



## MAINE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

23 State House Station  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333

### STATE OF MAINE

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The State Board of Education held a regular monthly meeting on May 13, 2020 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 Jaylee Rice

Excused: Casey Maddock

Vacant: One Member

Others Present: Deputy Commissioner Daniel Chuhta; Angel Loreda, Director of Higher Education and Educator Support Services; 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 virtually 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. Mary Becker will read the roll call.

Wendy Ault asked if the meeting was being recorded and if it would be posted on the website for the public. The secretary reported that the audio portion of the meeting was recorded as usual to assure the accuracy of minutes and that afterwards it would be destroyed as is consistent with Board practice for all meetings.

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

### **VISION STATEMENT:**

Read by Chair, Wilson Hess: 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 Jane Sexton, seconded by Peter Geiger, and unanimously voted by those present to accept the March 11, 2020 minutes as amended.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

No Public Comment

## **COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE:**

Deputy Commissioner Chuhta gave an update:

- The DOE has been all hands-on deck via Zoom meetings.
- Embraced a lot of questions, feedback and guidance that the field has been requesting from the DOE. On behalf of Dan's colleagues and the Commissioner, they are doing their best to support school units.
- Mid-March came along, and the pace is like he has never seen before.
- Federal funds from the Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act
  - Governor's Emergency Education Relief – DOE is using for three main priorities.
    - Connectivity: Upwards of 20,000 devices sent out to students across the state. Connectivity and device shortages – most of the devices are hot spot enabled and work off cell service.
    - Online learning platform: To help support professional learning for educators and to provide a learning platform for students– uncertainty of what next school year will look like.
    - Innovation: An opportunity to use this window of time to re-think things that have been in place for a long time – ability to take time as to how some aspects can be different.
- Money for school units - to be used for items such as CTE, special education, adult education, etc.
- There is an additional source of competitive grant funding that is focused around innovation. An application will be written following an intent to apply letter to be completed next week. Maine Curriculum Association has agreed to partner with the DOE in writing the application. Also looking to partner with the University of Maine System and Maine Community Colleges. The application is due in June.
- Professional Learning – daily office hours with content specialists at the DOE. Every day there is an offering of a variety of different topics. The DOE has received national recognition on this.

- Working on a series of guidance for schools. The DOE has a direct contact with an individual at the CDC. School nurses across the State are meeting and putting together some health-related recommendations. Send to CDC for review and feedback, then it goes to the field.
- Graduation guidance has been released - The Commissioner mentioned to a few folks a national celebration of 2020 graduates. On Saturday at 8 PM CNN will be hosting a nation-wide graduation celebration. There will be a map to hover over and see names of Maine graduates. The Governor and Commissioner will be represented via video.
- Summer programming guidance should be out to superintendents soon.
- Guidance for school safety will also be out to schools soon.
- Chapter 115 consensus-based rulemaking meeting will be convened by the end of the month. The meeting will be virtually to begin the re-write of Chapter 115. The Professional Standards Board members will be invited to participate.
- Certification update was given by Deputy Commissioner Chuhta regarding renewals, fingerprinting access, background checks and PRAXIS testing. There is a waiver for PRAXIS testing. A priority notice will be going out to guide individuals in getting certified.
- CTE – working with CTE Directors on ways for students to get certified – CNA is a concern for students to get certification.
- A student cabinet meeting was held last-week and Jaylee will report on the meeting. Social emotional learning and mental health are topics of concern.

## **OFFICER'S REPORTS:**

### **Chair, Wilson Hess**

- The Board's Professional Standards Board rule held a public hearing. There were no members of the public present. Some written comments were submitted. The rule has moved forward as approved by the Board. It has been signed and goes into effect around May 25, 2020.

### **Vice Chair, Jane Sexton**

- She and Wilson have been in conversation throughout the last two months regarding Board work.

### **Board Annual Retreat Discussion (Jane Sexton)**

One of the responsibilities of the Vice Chair is to plan and coordinate the Board's annual retreat and to identify meeting sites for monthly Board meetings. The Board travels throughout the State to visit schools from September through December and meets in Augusta when the Legislature is in session.

- Jane requested that each member of the Board give input on the August Annual Board retreat. Should the Board meet in person at a location where the rate of COVID-19 is not as high or should they meet virtually via Zoom?
- Jane also is looking for input from Board members regarding fall meetings at schools throughout the State. This will depend if schools are in session in the fall. Following discussion, for planning purposes the Board decided to

have further discussion at the June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. Any thoughts from Board members should be emailed to Mary Becker.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:**

Wendy Ault received a call from a principal in the Augusta area who knows a local student that attends Bowdoin College. She is a sophomore who is studying education. The student lost her summer work study opportunity when Bowdoin closed. She is looking for some sort of summer experience working on education policy or education related work. The principal was inquiring if MELMAC Foundation had any work opportunity for her to do and if Wendy could reach out to the State Board of Education to see if there might be a project she could work on for the Board. She does not require any pay. She is an education major and a local student, so Wendy thought there might be a project she could work on or perhaps the DOE might have something. Deputy Commissioner Chuhta suggested that the student reach out to Jessica Nixon, Chief of Staff at the DOE.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

***School Construction Committee (Martha Harris):***

The School Construction Committee did not meet on March 27 or on April 24, 2020 as scheduled.

The next School Construction Committee meeting is scheduled for Friday, May 29, 2020. The meeting will be held in room 500 of the Cross State Office Building or virtually via Zoom. The approved minutes will be posted on the State Board website.

***Certification and Higher Education (Jane Sexton):***

The Certification and Higher Education Committee did not meet on March 25 or April 22, 2020 as scheduled.

- An agenda will be going out soon for the next meeting. Items on the agenda will be as follows:
  - Update on Northeastern University Team Review
  - Review of Colby Team Report
  - Review of UMA Team Report
  - Review of Annual Reports that were due April 7th

The next Certification and Higher Education Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 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 March 26 and April 23, 2020 as scheduled.

The Committee held the March and April meeting virtually via Zoom.

- The Perkins third quarter report is an item on the business agenda that will go before the Board for approval. Due to schools not being in session, a three-

month extension has been issued for the use of funds through September 2020.

- Don Cannan, Executive Director of Maine Administrators of Career and Technical Education (MACTE) will be stepping down and retiring as of July 1, 2020. Don is responsible for managing the grant funded with Briggs money. With schools being closed due to COVID-19, Don submitted to the CTE Committee a request to carryover funds for MACTE from this year's Briggs Grant until December of 2020. The Committee voted to recommend that the Board approve the extension and this item will come before the Board at the June 10th meeting.
- The Perkins carryover funds support 10+- schools with grants. Funding for this program will be extended through fall of 2020. The programs cannot be completed if students are not in school. The programs need to be evaluated. The Committee has arranged for Educate Maine to help with the evaluation work. Educate Maine has come forward with a proposal to evaluate the grants which total \$350,000.00 worth of programs in the schools. The cost to accomplish this will be no more than \$20,000.00. The Committee supports the proposal and it will go before the full Board for approval at the June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- The Committee discussed a CTE summer institute like they held at Sugarloaf last year. Jason Judd, Educate Maine did some preliminary research on logistics and an agenda for a summit at a date to be determined later in the summer or early fall.

The next Career and Technical Education (CTE) Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 28, 2020. The meeting will be held in room 538 of the Cross State Office Building or 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 Friday March 6, 2020.

***Nomination and Election (Martha Harris):***

Martha Harris is the Chair of the Nominations and Election Committee. Wendy Ault and Fern Desjardins serve on the committee. The Committee was tasked with presenting a slate of officers for the 2020-2021 year. The Committee met on Friday, May 8, 2020.

The Committee recommended the following slate of officers:

Wilson Hess – Chair

Jane Sexton – Vice Chair

The Board will vote at the June 10, 2020 meeting.

The Board's procedure indicates that other members who wish to be placed on the ballot must obtain two supporting nominations from Board members and present

them to the Nomination and Election committee chair at least two weeks prior to the annual meeting on June 10, 2020.

***Student Voices (Jaylee Rice and Wendy Ault):***

Wendy Ault expressed, on behalf of the students in the State of Maine, how pleased she was that the Commissioner convened an emergency meeting of the Student Advisory Committee so she could hear directly from students what they were experiencing and what some of the challenges included that they are facing. Wendy gives much credit to the Commissioner for holding this emergency meeting for the student cabinet.

Wendy also made comment to Jaylee on how wonderful it has been to have her participate on the State Board and how grateful the Board is to Nokomis High School for being so generous to give Jaylee access to their computer room when she was not able to attend a meeting in person. It has been a pleasure to work with Jaylee.

Jaylee expressed what a great experience it has been to be a member of the Board. Her graduation is scheduled for June 12<sup>th</sup>.

Jaylee gave a brief report on the Student Cabinet committee meeting.

- The Committee started off by outlining ways to make online learning more effective and how to approach going back to school in the fall.
- Divided into breakout groups by grades with middle school age and high school, etc. in separate rooms. It was effective because the groups could talk about things that were age sensitive. The high school group's topics were mental health and having a time dedicated to something that is non-academic but just as essential. It is like an advisory period where every student has access, not just a select few deemed in need of those services. Consistency in the layout of remote learning was a problem expressed by several students - how teachers were not doing enough and how their meeting times were not consistent. Not all teachers are well equipped with online learning tools, such as Zoom or Google Meet. It was suggested to have more training for teachers with remote learning.
- At the end of the meeting, emphasis around returning to school was a big point that many students voiced because students have been out of school for months. There is some anxiousness around returning to school.
- The group got back together and summed up all ideas.
- Wendy stressed that the Commissioner was an active listener and has great empathy for seniors that are missing prom and graduation.
- Wilson Hess commented on Jaylee's term on the Board. He believes that Jaylee will be allowed to stay on the Board until a successor has been appointed to her seat. Wilson will confirm that this is the case. He thanked her for her service and all the work she has done as a student Board member, especially her work as a student cabinet member.

***Student Membership (Fern Desjardins):***

Wendy Ault, Fern Desjardins and Jaylee Rice were appointed by Chair Hess to serve on the ad-hoc committee reviewing student applications, selecting the six semi-finalists for interviews and following the interviews, sending the names of the three finalists to the Governor for an appointment to the Board.

Fern Desjardins updated the Board:

The committee is down to the six semi-finalists to be interviewed. Interviews were scheduled to take place on March 17, 2020. Due to COVID-19 the Committee decided to postpone the interviews until all six students return to school. The interviews have not been re-scheduled to date. The legislature adjourned so the appointed student could not be confirmed by the legislature. Fern welcomes any suggestions that the Board has regarding moving forward with the interviews. Following a discussion, the student membership committee decided to move forward with the interviews.

***Charter Commission Representatives (Jana Lapoint):***

The Charter School Commission met on May 12, 2020.

The Charter Commission accepted the budget and approved the following items:

- Fiddlehead School of Arts and Sciences request to amend bylaws.
- Harpswell Coastal Academy's request to amend bylaws.
- Ecology Learning Center's request to extend building lease approval until the end of May.
- Maine Academy of Natural Science request of \$3,000 for professional development. Maine Virtual Academy's Independent Third-Party Evaluation as required by law of both virtual schools every two years.
- Accepted resignation of head of school from Baxter Academy and accepted appointment of Interim Head of School.
- Accepted a new hiring of Finance Manager at Maine Arts Academy.

General Information from staff included a report on the weekly meetings with heads of schools, a report concerning all schools virtual participation on budget for the following year and to take a serious look at how they would handle a minimum of a 10% decrease in budget allocations.

One highlight of the meeting was presented as each liaison discussed how their schools have handled the virus teaching from home. It appears that all schools were well positioned for what has transpired due to present methods of teaching, anytime, anywhere learning.

The liaisons also mentioned the support schools have given to the community in the form of help at food banks. One school mentioned they had provided food for 300 families outside of their school in addition to providing more than 200 families within their school, they loaned their mini bus for the food bank deliveries and even

provided an ed tech to work at a food bank to relieve some of the elderly workers that could not volunteer their time.

Baxter Academy has been selected as one of the top seven finalist in a contest of over two hundred entries to design a ventilator. These entries came from all over the world and included many of our top colleges in this country. Their final design must be submitted by June 1st and the winner will be selected by June 20<sup>th</sup>. The school raised \$8,000 to help and now have the support of several manufacturing companies in our State.

***Professional Standards Board (Peter Geiger):***

The Professional Standards Board has not met. Waiting to hold the initial meeting in June.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

No Old Business

**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 recently reauthorized Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (P. L. 115-224) requires a designated eligible agency in each State, in Maine's case the State Board of Education, to submit a State Plan for Career and Technical Education. The Interim State Plan was approved by the Office of Career and Technical and Adult Education on July 1, 2019. 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 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 third report for FY2020.



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

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- Submit travel and expense account vouchers to Mary Becker at the end of this meeting.
- The next Board meeting will be held at the Cross State Office Building or virtually via Zoom on Wednesday, June 10, 2020, at 1:00 PM.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The May 13, 2020 State Board of Education meeting adjourned at 3:14 PM.