

THE MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Minutes of the December 5, 2023 Meeting
200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201

The Maryland State Board of Education met on December 5, 2023 at 9:06am in the State Board room located within the Maryland State Department of Education.

The following Board members were present in the Board room:

Mr. Clarence Crawford (Board President), Dr. Joshua Michael (Board Vice President), Ms. Rachel McCusker, Ms. Chuen-Chin Bianca Chang, Mr. Nick Greer, Dr. Susan Getty, Dr. Holly Wilcox, Ms. Abisola Ayoola, Dr. Irma E. Johnson, Dr. Joan Mele-McCarthy, Mr. Shawn Bartley, Esq and Dr. Monica Goldson were in attendance.

Mr. Samir Paul, Esq., participated virtually. Interim State Superintendent Dr. Carey Wright, State Board Executive Director Zachary Hands, and Assistant Attorney General Elliott Schoen were also in attendance.

MEETING OPENING

Mr. Crawford called the meeting to order at 9:06am and led the pledge of allegiance. Mr. Schoen declared that a quorum was present.

Mr. Crawford provided opening remarks.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Cheryl Bost, MSEA President – Certification regulations
2. Sharon Saroff – Special education
3. Bill Hudson, Maryland State Child Care Association, Community partners and Pre-K
4. Shamoyia Gardner, Executive Director, Strong Schools Maryland – State Board legislative platform, CCR standard, Special Education Workgroup
5. Dr. Kevin Kendrick, PGCPSS – Multi-tiered reporting of state assessment data
6. Dr. Andrae Townsel, Superintendent, Calvert County Public Schools – update from PSSAM

NEW BUSINESS

- Approval of the Consent Agenda
 - Approval of the October 24 and November 9, 2023 Meeting Minutes
 - Personnel Actions

- o Budget Adjustments, October 2023

ACTION: The State Board granted approval by unanimous consent.

Dr. Wright highlighted the hiring of Dr. Tenette Smith as the new Executive Director for Literacy Programs and Initiatives.

President Crawford discussed the State Board's awareness of budget concerns in Annapolis this upcoming legislative session and emphasized the State Board's role as a partner in the process and to demonstrate that there is value in investments in education.

President Crawford and other Board members took an opportunity to recognize the retirement of Dr. Tim Tooten, WBAL-TV reporter, and thanked him for his long service to the State of Maryland and his commitment to reporting on education. The State Board presented Dr. Tooten a citation from the State Board.

President Crawford acknowledged the resignation of State Board member General Warner Sumpter. President Crawford thanked General Sumpter for his several years of service on the State Board, including as State Board President.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SESSION: MARYLAND CENTER FOR SCHOOL SAFETY (MCSS)

(Presenter: Ms. Kate Bryan, Executive Director, MCSS)

Ms. Bryan provided the State Board a deep dive presentation into the programs and services provided by MCSS. She described the Safe Schools Maryland (SSMD) Anonymous Reporting System, School Resource Officer (SRO) & School Security Employee (SSE) Training Academy, Behavior Threat Assessment, and other programs. Ms. Bryan reviewed grants managed by MCSS and discussed the structure of MCSS and the School Safety Subcabinet.

Mr. J.T. Ridgely, from Howard County Public School System, reviewed the safety strategy approach in HCPSS. Several Board members raised questions about the MCSS role in addressing gun violence in schools, working to preemptively address safety incidents, the function and efficacy of the Safe Schools Maryland Anonymous Reporting System, student voice in the school safety training process, and the need for law enforcement officers to receive vigorous SRO training.

STATE SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Dr. Wright discussed MSDE's work to develop a more in-depth and accurate Blueprint tracking system to keep tabs on various pieces of Blueprint implementation and the work underway to complete each item. The goal is to use the tracker "just in time" to monitor the Blueprint.

Dr. Wright also mentioned an MOU being worked on between MSDE and the University of Maryland and Morgan State to partner in building the literacy instructional expert teams that will be deployed in schools this school year. She highlighted also highlighted recent listening sessions with MSDE staff to answer their questions and share her vision for the agency.

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS STANDARD DISCUSSION

(Presenters: Phil Lasser, Executive Director, Office of the State Superintendent, and Matt Duque, Director MSDE Office of Research, Planning, and Program Evaluation)

President Crawford offered opening comments addressing the State Board's decision to continue discussions surrounding the College and Career Readiness (CCR) standard and come with a final recommendation at the January State Board meeting. He noted that the State Board wants to proceed in a thoughtful way and to consider all the feedback received and explore more options. Dr. Michael emphasized President Crawford's points and recommended additional deliberation.

Dr. Wright agreed regarding the need to incorporate and consider the feedback received by MSDE and the State Board. She also mentioned the need to address the impacts of including GPA on the grading policies throughout the state and the need for state guidance to provide consistency. She also spoke briefly on math pathways beginning in kindergarten through 8th grade. Specifically, she referenced progress being made through MSDE engagement with the Years Initiative at The University of Texas at Austin.

Mr. Lasser provided background on the statutory requirement for a research study and adoption of a new CCR standard, and reviewed the feedback from stakeholder engagement. Mr. Duque presented on the stakeholder engagement results to date, highlighting that over 90% of responses support adopting a CCR standard that includes multiple measures. Board members discussed their concerns with the research study and proposed standard.

Dr. Mele-McCarthy raised a concern that the CCR work does not address neuro-diverse students. Dr. Michael stressed the importance of allowing students not meeting the CCR standard to access programs and the significant fiscal impacts that are made by setting a

new standard. Mr. Paul asked about possible limitations from including math mastery in the standard. President Crawford thanked everyone for a vibrant discussion and emphasized that the issue will return in January.

2023 MARYLAND SCHOOL REPORT CARD UPDATE

(Presenter: Dr. Chandra Haislet, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Assessment, Accountability, and Performance Reporting)

Dr. Haislet provided an overview of the Maryland School Report Card results reported for the 2022-2023 school year and publication of data. She provided information on how schools received their star rating in the State's accountability system and how points are awarded. She clarified for the State Board that this is the first administration of the Social Studies MCAP assessment. Dr. Haislet reviewed statewide results by school type and distribution of star ratings. She noted that more schools earned three stars in the accountability system in the 2022-2023 school year and that there a decrease in the number of schools receiving five stars. She noted that most schools remained the same.

Dr. Michael raised a question about the changes in the results and what drove the differences school year over school year and noted that in future data releases that all information should be released on the same day. Dr. Getty asked about the degree of family engagement on the use-friendliness of the report card platform. President Crawford noted that it is critical for members of the public to receive clear, concise information on performance.

REPORTS TO THE STATE BOARD FOR DISCUSSION/ACTION

The State Board considered a consent agenda for regulatory items returning for permission to adopt or withdraw the following items:

- 13A.07.08 Incentive Program for Certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (Permission to Withdraw)
- 13A.01.05 Appeals to the State Board of Education (Permission to Adopt)
- 13A.01.07 Nondiscrimination in Education (Permission to Adopt)
- Emergency Intermediate Sanctions for 13A.15.13 and 14 Family Child Care; 13A.16.17 and 18 Child Care Centers; 13A.17.15 and 16 Child Care—Letters of Compliance; 13A.18.14 and 15 Large Family Child Care Homes (Permission to Adopt)

ACTION: The State Board granted approval by unanimous consent.

Regulatory Actions for Discussion and Action:

Cannabis Regulations for 13A.15 Family Child Care; 13A.16 Child Care Centers; 13A.17 Child Care—Letters of Compliance; 13A.18 Large Family Child Care Homes (Permission to Adopt)

Dr. Cook presented the regulations and addressed existing concerns from Board members regarding language surrounding “immediate presence” related to the use of cannabis and other substances in child care settings.

ACTION: Upon motion by Ms. McCusker, seconded by Ms. Ayoola, the State Board granted permission to publish regulations under Cannabis Regulations for 13A.15 Family Child Care; 13A.16 Child Care Centers; 13A.17 Child Care—Letters of Compliance; 13A.18 Large Family Child Care Homes (In Favor: 13, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0)

13A.08.01.02-3 Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (Permission to Publish)

Dr. Haislet presented the regulations as revised based on input on the previous version presented and discussed at the Board’s October meeting.

ACTION: Upon motion by Ms. McCusker, seconded by Dr. Johnson, the State Board granted permission to publish regulations under COMAR 13A.08.01.02-3 Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (In Favor: 13, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0)

13A.07.06 Programs for Professionally Licensed Personnel (Permission to Adopt) and 13A.12 Educator Licensure (Permission to Adopt)

Ms. Meadows provided a brief history of the regulations and fielded questions regarding concerns raised by State Board members related to National Board Certification and its alignment to the Science of Reading.

ACTION: Upon motion by Ms. McCusker, seconded by Mr. Paul, the State Board granted permission to publish regulations under COMAR 13A.08.01.02-3 Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (In Favor: 10, Opposed: 2, Abstained: 1)

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

(Presenter: Zach Hands, Executive Director, Maryland State Board of Education, Dr. Akilah Alleyne, Executive Director, Government Affairs, Education Policy, and External Relations)

Education Policy Committee Chair Rachel McCusker highlighted the recommendation from the committee to adopt the final draft version of the legislative platform. Mr. Hands

presented the State Board's legislative principles and platform. Dr. Alleyne provided a high-level overview of the processes in the upcoming legislative session.

ACTION: Upon motion by Ms. Ayoola, seconded by Mr. Greer, the State Board adopted the State Board legislative platform. (In Favor: 13, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0)

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pursuant to § 3-305(b)(1) and (7) of the General Provisions Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, and upon motion of Ms. Chang and seconded by Ms. Ayoola and with unanimous approval, the State Board of Education met in closed session on Tuesday, December 5, 2023, in Conference Room #6, 8th Floor, at the Nancy S. Grasmick Building. All board members were present. Dr. Goldson left the session early.

Also in attendance were Interim Superintendent Dr. Carey Wright, Deputy Superintendent Krishnanda Tallur, Executive Director of the State Board Zachary Hands, and Assistant Attorneys General Elliott Schoen and Jackie La Fiandra.

The Executive Session commenced at 2:10 p.m. and ended at 4:30 p.m.

At that time, the State Board reviewed and approved two Opinions and six Orders.

- *A.D. and E.W. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – Opin. No. 23-26. The Board affirmed the local board's decision.
- *M.A.H. v. Prince George's County Board of Education* – Opin. No. 23-27. The Board affirmed the local board's decision.
- *In the Matter of Shannon Hinkhaus* – Order No. OR23-17. The Board dismissed the case.
- *T.J. and D.J. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – Order No. OR23-18. The Board denied the request for reconsideration.
- *Adrian Pugh v. Prince George's County Board of Education* – Order No. OR23-19. The Board dismissed the appeal.
- *Shanise S. v. Anne Arundel County Board of Education* – Order No. OR23-20. The Board affirmed the local board's dismissal of the appeal.
- *M.T. and N.A. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – Order No. OR23-21. The Board dismissed the appeal.
- *Zaharah Valentine v. Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners* – Order No. OR23-22. The Board dismissed the appeal.

Dr. Wright and Deputy Superintendent Tallur gave the Board an update regarding the FY 2025 confidential DBM budget estimates and requests.

Dr. Wright updated the Board regarding personnel matters.

The Board discussed internal processes for the Board's Education Policy Committee.

STATE BOARD MEMBER COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

Dr. Mele-McCarthy mentioned that she now serves as the State Board representative on the Blueprint Special Education Workgroup.

Mr. Greer mentioned that the parent, student, and teacher member of the State Board have begun convening in a smaller group.

Ms. Chang reported on behalf of the Education Transformation and Accountability Committee regarding the committee's upcoming review of the strategic plan targets and goals.

Dr. Michael provided an update on the RFP process to procure a search firm to assist with the State Superintendent search and highlighted a recent State Board visit to Forest Park High School in Baltimore City.

FUTURE BOARD AGENDA ITEMS

Dr. Mele-McCarthy requested a deeper dive on the issue of school safety.

Mr. Greer recommended that the State Board receive a briefing in the future on the teacher effectiveness review process.

Dr. Getty requested a deep dive on the issue of chronic absenteeism to the State Board.

LEGAL OPINIONS AND ORDERS

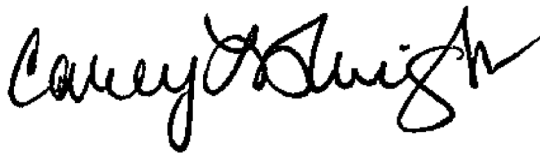
Mr. Schoen announced the following opinions:

- *A.D. and E.W. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – Opin. No. 23-26
- *M.A.H. v. Prince George's County Board of Education* – Opin. No. 23-27
- *In the Matter of Shannon Hinkhaus* – Order No. OR23-17

- *T.J. and D.J. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – Order No. OR23-18
- *Adrian Pugh v. Prince George’s County Board of Education* – Order No. OR23-19
- *Shanise S. v. Anne Arundel County Board of Education* – Order No. OR23-20
- *M.T. and N.A. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – Order No. OR23-21
- *Zaharah Valentine v. Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners* – Order No. OR23-22

With no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 4:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Carey M. Wright, Ed.D.
Secretary/Treasurer

Date: January 23, 2024

The information included here provides a summary of the agenda items presented. The video recordings of the meetings are the official record and can be located at:

<https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/stateboard/Pages/Meetings-2023.aspx>

Meeting materials, Opinions, and Orders can be found at:

<https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/stateboard/Pages/default.aspx>

The next Maryland State Board of Education meeting will be held on **Tuesday, January 23, 2024.**

Appropriate accommodations for individuals with disabilities will be provided upon request. Eight business days’ notice prior to the event is required. Please contact Charlene Necessary at (410) 767-0467 or TTY at (410) 333-6442 so arrangements can be made.