

State Board of Education

Draft Meeting Minutes

VIRTUAL Teams Meeting/Video/Teleconference
Call in #: 1-802-552-8456, Conference ID: 612 837 589#

Date: July 19, 2023

Present:

State Board Members (SBE): Jennifer Samuelson, Chair; Tammy Kolbe, Vice Chair; Tom Lovett; Lyle Jepson; Kim Gleason; Jenna O'Farrell, Richard Werner, Aaliyah Wilburn; Grey Fearon; and Heather Bouchey

Agency of Education (AOE): Maureen Gaidys, Suzanne Sprague

Others: Adam Walker, Katie Ballard, Special Education Advisory Panel Chair; Jeff Francis, Vermont Superintendents Association (VSA); Sue Ceglowski, Vermont School Boards Association (VSBA); Jay Nichols, Vermont Principals' Association (VPA); Jeff Fannon, Vermont National Education Association (VT-NEA)

Call to Order/Roll Call/Amendments to the Agenda

Chair Samuelson called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. A roll call was taken. There was one amendment to the agenda, to postpone item L to a future meeting date.

Welcome and Oath of Allegiance/Office for New Student Members

Chair Samuelson welcomed new student members Aaliyah Wilburn, voting member, and Grey Fearon, non-voting member. She administered the Oath of Allegiance and Oath of Office to both student members. The student members provided a brief introduction.

Board Announcements

Chair Samuelson said the August meeting date has been changed to August 9, 2023, and will be held virtually.

Approval of the June 21, 2023, Draft Meeting Minutes and June 29, 2023, Special Meeting Draft Minutes

Lovett made a motion to approve the [draft meeting minutes from June 21, 2023](#). Chair Samuelson seconded. No discussion. The motion carried.

Jepson made a motion to approve the [draft meeting minutes from June 29, 2023](#). Gleason seconded. No discussion. The motion carried.

Public to be Heard

Jeff Francis, VSA: Francis honored Donna Russo-Savage for her exemplary work of public service to the State of Vermont and public education.

Resolution for Donna Russo-Savage

Chair Samuelson read a [resolution](#) to honor Donna Russo-Savage, who retired from AOE on June 30, 2023.

Secretary's Update and Final Act 173 Update

Interim Secretary Bouchey provided an update on the State of Emergency resulting from the recent flooding disaster. She noted that highly impacted locations, damage to schools within impacted areas and the challenges faced by the state are delaying rebuilding and recovery. Interim Secretary Bouchey noted that several AOE employees are working in the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) to aid in the emergency, mostly dealing with mass feeding and homelessness.

Interim Secretary Bouchey provided an update on preparation for Independent School readiness pertaining to the new Rule Series 2200. A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document is ready for release. A new attestation is under legal review and close to being released. The AOE provides ongoing outreach and office hours. More support is being provided to independent schools as needed. Discussion followed on how AOE conducts requests for reapproval, AOE capacity, moratorium on independent school initial approvals, process for reapproval for those independent schools that want to accept public funds, including independent schools that want to accept public funds on one green sheet for approval by SBE, current approval process, SBE role in approval before public tuition is paid and the potential need for a special meeting.

Interim Secretary Bouchey provided a high-level update on the Census-Based Funding Advisory Group's Report and summarized the recommendations for the AOE, SBE and General Assembly. The primary recommendations for the AOE include professional development around the implementation of Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and guidance for documentation for Maintenance of Effort (MOE). The primary recommendation for the SBE is to provide Local Education Agencies (LEAs) greater clarity on MTSS through rulemaking. The primary recommendations for the General Assembly (GA) are to provide accountability and oversight in law and to place a cap on what independent schools can request from LEAs for reimbursement. Discussion followed regarding the MOE, Center for IDEA Fiscal Reporting (CIFR), uncertainty about what counts and what doesn't in MOE and Maintenance of State Financial Support (MFS) and differing legal opinions.

Education Quality Standards (EQS) Committee Update

Vice Chair Kolbe said there is nothing new for the Board to review at this time. The committee is being reconstituted with new members. Lovett will come off this committee and Diop and Werner will join it. In the coming weeks, the committee will consider the Act 1 content standards recommendations. The revisions to the EQS rules should be submitted to the Secretary of State's office this week. There are three public hearings scheduled for September 13th and 28th and October 3rd. Any changes to the rules based upon public comment should be ready for the Board's consideration in December or January.

Chair Samuelson called for a break at 9:51 a.m. The meeting was reconvened at 10:07 a.m.

Rules Series 2200 Committee Update

Chair Samuelson reminded the Board of its consensus at the May meeting that the goals of Act 1 should be extended to approved independent schools. The appropriate mechanism for applying these goals is through Rules Series 2200 which pertains to independent school approvals. The 2200 Subcommittee is reconvened and includes Lovett and Gleason. Chair Samuelson will serve as the chair of the committee with the committee's goal of aligning Rules Series 2200 with the goals of Act 1. The committee hopes to have a draft for the full Board's consideration in August followed by opening the rules this fall.

Special Education Advisory Panel Update

Katie Ballard, Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) Chair, provided an update to the Board. She said it has been a challenging year for those dealing with special education with staff shortages and conversations taking place across the state. The SEAP has focused on critical staff shortages, the use of independent schools for publicly funded students and exclusionary discipline as it relates to students with disabilities. They are working to figure out how to continue to partner with the AOE on these important topics and to not become a strain on AOE resources and staff. Ballard said the focus of the SEAP for next year will be transitions from early childhood and transitions from age 18 to age 22 where students are still eligible to stay in school. Discussion followed regarding frequency of SEAP meetings and the report to the AOE and SBE.

Future Meeting Planning

Chair Samuelson said Teacher of the Year presentations, an EQS Committee update, a Rule Series 2200 Committee update, and an update from the Expeditionary School at Black River will be on the August agenda. Lovett said there may be a few independent school reapprovals/renewals.

Public to be Heard

None.

Adjourn

Gleason moved to adjourn. Jepson seconded. The vote was unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 10:22 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Suzanne Sprague.