

March 15, 2016

Strategic Goals: (1) Ensure that Vermont's public education system operates within the framework of high expectations for every learner and ensure that there is equity in opportunity for all.
(2) Ensure that the public education system is stable, efficient, and responsive to changes and ever-changing population needs, economic and 21st century issues.

MINUTES

Present

State Board of Education (SBE): Sean-Marie Oller, Vice Chair; Peter Peltz; William Mathis; Mark Perrin; Krista Huling; Stacy Weinberger, Rainbow Chen, Student member non-voting.

Agency of Education (AOE): Rebecca Holcombe, Robert Stirewalt, Rebecca Plude, Suzanne Sprague, Hayley Dover.

Others: Tiffany Pash, VT Digger; Julie Longchamp, VT NEA; Martha Allen, VT NEA; Joel Cook, VT NEA; John Pandolfo, Superintendent BSU; Mill Moore, VT Independent Schools Association; Andrew Jewel, GISU Act 46 Committee Chair; Emily Knightsley, Interim Superintendent Blue Mountain SU; Ken Page, VPA.

Item A: Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call

Vice-Chair Oller called the meeting to order at 10:18 AM. She reminded those in attendance to sign the attendance sheet. The members of the SBE introduced themselves.

Item B: Public to be heard

John Pandolfo, Superintendent of the Barre Supervisory Union, introduced himself and thanked the Board for taking their time to tour Spaulding High School and the Central VT Career Center this morning.

Andrew Jewel, Grand Isle Supervisory Union Act 46 Committee Chair spoke to the Board about the work the committee has done around consolidation.

Item C: Consent Agenda

Motion: Peltz moved to remove item C2 for further discussion. The motion was seconded by Huling.

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

Motion: Peltz moved to approve the consent agenda as revised. The motion was seconded by Huling.

The minutes were revised to include that Item K – pertains to 21st century grants.

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

Specifically, the items approved were: Item C – Consent Agenda

1. Minutes - February 16, 2016, SBE Meeting
3. Independent School Approvals:
 - a) Renewal of General Independent School Approval:
 - The Riverside School, Lyndonville; grades K-8
 - b) Renewal of General and Special Education Independent School Approval:
 1. Cornerstone School, St. Johnsbury; grades K-12
 2. Lyndon Institute, Lyndon Center; grades 9-12
 - c) Request to Rescind Tutorial Approval:
 - H.O.P.E. Program, Vergennes; no longer opening as planned
4. Essex Westford Unified District

Emily Knightsley, Interim Superintendent Blue Mountain SU, spoke to the Board and asked for clarification on what they should provide by the June meeting.

Item D: Board Members Announcements and Student Representatives Emails

Chen stated that she and another student visited the financial literacy committee as a guest of Mark Perrin and spoke about financial literacy. Perrin added that Heather Bouchey spoke for the AOE, starting the meeting, Burlington HS and Colchester HS representatives were present as well.

Holcombe reported that there was an initial meeting of the ESSA fit team which Huling and Peltz are members of. They discussed which agencies will be solicited to provide input. Mathis suggested that NASBE members also be invited to provide input.

Huling met with Karen Brown regarding the 2016 Status Report Women, Work and Wages in Vermont, item from February's agenda to continue the discussion. She is also attending a conference in Washington DC representing the SBE in April.

Item F: Secretary's Report

Secretary Holcombe thanked Peltz for bringing the [AOE/AHS Report on Act 46 of 2015](#) to the SBEs attention.

Holcombe updated the Board about the Agency's work and testimony regarding teacher licensing, and whether this should remain within the Agency. The proposed bill suggests moving the licensing of specialized teachers to the Office of Professional Regulation. The Agency has provided testimony not supporting this bill.

She distributed a copy of the Agency's response to a recent press release from Campaign for Vermont. Also distributed were the findings from a recent audit of the Agency's equalized

pupil count. The Auditor's office concluded that the Agency has "accurately computed the FY 2016 number of equalized pupils."

Holcombe distributed a revised sheet detailing the Agency's current budget. The Vermont general fund contributions to the Agency of Education are down from Fiscal Year 2009 by 61%.

Item: H – Integrated Field Review Update

Amy Fowler presented three individuals who participated in the AOE's first round of the Integrated Field Review. David Adler, Director of Curriculum Orleans Southwest; Megan Jones, Blue Mt. Union School MS/HS Social Studies Teacher; and Emily Knightsley, Interim Superintendent Blue Mountain SU; spoke to the Board about their experiences with the IFRs.

Board members asked questions regarding the review's findings, and how they will be used going forward.

Fowler summarized the discussion and will bring a summary of findings for the SBE to review.

The Board broke for lunch at 12:15 and reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

Item: I – Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) – Update, Dr. Amy Fowler, Deputy Secretary

Dr. Fowler presented an update to the Board. At the conclusion of her presentation, the State Board of Education members will be able to articulate the process AOE is pursuing in drafting the State plan, offer input to the decision making criteria for State decisions, and they asked questions related to ESSA implementation. Key groups providing input into this process are: State Plan Management Team-AOE staff, State Bounce Teams-AOE Staff, Field Input Team (FIT)-Public and educators, and 16 Input Teams-Public and Educators.

The methods which the public may provide input are: Survey of the public or targeted audiences, Webinars or tele-meetings, Face-to-face focus groups. We are recruiting the first 4 groups now-people can register via the ESSA web page: <http://education.vermont.gov/essa>. They estimate 16-20 focus groups over the next 6 months.

Item: J - Legislative Update - Robert Stirewalt

Robert Stirewalt distributed and discussed a brief update on current legislative initiatives. The AOE is currently operating at capacity and does not have resources to take on any additional new legislative and regulatory mandates. The Agency has continually expressed to lawmakers that our focus is on using existing resources as efficiently as possible, and on delivering on current mandates to the best of our ability. We discourage new mandates until we and the field have successfully implemented existing initiatives.

Item: L - Implementation of Act 46, 166 and 77 Jeff Francis, VSA

Jeff Francis, VT Superintendent's Association; Joanne LeBlanc, Orleans Southwest SU; Ned Kirsch, Franklin West SU; and Joanne Unrue, VT Council SPED, Washington West; spoke to the Board regarding unforeseen aspects of recent legislation that have been challenging, and have created a disparity in opportunities for Vermont's learners. The general Assembly should take

stock of the intended and unintended consequences emerging as Acts 166 and 77 are implemented, and make adjustments as necessary to better support school systems in their work to respond to the Acts. Appropriate actions should be taken to ensure the Agency of Education has the capacity it needs to support school officials in their implementation of Acts 46, 77 and 166.

Results of a short survey asking superintendents to comment on the challenges and unforeseen consequences associated with the implementation of Acts 166 and 77, were shared.

Board members discussed the testimony presented, and revised language to a resolution which will be distributed to the VT Legislature.

Motion: Mathis moved that WHEREAS, universal access to pre-school is one of the most effective and cost-efficient educational reforms and is vital to the healthy growth and development of youth, and

WHEREAS, flexible pathways is an important incentive to encourage enrollment in post-secondary education, assist students fulfill their ambitions, and to advance the economy, and

WHEREAS, the pre-school law (Act 166) structurally establishes a disequalizing system, and does not sufficiently address the needs of our less advantaged children, and

WHEREAS the dual enrollment law has likewise had unintended side effects which results in not equitably providing benefits to our neediest children, and

WHEREAS, without immediate actions, the inequities will become institutionalized resulting in thwarted opportunities for children and harm to the state's society and common good, and

WHEREAS, while schools enjoy advantageous staffing patterns, the state has over-extended its limited support capacity thereby threatening the viability of all initiatives

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Vermont State Board of Education requests the General Assembly to immediately address and resolve the structured inequities in these laws, and

Be it further resolved,

That this action be prioritized by the appropriate committees of the General Assembly, and

Be it further resolved,

That new initiatives beyond these areas and Act 46 be postponed.

The motion was seconded by Perrin.

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn

Motion: Mathis moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:07 PM. The motion was seconded by Johnson-Aten.

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes recorded and prepared by Rebecca Plude