



## **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 June 21, 2024, at the Burton M. Cross building in Augusta, Maine 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; Cedar Worster; and Phat Thai.

Others Present: Mallory Cook, Director of Training and Early Educator Engagement, MEA; Jonathan Moody, Superintendent, MSAD 54/RSU 54; Ryan Hafener, former student rep, State Board of Education; and Emily Cummins, Office Specialist, State Board of Education.

### **CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Fern Desjardins called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM. She welcomed Cedar Worster to her first meeting of the State Board as a student board member and asked Ms. Worster to introduce herself, followed by Board members introducing themselves.

Cedar replaces Ryan Hafener who graduated from high school earlier in June. Later in the meeting, Ryan was recognized for his two years of service on the State Board.

The roll call was taken by Chair Desjardins who declared a quorum present.

### **VISION STATEMENT:**

Read by Edmond Morin, board member: 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:**

April 10, 2024 – Correction to the Statement of Fact. MOTION by Kristin Bishop, seconded by Denham Ward and voted six in favor with one abstention (Edmond Morin) to accept the April 10, 2024, minutes as amended. The motion was adopted.

May 8, 2024 – MOTION by Tori Kornfield, seconded by Denham Ward and unanimously voted to accept the May 8, 2024, minutes as presented. The motion was adopted.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Mallory Cook, Director of Training and Early Educator Engagement, spoke on MEA's professional development programs to ensure that the State Board and other organizations are aware of the resources offered. MEA hosts three conferences: a winter and summer conference that are open to all educators who are a part of the collective bargaining unit, and a spring conference which is specifically created for educators in their first five years.

In addition to these in-person conferences, they also provide regional trainings and webinars throughout the year, which are tailored to the needs and requests of their members. They also offer National Board Certification candidate support workshops for members.

Through the National Education Association, their members have access to over 200 Micro-credentials spanning topics from working with multilingual learners, classroom management, teacher and Ed. Tech relationships, assessment, literacy, social and emotional learning, family engagement and a slew of others.

### **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 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 seven 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 Kristin Bishop, 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 SM and LM 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 1:27 PM.

The Board returned to the regular business meeting at 1:47 PM.

MOTION by Victoria Kornfield, seconded by Tom Keller, and voted unanimously that given the information the Board received, it was in LM's best interest to disapprove the transfer. The transfer was disapproved.

MOTION by Victoria Kornfield, seconded by Tom Keller, and voted unanimously that given the information the Board received, it was in SM's best interest to disapprove the transfer. The transfer was disapproved.

MOTION by Paulette Bonneau, seconded by Kristin Bishop, 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 JS 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 1:52 PM.

The Board returned to the regular business meeting at 2:08 PM.

MOTION by Tom Keller, seconded by Kristin Bishop, and voted six in favor and three opposed (Thomas Keller, Paulette Bonneau, and Victoria Kornfield) that given the information the Board received, it was in JS's best interest to approve a transfer. The transfer was approved.

MOTION by Paulette Bonneau, seconded by Kristin Bishop, 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 NW and WW 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 2:12 PM.

The Board returned to the regular business meeting at 2:29 PM.

MOTION by Ed Morin, seconded by Kristin Bishop, and voted seven in favor with two opposed (Tom Keller and Victoria Kornfield) that given the information the Board received, it was in NW's best interest to approve the transfer. The transfer was approved.

MOTION by Ed Morin, seconded by Kristin Bishop, and voted seven in favor with two opposed (Tom Keller and Victoria Kornfield) that given the information the Board received, it was in WW's best interest to approve the transfer. The transfer was approved.

MOTION by Paulette Bonneau, seconded by Kristin Bishop, 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

SO 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 2:33 PM.

The Board returned to the regular business meeting at 2:46 PM.

MOTION by Denham Ward, seconded by Paulette Bonneau, and voted six in favor with three opposed (Tom Keller, Victoria Kornfield, and Denham Ward) that given the information the Board received, it was in SO's best interest to approve a transfer. The transfer was approved.

MOTION by Paulette Bonneau, seconded by Kristin Bishop, 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 FCH 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 2:51 PM.

The Board returned to the regular business meeting at 3:19 PM.

MOTION by Fern Desjardins, seconded by Kristin Bishop, and voted unanimously that given the information the Board received, it was in FCH's best interest to approve a transfer. The transfer was approved.

## **OFFICER'S REPORTS:**

### **Chair, Fern Desjardins**

- LD 1018, Resolve, 2023, Chapter 125 *Resolve, Directing the Department of Education to Establish a Working Group to Review the State Board of Education's Membership, Responsibilities, Functions and Staffing*. Paulette and Fern will represent the State Board on the working group.
- Victoria Kornfield recused herself from serving on the 2025 Maine Teacher of the Year Review Panel. Fern thanked Wendy for accepting to serve on the panel this year.
- Fern thanked Paulette for accepting to represent the State Board at the Maine DOE Annual Education Summit on August 6 at the Augusta Civic Center. Paulette will congratulate the 2024 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching finalists and the 2023/2024 History Teachers of the Year.
- Fern and Paulette attended the "Regional Convening to Support State Action to

Advance the Education Professions” sponsored by the US Department of Education, The Hunt Institute, and TEACH.org at the University of Illinois Chicago on June 13-14, 2024. The Maine delegation included leaders from the MDOE, MEA, MSSA, and MSBE. State teams heard from experts and key leaders from other states about strategies used to increase educator compensation, expand high-quality and affordable educator preparation, and increase educator diversity. The next step identified by the Maine delegation in the closing session was to “Reconvene think-tank to plan for regular meetings.” They hope to initiate regular meetings of key state leaders in addressing recruitment and retention.

- The MEPRI Steering Committee met on May 22. Fern reported out to Board members in an email on May 23 and followed up by asking Emily to distribute a copy of the official meeting notes.

#### **Vice Chair, Paulette Bonneau**

- May 14<sup>th</sup>, Paulette and Fern attended a Zoom meeting with Michael Perry and met Dr. Christina O’Neal, Educator Excellence Coordinator.
- Paulette has been communicating with Dr. Ezekiel Kimball, interim chair at UMaine Orono. They will be hosting the Board for our September 11-12 retreat. September 11 will be our typical workshop in the morning, followed by the board meeting in the afternoon beginning at 1:00 PM. September 12 will be the retreat day.
- Paulette attended the Regional Convening Conference to support State action and to advance the education professions sponsored by the Hunt Institute, TEACH.org, and the US Department of Education.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

##### ***School Construction Committee (Fern Desjardins):***

The School Construction Committee did not meet in May, nor will it meet in June.

##### ***Certification and Higher Education (Thomas Keller):***

The Certification and Higher Education Committee met May 22, 2024.

##### **Higher Education update**

Dr. Anita Charles of Bates College submitted a letter dated January 16, 2024 requesting a delay to the state EPP approval visit. She asked that the Fall 2025 visit be deferred to Fall 2027. She cited extenuating circumstances including: (1) at least one (of a total of 4) faculty members on leave for part or all of 24-25, 25-26 and 26-27, necessitating faculty searches in addition to having absent faculty members; (2) an internal decadal review extending through AY 24-25; (3) additional internal initiatives to deepen their curriculum goals under new Bates regulations for courses to be tagged for

the designation of “Race, Power, Privilege, and Colonialism”; and (4) an initiative to establish a 9<sup>th</sup> semester program within the next couple of years. Bates is projecting two program completers for 2023-24. Based on all this information, Denham moved, Tori seconded and all voted in favor to recommend the deferment to the full State Board. Michael Perry should prepare an exhibit for the next State Board meeting.

#### Certification Update

In May, 2,974 applications for certification were processed including the first one for a retired teacher to regain their certification. Michael provided a pie chart and table of recent activity. Tori again expressed concern about rural areas probably having more conditional and emergency certified teachers but has no data on this. Michael indicated he is in contact with the database’s vendor and will attempt to get parsed data.

Relative to the CHRC violations report, 1,292 people have been found to be in violation, which is consistent month-to-month. This data as well need to be broken down but the issue is usually one of a paperwork error or miscommunication between the NEO system and the MEIS system, with the finger printing process and reports as the main culprit.

Micheal attended the US ED Regional Convening on Teacher Workforce issues. Others on the Maine team were representatives from the MEA, MSSA and the State Board.

#### ***Career and Technical Education (Edmond Morin):***

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) Committee met on May 23, 2024.

- CTE directors and attendees reported on end-of-year ceremonies and focusing on how best to use the federal money coming to Maine through the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act, signed in 2018 and known as Perkins V.
- Maine has about \$400,000 headed its way, which can be used for innovative programs and appropriate equipment, technology and instructional materials aligned with business and industry needs as opposed to real property, such as land and buildings.
- DOE CTE Director, Dwight Littlefield, suggests that the state board make decisions about the funding sooner rather than later, possibly at the beginning of the school year so that they can include it in their plans for the school year.
- MACTE President, Amanda Peterson, who is also the Director of the United Technologies Center, said she would conduct a survey of the state CTE Directors to see what they feel is the best way to use the funds. Amanda will be reporting on the survey at the next CTE committee meeting.
- The Committee and attendees also discussed how to use funding through the Briggs Trust. Right now, there’s about \$180,000 that the State Board would be

able to award, although I don't believe the total amount available has ever been awarded. MACTE, the organization which represents CTE administrators statewide, has often used this funding for professional development. This year MACTE has gotten enough sponsors so that they will not be requesting professional development funding, something in keeping with sentiments expressed by some members of the State Board. MACTE has some ideas for how some Briggs funding can be used and plans to offer an oral proposal during next week's CTE Committee meeting.

***Legislative Action (Paulette Bonneau):***

- No report.

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

- Phat has already begun mentoring Cedar Worster, the new student member on the State Board.
- Meetings will continue the Monday before State Board meetings at 4:00 PM; however, meetings do change on a regular basis.
- Phat reported that there was a student cabinet meeting on May 23, 2024. They had a listening panel for the kids, and numerous guests from the department and representatives from different schools. Topics of discussion were mental health, social justice, and school safety.
- Cedar coordinated a DEI committee at her school. They had their end-of-year gathering where they met and went through all the feedback from the school staff and discussed what they were going to do.

***Board Effectiveness (Paulette Bonneau):***

The Board Effectiveness Committee met several times this past month.

Their primary focus was on planning and organizing the workshop agenda. Paulette created a PowerPoint presentation on Maine State Board of Education Responsibilities.

***Nomination and Election (Wendy Ault):***

The Nomination and Election Committee met on May 7.

- The Committee presented a slate of Officers at the May 8 meeting.
- The following single slate of nominees is: Fern Desjardins for Chair and Paulette Bonneau for Vice Chair.
- The Committee did not receive any self-nominations.
- There will be an opportunity for nominations from the floor when we vote today.



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

- The July meeting was canceled. We are revising our mission, vision, and values.
- Officers are being re-elected. Norm as chair and Lee as vice chair.
- NWEA testing - can be done through year or growth, but the state has not gotten the data back very quickly.

***Professional Standards Board (Denham Ward):***

- The organization has not yet completed its roster. They are trying to develop a process, as organizations like the MEA must nominate people to be on the board to the Governor's office, and the Governor's office makes the appointments. The group has not filled out its roster to be able to do anything.
- The Professional Standards Board is made up of teachers in the field and has a lot of representation on it. If we need to have an organization that is advising us, we have one, but it needs a full membership roster. They are currently underutilized and would be a good source of input for Chapter 115.

***NASBE:***

***Executive Committee/Board of Directors (Fern Desjardins):***

- Fern attended the June 10 session of Office Hours with guests from the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) and the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). They discussed research on improving reading and support for educators in implementing evidence-based early literacy policies. The next Office Hours will be held on July 5, 3-4 pm for a discussion on career and technical education. Kate Kreamer, executive director of Advance CTE, will review the updated National Career Clusters Framework.
- The Executive Committee met on June 17 to review progress on the President/CEO's goals status. The committee also received updates on NASBE grants and sponsorships, conferences, and committee meetings.

***Government Affairs Committee (Thomas Keller):***

- They do a state roll call to say what is happening. The membership has doubled from 10 to around 20 people now.
- Shortage of teachers, bus drivers, literacy, early math, and mental health were reported out state by state.

***Public Education Positions Committee (Paulette Bonneau):***

- They met on Tuesday looking at the purpose of PEP, defining itself and how it can be more useful to state boards.

**UNFINISHED (OLD) BUSINESS:**

No Unfinished Business.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**REQUEST TO EXTEND EXISTING APPROVAL OF THE BOWDOIN COLLEGE  
EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM BY TWENTY-FOUR MONTHS**

BACKGROUND: Bowdoin College is a state approved Educator Preparation Program (EPP) which was last approved by the State Board of Education for the period of Spring 2022 to Spring 2027.

On December 15, 2023, Dr. Doris A. Santoro, Professor and Chair of Bowdoin's Education Department, indicated the institution's desire to request an extension to their current EPP approval. Bowdoin has offered the following reason for their requested extension:

"The state review process, while valuable, also proves substantially labor-intensive. Only three full-time faculty comprise our department. Preparation for the review diverts substantial resources away from our teaching and research. Furthermore, it places significant demands on our time-strapped school partners who play a significant part in the review process."

State Board of Education Rule Chapter 114, *Purpose, Standards and Procedures for the Review and Approval of Preparation Programs for Education Personnel*, subsection 3.11(e), allows that "requests for extensions for existing approval, due to extraordinary circumstances, may be granted at the discretion of the State Board of Education."

The Certification and Higher Education Committee of the State Board of Education discussed this request during its regular meeting on May 22, 2024, and voted unanimously to approve Bowdoin's request to extend their EPP approval through Spring 2029.

RECOMMENDATION: That, pursuant to State Board of Education Rule Chapter 114, subsection 3.11(e), the State Board of Education approve Bowdoin College's request to extend the existing approval of its Educator Preparation Program by twenty-four months.

MOTION by Thomas Keller, seconded by Edmond Morin, and unanimously voted by those present that pursuant to State Board of Education Rule Chapter 114, subsection 3.11(e), the State Board of Education approve Bowdoin College's request to extend the existing approval of its Educator Preparation Program by twelve months [not the twenty-four months requested].

## **RECEIPT OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS BOARD 2024 ANNUAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Andrew McCullough, Chair, Professional Standards Board, submitted the following report:

The Professional Standards Board met on the following dates during the 2023-2024 academic school year:

August 21, 2023  
October 13, 2023  
December 4, 2023  
February 5, 2024  
June 3, 2024

During these meetings the following agenda items were outlined and discussed:

### **TOPIC: Resources for Maine Teachers**

Teacher retention continues to be a serious issue for districts across the state. After reviewing our own recommendations, we explored what other resources are available. These resources include offerings from the DOE, various non-profit organizations, and union groups.

### **TOPIC: PSB Terms**

We coordinated with DOE, MEA, and MPA to advise on new appointments to the PSB as current terms run out.

### **TOPIC: Role of mentoring in teacher retention**

Maine has a disjointed and unorganized structure in how mentor training for educators occurs. Mentor training is not often available, and when it is available, it is not coordinated. Furthermore, at the local level district mentor plans for new teachers vary wildly. We discussed and began to develop recommendations directed towards unifying mentor training and creating recommendations for local districts to improve their new teacher mentoring programs.

### **TOPIC: Role of MEA, MPA, and MSMA in teacher retention**

We talked with representatives from each of the above groups about ways to unify messages and recommendations concerning teacher retention in Maine.

Individual minutes from all PSB meetings are available for further details.

## **PSB Work Plan for the '24-'25 School Year**

The PSB recommends the following action items:

1. The format for election of new PSB members is set and clearly conveyed to all vested parties including the DOE, Governor's Office, MEA, MPA, and MSMA.
2. The PSB works in conjunction with the DOE to establish guidelines for formal new-teacher mentor training across the state. This might include coordination with trainers and training already in place.
3. The PSB works with the State Board of Education to explore restructuring of the language around new teacher mentoring outlined in Ch. 118 in preparation for the eventual opening of Ch. 118 for review.
4. The PSB works with the State Board of Education on any items related to the review of Ch. 115 and Educator Certification in the State.

MOTION by Denham Ward, seconded by Paulette Bonneau, and unanimously voted by those present to receive the Professional Standards Board 2024 Annual Report and Recommendations.

## **ANNUAL ORGANIZATIONAL BUSINESS:**

### **Election of Officers Effective July 1, 2024**

Wendy Ault was Chair of the Nominations and Election Committee. Kristin Bishop and Thomas Keller served on the Committee with Wendy.

A slate of officers was read by Wendy Ault: Fern Desjardins as Chair and Paulette Bonneau as Vice Chair.

An opportunity for nominations from the floor was given. No nominations from the floor were received.

Wendy Ault asked for a show of hands for the slate of officers to serve for the term of one year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025.

Fern Desjardins as Chair – unanimous vote, none opposed. The vote carries.  
Paulette Bonneau as Vice Chair – unanimous vote, none opposed. The vote carries.

### **Board Retreat Date and Location:**

The retreat will take place at the University of Maine on September 11-12, 2024.

**Tentative Meeting Schedule for July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025**

The State Board of Education will continue to meet on the second Wednesday of every month.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- Chair Desjardins distributed a survey for board members to indicate their committee preferences for appointments beginning July 1.
- Submit expense account vouchers to Emily Cummins by the 15<sup>th</sup> day following the month of the expenses incurred.
- The next regular State Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 17, 2024, 1:00 PM at the Burton Cross State Office Building and virtually via Zoom.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting adjourned at 4:59 PM.

Emily Cummins, Office Specialist  
Maine State Board of Education