



**New Hampshire State Board of Education
Department of Education
25 Hall Street, Concord, NH 03301**

Minutes of the October 11, 2023, Meeting

AGENDA ITEM I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the State Board of Education convened at 10:10 a.m. Drew Cline presided as chair.

Members present: Ryan Terrell, Ann Lane, Drew Cline - Chair, and Richard Sala. Also in attendance were Frank Edelblut, Commissioner of Education, and Christine Brennan, Deputy Commissioner.

Members absent: Kate Cassady, Phil Nazzaro, and Jim Fricchione were not in attendance due to prior commitments.

AGENDA ITEM II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Drew Cline led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA ITEM III. PUBLIC COMMENT

David Trumble, Weare, attended the meeting to discuss the 306 regulations from a legal perspective. When NH was drafting its new laws for over sign of regulations, they asked the NH Supreme Court for their opinion and they issued their opinion, which was when writing regulations, administrative agencies can only "fill in the details of the statutes. Rules that go beyond the filling in of the details are invalid. Rules may not add to, detract from, or in any way modify statutory law." David Trumble highlighted three points, which were protecting civil rights in the public schools, the duty to provide an adequate education, and legislative review.

Dean Cascadden, a 24-year administrator in New Hampshire, advised that he is very interested in seeing the draft standards come out when they're taken off the table and put into rulemaking as these are very important rules for education, especially to work on equity and make sure that all students in NH have equal opportunity.

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Adriana expressed her gratitude for the Education Freedom Accounts as they are highly beneficial for families and will continue to be beneficial in the long-term.

Tom Laliberte, Boscawen, was at the meeting as a concerned citizen of the state. He stressed his concern with the Learn Everywhere program, especially now that PragerU's Financial Literacy course has become an approved program. After PragerU's Financial Literacy course being approved, he had several questions, being: Do students write, read, solve a financial problem, collaborate, apply their learning, partner with a financial institution, or think critically? After being informed that these practices do occur, he signed up for the course himself and after 105 minutes, he received a certificate of successful completion. PragerU offered 15 videos that totaled 76 minutes and 37 seconds. Each video had 10 optional multiple choice or true/false questions to check for understanding, and many of these were part of the final 40-point exam. He reported that his entire learning experience that he engaged in with PragerU is at the lowest level of cognitive engagement for both Bloom's Taxonomy and Webb's Depth of Knowledge. He requested the State Board to please reconsider the Learn Everywhere program to ensure that students experience a high-quality education.

Janet Ward, Contoocook, shared her deep concern that the 306-revision process has not been transparent. She also mentioned that she'd written an article which says, "Soon Commissioner Edelblut and the State Board of Education will be making decisions on revisions to the 306 Administrative Rules, with which all public schools must comply. For details on 306 rule changes, you can visit the nonpartisan Reaching Higher New Hampshire website. Unless you have been following the revision process, you will not understand how these changes would seriously undermine public schools, by setting up conditions to outsource instruction to private companies and to further remove public oversight over taxpayer supported education."

Meg Ever, Barrington, shared that she's able to educate her three children thanks to the Education Freedom Account.

AGENDA ITEM IV. NONPUBLIC SESSION

Motion: Richard Sala made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell, that the State Board of Education enter nonpublic session under RSA 91-A:3, II(c) at 10:38 AM

Vote: The motion was approved by roll call vote by State Board of Education members Ryan Terrell, Ann Lane, Drew Cline (chair), and Richard Sala.

Motion: Ryan Terrell made the motion, seconded by Ann Lane, that the State Board of Education return to public session at 1:15 PM.

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Vote: The motion was approved by roll call vote by State Board of Education members Ryan Terrell, Ann Lane, Drew Cline (chair), and Richard Sala.

Motion: Richard Sala made the motion, seconded by Ann Lane, that the State Board of Education seal the minutes of the nonpublic session indefinitely.

Vote: The motion was approved by roll call vote by State Board of Education members Ryan Terrell, Ann Lane, Drew Cline (chair), and Richard Sala.

AGENDA ITEM V. SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT(s) SPOTLIGHT

There was no school administrative unit spotlight.

AGENDA ITEM VI. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/UPDATES

A. Education Freedom Account program updates – KATE BAKER DEMERS, Executive Director, Children’s Scholarship Fund

The Education Freedom Account program has been running since 2021, and the last time the EFA saw the Board was when the rules were approved in the summer of 2021. She brought Melissa Hagan, Matt Southerton, and Kelly Santos along to share further information.

Melissa Hagan, Manchester, reported that she loved the EFA program. Before the program she homeschooled in Massachusetts and couldn’t afford the books or the curriculum. Because of the EFA program, her children have been placed in an academy. The EFA program has enriched her family’s lives.

Kelly Santos from Hudson discussed that because of the EFA program, she was able to supplement their income and get two of their children enrolled at 2nd Nature Academy, which agrees wholeheartedly with their specific issues.

Matt Southerton, Director of Policy and Compliance at Children’s Scholarship Fund, reviewed the basics of applying for the scholarship. He highlighted that this is the first time that many of the students in this program have access to computers, funds for a tutor, to name a few. In order to qualify for the program, EFA families need to meet certain criteria and they must agree to certain conditions. The parent and students must be NH residents. The student must be eligible to enroll in the student’s resident public school district. In the first year of the program, the household must not exceed 350% of the federal poverty guidelines. No income threshold must be met in subsequent years. Parents must reapply annually.

Since the program's inception in November 2021, over 56 000 EFA orders. Approximately 8% of the total EFA orders have been rejected for one reason or another. EFA's are individual grants for the child named on the account.

The list of allowable items includes tuition, textbooks, supplemental materials, classes and courses, transportation if needed to and from a provider, career and tech ed classes.

Briefly, it works a lot like cryptocurrency where you have a digital wallet that gives you access to certain marketplaces. The digital wallet is the key that allows you to be inside the digital marketplace. You do all your transactions within the marketplace, and the actual verification method is done within the blockchain. In this case, the blockchain is human eyes looking to verify the transaction. Once verified, the parent is notified, and the process continues.

AGENDA ITEM VII. BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

A. Office of Charter Schools – *TAL BAYER, NHED, Administrator, Office of Public Charter Schools*

1. The Virtual Learning Academy (VLACS) – charter renewal

Steve Kossakoski, CEO, introduced Michael Garron, CFO, Carey Glines, School Principal, and Tony Baldasaro, COO.

Steve Kossakoski informed the Board about how VLACS operates and their procedures. He also mentioned that VLACS has been around for about 15 years, and annually works with about 10 000 students in Grades K through 12. VLACS also has their own self-funded adult education program. During the pandemic, VLACS put together Grades K through 3 and opened up thereafter full-time K through 5.

Carey Glines highlighted that their five-year graduation rates tend to be higher than the state average, typically. This year, they've developed some pretty robust monitoring systems that are allowing them to provide more proactive student support and get students in front of the individualized support that they need earlier.

Motion: Ryan Terrell made the motion, seconded by Richard Sala, that the State Board of Education approve the renewal of Virtual Learning Academy Charter Public School's charter.

Vote: The motion was approved by unanimous vote by the State Board of Education.

B. Office of Learn Everywhere Programs – TIM CARNEY, NHED, Administrator, Educational Pathways

1. Nashua Community Music School – new application

Tim Carney requested the Board's approval of the Nashua Community Music School Learn Everywhere initial application for one year.

Lindsay Rinaldi, Executive Director of Nashua Community Music School, walked the Board through the assessment process. She reported that this is the only course in NH that covers these types of competencies. Many students enrolled in the traditional public-school programs have to be on the typical chorus track, or the typical band track. Music technology and music production fields are booming, and Nashua created this program to allow those children who don't fall into the typical chorus or band tracks, to also be musical.

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Richard Sala, that the State Board of Education approve the Nashua Community Music School Learn Everywhere initial application.

Vote: The motion was approved by unanimous vote by the State Board of Education.

C. Office of Nonpublic Schools – TIM CARNEY, NHED, Administrator, Educational Pathways

1. Commissioner's Nonpublic School Approval Designation Report – new school approval (AA status)

Carl and Jennifer Chambers from the New England School of the Arts in Lebanon, NH, shared their vision of a school offering a high-quality arts-based program. They're partnering with established organizations, like Dartmouth College and AVA Art Gallery.

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Richard Sala, that the State Board of Education accept and approve the school for the period of October 11, 2023, through June 30, 2024. The application for the New England School for the Arts meets all the applicable requirements of 403.

Vote: The motion was approved by unanimous vote by the State Board of Education.

2. Commissioner's Nonpublic School Approval Designation Report – school grade expansion (AA status)

Building Block Commons, a school in Exeter, NH, currently runs from Grades K through 8 and they're looking to add Grades 9 through 12.

Motion: Richard Sala made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell, that the State Board of Education accept and approve Building Block Commons' request to add Grades 9 through 12 for the remaining term of their existing approval period.

Vote: The motion was approved by unanimous vote by the State Board of Education.

AGENDA ITEM VIII. RULEMAKING/LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

A. Conditional Approval Response – School Facility Approvals (Ed 320)

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell, that the State Board of Education approve the condition approval response Ed 320.

Vote: The motion was approved by unanimous vote by the State Board of Education.

B. Initial Proposal – Learn Everywhere Rules (Ed 1400)

Tim Carney discussed the proposed changes to the rules. A few of them are listed below.

1403.02, page 4, rewording of what was called the ad hoc Learn Everywhere program approval committee. This committee has no approval authority.

1403.02 (b), page 5, sometimes programs don't fall into a credential or endorsement area, so this provides some flexibility to the administrators in selecting team members who have the most similar background.

Right now, Learn Everywhere has a one-year approval and a five-year approval. Tim Carney proposed a three-year provisional approval. Student evaluations and monitoring reports will also have a three-year provisional approval.

1405.01, the Annual Report, will be pushed for reporting purposes.

Page 10, Tim Carney is looking to strike the "Program completion certificates earned by students while not enrolled in the school," as defined in Ed 1402.01 (j), which is a public 9 through 12 school.

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Richard Sala, that the State Board of Education approve the initial proposal for Ed 1400 regarding Learn Everywhere.

Vote: The motion was approved by unanimous vote by the State Board of Education.

C. Initial Proposal – Computer Science Educator (Ed 507.54)

Steve Appleby advised the Board that this is a follow-up to the interim rule from last month. This is as a result of HB-2, the governor's drive to have more licensed computer science teachers in the state. The major change is the addition of the industry recognized credentials in place of the bachelor's degree for IT.

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell, that the State Board of Education approve the initial proposal for Ed 507.54 relative to licensure requirements for computer science educators.

Vote: The motion was approved by unanimous vote by the State Board of Education.

D. Initial Proposal – Visual Arts Teacher (Ed 507.09)

Steve Appleby advised that this was from the Professional Standard's Board. Unfortunately, due to timing, there's no one from the PSB present to talk about it, but the PSB have created a form to convey changes to the Board. Drew Cline commented that he has some questions for the PSB and requested it be tabled until November 2023.

Motion: Ryan Terrell made the motion, seconded by Richard Sala, that the State Board of Education table the initial proposal for Ed 507.09 relative to licensure requirements for visual arts teachers.

Vote: The motion was approved by unanimous vote by the State Board of Education.

E. Adopt – Special Education 21 Inclusive (Ed 1100 – various)

The state law and state regulatory body have been aligned with federal law relative to 21 inclusive relative to special education students.

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell, that the State Board of Education adopt Ed 1100.

Vote: The motion was approved by unanimous vote by the State Board of Education.

F. Adopt – School Facility Approval Process (Ed 320)

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell, that the State Board of Education adopt Ed 320.

Vote: The motion was approved by unanimous vote by the State Board of Education.

AGENDA ITEM IX. COMMISSIONER’S UPDATE

A. Commissioner’s consultation with the State Board of Education per RSA 21-N:3, II

Melissa White’s term as the Division Director for the division of learner support is expiring in the near future. The Commissioner recommended that she be re-nominated to that role for another four years. Request was moved.

Teacher of the Year Award went to Elizabeth Duclos from Pembroke Academy. She’s an elementary school teacher, and big into the science of reading.

The science of reading program continues to do well. There are over 33 000 people in the program. They’re currently in stage 4 of the program and 70% have gotten this far. They have an endorsement from Bodie Muller and a TikTok video of him reading to his two little boys promoting the love of reading.

Some additional assessment result data was released. The report cards will be put out end of November, beginning December. A press release was done about this too.

Another press release was done after the last meeting but since this meeting, the Department of Education got a \$4 million grant relative to the school and department’s financial data systems. This grant allows data visualizations to be created for the financial data for schools.

The NH Great Apple Crunch is on October 18, which is a celebration of farm to school in NH. It will be advertised.

Military Cards for Kids - every state in America is participating.

Robotics grants - each Board member will receive an invitation from Tim Broadrick for the Robotics Tournament on November 4.

AGENDA ITEM X. OPEN BOARD DISCUSSION

There was no open board discussion.

AGENDA ITEM XI. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Meeting Minutes of September 14, 2023

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell, that the State Board of Education accept the September 14, 2023, meeting minutes as amended.

Vote: The motion was approved by unanimous vote by the State Board of Education.

AGENDA ITEM XII. TABLED ITEMS

A. Initial Proposal – Minimum Standards (Ed 306)

AGENDA ITEM XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell, that the State Board of Education adjourn the meeting at 3:28 p.m.

Vote: The motion was approved by unanimous vote by the State Board of Education.



Secretary