

**New Jersey State Board of Education
Minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting
in the Conference Room on the First Floor,
100 River View Executive Plaza
Trenton, NJ**

February 18, 2009

Presiding: Josephine Hernandez, President

Secretary: Lucille E. Davy, Commissioner

PRESENT CONSTITUTING A QUORUM

Mr. Arcelio Aponte
Dr. Ronald Butcher
Ms. Kathleen Dietz
Ms. Edithe Fulton
Mr. Robert Haney
Dr. Ernest Lepore
Ms. Florence McGinn
Dr. Dorothy Strickland

ABSENT

CONVENING

Josephine Hernandez, president, State Board of Education, convened the public meeting with the reading of the resolution pertaining to the public session of the State Board meeting as it complies with the Open Public Meetings Act.

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act was enacted to insure 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, and

WHEREAS, 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, 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, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that by adopting this resolution the State Board of Education states its intention to convene a public meeting to conduct the state's business on February 18, 2009.

SWEARING-IN STATE BOARD MEMBER

President Hernandez introduced Ilan Plawker who was sworn in by Superior Court Judge Lawrence DeBello. Mr. Plawker's wife, Terry, held the Bible. Mr. Plawker is from Bergen County. President Hernandez welcomed Mr. Plawker to the State Board.

In his remarks, Mr. Plawker shared that the most important function of government is to serve the children of the state.

STUDENT SPEAKERS

Jen Luck, a senior at South Brunswick High School (Middlesex County) introduced next year's student representative, Devon McGrimmon, a sophomore at J.P. Stevens High School in Edison (Middlesex County). Jen welcomed the student speaker, Sherill Henriquez, a senior at Emerson High School in Union City, president of the National Honors Society and a member of the student council. Ms. Henriquez advocated for equal funding for art education and athletics.

President Hernandez thanked Sherill for her comments and for highlighting this issue.

INTRODUCTIONS

Commissioner Davy recognized Carole Morris, Monmouth County Executive County Superintendent of Schools, who represented the county superintendents.

Student Recognition Program

Ms. Morris introduced Bryan Larco, a senior at Long Branch High School (Monmouth County). Bryan is from Ecuador, is 12th in his class and has distinguished himself athletically and in extra-curricular activities. The State Board recognizes a student or group of students as a part of its monthly recognition program designed to honor a student or a group of students who have made a significant contribution to school, community, family or other groups. The State Board recognized Bryan for his academic achievements and community service.

On behalf of the State Board, President Hernandez congratulated Bryan on his accomplishments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS

On a motion duly seconded and carried, the State Board members approved the minutes of the public meeting conducted on January 21, 2009. State Board members Ilan Plawker, Ronald Butcher and President Hernandez abstained.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Hernandez congratulated Jen Luck for her participation in "We the People, The Citizen and the Constitution" competition. President Hernandez was a judge for this competition and Jen was a member of her school's team. President Hernandez said that Jen represented her school well. President Hernandez stated that the competition highlighted the importance of civics in the curriculum. However, she was disappointed at the lack of participation from urban schools and she stated she would like to see these districts participate in this competition in the future.

President Hernandez also shared that she will attending the NASBE Legislative Conference in Washington D.C. on March 10-13, 2009. Florence McGinn will also attend the NASBE Conference in March. She will attend the session on obesity.

State Board member Robert Haney, chair of the code committee, reported that the code committee met via conference call twice. The first conference call on January 8, 2009, was a detailed review of the high school graduation code proposal and discussion of the public comments and questions received. The second conference call on February 10, 2009, focused on the revisions that were made to the proposal as a result of the discussion from the first conference call and additional public comments received. The committee was satisfied with the changes made.

President Hernandez asked Ilan Plawker to join the legislative committee and Mr. Plawker agreed. President Hernandez encouraged this committee to meet with the Assembly and Senate education committees to establish a relationship. President Hernandez shared that she had a conversation with Assemblywoman Jacey and they discussed inviting the State Board Members to assembly meetings particularly when the Assembly is scheduled to discuss education policy.

President Hernandez announced that the State Board's follow-up retreat will be held after the public meeting in March. NASBE Executive Director Brenda Wilburn will be the facilitator. President Hernandez expressed hope to revise the State Board's strategic plan.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORTS

Presentation by Retired Army Colonel

Commissioner Davy introduced Retired Army Colonel Edward Petersen who is the education director of the S.T.E.M. Project Office with the Department of Defense. Mr. Petersen shared the Army's concern that schools are not producing enough new engineers and scientists to fill the expected vacancies within their laboratory. The Department of Defense would like to convince students that engineer and science represent good career paths. Accordingly, the Department of Defense expanded its educational outreach program into NJ schools providing scientists and engineers as role models and mentors to students and hosting workshops for teachers at no charge. In 2008, the first year of the program, NJ out-performed all other states thanks to the efforts of Commissioner Davy and State Board Member Ernest Lepore. Retired Colonel Petersen thanked Commissioner Davy and State Board Member Ernest Lepore for their assistance, guidance and support in establishing a model program that will be used nationwide.

Federal Stimulus Package

Commissioner Davy shared that the stimulus package contains significant funds allocated to education in such areas as preschool through college education, IDEA, Title I, innovation fund, teacher development programs, and S.T.E.M. development. The department is waiting for guidance from the U.S. Department of Education.

Art work

Commissioner Davy highlighted the new student art work located in the first floor conference room and throughout the department. She shared that it is a wonderful example of student creative work and it substantiates the importance of the arts as articulated by the student speaker, Sherill Henriquez. Commissioner Davy expressed appreciation to the art teachers who faithfully select and post the art work.

Monitoring of School Districts

Commissioner Davy stated that NJQSAC county reviews are underway. She has received results from some of the counties that have completed their work. A written report may be ready for the State Board in April.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION:

On motions duly seconded and carried, the State Board of Education took the following action:

A. Appointments

- There were no appointments.

B. Adult Education

- Assistant Commissioner Jay Doolan, and Marie Barry, director of Office of Career and Technical Education presented for second level discussion information regarding the proposal to increase the GED testing fees from \$25 to \$50.

C. High School Graduation Amendments

- Approved the proposed amendments to N.J.A.C. 6A:8. In addition, deputy commissioner Willa Spicer provided an update from the assessment committee.

WORK SESSION

Commissioner Davy introduced Dr. Aaron Fichtner, Director of Research and Evaluation at the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University. The Heldrich Center endeavors to understand the changing workforce and skill needs of industry and assists educational institutions in using this information to inform curricula and other decisions. Dr. Fichtner presented six evolving workplace trends and highlighted the skills needed by the emerging workforce to match these trends.

Assistant Commissioner Jay Doolan and Janis Jensen, director of the Office of Academic Standards and 21st Century Skills, showed the State Board members where they can find the revised core curriculum content standards on-line.

NEW BUSINESS

President Hernandez asked for a discussion at the next board meeting with the department's technology unit and state board office staff regarding the technology available for board member use that will promote greater efficiency.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion duly seconded and carried the State Board of Education adjourned its February 18, 2009 public meeting at 3:10 p.m.

Lucille E. Davy, Commissioner
Secretary, State Board of Education