

New Hampshire
State Board of Education
Minutes of the July 9, 2020 Meeting
Meeting held telephonically due to the COVID-19 State of Emergency

AGENDA ITEM I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the State Board of Education was convened at 9:14 a.m. The meeting was held telephonically due to the COVID-19 state of emergency. Drew Cline presided as Chair.

Members in attendance: Drew Cline, Chair, Sally Griffin, Ann Lane, Kate Cassady, Phil Nazzaro and Helen Honorow. Cindy Chagnon had another commitment and was not able to attend. Frank Edelblut, Commissioner of Education and Christine Brennan, Deputy Commissioner of Education were all in attendance.

AGENDA ITEM II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ann Lane led the pledge of allegiance.

AGENDA ITEM III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Written commentary was submitted by Racial Unity Team and was posted to the public materials on the Board's [webpage](#).

AGENDA ITEM IV. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/UPDATES

A. Student/Profile School Board ~ S.B.-FY-20-05-006

Kimberly Koprowski, the Profile Board Chairman, and the parents, Monica and Scott Laflamme, were present. Chairman Cline noted that both parties' statements would be limited to ten minutes.

Scott Laflamme wished to add a due process violation that was not included in the findings written by Hearing Officer, Scott Johnson. On May 11, Mr. Laflamme requested from the Profile School Board information that was provided to them by the Profile School principal for the May 5 School Board meeting. The Profile School Board Chair provided some of the information, but omitted some of the principal's testimony and information because it contained student names and, as such, would violate the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) privacy law. Mr. Laflamme argued that this omission constituted a violation of due process and that the Profile School Board could have redacted these names in order to supply the missing information.

Chairman Cline explained to Mr. Laflamme that the Board is not allowed to consider new information. He asked if the Board had any questions of the family. There being no questions, Chairman Cline asked if the family had any additional comments.

Ms. Laflamme noted that Hearing Officer Johnson's summary was excellent and that the omissions only recently came to the family's attention.

There being no additional comments from the family, Ann Lane asked whether the Laflammes' daughter was, in her senior year, technically a home-school student or a Profile School student. Ms. Laflamme replied that her daughter was still considered a full-time Profile School student since she was still taking a couple of classes at Profile. In reply to Chairman Cline's question about State Adequacy Aid, the Commissioner noted that the Laflammes' daughter was, during her senior year, a home education student who was taking classes at both VLACS and the Profile School. The State Adequacy Aid payments are paid in arrears, so Profile School would have received 100% for this year. Next year, Profile School would receive Adequacy payments for the courses taken at Profile, and VLACS would receive payments for the student's VLACS classes. Ms. Laflamme clarified that her daughter was never in fact a homeschool student; she was always a full-time student within the New Hampshire school system. Chairman Cline noted that legally, the Laflammes' daughter was technically classified as a homeschool student to ensure that she was not counted as truant.

Chair Koprowski from the Profile School Board responded to the alleged denial of due process, noting that neither the Laflammes nor the Hearing Officer ever specified what information was lacking. Regarding the concern that the principal's rebuttal was not shared with the Laflammes, Chair Koprowski noted that no new information was included in the rebuttal other than a few irrelevant court cases.

Chair Koprowski also discussed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the way in which hearings are normally conducted. Regarding the concern that the principal did not leave the meeting room, Chair Koprowski noted that she has several witnesses to verify that only the six Board members and the Board clerk were present. Regarding concerns that Senator Starr was unable to call in to the meeting, Chair Koprowski pointed out that five groups of people were able to call into the Zoom meeting and that the Board was not notified prior to the meeting of the senator's intention to call in. Chair Koprowski also noted that she summarized Senator Starr's letter at the meeting. Further, the parents did not attempt to bring up omitted information during the meeting, despite being offered two opportunities for rebuttal. In response to the parents' concern that the principal attended the meeting in person, while the Laflammes did not, Chair Koprowski noted that the meeting had to be kept to under ten people because of social distancing constraints.

Chairman Cline asked who was operating the Zoom meeting. Chair Koprowski replied that Principal Sheehan started the Zoom meeting and that there was not a specific individual dedicated to operating the computer throughout the meeting. Prior to deliberations, Principal Sheehan moved some people to the Zoom waiting room, but the Board all witnessed this procedure. The principal then left the room and was retrieved after deliberations were complete. Chairman Cline asked why the principal, a party to the case, was the person who initiated the Zoom meeting. Chair Koprowski did not find the principal's technical participation to be a conflict and noted that there were witnesses watching Principal Sheehan's actions.

Chairman Cline asked for more detail on the principal's rebuttal. Chair Koprowski received the rebuttal the night before the hearing (May 4) and delivered it to the parents at the meeting. Chair Koprowski tried unsuccessfully to contact Principal Sheehan multiple times prior to the meeting. Chairman Cline questioned whether it would have been more appropriate to provide the rebuttal to the parents prior to the meeting. Chair Koprowski says she would have liked to have done so, and that she provided two opportunities for rebuttal during the meeting in order to compensate for the parents' last-minute receipt of the principal's rebuttal.

Chairman Cline argued that the process was unfair to the Laflammas from a procedural standpoint, for the following reasons: a party to the case should not be in the room without the other party present; a party to the case should not be technically controlling the meeting; and when one party submits a late document, that document should be provided to the other party immediately. However, since the parents withdrew their main contention about participating in the graduation, the only decision left to the Board regards a reprimand to the School District. Thus, given that there is no remedy here, Chairman Cline believes the case is really moot.

Helen Honorow agreed that the request is moot. Ms. Honorow also concurred with Chairman Cline's concerns about due process and the presumably unintentional appearance of impropriety. Ms. Honorow felt that the Hearing Officer's position on due process should be made part of any potential order issued by the Board. Kate Cassady referenced Ed. 204.01, due process requirements. Chairman Cline suggested that, in addition to issuing an order mandating the School District reread Ed. 204.01, the Board should also address COVID-related restrictions and enumerate ways to avoid the appearance of impropriety in remote meetings.

MOTION: Ann Lane made the following motion, seconded by Helen Honorow, that the State Board accepts the Hearing Officer's report and adopts the Hearing Officer's Recommendation; that the State Board require the local board to adhere to hearing requirements under Ed. 204.01 and additional requirements outlined by the hearing officer when conducting

hearings via online video conferencing. Specifically, it is important during remote meetings to ensure that all parties have equal access to materials related to the case and that procedures do not give the appearance of favoring one party over the other.

VOTE: The motion was approved by roll-call vote by State Board of Education Members Sally Griffin, Ann Lane, Kate Cassady, Phil Nazzaro and Helen Honorow with the Chair abstaining.

B. Home Education Advisory Council Annual Report

Kathryn Michelotti, Home Education Advisory Council Chair, was present.

Chairman Cline confirmed that all Board members have read the report, so Chair Michelotti proceeded to questions.

Ann Lane asked if there were any changes to membership or leadership of the Council. Chair Michelotti replied that all changes were included in the report and noted that Kara Potter resigned at the end of her term, and the Council is awaiting a nomination. Michelle Levell was replaced by Catie McLaughlin from the Seacoast Christian Home Educators Association. Jennifer Pereira elected to stay on at the end of her term. Fred Fraser took over Kara Potter's position of secretary. Helen Rist is still serving as placeholder for the School Administrators Association, though she might be replaced.

Chairman Cline asked how many homeschooled students there are in New Hampshire. Chair Michelotti replied that about 5% of school-age children in New Hampshire are homeschooled. The Council has seen an uptick in inquiries about homeschooling since the pandemic, and predicts there will be more families homeschooling in the upcoming school year. Chairman Cline noted that many people do not understand the distinction between crisis schooling for the pandemic and homeschooling. Chair Michelotti pointed out that parents who have been abruptly thrown into crisis homeschooling have a very different experience than parents who have made the conscious decision to homeschool. The Council has been providing suggestions and resources to help parents cope with crisis schooling.

Kate Cassady asked if the Council knows the actual headcount for students being homeschooled. Chair Michelotti replied that they know the actual number of new students each year because this number is reported to the Department of Education. However, to get an accurate headcount, one would have to cross-check all the numbers of reported new homeschoolers and then subtract the number of homeschoolers who have sent in letters of completion, which is not feasible given manpower limitations. Chairman Cline noted that last year, the Department reported a number of just under 5,000 homeschooled students.

Ms. Cassady also asked when the Council meets. According to Chair Michelotti, meetings occur on the third Thursday of every other month from 3:30 to 5:00 PM. The schedule is posted on the Department's website, and the meetings are open to the public. The Council has held extra meetings this year to complete and vote on the new rules that they have been working on. Meetings usually take place at the Department, but recently have been occurring on Zoom. The next meeting will take place in September 2020.

AGENDA ITEM V. LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

A. Initial Proposal - Regional Career and Technical Center Lease Aid (Ed. 322)

Amanda Phelps, NHDOE Administrative Rules Coordinator, provided a brief background on the proposal. Career and Technical Center Lease Aid is in the same Ed 322 rule as Item C, Charter School Lease Aid. The intent is to pull Charter School Lease Aid out of Ed 322 and create its own rule in Ed 323. The change has been proposed because the Lease Aid program was funded for the first time, but funding was provided only for charter schools. Further, Ed 322 contains some differences between lease aid for charter schools and lease aid for career and technical centers, so the Department thought it best to separate the rules. The current proposal would simply remove reference to charter schools from Ed 322. The Department plans, at a later date, to review the process for charter school lease aid and update the Ed 322 rules with a new process.

MOTION: Ann Lane made the following motion, seconded by Kate Cassady, that the State Board of Education approve Ed. 322, Regional Career and Technical Center Lease Aid.

VOTE: The motion was approved by roll-call vote by State Board of Education Members Sally Griffin, Ann Lane, Kate Cassady, Phil Nazzaro and Helen Honorow, with the Chair abstaining.

B. INITIAL PROPOSAL – Donations to Regional Career and Technical Education Centers (Ed 1308)

Amanda Phelps provided background on the proposal. Senate Bill 270 was passed in the prior legislative session. It requires the Board to adopt rules regarding the form used for donations and dictates how the form is internally processed. Senate Bill 270 clearly lays out the requirements and process; the Board simply needs to incorporate the form by reference in the rules.

MOTION: Kate Cassady made the following motion, seconded by Sally Griffin, that the State Board of Education approve the initial

proposal for Ed. 1308, Donations to Regional Career and Technical Education Centers.

VOTE: The motion was approved by roll-call vote by State Board of Education Members Sally Griffin, Ann Lane, Kate Cassady, Phil Nazzaro and Helen Honorow with the Chair abstaining.

C. INITIAL PROPOSAL - Charter School Lease Aid (Ed 323)

Amanda Phelps discussed Charter School Lease Aid, which is basically the same as Item A.

Helen Honorow pointed out that when charter applications are approved, there is often a tiered amount of space needed per year, which changes as the school expands to include more grades. Given this fact, Ms. Honorow requested clarification on the term, "all you need to operate the school." Ms. Phelps said that the question would best be answered by NHDOE colleagues, Amy Clark and Caitlin Davis, who drafted the rules. Ms. Davis said that currently, there is a set amount of lease aid that schools are eligible to apply for based on the overall lease of the space. They are currently reviewing the rules to possibly add modifications related to specific space usage. Ms. Davis also noted that the amount of money being received is nominal. Nate Greene, NHDOE Administrator, Bureau of Educational Opportunities, added that the idea is really to prevent charter schools from receiving lease aid for portions of the lease used for additional, non-educational businesses within the space. The clause was not referring to a currently existing situation, but rather to prevent such a situation from arising in the future.

Ms. Honorow also pointed out a potential contradiction: on one hand, initial building costs of modifying the building to meet the requirements of the educational program are eligible for lease aid, but on the other, permanent upgrades or renovations to the lease space are not eligible for aid. Nate Greene replied that any issues arising during the preliminary inspection that need to be addressed in order to bring the building up to educational code are eligible for lease aid. Other nonessential permanent modifications to the building are ineligible, since lease aid covers only modifications that are included in the initial lease (such as removing a drive-through window from a former fast-food building).

Chairman Cline asked about later expansions into additional space (e.g., when other tenants in the building vacate). Since a new lease agreement would be necessary to expand, would these later modifications be eligible for lease aid? Ms. Davis thought that such a scenario would be covered and noted that they would add further clarification to the proposal. Chairman Cline agreed that the eligibility section should be amended for clarity.

Ann Lane asked about the source of the grant funding. Ms. Davis replied that general funds were allocated in the legislature-approved budget to the Department of Education for lease aid to approved charter schools. These funds are re-allocated and approved annually. Chairman Cline added that lease aid funding depends on the amount of money available in the state budget and that it tends not to get funded in lean years.

MOTION: Ann Lane made the following motion, seconded by Sally Griffin, that the State Board of Education approve Ed 323, Charter School Lease Aid.

VOTE: The motion was approved by roll-call vote by State Board of Education Members Sally Griffin, Ann Lane, Kate Cassady, Phil Nazzaro and Helen Honorow with the Chair abstaining.

D. FINAL PROPOSAL – Robotics Education Grant Fund (Ed. 1307)

Per Amanda Phelps, a public hearing was held for this rule on June 11. The Department and the Board did not receive any written or oral testimony. Ms. Phelps made one amendment on the last page of the rule (regarding eligibility to open a new application period if funds still remain from the prior period), which is still pending approval from the Office of Legislative Services (OLS).

Ann Lane asked if there is a process whereby schools can request a waiver on any of the rules. Ms. Phelps said that there is no overall waiver rule within the education rules. Chairman Cline added that these rules are in at least partial alignment with state law, so waivers are probably not possible.

Chairman Cline proposed a minor change at the top of page 1, arguing that certain language could lead to the misperception that charter public schools are not full public schools. He proposed the passage, "to motivate and encourage public school and charter public school students," be changed to "public school students, including charter school students." He also requested a later, similar passage referencing "public school or charter public school" be changed to "public school, including charter public school." Ms. Phelps noted that this clarification needs to be made in the definitions as well.

MOTION: Ann Lane made the following motion, seconded by Kate Cassady, that the State Board of Education approve the final proposal for Ed 1307, Robotics Education Grant Fund, as amended.

VOTE: The motion was approved by roll-call vote by State Board of Education Members Sally Griffin, Ann Lane, Kate Cassady, Phil Nazzaro and Helen Honorow with the Chair abstaining.

E. Update on Joint Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules (JLCAR) on the Ed. 500 Rules

Amanda Phelps provided an update on the Ed 500 rules. The Joint Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules (JLCAR) held a meeting on June 19, during which the Ed 500 rules were reviewed and discussed. The Ed 500 rules consists of four proposals which overhaul the rules that grant credentials to educators in New Hampshire. OLS submitted comments prior to the JLCAR meeting, in accordance with the rule-making procedures. All substantive comments were addressed with Steve Appleby, NHDOE, Director of Educator Support and Higher Education, as a conditional approval request. The only substantive comment not addressed with an amendment to the rule related to the term "licensed." OLS flagged the use of this term, arguing that the Board lacks the legislative authority because the statute refers to "license" as "certificate." This concern over the word remained an issue throughout the rule-making process.

Steve Appleby, Attorney Bond, and Ms. Phelps agreed that rather than making a change, they would have a discussion of the issue at the next JLCAR meeting. The majority of JLCAR members seemed inclined to vote to approve the request. However, JLCAR's discussion concluded with a vote to postpone the rules until July 16 because of the upcoming June 30 legislative session. Senator Kahn, a member of JLCAR, believed the word could be changed legislatively. Ms. Phelps believes the term was changed to "license" during this legislative session. However, not all of the statutes that contain the word "certificate" were changed. Discussions are continuing with Senator Kahn. Ms. Phelps anticipates receiving a conditional approval at the July 16 JLCAR meeting, and assumes it will be recommended to amend the remaining relevant statutes with the term "license."

F. Update on the Charter School Rules

Caitlin Davis and Nate Greene have been working on a revision of the charter school rules. Amanda Phelps believes some substantive changes are pending that were not ready for this month's meeting. An initial proposal should be ready for Board review in time for the August meeting.

G. Update on Home Education Rules

Attorney Bond and Amanda Phelps have been working with the Home Education Advisory Council. A consensus has been reached, albeit one that does not address every individual member's concerns. The goal is to align the rules with the statute. Ms. Phelps and Council Chair Michelotti will present the rules to the Board at the August meeting.

H. EMERGENCY RULE – Vocational Rehabilitation Programs (Ed. 1000)

Ms. Phelps noted that an interim rule governing vocational rehabilitation was instituted in anticipation of the current rules' expiration in January. An initial proposal for the new rule is in the works, but the process was delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions. Because the interim rule expired yesterday, a new emergency rule is required in order to continue providing services. There are no changes to the interim rule.

Helen Honorow asked for additional detail on the rationale for action, asking what the Department is trying to navigate. Per Ms. Phelps, COVID restrictions first began around the time that the initial proposal for vocational rehabilitation was due for a public hearing. JLCAR and OLS raised concerns that 100% remote meetings would not comply with the requirements of a rule-making hearing, and it took three months to sort out those concerns. Further, substantive changes have been made between the initial and final proposals, necessitating an additional public hearing for the final proposal.

MOTION: Ann Lane made the following motion, seconded by Kate Cassady, that the State Board of Education adopt the emergency rule for Vocational Rehabilitation Programs, Ed 1000.

VOTE: The motion was approved by roll-call vote by State Board of Education Members Sally Griffin, Ann Lane, Kate Cassady, Phil Nazzaro and Helen Honorow with the Chair abstaining.

AGENDA ITEM VI. COUNCIL for TEACHER EDUCATION (CTE)

Laura Stoneking, NHDOE, Administrator, Bureau of Educator Preparation and Higher Education, presented the updates from the Council for Teacher Education (CTE).

A. Saint Anselm Substantive Change Request: 1-year Extension of Ed. 612.33 Computer Science Program

Laura Wasielewski is present, representing Saint Anselm College regarding a brief extension. They are scheduled for a site review next year.

Ann Lane noted that new computer science minimum standards were approved during the course of 2018, with initial implementation beginning in 2019. Ms. Lane requested verification that Saint Anselm's teaching program incorporates these computer science minimum standards. Ms. Wasielewski replied that, shortly after the computer science program was approved, Saint Anselm's new program was approved, and the reviewer commented that the college had implemented all of the standards. However, Saint Anselm does not currently have any students

enrolled in that program; the five-month extension was requested by the CTE-designated co-chairs in order to ensure that all of -Saint Anselm's other programs are aligned before moving forward.

MOTION: Ann Lane made the following motion, seconded by Kate Cassady, that the State Board of Education moves to grant Saint Anselm College the extension of Ed 612.33 Computer Science Program approval through August 30, 2021.

VOTE: The motion was approved by roll-call vote by State Board of Education Members Sally Griffin, Ann Lane, Kate Cassady, Phil Nazzaro and Helen Honorow with the Chair abstaining.

B. Upper Valley Educator Institute (UVEI): 2 New Program Reviews and Approval Recommendations

Laura Stoneking indicated that Page Thomkins, Executive Director from UVEI, Becky Wipfler, practicing member of UVEI, and Brian Walker were present to answer Board questions. Ms. Stoneking reported that Mr. Walker was a CTE reviewer of the proposal to implement the two new programs, one for reading and writing teacher and one for reading and writing specialist. There were no questions.

MOTION: Ann Lane made the following motion, seconded by Sally Griffin, that the State Board of Education grant Upper Valley Educators Institute full approval of Ed 612.02, Reading and Writing Teacher (Post Bac) and Ed 614.02 Reading and Writing Specialist (Post Bac) programs through August 31, 2022.

VOTE: The motion was approved by roll-call vote by State Board of Education Members Sally Griffin, Ann Lane, Kate Cassady, Phil Nazzaro, and Helen Honorow, with the Chair abstaining.

C. New England College (NEC): Program Review and Approval Recommendations

Laura Stoneking announced the presence of NEC attendees Suzanne Canali, Acting Associate Dean, Education Division, Wayne Lesperance, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Pat Corbett, and Review Co-Chairs Kelly Moore Dunn and Chris Ward. NEC had an extensive site review for all but four of their new programs, leading to a recommendation for conditional two-year approval for the listed programs.

Helen Honorow asked Ms. Stoneking what will happen if the Board goes with the recommendation of conditional approval for the listed programs. What

happens if there is a concern that the recommendations are not being appropriately addressed in the six-month or one-year report? Ms. Stoneking replied that the first step on conditional approval involves providing documentation of how the unmet standards are being addressed, with the goal of transitioning from unmet to met. They are then filtered through the Council, and the Council makes the recommendation to continue to work on unmet standards. The recommendation then comes to the State Board. In Ms. Stoneking's experience, most institutions meet the standards within six months to one year. At the six-month mark, it is submitted to the CTE, at which point it returns to the Board with the new CTE recommendation.

Given that every single program received a score between 2 and 3, Helen Honorow has a number of concerns, including: data collection is not consistently being done and is not being used to inform decision-making on the decline in enrollment; there are not enough classes in the physical education program; some courses attempt to address all teachers rather than providing content specificity. Wayne Lesperance reassured Ms. Honorow that the leaders are all aligned in terms of prioritizing content and that the leaders took the review process very seriously. He also emphasized that the steps outlined in the plan speak to the concerns raised by students and reviewers, as well as the concerns just mentioned by Ms. Honorow.

Pat Corbett noted that, since the review, Suzanne Canali has been moved into the Director of Teacher Certification role, and brings with her expertise in state standards. As such, Ms. Canali will focus on addressing the program deficiencies based on the feedback in the report. This is an improvement over the college's prior practice, in which an outside person was brought in to oversee the process.

Ms. Canali addressed some specific concerns raised by Ms. Honorow. Ms. Canali attributes the serious decline in the number of enrolled students to significant turnover in leadership. She noted that leaders in this field need to be adept at helping faculty embrace the changes in educator preparation. Ms. Canali also reiterated that she and the other leaders are fully aware of the need for more content and hope to evolve the program such that students will ultimately be able to major in their content area.

MOTION: Ann Lane made the following motion, seconded by Kate Cassady, that the State Board of Education grant New England College two-year conditional approval of the following ten (10) programs through August 31, 2022.

Ed 612.04	Elementary Education K-8, Undergraduate Conversion
Ed 612.05	Secondary English 5-12, Undergraduate Conversion

Ed 612.07	Special Education Programs, Undergraduate Conversion
Ed 612.18	Secondary Education Mathematics 7-12, Undergraduate (teach out) Conversion
Ed 612.21	Physical Education, Undergraduate Conversion
Ed 612.25	Secondary Education Life Science, Undergraduate Conversion
Ed 612.28	Secondary Social Studies 5-12, Undergraduate Conversion
Ed 612.30	Theatre Education, Undergraduate Conversion
Specialty Areas	
Ed 614.05	Superintendent, Graduate
Ed 614.04	School Principal, Graduate

Additionally, in accordance with Ed 602.13, New England College shall develop a progress report. This report shall be submitted to the department within 6 months of the State Board approval decision.

VOTE: The motion was approved by roll-call vote by State Board of Education Members Sally Griffin, Ann Lane, Kate Cassady, Phil Nazzaro and Helen Honorow with the Chair abstaining.

D. University of New Hampshire (UNH) Substantive Change Request: Ed. 312.30 Theatre and Ed. 612.32 Dance Education

UNH has requested to add an additional proposed format to both the theater and dance programs. Currently, both are offered as Master of Education or a Master of Arts in Teaching, and UNH is proposing to add the bachelor's degree. Raina Ames, Department Chair, Joe Onosko, Director, Education Preparation, and Liz Arcieri, Coordinator of Accreditation and Certification, were present to answer Board questions. There were no questions.

MOTION: Ann Lane made the following motion, seconded by Kate Cassady, that the State Board of Education grant UNH approval of a substantive change of educator preparation programs, Ed 612.30, Theatre (M.ED, MAT, & BA) and ED 612.32 Dance Education (M.ED, MAT & BA), to offer the Bachelor's in addition to the Master's level through May 30, 2022.

VOTE: The motion was approved by roll-call vote by State Board of Education Members Sally Griffin, Ann Lane, Kate Cassady, Phil Nazzaro and Helen Honorow with the Chair abstaining.

AGENDA ITEM VII. CHARTER SCHOOL REPORTS/ UPDATES

Jane Waterhouse presented the Charter School updates.

A. Charter Amendment Request for Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS)

The Virtual Learning Academy is requesting an amendment to their charter to add grades K through 3.

Steve Kossakoski, CEO of VLACS, noted that the VLACS board unanimously approved a request to change the charter to include grades K through 3. The primary reason for this change is to help families during the pandemic. VLACS does, however, intend to continue offering the new grades after the pandemic.

Helen Honorow asked what kindergarten will look like in an online setting. Mr. Kossakoski replied that parents are required to be involved and that there are both asynchronous and synchronous components. VLACS is using curriculum from the Florida Virtual School, which has several years of experience offering kindergarten-level online education. This curriculum involves engaging kids in activities such as science experiments and dioramas, in addition to the online work. VLACS would also provide one-on-one support, as well as activities such as story hour. The curriculum also gives parents flexibility to structure the day as they see fit.

Ann Lane expressed a reservation about the K through 3 program being appropriate for young children in light of the importance of socialization with other children at this age. She did not think such a program is appropriate for the majority of K through 3 children outside of the pandemic. Mr. Kossakoski emphasized that many families who use VLACS during the pandemic will return to a traditional school setting post-COVID.

Ms. Cassady asked about the anticipated head count and the head count goal. Mr. Kossakoski said that it is a moving target, but recent surveys indicate that between 8% and 20% of parents may not send their children to school in the fall. VLACS plans to have at least five to ten instructors available for the program. Commissioner Frank Edelblut interjected that a number of superintendents in the district are concerned about their ability to support all of their students during the pandemic. Commissioner Edelblut then reached out to Mr. Kossakoski to request his help.

Ms. Cassady asked if K through 3 is intended to be full-time. Mr. Kossakoski anticipates that these grades will have a full curriculum but will not be full-time until after the holidays. VLACS is planning a full-time program for grades 4 and 5.

Ms. Honorow asked if Mr. Kossakoski feels confident in VLACS's ability to meet the state standards at the kindergarten level. Mr. Kossakoski replied that they would ensure compliance with state standards for all of the newly proposed grades before attempting to open a full-time program. If a family wants to enroll full-time for the fall, they could file a homeschool letter and then access the VLACS curriculum to fulfill the needs of a homeschool program.

MOTION: Ann Lane made the following motion, seconded by Kate Cassady, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to RSA 194-B:3, XI, I, authorizes Virtual Learning Academy Charter School to amend the charter to add a kindergarten through grade 3 (K-3) program.

VOTE: The motion was approved by roll-call vote by State Board of Education Members Sally Griffin, Ann Lane, Kate Cassady, Phil Nazzaro and Helen Honorow with the Chair abstaining.

B. Charter Renewal for Making Community Connections Public Charter School (MC2), Monadnock Campus

Jane Waterhouse, NHDOE, Charter School Administrator, introduced John Sabolevski, the new Chief Education Officer replacing Kim Carter, who is now a member of the Board of Trustees and the Treasurer; Chris O'Reilly, Head of School for the Monadnock campus; Jodi Adams, Board Chairperson; and Teacher Advisors Elizabeth Cardine and Sarah Stout.

Ms. Waterhouse provided a brief summary of the evaluation and visitation of the school by the review team. The review team met with students and stakeholders and spent the whole day onsite. The team found that the charter school is making progress toward achieving its mission, programmatically, academically, and organizationally. The review team believes MC2 has demonstrated that they are meeting or exceeding the achievement of their mission. On average, students make no less than one year's growth each year in reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies. Students complete at least two substantive projects each year, participate in internships, and develop independent or group learning projects. Graduation rates remain low compared to state and local schools, but showed an increase from 2018 to 2019.

MC2 has developed several organizational goals to build sustainability, including increasing stakeholder participation in the Site Council, a group that focuses on sustainability plans. Other goals include developing a benefits package for their staff and replacing aging technology. MC2 is developing a review of the

organizational structure in order to address any areas in need of improvement. A review of Board meeting minutes indicates that the school is financially stable, and the administration provides regular updates to the Board of Trustees.

The team's evaluation included responsible use of public funds, sustainability of the school, and progress in promoting student attainment of expected knowledge and skills, and MC2 satisfied the team on all counts. The reviewers did note a few sustainability concerns, including limited resources, mainly due to insufficient funds from fundraising efforts, turnover in paraprofessionals, and lower-than-anticipated enrollment. All the stakeholders feel that a solution to these sustainability challenges can be overcome. Other concerns the review team had from the interviews include:

- The school needs to develop a more focused and committed data-driven accountability plan to support the school.
- The school needs to improve relationships with ascending school districts in order to better meet the academic needs of students.
- The school needs to develop a robust student recruitment plan/campaign that targets students who would benefit from MC2's educational environment.
- The school needs to consider revising the orientation process for new students who enter the school at different times of year in order to minimize disruptions to existing students.
- The school needs to improve staff retention by offering a competitive salary and benefit package (a project the school is working on through the Site Council).

The evaluation team unanimously recommended renewal for MC2.

Kate Cassady noticed that there are only six members on the Board of Trustees, whereas she believed there should be seven members per the charter school application. The seven should include two parents, two professional educators or direct service providers, and three community members. Ms. Cassady is wondering if the charter requirements have changed since the document she is looking at. Kim Carter said that according to the bylaws in their charter, the board should consist of 5 to 12 members, in accordance with RSA 194B, Section 5. Nate Greene said that the specific board makeup referenced by Ms. Cassady (two parents, et cetera), does not exist, either within the administrative rules or within the RSA itself. He added that the parameters Ms. Cassady referenced might be related to an internal Department process from years ago.

Helen Honorow requested a response to the recommendations that the team provided, such as the use of data. Ms. Carter replied that all of the items recommended by the team were in line with items the school has already been working on.

Ms. Carter noted that the data concern is of utmost importance to the school, and the Board's Academic Excellence Committee is looking at instituting metrics to measure values laid out in the school charter. The school is also finalizing transition to a student information system that would increase capacity for generating ongoing reports and data measuring student progress. This student information system is designed to integrate with MC2's learning management system.

The Site Council and new CEO John Sabolevski are focusing on the enrollment piece.

Ms. Carter argued that fundraising has actually been a relative strength for the Monadnock school, but there is always a need for more. As indicated in the fundraising report, over \$100,000 has been raised in their first five years at that campus. They continue to grow goodwill and have established regular fundraisers that have become part of the community fabric, including a twice-yearly comedy night, "Let it Slide."

Retention of staff has also improved significantly. All staff from last year have elected to return.

Revisions to the orientation process were already in the works before the review. Advisor teacher Sarah Stout has been instrumental in this work.

Elizabeth Cardine has focused on outreach, successfully building relationships with the local Chamber of Commerce as well as other local organizations, such as the Hannah Grimes Incubator center.

Kate Cassady asked Ms. Waterhouse if follow-up deadlines for completion are provided to schools after reviews take place. Ms. Waterhouse said that she does not provide deadlines at this time, but will follow up with Nate Greene to develop such a system.

MOTION: Ann Lane made the following motion, seconded by Kate Cassady, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to Ed 318.12 and Ed 318.13, authorize the charter renewal for Making Community Connections Chartered Public School, Monadnock Campus.

VOTE: The motion was approved by roll-call vote by State Board of Education Members Sally Griffin, Ann Lane, Kate Cassady, Phil Nazzaro and Helen Honorow with the Chair abstaining.

AGENDA ITEM VIII. COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE

Commissioner Frank Edelblut reported that the School Transition Reopening and Redesign Taskforce (STRRT) wrapped up its work last Monday. The taskforce provided a framework of high-level recommendations, along with sub-recommendations, that the Department has fleshed out. These recommendations were based on a number of factors, including over 56,000 field surveys, as well as content produced by the work groups. AIR from the Comprehensive Center for Region 1 has served as facilitation partner throughout this process. Using this material, the Department fleshed out some detailed reopen guidance, which was then handed off to both the Governor's office and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). DHHS is currently working through the guidance in preparation for reopening in September.

STRRT's work, including communications and content, is transparently documented on the Department's website and can be found on the STRRT [webpage](#). All survey results have been published on the webpage in Excel format. All material will ultimately be made fully accessible through conversion to open-source applications (e.g., converting from Excel to PDF format), per state requirements.

As reopening preparation continues, the STRRT work will come out, DHHS will provide their guidance, and the Department will publish a guidance document. Further, the Department is collaborating closely with districts as they work to develop their local reopening plans. All of this work will merge into firm back-to-school plans for the fall.

Based on results from the STRRT-conducted surveys, the Department recognizes the significant number of families and educators who, because of underlying health risks, will need to use a remote model. The Department is working with the schools to ensure that these individuals can be accommodated. The K-3 VLACS plan outlined earlier is one of the accommodations being worked on.

In addition, the Department is encouraging districts to formulate plans on how to respond to an actual or suspected case of COVID. For example, if a particular school has a COVID-related incident, would the school need to move out of the building for three days for deep cleaning? Could cleaning efforts instead focus only on certain classrooms? Or would a 14-day quarantine be necessary? The goal is to minimize disruptions to student learning in the event of such a situation.

The State is also using the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds to invest in a statewide learning management system through Canvas. The Department is working in partnership with the University System of New Hampshire to offer all districts a statewide license to Canvas for K through 20. The university and community college systems, as well as some districts, had already been using Canvas; now Canvas will be made available to all school

districts. This technology investment will enhance nimbleness and facilitate transition between in-person and remote learning.

Add-ons to the Canvas implementation include Kaltura, a tool which will help districts to more easily manage video content, and statewide Zoom licenses to enhance affordability of the Zoom platform.

New Hampshire's approach to a statewide learning management system is not unique; other states, including Utah, Wyoming, Indiana, and North Carolina, have successfully implemented this type of system.

The Department has made available to the districts \$33 million of CARES Act funds received from the U.S. Department of Education. Schools are in the process of filing their applications, and 35 applications have been approved thus far. As of yesterday, 8 applications were in review, and 4 had been submitted but not yet picked up for review. There remain 132 districts that have not yet submitted an application. The Department conducted a call yesterday with school leaders to encourage them to move forward with their applications.

Working in conjunction with Health and Human Services and the New Hampshire National Guard, the Department is working to distribute 25,000 wellness kits to New Hampshire students. This program was initiated by DHHS, which was seeking a partner to help distribute their dental wellness kits. Soon after districts were notified of the kits, the program quickly became oversubscribed. The kits will be distributed in July.

The broadband expansion being run through the Office of Strategic Initiative also continues to move forward. The RFP has closed, and the review process is beginning. The goal of the expansion is to support families and educators who need to work remotely.

AGENDA ITEM IX. OPEN BOARD DISCUSSIONS

Helen Honorow asked if the Board was planning to discuss the fiscal impact statement, noting that it was not on the agenda. Chairman Cline replied that he did not put it on the agenda because it was not received until the last minute and invited discussion on the topic.

Ms. Honorow asked how the implementation of a no-cost rigorous remote program is possible, as claimed in the fiscal impact statement. Chairman Cline replied that he was not aware of the methodology that went into the claim and asked Commissioner Edelblut if he was aware of how the fiscal impact statement was produced. Commissioner Edelblut indicated that he was not aware and that he actually has not yet seen the statement.

Ms. Honorow noted that it actually says "0" on the statement and asked who crafted the statement and how to find the answer to her question. Chairman Cline said he would be happy to track down the information. He also stated that, in general, when fiscal impact statements are made, there is often a limit to what information can be gathered. As a result, if impact cannot be determined definitively, the impact is sometimes assumed to be insignificant.

Ms. Honorow pointed to an article in the *Nashua Telegraph* stating that it would cost \$800,000 to get Chromebooks for students who require them. This represents only one piece of a remote program in one district, so it seems implausible that a statewide program would cost nothing. Amanda Phelps replied that there are specific questions that need to be answered in a request for a fiscal impact statement. In particular, it has to be determined how the new rules relate to the old rules and whether there is a cost increase between the proposed rule and the old rule. Based on the answers provided, the legislative budget assistant makes a determination of the fiscal impact. Ms. Phelps did not have her notes available, but she stated she would forward the actual requests, along with the answers, to the Board. Ms. Honorow noted that the new rule requiring implementation of a rigorous remote learning program would clearly have a different impact than the old rule, which did not require the remote program.

Commissioner Edelblut agreed to investigate the issue further. He also noted that Chromebooks are used for in-person instruction, and he is unsure of the context for the figure Ms. Honorow cited in the newspaper article. Additionally, the emergency rule will expire, and superintendents are trying to make plans to support remote learning in the fall. Commissioner Edelblut encourages the Board to keep in mind that each district is coming up with its own plans for integrating remote learning into their instructional models and that it is important to keep the big picture in mind and allow for nimbleness in devising responses. Ms. Honorow replied that she is not commenting on whether or not the provision should be in the rules; rather, she is asking strictly about the cost piece.

AGENDA ITEM X. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

AGENDA ITEM XI. TABLED ITEMS

There was no discussion.

AGENDA ITEM XII. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Meeting Minutes of June 11, 2020 – Helen Honorow had one correction to the meeting minutes on page 4948, in the second-to-last sentence. She noted that the word "redaction" should be replaced with "retraction."

Chairman Cline pointed out a correction on page 4974 in the first sentence of the last paragraph, noting that when you have a dollar sign, you don't need the word "dollar."

MOTION: Ms. Lane made the following motion, seconded by Kate Cassady, that the Board accept the minutes as amended.

VOTE: The motion was approved by roll-call vote by State Board of Education Members Sally Griffin, Ann Lane, Kate Cassady, Phil Nazzaro and Helen Honorow, with the Chair abstaining.

AGENDA ITEM XIII. NONPUBLIC SESSION

MOTION: Kate Cassady made the following motion, seconded by Sally Griffin, that the State Board of Education move to nonpublic session under RSA 91-A:3, II(c).

VOTE: The motion was approved at 12:30 PM by roll-call vote by State Board of Education Members Sally Griffin, Ann Lane, Kate Cassady, Phil Nazzaro, and Helen Honorow with the Chair abstaining.

MOTION: Helen Honorow made the following motion, seconded by Kate Cassady, that the State Board of Education to leave nonpublic session and return to public session at 12:53 PM.

VOTE: The motion was approved by roll-call vote by State Board of Education Members Sally Griffin, Ann Lane, Kate Cassady, Phil Nazzaro, Helen Honorow with the Chair abstaining.

MOTION: Phil Nazzaro made the following motion, seconded by Helen Honorow, to seal the minutes of the nonpublic session.

VOTE: The motion was approved by roll-call vote by State Board of Education Members Sally Griffin, Ann Lane, Kate Cassady, Phil Nazzaro, Helen Honorow with the Chair abstaining.

AGENDA ITEM XIV. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Sally Griffin, to adjourn the meeting at 12:54 PM.

VOTE: The motion was approved by roll-call vote by State Board of Education Members Sally Griffin, Ann Lane, Kate Cassady, Phil Nazzaro and Helen Honorow with the Chair abstaining.



Secretary