

May 16, 2018

- 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.*

## **Draft Minutes**

### **Present:**

**State Board of Education (SBE):** Krista Huling, Chair; William Mathis, Vice Chair; Stacy Weinberger, Mark Perrin; Peter Peltz; John O'Keefe; Callahan Beck; John Carroll; Connor Solimano; Heather Bouchey (via phone)

**Agency of Education (AOE):** Cassandra Ryan, Molly Bachman, Emily Simmons, Haley Jones, Suzanne Sprague

**Others:** Dan MacArthur, Marlboro; David Kelley, Greensboro; James Jewett, Franklin; Jay Denault, Franklin; Jody Normandeau, Dummerston; Mary Moran, Superintendent Rutland City SD; Mill Moore, VT Independent Schools Association; Representative Larry Cupoli, Rutland City; Representative Scott Beck, St. Johnsbury; Tiffany Pache, VT Digger; John Castle, Superintendent North Country SU; Margaret Maclean, Peacham; Carin Park, Barnard; Jeff Francis, VSA; Nicole Mace, VSBA; Tyle Machia; Pamela Fraser, Barnard; Gaston Bathalon, Troy/NCSU; Courtney Callo, Red Fox; Samantha Krasney, Red Fox; Maxine Linehan, Red Fox; Austin Robertson, Rutland High School; Krisha Sachdev, Rutland High School; Victoria Quint, Rutland High School; Megan McGee, Rutland High School; Delaney Courcelle, Rutland High School; Jennifer Wigmore, Rutland; Kelton Myers, Rutland; Amy Conn, Rutland; Cara Solimano, Rutland; Erica Wallstrom, Rutland; Lucas Barrett, OESU; Emilie Knisely, BMU; Angeline Alley, BMU Chair; Bruce Stevens, BMU Former Chair; Brent Abare, BMU; Judy Murray, BMU.

Superintendent Mary Moran welcomed the State Board of Education to Rutland High School. Peltz and Mathis thanked Moran for her 22 years of service to the children of Vermont.

### **Item A: Call to Order**

Chairman Huling called the meeting to order at 8:55 a.m.

### **Item B: Roll Call and Introductions**

Chair Huling asked Board members to introduce themselves.

### **Item C: Consent Agenda**

Mathis made a motion to accept the consent agenda. Peltz seconded. Carroll indicated that his preference for schools to notify the Agency of Education of any changes be extended rather than

the timeline noted. He asked that a typographical error on C5 be corrected and that the word “must” be added to the green sheet. The vote passed unanimously.

**Item D: Board Announcements**

None

**Item E: Chair’s Report**

Chair Huling thanked the members of the Secretary Search Committee for volunteering their time. Additionally, she thanked Gaidys and Sprague for assisting the committee through the process.

Chair Huling mentioned that the AOE sent a survey that focused on the AOE Strategic Vision and Goals for Technical Education Vermont. The AOE received 1,400 responses. Chair Huling said 40 people will convene in mid-June to work on a Strategic Plan for technical education. Chair Huling said to expect rulemaking as the outcome as the current CTE State Board rules are 25 years old and will be updated.

Chair Huling said that the SBE Retreat will be in Lake Morey on June 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>.

Chair Huling said that she was approached by Allison Litten, President of the Vermont Foreign Language Association about updating the standards.

Chair Huling reminded the State Board of the upcoming VSA/VSBA Spring Conference on May 24 and 25, 2018. Mathis and Carroll confirmed each will attend some or all of the conference.

Chair Huling said that the NASBE President, Kris Amundson, contacted and updated her on the services NASBE provides. She said that NASBE reads the monthly Vermont State Board of Education’s meeting minutes as well as the monthly meeting minutes from every other state board in the U.S. The NASBE President said that they can assist with policy work.

The Governor’s Office is taking applications for a new student member. Chair Huling said to visit the Governor’s website for more information. She added that the State Board vacancy left by Johnson-Aten would be filled very soon.

Chair Huling said she received correspondence from a constituent around inequity and transportation, specifically pertaining to school choice and that the lack of transportation for some creates inequity. She added that the State Board will have an intern from UVM this fall. The Board will need to pick a project for the intern to work on.

Chair Huling said that it was requested that she testify during the last days of the Legislative session but she had a conflict with the Secretary Search Committee meeting. Huling sent the testimony in writing on the topic of Technical Centers and teacher licensure. She relayed that the full State Board has not voted on teacher licensure for technical education teachers and in discussion the State Board spoke about not wanting to diminish the quality of staff in Technical Centers. Chair Huling said that she was requested to testify on teacher health care, on which she provided no comment and said the State Board have not spoken of it at any meeting.

**Item F: Committee Reports**

Peltz said the Legislative Committee did not meet. He read a brief personal statement on the recent history of school mergers and his belief in the merger plan. Peltz said that small school grants may be perceived as punitive to small rural schools and the State Board must be sensitive to the needs of students and do no harm.

Carroll said the Strategic Plan discussion will continue at the retreat.

**Item G: Student Reports**

Solimano welcomed the State Board to Rutland High School. He said he has been busy preparing for and taking five AP exams. The exams take 3 hours each and the score is based on a five-point scale. AP scores of three and above are considered passing. Students with these scores can potentially receive college credits for the classes.

Beck mentioned that the annual Hildene Essay Contest writing prompt was to describe a current or recent event in which the actions of the participant(s) may be viewed as patriotic by some and unpatriotic by others. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade applicants were asked to discuss the differing points of view and explain their position. Beck said that the top three winners were from the Edmunds Middle School in Burlington.

**Item H: Public to be Heard**

The following people addressed the State Board of Education on licenses for CTE teachers.

Superintendent Mary Moran, Rutland City SD

The following people addressed the State Board of Education on small schools grants.

Nicole Mace, Executive Director of the Vermont School Boards Association

Dan MacArthur, Marlboro School Board

Carin Park, Barnard School Board

Pamela Fraser, Barnard

Jody Normandeau, Dummerston

David Kelley, Greensboro

Superintendent John Castle, North Country SU

Margaret McClean, Peacham

Chair Huling invited the public to remain at the meeting, if possible, because small schools grants will be discussed at 1:45 p.m.

**Item J: Rule Series 2200: Review and Process**

Cassandra Ryan and Molly Bachman presented to the State Board on the independent schools application process. Ryan described the Agency division that currently works on independent school applications. She reviewed the handouts and applications. Ryan explained that in 2015 the AOE created a standardized application. She said that the general education portion was contracted out to independent reviewers, which created a slowdown and backlog. The special education portion now is completed by the special education team at the AOE and there was a learning curve for the team and processing was delayed which created more backlog.

Ryan said that the AOE has uncovered weaknesses and inefficiencies in the process and that the deputies at the AOE have determined that the Independent School review and recommendation process merits a PIVOT project to improve efficiencies and outcomes. It is a review process that will match the actual process to the rules with the intent to improve it. Carroll asked for the problems to be identified that warrant the project. Ryan said the timeliness of completion of the application are a problem. She also added that the independent contractor piece is expensive and may not be netting the required results. The fee is \$1,000 per review. It includes a review of the application, an on-site visit and a final report. Discussion followed regarding the yearly review schedule, using resources wisely, review by contractor, fee, clarifying green sheet, funding and staffing at the AOE, school governance, staff evaluating application, authority of the AOE compared to the rules, student safety, role of the AOE versus the State Board and improving the rules.

Carroll suggested that all approvals of independent schools be given to NEASC if the schools want to receive public dollars. Ryan said that NEASC does not have a track for special education. Carroll said that any new independent school should have the working capital and is uneasy about the general public subsidizing the school. Discussion followed regarding the cost. Carroll asked that the discussion continue at the retreat. Weinberger asked to be mindful of setting new criteria around two anomalies. She continued that the State Board should remember what works with the review process and what does not. Peltz said that what the State Board has experienced may be a trend.

Chair Huling called for a recess at 10:47 a.m. The meeting reconvened at 11:05 a.m.

#### **Item K: Independent School Approvals and Renewals**

Ryan explained that Red Fox Community School is applying for initial approval. She added under State Board rules it is a two-year term. Red Fox Community School is currently a recognized school. Courtney Callo, Board member, Samantha Krasney, Director of Academics and Administration, and Maxine Linehan, Board Chair, were present. O'Keefe said he will not recuse himself from the vote. He said that the school is in his home town and he does not have business dealings with them. Carroll asked for clarification on the Independent Reviewer's report "meets the most important" and asked if it should read "meets all...". Ryan said that the original phrase used a poor choice of words.

Carroll made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Acting Secretary. Perrin seconded the motion. Discussion followed regarding clarification of the origin of the school and forecasted enrollment. Carroll suggested a friendly amendment to allow the school to report within five business days to the AOE if there are any changes in enrollment, programs, policies, facilities, financial capacity, staffing or administration.

The vote passed unanimously.

#### **Item X: Calendar Review**

Chair Huling reviewed the State Board calendar. She reminded the State Board of the June 8 meeting to review the State Plan. The meeting is at the Agency of Education in Barre. Chair

Huling said that the State Plan, independent schools, and the strategic plan will be discussed at the retreat. She added that the small schools metrics is due by June 30. Chair Huling said that the July State Board meeting will be held in the northern part of the state so that feedback can be taken by region. The August meeting will be held in the central part of the state and the September meeting will be held in the southern part of the state. An additional meeting will be held on October 2, 2018. Chair Huling reminded the State Board that it cannot comment on the State Plan until after comment is heard from all regions in Vermont.

**Item L: Rutland High School Student Panel on Act 77**

The Rutland High School student Act 77 panelists were Connor Solimano, Austin Robertson, Krisha Sachdev, Victoria Quint, Megan McGee and Delaney Courelle. The following Rutland High School teachers were acknowledged by Superintendent Moran; Jennifer Wigmore; Kelton Meyers; Amy Conn; and Erica Wallstrom.

**Item M: Resolution for Connor Solimano**

Chair Huling read a resolution of appreciation to Connor Solimano, State Board Voting Student Member from Rutland High School. Carroll sang the Harvard University alma mater and presented Solimano with a Harvard tie with “veritas” printed on it.

Acting Secretary Bouchey left the call at 12:15 p.m.

Chair Huling called for lunch at 12:25 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 1:19 p.m.

**Item N: Legislative Update**

Jones shared a [Legislative Update](#) with the State Board. She reviewed the recent legislative activity. She advised that the AOE is waiting for final versions of many bills. She said that the Governor is going to veto the budget bill and is calling back the Legislature for three additional days. Jones advised that the Senate miscellaneous education bill did not make it to the final stages and that pieces of it were included in the budget bill. She advised the following bills passed H.919, H.897, H.27 and S.261. Discussion followed on special education funding, restorative justice, CTE licensure and the special session. Jones identified topics in the Senate miscellaneous education bill that were not included in any other bill. These include PreK, ethnic studies, expanded learning programs, technical correction for small schools grants to account for PreK students, licensing language, radon and others.

Chair Huling said there would be another update at the June 8 meeting. Jones said she will send an update at the end of next week.

**Item P: Small Schools Grant Metrics (Excellence)**

Simmons shared a slide with the State Board. She reviewed that the Legislature created a new statute governing small schools grants effective in July 1, 2019. The average grade size requirement remains the same with 20 or fewer. The State Board is considering two options that are independent of each other which are 1) lengthy drive times and 2) academic excellence and operational efficiency. Simmons focused on number two, academic excellence/operational efficiency. Chair Huling said that these metrics do not affect schools that have already merged to a larger district and that the school remains operational. The grant name will be changed to a

Merger Support Grant on July 1, 2019. Simmons added that the stand alone districts in a 2x2x1 and a 3x1 do not receive a Merger Support Grant because the incentive package was different.

Simmons reviewed her presentation. She added that beginning in December, the AOE will be measuring schools by academic proficiency, personalization, safe and healthy schools, high quality staffing and investment priorities. The schools can be viewed by school or by SU or compared to the State. Simmons suggested using the existing data collected by the AOE indicators for the metrics. Mathis asked if the measures are weighted and Simmons confirmed yes. Simmons explained option A. She also explained option B. Simmons clarified an error on slide 6. The statewide average should be 4.68 and not 5.15. Simmons mentioned that the fourth metric is whether the district has participated in a merger study and submitted a merger report, which needs to be considered as well. Simmons compared option A and B side by side and offered options of a 4 of 4 metrics required or 3 of 4 metrics required. Discussion followed regarding each metric being equal, merger report being an equal metric, yearly application, one-time review of metrics by the State Board until the law changes, deciding the metrics being precedent setting, return on investment versus per student cost, staffing ratios, taking money from the needy and point system for considering the poverty level of students in an applicant district.

Acting Secretary Bouchey rejoined the meeting at 2:31 p.m.

Discussion continued on controlling for poverty level, using EQS, yearly snapshot and new scoring system. Chair Huling asked how the State Board would like the AOE to proceed. The State Board agreed that option A was preferred along with an adjustment for poverty. Simmons will write the first draft and will send the draft to Chair Huling.

**Item Q: Blue Mountain Union School District – SU Reassignment Proposal**

Chair Huling said that Blue Mountain had a Board meeting last night and were going to report the outcome. Blue Mountain community member in attendance were Angeline Alley, Board Chair, Bruce Stevens, former Chair, Emilie Knisely, Superintendent, Judy Murray, Brent Abare and Lucas Barrett, Chair of OESU. Chair Huling said that Blue Mountain SD is losing its superintendent and business manager on July 1, 2018. Blue Mountain has 350 students in grades K – 12. She continued that Blue Mountain SD is looking for a decision in advance of the State Plan so there is leadership at the school.

Chair Huling asked for an update on where Blue Mountain is in terms of a decision at last evening's school board meeting and the future of Blue Mountain SD. Alley said at their last meeting of the nine-member board, they were polled and five members voted to share supervisory services with Orange East SU, two members voted to join Caledonia Central SU and two members were undecided. Chair Huling said that Orange East SU is where the current superintendent and business manager will be working on July 1. Alley said that the main concern of the board members is that by indicating where to go for services that the board is deciding the path for Act 46 and helping to draw the map in the State Plan. It is a one-year term to guarantee central office services on July 1. Blue Mountain wishes to remain a district.

Chair Huling said that the State Board has received a letter from Orange East SU and did not receive a letter from Caledonia Central SU. Barrett is concerned with overall governance and creating stability within the SU. He indicated that servicing Blue Mountain is a logical step.

Chair Huling said Blue Mountain needs a direction before the State Plan. Simmons read the statute on the State Board authority under Title 16 Section 261. Chair Huling said that there is no consensus at Blue Mountain and the State Board needs to assign them to a location. Discussion followed regarding letting Blue Mountain figure it out on their own, board members, permission to search for a new superintendent and risk involved.

O'Keefe made a motion to assign Blue Mountain SD to Orange East SU for supervisory union services. Weinberger seconded. Carroll spoke in opposition to the motion and asked the board to figure it out. Peltz said that the State Board could potentially postpone the inevitable. O'Keefe said that time is running out and people want to be paid on July 1. It takes time to put people on the payroll and all other administrative functions that must happen in tandem. The vote passed. Carroll voted no.

Solimano left the meeting at 3:25 p.m.

#### **Item R: NASBE**

Chair Huling said that there is a document in the packet that is called the "Benefits of NASBE Membership." She continued that budgeted State Board funds are not carried over to the next year if the State Board does not use the budgeted dollars for the NASBE dues. Chair Huling said that NASBE is willing to be the State Board's policy staff and perform policy research. If approved, NASBE will come to Vermont and work to be better partners with Vermont. Chair Huling said that the dues for the State of Vermont are \$18,000. Mathis made a motion to pay NASBE. Perrin seconded. Discussion followed regarding possible projects for NASBE, what NASBE does for other states and making a commitment to utilize their services. The vote passed. Yay votes: Carroll, Perrin, Mathis. Nay votes: O'Keefe, Peltz, Weinberger. Tiebreaker – Huling voted yay. The vote passed.

#### **Item S: Acting Secretary's Report**

Acting Secretary Bouchey said that the AOE has engaged in a partnership with VSAC and the Vermont State Colleges, which is funded by VSAC. The purpose is to have a small working group of high school math teachers and college math faculty design a pilot course to ensure that students who are at risk before their senior year of not being college ready, can get the pilot course their senior year.

Acting Secretary Bouchey said that there will be no challenges in adhering to the deadline for the State Plan.

#### **Item T: Update on Process for Act 46 Section 9 Reading Assignments**

Chair Huling assigned Carroll, O'Keefe and Perrin to the northern region in Vermont. She assigned herself and Weinberger to the central region in Vermont. Beck, Peltz and Mathis are assigned to the southern region in Vermont. She asked the State Board members to read all the executive summaries of all Section 9 proposals as well and read thoroughly the Section 9 proposals for their specific region.

**Item U: Orange Southwest SU Waiver Request**

Weinberger made the motion to accept the motion as recommended by the Acting Secretary. Carroll seconded. The vote passed unanimously to deny the waiver request.

**Item V: Update on Secretary's Search**

Chair Huling thanked the search committee for their time.

**Item W: Anticipated Executive Session**

Perrin made a motion to go into executive session under 1 V.S.A. § 313 to discuss the appointment or employment of a public officer or employee. Carroll seconded. The vote passed unanimously.

The State Board went into executive session at 4:10 p.m.

The State Board returned to regular session at 4:20 p.m.

Perrin made a motion for the Chair to forward the three names to the Governor for consideration of the position of Secretary of Education. Peltz seconded. The vote passed unanimously.

**Adjourn**

Mathis made a motion to adjourn. Carroll seconded. There was no further discussion. The vote was unanimous to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 4:21 p.m.

Minutes recorded and prepared by Suzanne Sprague.

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