

**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**

**January 20, 2010**

**Presiding:** Arcelio Aponte, Vice President

**Secretary:** Willa Spicer, Acting Commissioner

**PRESENT CONSTITUTING A QUORUM**

Ms. Edithe Fulton  
Dr. Ernest Lepore  
Ms. Florence McGinn  
Mr. Ilan Plawker  
Dr. Dorothy Strickland

**ABSENT**

Dr. Ronald Butcher  
Ms. Kathleen Dietz  
Mr. Robert Haney  
Ms. Josephine Hernandez

**CONVENING**

Arcelio Aponte, Vice President, State Board of Education, convened the public meeting at 9:20 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 January 20, 2010, was called to order.

**ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Vice President Aponte 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 of Education will now adjourn to executive session to discuss personnel issues.

The State Board immediately adjourned to executive session.

### **RECONVENING**

Vice President Aponte reconvened the public meeting 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**

### **COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**

Acting Commissioner Willa Spicer nominated Bret Schundler as Assistant Commissioner. The State Board approved the nomination. Acting Commissioner Spicer resigned as Acting Commissioner and appointed Bret Schundler as Acting Commissioner.

Acting Commissioner Schundler stated that is a pleasure and an honor to be with representatives of the department and the public. He stated that wonderful things are happening in education in New Jersey. He joins with all who have a passion for education and desire that education be the best it can be for our children. It is essential that the children have the broadest possible opportunities. He thanked the public for their concern for and commitment to education as either parents or interested citizens. These roles are essential to the success of our educational system. Our success is dependent upon the State Board, the department and the public working together. Vice President Aponte congratulated and welcomed Acting Commissioner Schundler.

### **STUDENT SPEAKERS**

Devon McRimmon, the 2009-10 student representative to the State Board and a junior at J.P. Stevens High School (Middlesex County) spoke to the State Board about the cross town rivalry that has developed with Edison High School. Edison High School did not pass the test requirements for No Child Left Behind because a few students did not improve their test scores from the previous year. As a result students from Edison High School have the option of transferring to the nearest school that had passed. In this case, that school was J.P. Stevens High School. Devon shared that enough students transferred into his high school to increase the class size in his classes, lunch periods are not sufficient for everyone and this failure has had a negative impact on the town of Edison. Devon asked what can be done in the future to prevent this from happening to another district.

Deputy Commissioner Spicer encouraged Devon to write to his legislator in Washington and tell him/her this story because the No Child Left Behind legislation is soon to expire and this is an apropos time for this discussion. On behalf of the State Board, Vice President Aponte thanked Devon for bringing this situation to the State Board's attention.

## **INTRODUCTIONS**

Deputy Commissioner Spicer recognized Bruce Greenfield, Executive County Superintendent of Schools (Ocean County), who represented the county superintendents.

### **Student Recognition Program**

Dr. Greenfield introduced Erica Thieleman a senior at Point Pleasant Borough High School (Ocean County). The State Board congratulated Erica for her academic 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 December 16, 2009.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Vice President Aponte introduced the School Board Recognition resolution. State Board member Edithe Fulton read the resolution which was approved by the State Board. Harry Delgado, President of the New Jersey School Boards Association, thanked the State Board for the recognition.

## **RESOLUTION FOR SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION MONTH**

**WHEREAS**, New Jersey's 1.4 million public school children in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade must meet rigorous academic standards instituted by the New Jersey State Board of Education through the state's Core Curriculum Content Standards; and

**WHEREAS**, New Jersey's 602 boards of education are tasked with the mission to meet those state standards to provide a world-class education to help students compete in a global economy upon graduation; and

**WHEREAS**, New Jersey's 4,800 non-partisan local board of education members dedicate their time, without remuneration, to ensure the proper oversight of school district operations, sound finances, comprehensive policies, curriculum, and staffing; and

**WHEREAS**, the efforts of local boards of education have established a foundation of student success, contributing to New Jersey's status as a leader in academic quality in benchmarks such as high school graduation rates, National Assessment of Educational Progress scores, teacher-to-student ratios, and college preparation through advanced-placement offerings; and

**WHEREAS**, the National School Boards Association and the New Jersey School Boards Association have declared January 2010 to be School Board Recognition Month; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that the New Jersey State Board of Education recognizes the contributions of our state's local boards of education to the academic success of its public school

students and expresses its sincerest appreciation to local board of education members for their focus on the achievement and well-being of children throughout New Jersey; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the New Jersey State Board of Education encourages qualified New Jersey citizens to consider serving as members on their local boards of education.

## **COMMISSIONER'S REPORTS**

### **Race to the Top**

Deputy Commissioner Spicer reported that the department submitted the application for the Race to the Top funds. Three hundred and seventy-eight districts have signed the memorandum of agreement to join the State. That is 59% of school districts, including charter and vocational schools. There are four elements of the plan: assessment and curriculum work, data collection, evaluation of teachers and administrators, and a section on turnaround schools (for NJ that's less than 30 schools). The grant also permits an award to schools that exceed the state standards set annually by the State Board. The budget for the state is \$180 million and for the local districts that are Title 1 there is a division of another \$180 million. Each district will have to construct its own plan on how it will spend the money if New Jersey wins the grant.

Vice President Aponte thanked Deputy Commissioner Spicer and the department staff for their efforts in putting this application together.

### **Monitoring School Districts**

No report.

## **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. **Marie H. Katzenbach School for the Deaf – Marie H. Katzenbach School for the Deaf – Proposal**

- Adopted the proposed amendments to the code pertaining to the Marie H. Katzenbach School for the Deaf. Assistant Commissioner Barbara Gantwerk and Ron Goodwin, Interim Superintendent, thanked Dr. Lepore for visiting the school and answered questions.
- Dr. Lepore encouraged the State Board members to visit the school and to perhaps have a meeting there.

### C. **Controversies and Disputes - Adoption**

- This will be considered at the February meeting.

D. **Charter Schools - Adoption**

- Adopted the proposed amendments to the charter school code. Assistant Commissioner Rochelle Hendricks and Ken Figgs, Manager, were present to answer questions.

E. **Education Standards and Assessment – Second Discussion**

- Discussed the proposed readoption with amendments to the standards and assessment code. Janis Jensen, director of the Office of Academic Standards, was present to answer questions.

**WORK SESSION**

**Core Curriculum Content Standards/Math and Language Arts Standards**

Sandra Alberti, director of the Office of Math and Science and Mary Jane Kubinski, director of the Office of Language Arts Literacy Education, presented the department's plan for the common core standards for math and language arts literacy. Public input is needed on the content of the standards and the adoption of the standards. Accordingly, public testimony sessions will be held in February and March, and the department has reactivated an email box to receive comments. The department is also hosting 12 meetings per month for the next three months with various educators and other stakeholders to get their feedback on the standards. Once the public comment period ends, the final draft of the standards will be released to the public in mid-March. Thereafter, the shift of focus will be on the adoption of the standards.

State Board members expressed support for this process and the concept of common core standards.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Vice President Aponte announced that public testimony will be held today at 3:00 p.m. The topics are: Open topic and Professional Licensure and Standards.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion duly seconded and carried the State Board of Education adjourned its January 20, 2010 public meeting at 11:20 a.m.

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Bret Schundler, Acting Commissioner  
Secretary, State Board of Education