



MAINE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

23 State House Station
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333

STATE OF MAINE

The State Board of Education held a regular monthly meeting on February 10, 2021 virtually via Zoom. The following members were present: Chair Wilson Hess; Vice Chair Jane Sexton; Wendy Ault; John Bird; Fern Desjardins; Peter Geiger; Martha Harris; Jana Lapoint; and Casey Maddock.

Vacant: One Member

Others Present: Deputy Commissioner Daniel Chuhta; Scott Brown, Director of School Facilities; (Department of Education); and Mary Becker, State Board Secretary Specialist.

CALLED TO ORDER:

Chair, Wilson Hess called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM.

The meeting was conducted in accordance with Sec. G-1. 1 MRSA §403-A, Public proceedings through remote access during declaration of state of emergency due to COVID-19. Whereas the meeting is open to the public, all votes will be taken by roll call. Nine Board members attended virtually.

Roll call was taken by Mary Becker, Secretary Specialist. The chair declared a quorum present.

VISION STATEMENT:

Read by student member, Casey Maddock: The Vision of the State Board is to ensure Maine public school students graduate with the skills, knowledge, and principles to be responsible American citizens; self-directed and dedicated to making contributions to society by pursuing further education and employment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOVED by John Bird, seconded by Jane Sexton, and unanimously voted by those present to accept the January 13, 2021 minutes as amended.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No Public Comment

OFFICER'S REPORTS:

Chair, Wilson Hess

- Wilson Hess testified to the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee for three nominations to the State Board of Education. James Ford and Cynthia Murray-Beliveau will be replacing two Board members. Wilson thanked Jana Lapoint and Jane Sexton for their service to the Board. At the conclusion of today's meeting there will be time for each member to give their sentiments to Jane and Jana.
- Wilson reviewed the business agenda for the February 10 meeting.
 - *Unfinished Business*
 - Rule Chapter 115
 - *New Business*
 - Career and Technical Education (CTE) Committee Action Item - Request Approval of the Quarterly Report of the Maine Carl D. Perkins Grant as authorized under the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (P.L. 115-224).
 - School Construction Committee Action Item - Major Capital School Construction Program – Integrated, Consolidated 9-16 Educational Facility Approval Projects List for the 2017-2018 Rating Cycle – Removal of Valley Unified Educational Service Center Project.
 - Nomination and Election Committee Action Item - Recommendation of an Interim Vice Chair to replace Jane Sexton – Pending Vacancy with the Vice Chair position of the Board, Wilson appointed Wendy Ault (Chair), John Bird and himself to the Nomination and Election Committee.
 - Action Item - Appointment to the Maine Charter School Commission to replace Jana Lapoint.
- The Student Membership Committee has convened for the 2021 application process. Wilson has appointed Wendy Ault, Fern Desjardins and Casey Maddock to serve on the ad-hoc committee reviewing student applications and selecting six semi-finalists to interview, then three finalists names to be sent to Governor Mills for nomination of one student to the Board.
- There have been some transitions with Department of Education (DOE) staff. Karen Kusiak, staff person, who attends the Legislative Action Committee weekly meetings has been replaced by Jaci Holmes. Karen has taken a position with federal ESSER II funds and applications. Jaci has given up her spot on MEPRI.

Vice Chair, Jane Sexton

- Jane Sexton thanked the Board for the beautiful bouquet of flowers she received.
- Jane has appreciated the working relationship with Board members and the friendships that have developed. Staff of the Department of Education are very hard working professionals that Jane has become well acquainted with. The one thing she will not miss is the discussions of student transfers. Her public service started a long time ago. She enjoyed the education she has received while serving on the Board.
- She attended the Construction Committee meeting on January 29.
- She attended Legislative Action Committee Friday meetings.
- She attended the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Committee meeting on January 28.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

School Construction Committee (Peter Geiger for Martha Harris):

The School Construction Committee met on January 29, 2021 as scheduled.

The Committee's primary focus of the meeting was to review the Valley Unified Educational Service Center Project. At our October 14, 2020 meeting we agreed to send a joint letter with the Commissioner of the DOE to the three districts asking for a written plan, evidence that all three districts are in agreement and established a Dec. 31, 2020 deadline for such a plan. We will discuss this matter later in our meeting.

The next School Construction Committee meeting is scheduled for Friday, February 26, 2021. The meeting will be held virtually via Zoom. The approved minutes will be posted on the State Board website.

Certification and Higher Education (Wendy Ault):

The Certification and Higher Education Committee met on January 27, 2021 as scheduled. The Committee held special meetings on January 20, February 3, and February 8.

- Wendy Ault reported that the Committee has been engrossed in the review and discussion of Chapter 115. Wendy thanked Jana Lapoint and Fern Desjardins for their work on Chapter 115.

The Committee will hold a special meeting on February 23. The next Certification and Higher Education Committee regular monthly meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 24, 2021. The meeting will be held virtually via Zoom. The approved minutes will be posted on the State Board website.

Career and Technical Education (John Bird):

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) Committee met on January 28, 2021 as scheduled.

- The Committee accepted the Quarterly report for the period of October 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020, of the State of Maine Plan for the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (P.L. 115-224). The report will go before the Board during the business meeting today.
- Patricia Hart, Hart Consulting, presented an update on the evaluation of Perkins-funded CTE grants for Grades 9-10 grant recipients. Patricia Hart will update the report with input provided by the Committee for final review at the February 25, 2021 Committee meeting. John Bird briefed the Board on highlights of the report.
- Maine Administrators of Career and Technical Education (MACTE) - Rob Callahan reported that final touches are being put into the year-end report that will be submitted in time for Committee consideration at its February meeting.
- Dave Keaton will be the new Executive Director of MACTE beginning July 1, 2021.

The next CTE Committee regular monthly meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 25, 2021. The meeting will be held virtually via Zoom. The approved minutes will be posted on the State Board website.

Legislative Action (Peter Geiger):

The Legislative Action Committee last met on February 5, 2021.

The Committee had a preliminary list of 30 LRs (Legislative Request) for which we have direct interest and identified them by committee. We also added 8 initiatives that will address Maine's broadband needs. Much of the work of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee has been orientations and confirmations to many boards and commissions, including 4 being named to the State Board of Education. Karen Kusiak has been our departmental eyes and ears. She has a new assignment, and this work is being handled by Jaci Holmes. As LRs become LDs (legislative documents) we will review the content and make decisions regarding testimony.

Nomination and Election Committee (Wendy Ault):

Wendy Ault as Chair of the Nomination and Election Committee reported that the Committee met to consider a successor to Jane Sexton as the vice chair since she will be leaving the Board. Following a lengthy discussion, the Committee agreed to put forward Peter Geiger's name as the interim vice chair.

MOTION by John Bird, seconded by Wilson Hess, and unanimously voted by those present to elect Peter Geiger as the interim vice chair of the Board upon the vacancy in the position of vice chair following the confirmation of the new members of the Board to replace the incumbent vice chair. The interim vice chair will serve until June 30, 2021.

Wilson Hess pointed out to the Board that the nature of the appointment of the Nomination and Election Committee which normally does not happen until the April meeting, this group will remain empaneled as the Nomination and Election Committee as the Board proceeds to a normal Nomination and Election process which is scheduled to bring forth nominations at the May 2021 meeting and the Board will vote to fill the vacancies at the June 2021 meeting.

Student Voices (Casey Maddock and Wendy Ault):

Wendy Ault continues to be pleased to be a part of the Commissioner's Student Cabinet. The conversations that students have are so telling. It has been such an experience that she appreciates. Casey has been amazing on the Student Cabinet. Wendy had an opportunity to go into Casey's Zoom room and observe her facilitate a group of students and she did an amazing job. She did a masterful job of having students open up and they were so comfortable talking with Casey.

Wendy turned the report over to student, Casey Maddock. Casey reported that the Student Cabinet met on January 27. First they held an advocacy lesson which helps the students out with understanding once you identify the change you want to make, where you go from there, who you talk to, and how it works. They split into break-out rooms and Casey facilitated middle school students. A lot of the students in her group wanted to talk about mental health in schools and students that learn in different ways. Rachel Paling at the DOE reached out to Casey and said that News Center is looking into doing a story about students' mental health in Maine. Rachel gave News Center Casey's name and she is looking forward to being a part of the story and bringing attention to this topic that is very important to her and many of the students on the Student Cabinet.

Wendy and Casey briefed the Board on the discussion students had on mental health assessments.

Student Membership (Fern Desjardins):

Chair Hess appointed Fern Desjardins, Wendy Ault and Casey Maddock to the Student Membership Committee. The Committee met on January 25 to discuss the application process for this year. Applications are being accepted from February 1 to March 1, 2021. The student will be replacing Casey Maddock who represents congressional district one. All high school principals and school counselors in district one have received application materials via email and mail. The application materials are also posted on the Board's website. The Committee

will be reviewing applications on March 8, March 11, and March 16. The six semi-finalists will be selected and interviews will be conducted on March 29. The three finalists names will be submitted to Governor Mills on March 30.

Charter Commission Representatives (Jana Lapoint):

The Charter School Commission met on February 9, 2021 as scheduled.

- The Commission held their first monthly meeting with their new Executive Director, Jeremy Jones.
- Annual Report and summary of performance – update of all Charter Schools. The report is sent to Commissioner Makin, members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee and State Board of Education members.
- Received an Independent Third-Party Evaluation from Maine Virtual Academy.
- Mid-Year Check-in reports for Maine Arts Academy and Maine Virtual Academy. This is another way to check in to see that schools are performing.
- Lotteries were set for nine charter schools in the month of March. Most of the schools have waiting list.
- The Commission is considering the purchase of a student information system platform. This system would gather student information to keep on file and free up extra work for the schools.

Wilson Hess thanked Jana Lapoint for her many years of work on the Charter Commission and her passion for Charter Schools.

Professional Standards Board (Peter Geiger):

The Professional Standards Board (PSB) held its fifth meeting on January 4, 2021. The PSB did not meet since their the last Board meeting.

The next Professional Standards Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 1, 2021 and will be held via Zoom.

UNFINISHED (OLD) BUSINESS:

CONSIDERATION OF RULE CHAPTER 115

At the January 13, 2021 State Board of Education meeting, the Board voted unanimously to table consideration of Rule Chapter 115 approval until the February 10, 2021 meeting.

MOTION by John Bird, seconded by Jane Sexton, and unanimously voted by those present to table consideration of Rule Chapter 115 to the March 10, 2021 State Board of Education meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

REQUEST APPROVAL OF THE QUARTERLY REPORT OF THE MAINE CARL D. PERKINS GRANT AS AUTHORIZED UNDER THE STRENGTHENING CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY ACT (P. L. 115-224)

As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds to support vocational and technical education, §122 of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education For The 21st Century Act (P. L. 115-224), requires a designated eligible agency in each State, which in Maine is the State Board of Education, to submit a State Plan for Career and Technical Education. The State Plan was approved by the Office of Career and Technical and Adult Education on May 22, 2020. Further requirements are as follows:

SEC. 121. STATE ADMINISTRATION.

(a) ELIGIBLE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES.—The responsibilities of an eligible agency under this title shall include:

(3) convening and meeting as an eligible agency (consistent with State law and procedure for the conduct of such meetings) at such time as the eligible agency determines necessary to carry out the eligible agency's responsibilities under this title, but not less than 4 times annually;

The State Board of Education Chair has requested, in accordance with Title 20-A, Section 405, 7, that the Career and Technical Education (CTE) team submits a quarterly financial report to the Board and in response to this request we are submitting this report as the second report for FY2021.

RECOMMENDATION: The State Board of Education approve the Quarterly report for the period of October 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020, of the State of Maine Plan for the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (P. L. 115-224).

MOTION by John Bird, seconded by Jana Lapoint, and unanimously voted by those present to approve the Quarterly report for the period of October 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020, of the State of Maine Plan for the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (P. L. 115-224).

MAJOR CAPITAL SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM – INTEGRATED,
CONSOLIDATED 9-16 EDUCATIONAL FACILITY APPROVED PROJECTS LIST
FOR THE 2017-2018 RATING CYCLE – REMOVAL OF VALLEY UNIFIED
EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER PROJECT

STATEMENT OF FACT: On August 14, 2018, the State Board of Education approved the Integrated, Consolidated 9-16 Educational Facility Proposed Priority List recommended by the Commissioner of the Department of Education. On September 12, 2018 project number 1, Valley Unified Service Center project, was

added to the Approved Projects List which formally initiated the planning process for the project.

The project had slowed and lost its momentum over the past year due to challenges in the planning process specifically regarding the development of an appropriate governance structure that is legally capable of “operating or constructing public schools.”

At the October 14, 2020 State Board of Education meeting the board voted to send a joint letter, with the Commissioner of the Department of Education, to the three districts involved in the project. The letter stated that in order for the project to continue to progress forward “The Boards of the three member SAUs must work together to develop and vote on a written plan to create this structure. The deadline for submitting documentation to the Department of Education of 1) a written plan and 2) evidence that all three boards have voted in the affirmative to adopt the plan is December 31, 2020.”

The three boards were unable to meet this request to vote in the affirmative to adopt a plan for a governance by the December 31, 2020 deadline.

Further, on December 30, 2020 MSAD 27, a member applicant of project number 1, indicated that “there is no possibility for the parties to reach an agreement.” It further stated “MSAD 27 does not believe there is any future for the Valley Unified construction project” and its understanding that, as a result, “the Valley Unified construction project will be removed from the Approved Projects List.” Having thus indicated its de facto withdrawal from the project, only two high schools remain.

During the application process for the 2017-2018 cycle the Department sponsored four regional informational meetings and distributed materials that clearly indicated the intent and goal was to identify a pilot project(s) that included three or more high schools, Career and Technical Education, and higher education components. The application and scoring processes were aligned to identify the best applicant(s) that met those objectives. Project number 1’s original application included three high schools. The December withdrawal of MSAD #27, leaving only two remaining high schools, would have significantly reduced the points awarded in the Part 1 scoring, changed the priority order, and would have made the project ineligible to move forward to Part 2.

The Construction Committee of the State Board of Education reviewed recent correspondence from all three districts regarding this issue at its January 29, 2021 meeting. The Committee then voted unanimously to recommend removing the project from the Integrated, Consolidated 9-16 Educational Facility Approved Projects List.

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On January 29, 2021, the School Construction Committee recommended that this exhibit be placed on the February 10, 2021 State Board meeting agenda and that the State Board approve the removal of project 1, Valley Unified Educational Service Center from the Integrated, Consolidated 9-16, Educational Facility Approved Projects List for the 2017-2018 Rating Cycle.

MOTION by Martha Harris, seconded by Peter Geiger, and voted seven in favor with one-member abstaining (Wilson Hess) to approve the removal of project 1, Valley Unified Educational Service Center from the Integrated, Consolidated 9-16, Educational Facility Approved Projects List for the 2017-2018 Rating Cycle.

APPOINTMENT OF A STATE BOARD MEMBER TO THE MAINE CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION

MOTION by Jana Lapoint, seconded by John Bird, and unanimously voted by those present to appoint Wilson Hess to serve on the Maine Charter Commission.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Chair Hess excused himself from the meeting to attend and testify at the confirmation hearings with the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee of four new members to the State Board.
- Board members thanked Jane Sexton and Jana Lapoint for their service on the State Board of Education.
- Submit travel and expense account vouchers to Mary Becker at the end of this meeting.
- Chair Hess announced that expenditures for the Board were distributed by Mary Becker and the Board is on track with the budget.
- The next Board meeting is currently scheduled to be held virtually via Zoom on Wednesday, March 10, 2021, at 1:00 PM.

ADJOURNMENT:

The February 10, 2021 State Board of Education meeting adjourned at 2:12 PM.