

**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
September 6, 2023**

Presiding: Kathy Goldenberg, President

Secretary: Angelica Allen-McMillan, Acting Commissioner

Present Constituting a Quorum

Mr. Andrew Mulvihill

Mrs. Mary Beth Berry

Mrs. Mary Beth Gazi

Mr. Jack Fornaro

Dr. Nedd Johnson

Mrs. Sylvia Sylvia

Mrs. Fatimah Burnam-Watkins

Absent

Mr. Arcelio Aponte

Dr. Ronald Butcher

Mrs. Elaine Bobrove

Dr. Joseph Ricca

Convening

State Board of Education President Kathy Goldenberg convened the public meeting at 9:34 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 September 6, 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 September 6, 2023.

Reconvening

President Kathy Goldenberg reconvened the open meeting at 11:10 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 Vice President Andrew Mulvihill.

President Goldenberg welcomed the public to the meeting and thanked those either in person or virtually 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 August 2, 2023.

President's Reports

Public Testimony

For the month of September, the State Board will receive Open Public testimony on any educational topic of choice from registered members of the public. For the month of October, the State Board will receive public testimony on the readoption with amendments to Chapter 3, Controversies and Disputes.

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. Miss Ghosh participated virtually in the meeting. She did not provide a report this month.

State Board Committee Reports

Policy Committee

President Goldenberg provided the report on behalf of Mrs. Bobrove, chair of the Policy Committee who was not in attendance. She stated that the Policy committee met on August 9, 2023, to discuss the readoption with amendments of Chapter 3, which are the rules governing the controversies and disputes process. She stated that since the rulemaking is on today's agenda, so she will forgo further

details. She further stated they also discussed the possible revisions to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in English language arts and mathematics.

President Goldenberg stated the committee met again on August 28, 2023, to receive any updates on the status of revisions to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in English language arts and Mathematics. She also stated that at this time, this is still under review. She further stated that the committee also received an update on the status of the proposed amendments to Chapter 14, Special Education and anticipate that this will come before the board in October.

National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) Election

President Goldenberg stated that the elections for the President Elect of the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) will take place at the annual business meeting during NASBE's conference in San Diego this October. President Goldenberg also stated that she will serve as the State delegate to the conference this year. She further stated that the candidate for President Elect is Keven Ellis from Texas, The candidate for Secretary-Treasurer is Fern Desjardins from Maine and the candidate for Northeast Area Director is Erin Benham from Connecticut. While there is only one candidate for each position, the State Board took a voice vote in support of the candidates for these positions. New Jersey will vote for Keven Ellis for Chair-elect of the Board of Directors, Fern Desjardins for Secretary-Treasurer and Erin Benham as the Northeast Area Director.

Commissioner's Reports

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan provided an update on the successful educator Certification Fee Holiday program, To promote this program, in collaboration with Governor Murphy, she stated that she was a guest on the FOX29 Good Day Philadelphia morning show on August 7 to discuss the goals and achievements in this first month of the effort. She also stated that to date, the Department has waived over \$1.5 million dollars in certification fees and supported over 1,000 teachers and candidates in their pursuit of teaching certificates. She further stated the program will continue until the end of June 2024.

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan stated the Department is finalizing the review of grant applications under the Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) and Regular Operating Districts (ROD) programs. She also stated these two opportunities represent a total funding exceeding \$1 billion in funding, with over 700 projects in the final process, at this time; 40 for the UPK and the remainder being ROD programs. She further stated the Department plans to announce the initial awardees in the coming weeks, with the UPK grants first, followed by the ROD recipients a short time later.

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan stated this month, the 2023-2024 County Teachers of the Year were announced. She also stated that in an awards ceremony at The College of New Jersey, which was livestreamed for additional reach, she congratulated each of these 21 educators who were selected by their respective county board of education as an embodiment of dedication, effort, and service. Serving as ambassadors for New Jersey's public schools throughout this school year, she further stated they are now eligible to be selected as the 2024 New Jersey Teacher of the Year, with that winner going on to represent our state in the National Teacher of the Year selection. Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan congratulated all the winners and stated that she looks forward to working with them in the coming months.

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan stated the next installment of the teachers' monthly newsletter was issued the week of August 21 in the online "Teacher Toolkit." She also stated the NJDOE Monthly Teacher Newsletter provides information and resources to educators, along with messages from New Jersey's Teacher of the Year, information on the services provided by

Department offices, and helpful resources for everything from instruction aids to professional development. She further stated the toolkit can be found from the Department’s homepage by clicking on the word “Educators” in the blue bar at the top to access the latest newsletter.

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan stated the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year is upon us now, with some schools opening their doors the end of August. She stated we continue our work to empower students, educators, and parents to “Dream. Achieve. Serve. Inspire.” Through the lens of learning, our social media team will continue to promote these ideals to encourage quality interaction through all platforms. Our “Back to School NJ 2023” promotion works in conjunction with the successful “Power of Education” and “Good News in NJ Schools” campaigns, with updated graphics and banners on our social platforms and website. She further stated as we set the narrative of back-to-school highlights for the New Jersey press corps, we strive to elevate the teaching profession by highlighting the positive impact teachers can have on students and encourage greater interaction with Department social media.

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan stated our social media will also be emphasizing “Suicide Prevention Month” to help in the efforts of public awareness. She also stated suicide is a serious public health problem that can have long-lasting effects on individuals, families, and communities and preventing suicide requires strategies at all levels of society, including prevention and protective strategies. She further stated everyone can help prevent suicide by learning the warning signs, promoting prevention and resilience, and a committing to social change.

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan stated as always, please be sure to Like, Comment, Share, and Retweet as we spread awareness of the exceptional work being done at the Department, this also now includes a new social media platform: Threads! Be sure to follow along for engaging posts and discussion topics on our Threads, via your Instagram account.

Lighthouse Local Educational Agencies Presentation

Acting Commissioner Allen-McMillan introduced Ms. Lisa Haberl, Executive Director, Division of Teaching and Learning Services, and Dr. Peter Mazzagatti, Acting Director, Office of Educator Effectiveness, who presented the Lighthouse Local Educational Agencies for 2023.

The following Local Educational Agencies were awarded the 2023 Lighthouse designation:

Palmyra Public School District

Philip's Academy Charter School

Morris County Vocational School

Middlesex County Vocational and Technical School

Union County Vocational School District

Items for Consideration

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

***A. Appointments**

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

- Mrs. Secil Onat, Assistant Commissioner, Division of Finance and Business Services; and
- Dr. Peter Mazzagatti, Director, Office of Educator Effectiveness, Division of Teaching and Learning Services.

***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. Vice president Andrew Mulvihill opposed. State Board members Fatimah Burnam-Watkins and Mary Beth Berry abstained.

Districts	County
Bergenfield Borough School District	Bergen
Bogota Public School District	Bergen
Englewood Cliffs School District	Bergen
Fort Lee School District	Bergen
Moonachie School District	Bergen
Old Tappan Public School District	Bergen
River Dell Regional School District	Bergen
Cedar Grove Township School District	Essex
Essex Fells School District	Essex
Union Township School District	Hunterdon
West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District	Mercer
Carteret Public School District	Middlesex
Middlesex County Vocational and Technical School District	Middlesex
Brielle Borough School District	Monmouth
Little Silver Borough School District	Monmouth
Wall Township Public School District	Monmouth
Bay Head Borough School District	Ocean
Franklin Township Public School District	Somerset
Manville School District	Somerset
Montgomery Township School District	Somerset
North Plainfield School District	Somerset
Watchung Borough School District	Somerset
Berkeley Heights School District	Union
Linden Public School District	Union

C. Chapter 3, Controversies and Disputes

- That the State Board discussed the readoption with amendments to at N.J.A.C. 6A:3, Controversies and Disputes, pertaining to the rules of procedure for the filing of petitions with the Commissioner of Education to hear and decide controversies and disputes arising under school laws, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:6-9 and 10; 18A:7-4; 18A:7A-15 and 42.a(3); 18A:7F-9; 18A:11-3; 18A:12-29; 18A:20-36; 18A:26-10; 18A:28-8; 18A:29-4 and 14; 18A:33-2; 18A:38-1 and 13; 18A:39-28 et seq.; 18A:54-4; and 18A:60-1; P.L. 2007, c. 260; and P.L. 2012, c. 26.

New Business

Vice president Andrew Mulvihill stated that he requested information on the appropriate process that the board would take to reopen chapter 7, Managing for Equity in Education for review ahead of the board's next meeting on Oct. 4.

State Board member Sylvia Sylvia provided additional information on suicide prevention for the public including the following number for the crisis hotline 988. She offered the following number for Veterans 866-vetsnj4. She also offered the following number for the police 866-cop2cop. Sylvia Sylvia encouraged members of the board and the public to look for signs of crisis and watch out for their neighbors and friends and to continue to keep suicide prevention at the forefront of their minds.

Adjournment

On a motion duly seconded and carried, the State Board of Education adjourned its September 6, 2023, public meeting at 12:20 p.m.

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