconvened the open meeting at 10:10 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 State Board member Jeanette Peña.

Welcome

Vice President Johnson 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. He 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 Meeting

On a motion duly seconded and carried, the State Board members unanimously approved the minutes of the public meeting conducted on January 8, 2025. Dr. Joseph Ricca abstained.

President’s Reports

Public Testimony

Vice President Johnson stated that for the month of February, the State Board will not receive public testimony as there are no educational topics scheduled for discussion.

Vice President Johnson stated that for the month of March, the State Board of Education will hear public testimony on Chapter 8, Standards and Assessment.

Permanent Student Representative

Vice President Johnson introduced the State Board of Education’s permanent student representative, Miss Anna Paszkiewicz. Miss Paszkiewicz is a senior at Palmyra High School in Burlington County.

Miss Paszkiewicz spoke about her attendance and participation in the New Jersey Association of Student Councils (NJASC) 99th annual Winter Convention held last month.

State Board Committee Reports

Instructional Policy Committee Meeting

Nedd Johnson, chair of the Instructional Policy committee meeting stated that the committee met on January 27, 2025, to receive an overview of the amendments that the Department is proposing as part of the readoption of Chapter 8, Standards and Assessments. He stated they also discussed the Department's goals for the proposed amendments. Dr. Johnson stated since this item is on today's agenda and the Department will be presenting the proposed amendments and the goals, he will refrain from providing a longer report.

Resolution in Honor of Career and Technical Education Month

Vice President Johnson requested that the State Board adopt a ceremonial Resolution in Honor of Career and Technical Education Month in New Jersey. The State Board unanimously adopted the following resolution read by State Board member Mary Beth Berry recognizing February as Career and Technical Education Month in New Jersey.

Resolution in Recognition of Career and Technical Education Month in New Jersey

Whereas, the month of February 2025 has been designated nationally as Career and Technical Education Month[®] by the Association for Career and Technical Education; and

Whereas, teachers, administrators, and school counselors involved in career and technical education help more than 143,000 secondary and postsecondary students in New Jersey pursue a range of career pathways; and

Whereas, career and technical education programs incorporate a rigorous academic core coupled with high-level technical curriculum to deliver opportunities for students to earn college credit, industry-valued credentials, and work-based learning to be college and career ready; and

Whereas, career and technical education prepares New Jerseyans for the jobs that exist today and equips them with the skills employers will need in the future; and

Whereas, the New Jersey Department of Education has continued to implement a variety of career and technical education initiatives, including the Building Capacity for Career Pathways, Esports Industry Career Exploration, and Expanding Career Pathways in Artificial Intelligence programs; and

Whereas, career and technical education offers opportunities for student leadership experiences supporting personal and professional growth through seven State career and technical student organizations currently serving approximately 46,000 students in New Jersey through membership in Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA); National FFA (formerly known as Future Farmers of America) Organization; Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA); DECA, an Association of Marketing Students; Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA); Technology Student Association (TSA); and SkillsUSA; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the New Jersey State Board of Education and the Acting Commissioner of Education hereby recognize February 2025 as Career and Technical Education

Month in New Jersey and the potential of career and technical education to fully prepare students for postsecondary success.

Vice President Johnson recognized Dr. James Pedersen, President of The New Jersey Council of County Vocational-Technical Schools who accepted the resolution and offered brief remarks.

Commissioner's Reports

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month

Acting Commissioner Kevin Dehmer stated that Dr. Jorden Schiff, Assistant Commissioner for the Division of Teaching and Learning Services, and Mrs. Kathleen Paquette, Director of the Office of Career Readiness, provided a brief overview of the CTE landscape in New Jersey. They were joined by special student guests, Aryan Garg from Middlesex County Magnet School and Sowmya Hemadri from Colts Neck High School who shared their inspiring stories.

Items for Consideration

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

***A. Appointments**

- There were no appointments.

***B. Certification of School Districts**

- There were no districts for certification.

***C. Resolution to Accept Donated Funds**

- Adopted the resolution approving acceptance of donated funds.

Resolution to Accept Donated Funds

Whereas, the New Jersey Department of Education, Marie H. Katzenbach School for the Deaf is the recipient of a donation from Renaissance Women's Club.

Whereas, N.J.S.A. 18A:4-26 requires the approval of the New Jersey State Board of Education in order for the Acting Commissioner of Education to accept donated funds; and

Whereas, a donation in the amount of \$500.00 was made by Renaissance Women's Club. These funds are to provide the Department of Education, Marie H. Katzenbach School for the Deaf to use for student activity funds, which are for the sole use of supporting student activities such as field trips, yearbooks and student clubs; now therefore be it

Resolved, that the New Jersey State Board of Education approves the acceptance of the donated funds to the aforementioned specified purposes.

***D. School District Operations**

- Approved for publication in the *New Jersey Register* the proposed amendments at N.J.A.C. 6A:32 related to a State-excused absence for civic events, pursuant to P.L. 2023, c. 274, and N.J.S.A. 18A:4-15.

E. Standards and Assessments

- Discussed the readoption with amendments to Chapter 8, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-10 through 14, 18A:7C-1 et seq., 18A:7E-2 through 5, 18A:35-4.2 and 4.7, 18A:59-5 and 18A:4-15.

Work Session

There was no work session.

New Business

Vice President Johnson acknowledged February as Black History Month stating that many schools are celebrating and encouraged State Board members to attend when invited. He also acknowledged that the New Jersey Amistad Commission is planning activities showcasing the contributions of Africans throughout history.

Adjournment

On a motion duly seconded and carried, the State Board of Education adjourned its February 5, 2025, public meeting at 11:36 a.m.

Kevin Dehmer, Commissioner
Secretary, N.J. State Board of Education