

New Hampshire
State Board of Education
Minutes of the August 27, 2021 Meeting

AGENDA ITEM I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the State Board of Education was convened at 9:03 a.m. Drew Cline presided as Chair.

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

AGENDA ITEM II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Drew Cline led the pledge of allegiance.

AGENDA ITEM III. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS

A. Annual Home Education Advisory Council (HEAC) Report

Kathryn Michelotti, former HEAC Chair, shared that there are 6,110 new homeschoolers that started last year. Chair Cline asked about the total number of homeschoolers going into the fall. Kathryn Michelotti shared that homeschoolers report as of September 1st. School districts report to the Department of Education and then the Department reports the number by October. The only required report is how many new homeschoolers each year.

Ryan Terrell asked if there was a reason for the increase in homeschool education other than the pandemic. Kathryn Michelotti responded that reported reasons have included safety concerns, parents wanting to have more input in what kids are learning, and once parents had students at home they decided to continue. There are also ongoing mask debates.

AGENDA ITEM IV. COUNCIL FOR TEACHER EDUCATION (CTE)

A. University of New Hampshire (UNH) - Substantive Change Request

Chair Cline shared that not everyone was able to read the packet due to a technical issue. The converted packet was shared with all members.

Laura Stoneking, NHDOE, Administrator, Bureau of Educator Preparation and Higher Education, shared that UNH's request from June was to add additional approved ed prep programs at the bachelor's level. It was discussed at the June meeting and tabled. Judy Sharkey, Elizabeth Arcieri, and Kathryn McCurdy were in attendance to represent the UNH Education Department.

Ann Lane stated there are 2 courses currently offered and UNH is looking for approval to use these courses for certification. Elizabeth Arcieri clarified that it is 2 additional certification pathways for approval. Ann Lane noted the 2 course approval forms: Advocating for Diverse and Inclusive Family School Community Partnerships and Inclusive Elementary Education. Chair Cline stated that the Board had previously requested supplemental information to show how course titles change. Ann Lane asked why UNH is asking for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) rather than Elementary Education certification. Elizabeth Arcieri stated that when developing the new pathways, they wanted to make elementary education certification available at the undergraduate level. The committee decided that since elementary education pathways are widely available, UNH would offer something different by combining it with a critical shortage area. Since the prior meeting, UNH updated their proposal to allow students with any appropriate major to pursue elementary education. Chair Cline summarized that the initial pathways were tied to education studies EDI major. The new proposal is separated into two pathways: EDI or education studies double major.

Elizabeth Arcieri shared that within the pathway students would do elementary ed and choose either special education or English speakers of other languages (ESOL). The general special education program is currently under conditional approval and as a result, special education was removed from the current proposal.

MOTION: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Kate Cassady that the State Board of Education remove the UNH substantive change request from the table.

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

MOTION: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell that the State Board of Education approve UNH's substantive change request.

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

AGENDA ITEM V. BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

A. Office of Charter Schools

1. Seacoast Charter School – Renewal

Jess Pine, Head of School, shared that they are a K-8 charter school with a focus on art integration. They are on track with their mission and use of public funds and school sustainability. The committee recommended term limits for Board of Trustees. They are starting strategic planning in September. The budget narrative was completed based upon committee recommendation. The committee suggested defining future fundraising monetary goals. They are going to work on putting those projections in writing as part of the strategic plan. They are working to improve posting project reports and financials on the school website.

Ann Lane asked about the committee's budget concerns. Jess Pine responded the concern was to have a more thorough budget plan. Ryan Terrell asked about the goal of 100% parental involvement. Jess Pine responded that students come from 30 different towns. They do a lot of events to create a community within their school. The involvement has waned since the school moved to Dover. Ryan Terrell asked if the goal will be adjusted based upon constraints and the pandemic. Jess Pine responded that the school would continue to strive toward that goal. Ryan Terrell asked what the school plans to do to increase parent involvement. Jess Pine responded that the school did virtual conversations with families during the pandemic. The school does family events throughout the year. They do neighborhood gatherings in different areas to meet more families.

Ann Lane asked about challenges with sending districts regarding special education. Jess Pine responded that there are 30 different districts. Special education numbers are increasing. Some districts are more challenging when trying to fight for services that students need. Finding special education teachers is harder at the charter school level due to funding. Ann Lane asked about changing buildings to allow for expansion. Jess Pine shared that there are over 200 students on the school's wait list.

Chair Cline asked how the school has maintained high grades in an art focused school when historically other art schools have struggled. Jess Pine responded that families are motivated to choose their school. The school puts a lot of money into the classrooms and professional development. They focus on areas of professional development based upon student data.

Kate Cassady asked about a budget for \$60,000 in annual donations and what the actual amount was for 2021. Jess Pine stated that it was less due to Covid. Kate Cassady recommended not including that in the budget, but rather in a separate report.

MOTION: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Kate Cassady that pursuant to Chapter 194-B and Ed 318 Charter Public Schools, the State Board of Education authorizes the charter renewal for Seacoast Charter School.

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

2. PACE Career Academy Charter School – Closing Report

Chair Cline stated that the Board received PACE's closing report. Chair Cline stated that at the previous meeting, the Board suggested adding a parent to the board, which happened, and to have a full board vote to close, which has not happened. Kris Raymond responded that they had a full board meeting on June 28th and added the parent and student representative. They reviewed the proposed budget, staffing model and the motion failed. They were not able to have the motion to ratify executive committee vote. They had 9 people present to vote, 4 voted in favor, 2 not in favor, and 3 abstained. Another full board meeting was scheduled; however, they did not have a quorum. They have scheduled another PACE board meeting for September 27th. There are two items on the agenda: ratification of the executive committee recommendation to close and to vote to approve the liquidation of assets. The school is in danger of being foreclosed on by the bank. There are currently no students or staff as of the end of the school year. Student records have been sent to new schools. The Board asked PACE to confirm that all student records that have been requested have been send to the new schools.

Chair Cline stated that the Board would like to see a formal closing board vote for clarity. Ryan Terrell asked about the challenge to get the board together for a vote. Kris Raymond responded that members have not shown up to the meetings. Chair Cline asked how many board members are appointed by the district. Clinton Hanson responded that the district has 1 school board member appointed for a 2-year term. There is also a representative from SAU 53 and an SAU 53 administrator. The building is worth \$1.3 million and the assets within the building would bring the total up to about \$1.6 million.

Ryan Terrell asked what PACE has learned that could help future charter schools. Clinton Hanson responded that the budget process is critical. Fundraising did not make up for needed funds. There was a buffer in place with payment from Pembroke and SAU students, but the percentage of these students has decreased. A key factor is looking ahead to summer budget to ensure money is put aside for those months.

3. Making Community Connections – Manchester – Closing Report

Jodi Adams, interim CEO and school leader, stated her position ended July 31st and she is currently only a board member. Chair Cline stated the Board received the closing report. Ryan Terrell asked what the school learned that could benefit other charter schools. Jodi Adams responded that they have 2

locations. The difference between them is the student population and community support. The student population in Manchester consisted of a majority of trauma students: homeless, abused, drug addicted parents, etc. The school was not setup to hire a social worker to help students with their social emotional needs. They also struggled to keep staff due to lack of benefits. There was a lack of community and parental support at the Manchester campus.

Ann Lane asked where students were being enrolled after the school closing. Jodi Adams responded that only some parents communicated where students were going. Others did not respond to any communication. If the school did not receive transfer information, records were sent to their sending district.

Kate Cassady asked what the school would've done differently. Jodi Adams responded that she would have put more effort into fundraising. Additional funds could have been used to hire additional support staff to work with students. Kate Cassady asked if the mission statement matched the student population. Jodi Adams responded that they made every effort to make sure the mission was being accomplished, but there were many additional challenges. Part of the mission includes the parents. There were parent meetings at the end of every term. In Manchester, parents did not show up for these meetings. The parent participation model should have been adjusted to try to get more parents involved.

B. Office of Non-Public School Approval Board

1. Commissioner's Non-Public School Approval Designation

a. St. Christopher Academy Facility Update

Shireen Meskoob stated that in June St. Christopher Academy did not successfully obtain a standard approval for attendance purposes only because they had some facility issues they needed to address. The town of Nashua has provided a letter assuring students were safe in the building and the issues have been addressed. For that reason, she is requesting the conditional approval be changed to a standard approval.

MOTION: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Kate Cassady that the State Board accept and approve the following school for continued attendance approval status for the period of August 27, 2021 through June 30, 2024: St. Christopher Academy.

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

b. Bedford Academy

Shireen Meskoob introduced Roxanne Molina who is looking to open Bedford Academy. Chair Cline stated that the application was very detailed and opened the floor for questions. Ann Lane asked about the lack of staff and low teacher salary. Roxanne Molina responded that they have been waiting for approval, but they do have a couple of teachers hired and will hire more based upon enrollment. They purchased a property that has a tenant on the second floor. The school will utilize the bottom floor with four classrooms. They will open and expand as enrollment increases. The teacher contracts state that as enrollment grows, teacher salaries will increase. The tenant pays the entire mortgage, which allows slow growth. Ann Lane asked about access to the school facility via the second floor. Roxanne Molina responded that they have invested in electronic doors, cameras, and a security system.

Chair Cline asked how the school is advertising for students. Roxanne Molina responded they started advertising. They have Facebook ads, a bulletin, neighborhood news. She also has a learning pod and some parents whose children are part of the pod following her to the new school.

Ryan Terrell asked why a school is needed in Bedford. Roxanne Molina responded that as a parent, she was looking for an option with small class sizes, 10 or less. They are also STEAM inspired and have individual learning plans. Her background is in education. During remote learning, she was using a STEAM model with her own daughter and other students in her class joined, creating a learning pod. Ryan Terrell asked about some of the potential ways this school could be different. Roxanne Molina responded that she wants this to be an instructionally valuable program. She wants it to be a safe place. They have invested in sanitation systems and a ventilation system. Ryan Terrell asked how they are factoring in teachers wanting to follow the vision at the lower salary. Roxanne Molina responded that her current interested teachers believe in the philosophy and that they will grow with the school. Ryan Terrell asked what she learned from the previous presenters at today's meeting. Roxanne Molina responded that it was scary hearing the ways planning can fall through.

Ann Lane asked who is the immediate competition is for students. Roxanne Molina responded that Bedford schools are good schools. She is hoping that the niche of STEAM inspired, and smaller class sizes will be attractive to parents. There are a lot of religious based schools which will also be competition, but they do not have the focus on STEAM. Ann Lane asked about optimal enrollment. Roxanne Molina responded that 38 is the maximum, and the break-even for each classroom is 3. The projected opening date is September 9th. Kate Cassady suggested they go back over the budget to ensure the numbers are correct.

MOTION: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell that the State Board of Education accept and approve the following school for initial attendance approval status for the period of August 27, 2021 through June 30, 2024: Bedford Academy.

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

C. Learn Everywhere

1. The Boys & Girls Club of Souhegan

Chair Cline asked about the depth of knowledge for certificates. The competencies and standards being met seem thin for sound engineering. Robin LaCroix shared that they do 9 shows a year. They are fully realized, fully sound, microphones on all the kids, etc. A sound engineer student is involved with the production team, building sound cues, building mic plots, understanding how and where the kids are coming on and off the stage and programming the computers with all the cues. During tech week and the run of the show, they manipulate all those cues, adjusting sound on the go, etc. It's a constant learning process. Chair Cline shared that the explanation filled in the gaps in the application. He suggested having the skills and met standards written in a more narrative, detailed form.

Chair Cline asked if students would choose one area or have the option to participate in multiple areas. Robin LaCroix responded that the goal is to expose students to every area they are interested in. Chair Cline asked if there's any thought to adding the stage component to the program. Robin LaCroix responded that there are other opportunities to add on to the program in the future.

Ann Lane asked about the cost structure and anticipated scholarship opportunities. Robin LaCroix responded that the production fee for actors is \$75 per student. There is scholarship money available. They offer opportunities to volunteer in management positions to offset production fees and to allow students to get ads for programs to offset production fees. The tech students have \$45 production fees.

MOTION: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell that the State Board of Education approve The Boys & Girls Club of Souhegan Learn Everywhere application.

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

2. FIRST New Hampshire Robotics

Chair Cline stated that the application was very thorough. Ann Lane asked if there is a maximum number of students that can participate. Frank Grossman from FIRST stated that they are using Learn Everywhere as a recruiting tool to include students who are focused on arts, design, business, etc. by having the ability to offer credits. Ann Lane asked about scholarships. Frank Grossman responded that most FIRST programs do not require students to pay. At the high school level, most teams have sponsors.

Ryan Terrell asked about the competencies of technology education and technology education elective. One is for arts, audio visual, technology and communication and the other is marketing, sales. Under the arts, audio visual, technology there are big subject matters. He suggested having some of the more web focused stuff trickle down to marketing and sales. Libby Simpson from FIRST responded that individual students building the website would be for the purpose of marketing to the community. The authenticity in which they will apply the standards are going to happen in combination. The competencies are tied to projects that the majority of teams participate in.

MOTION: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell that the State Board of Education approve FIRST Robotics Learn Everywhere application.

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

3. Neil Stone's Karate Academy

Nate Greene shared that there was a scheduling conflict and Neil Stone's Karate Academy requested to be moved to next month.

4. Seacoast United Sports Club

Chair Cline stated that the application was thorough. Ian Burgess shared that his background is education. He wanted to provide educational opportunities off the field. Some are measurable and some are objective. The objective part has oversight from other coaches and licensed staff.

Ann Lane asked about the participation rate. Ian Burgess responded that they anticipate the majority of New Hampshire athletes enrolling in this program. Ann Lane asked about scholarship provisions. Ian Burgess responded that there are 3 scholarship paths. The first is Seacoast United sports foundation which allows funding to children without financial support. The second way is internally, which is between \$300,000 - \$500,000 per year. The third is a give back program which allows families to volunteer. High school athletes will be expected to

become mentors and help as assistant coaches with younger groups. No one is ever turned away.

MOTION: Kate Cassady made the motion, seconded by Ann Lane that the State Board of Education approve Seacoast United Learn Everywhere application.

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

AGENDA ITEM VI. LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

A. Conditional Approval Response – Interim Rule – Education Freedom Accounts (EFA) Program (Ed 324)

Chair Cline requested that this item be taken up by the board early on in the agenda. This will give the Joint Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules (JLCAR) time to review and approve so it can be adopted later in the meeting.

MOTION: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded Kate Cassady that the State Board of Education adopt Ed 324 regarding Education Freedom Accounts.

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

B. Adopt – Interim Rule – Education Freedom Accounts (EFA) Program (Ed 324)

Chair Cline shared that JLCAR gave approval of EFA rules.

MOTION: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell that the State Board of Education adopt Ed 324 regarding Education Freedom Accounts.

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

C. Discussion - Holocaust and Genocide Discussion (ED 306)

Chair Cline shared that the two board members who worked on this are not at the meeting. An initial proposal will be ready for the September meeting.

AGENDA ITEM VII. COMMISSIONER'S UPDATES

Commissioner Edelblut shared that asbestos mitigation project at Londergan Hall turned out to be more than anticipated and the plan was changed, which required the building to be completely vacated by staff. People are working at various office space locations and from home and noted there may be some delays in responses during the transition.

There has been programming to bring tools to educators, administrators and families at the start of the year. One example is a statewide learning management system that creates connectivity for students. They launched a training program for educators that allows them to use the game of chess to amplify instruction. The learning pod program includes district learning pods and community learning pods. The Yes, Every Student program can provide public school students with disabilities up to \$1,000 for services. Students who are at poverty level or below can apply for a stipend up to \$1,000 for tutoring services by a New Hampshire certified educator.

The commissioner is trying to mitigate anxieties at the start of the school year. The number 1 mitigating strategy is not sending sick kids to school. If a student is symptomatic at school, they would be sent to the nurse and asked to exclude themselves. They will be no contact tracing and quarantining in public schools and students will be monitored for symptoms. Guidance was recently shared in June around vaccines. Students cannot be distinguished or discriminated against due to vaccination status.

Ryan Terrell asked if parents, students and teachers seem more anxious because they don't know what to do or because they have the information and don't know what they want to do. Commissioner Edelblut responded that there's a lot of information that could be anxiety provoking.

AGENDA ITEM VIII. OPEN BOARD DISCUSSIONS

There were no topics for discussion.

AGENDA ITEM IX. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Meeting Minutes of July 8, 2021 State Board Meeting

Board members noted necessary changes to meeting minutes.

B. Meeting Minutes of July 15, 2021 State Board Special Meeting

There were no noted changes to meeting minutes.

C. Dresden Interstate School District ~ Articles of Agreement Change Notification

MOTION: Ann Lane made the motion, seconded by Ryan Terrell that the State Board of Education accept the consent agenda items as a slate.

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

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 12:04 p.m.

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



Secretary