

**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
January 8, 2025**

Presiding: Kathy Goldenberg, President

Secretary: Kevin Dehmer, Acting Commissioner

Present Constituting a Quorum

Dr. Nedd Johnson
Ms. Mary Bennett
Ms. Mary Beth Berry
Mr. Arcelio Aponte
Mr. Jack Fornaro
Ms. Elaine Bobrove
Dr. Claudine Keenan
Mr. Ahmed Shehata

Absent

Dr. Joseph Ricca
Ms. Jeanette Peña
Dr. Ronald Butcher

Convening

State Board of Education President Kathy Goldenberg convened the public meeting at 9:28 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 January 8, 2025, 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 January 8, 2025.

Reconvening

President Kathy Goldenberg reconvened the open meeting at 10:59 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 State Board President Kathy Goldenberg.

Welcome

President Goldenberg stated the State Board meetings are accessible to the public for viewing on the 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 Meetings

On a motion duly seconded and carried, the State Board members unanimously approved the minutes of the public meeting conducted on December 4, 2024.

President's Reports

Public Testimony

President Goldenberg stated that for the month of January, the State Board of Education will hear public testimony on Chapter 32, School District Operations. She also stated that January's public testimony was an Open Topic Public Testimony opportunity meaning registered members of the public have an opportunity to speak to the State Board on any educational topic of choice.

President Goldenberg stated that for the month of February, the State Board will not receive public testimony as there are no educational topics scheduled for discussion.

Permanent Student Representative

President Goldenberg introduced the State Board of Education's permanent student representative, Miss Anna Paszkiewicz. Miss Paszkiewicz is a senior at Palmyra High School in Burlington County.

Miss Paszkiewicz spoke about artificial intelligence (AI) being used in schools.

State Board Committee Reports

CTE Committee

Mary Beth Berry, chair of the CTE committee, stated that the committee met on December 19, 2024, to receive some updates on the implementation of the career and technical education programs across the State, specifically the evolution of the supermarket program and how school districts best address the needs of children who qualify for special education related services in CTE programs.

Resolution in Honor of New Jersey School Board Recognition Month

President Goldenberg requested that the State Board adopt a ceremonial Resolution in Honor of New Jersey School Board Recognition Month. The State Board unanimously adopted the following resolution read by State Board member Mary Bennett recognizing January as School Board Recognition Month.

Resolution in Honor of New Jersey School Board Recognition Month

Whereas, the New Jersey State Board of Education has established rigorous standards through its promulgation of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards, which set the expectations of academic achievement for nearly 1.4 million public schoolchildren; and

Whereas, New Jersey's locally elected and appointed boards of education play a vital role in ensuring that their local school districts meet state standards and adhere to state and federal education statute and regulations, with the goal of preparing all students for college and the workplace, thereby enabling them to compete in a global economy; and

Whereas, New Jersey's 5,000 non-partisan local board of education members and charter school trustees are public servants who dedicate their time, without pay or benefit, to the oversight of school district operations, through sound financial practices and comprehensive policies on curriculum, staffing and other areas to ensure the well-being and academic achievement of all students in the district; and

Whereas, local boards of education, in conjunction with state education officials and local educators, have built a foundation of success that has led to New Jersey's status as a leader in student achievement, as evidenced by the National Assessment of Educational Progress scores; and

Whereas, the New Jersey School Boards Association has declared January 2025 to be School Board Recognition Month; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the New Jersey State Board of Education and the Acting Commissioner of Education recognize the contributions of our state's local boards of education to the academic success of its public school students and expresses its sincere appreciation to local board of education members for their continued focus on the achievement of children throughout New Jersey; and be it further

Resolved, that the New Jersey State Board of Education and the Acting Commissioner of Education encourage qualified New Jersey citizens to consider serving as members of their local school boards.

Commissioner's Reports

Acting Commissioner Dehmer stated there are no Commissioner's reports this month.

Items for Consideration

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

***A. Appointments**

- Approved the following appointments pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:4-32-35 and N.J.A.C. 6A:2-1.1 et seq.:

Ms. Rani Singh, Director, Office of Recruitment, Preparation and Certification.

Ms. Natalie Dougherty, Director, Office of Learning, Equity and Academic Recovery.

***B. Certification of School Districts**

- There were no districts for certification.

C. School District Operations

- Discussed the proposed amendments at N.J.A.C. 6A:32 related to a State-excused absence for civic events, pursuant to P.L. 2023, c. 274, and N.J.S.A. 18A:4-15.

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 January 8, 2025, public meeting at 11:33 a.m.

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