

New Hampshire
State Board of Education
Minutes of the August 11, 2022, Meeting

AGENDA ITEM I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the State Board of Education convened at 10:05 a.m. Drew Cline presided as Chair.

Members present: Ryan Terrell, Phil Nazzaro (remote), Ann Lane, Drew Cline (chair), and Richard Sala. Also in attendance were Commissioner Frank Edelblut and Deputy Commissioner Christine Brennan (remote). Kate Cassady and Sally Griffin were not able to attend due to prior commitments.

AGENDA ITEM II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Richard Sala led the pledge of allegiance.

AGENDA ITEM III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Carisa Corrow (Penacook, NH) stated she is a mother of three children and was a public-school teacher in New Hampshire for 14 years and now collaborates with teachers. She asked the Board to consider holding conversations about the purpose of public education and what the vision is for schools and communities. Conversations could help with the current feeling of division.

Marcella Dube (Amherst, NH), a volunteer member of Moms Demand Action, asked if there will be written guidance for the New Hampshire school districts for the recent passing of House Bill 1178. The bill says the state does not have to participate in any federally mandated gun legislation. Chair Cline stated the State Board does not provide guidance for state laws. The Attorney General's Office has issued guidance.

AGENDA ITEM IV. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS

A. Annual Home Education Advisory Council (HEAC) Report

Jennifer Pereira and Amanda Weeden, co-chairs of HEAC, presented the required annual report. An advance copy of the report was provided to the Board. Jennifer Pereira stated HEAC has seen increased growth in Home Education support groups and coops from all the represented organizations. There has been continued discussion regarding confusion in the community as people try to understand the different options for fulfilling compulsory attendance. HEAC meetings will now be on Friday afternoons to allow legislators to attend.

AGENDA ITEM V. BUREAU FOR EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

A. Office of Charter Schools

1. Coastal Waters Chartered Public School – charter amendment

Bill Libby was in attendance on behalf of Coastal Waters Chartered Public School. The amendment request was provided to the Board prior to the meeting.

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell, that the State Board of Education approve the amendments to Coastal Waters Chartered Public School charter document.

Vote: The motion was approved by unanimous vote by the State Board of Education, with Phil Nazzaro abstaining.

2. Mill Falls Charter School – renewal

Meryl Levin, Executive Director; Laura Wrubleski, Education Program Director; Sara Bee Pichette, Board of Trustees; Danielle Dalton, Board of Trustees; Naomi Butterfield, Board of Trustees; and Hind Bashier, Board of Trustees were in attendance representing Mill Falls Charter School.

Meryl Levin stated over the last 10 years, Mill Falls has served over five hundred children. The school opened in 2012 for students K-3. Mill Falls is a Montessori school. There is strong staff retention. They created a foundation in addition to the school with the purpose of creating financial long-term sustainability for Mill Falls. They also access title funds and seek private grant money.

The last school year had eighteen towns represented in the student body, 28% of students received special ed support, eight languages beside English are spoken at home, 20% of students are living below the poverty line, 25% of students are students of color. They have a strong board of trustees with backgrounds in law, tech, education, and finance.

Ann Lane asked about enrollment. Meryl Levin stated expected enrollment is 168. Their approval is larger, but the current location has limited space. Ann Lane asked about the process for placing students. Meryl Levin responded there is a lottery which holds the spot unless families choose to unenroll. In a typical year, there could be 5-10 students who unenroll during the year and the wait list is accessed from the lottery.

Richard Sala asked about the school's high teacher retention. Meryl Levin attributes the high retention to teachers participating in all aspects of the program. There is professional development every month and level meetings every week.

They have a coaching school model. There are layers to support teachers, build community, and make teachers want to stay. Teachers are given a voice.

Richard Sala asked how they have addressed negative effects from COVID. Meryl Levin responded during COVID, they collaborated closely with staff including access to yoga and a therapist. Laura Wrubleski added they continued to trust the Montessori philosophy. They hired a social worker to provide social emotional support. An interventionist was hired at the upper elementary level to support older students. A child study team was implemented to look at data and find ways to support students at an individual level.

Ann Lane asked about relationships with sending districts. Meryl Levin responded they are based in Manchester. Manchester has gone through several superintendents in the time the school has been open which creates challenges. They continue to try to create relationships to problem solve transportation and special ed supports with the sending districts.

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell, that the State Board of Education approve the renewal of the Mill Falls Chartered Public School.

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

3. North Star Chartered Public School – new application

James Miller, Board Chair; Dan Yule, Vice Chair; and Caitlin Blundell were in attendance representing North Star Chartered Public School. James Miller reported they are looking to launch North Star Academy because they are supporters of school choice and in service to stakeholders and community. They are looking to start the school in the lakes regions where there are limited options. Ms. Blundell, a CPA, provides outsourced accounting and advisory solutions for charter schools and private schools in New Hampshire. Her knowledge helped develop a budget that makes sense for their vision.

Drew Cline stated there is a review committee for charter school applications and the overall comments were positive.

Ann Lane asked about locations. James Miller responded the lakes area does not have much commercial development. They are collaborating with a commercial developer who is building a commercial building and hope to lease the entire space/building.

Richard Sala commented on positive aspects of the curriculum. He asked about use of the Socratic method in the younger grades. James Miller responded

use of cultural literacy improves decoding while learning to read. The Socratic method allows students space for their own discovery.

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Richard Sala, that the State Board of Education approve the charter for North Star Chartered Public School.

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

B. Office of Nonpublic Schools

1. Commissioner's Nonpublic School Approval Designation – new grade level offered approval

Nate Fillman, Head of School, was in attendance representing the Harkness House requesting approval to add sixth grade to their school. They are a dedicated middle school, originally proposed opening as a 7-9 middle school. Based on family feedback, they are asking to include sixth grade.

Ann Lane asked about the location. Nate Fillman responded they are in an 8,000 square foot office space in North Nashua. They have the space to add the extra grade level. They will start with grade 6 and 7 and add an additional grade level each year. Whether they go up to grade 9 will be based upon enrollment.

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell, that the State Board of Education accept and approve the Harkness House request to add grade 6 for the remaining term of their existing approval.

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

2. Commissioner's Nonpublic School Approval Designation – new school approvals

Tim Carney, NHED, presented approval of four new schools for attendance status. Representatives for all four schools were in attendance.

Nathan Lyczak, Executive Director of Kroka, reported the school was founded by two New Hampshire public school teachers. Ann Lane asked how students have been completing math requirements independently. Liz Jordan, Director of Education, responded students usually come from other schools having already completed math requirements. Others take summer school or community college courses.

Drew Cline asked about diversity in the school. Nathan Lyczak responded working with the land and within a community allows students to engage with the diversity in the world. Liz Jordan added social studies curriculum differs depending on the semester. The fall semester takes place in the southwest and the experience culminates on the U.S. Mexican border. The curriculum is surrounded by the places they are experiencing.

Drew Cline asked about U.S. history requirements. Liz Jordan responded students typically do not complete their high school credits with Kroka. They start at 10th grade and typically stay for only for a few semesters. Many students already have the history credit, but some will get that credit while enrolled in Kroka.

Drew Cline encouraged them to look at other U.S. history textbook options.

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Richard Sala, that the State Board of Education accept and approve the four new nonpublic schools as a slate for attendance purposes only, August 11, 2022 – 2025.

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

C. Learn Everywhere Program

1. North Main Music – renewal

Mr. McAdam was in attendance representing North Main Music requesting a renewal. Ann Lane asked about enrollment. Mr. McAdam responded there were several inquiries. They are still transitioning back to in person lessons after COVID.

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell, that the State Board of Education approve the North Main Music Learn Everywhere renewal application for 5 years.

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

2. FIRST Robotics – renewal

Frank Grossman was in attendance representing FIRST Robotics requesting program renewal and reported that one student went through the program last year.

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell, that the State Board of Education approve the FIRST New

Hampshire Robotics Learn Everywhere renewal application for 5 years.

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

AGENDA ITEM VI. COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE

Frank Edelblut reported that at the upcoming Governor and Council meeting, there are two contracts on the agenda for approval for the Learning into Literacy program. The contracts include training opportunities for individuals to build capacity on literacy instruction. In addition to programs for educators, there will be programs for individuals working with littles, parents, caregivers, and daycare centers. There is also a program for administrators. Another contract will provide additional tutoring opportunities for schools.

One program that will continue into the next year is a training program for paraeducators. It helps existing paraeducators to be more effective as well as prepare new paraeducators. It will help when recruiting new staff.

The Choose Love program has been rolled out statewide. There is a celebration of school and teaching event that will take place on August 20 from 9:00-4:00. There will be a series of speakers centered around encouragement and motivation for educators.

The Security Action for Education grants (SAFE) have put out two sets of funds. The initial phase took place in July. A second phase extends through August 26. In the first phase, over five hundred applications were submitted for about \$18 million. The grants focus on access, control, communication, and emergency response. The projects are being risk ranked by Homeland Security to ensure money is being put into areas of highest risk.

Drew Cline noted Oyster River took care of its school bus driver shortage by increasing pay. He asked if there have been pay increases for paraeducators to assist in the shortages. Commissioner Edelblut responded the districts are setting the wages.

AGENDA ITEM VII. OPEN BOARD DISCUSSIONS

There was no open board discussion.

AGENDA ITEM VIII. TABLED ITEMS

A. Initial Proposal – Administrator Endorsements (ED 506)

Drew Cline shared Steve Appleby is working through the administrator endorsements. They hope to be able to bring it to the Board in September.

B. River View Public Charter School - Application

AGENDA ITEM IX. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Meeting Minutes of July 14, 2022

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell to accept the meeting minutes of July 14, 2022, as amended.

Vote: The motion was approved by the State Board of Education with Phil Nazzaro and Ann Lane abstaining.

AGENDA ITEM X. NONPUBLIC SESSION

There was no nonpublic session.

AGENDA ITEM XI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell to adjourn the meeting at 11:36 a.m.

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



Secretary