

THE MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Minutes of the August 22, 2023 Meeting
200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201

The Maryland State Board of Education met on August 22, 2023 at 9:02am 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), Mr. Samir Paul, Esq., Ms. Chuen-Chin Bianca Chang, Ms. Rachel McCusker, Brigadier General (BG) Warner Sumpter, Mr. Nick Greer, Dr. Susan Getty, Dr. Holly Wilcox, Ms. Abisola Ayoola, Dr. Irma E. Johnson, and Mr. Shawn Bartley were in attendance.

Board members Dr. Joan Mele-McCarthy and Dr. Monica Goldson participated virtually. State Board Executive Director Zachary Hands was absent.

State Superintendent Mohammed Choudhury and Elliott Schoen (Assistant Attorney General) were also in attendance.

MEETING OPENING

Mr. Crawford called the meeting to order at 9:02am and led the pledge of allegiance. Mr. Schoen declared that a quorum was present.

Mr. Crawford provided opening remarks and welcomed members of the public.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- 1. Sharon Saroff – Special Education**
- 2. Angela Wu – Narcan Education in Middle School Health Curriculum**
- 3. Asheesh Misra – Teachers and Time**
- 4. Cheryl Bost – Proposed changes to COMAR 13A.12 and 13A.07**
- 5. Dr. Vermelle Greene – Being educators, citizens, and parents**
- 6. Laura Stewart, FreeStatePTA VP for Advocacy – Inclusive Books and Media**
- 7. Madelin Martinez – Hispanic Student Achievement**
- 8. Valarie Davis – Academic Outcomes for Black Students**
- 9. Genesis Aguilar Chavez – Supporting multilingual learners and the Latinx/Latine Community**
- 10. Aubrey Ellison – The removal of 54 books from shelves in Carroll County**

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. McCusker offered remarks on the upcoming first day of the 2023-2024 school year and thanked teachers for their preparation and work to welcome students back into classrooms.

President Crawford mentioned that many Board members will be out in school buildings on the first day of school across the state welcoming students back to the classroom.

- Approval of the Consent Agenda
 - Approval of the July 25, 2023 Meeting Minutes
 - Personnel Actions
 - Budget Adjustments, July 2023

ACTION: The State Board granted approval by unanimous consent.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM)

(Presenter: Dr. Jeff Lawson, Superintendent, Cecil County Public Schools, PSSAM President)

Dr. Lawson explained that PSSAM is building a new strategic planning process and is focused on supporting implementation of the Blueprint and providing technical assistance to LEA Blueprint Coordinators and CFOs. He reaffirmed a commitment to partnerships with the State Superintendent and the State Board and highlighted that PSSAM will be having monthly meetings with the State Superintendent.

Dr. Lawson spoke at length about PSSAM's potential legislative priorities, and how all stakeholders can work together towards optimum implementation of the Blueprint.

Maryland Chamber of Commerce (MDCC) National Civics Bee - National Civics Bee Finalists

(Presenter: Whitney Harmel, Executive Director, Maryland Chamber Foundation)

President Crawford introduced Ms. Harmel and spoke about his participation as a judge for the National Civics Bee and touched upon the impressive student participants in the Civics Bee. Ms. Harmel provided a brief history and overview of the Civics Bee and highlighted that this is the second year that Maryland has participated. Next year, Maryland will select a representative to participate in a national contest in Washington, D.C.

Two students presented their essays and the Board awarded citations and took pictures with the students and their families.

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE ON BLUEPRINT IMPLEMENTATION

(Presenters: Mohammed Choudhury, State Superintendent of Schools and Phil Lasser, Executive Director, Office of the State Superintendent)

Mr. Lasser reviewed updates that were made to the Accountability and Implementation Board's Blueprint Comprehensive Implementation Plan. He also provided an overview of an initial deployment of expert review teams for the coming school year and the school review process that the teams will employ.

REPORTS TO THE STATE BOARD FOR DISCUSSION/ACTION

Code of Maryland Regulations 13A.07.08 Incentive Program for Certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (Permission to Publish Amendments)

(Presenter: Kelly Meadows, Senior Advisor, Education Preparation and Quality)

Ms. Meadows gave a summary of the draft regulation, which defines the criteria for the selection of public school teachers who are eligible to receive financial aid to pursue National Board Certification based on the policies of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, as well as outlines the processes associated with the program.

ACTION: Upon motion by Gen. Sumpter, seconded by Dr. Johnson, the State Board granted permission to publish amendments to COMAR 13A.07.08 Incentive Program for Certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (In Favor: 13, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0)

PRIORITIES:

2023 Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science Results

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

Mr. Choudhury began with an overview of the presentation on the MCAP results for the 2022-2023 school year and highlighted areas of improvement and of concern. Ms. Haislet reviewed various highlights from the results, particularly the significant improvements in ELA that represent the greatest increases in performance for students in that subject in almost 10 years. Math proficiency rates remain a concern. Mr. Choudhury alluded to improvements in teaching and learning in the past two years

through the use of high-quality instructional materials and the science of reading as significant in the ELA results but emphasized that the state is far from declaring “mission accomplished.” He noted that improvements in math proficiency must be made. Ms. Haislet reviewed the results of the science assessments and the Next Generation Science Standards and described that the results were mixed depending on grade band. Ms. Haislet reviewed the Department’s data disclosure practices embedded within the State’s 2018 ESSA plan and provided context for the reporting data through the standards established in that plan. The Board discussed the importance of transparency in reporting the performance of students while continuing to ensure student data privacy.

MSDE’s Grantmaking Evolution: Insights, Challenges, and the Path Forward

(Presenter: Justin Dayhoff, Assistant State Superintendent, Fiscal Planning, Operations, and Strategy)

Mr. Dayhoff provided a comprehensive overview of MSDE’s grant management process and how it is being redesigned to align to the State Board and MSDE’s Strategic Plan by moving away from a compliance-based approach to one that is outcome-based and centers around customer support. He noted that MSDE’s approach to grant management previously created a significant number of challenges, including inconsistent application of standards and differences in the RFP process. MSDE has taken significant steps to improve this process. Mr. Dayhoff laid out the variety of grants that MSDE manages.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pursuant to § 3-305(b)(1), (7), and (13) of the General Provisions Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, and upon motion of Mr. Greer and seconded by Gen. Sumpter and with unanimous approval, the State Board of Education met for a second closed session in Conference Room #6, 8th Floor, at the Nancy S. Grasmick Building. All Board members were present. Also in attendance were Superintendent Choudhury, Deputy Superintendent Sylvia Lawson, Assistant Superintendent Justin Dayhoff, Assistant Attorneys General Elliott Schoen and Jackie La Fiandra. The Executive Session commenced at 2:50 p.m. and ended at 6:05 p.m.

At that time, the State Board reviewed and approved two opinions and three orders.

- *I.A. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – student transfer – Opin. No. 23-21. The Board affirmed the local board’s decision.
- *F.W. v. Baltimore County Board of Education* – reportable offense – Opin. No. 23-22.

The Board overturned the local board's decision and required BCPS to conduct an investigation and conference consistent with Educ. §§7-303 and 7-305.

- *Debra Evans v. Prince George's County Board of Education* – transfer of principal – OR23-12. The Board dismissed the appeal as not ripe for review.
- *Thomas Gleason v. St. Mary's County Board of Education* – transfer of teacher – OR23-13. The Board dismissed the appeal for untimeliness.
- *Zaharah Valentine v. Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners* – request for reconsideration – OR23-14. The Board dismissed the appeal for untimeliness.

Mr. Dayhoff presented confidential preliminary FY 2025 DBM Budget Estimates and Requests to the Board.

The Board considered a personnel matter.

STATE BOARD MEMBER COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

Gen. Sumpter reported on his visit to Phoenix International School of the Arts in LaPlata on August 7th. He said the school was very impressive and encouraged others to go tour the school.

Ms. McCusker reported that she and Mr. Paul represented the Board at a roundtable discussion in Prince George's County at Crossland High School with U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. Discussion centered around career and technology education program. Ms. McCusker said the students were amazing ambassadors for that program.

Ms. McCusker reported that the Big Rocks Committee met one last time before they set up the permanent committee and have identified areas of interest.

Vice President Michael reported that he and Dr. Getty attended the MACo Conference in Ocean City.

LEGAL OPINIONS AND ORDERS

Mr. Schoen announced the following opinions:

- *I.A. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – student transfer – Opin. No. 23-21
- *F.W. v. Baltimore County Board of Education* – reportable offense – Opin. No. 23-22
- *Debra Evans v. Prince George's County Board of Education* – transfer of principal – OR23-12

- *Thomas Gleason v. St. Mary's County Board of Education* – transfer of teacher – OR23-13
- *Zaharah Valentine v. Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners* – request for reconsideration – OR23-14

With no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Mohammed Choudhury
Secretary/Treasurer

Date: September 26, 2023

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, September 26, 2023.**

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.