



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 October 11, 2023, at Caribou Community School and virtually via Zoom. The following members were present: Chair Fern Desjardins; Vice Chair Paulette Bonneau; Wendy Ault; Kristin Bishop; James Ford; Thomas Keller; Victoria Kornfield; Edmond Morin; Denham Ward; and Ryan Hafener.

Absent with Excuse: Phat Thai

Others Present: Sandra Bourget, State Board of Education Office Specialist.

CALLED TO ORDER:

Chair Fern Desjardins called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

Roll call was taken by Sandra Bourget. Chair Desjardins declared a quorum present.

VISION STATEMENT:

Read by student member, Ryan Hafener: The vision of the Maine State Board of Education is that all students will receive a high-quality education leading to graduation with the skills, knowledge, and principles to be prepared for future learning, careers, and life.

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA:

No Adjustments to the Agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION by Denham Ward, seconded by Paulette Bonneau, and voted six in favor with two abstentions (Wendy Ault and Edmond Morin) to accept the September 13, 2023, minutes as presented. The motion was adopted.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No Public Comment.

STUDENT TRANSFER APPEALS:

PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING REQUESTS FOR REVIEW OF STUDENT TRANSFER REQUESTS

Fern Desjardins, Chair of the Board, read a procedure for the Board when going into executive session to review requests for review of the Superintendents' decisions on student transfer requests.

The Board will be considering requests for Board review of the Superintendents' decisions regarding requested transfers of students to another school district, pursuant to Title 20-A, section 5205(6)(F). The Board will be going into executive session to consider the requests because each one involves reviewing and discussing information contained in student records made confidential by the federal law known as FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. The parents and any attorney representing a parent are welcome to attend the executive session for the discussion of their particular student's transfer, as are the Superintendents of the school districts involved in that requested transfer. The Board will review each of the transfer requests in separate executive sessions. Today, the Board has three transfer requests.

After the Board comes out of executive session, the Board will entertain a motion and take a vote on the disposition of the request in public session.

The Board's role in these proceedings is to review the Superintendents' decisions based on the record that was before them at the time they made the decision. Although the statute directs the Board to "communicate with" the parties involved, which the Board has done, the Board cannot accept any new evidence pertaining to a transfer request that was not considered or not available in the record at the time of the Superintendents' decision.

The Board provides for public comment, which was explained earlier in the meeting. In the executive session the same rules apply for public comment and there will be a three-minute time limit for comment. This is not a time for debate or a time to introduce new evidence. It is a time for families to highlight the things they want the Board to consider in the record.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

MOTION by Paulette Bonneau, seconded by Victoria Kornfield, and unanimously voted by those present for the Board to go into Executive Session, pursuant to Title 1 of the

Maine Revised Statutes, section 405, subsection 6, paragraph F, to discuss information contained in records that are confidential under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Title 20 of the United States Code, section 1232g relating to a request from KM to review the Superintendents' decisions to approve or disapprove a request for a student transfer, pursuant to Title 20-A, section 5205, subsection 6, paragraph F at 1:14 PM.

The Board returned to the regular business meeting at 1:52 PM.

MOTION by Thomas Keller, seconded by Victoria Kornfield, and voted five in favor with three opposed (Wendy Ault, Kristin Bishop, and James Ford) and one abstention (Fern Desjardins) that given the information the Board received, it was in KM's best interest to disapprove a transfer. The transfer was disapproved.

MOTION by Paulette Bonneau, seconded by Victoria Kornfield, and unanimously voted by those present for the Board to go into Executive Session, pursuant to Title 1 of the Maine Revised Statutes, section 405, subsection 6, paragraph F, to discuss information contained in records that are confidential under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Title 20 of the United States Code, section 1232g relating to a request from ES and KS to review the Superintendents' decisions to approve or disapprove a request for a student transfer, pursuant to Title 20-A, section 5205, subsection 6, paragraph F at 1:56 PM.

The Board returned to the regular business meeting at 2:17 PM.

MOTION by Edmond Morin, seconded by Victoria Kornfield, and voted unanimously that given the information the Board received, it was in ES's best interest to approve a transfer. The transfer was approved.

MOTION by Edmond Morin, seconded by Paulette Bonneau, and voted unanimously that given the information the Board received, it was in KS's best interest to approve a transfer. The transfer was approved.

On September 1, 2023, the Board reviewed appeals for MY and JY and voted unanimously to table action on the transfer appeals of MY and JY to the State Board's October 11, 2023, meeting.

MOTION by Paulette Bonneau, seconded by Victoria Kornfield, and voted unanimously to take from the table action on the transfer appeal for MY and action on the transfer appeal for JY.

Follow up by Chair Desjardins: The *Request for a Superintendent's Agreement* was resolved locally. A revised request was submitted by the parent and approved by the

resident superintendent and receiving superintendent. The parent withdraws the appeal to the State Board. No further action is needed.

OFFICER'S REPORTS:

Chair, Fern Desjardins

- Fern attended a number of NASBE meetings, School Construction Committee meetings on September 21 and October 3, and the Board Effectiveness Committee meeting on September 25. All are included in the committee reports below.

Vice Chair, Paulette Bonneau

- Paulette attended an agenda review meeting with Fern and Deputy Commissioner Chuhta.
- Board Effectiveness Committee (BEC) met on September 25. We reviewed and further edited the Student Transfer Appeal policy and discussed the presentation on Boardsmanship. The BEC will meet on October 23.
- November's State Board meeting will take place in Topsham at Mt. Ararat High School. December's meeting will be at Bangor High School.
- On October 21, Paulette will represent the State Board of Education at the ribbon cutting ceremony and opening of South Portland Middle School.
- She will be attending the NASBE Annual Conference at the end of October and is looking forward to hearing Keynote Speaker Linda Darling-Hammond.
- Paulette is happy to get to share in the recognition and award Chair Desjardins will be receiving from NASBE.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

School Construction Committee (Fern Desjardins):

The School Construction Committee met on September 21 and followed up with a special meeting on October 3.

- The focus of both meetings was to discuss sections of Chapter 61 that should be considered for amendments in the Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature.
 - The committee agreed to wording that will address L.D. 1415 Section 2 on school construction projects and Section 3 on fiscal year 2024-2025 funding.
 - Language was drafted in the section on "Moveable Equipment" to align with action taken by the State Board on April 12, 2023.
 - Additions were made to the definition of "Emergency Project."
 - New dates were selected to bring Chapter 61 up to date wherever dates are included in the rule.

- A change in the time limitation from a local referendum vote to the time the project is presented to the State Board for Design and Funding Approval – moved from 9 months to 18 months.
 - An update to language referring to the Bureau of General Services and Project Management.
- The next Committee meeting will be held on October 31 at 9:00 a.m.

Certification and Higher Education (Thomas Keller):

The Certification and Higher Education (C&HE) Committee met on September 27, 2023.

- We had three superintendents provide public comments, following the opening of the meeting and the acceptance with correction of the minutes from August 23.
- The three superintendents, all from the southern part of the state, focused their comments on certification and the need for better communication and flexibility in decisions regarding certification.
- One idea that was presented is for ‘regional certification sites’ where for a day, an MDOE certification specialist is available for a face-to-face review of an applicant’s packet. These days should be moved around the state so clarity can be provided on what is accepted and what is not.
- A member of the Teacher Educator Alliance of Maine (TeaMe) commented on the inconsistencies with reviews of certification applications. She stated it would be helpful to have missing items, from a Pathway 2 application, be specifically identified.
- In Higher Education, Michael Perry has created and posted a form asking for review committee volunteers. Since there is no institutional incentive for serving on a review committee, it was suggested that the State Board of Education prepare a formal letter of appreciation for each committee member or co-sign such a letter with MDOE.
- Regarding EPP visits, Michael Perry reported that Husson University and the Maine College of Art and Design are due for visits this academic year. Denham Ward volunteered to serve as the observer for MECA&D. Beal University is “open to a review” and Denham volunteered to serve as the observer on that, but Michael will check in with the Beal University president to confirm the process.
- There was discussion about a seven-year approval for a program review, which accommodates the smaller campuses especially well. It is thought this could be done via the State Board motion approving an EPP site visit “for seven years”. Upon further review with AAG Sarah Forster, it is not presently possible, but we can look at that if/when revising Chapter 114.
- Michael Perry attended a recent SARA meeting – State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement. This impacts teachers who are certified in other states and the ease of becoming certified in Maine.
- A short discussion was had regarding “mentors”. A variety of programs exist for mentors, interns, apprentices, etc. The Maine SEEDS program with the

University of Maine and MDOE is for mentoring conditionally certified special education teachers; University of Southern Maine with the University of Maine have earmarked funds for training mentor teachers; and the MDOE has a mentor program. Deputy Commissioner Chuhta noted that mentors are part of the LEA responsibility. It seems more training is needed. Examples are those who mentor newer teachers, those who 'mentor' student teachers, those who 'mentor' higher education faculty overseeing student and mentor/cooperating teachers. Regarding teacher prep, some higher education institutions pay student teachers, some pay mentor/cooperating teachers, and some have training for mentor/cooperating teachers so learning from each other on best, most effective practices is in hand.

- Michael gave a certification update. The MDOE continues to process an amazing number of applications (3,923 in August alone). The violations list continues to be worked through; one issue continues to be incorrect data in the NEO system. Another issue is that the CTE codes are out of alignment with the NEO codes. New mapping is underway within the MDOE and Michael is sitting on the data team.
- Dr. Anita Charles from Bates College gave the TeaMe report. They were very grateful for the collaboration with the SBE. She mentioned that TeaMe is 10 years old and fosters great cooperation among the EPPs in the state. She noted the apprenticeship and residency programs as innovations.
- Denham reported that the Professional Standards Board will likely sharpen their recommendations for teacher recruitment and retention and develop an implementation plan. Their next meeting is later in October.
- Victoria Kornfield mentioned the four finalists for the Teacher of the Year program. Tom was honored to represent the State Board of Education at the ceremony in which Joshua Chard was selected. Joshua is an exceptional teacher.
- Denham noted that the number of Maine students going on to college has declined and wondered about data available on this. He also said he would be out of touch on October 25, which is the date of our next C&HE meeting.
- The next meeting is scheduled for October 25, 2023.

Career and Technical Education (Edmond Morin):

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) Committee met on September 28, 2023.

- Ed had the opportunity to do a couple of extracurricular activities over the past week or so. On Friday, he attended the annual Fall CTE Conference, which was held at the Lewiston Regional Technical Center. The conference, which is funded by the Briggs Trust, which is administered by this body, brought together almost 500 CTE educators from across the state to take part in sessions with other folks who teach in their disciplines. He sat for the multimedia tech update and was struck by the camaraderie, support, and professional give and take among these educators. Later, attendees were able go to any of almost 20 presentations

- on a range of topics such as Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, CTE Certification, and Exploring Pre-Apprenticeship Programs in CTE Schools.
- Earlier in the week, Ed listened in as MEPRI, the Maine Education Policy Research Institute, made a presentation to the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee on a couple of MEPRI's recent reports. One examining Access to College and Career Readiness Through Early College and CTE programs and Models for Earning Academic Requirements for High School Graduation Through CTE Programs.
 - MDOE CTE Director, Dwight Littlefield, reports they are communicating with CTE Directors on available Maine Jobs and Recovery Program funds and that if there are any funds left over, a third round of applications may be opened to pay for equipment. Now that we are in the post-Covid era, MDOE will be getting back out for school reviews, and following the passage of legislation last session, task force meetings are beginning this month exploring the possibility of creating a Comprehensive Career and Technical Education System.
 - Joan DeCosta from the Maine Community College System reports that Maine Community College System is working to implement a new unified student information system.
 - MACTE President, Amanda Peterson, reports that CTEs across the state are gearing up for the recruiting season for next year, that a group of directors met with the Eastern Maine Community College Dean of Education Department to start to look at the certification of courses for CTE teachers, and for developing a better structure in terms of how those courses are delivered.
 - Educate Maine Executive Director, Jason Judd, announced a new partnership with MDOE focused on teacher recruitment and retention, one that is not actually CTE specific but certainly will be of interest to those in CTE. They will hold virtual county forums with educators in the Fall of 2023 and in 2024. Jason also said he invited several SBE members to be part of these teams and groups.
 - Much of the meeting was devoted to hearing presentations on two CTE related reports. MDOE CTE Director, Dwight Littlefield, spoke about reports mandated by L.D. 313 from the 130th legislature that created a work group to explore innovative approaches to advancing career and technical education.
 - Educate Maine's Jason Judd spoke about a report from his organization examining systemic barriers to CTE. The report was the result of work by a group of stakeholders with the approval of the State Board of Education. SBE members, Wilson Hess and Wendy Ault, were members of that group. Jason presented the findings of the group to this body. He updated that report for the CTE Committee.
 - Ed has asked that folks send him what they feel are the most important areas to address and how best to go about this work.
 - The next meeting is scheduled for October 26, 2023.

Legislative Action (Paulette Bonneau):

The Legislative Action Committee has not met.

- The Education and Cultural Affairs Committee has held various sessions on the EPS Funding Formula and the MEPRI report. The next session on the EPS Funding Formula will be on November 7.

Student Voices (Ryan Hafener, Phat Thai, Wendy Ault, and James Ford):

The Student Voices Committee met on October 10, 2023.

- Spoke of Ryan's article in The State Education Standard and of a NASBE webinar he attended on assessment and accountability and ensuring test praxes are practical and fair.
- Phat is excused from today's meeting as he is taking PSATs, and he recently got his license.
- Bowdoin is Ryan's number one choice for college.
- They will be meeting with Commissioner Makin on the Student Cabinet. Applications are opening soon. A notice will go out to the MDOE Newsroom. We are looking to cast a wide net on outreach with groups who interact with students. Commissioner Makin will review applications in November, and the first Student Cabinet meeting will be in December.
- Ryan has been put on the Study of the School Day Workgroup by the MDOE, as a student member.
- Ryan was named to GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network) National Student Council as one of 12 students in the country.
- Ryan met with Senator Mattie Daughtry to discuss youth engagement across the state.
- Phat was instrumental in starting the Deering Asian Student Union and is very involved with that.

Board Effectiveness (Paulette Bonneau):

The Board Effectiveness Committee met on September 25, 2023.

- We reviewed and further edited the Student Transfer Appeal policy.
- We discussed the presentation on Boardsmanship and its implications on what we're aiming to do around our own policies and practices.
- The next meeting will be held on October 23, 2023.

Charter Commission Representatives (Victoria Kornfield, Thomas Keller, and James Ford):

The Charter School Commission met on October 10, 2023.

- We reauthorized Maine Connections Academy for another five years. They have improved in every category.

- The 10th school application is working its way through a development process and is hoped to be release by the first of the year.

Professional Standards Board (Denham Ward):

- The PBS will meet next week on October 15.

NASBE:

Executive Committee/Board of Directors (Fern Desjardins):

- Fern chaired the Finance & Audit Committee meeting on September 19. The committee approved the FY2022 Audit Report. The report was also approved by the Board of Directors on September 25 and will now move to the Delegate Assembly on October 28 for a vote. The committee approved the FY2024 budget, reviewed the IRS 990 Form, and received updates from President & CEO Paolo DeMaria.
- She attended an Executive Committee meeting on September 23 for transition plans of new members to be voted on the Board of Directors at the Delegate Assembly.
- Fern attended the Board of Directors meeting on September 25. The board approved the FY2022 audit report and received updates on NASBE's committees, affiliates (NCSBEE and NCOSEA), area directors, and the upcoming Annual Conference in San Diego.
- President & CEO DeMaria was recently evaluated by Fern and other Executive Committee members.

Awards Committee (Thomas Keller):

- The committee did not meet in September.

Government Affairs Committee (Thomas Keller):

- There's a hangup in Washington, DC around budget issues with recent changes to the House. A continued resolution has been passed, and we're waiting to see what will occur when they decide what they'll do regarding a speaker.
- Discussion took place on Blue Ribbon Schools, a program through the US Department of Education. Maine and Nevada do not participate in it. Maine last participated in 2020.

Public Education Positions Committee (Paulette Bonneau):

- The committee is done meeting, and a paper will be proposed and voted on at the Annual Conference.

UNFINISHED (OLD) BUSINESS:

No Unfinished Business

NEW BUSINESS:

**2023 NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE BOARDS OF EDUCATION (NASBE)
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD**

MOTION by Paulette Bonneau, seconded by Wendy Ault, and voted eight in favor with one abstention (Fern Desjardins) to support Fern Desjardins to receive the 2023 National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) Distinguished Service Award for her dedication, service, and commitment to education in the State of Maine. The motion was adopted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Submit expense account vouchers to Sandra Bourget by the 15th day following the month of the expenses incurred. Fern is looking into some items of concern with reimbursements.
- The next regular State Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 8, 2023, at 1:00 PM at Mt. Ararat High School and virtually via Zoom.
- Any recommendations for the 2024 State Board meeting calendar should be forwarded to Fern, Paulette, or Sandy.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 3:12 PM.

Respectfully Submitted by
Sandra Bourget, Office Specialist
State Board of Education
