



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 August 14, 2024, at the Burton M. Cross building in Augusta, Maine and virtually via Zoom. The following members were present: Chair Fern Desjardins; James Ford; Thomas Keller; Victoria Kornfield; Denham Ward; Cedar Worster; and Phat Thai.

Absent Members: Wendy Ault; Ed Morin; and Paulette Bonneau

Others Present: Emily Cummins, Office Specialist II, State Board of Education.

CALL TO ORDER:

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

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

Fern mentioned that Kristin Bishop resigned from the Board on July 26, 2024. She accepted a position working for the State of Maine. Kristin was recognized for her two years of service on the State Board.

VISION STATEMENT:

Read by student member, Cedar Worster: 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:

June 21, 2024 – MOTION by Tom Keller, seconded by Tori Kornfield and unanimously voted to accept the June 21, 2024 minutes as presented. The motion was adopted.

July 17, 2024 – MOTION by Victoria Kornfield, seconded by Denham Ward and unanimously voted to accept the July 17, 2024 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 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 Victoria Kornfield, seconded by James Ford, 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 LT 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 1:13 PM.

The Board returned to the regular business meeting at 2:02 PM.

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

MOTION by Victoria Kornfield, seconded by Denham Ward, 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 DW 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 2:05 PM.

The Board returned to the regular business meeting at 2:30 PM.

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

MOTION by Victoria Kornfield, seconded by James Ford, 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 AB 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 2:49 PM.

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

MOTION by Victoria Kornfield, seconded by James Ford, 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 BC 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 2:53 PM.

The Board returned to the regular business meeting at 3:20 PM.

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

MOTION by Victoria Kornfield, seconded by Denham Ward, 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 PB 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 3:24 PM.

The Board returned to the regular business meeting at 3:56 PM.

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

OFFICER'S REPORTS:

Chair, Fern Desjardins

- Reminder – "Measure What Matters Community Conversations" hosted by the Maine Department of Education began Tuesday, August 13 at Westbrook High

School and will continue throughout Maine from August 13 to September 12 when the last regional meeting is held at Caribou Community School. Fern forwarded the schedule in an email from Marcus Mrowka, Communications Director, MDOE to Board members.

- The Certification & Higher Education (C&HE) Committee is diligently working on the Resolve as per LD 2221, 2024, Chapter 137, as they consider amendments to Chapter 115. Fern attended their meeting on July 24. In light of discussions at the meeting, committee members decided that the Consensus Rulemaking Process was perhaps not the best approach in addressing LD 2221; therefore, Fern scheduled a rulemaking review session on the Conceptual Process with Laura Cyr, Federal and State Legislative Specialist, MDOE on August 9. Tom Keller and Paulette Bonneau attended the session. Tom, Chair of the C&HE Committee, affirmed his preference to move from the Consensus Rulemaking Process to the Conceptual Rulemaking Process. Paulette and Fern supported Chair Keller's decision.
- Fern joined up with Maine Administrators of Career and Technical Education (MACTE) at the St. John Valley Technology Center in Frenchville on July 30 as administrators toured CTE centers and regions in Aroostook County. The number of CTE programs offered at centers and regions in recent years has expanded along with significant increases in enrollment.
- On August 13, Fern and Paulette attended the first meeting of the working group of stakeholders to review the responsibilities, functions, and staffing of the State Board of Education, per LD 1018, 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*. Deputy Commissioner Dan Chuhta is the facilitator for the working group of seven members. Laura Cyr, Federal and State Legislative Specialist, MDOE, is assisting the Deputy Commissioner.
The next meeting will be held on August 27 via Zoom. There will be a CTE report out on statutes and a review of general duties of the State Board.

Vice Chair, Paulette Bonneau

- Attended the agenda review last week with Deputy Commissioner Dan Chuhta and Fern.
- Continuing to work on retreat - waiting for confirmation from Educate Maine to present on the status of the Maine Teacher Center and report on their findings gathered by the county focus groups they held.
- On August 6th, I attended the Maine History Teacher of the Year awards ceremony and the prestigious Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. Michelle Mailhot and Jaimie Beal from the DOE hosted this award ceremony, and Dan Chuhta congratulated the candidates.

- Ethan Brownell (2023) and Jessica Graham (2024) were both recognized as Maine History Teacher of the Year.

The 2024 PAEMST finalists are:

-Elementary Mathematics: Deb Larsen-Soderberg

-Elementary Science: Hillary Bellefleur

-Elementary Science: Marci Train

- On August 9th, I attended a meeting to support Emily in her new role. We will be meeting biweekly for the next couple of months.
- Also, on August 9th, I attended a rulemaking meeting with Fern, Tom, and Laura Cyr. As a result, we have direction and a plan to deal with Ch. 115.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

School Construction Committee (Fern Desjardins):

The School Construction Committee did not meet in July.

Certification and Higher Education (Thomas Keller):

The Certification and Higher Education Committee met July 24, 2024.

- Zeke Kimball of the University of Maine introduced himself as the Interim Dean for their College of Education. He is both a product of Maine public schools and a huge fan. Welcome, Dr. Kimball!
- Upcoming visits – Thomas College has submitted a draft schedule to Michael. Other institutions up for review in 2024-25 are a UMaine off-cycle, Syracuse University, UMaine Machias and Colby College.
- A quick discussion was held as to the format of the Annual EPP Program Update report for next year. Tori mentioned that getting data on methods of instructing teachers to teach math would be of value considering that Maine's student performance in mathematics is as disappointing as in reading. I wonder if we can ask about the EPP's policy on giving a stipend to student teachers. We could ask them to supply their student teaching manual - if they have one and/or describe their process for training cooperating/supervising teachers including selection. According to Chapter 114, the updates should not exceed five (5) pages in length and will summarize yearly data, changes, additions, trends and deletions.
- In June, 2,976 applications for certification were processed (in May, it was 2,974) including two more retired teachers applying to regain their certification.
- Relative to the CHRC violations report, 1,634 people have been found to be in violation, which is consistent month to month (last month it was 1,292).
- Regarding certification violations, there is difficulty in gathering the data from the MEIS and NEO software systems.

- For a variety of reasons, we hope to shift the rulemaking process from a consensus-based one to the traditional one. The change is due to Dan saying we need to establish the consensus group now. Doing so requires a lot of work for which we have no budget or capacity. Going the traditional route means we can continue to gather input and the committee prepares the draft rule. I have gotten several emails from people thanking us for listening which they indicated didn't happen last time with consensus based. Going the traditional route allows us to gather input from anyone 'at the 40,000 ft level' whereas consensus based is centered on the consensus group.

Career and Technical Education (Edmond Morin): No report.

Legislative Action (Paulette Bonneau): No report.

Student Voices (Cedar Worster, Phat Thai, Wendy Ault, and James Ford):
The Student Voices Committee did not meet this month.

Board Effectiveness (Paulette Bonneau): No report.

Nomination and Election (Wendy Ault): No report.

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

- After reviewing the results from the Panorama Survey, there are concerns about two of the nine schools.
- Proceeding in the process of picking a tenth school.
- Eight groups have put in letters of intent and are filling out applications.

Professional Standards Board (Denham Ward): No report.

NASBE:

Executive Committee/Board of Directors (Fern Desjardins):

- NASBE's Board of Directors met on July 22. They received the Quarter 2 Strategic Plan and Operations Update from Paolo DeMaria, President/CEO. Committee and Affiliate Chairs (or designees) reported out on their recent meetings. The New Member Institute held recently in Washington, DC was a success with good attendance and sponsorships that yielded \$31,000 in revenue.
- The Finance and Audit Committee met on July 24. The committee approved the FY2023 Independent Auditor's Report, reviewed the Quarter 2 Expenditures and Revenue, and discussed the FY2025 budget development timeline. FY2024

member dues have all been paid. NASBE was the beneficiary of a trust of over \$21,000 left recently by the estate of two individuals who served on the Kentucky State Board of Education.

- NASBE's Principal Collaborative held their third meeting on August 12. Dr. Paul Manna of William & Mary presented state policy levers to develop excellent principals. Authors Marjorie Wechsler and Julie Fitz of the Learning Policy Institute discussed state policy levers to support principals and school teachers. They presented different state approaches to developing principals.

Government Affairs Committee (Thomas Keller):

National Association of State Boards of Education's Government Affairs Committee met on August 6, 2024.

- Approximately 10 states were represented.
- A consultant from Foresight Law + Policy gave an update on Washington doings, mostly budget. The FY 24 (October 1, 2023 to Sept. 30, 2024) budget lowered the US ED budget by \$500M. Still, there were modest increases to Title IA, Title IVA and IDEA/Perkins CTE.
- For FY25, the House GOP wants to cut ED by 14%, including cuts to Title IA, Title II and funds for preparing teachers and administrators. The GOP has proposed modest increases in IDEA and CTE/Perkins. They also propose cutting state assessment grants (from the report mentioned below – ("State Assessments- The Committee does not provide funding for this program. The Committee believes that State and local funds should cover these activities."))
- The Senate proposal is for level funding and has strong bipartisan support, but expect to see a Continuing Resolution around the September 30 deadline.
- The House committee is required to provide an easy to understand rationale for their actions which can be seen at <https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AP/AP00/20240710/117503/HMKP-118-AP00-20240710-SD002.pdf>, all 350 pages. This report (page 232) also reports "Teacher Quality Partnership Grants - The Committee does not provide funding for the Teacher Quality Partnerships program. The Committee notes this program's purpose duplicates those of other Federal programs related to teacher preparation and development. The Committee recognizes that K-12 education is inherently local in nature, and therefore States and districts can be most responsive to needs regarding teacher recruitment and development in local schools. Therefore, they are best positioned to make funding decisions for such activities."
- The US Department of Labor has funds under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) for in school and out of school youth. They are issuing a 'discussion draft' of the rules. The US DOL final apprenticeship rules will be released in August.

- The US ED has sent a letter to all chiefs about a webinar series on chronic absenteeism. If chiefs so choose, they can invite others.
- Some states are contemplating, at the governor level, to prohibit cell phones in schools, e.g., UT, NY and AR.
- DE is attempting to go to a \$60K starting salary for teachers.
- Common issues – changing graduation requirements, teacher workforce, and AI.

Public Education Positions Committee (Paulette Bonneau): No report.

UNFINISHED (OLD) BUSINESS: No Unfinished Business.

NEW BUSINESS: No New Business

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Please submit expense account vouchers to Emily Cummins by the 15th day following the month of the expenses incurred.
- The next regular State Board meeting will be the annual retreat held September 11 and 12, 2024, on the campus of UMaine Orono, and virtually via Zoom.
- A Special Board Meeting will be held on August 26, 2024 at 10:00 AM to consider student transfer appeals.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 4:29 PM.

Emily Cummins, Office Specialist
Maine State Board of Education