

THE MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Minutes of the March 26, 2024 Meeting
200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201

The Maryland State Board of Education met on March 26, 2024 at 9:00am 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, Ms. Abisola Ayoola, Dr. Irma E. Johnson, and Dr. Monica Goldson were in attendance.

Mr. Samir Paul joined virtually. Mr. Shawn Bartley. Dr. Joan Mele-McCarthy, and Dr. Holly Wilcox were absent. Interim State Superintendent Dr. Carey Wright, State Board Executive Director Zachary Hands, and Assistant Attorney General Alan J. Dunklow were also in attendance.

MEETING OPENING

Mr. Crawford called the meeting to order at 9:01am and led the pledge of allegiance. Mr. Dunklow declared that a quorum was present.

Mr. Crawford provided opening remarks and requested a moment of silence in recognition of the tragic accident at the Key Bridge earlier in the morning.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Peter Boyko – Graduation requirements and career pathways
2. Sharon Saroff – Special education
3. Joe Cormier – Funding for Calvert County Public Schools
4. Trish Brennan-Gac – The State of Reading in Maryland 2024
5. Dr. Derek Simmons – Update from Local Superintendents
6. Dr. Darryl Williams – Teacher and Principal Pipeline
7. Thornell Jones – Restorative Practices

NEW BUSINESS

- Approval of the Consent Agenda
 - Approval of the January 11, February 27, and March 4, 2024 Meeting Minutes
 - Personnel Actions

- o Budget Adjustments, February 2024

ACTION: The State Board granted approval by unanimous consent.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SESSION:

Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals (MAESP) and Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP)

(Presenters: Dr. Addie Kaufman, Executive Director, MASSP, Tracy Hilliard, Principal, Urbana High School, Josh Fine, Principal, Flower Hill Elementary School, Kris Hemstetter, Principal, Kent County High School)

Dr. Kaufman introduced the principal leaders of MAESP and MASSP and thanked the State Board for their collaborative work with both organizations over the years. Principal Hilliard and Principal Hemstetter provided an overview of the mission and value statements of both MAESP and MASSP.

Dr. Kaufman outlined concerns with the pipeline of principals and the demand for meeting the needs of the Blueprint. She discussed the Next Level Leaders Academy, which is an effort designed to build an effective pipeline of school-level leaders. She emphasized the MAESP and MASSP work with the AIB and reviewed several of the advocacy activities and professional development opportunities available to members of MAESP and MASSP. Dr. Kaufman asked the State Board for their support of Senate Bill 598, an effort to have an active principal member of the State Board. Principal Hilliard highlighted the work of both entities to build school culture and climate.

Ms. McCusker asked for more information on the Next Level Leaders Academy and what it offers to participants. Dr. Michael discussed how critical principal leadership is and how individual school-level leadership is valuable to the success of the Blueprint. Dr. Johnson asked MAESP and MASSP leadership to reach out to her to establish a further relationship.

PRIORITIES

2023 Cohort Graduation Rate Data

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

Dr. Haislet provided the State Board graduation rate data, including the five-year trend of awarding high school diplomas and high school certificates to students with

disabilities who cannot meeting the requirements for a diploma. She reviewed the adjusted four-year cohort graduation rate and offered that the effects of the pandemic are still felt in the data being presented to the Board today. She highlighted some of the demographic and socioeconomic differences prevalent in the data, as well as across local education agencies. Dr. Haislet also briefly touched upon the five-year adjusted cohort graduation Rate, four-year dropout rate, and postsecondary enrollment. She informed the Board that all of the information shared with the Board will be immediately available to the public through data downloads on the MSDE website and through the Maryland Report Card.

Mr. Greer raised concerns about the dropout rate among Hispanic students and what steps are being taken to address the disparity and connect with parents and families. Ms. McCusker asked if MSDE gathers data on why students are dropping out. Dr. Haislet and Dr. Wright suggested that they investigate both issues and that data isn't collected at MSDE on why students are leaving the school system. Dr. Goldson suggested that many local education agencies have various codes to identify the reason behind a student's disengagement with the school and that often times it is simply that the school system cannot find the student. Dr. Johnson provided an anecdote from a local principal on the experience of Hispanic students and reasoning behind the dropout rates among the student population being focused on going to work instead of completing high school. Ms. Ayoola described a similar anecdote. Dr. Michael reinforced that MSDE and the Board should look further into this issue.

Educate to Stop the Hate Committee

(Presenters: Dr. Deann Collins, Deputy State Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, and Mr. Peter Ramsey, Director of Social Studies)

Dr. Wright provided opening remarks on the presentation and shared that with a lot of concern surrounding issues of hate and antisemitism becoming rampant in our society, as well as legislation that was drafted on this subject, that MSDE is establishing the Educate to Stop the Hate Committee to take a closer look at the Social Studies standards and frameworks in Maryland.

Dr. Collins provided the background on the Social Studies COMAR that already exists to provide for the diversity of student needs, abilities, and interests at the early, middle, and high school learning years and how the Social Studies frameworks have to align to the Social Studies standards. She also provided a brief explanation of the difference between frameworks and standards.

Mr. Ramsey explained to the State Board that MSDE intends to convene the Educate to Stop the Hate Committee to ensure that Social Studies coursework is being leveraged effectively to challenge contemporary racism and hatred while seeking to build tolerance and understanding among Maryland's students.

Dr. Collins further explained the charge and purpose of the Committee to respond to what MSDE feels is an immediate need to align what is being taught in the classroom with contemporary concerns and emergent needs.

Mr. Ramsey indicated that the Committee will seek to engage a wide variety of stakeholders and will utilize an application process to build the membership of the group.

Dr. Michael thanked Dr. Wright for MSDE's proactive work on these issues. He emphasized the ongoing need to understand the difference between standards and frameworks and that the grade-level expectations in Social Studies mostly live in the frameworks (which LEAs are not required to adopt) and not the standards (which LEAs are required to adopt). He welcomes recommendations on where grade-level expectations ought to live and hopes that this Committee reviews that aspect of this process.

Mr. Greer emphasized the need to look at these issues in curricular areas beyond Social Studies and asked how members of this Committee will be selected. Mr. Ramsey explained the application process. Mr. Paul discussed the need to bring onto the Committee strong historical experts who can lend credibility to the process.

Dr. Johnson asked what the definition of contemporary racism is and Mr. Ramsey provided a series of items that could define that phrase, including violence, rhetoric, and said there is a need to have a working definition of the term. Ms. Chang asked what the timeline for the Committee will be and emphasized the need to address the topics in all subject areas.

STATE SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

(Presenter: Dr. Carey Wright, Interim State Superintendent of Schools)

Dr. Wright explained that it has been a very productive month. She highlighted that March is Arts in Our Schools Month and detailed the vital role that the arts play in each of our schools. Dr. Wright showed the State Board a video of Crisfield High School and their music program from a recent MSDE visit to the school.

Ms. McCusker took a few minutes to highlight the importance of the arts and how instrumental they are to student success and student expression. Dr. Getty spoke about how she was struck about the juxtaposition with athletics in the video.

Dr. Wright provided an update on collaboration with local superintendents and how she is launching a superintendents workgroup, with several local superintendents and members of MSDE and AIB staff to dive deeper into Blueprint implementation challenges and what are solutions to issues facing school systems. Dr. Wright updated the State Board on an aligned metrics workgroup that will bring recommendations on targets and goals for presentation to the State Board that are aligned with the State Board Strategic Plan, the AIB's Outcomes Workgroup, and the Governor's State Plan.

Dr. Wright provided an update on the co-chairs of the Accountability and Assessment Workgroups. Dr. Wright provided an update on moving forward with the plan to procure a new Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) and on the NAEP testing window. Dr. Wright informed the Board that she has created a new division at MSDE on federal programs and will be led by Mary Gable at the Department. She discussed the Board and MSDE's recent visit to the Judy Center at Waverley Elementary School in Frederick County.

REPORTS TO THE STATE BOARD FOR DISCUSSION/ACTION:

COMAR 13A.07.02.01 Contracts (Permission to Publish)

(Presenter: Ms. Kelly Meadows, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Educator Certification and Program Approval)

ACTION: Upon motion by Ms. McCusker, seconded by Dr. Johnson, the State Board granted permission to publish amendments to COMAR 13A.07.02.01 Contracts (In Favor: 10, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0)

COMAR 13A.15 Family Child Care, COMAR 13A.16 Child Care Center, 13A.17 Letters of Compliance, 13A.18 Large Family Child Care Homes - Safe Sleep (Permission to Adopt with Nonsubstantive Changes)

(Presenter: Dr. Shayna Cook, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Early Childhood)

ACTION: Upon motion by Dr. Getty, seconded by Ms. McCusker, the State Board granted permission to adopt amendments to COMAR 13A.07.02.01 COMAR 13A.15 Family Child Care, COMAR 13A.16 Child Care Center, 13A.17 Letters of Compliance,

13A.18 Large Family Child Care Homes - Safe Sleep (In Favor: 10, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0)

**COMAR 13A.08.01.17 School Use of Reportable Offenses (Permission to Republish)
(Presenter: Ms. Mary Gable, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Student Support, Academic Enrichment, and Education Policy)**

ACTION: Upon motion by Ms. McCusker, seconded by Dr. Michael, the State Board granted permission to republish amendments to COMAR 13A.08.01.17 School Use of Reportable Offenses (In Favor: 10, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0)

Queen Anne’s County Public Schools and St. Mary’s County Public Schools Calendar Modification Request

ACTION: Upon motion by Ms. McCusker, seconded by Ms. Ayoola, the State Board granted approval of the request to waive one day of the 180-day instructional requirement for Queen Anne’s County Public Schools and St. Mary’s County Public Schools to end the 2023-2024 school year on Friday, June 7, 2024, at 179 days consistent with COMAR 13A.02.01.04D(2)(a).
(In Favor: 10, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0)

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SESSION:

FreeState PTA

(Presenter: Mr. Gerrod Tyler, President, FreeState PTA, and Marla Posey-Moss, Vice President for Leadership)

Mr. Tyler provided the Board information on FreeState PTA as a child advocacy organization and its engagement in various activities, such as advocating for education-related policies, providing resources and programs for parents and teachers, supporting school improvement efforts, and organizing events to encourage family involvement in education. He highlighted FreeState PTA’s organizational goals, the School of Excellence Program, and other educational programs available through PTAs.

Mr. Greer thanked FreeState PTA for their work and their engagement with parents and asked if Mr. Tyler could provide information on the youth members that FreeState will plan to bring onto the FreeState PTA executive board.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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

Mr. Crawford provided some opening remarks on the legislative session and how pleased he is with the State Board and MSDE's efforts in Annapolis this year.

ACTION: The State Board voted unanimously to oppose House Bill 1254.

Mr. Hands provided an overview of House Bill 88/Senate Bill 266, House Bill 1426/Senate Bill 1102 and House Bill 200/Senate Bill 161. Dr. Alleyne provided an overview of Senate Bill 771/House Bill 945 and Senate Bill 370/House Bill 428.

Dr. Michael provided remarks on his satisfaction with MSDE and the State Board's engagement with many partners on Blueprint implementation through the legislative process.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pursuant to § 3-305(b)(1) and (7) of the General Provisions Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, and upon motion of Ms. McCusker, seconded by Dr. Johnson and with unanimous approval, the State Board of Education met in closed session on Tuesday, March 26, 2024, in Conference Room #6, 8th Floor, at the Nancy S. Grasmick Building. All board members were present except Mr. Bartley, Dr. Joan Mele-McCarthy, and Dr. Holly Wilcox. Also in attendance were Interim Superintendent Dr. Carey Wright, Executive Director of the State Board Zachary Hands, and Assistant Attorneys General Alan Dunklow and Jackie LaFiandra. Dr. Michael and Ms. Chang were absent during review of the opinions, while Dr. Wright and Ms. LaFiandra were absent during the briefing on the appointment process. The Executive Session commenced at 1:30 p.m. and ended at 2:10 p.m.

The State Board reviewed and approved three Opinions and one Order.

- *Sarah Ianacone v. Frederick County Board of Education* – employee termination – Opin. No. 24-05. The Board affirmed the local board's decision.
- *Justin King v. Harford County Board of Education* – employee suspension – Opin. No. 24-06. The Board affirmed the local board's decision.
- *J.S. and J.S. v. Harford County Board of Education* – student transfer – Opin. No. 24-07. The Board affirmed the local board.
- *Fred Ragazzone v. Anne Arundel County Board of Education* – untimely appeal – Order No. OR24-06. The Board dismissed the appeal for untimeliness.

President Clarence Crawford and Vice President Michael briefed the Board on the appointment process and timeline for the new State Superintendent of Schools.

STATE BOARD MEMBER COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

Ms. McCusker reported that the Education Policy Committee members met on March 13th. The next Ed Policy Committee meeting will be held on April 10th.

Dr. Goldson reported that the Education Transformation and Accountability Committee members did not meet in the month of March but will meet on April 11th at 6:00 pm.

FUTURE BOARD AGENDA ITEMS

No updates.

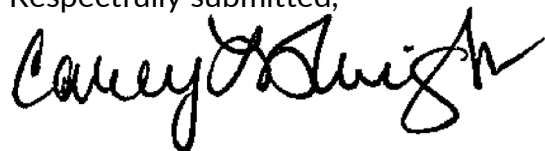
LEGAL OPINIONS AND ORDERS

Mr. Dunklow announced the following opinions:

- *Sarah Ianacone v. Frederick County Board of Education* – employee termination – Opin. No. 24-05
- *Justin King v. Harford County Board of Education* – employee suspension – Opin. No. 24-06
- *J.S. and J.S. v. Harford County Board of Education* – student transfer – Opin. No. 24-07
- *Fred Ragazzone v. Anne Arundel County Board of Education* – untimely appeal – Order No. OR24-06

With no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 2:18pm.

Respectfully submitted,



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

Date: April 30, 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-2024.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, April 30, 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.