

THE MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Minutes of the January 23, 2024 Meeting
200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201

The Maryland State Board of Education met on January 23, 2024 at 9:00 am 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, Dr. Joan Mele-McCarthy, Mr. Samir Paul, Esq., and Dr. Monica Goldson were in attendance.

Dr. Holly Wilcox participated virtually. Mr. Shawn Bartley, Esq. was absent. 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. Dr. Sharon Pepukayi – Update from Maryland Superintendents
2. Piya Scielzo - Neurodiversity from the Student Perspective and How to Create Inclusive School Environments
3. Jessica Shiller – Community Schools
4. McKenzie Allen – MD’s Public Charter Schools Program Grant (from US Dept. of Education)
5. Sharon Saroff - Special Education
6. Karin Bright – Science of Reading Implementation

NEW BUSINESS

- Approval of the Consent Agenda
 - Approval of the December 5, 2023 Meeting Minutes
 - Personnel Actions
 - Budget Adjustments, December 2023

ACTION: The State Board granted approval by unanimous consent. Dr. Wright introduced new hire Geoffrey Sanderson as the new Deputy State Superintendent of Accountability.

STATE BOARD RESOLUTION ON SCIENCE OF READING

(Presenter: Mr. Clarence Crawford, President of the State Board)

Mr. Crawford introduced the Board's proposed resolution calling for the Statewide Adoption and Implementation of the Science of Reading. At Mr. Crawford's direction, Mr. Hands read *Resolution 24-01 Statewide Adoption and Implementation of the Science of Reading* into the record. Mr. Crawford noted that the State Board is in full agreement with the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) in this matter.

Dr. Michael agreed with Mr. Crawford's comments and went on to say he believes this is a know better, do better moment and that this is the right way to go in terms of assuring that all students learn to read.

Dr. Mele-McCarthy shared her strong support for the resolution based on her professional experience and based on decades of scientific data on what we know works for students.

Dr. Wright spoke in support of the resolution and the benefits of the science of reading-based instruction for students in poverty.

Dr. Johnson agreed with Dr. Mele-McCarthy that speech language pathologists need to be a part of the collaboration so we can get the results that we want.

Ms. McCusker asked Dr. Wright what MSDE plans are for supporting the LEAs to implement these changes. Dr. Wright commented that she is going to speak to this during her Superintendent's Update. Mr. Greer made a similar request for more information on supporting caregivers and parents when they need it.

ACTION: Upon motion by Dr. Mele-McCarthy, seconded by Dr. Johnson, the State Board adopted *Resolution 24-01 Statewide Adoption and Implementation of the Science of Reading*. (In Favor: 12, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0)

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Dr. Wright presented MSDE's Framework for Continuous Literacy Improvement: Building a Comprehensive State Plan and her visions for implementing the Resolution.

Dr. Wilcox asked Dr. Wright if: (1) the coaches could do anything with progress monitoring as part of their job; and (2) whether the coaches will interface with parents and families. Dr. Wright explained she doesn't have the answer to the second question yet and the first question would be dependent on how confident the districts are with a coach being a part of the monitoring process because their job is to be working with the teachers.

Mr. Paul thanked Dr. Wright for charting out a plan to get us to this goal. He explained his concerns with the National Board Certification program which is not aligned with the science of reading. Dr. Wright responded that she and Dr. Michael have met with the National Board and have expressed their concerns to them. The National Board is supposed to get back to them about those concerns.

Ms. McCusker commented that we need to make sure that we are explaining that this is a reading initiative and not a testing initiative. Dr. Getty spoke in favor of adding a question to the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) enrollment form about what instruction has been given previously.

Dr. Johnson commented on the instructional materials being purchased by the LEAs and whether they are working and whether we can track what is being purchased.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SESSION: MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF BOARDS OF EDUCATION (MABE)

(Presenters: Ms. Michelle Corkadel, President, MABE and Ms. Jen Swichard Mallo, Chair, Howard County Board of Education)

Ms. Corkadel presented on MABE's services provided to all of the local boards of education. They include professional development, advocacy, legal and policy services, and insurance programs.

MABE places a high priority on maintaining a positive and productive relationship with the Maryland State Board of Education.

Ms. Swichard Mallo reported on the 2024 legislative positions and priorities. MABE supports continued governance autonomy for local boards of education to set education policy and school budgets, and opposition to unfunded mandates.

Dr. Goldson thanked Ms. Corkadel for raising the issue of artificial intelligence and focusing on equitable access rather than banning AI.

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS STANDARD DISCUSSION

(Presenters: Dr. Deann Collins, Deputy Superintendent, Office of Teaching and Learning; Phil Lasser, Executive Director, Office of the State Superintendent; and Matt Duque, Director MSDE Office of Research, Planning, and Program Evaluation)

Mr. Crawford introduced the presentation of the Department's briefing about the College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standard and implications for adopting a revised version of the CCR Standard, as directed by the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

Mr. Lasser and Mr. Duque reviewed the proposed CCR standard and distinguished the role of the CCR standard from the graduation standard and reviewed the extensive community and stakeholder engagement leading to the development of the CCR standard being proposed. Dr. Collins provided a comprehensive overview of MSDE's engagement with local school systems.

Dr. Johnson asked about whether the graduation requirement means that students pass the assessments or only take the assessments. Board Vice President Josh Michael clarified that the current graduation requirements to take but not pass the state assessments in English, Government, Mathematics, and Science are not the subject of the CCR standard before the State Board but will be revisited soon.

Mr. Lasser shared that state funding based on the new CCR standards would go into effect in fiscal year 2026 for the 2025–2026 school year. Mr. Greer raised concerns with funding.

Mr. Paul, Dr. Goldson, and Dr. Getty shared their enthusiasm for the new standards.

ACTION: Upon motion by Dr. Getty, seconded by Ms. Ayoola, the State Board adopted a new College and Career Readiness Standard, which lays out multiple paths to identify a student as College and Career Ready by the end of the 10th grade. These include two paths: 1. Earning a GPA of 3.0 or greater AND earning a grade of A, B, or C in Algebra I OR Scoring Proficient or above in the Algebra I MCAP assessment. Or 2. Scoring Proficient on the English 10 AND Algebra I MCAP assessment. (In Favor: 12, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0)

REPORTS TO THE STATE BOARD FOR DISCUSSION/ACTION

Virtual Education for Severe Weather Conditions (2024–2025 School Year)

Assistant State Superintendent Mary Gable presented on the Virtual Education for Severe Weather Conditions under §7-103.2 of the Education Article. This statute outlines a new policy by which LEAs can develop severe weather conditions virtual education plans.

ACTION: No action; informational only.

6th and 7th Grade Social Studies Frameworks

Mr. Peter Ramsey, Director of Social Studies, and Deputy State Superintendent Dr. Deann Collins presented for review and adoption the revised 6th and 7th grade Social Studies Frameworks. The revisions to the 6th and 7th grade social studies curricular frameworks included collaboration and engagement from a diverse set of stakeholders, including LEA content supervisors, academic partners, and classroom teachers.

ACTION: Upon motion by Ms. McCusker, seconded by Mr. Paul, the State Board granted permission to adopt and publish the revised 6th and 7th grade Social Studies Frameworks. (In Favor: 12, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0)

Waiver of COMAR 13A.12.01.11C Conditional Teacher Certification

Assistant State Superintendent Kelly Meadows presented a proposed action to modify the Conditional Teacher Certificate waiver. Dr. Wright is requesting the State Board modify a previously approved waiver related to COMAR 13A.12.01.11C Conditional Teacher Certificate, due to a gap in the waiver between January 1st and when recently adopted licensure regulations will take effect.

ACTION: Upon motion by Ms. McCusker, seconded by Ms. Chang, the State Board granted the State Superintendent's recommendation for a waiver of COMAR 13A.12.01.11C Conditional Teacher Certificate. (In Favor: 12, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0)

Queen Anne's County Public Schools Calendar Modification

Ms. Teresa Dantzler presented a waiver request from Queen Anne's County Public Schools to open school on Presidents' Day as an inclement weather make-up day, if needed, for the 2023-2024 school year.

ACTION: Upon motion by Ms. McCusker, seconded by Mr. Paul, the State Board approved Queen Anne’s County Public Schools’ waiver request to open school on Presidents’ Day. (In Favor: 12, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0)

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

(Presenters: Donna Gunning, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Financial Policy, Planning, Operations & Strategy; Zach Hands, Executive Director, Maryland State Board of Education; and Dr. Akilah Alleyne, Executive Director, Government Affairs, Education Policy, and External Relations)

Review of Governor’s FY 2025 Budget

Assistant State Superintendent Donna Gunning presented the proposed State Budget for FY 2025 as it pertains to MSDE Headquarters and operations and State Aid to Education for the 24 local school systems.

Review of Introduced Legislation and Positions

Dr. Akilah Alleyne, MSDE’s Executive Director for Office of Governmental Affairs, Education Policy, and External Relations, briefed the Board members and recommended positions on several pending bills.

ACTION: Upon motion by Ms. McCusker, seconded by Dr. Mele-McCarthy, the State Board took the following positions: (1) supports Senate Bill 5 and Senate Bill 161/House Bill 200; and (2) opposed House Bill 138. (In Favor: 12, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0)

STATE SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH UPDATE

(Presenters: Dr. Jack Smith and Monica Browne from the search firm of Hazard Young Attea and Associates (HYA))

Dr. Michael briefed the State Board on the public engagement process in the search for the next State Superintendent of Schools. Dr. Jack Smith and Ms. Browne presented a comprehensive overview and updates on the State Superintendent search.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pursuant to § 3-305(b)(1) and (7) of the General Provisions Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, and upon motion of Abisola Ayoola and seconded by Samir Paul and with unanimous approval, the State Board of Education met in closed session on Tuesday, January 23, 2024, in Conference Room #6, 8th Floor, at the Nancy S. Grasmick Building. All board members were present except Shawn Bartley, Esq.

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

The Executive Session commenced at 2:30 p.m. and ended at 3:37 p.m.

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

- *In the Matter of Request for Removal of Local Board Member Renee Dixon* – removal request. – Opin. No. 24-01. The Board declined to issue charges for removal from office and dismissed the appeal.
- *Joy Woods v. Baltimore County Board of School Commissioners* – teacher termination – Opin. No. 24-02. The Board adopted the ALJ’s proposed decision and affirmed the local board’s decision.
- *K.B. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – lack of jurisdiction – Order No. OR24-01. The Board dismissed all claims except those alleging violations of local board Policy FAA and failure of the IAG plan for lack of jurisdiction.
- *Tonya Wingfield, et al. v. Prince George’s County Board of Education* – lack of jurisdiction – Order No. OR24-02. The Board dismissed the appeal for lack of jurisdiction.

The Board considered a personnel matter.

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

Ms. McCusker reported that the Education Policy Committee members met on January 10th. Also there were a couple of legislative stakeholder meetings with MSEA’s legislative members and Strong Schools Maryland about their legislative priorities. The next Ed Policy Committee meeting will be held on February 7th.

Dr. Goldson reported that the Education Transformation and Accountability Committee members did not meet in the month of January but will meet on February 15th at 6:00 pm.

LEGAL OPINIONS AND ORDERS

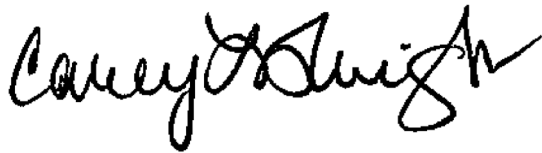
Mr. Schoen announced the following opinions:

- *In the Matter of Request for Removal of Local Board Member Renee Dixon* – removal request – Opin. No. 24-01

- *Joy Woods v. Baltimore County Board of School Commissioners* – teacher termination – Opin. No. 24-02
- *K.B. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – lack of jurisdiction – Order No. OR24-01
- *Tonya Wingfield, et al. v. Prince George’s County Board of Education* – lack of jurisdiction – Order No. OR24-02

With no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 4:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



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

Date: February 27, 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, February 27, 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.