

New Hampshire
State Board of Education
Department of Education
Londergan Hall, Room 100F
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, NH 03301
Minutes of the September 12, 2019 Meeting

AGENDA ITEM I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the State Board of Education was convened at 9:20 a.m. at the State Department of Education, 101 Pleasant Street, Concord, NH. Drew Cline presided as Chairman.

Members present: Drew Cline, Chairman, Kate Cassady, Cindy Chagnon, Sally Griffin, Helen Honorow and Ann Lane. Phil Nazzaro was not able to attend due to a prior commitment. Frank Edelblut, Commissioner of Education, was also in attendance. Christine Brennan, Deputy Commissioner, had a prior commitment and was not able to attend.

AGENDA ITEM II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Kate Cassady led the pledge of allegiance.

AGENDA ITEM III. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

AGENDA ITEM IV. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/UPDATES

Chairman Drew Cline opened the session by congratulating the Department for having won a federal grant for \$46 million for public charter schools. The grant was written with a focus on at-risk children and closing the performance gap. He thanked the Department's grant writing team, Jane Waterhouse, Jan Fiderio and Caitlin Davis for their hard work. The grant is intended to last for 5 years but could be extended for as long as 12 years.

A. NH. Historical Society Presentation on Social Studies Education and the Society's New Social Studies Curriculum

Elizabeth Dubrulle, Director of Education and Public Programs, New Hampshire Historical Society, said she had attended a State Board meeting in March 2016 to alert them to the ongoing crisis in social studies education. The situation remains the same and needs attention at all levels. In response to the crisis, the Society started the Democracy Project, which provides curricular

resources, teacher training and advocacy for social studies learning at the local and State levels.

During a listening tour conducted in 2018 by the Society, educators talked about three issues in particular.

The first was a lack of curricular resources. The Society found that virtually no schools were offering social studies courses, except those that created their own curricula. As a result, anyone teaching social studies at any level had to focus their work at a more basic level of understanding. Meanwhile, some teachers had to use outdated materials that may not reflect current standards or pedagogical methods.

The second issue was teacher training. There were no professional development resources until just a few years ago, and New Hampshire does not require teachers to demonstrate competency in State history. Therefore, many educators said they were not comfortable teaching State history because they, themselves, had not studied it since they were in school.

The third issue focused on leadership. There is no audit of social studies curricula because it is not seen as a high priority. As a result, most school districts do not offer a spiraling curriculum. Meanwhile, the NHDOE no longer has a dedicated social studies liaison. Individual organizations try to work together, but without a liaison it is difficult to organize and coordinate activities.

Ms. Dubrulle explained that the Democracy Project is developing an upper elementary school curriculum called “Moose on the Loose”, which will provide material for maximum flexibility for teachers to address different standards. An event on October 3 will celebrate the public launch of the program.

Ms. Cindy Chagnon thanked Ms. Dubrulle for her work. Ms. Dubrulle emphasized that the Society and other affinity groups are looking to the NHDOE for direction.

Commissioner Edelblut remarked that a lot of emphasis has moved to English and math at the elementary level, which has taken some focus off social studies. Ms. Dubrulle said the curriculum her group designed incorporates those subjects, so students are learning multiple subjects in an integrated way.

Ms. Ann Lane asked Commissioner Edelblut the likelihood of having a dedicated social studies liaison at the Department. Commissioner Edelblut said it was unlikely given the current situation with the new budget which has still not been approved. However, Ashley Frame, NHDOE Education Consultant, has a social studies teaching background and is overseeing the standards review in several areas, including social studies, is very passionate about creating curricula that weaves together multiple disciplines, which he found encouraging.

Ms. Sally Griffin asked about the availability of social studies materials for teachers. Ms. Dubrulle noted that “Moose on the Loose” has an online textbook, games and activities and other interactive projects, along with detailed lesson plans and extensive overviews of New Hampshire history, all at no cost to teachers.

Ms. Kate Cassady asked if the Society has spoken to principals or superintendents. Ms. Dubrulle said they have spoken to several of them to let them know about the project.

Ms. Honorow asked if the Society has any expertise they can share with teachers who want to take a more integrated approach to teaching social studies. Ms. Dubrulle noted that they have been offering teachers some training and at the teachers’ request, are currently working on offering instruction that will help them integrate history and science.

Ms. Chagnon asked if the group has reached out to charter schools. Ms. Dubrulle noted that they have reached out to charter schools, private schools, independent schools, and home schoolers.

B. Professional Standard Board (PSB) Update

Ann Wallace, Chair, PSB, provided the State Board an advance copy of the end of the year report. She reviewed some of the highlights from the report.

- The PSB held eight full meetings and one informational meeting.
- One member served on the Criminal Background Check Study committee and another on the Social Studies Curriculum committee.
- The PSB had seven active committees.
- The PSB spent time looking at ways to streamline and provide clearer expectations and communication of its procedures.

Ms. Wallace thanked Katrina Hall and Lisa Witte for their service and contributions to the PSB. She also thanked the State Board for selecting her to be part of the PSB and called it an honor to serve.

C. Kreiva Academy Public Charter School First Year Program Audit Report

Jane Waterhouse, NHDOE, Charter School Administrator, introduced Tal Beyer, Head of School, and Jessica Baker, President of the Board of Trustees. Mr. Beyer described Kreiva as a project-based learning school with cross-curricular, multidisciplinary classes with an enrollment of 127 students.

He noted that approximately 65 percent of Kreiva’s students are from Manchester and 25 percent are identified as having special education needs.

There are two special education teachers and three full-time paras. Kreiva has a very active and hands-on environment, which has been beneficial for many of the students, particularly those with focus issues.

It was asked if the school has started making long-term plans per the checklist it received as a result of the audit. Mr. Beyer said approximately 80 percent of the strategic plan has been mapped out, and new staff has recently been brought on to help create a vision and bring life to its academic programs. Also, Kreiva has moved from a co-director model to a single Head of School model.

Ms. Waterhouse was asked if she provided Kreiva with a timeline for completing the audit checklist items. Ms. Waterhouse said she did not; however she explained that she has an action template that provides a timeline that she can use to monitor progress on individual items.

Chairman Cline invited Kreiva to return in 90 days with an updated progress report. Mr. Beyer welcomed the opportunity and said some items would be completed over the next few weeks.

Ms. Honorow asked Mr. Beyer if he found the audit process helpful. He said it was very helpful and acknowledged and thanked Ms. Waterhouse for her help in guiding them through several challenges. He said the audit showed them how the challenges and pieces fit together and helped to reveal areas where improvement was needed.

Ms. Honorow noted that her perception was that Kreiva was weak in their student assessments. Mr. Beyer said this is an area they working on and explained that they are administering newly purchased assessments. He noted that the initial math assessments have been completed and are currently working on baseline testing to be used to help teachers identify skill gaps and develop plans to address them. He also mentioned that the school had challenges working with the funding model, so it is working to establish a line of credit. The school also received a half-million-dollar grant from the Barr Foundation for the next two years.

Ms. Honorow asked for more detail on personal loans to the school. Ms. Baker explained that the school tried to secure a line of credit with its bank, but did not meet the requirements needed to secure one, so instead sought private investments. It received a private loan of \$76,000 that has already been repaid.

Ms. Kate Cassady asked about school fundraising. Mr. Beyer said that the school has not yet started this year's fundraising; however, they are in the process of recruiting a board member with fundraising expertise who can guide and oversee these activities. Ms. Cassady asked if the school had applied for any grants. Mr. Beyer responded that it received almost \$1 million in grants, including grants from the Barr Foundation, NHDOE and the Department of Homeland

Security. He noted that Kreiva is taking a proactive approach to getting grants so it can remain financially healthy.

D. School Funding Presentation

John Tobin, a former director of legal systems, said he has spent the past 15 months traveling around the State to talk about school funding as it currently operates in New Hampshire with the goal to move it back into the forefront of public discussion.

All litigation can be boiled down to two principles: 1) The State has a duty to provide an adequate education to every child; and 2) Whatever taxes the State uses to fund schools the State must make the rate consistent across the board. Courts have stated that an adequate education does not just require reading, writing and arithmetic, but also the skills needed to compete in the economy, which incorporate subjects like science, technology and languages.

In terms of taxes, the Court has determined that a district is not complying with the Constitution if people from different towns are paying different rates. In a recent case in Cheshire County Superior Court, the Court ruled that the formula used to calculate rates is unconstitutional.

Mr. Tobin showed that three-fourths of school taxes come from local property taxes and another 20 percent comes from State aid. This means New Hampshire spends more per pupil than many other US States but ranks last in terms of the proportion that comes from the State. Therefore, New Hampshire relies heavily on local property taxes to fund education.

Using simple math as an example, Mr. Tobin explained that when taxes are determined by total property in a town, a town with a total property value of \$20 per square mile could raise \$40, but a town with a total property value at \$4 per square mile would only raise \$8, meaning the smaller town must raise their property tax rate to fund their schools. As a result, parents in towns with low property values could pay more in property taxes than parents in towns with higher property values.

In New Hampshire, the average spent per student is \$15,800. However, because of variable tax rates, residents and businesses in high-value property areas can spend less in taxes but still spend more per child than their counterparts in lower-value property towns. Schools in lower-value property towns end up with fewer resources than high-value property towns, even after figuring in State aid. Meanwhile, towns with lower property values raise property taxes and end up with less tax revenue with which to invest in their businesses and communities.

Based on Mr. Tobin's research, 77 percent of NH students and 75 percent of NH taxpayers live in areas where the property value is below average. That means residents in those areas must work harder to invest less in their schools.

The consequences of that include:

- The current tax policy discourages starting businesses in towns with lower property values, which impedes the goal of encouraging economic prosperity throughout the State.
- The State has trouble attracting young families due to high property taxes.
- Towns and cities do not look favorably on new housing because more housing means more children, which means higher school budgets.
- There is little cooperation because towns with high property values do not want to integrate with towns with lower property values.

Adding to the issue is the fact that some land is not taxed, such as National Forest land and State prisons.

In order to meet budgetary requirements, some districts are forced to cut resources including school nurses, art and language classes and custodians. Even after making these cuts, some schools still must lay off teachers, resulting in class sizes as large as 60 students. Despite these larger classes, teacher salaries remain low and the school district faces high teacher turnover.

These shortfalls can be remedied somewhat by stabilization grants, but the legislature cut these grants by 4 percent in 2015, so some districts may lose significant funding and are forced to raise taxes even more.

What's more, in some districts more than half of all students are on free or reduced lunches. Those children may have more needs, which increase the cost of educating them, but the lack of adequate funding makes it difficult to provide that.

Mr. Tobin said he was hoping to see three things in the most recent State budget: 1) roll back the cuts to stabilization grants; 2) restore disparity aid and give more funding to poorer towns; 3) set up an independent commission to look at education costs and how to pay for them.

Ms. Honorow asked what role the group plays in working with legislators to adjust funding. Mr. Tobin said they have been trying to talk to legislators, but they also educate citizens on the impact of the funding model and encourage them to speak to their elected officials. He said he was here today because the State Board can take a leadership role in talking about the issue and speaking up for taxpayers and students in poorer areas.

Ms. Honorow then asked Mr. Tobin if he has spoken with BIA or chambers of commerce. Mr. Tobin said he has been to BIA twice and has been invited to speak at chambers of commerce. They understand the challenges related to attracting new residents and offering affordable housing, so there is interest in this topic. Over the next year, his group plans to visit more chambers of commerce and rotary clubs.

E. Petition for Relief/Rehearing - Student/Londonderry School Board - SB-FY-11-001/SB-FY-18-03-14

Stephen Berwick, NHDOE, Coordinator, Dispute Resolution and Constituent Complaints, presented a complaint from a parent regarding the status of his concerns with the Londonderry School District.

Mr. Berwick explained that the parent had gone to the local school board to discuss the relocation of a bus stop, but the local school board did not provide the parent with a hearing. Under Ed 204, a parent must have a written decision from a local school board before he or she can bring the issue before the State Board. Without the local school board's written response, there is no recourse available to the parent to move the matter forward to the State Board. Mr. Berwick said he believes the parent's primary complaint is the denial of process at the local level, and it is unclear what jurisdiction the State Board would have to hear the complaint.

Ms. Honorow asked Mr. Berwick if he has spoken with the local school board. Mr. Berwick responded that he had spoken with the attorney for the local school board and was told they are trying to reach a resolution. Mr. Berwick also said he learned from the parent that a letter was sent to him from the superintendent but does not know if the letter was sent on behalf of the local school board or on behalf of the superintendent only.

Ms. Honorow asked if the State Board could reply to the letter they received from the parent explaining that there is nothing the State Board can do because there is no remedy available according to the statute. Chairman Cline said the State Board should wait to respond until it has more detail on what happened at the local level.

Commissioner Edelblut said there are other ways to present the matter, including public comment sessions. Mr. Berwick said he has no problem contacting the parent and the school board to learn more about what has happened so far. If it turns out the parent is being denied due process, he or she could bring evidence of that to the State Board.

AGENDA ITEM V. LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Amanda Phelps, NHDOE, Administrative Rules Coordinator, explained to the State Board that Ed 505.02 and Ed 505.05 will expire on September 16, 2019.

An interim rule is in effect and will go to the Joint Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules (JLCAR) on September 20, 2019 and will be brought back before the State Board at the October 10, 2019 meeting for adoption. She noted that when she speaks with JLCAR, she will explain that no educator credentials will be issued by the NHDOE during the time period that the rules are expired. Ms. Phelps did explain that there is a statute available to school districts which allows for the emergency authorization of a teacher credential they can evoke if needed during the time period the rules are expired.

Ms. Honorow asked what the impact would be of adopting the interim rule. Ms. Phelps responded that the interim rule will be adopted for six months. Meanwhile, the initial proposal will be ready for a vote to start the regular rule making process before the six months expire.

A. Ed 500 Rule Change Summary

Ms. Phelps explained that because the Ed 500 rule changes were extensive they will be presented to the Office of Legislative Services (OLS) in four separate sections.

Several board members noted they had received a summary but not the proposed changes. Chairman Cline said he would arrange to have them sent out later that day.

Ms. Honorow asked for the difference between the validation score and the national cut score. Mr. Steve Appleby, NHDOE, Administrator, Bureau of Credentialing and Closed School Transcripts, stated, that his understanding is the rule requires the forming of a committee to determine and make a recommendation to the State Board. Historically, the committee has always recommended the national cut score. The wording for the validation study language will be slightly different than the current version.

Ms. Honorow then asked why there is no minimum GPA requirement in the rules. Mr. Appleby said several rules are ambiguously written, including the rules regarding GPAs. Some schools offer transcripts without GPAs, while some colleges require demonstration of competency rather than a GPA. Also, a GPA from one college would be weighted differently than the same GPA from another college, so it was determined that GPA is so subjective that it does not hold much value.

Ms. Honorow noted that not having a GPA requirement pushes against the goal to increase State standards in certain content areas. Mr. Appleby explained that the Credentialing Bureau sees student program plans when they are seeking a credential and see vast differences in the quality of the plans as a result. He further explained that there are times when a graduate has the minimum GPA

but does not demonstrate the corresponding competency, so GPA does not always demonstrate the required competency in content areas.

Ms. Griffin asked about Ed 505.04, which sets out rules for accepting credits from State educator preparation programs or similar programs from other States. Mr. Appleby said there are already separate pathways for in-State graduates and out-of-State graduates. Out-of-State transcripts are measured against Ed 600 requirements to make sure the competencies are comparable. If they are not, the graduate must take the required coursework.

Ms. Honorow asked if the \$50 name change fee is critical and noted it was one of the fees that did not come down. Mr. Appleby said the current process is very loose because it does not require any verification. The fee would help put a process in place. Once it is, the fee may be lowered if it turns out the processing costs are low. He also noted that there will be another fee reduction in October. The renewal fee is decreasing by \$10 every three years and will also reduce the initial license fee by \$10.

Chairman Cline thanked the committee for their work. Mr. Appleby said a real motivator was talking to educators who were distraught because the process was making it hard for them to get the licensure they needed.

Ms. Phelps said she will submit the current changes, but the PSB committee may make other changes. Ms. Honorow asked to receive both sets of changes at the same time and Chairman Cline suggested a red-lined version of the changes PSB is proposing.

Ms. Honorow asked for a status from JLCAR regarding Learn Everywhere. Ms. Phelps said the committee submitted their response to the Office of Legislative Services (OLS), and the item has been added to JLCAR's October meeting agenda.

AGENDA ITEM VI. COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE

Commissioner Edelblut met with superintendents at their last statewide meeting and reminded them that the State's charter school laws encourage public schools to charter organizations as well, so the funds awarded by the new grant are available to school districts as well. He encouraged them to explore this opportunity.

The preschool development grant is ongoing. The Department is collecting data, including surveys of parents and educators, and will look at it to determine next steps. The Department will be applying for a grant to implement next steps.

Commissioner Edelblut and Mr. Appleby met with the speech language pathology governing board to talk about the issues surrounding required

credentials. It is likely that the board will propose changes to allow more flexibility or speech language pathologists to be effective in the schools.

The New Hampshire Career Academy is moving forward and there will be an MOU signing tomorrow at 10:00 a.m. at Great Bay Community College with the Governor.

The Department is currently recruiting candidates for the positions of Director of Educator Support and Higher Education Division. Ashlee Stetser has resigned and is moving to the United Kingdom, so her position is also open.

Since Ashlee went on maternity leave, Commissioner Edelblut and Mr. Appleby have taken over many of her duties, including the program review process. The problems in that process continue, so they are talking with the CTE to help find solutions.

The Department made an offer to a candidate to replace Attorney Richard Sala, but the offer has not yet been accepted.

The U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) Deputy Secretary, Mick Zais will be visiting New Hampshire to deliver an address on the State of Education in the US and New England. The tentative date is September 30.

Ms. Honorow noted she had offered to assist the CTE with the program review process and has yet to connect with them. She asked how she could assist. Commissioner Edelblut said she can assist by helping to recruit reviewers.

Ms. Honorow then asked about the charter school grant and how the State Board can move that process forward. Commissioner Edelblut explained that the Department is waiting for more guidance from the USDOE to assist in developing State guidelines and hope to have more conversations in November and hopes to have the State Board involved with the process.

AGENDA ITEM VII. APPOINTMENTS

A. Chartered Public Schools Oversight Committee (RSA 194-B)

Chairman Cline nominated Kate Cassady to serve on the Chartered Public Schools Oversight Committee. The Board approved his selection unanimously.

B. Commissioner's Consultation with the State Board of Education (RSA 21-N:3 II)

Commissioner Edelblut presented his proposal to reappoint Caitlin Davis to continue in her position as Director for the Division of Education and Analytic Resources.

AGENDA ITEM VIII. NONPUBLIC SCHOOL APPROVAL

A. Commissioner's Nonpublic School Initial Application Review – Crossroads Christian School, Pelham, NH

Melissa Valence, Division of Education Analytics and Resources, NHDOE, introduced Joann Spain from Crossroads Christian School.

Ms. Lane asked if the school has plans for program approval in the future. Ms. Spain said it does. The school is a member of the American Christian School International (ACSI), but it must be open for one year before it can apply for accreditation.

MOTION: Ann Lane made the following motion, seconded by Sally Griffin, that the State Board of Education accepts and approves the Commissioner's Nonpublic School Initial Approval Status report for Crossroads Christian School for compulsory attendance only and that all materials issued by the Crossroads Christian School indicate this approval.

VOTE: The motion was approved by unanimous vote of the Board with the Chairman abstaining.

AGENDA ITEM IX. OPEN BOARD DISCUSSIONS

A. Marking the 100th Anniversary of the State Board of Education

Chairman Cline noted that while there have been many changes in education over the past 100 years, the one constant has been the concept of the New Hampshire State Board of education, comprised of citizens who are non-educators and independent of the Department of Education. Today marks the 100th anniversary of the State Board. Chairman Cline thanked everyone on the Board for their service.

AGENDA ITEM X. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Honorow mentioned that MicroSociety had said they had a wait list at the last meeting, but she saw that they are highlighting free tuition and advertising for grades 1-2. She asked if the State Board should be concerned. Chairman Cline responded that some charter schools have expressed concern that people think they charge tuition. He believes MicroSociety is taking this step to prevent that misinterpretation and will speak to the school to confirm this. Ms. Honorow asked that he also find out if they have filled their open slots.

Ms. Honorow then asked for a follow-up on the task force regarding math learning communities. Chairman Cline said he would look into.

Ms. Adams said the State Board is tentatively scheduled to hold a fall meeting at SAU 23 and will follow up once it is confirmed.

AGENDA ITEM XI. NONPUBLIC SESSION

There was no nonpublic session.

AGENDA ITEM XII. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes of August 8, 2019

Ms. Honorow requested that a minor change be made on Page 4731, “and board training” be changed to “any board training”.

MOTION: Cindy Chagnon made the motion, seconded by Kate Cassady, to approve the Minutes of August 8, 2019 as amended.

VOTE: The motion was approved by unanimous vote of the Board with the Chairman abstaining.

B. Monadnock Regional School District’s Request to Change Apportionment Formulas

MOTION: Cindy Chagnon made the motion, seconded by Kate Cassady, that the State Board of Education approve Monadnock Regional School District’s request to change their apportionment formulas.

VOTE: The motion was approved by unanimous vote of the Board with the Chairman abstaining.

AGENDA ITEM XIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Helen Honorow made the motion, seconded by Kate Cassady, to adjourn the meeting at 1:10 p.m.

VOTE: The motion was approved by unanimous vote of the Board present, with the Chairman abstaining.



Secretary