

**Minutes of the Meeting of the New Jersey State Board of Education
In the Conference Room on the First Floor
100 River View Executive Plaza
Trenton, NJ
April 3, 2024**

Presiding: Kathy Goldenberg, President

Secretary: Kevin Dehmer, Acting Commissioner

Present Constituting a Quorum

Mr. Andrew Mulvihill

Dr. Ronald Butcher

Mr. Jack Fornaro

Dr. Nedd Johnson

Dr. Joseph Ricca

Mrs. Elaine Bobrove

Ms. Fatimah Burnam-Watkins

Ms. Mary Bennett

Ms. Jeanette Peña

Absent

Mr. Arcelio Aponte

Mrs. Mary Beth Berry

Mrs. Sylvia Sylvia

Convening

State Board of Education President Kathy Goldenberg convened the public meeting at 9:10 a.m. with the reading of the statement pertaining to the public session of the State Board meeting as it complies with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act.

The Open Public Meetings Act was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meeting of public bodies at which any business affecting their interest is discussed or acted upon.

In accordance with the provisions of this Act, the State Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time and place thereof posted in the Department of Education (Department), Secretary of State's Office and notice also having been given to the State House Press Corps, the Governor's Office and the State Board agenda subscribers.

And seeing there was a quorum, the meeting of April 3, 2024, was called to order.

Adjourn to Executive Session

President Goldenberg then read the resolution pertaining to the executive session of the State Board meeting as it complies with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Whereas, in order to protect the personal privacy and to avoid situations wherein the public interest might be disserved, the Open Public Meetings Act permits public bodies to exclude the public from that portion of a meeting at which certain matters are discussed, now therefore be it

Resolved, that consistent with the provision of N.J.S.A. 10:4-12.b, the State Board Education will now adjourn to executive session to discuss personnel and legal issues. The State Board immediately adjourned to executive session on April 3, 2024.

Reconvening

President Kathy Goldenberg reconvened the open meeting at 10:08 a.m. with the reading of the resolution pertaining to the resumption of the public session of the State Board meeting as it complies with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Whereas, consistent with the provision of N.J.S.A. 10:4-12.b, the State Board will now adjourn from executive session to resume the open session of this meeting.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Fatimah Burnam-Watkins.

Welcome

President Goldenberg stated the State Board meetings are accessible to the public for viewing on YouTube Channel and would like to advise that YouTube provides readily accessible language translation options for closed captioning. She further stated if you are viewing this simulcast now, you can use the settings option in YouTube for information about sub-titles, auto translations and closed captioning in multiple languages.

Approval of Minutes of The Meeting

On a motion duly seconded and carried, the State Board members approved the minutes of the public meeting conducted on March 6, 2024.

President's Reports

Public Testimony

President Goldenberg stated that for the month of April, the State Board will not receive public testimony on the Religious Holidays Calendar Resolution for 2024-2025 and the proposed readoption with amendments to Chapter 22, Student Residency as no one registered to testify. For the month of May, the State Board will receive open topic public testimony in addition to testimony on the proposed amendments to Chapter 12, Interdistrict Public School Choice.

Welcome of the Permanent Student Representative

President Goldenberg introduced the State Board of Education's permanent student representative, Miss Nilanjana (Nillie) Ghosh. Miss Ghosh is a rising junior at West Windsor Plainsboro High School North.

Ms. Nilanjana Ghosh (Nillie) stated that she has been researching current event articles about the upcoming presidential election and has learned there are voting expansion initiatives in New Jersey to allow younger Americans to vote in upcoming school board elections. She stated that she feels youth activism is important and brought the idea to her school's Key Club to hold drives for voter registration for seniors and juniors who will be eligible to vote in the 2024 presidential election.

Ms. Ghosh further stated that she is currently mentoring the new incoming student representative, Anna Paszkiewicz, and feels confident that Anna will excel as the new incoming State Board of Education representative.

Resolution in Recognition of the Month of the Military Child

President Goldenberg requested that the State Board adopt a ceremonial Resolution in Recognition of the Month of the Military Child. The State Board unanimously adopted the following resolution read by President Goldenberg recognizing the Month of the Military Child.

Resolution in Recognition of the Month of the Military Child

Whereas, the month of April 2024 has been designated nationally as the Month of the Military Child by the Department of Defense to underscore the important role military children play in the armed forces community; and

Whereas, the New Jersey State Board of Education and the Department of Education aim to ensure, through the policies established, that all students are challenged to maximize their potential and to excel academically, socially, emotionally, and physically for college, career and throughout life; and

Whereas, the Department of Education encourages school districts to provide support to children of service members as they transition between schools to address their distinct needs and prepare them to graduate as well-rounded citizens; and

Whereas, the physical, social and emotional well-being of children in military families is essential to their success and has a direct impact on the resiliency of military families serving our country; and

Whereas, these efforts and supports can improve the lives of military children and help pave the way for future generations; and

Whereas, it is both fitting and proper that special recognition be given to ensuring military children feel safe and supported in our schools and communities, so that their parents can focus on the challenges and missions they face in the line of duty; now, therefore be it

Resolved, that the New Jersey State Board of Education and the Acting Commissioner of Education recognize April 2024 as the Month of the Military Child in New Jersey.

President Goldenberg stated that Mr. Tony Trongone, Commissioner, and primary point on contact for the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commissioner, was not able to accept the resolution today due to illness. The resolution will be mailed to him.

Resolution in Recognition of School Library Month in New Jersey

President Goldenberg requested that the State Board adopt a ceremonial Resolution in Recognition of School Library Month in New Jersey. The State Board unanimously adopted the following resolution read by Nedd Johnson recognizing April as School Library Month in New Jersey.

Resolution in Recognition of School Library Month in New Jersey

Whereas, the month of April 2024, has been designated nationally as School Library Month by the American Association of School Librarians; and

Whereas, school libraries strive to provide equitable access to resources and instruction for all students; and

Whereas, school libraries provide materials and resources which reflect the diversity of our students and communities as well as honoring students' freedom to read; and

Whereas, school libraries provide resources and instruction to assist with the implementation of New Jersey Student Learning Standards; and

Whereas, school library media specialists develop information literacy skills instruction so students are able to effectively locate, evaluate and apply knowledge; and

Whereas, school library media specialists assist with literacy development to raise literacy rates by inspiring students to develop a lifelong love of reading; and

Whereas, school library media specialists create literature appreciation activities, and encourage content and recreational reading to every student; and

Whereas, school libraries contribute to students' social and emotional learning needs; and

Whereas, it is both fitting and proper that special recognition be given to school libraries and the role of certified school library media specialists in ensuring an environment that allows for reading and learning, investigation and research, and the lifelong pursuit of knowledge for all students in New Jersey; now, therefore be it

Resolved, that the New Jersey State Board of Education and the Commissioner of Education recognize April 2024 as School Library Month in New Jersey.

President Goldenberg introduced Ms. Beth Raff, President of the New Jersey Association of School Librarians (NJASL) to accept the resolution and say a few words. Ms. Raff was accompanied by Ms. Mary Moyer, Legislative Consultant to the NJASL.

Resolution in Recognition of National Hearing and Speech Month in New Jersey

President Goldenberg requested that the State Board adopt a ceremonial Resolution in Recognition of National Hearing and Speech Month in New Jersey. She stated it is fitting that the State Board of Education advance awareness about communication disorders and draw attention to all those

individuals who work tirelessly to help those with communication disorders to communicate effectively and live a high-quality life.

The State Board unanimously adopted the following resolution read by Mary Bennett recognizing May as National Hearing and Speech Month in New Jersey.

Resolution in Recognition of National Hearing and Speech Month in New Jersey

Whereas, the month of May 2024 is being celebrated as National Hearing and Speech Month; and

Whereas, the New Jersey State Board of Education recognizes that many students have communication disorders and acknowledges the significance that the ability to communicate plays in building personal and societal relationships as students grow and mature; and

Whereas, National Hearing and Speech Month is a time to raise awareness about communication disorders and to encourage children and families to receive appropriate screenings and evaluations; and

Whereas, National Hearing and Speech Month is also a time to acknowledge the hard work of audiologists, speech-language pathologists, and speech, language, and hearing scientists and the contributions they make that remarkably affect the lives of students in New Jersey; and

Whereas, these professionals are invested in serving the needs of students with speech, language, and hearing disorders to foster success in all aspects of their lives by prioritizing effective communication for the highest quality of life; and

Whereas, the New Jersey Speech-Language-Hearing Association supports students and professionals by its professional development offerings, advocacy efforts, and public awareness campaigns designed to ensure that high-quality care is provided; and

Whereas, it is both fitting and proper that special recognition be given to acknowledge May 2024 as National Hearing and Speech Month along with commending the New Jersey Speech-Language-Hearing Association for its role in providing outstanding service to professionals throughout the State of New Jersey; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the New Jersey State Board of Education and the Acting Commissioner of Education recognize May 2024 as National Hearing and Speech Month in New Jersey.

President Goldenberg introduced Ms. Robin Kanis, representative for the New Jersey Speech and Hearing Association (NJSHA) to accept the resolution and say a few words.

Resolution in Recognition of Autism Acceptance Month in New Jersey

President Goldenberg requested that the State Board adopt a ceremonial Resolution in Recognition of Autism Acceptance Month in New Jersey. She stated that Autism awareness helps to foster understanding and acceptance of individuals with autism spectrum disorder and promotes inclusion within our schools and communities.

The State Board unanimously adopted the following resolution read by Jeanette Peña recognizing April as Autism Acceptance Month in New Jersey.

Resolution in Recognition of Autism Acceptance Month in New Jersey

Whereas, the month of April is globally acknowledged as Autism Acceptance Month, dedicated to increasing awareness, understanding, and acceptance of autism spectrum disorder; and

Whereas, it is important to recognize and support individuals with autism by fostering a learning environment and community that embraces neurodiversity and promotes inclusivity; and

Whereas, autism spectrum disorders are characterized by a range of challenges and strengths, impacting social communication, behavior, and sensory experiences; and

Whereas, raising awareness about autism is essential in promoting early diagnosis, intervention, and access to appropriate resources and support; and

Whereas, creating an inclusive and supportive environment for individuals with autism involves promoting understanding, empathy, and acceptance within schools, workplaces, homes, and communities; and

Whereas, the New Jersey State Board of Education and the Acting Commissioner of Education acknowledges the importance of fostering understanding and support for individuals on the autism spectrum, recognizing their unique social and emotional needs; and

Whereas, creating inclusive and supportive learning environments that cultivate positive relationships, understanding, and empathy for all students, including those with autism, is integral to the mission of the Department; and

Whereas, the New Jersey State Board of Education and the Acting Commissioner of Education are committed to promoting inclusive practices within educational settings to ensure safe, supportive, and equitable learning environments for all; and

Whereas, collaboration among schools, families, and the broader community is essential to enhancing acceptance and understanding of autism and to furthering inclusive practices that benefit every student; and

Whereas, the New Jersey State Board of Education and the Acting Commissioner of Education recognizes the ongoing efforts required to advance autism acceptance and awareness, contributing to the creation of a more compassionate and inclusive community; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the New Jersey State Board of Education and the Acting Commissioner of Education hereby recognize April 2024 as Autism Acceptance Month in New Jersey.

President Goldenberg stated that Ms. Suzanne Buchanan, Executive Director for Autism New Jersey, was not able to attend today's meeting today due to illness. She stated that student ambassador Matthew Pini is here today to say a few words and accept the resolution, accompanied

by his grandfather, Tom Curtin, Immediate Past President of the Board of Trustees for Autism New Jersey, and Matthew's mother, Amy Pini.

State Board Committee Reports

CTE Committee

Mary Beth Berry, chair of the CTE Committee, was not present today. President Goldenberg stated that the committee met on March 12, 2024. She stated the Department presented demographic data on student enrollment in career and technical education (CTE) career clusters in science, engineering, technology, and mathematics (STEM) and information technology (IT) for the 2023 school year. She further stated they discussed the federal requirement for all school districts receiving Perkins V funding to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment every two years. She stated the assessment must provide a description of progress toward implementation of equal access to high-quality CTE courses and programs of study for all students. President Goldenberg stated they further discussed how CTE programs are promoted to garner student interest, including at the middle school level.

Ad Hoc Committee

Nedd Johnson, chair of the Ad Hoc Committee, stated that the committee met on March 19, 2024. He stated the State Board is required by the Administrative Procedure Act to receive public comment on all rulemakings under its authority and that the Board may receive comments through oral or written testimony, per the statute. He further stated the State Board is not required to hold Open Topic Sessions, per any regulation or statute, but because there are certain procedures that must followed for public testimony, the committee was charged with discussing current procedures used by the State Board of Education for public testimony and any possible changes that could be recommended to the full Board. Dr. Johnson stated the committee recommends that timed allotment be changed from five minutes per registered speaker to three minutes, and the committee also recommends that registered speakers be required to provide four written copies of their remarks upon arrival so that their testimony can be shared with the full membership of the Board and the Commissioner of Education/Department of Education. He stated these minor changes will assist in a more efficient and effective process. Dr. Johnson further stated that in executive session today the Board discussed that for this process to work it requires active participation from all Board members. He stated that a schedule was developed for the Board to follow, and it is important for members to make themselves readily available when they are assigned.

Items for Consideration

**Items scheduled for a vote are marked with an asterisk.*

***A. Appointments**

- Approved the following appointment(s) pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:4-32-35 and N.J.A.C. 6A:2-1.1 et seq.:
 - Ms. Kathleen Paquette, Director, Office of Career Readiness, Division of Teaching and Learning Services

***B. Certification of School Districts**

- Approved for a period of three years, those school districts recommended by the Commissioner, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-14.a and b.

Districts	County
Egg Harbor Twp. School District	Atlantic
Hammonton School District	Atlantic
Carlstadt-East Rutherford Regional High School District	Bergen
Rockaway Twp. School District	Morris
Hope Twp. School District	Warren

***C. Controversies and Disputes**

- Adopted the readoption with amendments at N.J.A.C, 6A:3, Controversies and Disputes, pertaining to the rules of procedure for the filing of petitions with the Commissioner of Education to hear and decide controversies and disputes arising under school laws, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:6-9 and 10; 18A:7-4; 18A:7A-15 and 42.a(3); 18A:7F-9; 18A:11-3; 18A:12-29; 18A:20-36; 18A:26-10; 18A:28-8; 18A:29-4 and 14; 18A:33-2; 18A:38-1 and 13; 18A:39-28 et seq.; 18A:54-4; and 18A:60-1; P.L. 2007, c. 260; and P.L. 2012, c. 26.

Work Session

There was no work session.

New Business

There was no new business.

Adjournment

On a motion duly seconded and carried, the State Board of Education adjourned its April 3, 2024, public meeting at 12:23 p.m.

Kevin Dehmer, Acting Commissioner
Acting Secretary, N.J. State Board of Education