



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 January 13, 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.

Excused: Jaylee Rice

Vacant: One Member

Others Present: Greyson Orne, Student Member Designee; Deputy Commissioner Daniel Chuhta; Scott Brown, Director of School Facilities; Valerie Chiang, School Construction Coordinator; Jim Harford, School Construction Coordinator (Department of Education); and Mary Becker, State Board Secretary Specialist.

CALLED TO ORDER:

Chair, Wilson Hess called the meeting to order at 1:01 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 Fern Desjardins, seconded by Peter Geiger, and unanimously voted by those present to accept the December 21, 2020 minutes as written.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No Public Comment

OFFICER’S REPORTS:

Chair, Wilson Hess

- Wilson Hess gave his report at the morning workshop session.

Vice Chair, Jane Sexton

- Jane Sexton gave her report at the morning workshop session.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

School Construction Committee (Martha Harris):

The School Construction Committee met on December 18, 2020, three days before the State Board’s December 21st meeting.

- The Committee is bringing forward, on the business agenda of the January 13, 2021 meeting, a recommendation for the State Board to grant Design and Funding Approval to the South Portland School Department for the new Middle School construction project.

The next School Construction Committee meeting is scheduled for Friday, January 29, 2021. The meeting will be held virtually via Zoom. The approved minutes will be posted on the State Board website.

Certification and Higher Education (Fern Desjardins for Wendy Ault):

The Certification and Higher Education Committee met on December 16, 2020 as scheduled.

- Fern Desjardins reported that the Committee planned to meet on January 4th and January 5th to continue review of Rule Chapter 115. The meetings were canceled as information was not available to proceed with discussion on Chapter 115. The Committee will hold a special meeting on Wednesday, January 20th.

The next Certification and Higher Education Committee regular monthly meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 27, 2020. 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 December 10, 2020 as scheduled.

- John Bird reported on the December 10, 2020 Committee meeting at the State Board of Education meeting on December 21, 2020. John's report is reflected in the December 21st approved minutes.
- John announced the hiring of Dave Keaton as the new executive director of MACTE (Maine Administrators of Career and Technical Education). Dave will start his new position on July 1, 2021. Dave Keaton is currently the CTE Director at Region 2 – Houlton. The Committee looks forward to working with Dave who knows the state very well.

The next CTE Committee regular monthly meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 28, 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 September 26, 2020.

With the start of the 130th Legislature, approximately 2,000 bill titles have been submitted. Working with Chair Wilson and Mary Becker, Peter prepared a list of 30 bills that will be reviewed by the Legislative Committee. There are many other bills involving education, but the ones selected most closely relate to the Board's work and have been identified by the committee. The list is being sent to all board members and will be updated as the session progresses.

The Legislative Committee is comprised of Board officers and committee chairs. The Committee will meet each Friday at noon assuming it works for all parties. The next meeting will be held on January 15th. All members of the Board are welcome to attend. Karen Kusiak of the DOE will join the Committee. Additionally, Wilson Hess, Jane Sexton and Peter Geiger will have an initial discussion with co-chairs of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, Senator Daughtry and Representative Brennan on Tuesday, January 19th.

Historically, the Board has had a joint luncheon with the entire Education and Cultural Affairs Committee at the February Board meeting. While not possible this year, Peter will try to organize a virtual session with the Committee or schedule it post COVID restrictions.

Student Voices (Casey Maddock and Wendy Ault):

- Casey Maddock reported that the next Student Cabinet meeting is scheduled for January 27th. An emergency meeting of the Student Cabinet was held in December and Casey was not available to attend the meeting.

- Deputy Commissioner Chuhta reported that a Student Cabinet meeting was convened for those that were able to attend as an opportunity to hear from Sarah Woog, Project Director of the Wilderness Activities and Virtual Engagement of Students (WAVES) project. WAVES is a new initiative to support the mental health and wellbeing of Maine youth. Student Cabinet members provided feedback and ideas.
- Wilson Hess commented that Maine has been recognized by the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) as one of the leaders nationally in student participation on State Boards.

Charter Commission Representatives (Jana Lapoint, John Bird and Fern Desjardins):

The Charter School Commission met on January 12, 2021 as scheduled.

Jana Lapoint turned the report over to John Bird and Fern Desjardins.

John Bird reported on the January 12, 2021 Charter School Commission meeting. The Commission held a two-and-a-half-hour regular Commission meeting.

- The Commission received an update on the 2000 + Legislative bills. Twenty-nine or thirty bills relate to education. Eleven bills are related to Career and Technical Education.
- A presentation was given by David Silvernail and Richard Barnes (former Commission member) regarding a study with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA).
- The Commission approved reports from several Charter Schools. Baxter Academy, Fiddlehead, Maine Arts Academy, Maine Connections Academy and Maine Virtual Academy.
- Received 90-day review reports for first year schools.
- Two schools have expanded grade levels.
- Enrollment statistics - post-secondary school readiness activities. Enrollment has remained steady.
- Welcoming of Jeremy Jones, new Executive Director for Charter Schools.

Fern Desjardin, Chair of the Search Committee reported to the Board.

Fern reviewed the process that she and the other two members of the Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) Search Committee, John Bird and Shelley Reed, used in hiring a new Executive Director to replace Bob Kautz who retired on December 31, 2020. They began their work by conducting a needs assessment. A total of 14 people were interviewed. They included the four staff members of MCSC, two of the contracted personnel, one Head-of-School, one Board Chair, three leaders of The Education Action Forum of Maine, and the three Commission members who were not on the Search Committee.

A summary of the interviews was used to develop a *Needs Analysis from a Strategic Planning Perspective: Implications for Going Forward*. From this work the Search Committee framed six pillars for developing a new executive director job description that was amended and approved by the Commission.

The position was advertised on eight websites plus MCSC's *Interested Parties List* (a list of email addresses of those receiving MCSC news).

MCSC received 34 applications:

18 - residents of Maine; 15 - out-of-state; 1 - out-of-country
12 - Doctoral Degree; 1 - ABD; 1 - CAS; 2 - Ed.S. Degree; 1 - three Master's Degrees; 11 - holding 1 or 2 Master's Degrees; 5 - BS or BA Degree; 1 - Associate's Degree

Fern stated that the interest and credentials of those who applied for the position speaks well of educators who want to be involved with charter schools in Maine.

The Search Committee interviewed eight candidates and chose the final five to bring to the commission for a second interview. The Commission voted to hire Jeremy Jones. Mr. Jones was in attendance at the meeting and was asked to introduce himself.

Jeremy Jones introduced himself to the State Board. Jeremy comes to the Charter Commission with a long history of work with Charter Schools and traditional schools. He began his career as a teacher in New Orleans with the Teach for America program. After Hurricane Katrina he moved to Houston, Texas where he worked for the YES Prep Public Schools as a teacher and principal. Jeremy also helped launch the Achievement School District in Tennessee, a state-wide school district that authorized and operated charter schools. He is thrilled and honored to join this work in Maine. Now that the Commission has reached the Charter cap, he believes it is important to assess the history and look toward the future to clarify the role of the Commission to be sure all students in Maine have world class schools whether charter schools or traditional schools.

Chair Hess, on behalf of the Board, welcomed Jeremy Jones to the State of Maine.

Professional Standards Board (Peter Geiger):

The Professional Standards Board (PSB) held its fifth meeting on January 4, 2021.

By statute, the PSB has been organized to advise the State Board of Education on a variety of topics including certification. To date they have reviewed work of the Chapter 115-consensus group and the Certification and Higher Education

Committee of the Board and have endorsed all certifications. The PBS met on January 4th and is in the process of responding to a letter from the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee regarding recommendations on Praxis assessments.

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 December 21, 2020 State Board of Education meeting, the Board voted unanimously to table consideration of Rule Chapter 115 approval until the January 13, 2021 meeting.

By unanimous consent the Board tabled consideration of Rule Chapter 115 to the February 10, 2021 State Board of Education meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

MAJOR CAPITAL SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM; DESIGN AND FUNDING APPROVAL CONSIDERATION; SOUTH PORTLAND SCHOOL DEPARTMENT-NEW MIDDLE SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

STATEMENT OF FACT: Superintendent Ken Kunin requests that the State Board of Education grant Design and Funding Approval for a new grade 5-8 middle school in South Portland. The Mahoney Middle School rated 14th on the 2010-2011 Rating Cycle and was placed on the Approved Projects List at the August 8, 2016 State Board of Education meeting. The proposed new middle school will replace the existing Mahoney Middle School (grade 6-8) and the Memorial Middle School (grade 6-8).

The South Portland School Department hired WBRC Architects-Engineers to conduct a New vs. Renovations analysis of the existing Mahoney and Memorial Middle Schools. The analysis was completed with a recommendation of new construction. WBRC Architects-Engineers then worked with the district and city administrative personnel to identify potential school sites. After extensive evaluation of the final sites the existing Memorial Middle School site clearly became the best option for the new combined school. The site is centrally located in the district and well established in the social context of the community and will allow the new school to be constructed while the existing schools remain operational. The project received State Board of Education Site Approval on July 11, 2018.

The planning for the new school included a vigorous visioning process that included strong community involvement. The inclusion of the 5th grade in the proposed school will improve middle school programming as well as create much needed space for Pre-K, Special Education, and English Language Learners (ELL) students throughout the district. The project received State Board of Education Concept Approval on July 10, 2019.

The Department of Education's construction staff is currently working with the architect in finalizing the construction documents for bidding. There have only been minor modifications to the building and site design through the review processes since Concept Approval. The new building has been designed to meet the Department of Education school construction standards and is in the final stages of receiving all required approvals.

Design and Funding Approval is being requested pursuant to Title 20-A M.R.S. §15905(1) and State Board of Education Rule, Chapter 61, Rules for Major Capital School Construction Projects.

Project Information:

Project: South Portland School Department - New grade 5-8 Middle School Construction Project

Superintendent: Ken Kunin

Architect: WBRC Architects-Engineers – Michael Johanning

Schools to be closed: Existing Mahoney Middle School and Memorial Middle School

Project Budget Information:

Total Project Cost: \$67,726,169.

Local Only (no State participation): \$8,457,096.

Approved for State/Local Debt Service Subsidy: \$59,269,073.

COMMISSIONER'S RECOMMENDATION: The Commissioner of the Department of Education recommends that the State Board of Education grant Design and Funding Approval to the South Portland School Department for the new Middle School construction project as presented.

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On December 18, 2020, the School Construction Committee recommended that this exhibit be placed on the January 13, 2021 State Board meeting agenda and that the State Board grant Design and Funding Approval to the South Portland School Department for the new Middle School construction project as presented.

MOTION by Martha Harris, seconded by Fern Desjardins, and unanimously voted by those present to grant Design and Funding Approval to the South Portland School Department for the new Middle School construction project as presented in Exhibit VIII.A.

COMMISSIONERS RECOMMENDED FUNDING LEVEL FY 2021 - 2022

Pursuant to the provisions of 20-A M.R.S.A., Section 15689-C, the Commissioner, with the approval of the State Board of Education, shall certify to the Governor and the Bureau of the Budget recommended funding levels for the total cost of funding public education from kindergarten to grade twelve. The funding levels recommended herein were developed based on proposed amendments to the Essential Programs and Service Funding Act, 20-A M.R.S.A. Chapter 606-B.

COMMISSIONER’S RECOMMENDATION: To approve the certified funding level for FY 2021-2022 for the total cost of funding public education from kindergarten to grade twelve (including total operating allocation, total debt service allocation, total adjustments, total targeted education funds, total enhancing student performance and opportunity costs) at \$2,385,685,974 a local contribution amount of \$1,149,270,617 and a state contribution amount of \$1,236,415,357 to be distributed as General Purpose Aid for Local Schools. These amounts shall be distributed per the parameters of the Essential Programs & Services Funding Act, 20-A M.R.S.A. Chapter 606-B, as amended.

MOTION by Jane Sexton, seconded by Peter Geiger, and unanimously voted by those present to approve the certified funding level for FY 2021-2022 for the total cost of funding public education from pre-kindergarten to grade twelve (including total operating allocation, total debt service allocation, total adjustments, total targeted education funds, total enhancing student performance and opportunity costs) at \$2,385,685,974 a local contribution amount of \$1,149,270,617 and a state contribution amount of \$1,236,415,357 to be distributed as General Purpose Aid for Local Schools. These amounts shall be distributed per the parameters of the Essential Programs & Services Funding Act, 20-A M.R.S.A. Chapter 606-B, as amended.

Wilson Hess shared with the Board the FY 2022 CTE Allocation compared to FY 2021 CTE Allocation. Submitted by Joanne Allen, Director, School Finance and Operations, Maine Department of Education.

FY 2022 CTE Allocation Compared to FY 2021 Allocation	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>Amount of Change</u>
Total Allocation to new programs with transition adjustment	56,822,339.68	54,852,760.00	1,969,579.68
New Programs	<u>1,279,744.56</u>	<u>1,654,439.00</u>	<u>(374,694.44)</u>
Total Allocation with new programs	58,102,084.24	56,507,199.00	1,594,885.24

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- 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.
- Fern Desjardins commented on the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) President, Robert Hull. President Hull does an extraordinary job as the president of NASBE. He has participated in four meetings of the Biden transition team. He is on top of the finances, has good people representing us, and is doing what is best for education. Maine's dues are well spent at NASBE.
- The next Board meeting is currently scheduled to be held virtually via Zoom on Wednesday, February 10, 2021, at 1:00 PM.

ADJOURNMENT:

The January 13, 2021 State Board of Education meeting adjourned at 2:06 PM.