

New Hampshire
State Board of Education
Minutes of the October 14, 2021 Meeting

AGENDA ITEM I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the State Board of Education was convened at 9:10 a.m. Drew Cline presided as Chair.

Members present: Ryan Terrell, Ann Lane, Kate Cassady, Sally Griffin, Drew Cline, Richard Sala, and Phil Nazzaro (remote). Also in attendance were Commissioner of Education, Frank Edelblut and Deputy Commission, Christine Brennan.

AGENDA ITEM II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Students of North Country Charter Academy led the pledge of allegiance.

AGENDA ITEM III. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS

A. North Country Charter Academy Student and Staff Presentation

Lisa Lavoie, principal/superintendent, presented along with Timothy Carignan, Littleton Center Director. Ms. Lavoie shared that the school is in the 18th year of operation. They have 2 locations. They have students in grades 7-12. The goal of the founding districts was to provide students with another path to obtaining a high school diploma, decrease the dropout rate, and increase the dropout recovery. In 2012, the number of dropouts decreased by 74%. 580 students have graduated so far and 116 of those were dropout recovery students. Enrollment has remained steady, even through COVID. The student population last year included 60% eligible for differentiated aid.

The school has evolved to a cooperative learning environment where students are educated within the community. They have classrooms offsite and meet with community partners. They received a grant, which was used to develop five projects: Ammonoosuc and Israel River study; Geographic Information System; Waste Management Environment Science Project; Coding, Game Design and Animation Project; Physics and Weather Project.

Timothy Carignan shared that he has witnessed students regain hope. He brought 2 students to share highlights of their NCCA experience. Lou, second year student, and Willow, first year student. Willow stated that she chose NCCA after being homeschooled. She had a hard time staying on schedule at home and a regular public school isn't flexible enough for her learning abilities. NCCA allows her to learn at her own pace. Lou stated that he chose NCCA after his sister

attended and was successful. NCCA has helped decrease the stress he's experienced with schoolwork by allowing him to work at his own pace.

AGENDA ITEM IV. HEARINGS

A. Student/Hollis School District - SB-FY-21-06-017

Chair Cline reviewed the process of the hearing. Katherine, parent, stated that she believes the district acted in contradiction of Title II and IDEA. She believes the district has experienced overreach from the commissioner and the Board.

Allison, Hollis School District representative, stated that the Board should affirm the hearing officer's report and recommendation. In reference to issues brought up with IDEA/504, the hearing officer has recommended the allegations be dismissed as those types of issues are to be heard in a different administrative proceeding. The second recommendation referred to the fact that the emergency orders didn't require hybrid instruction during the 2020/2021 school year. Hollis School District offered a choice of remote or full time in-person instruction. The third recommendation was that if the district were to adopt distance learning in the future, that it complies with the existing regulations. The district has not adopted distance education and is not offering a remote model for the 2021/2022 school year.

Richard Sala stated that the proposed findings of law by the hearing officer were well done with the exception of the statement of State Board not having jurisdiction over RSA 354(a)27.

Motion: Kate Cassady made the motion, seconded by Richard Sala, that the State Board of Education accept the hearing officer's report and adopt the hearing officer's recommendation on motion to dismiss with the amendment that they do not accept as fact that State Board doesn't have authority over the law.

Vote: The motion was approved without dissent by unanimous vote by the State Board of Education, with Drew Cline abstaining.

AGENDA ITEM V. COUNCIL FOR TEACHER EDUCATION (CTE)

A. University of New Hampshire (UNH) - Music (M.Ed/MAT) and Middle Level Science (M.Ed/MAT) Priority Progress Report

Laura Stoneking shared that UNH had two reviews in the past two years. The report today is based on the 2020 review for programs given conditional approval. UNH submitted the priority progress reports. The recommendation from the council is full approval having met the standards.

Chair Cline asked about issues with technology by the initial reviewers. Kathryn McCurdy responded that was focused on the music education report. The pandemic allowed funds to purchase more technology. UNH was able to purchase equipment to allow for connection between various classrooms, subscriptions to web-based platforms that students could then incorporate into the music education practice.

Richard Sala asked about the life of the technologies and how relevant they will be after graduation. Kathryn McCurdy shared that many of the companies are interested in maintaining relevancy and making improvements.

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Sally Griffin, that the State Board of Education grant UNH's educator preparation programs full approval for the following: Ed 612.20 Music Education M.Ed/MAT through 8/30/2027 and Ed 612.22 Middle Level Science M.Ed/MAT through 8/30/2027.

Vote: The motion was approved without dissent by unanimous vote by the State Board of Education, with Drew Cline abstaining.

B. Plymouth State University (PSU) - Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) Site Visit Report

Laura Stoneking shared that previously PSU was challenged with some unmet standards through CAEP. Brian Walker has worked to ensure that standards are being brought up to the minimum. The recent CAEP review removed the areas of improvement with the recommendation. CTE is recommending full approval.

Ann Lane asked about the process. Brian Walker shared that faculty was engaged and administration worked to improve data and alignment. Phil Nazzaro asked about possible future improvements. Brian Walker responded that they are focusing on building on the programs they have and partnering with K-12 schools and administration. They are also looking into increasing recruitment to meet needs of K-12 schools. Richard Sala asked about the role of library media specialists in schools. Brian Walker responded they are the librarians at schools. The librarians take on the role of helping understanding sources and how to find information in the library and using digital sources as well as curating books to support students and teachers.

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Kate Cassady, that the State Board of Education grant Plymouth State University's educator preparation programs full approval for the following: Ed 614.11-507.21 Library Media Specialist M.Ed through 12/31/2024.

Vote: The motion was approved without dissent by unanimous vote by the State Board of Education, with Drew Cline abstaining.

AGENDA ITEM VI. BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

A. Office of Charter Schools

1. PACE Career Academy Closing Update

Jane Waterhouse shared that the request of student transitioning was provided. There were 65 students. 15 graduated, 20 transferred to a charter or public school, 5 students were over the age of 18, 1 student moved out of state, 1 student went to Second Start, the other 23 remaining students did not provide transition information. They had a board meeting and reached a quorum on the decision to close the school and to sell off all assets. The bank still has some say in what happens to assets.

Ann Lane asked if PACE reached out to home districts of the 23 students. Jane Waterhouse responded that they did not, but they did send all transcripts to resident districts. Ann Lane asked if there is concern. Commissioner responded that follow-up has been done and student ID numbers can be used to track down where they are enrolled. Nate Greene shared that EOY data can be compared from PACE to find all students. It is possible some have enrolled in home education and have not yet filed documentation.

Ryan Terrell suggested ensuring there are efficient processes in place for charter closing plans. Nate Greene stated that the department has created an internal checklist of what needs to be done. It would be helpful if there was clarification of what the Department and schools are responsible for. Nate and Jane have been looking at the websites of other states to find procedures used in other states.

2. Northeast Woodlands First Year Program Audit

Jason Gagnon, Board Chair, and Sarah Arnold, Head of School, attended representing Northeast Woodlands. Jane Waterhouse shared that she did a site visit for first year program audit. They found some areas where more evidence was needed, and Sarah Arnold submitted everything. They submitted their outstanding progress report.

Sarah Arnold shared that the school hired staff and started a school culture. They opened with 137 students preK-7. This year they were up to 171 students preK-8. They added 2 new classes, 2 new grade teachers, additional specials teachers, and a few elementary assistants. One goal is to have a teacher and assistant in every classroom. Students have benefited from the extra outdoor time.

Jason Gagnon shared that the board is very happy with the work done by Sarah Arnold to build the team and community at the school. At family orientation, parents expressed their gratitude for the school and the benefits they have seen in their children.

Kate Cassady asked the number of Waldorf schools in the area. Jason Gagnon responded that a private Waldorf school existed, and some left for the public Waldorf school due to tuition. The private school has since closed. Sarah Arnold added that there is a Montessori school in Conway. Ryan Terrell asked how the school keeps K-8 students excited while maintaining instruction. Sarah Arnold responded that Waldorf education is a developmental approach which homes in on what questions and issues that kids of a particular age are interested in. The third-grade curriculum focuses on survival: farming, building, etc. The project-based element makes information engaging.

Richard Sala asked about the teacher evaluation program. Sarah Arnold responded that teachers went through a goal setting process and chose 1-2 personal goals, and they also chose school-wide goals. The assistant head of school will do data gathering evaluations based on their personal goals. Peer visits allow peers to go into the classroom and notice things that are great and wonder about why the teacher does something a certain way. Both of those pieces will form a formal evaluation.

Chair Cline asked about an accountability plan. Jane Waterhouse shared that the school did complete an accountability plan. Chair Cline asked about some of the first-year challenges and how they learned from them. Sarah Arnold shared that the startup checklist made it easier leading up to opening. A first-year handbook might help to compile all of the requirements. They won a charter school start up grant and the timeline was very tight and is at the end of the first year. One challenge is the balancing running to school and getting the grant. Reporting processes were challenging to learn. Chair Cline asked if it would be helpful if the Department provided an ongoing calendar for all reporting requirements. Sarah Arnold responded that there is a reporting calendar, but a layered calendared would be helpful to include a budget calendar and basic enrollment calendar.

Ann Lane asked about the record of 87 incidents. Sarah Arnold responded that 43 of those incidents were injuries just requiring a band aid or ice pack. 17 were individual behavior events. 5 were multiple student behavior incidents. 16 were a physical interaction. Chair Cline asked about budgeting and fundraising. Sarah Arnold responded there are 2 main fundraisers. One is a PTO auction which raised \$8,000 last year and set a goal of \$12,000 for this year. The Northeast Waldorf Education Foundation have an annual campaign. Last year they raised about \$30,000. They are looking to create another fundraiser. Jason Gagnon added that they do not have the resources to have as many staff members. There is a lot of volunteer labor. As part of the starting checklist, a training for the board

would be helpful so they know what they are responsible for and available resources.

Jane Waterhouse asked how the school is utilizing the charter school grant. Sarah Arnold responded that 1/3 of the funds are going into Waldorf teacher training for all teachers. 1/3 of the grant is for furniture and physical supplies. 1/3 of the grant is curricular supplies. Jason Gagnon added that they wanted to use as much as possible as an investment in education, which is where the teacher training came in.

Ann Lane asked about reports on financial. Jane Waterhouse will send that report. Ann Lane clarified that fundraising should not be included on budgets but should include the goals for fundraisers. They reviewed the budget. Ann Lane stated that the parent/student/teacher handbooks should be done prior to a school opening. She also asked that reports be submitted on time.

3. Surry Village Charter Renewal

Carol Menck Keefe, Head of School, and Dan Johnson, Board Chair, attended to represent Surry Village Charter. Jane Waterhouse shared that a site visit was completed. They have 2 campuses: one in Keene and one in Surry. They interviewed students and parents who provided positive feedback. The evaluation team unanimously agreed that the school should be recommended for renewal.

Kate Cassady asked about progress made in finding a technology person. Carol Keefe responded that the school has a technology company they work with. The gap is with the on campus needs at a specific moment. They are working to find someone to be that person. They have current staff who are helping to problem solve in the meantime. Kate Cassady asked about oversight of the two schools. Carol Keefe responded that she has taken over the superintendent role and then a principal being the stable person in each building. Kate Cassady asked if the job descriptions could be clarified. Carol Keefe responded that it is written, however, the report was completed prior to the transition.

Richard Sala asked about successful social emotional learning. Carol Keefe responded that success is when there is something in place that allows kids to process whatever they are feeling. In kindergarten, they introduce stuffed animals that represent feelings which help young students communicate their feelings. Richard Sala asked about the balance between social emotional learning and academic rigor. Carol Keefe responded that through project-based learning, children are challenged to problem solve. Teachers support students in that challenging moment to encourage them.

Richard Sala asked about the challenges and planning of fundraising as well as getting more parents involved. Carol Keefe responded that one of the school goals is to work on sense of community. Some of the very active parents

had students graduate. Then COVID decreased the amount of involvement. They are brainstorming ways to bring the community together while being safe.

Sally Griffin asked about the board development. Dan Johnson responded finding board members is an ongoing challenge. There are currently 7 board members including parents who have students in the school, a student who went through K-high school public charter school, residents. Ann Lane asked about part of the report that mentioned high school. Carol Keefe responded that came from students, but there are no current plans for high school.

Chair Cline asked what they attribute their success. Carol Keefe responded that they have both project-based learning and programmatic instruction. They have great staff as well. Dan Johnson added that they involve parents and students in decisions, and they take their time to find staff that fit the school environment.

Kate Cassady praised the school's fundraising procedures. She also praised enrollment projections. She asked about contributions annual fund. Carol Keefe responded that the annual fund is donation letter sent out to donors. Chair Cline suggested sharing their fundraising procedures with other charters. Kate Cassady asked about parent fundraising estimate. Carol Keefe responded that is based upon parent small events.

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Kate Cassady, that the State Board of Education authorizes the charter renewal for Surry Village Charter.

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

B. Learn Everywhere

1. Izzit.org - Civics Fundamentals

Nate Greene introduced the Learn Everywhere program, Izzit.org, with a half credit of civics. Dean Graziano, Vice President of Education, shared that the company is a nonprofit that provides resources at no cost to educators for over 15 years. The video-based library covers a multitude of subjects and topics, which are all aligned to standards. The program contains 28 supplemental materials, which comes out to 113 hours that provide rigor. There is a midterm and final exam with rubrics.

Ann Lane asked about cost. Dean Graziano responded there is no cost to students. Any New Hampshire student can access information with pre and post assessment. Ann Lane asked about the time frame. Dean Graziano responded

that applications will be taken in January/February with a start date in March. Most students would end in June, but there will also be a cohort over the summer. It's a 15-week program, but many students will complete it in 12 weeks. Kate Cassady asked about the test. Dean Graziano responded that there is a pretest and posttest. Throughout the course, there are essays, discussion questions, etc.

Chair Cline asked about the content of the course. Dean Graziano responded that the syllabus will show exactly what is covered and how each standard is being met. Chair Cline stated that there is a law on what school districts have to offer, which includes a requirement of a half civics credit that includes U.S. and New Hampshire civics. Learn Everywhere is not a district course. This creates a legal gray area. The course must be strong because it will be the only civics course students will take. It might be more appropriate to give an elective credit, but the content will have to be reviewed.

Kate Cassady asked if the program would be national. Dean Graziano responded that they do plan to go national. New Hampshire is the pilot. Kate Cassady stated that it could be good exposure for the Learn Everywhere program.

Ryan Terrell asked about the assessment plan's black history inclusion and curriculum. Dean Graziano responded that it is US and black history. One topic that is discussed is what the founding fathers meant when they said "all men are created equal" when slavery continued. This helps students think deeper about what decisions were made and what rights people have. Content is created using people who are presenting based upon their own family history. The program is designed to give students the ability to challenge, to ask, to think outside the box.

Chair Cline stated that the application would be put on hold until next month to allow time to review the syllabus.

AGENDA ITEM VII. LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

A. Initial Proposal - Criminal History Records Checks for First-Time New Hampshire Applicants (Ed 505.07, Ed 505.08, Ed 512.01)

Nate Greene shared that the Department received feedback from OLS on the bus driver rules with concerns. This creates a concern around the same concerns will be brought up. It makes sense to table until next month after working with OLS on concerns.

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell, that the State Board of Education table this topic.

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

October 14, 2021

Phil Nazzaro left the meeting at 12:03.

AGENDA ITEM VIII. COMMISSIONER'S UPDATES

Commissioner Edelblut shared that teacher of the year candidates has been narrowed down to three. Christine Brennan shared that the committee has been going to the schools to meet the teacher, the staff, students, and watching the teachers in action. The pandemic caused some changes to the process. They are meeting teachers virtually and putting a lot of weight on the essays. Ryan Terrell shared that the teacher of the year nominees are surrounded by great staff. Christine Brennan shared there was an increase in nominations submitted by parents.

Commissioner Edelblut shared that two blue ribbon schools were announced, which are recognized nationally for their academic attainment in the school system.

Commissioner Edelblut discussed ESSER funds. The first amount of funds has been 99% budgeted by schools. The second amount in May has been 60% budgeted. The last amount has 13% budgeted. Districts are working through the process to ensure funds are being used appropriately. The total of all fundings was over \$650 million. Richard Sala asked if any of the money can be used to help rural communities with internet access. Commissioner Edelblut responded that there was money allocated to building infrastructure for internet access.

Commissioner Edelblut gave an update on chess in schools program. There is a training beginning for teachers.

Commissioner Edelblut stated that cases of teacher misconduct in the press are being watched closely and working with schools as appropriate. Some parent concerns have come to the Department about age-inappropriate content material. The Department continues to work with schools and teachers to ensure students are being provided age-appropriate content.

Commissioner Edelblut shared that spring assessment data results will be coming out shortly. One complication is a decrease in participation in assessment.

AGENDA ITEM IX. OPEN BOARD DISCUSSIONS

Chair Cline stated that Deputy Commissioner is up for reappointment. He sent a draft letter expressing support for Christine's reappointment.

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Kate Cassady, that the State Board of Education recommend Christine Brennan's reappointment as Deputy Commissioner.

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

AGENDA ITEM X. TABLED ITEMS

A. Robert Frost Charter Amendment (i.e., Expansion)

There were no updates

B. Initial Proposal - School Librarian (Ed 508.06)

There were no updates.

AGENDA ITEM XI. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Meeting Minutes of September 9, 2021, State Board Meeting

Board members noted no necessary changes to meeting minutes.

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Richard Sala that the State Board of Education approve the meeting minutes from September 9, 2021, as amended.

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

AGENDA ITEM XII. NONPUBLIC SESSION

There was no nonpublic session.

AGENDA ITEM XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Richard Sala to adjourn the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

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



Secretary

October 14, 2021