

**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**

**October 21, 2009**

**Presiding:** Josephine Hernandez, President

**Secretary:** Lucille E. Davy, Commissioner

**PRESENT CONSTITUTING A QUORUM**

Dr. Ronald Butcher  
Ms. Edithe Fulton  
Mr. Robert Haney  
Dr. Ernest Lepore  
Ms. Florence McGinn  
Mr. Ilan Plawker  
Dr. Dorothy Strickland

**ABSENT**

Mr. Arcelio Aponte  
Ms. Kathleen Dietz

**CONVENING**

Josephine Hernandez, President, State Board of Education, convened the public meeting at 10:16 a.m. with the reading of the statement pertaining to the public session of the State Board meeting as it complies with the Open Public Meetings Act.

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.

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.

And seeing there was a quorum the meeting of October 21, 2009, was called to order.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**STUDENT SPEAKERS**

Commissioner Davy introduced Frederick Hoagland who is a senior at Trenton High School West (Mercer County). Frederick shared how students need to take advantage of existing resources available to enhance their education. He highlighted several programs currently available at his high school that benefit students such as school-based youth services and tutoring. On behalf of the State Board, President Hernandez thanked Frederick for his comments and wished him well in the future.

## **INTRODUCTIONS**

Commissioner Davy recognized Thomas Dowd, Executive County Superintendent of Schools (Atlantic County), who represented the county superintendents.

### **Student Recognition Program**

Mr. Dowd introduced Nikki Liao, a senior at Absegami High School. The State Board members congratulated Nikki for her 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 September 16, 2009. President Hernandez and Ronald Butcher abstained from the vote.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Hernandez highlighted the success of the Project High School Graduation conference that most of the state board members also attended in New Brunswick. The next step is a conference on best practices in the spring which will showcase the various interventions that have been effective. President Hernandez also shared that she and Dorothy Strickland attended the Educational Forum of NJ conference sponsored by Educational Teaching Service on globalization; developing creative connections. She stated that globalization is more than being a traveler, and this concept needs to be infused into our schools.

President Hernandez announced that public testimony is scheduled for 3:00 p.m. and the topic is Controversies and Disputes.

### **Legal Committee**

Edithe Fulton reported that the committee met and discussed the possibility of re-instituting the appeals role of the State Board. The committee determined that they would monitor legal cases that are being decided to see what issues are being presented to the courts and report back to the full State Board in the spring with a recommendation. The committee also suggests that all the committees be more active via conference calls or in person meetings. President Hernandez endorsed this recommendation. President Hernandez also suggested that the legal committee consider a new name since the committee is not adjudicating legal cases.

Ms. Fulton asked the Commissioner whether a staff liaison can be assigned for each committee. Commissioner Davy agreed that primary liaisons will be the State Board Office staff and department staff can be available to assist the committees as needed.

### **Career and Technical Education Committee**

Dorothy Strickland reported that an exploratory meeting was held with the Southern Regional Educational Board (SREB) where they discussed common initiatives that the groups (SREB and State Board) might engage collaboratively. Another meeting is planned with statewide CTE people for the end of this month.

## **COMMISSIONER'S REPORTS**

### **Teacher of the Year**

Commissioner Davy and the State Board recognized Marianne Woods Murphy as Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Murphy is a Spanish teacher at Northern Highlands Regional High School. Mrs. Murphy was introduced by Janis Jensen, director of the Office of Professional Standards and Programs. Ms. Eleanor Horn from Educational Testing Service shared remarks on the importance of the teacher of the year program and highlighted the schedule of events for the year ahead for Mrs. Murphy. Mr. Wendell Steinower from NJEA also remarked on Mrs. Murphy's accomplishments and highlighted the resources that will be available through NJEA for her. Representatives from Keyboard Consultants presented a Smart Kids technology award package to Mrs. Murphy.

President Hernandez acknowledged her eighth grade algebra teacher Mr. Herb Levitt who was in the audience.

### **H1N1**

Commissioner Davy shared that the department has posted information on the department's webpage. Each Monday the department sends out weekly information updates from the Department of Health and the Governor's office to local school districts. Edithe Fulton shared her concern that parents are electing not to have their children vaccinated and asked whether there was any way the department can encourage parents to have their children vaccinated. Commissioner Davy shared the various methods the Commissioner of Health and Human Services has used to encourage parents to have their children vaccinated, however, it is ultimately a parental decision.

### **ARRA Funds**

Commissioner Davy shared that the department submitted data to the federal government last week. The information will be made available to the public shortly.

### **Project Graduation**

Commissioner Davy shared that more than 1000 people attended this conference. Dr. Pedro Negaro from New York University, Governor Corzine and Attorney General Ann Milgram were speakers at the conference. However, the panel of high school students was most memorable to the commissioner. The students spoke about the challenges in their lives and their feelings about school which included frequent comments on how academic expectations were not articulated.

Commissioner Davy also shared that she attended a conference sponsored by Sisco that included high school students from all over the world. Commissioner Davy shared that the students in both conferences consistently spoke about needing higher expectations from teachers and other members of society rather than the biased perception that they are going to cause trouble. The State Board has begun by adopting new graduation standards, but there is more work to do.

State Board member Ronald Butcher asked if it is possible to invite groups like Promise Communities and Harlem Children's Zone to come and present to the State Board about the initiatives these groups have undertaken related to raising expectations and focusing on the whole child. Commissioner Davy responded that this could be included in the December or

January agenda. She agreed this would be a great opportunity for the State Board to hear what these groups are doing.

Dr. Butcher also expressed concern over the zero tolerance policies that exist in the elementary school districts. He expressed the need to re-examine this issue and see how it impacts the younger children. Commissioner Davy recommended that this be examined first by the county executive superintendents. State Board member Ilan Plawker agreed that this policy needs to be reviewed.

### **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. **Evaluation of the Performance of School Districts**

- Approved the proposal to readopt the regulations with amendments related to the NJ Quality Single Accountability Continuum regulations. Donna Arons, special assistant to the Commissioner, discussed the revision made to the documents since the last presentation and answered questions.

C. **Educational Facilities**

- Approved the proposal to readopt and amend the grant funding code for regular operating school districts.

D. **Professional Licensure and Standards**

- Discussed the proposed amendments to the speech language specialists' code. Deputy commissioner Willa Spicer, Robert Higgins, director of the Office of and Cathy Pine, director of the Office of Professional Standards, Licensing and Higher Education Collaboration answered questions and provided background information on the predicament facing speech language specialists.

### **WORK SESSION**

- The State Board viewed a video entitled "Did You Know?" which highlighted the impact of the expansion of technology on students and future employment.
- Commissioner Davy and the State Board discussed the comments received from the public on the national Common Core Standards. Deputy Commissioner Willa Spicer and Mary Jane Kubinski, director of the Office of Language Arts Literacy Education were present to address questions. Several comments were received from the public.

One commenter raised concerns that standards change but systems don't change. Other commenters stated these standards exceed what was agreed to in NJ's standards and still others are concerned that these common core standards will be problematic for part-time vocational students. The commissioner stated that the next steps will be for the department to look at the categories listed in the common core standards and see how they map to the NJ standards and report back to the State Board. The department must submit comments on the common core standards as soon as possible.

- The commissioner proposed that the department submit a response with regard to the math which says that the department believes the national math standards appear to be closely aligned to NJ's standards and the department will compare the two standards and see where there are differences. In addition, the response should also clearly articulate that the State Board believes all students should be prepared for college and have the freedom to make that choice and NJ proposes a third year of rigorous math that will include components of algebra II but also probability, data and statistics to prepare students for careers and/or college.
- In addition, the commissioner suggested that we make it clear in the response that mathematical practice cannot be taught in the absence of content and vice versa. The commissioner will circulate a draft response to the State Board members for comment.
- The results of the health and physical education survey will be presented at a later date.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion duly seconded and carried the State Board of Education adjourned its October 21, 2009 public meeting at 2:27 p.m.

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