



## **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 September 11, 2024, on the Campus of University of Maine in Orono and virtually via Zoom. The following members were present: Chair Fern Desjardins; Vice Chair Paulette Bonneau; Wendy Ault; James Ford; Thomas Keller; Victoria Kornfield; Ed Morin; Denham Ward; and Cedar Worster

Absent with Excuse: Phat Thai

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.

Chair Desjardins took roll call and declared a quorum present.

### **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:**

MOTION by Victoria Kornfield, seconded by Denham Ward and voted five in favor with three abstentions (Paulette Bonneau, Wendy Ault, and Ed Morin) to accept the August 14, 2024, minutes as presented. The motion was adopted.

MOTION by Wendy Ault, seconded by Paulette Bonneau and unanimously voted to accept the August 26, 2024, minutes as presented. The motion was adopted.

MOTION by Wendy Ault, seconded by Tom Keller and voted seven in favor with one abstention (Tom Keller) to accept the August 29, 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 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 JM 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 1:09 PM.

The Board returned to the regular business meeting at 2:05 PM.

MOTION by Denham Ward, seconded by Ed Morin, and voted seven in favor with one opposed (Paulette Bonneau) that given the information the Board received, it was in JM's best interest to approve the transfer. The transfer was approved.

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 WM 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 2:10 PM.

The Board returned to the regular business meeting at 2:34 PM.

MOTION by Paulette Bonneau, seconded by Tom Keller, and voted six in favor with two opposed (Wendy Ault and Fern Desjardins) that given the information the Board received, it was in WM's best interest to disapprove the transfer. The transfer was disapproved.

MOTION by Paulette Bonneau, seconded by Wendy Ault, 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 DY 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 2:37 PM.

The Board returned to the regular business meeting at 2:49 PM.

MOTION by James Ford, seconded by Paulette Bonneau, and unanimously voted that given the information the Board received, it was in DY's best interest to disapprove the transfer. The transfer was disapproved.

### **OFFICER'S REPORTS:**

#### **Chair, Fern Desjardins**

- Emily and Fern had a Zoom meeting with Shirley Browne, Deputy State Controller, DAFS, Office of the State Controller, to discuss travel and expense account reimbursements in preparation for the discussion in this morning's workshop.
- August 27 and September 9 - Paulette and Fern attended the second and third meetings 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*. The group discussed State Board duties dealing with Career and Technical Education, Certification and Higher Education, Board staffing, and State Board comparisons across the country. The next meeting will be held on September 30 followed by the last meeting on October 4
- August 29 – Fern had an introductory meeting with Robert Feinberg, Director of Communications and Government Relations at MSMA. Robert replaces Vicki Wallack who recently retired.
- Senator James Libby declined an invitation to attend a State Board workshop to discuss an article that aired recently on local TV stations regarding the formation of a state education coalition to come up with strategies to support students and teachers “in hopes of improving academic performance.” Senator Libby discussed with Fern the need for more data in order to take action, student achievement in math and reading compared with other states, and chronic absenteeism rates in Maine. He would like to see a statewide, inclusive group studying student achievement and coming up with meaningful outcomes for bottom line results. Based on his initial research on other states, he believes that graduation requirements for reading, and math should be increased in Maine.
- Tori and Fern will be attending the “Measure What Matters Community Conversations” hosted by the Maine Department of Education this evening at Bangor High School. The last of 12 regional conversations will be held on September 12 at Caribou Community School.

## **Vice Chair, Paulette Bonneau**

- August 2 and 9th: I attended a meeting regarding rulemaking and conceptual conversations. I also have secured the dates of 10/24 (Bangor) and 11/4 (Westbrook) for the public meetings specific to CTE certification.
- August 13th: I attend the first meeting for the LD 1018 study meeting to discuss the boards responsibilities and functions. This was the first of five meetings held. I attended a second meeting on August 27th.
- August 15th: I attended a Measure What Matters community conversation held at YCCC.
- I have spent several hours wrapping up our retreat details and conversing with our speakers as they prepared for the retreat. I also have spent time preparing as an observer for the Thomas College review coming up at the end of the month.
- Our October meeting will be hosted by Superintendent Littlefield in Pittsfield. The November meeting will be at the newly built South Portland Middle School.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

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

The School Construction Committee did not meet in August.

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

The Certification and Higher Education Committee met on August 28, 2024.

- Upcoming visits – A team has been formed for the Thomas College review visit in September. Lane Clarke of UNE will chair the committee and Sherry Pino Brown of Colby, Flynn Ross of USM, and Shannon Sleeper of UMPI constitute the rest of the team with Paulette Bonneau as the State Board Observer along with Michael Perry of the MDOE. Denham moved and Tori seconded that the C&HE Committee send this slate of team members to the State Board for full approval at the next meeting. That passed unanimously.
- We reviewed and accepted for the file Annual EPP Reports (the unit must submit an annual program update, not to exceed five (5) pages, summarizing yearly data, changes, additions and deletions using a template provided by the Department, as per chapter 114, 3.12.) from UMPI, UNE and USM. The reports continue to surface interesting and relevant information.
- A quick discussion was held as to implications of these reports and the format of this report for next year. One specific thought is that the suggestion of using a table for Question 1 may limit comprehensive reporting. Six general thoughts-

1. Do we/should we/could we provide incentives for teachers going into shortage area certifications?
2. Data analysis from the vacancy study under the Regional Longitudinal Data Study is greatly anticipated. We hope there will be broad dissemination of the study and its findings.
3. Mentoring needs continue to be great. Mentoring for emergency, conditional and new teachers, for student teachers, cooperating/supervising teachers, and university faculty, and for new administrators. We look forward to Christine O'Neal's work in this area.
4. We as a state need to investigate the teaching of math in a parallel way to our questioning of the teaching of reading. Student performance is unacceptably low in these areas, as well as science. In 2023, 57% of high school students scored below proficiency on the Maine Educational Assessment in math.
5. USM's Novice Educator Support Series deserves a closer look. Is this unique to USM? Is it well used across the state? Is it effective?
6. What can the State Board and the Certification and Higher Education Committee do to support EPPs?
  - Michael reported the status of the Roux Institute's program approval. He said that the chapter that spells out degree granting authority in Maine allows for a full degree granting authority to be sought by an institution or individual program by program approval. That latter track is where Roux has currently opted for their approval in Maine. So, each of their discrete degree programs is under State Board Review rather than as an institution.
  - Michael then reported on the Beal University status. He needs to review the State Board files one more time to be clear on what was voted in, which will determine when the next review will be.

#### Certification Update – Michael Perry

- In July, 2,439 applications for certification were processed. Michael provided a pie chart and table of recent activity. NOTE: 2,500 x 12 months = 30,000 applications per year, if half are teachers and EM reports 14,000 teachers in Maine, supply should be overflowing. Why the shortage?
- Denham reported that the Regional Longitudinal Data Study was progressing, and this will be a major presentation and part of the State Board retreat in September.

#### Educator Preparation Programs/Teacher Educator Association of ME Update – Dr. Andrea Stairs-Davenport, USM

LD 2221/Resolve to amend Chapter 115 – Tom Keller

- Tom described the actions underway for traditional or conceptual conversation rulemaking. The goal is to have an approved rule submitted to the Legislature by January, 2026.
- Any questions, concerns or ideas can be sent to Tom Keller or any committee member.
- The next meeting is September 25 at 10:30 am. We will continue to take input on what is working and what is not, especially regarding but not limited to Chapter 115, Part 2, section 1.1 through 1.7. This includes the 029 Early Elementary Teacher endorsement, 020 Elementary Teacher endorsement, Middle Level Teacher endorsements, Secondary Teacher endorsements, Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12 Teacher (All Subjects Other than Art and Music) endorsements, Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12 Teacher (Music and Art) and World Language Teacher endorsements.

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

- The CTE committee held its regular monthly meeting via Zoom on Thursday August 29<sup>th</sup>
- Given that this was the first day of school for some CTE's, a couple of our regular attendees weren't able to be with us.
- State CTE Director Dwight Littlefield reported that there is now more than \$200,000 in the Briggs Trust account. Let me add that, while the Board doesn't have to expend Briggs money on an annual basis, I believe we should be looking at how best to serve CTE students in Maine through use of these funds. I have a couple of ideas and there may be some requests for funds on the horizon, but new ideas are always welcome.
- Dwight reports that he and his team at the Department of Education have had a busy summer. They issued a request for applications for \$20,000,000 in State-subsidized loans authorized for equipment purchases and related building infrastructure work for CTE Centers and CTE Regions. They just sent out the award letters to the eleven schools receiving funds. They just held a new Directors training at Cianbro in Pittsfield with around a dozen or so attending. They've been getting out industry standards grants which are part of the Governor's budget.
- Community College representatives reported that enrollment is up. They will be pulling together numbers on their skilled and technical trades offerings which were busting at the seams last year. MCCS faculty has been showing a lot of interest in the upcoming fall CTE Conference which is being held October 11<sup>th</sup> in Lewiston.

- MACTE Director Dave Keaton reported that CTE folks in Aroostook County were pleased that the annual Fall CTE Directors' Conclave was held in northern Maine this year. Five different CTE Centers and Regions were visited, and I came away with a lot of information that is informing some of the decisions I have been called upon to make. MACTE is in the midst of planning for the upcoming CTE conference.
- Educate Maine Executive Director Jason Judd reported that they had just released a teacher workforce report that pulls together all publicly available education data; everything from average wages to size of the workforce and various demographics. Educate Maine is holding an education leaders experience program in early October in Washington County which will have a number of CTE representatives. They are holding their education symposium on December 13<sup>th</sup> which is a MELMAC Peer Learning Collaboration. There will be a number of CTE Sessions at the event. They are prepping for professional development opportunities in the fall and are working on teacher workforce issues.
- MACTE President and UTC Director Amanda Peterson says they have 10 new teachers on staff, people who are from industry and not necessarily from the field of education. This fall they are opening their Educator Prep Program. It is the first program in their building in which they will have a traditional secondary education classroom. One of the goals is to help students figure out if this is their path or not. They are working with regional superintendents to get students back into their local schools to start to figure out how to become a teacher. They have a pathway currently with Eastern Maine Community College. But they're also working with the University of Maine and Husson and developing additional coursework.
- They also have an electric vehicle program opening this fall. Their CTE exploratory CTE program is taking off which has led to the opening of 4 offsite program.
- Next up we had a discussion and vote on how best to distribute Perkins Reserve Funds to the 27 CTE Center and Regions in Maine. We have an Exhibit to present to you in a bit so I think we can forego any details at this point.
- And we finished up with a discussion led by Paulette on the CTE portion of the State Board's Strategic Plan in preparation for tomorrow's review.

**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.

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

- They approved Maine Arts Academy's request to add seventh and eighth grades to their school.
- Two schools are up for renewal this year. They are Ecology Learning Center and MEVA. We will be voting on renewal next month.
- We have eight letters of intent from interested parties for the 10<sup>th</sup> school and the applications will be the next step.
- There is \$40,000 in the innovation fund. Schools are encouraged to apply for up to \$10,000 for a project.

**Professional Standards Board (Denham Ward):** No report.

**NASBE:**

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

- Members of NASBE's Board of Directors have taken on a New State Recruitment Project. Fern has engaged the chair of the Colorado State Board of Education in discussions on what might get them to rejoin NASBE.
- Office Hours on September 9 was focused on ways state board members can leverage Results for America's new Education Evidence-Based Spending Guide. Strategies were presented for maximizing the impact of grant programs. Fern thanked Denham Ward for attending the session.

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

National Association of State Boards of Education's Government Affairs Committee met on September 3, 2024.

- The House continues to propose cutting or eliminating funding for Titles 1, 2 and 4. Title 2 is zeroed out and Title 1 reduced in their proposal.
- The House budget zeros out funding for state assessment.
- There is a level of funding from the feds that triggers accountability requirements. The Senate budget proposal is above that; the House below that.
- Senator Collins is in a key position to impact federal funding for education.
- Public Service Loan Forgiveness process used to be extremely difficult but the Biden administration has streamlined it and made it easier. This is not well known.
- NAGB has issued a report titled A Primer on Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism on the Nation's Report Card and Beyond. It is at <https://www.nagb.gov/content/dam/nagb/en/documents/naep/nagb-chronic-absenteeism-v4.pdf>. The big takeaway is "On the most recent Nation's

Report Card, or National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 22% of 4th graders reported they were absent five or more days in the previous month. That is double the percentage who reported that in 2019. The results were similar for eighth-graders and similar across states and subgroups of students.” Rhode Island has a strategy - <https://www.future-ed.org/team-sport-rhode-islands-statewide-strategy-for-reducing-chronic-absenteeism/>

- The Delaware State Board has asked their Secretary to explain why assessment scores are so low.
- When asked what the GAC advocate could do for regarding alignment across the nation, I brought up teacher certification standards and reciprocity. This was well received, and one member suggested we start with special ed.
- UT will have a bill in their legislature to ban cell phones in schools.

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

- NASBE REPORT: August 20th: I attended the Public Education Positions Committee Meeting. In 2023, the PEP committee suggested to NASBE’s Delegate Assembly that its members perform a comprehensive review of the document to maintain the relevancy, coherence, and currentness of the existing positions and propose protocols for a routine review. The 2024 PEP committee has undertaken this work and expanded these goals to explore PEP’s purpose and role in supporting NASBE’s mission.
- This past year, the committee decided to split into three subcommittees to distribute some of the goals and priorities outlined at the start and work simultaneously around presenting PEP’s purpose, developing a playbook of processes and protocols, and addressing promising practices and pressing problems across NASBE’s membership. The 2024 Delegate Assembly discussion is an important one to gather feedback and recommendations on expanding the scope of the PEP committee’s work beyond written positions. The PEP committee is currently not seeking a vote on new positions, as it has in the past. Rather, with the Delegate Assembly’s feedback, the PEP committee aims to continue working on these areas and propose changes to both the positions themselves and potential PEP processes at the 2025 Delegate Assembly. Each of PEP’s three subcommittees will present their collaborative work to create a new vision for the PEP committee that would benefit NASBE, all NASBE committees, and state board members.

**UNFINISHED (OLD) BUSINESS:** No Unfinished Business.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Request Approval to allocate Maine Carl D. Perkins Targeted Secondary Reserve Grant funds as authorized under the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (P. L. 115-224).**

**FY2025 Secondary Reserve Fund Distribution Recommendation:**

The State Board of Education's Career and Technical Education Committee recommends to the State Board of Education to distribute the FY2025 Perkins V targeted secondary reserve grant funds (in the amount of \$400,806.12) equally between the 27 eligible secondary CTE sub-recipients to support equipment purchases.

**Sub-Recipient Eligible Uses of FY2025 Reserve Funds Recommendation:**

Sub-recipients may only use their allotted funding for the following eligible activities:

- New equipment, technology, and/or program supplies (as defined by the Maine Department of Education), for CTE programs which are established and active for the 2024-2025 school year.

**Justifications for Recommendation:**

Funds will be used in accordance with sections 112 and 135 of the Perkins V Act and will supplement and not supplant current resources.

The CTE Committee reviews proposals to make recommendations for the approval of programs to enhance career and technical education to the State Board of Education.

FY2025 Secondary Reserve Funds are intended to provide equal funding to each of the 27 secondary CTE schools (in the amount of \$14,844.67) to support the defined need for CTE equipment funding across the State, especially amongst schools located in rural areas and schools with low student enrollment counts who might otherwise receive proportionally less funding overall.

MOTION by Ed Morin, seconded by Wendy Ault, and unanimously voted that the State Board of Education distribute the FY2025 Perkins V targeted secondary reserve grant funds (in the amount of \$400,806.12) equally between the 27 eligible secondary CTE sub-recipients to support equipment purchases and that sub-recipients may only use their allotted funding for the following eligible activities: New equipment, technology,

and/or program supplies (as defined by the Maine Department of Education) for CTE programs which are established and active for the 2024-2025 school year.

### **Thomas College Educator Preparation Program Review Team**

BACKGROUND: Thomas College’s Educator Preparation Program (EPP) is reaching the end of its current approval cycle. The program has indicated its desire to renew its State Board approval and has prepared self-study materials in advance of an in-person review in September 2024.

State Board of Education Rule Chapter 114: Purpose, Standards and Procedures for the Review and Approval of Preparation Programs for Education Personnel lays out the process by which educator preparation programs are approved in Maine. The chapter defines a review team as, “A team of educators recommended to the State Board of Education by the Commissioner”. Subsection 3.4 (“Preparation of the Self Assessment”) further explains that a “Review Team will consist of 4-5 team members, plus the MDOE consultant and a State Board of Education Observer”.

The following individuals have agreed to serve on the Thomas University EPP Review Team:

Lane Clarke, EdD, Academic Director, School of Education, & Professor of Education, UNE (Chair)

Sherry Pineau Brown, PhD, Lecturer in Education & Coordinator of Teacher Education, Colby College

Flynn Ross, EdD, Associate Professor of Teacher Education, University of Southern Maine

Shannon Sleeper, M.Ed, Assistant Professor of Education, University of Maine at Presque Isle

Non-voting observers of the Thomas University EPP Review will include the following:

Paulette Bonneau, Vice-Chair, Maine State Board of Education

Laura Cyr, PhD, Maine Department of Education

Michael T. Perry, Maine Department of Education

Pursuant to Rule Chapter 114, Subsection 3.5(a), this review team is hereby “submitted to the State Board for approval prior to visitation”.

RECOMMENDATION: That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Rule Chapter 114, Subsection 3.5(a), approve Dr. Lane Clarke of the University of New England, Dr. Sherry Pineau Brown of Colby College, Dr. Flynn Ross of the University of Southern Maine, and Prof. Shannon Sleeper of the University of Maine at Presque Isle to serve as team members for the Fall 2024 review of Thomas College’s Educator Preparation

Program, with Dr. Lane Clarke serving as chair and Paulette Bonneau serving as Maine State Board of Education Observer.

MOTION by Tom Keller, seconded by James Ford, and unanimously voted by those present that the State Board of Education, pursuant to Rule Chapter 114, Subsection 3.5(a), approve Dr. Lane Clarke of the University of New England, Dr. Sherry Pineau Brown of Colby College, Dr. Flynn Ross of the University of Southern Maine, and Prof. Shannon Sleeper of the University of Maine at Presque Isle to serve as team members for the Fall 2024 review of Thomas College's Educator Preparation Program, with Dr. Lane Clarke serving as chair and Paulette Bonneau serving as Maine State Board of Education Observer. The motion was adopted.

**National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) Voting Delegate**

MOTION by Wendy Ault, seconded by Paulette Bonneau, and unanimously voted by those present that Denham Ward be designated as the National Association of State Boards of Education Voting Delegate at the 2024 Annual Conference, and that Fern Desjardins be designated as the alternate.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- Please 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, October 9, 2024, 1:00 PM in RSU 53, Pittsfield and virtually via Zoom.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting adjourned at 4:02 PM.

Emily Cummins, Office Specialist II  
Maine State Board of Education