



## **Nonpublic School Advisory Council Meeting**

**New Hampshire Department of Education  
25 Hall Street | Concord, NH 03301  
Granite State College Building | Room 302**

**Tuesday, August 29, 2023**

### **APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

#### 1.0 Members Physically Present

David Thibault - *Diocese of Manchester*  
Jill Grant - *Trinity Christian School of Keene*  
Christy Whipple - *Newport Montessori School*  
Andrea Elliot - *Bishop Brady High School*  
Chuck George - *New Hampton School*  
Matthew Hicks - *Shaker Road School*  
Susan Harrington - *Brewster Academy*  
Tobias Iselin - *The Wediko School*  
Ryan DeJoy - *Windham Woods School*  
Caitlin Davis - *Division of Education and Analytic Resources*  
Gina Powers - *Rath, Young & Pignatelli, P.C.*  
Linda Johnson - *McLane Middleton*  
Timothy Carney - *Bureau of Educational Opportunities*  
Heidi Clyborne - *Bureau of Special Education Support*

2.0 Meeting brought to Order at 4:00 by Tim Carney pending nomination of a Chair.

3.0 Members each introduced themselves to the Council.

4.0 Susan Harrington made a motion to nominate Dave Thibault as Chair and herself as Vice-Chair. Seconded by Linda Johnson. Approved by unanimous vote of the Council. Chair Thibault commenced running the Council meeting.

5.0 Tim Carney read out loud the responsibilities of the Council as listed in Ed 406.01. Chair Thibault asked if the role of the Council included hearing grievances. Time Carney confirmed it does.

6.0 Discussion ensued about the operation of the Council. The first item discussed was if there should be a public comment period during the Council meetings. After discussion, the Council

voted unanimously to allow for a public comment period both before and after the body of the meeting with no time limit on comments. The public comment periods will be added to the next meeting agenda.

The second item about the operation of the Council concerned whether Zoom access to meetings will be provided to the public. After discussion, Linda Johnson made a motion to make the meetings available remotely to the public via Zoom. The motion was seconded by the Chair. The motion was unanimously approved by the Council.

The third item about the operation of the Council concerned whether the Council would adopt the provisions of NH HB 308 to allow members of the Council to attend remotely while still being counted to meet the +50% requirement for establishing a quorum. HB 308 still requires an in-person quorum of 1/3 of the Council membership for a quorum and +50% when remote members are included. Linda Johnson made a motion to allow members to attend remotely and be counted toward the quorum requirement upon the October 3, 2023 effective date of the modifications of NH RSA 91-A made by HB 308. Tim Carney provided a second. Following discussion, the motion was unanimously approved.

The fourth item about the operation of the Council concerned setting fixed meeting dates. The Council discussed meeting requirements and potential dates and times. Ryan DeJoy made a motion that the Council have 6 meetings annually starting in September. Toby Iselin provided a second. Following discussion, the motion was approved unanimously. Andrea Elliot made a motion to set the meeting day/time for the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of every other month starting in September from 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm. Seconded by Tim Carney. Following discussion, the motion was unanimously approved.

Discussion ensued about Tim Carney sending Dave Thibault a list of nonpublic school contacts so they could be made aware of the meetings. Tim Carney will work with Dave Thibault to set up this process.

- 7.0 Discussion about the Council's review of the Cognia application to become a State Board of Education (SBOE) approved accrediting agency of nonpublic schools.

Tim Carney explained that the role of the Council in the approval process is that they provide a recommendation to the State Board of Education relative to approval of Cognia's application. Tim Carney also explained that his office had done a completeness review of the application and had provided feedback to Cognia who had provided a revised application back to his office. Discussion ensued. Some members of the Council shared they had completed such a review in their prior time with the Council. Tim Carney stated he would email Cognia's revised application to the Council members along with a review checklist for their use. The Council would like to discuss and potentially make a recommendation to the SBOE at their September 26, 2023 meeting.

- 8.0 Tim Carney shared that the Council has a responsibility to provide a nominee to the Home Education Advisory Council (HEAC) to the Commissioner of Education. Discussion ensued. Christy Whipple made a motion to nominate Jill Grant to be considered by the Commissioner for appointment to the HEAC. A second was provided. The motion was unanimously approved.

- 9.0 Tim Carney presented a report from the Office of Nonpublic Schools to the Council. Discussion about the Ed 400 rule revisions ensued. A request was made for Tim to send the Ed 400 initial proposed rules to the Council members. Tim Carney agreed to do so. Discussion about the Ed 320 rules ensued. Linda Johnson asked if the Council had a role in new nonpublic school approvals or renewals. Tim Carney stated that in accordance with the Ed 400 rules the Council does not. Toby Iselin asked if there was a way to align the nonpublic school renewal cycle with the Special Education renewal cycle. Discussion ensued. Further discussion needed. Tim Carney stated that NHED's nonpublic school web page will be revised to better meet the needs of schools and parents. Tim Carney stated his office is always receptive to input from the nonpublic school community on this topic.
10. Gina Powers asked if Council related emails could not be sent to her work email. Tim Carney stated that his office would use whatever email address each member would prefer to use. Tim Carney also shared that another Council had been advised to create a Council specific email in order to more easily respond to any right-to-know requests.
11. Tim Carney stated his office is also looking to provide technical assistance to the nonpublic school community on several issues including, Federal equitable services funding, state-wide assessments, transportation, and changes to teaching US and NH History and Civics. Discussion ensued.
12. Chair Thibault initiated discussion about potentially creating a nonpublic school association outside of the Council. Discussion ensued.
13. Gina Powers made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:30 pm. Seconded by Jill Grant. The motion was unanimously approved.