

Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board

Meeting Minutes

September 14th, 2023

The 482nd meeting of the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board (PSTEB) was held on September 14th, 2023. This meeting was held virtually. Ms. Kitchen called the meeting to order.

The following members were in attendance: Dr. Keisha Allen, Ms. Joy Bacon, Dr. Jacob Bauer- Zebley, Ms. Janill Bobbitt(virtual), Ms. Melissa Carpenter, Dr. Dionne Curbeam, Ms. Stephanie Farmer, Mr. Darren Hornbeck, Dr. Kristine McGee, Ms. Amy Poirier, Ms. Monica Roebuck(virtual), Ms. Sandra Skordalos, Dr. Winona Taylor, Ms. Amy Wilson, Ms. Karen Yoho,

The following members were absent: Mr. Sean Bulson

The following Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) staff were present.

Ms. Alexandra Cambra virtual, Ms. Nichole Crowder (Recorder) Tamara Deshields-Burns

The following Attorney General Staff Members were present: Mr. Sean Fitzgerald, Esq. – Assistant Attorney General.

PRELIMINARY ITEMS

Public Comment

Ms. Cheryl Bost of the Maryland State Education Association (MSEA) gave public comment on COMAR 13.A.12. Ms. Bost stated it was her intention to help clarify some of the issues raised in these changes that will impact the teacher community with respect to Educator Licensure and certain processes under the proposed regulations, in hopes of highlighting areas that are crucial to the members and ones that can be remedied before they are finalized. She stated that some areas of clarity that immediately come to the forefront are ones that can be addressed by simply amending some of the language, either by deleting terms or providing more specificity to the definitions to remove any ambiguity. For example, there are instances where a reference is made to an “agency” or “department”, yet these terms are not fully defined, and do not identify exactly which organization is responsible for the regulation. Other examples would be using a term like “professionally licensed mentor” when in fact, there is currently no such certification that is being referred to. She states in some instances there is a separation between the terms “full-time teaching” and “part-time teaching” that is unnecessary due to the responsibilities and roles being defined are the same for both groups. When examining some of the administrative processes that will be necessary to make these new changes, there needs to be a consideration of the effects these will have on other areas within the professional teaching environment. For instance, the timeline and levels of authorization needed to reach a fully completed professional development plan place an undue burden on both the applicant and the administrative support structure. That could possibly lead to either a plan that is not fully developed, or one that is rushed through review to meet a deadline. Both cases are undesirable and do not provide the best method of ensuring that our educators have a specific, realistic, and actionable course of action to pursue their teaching goals. Ms. Bost indicated that there is a point in the proposed regulations that appears to violate a due process clause by allowing the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) the ability to unilaterally place an alert on an educator’s record prior to adjudication. In the situation where an educator is challenging a local action, they are not able to be employed with another public school within the State until that action is resolved. In place of this alert, MSEA proposes the following language that an alert does not affect the validity of an educator’s license, and the Department is precluded from sharing information relative to the alert externally with other boards of education or state departments of education until the matter is fully

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adjudicated.” This language would allow for both MSDE to place a notice on a personnel record while an investigation is taking place, and for the staff member to be employed pending the results. We believe that this suggestion protects the rights of the educator and MSDE’s need to monitor these processes.

Announcements

Ms. Meadows announced that we have a new board member, Dr. Sean Bulson for Public Schools Superintendent Association of Maryland

Communication Updates

Ms. Kitchen stated that she and Mr. Hornbeck were able to sit and have coffee with the State Board President to share priorities and the future of the current regulations. Ms. Kitchen also stated that she, Ms. Meadows, and Mr. Hornbeck were able to meet with The State Superintendent to discuss some of the items for public comment.

State Board Update

None

Proposed Agenda Items for October

- Call to order
- Public comment
- Announcements
- Legislative Update
- Communication Update
- Approval of August and September’s Minutes
- Public comments for Program Approval
- Discussion on Legislative Priorities
- Elections of office

ACTION ITEMS

Public Comment Discussion

Ms. Meadows gave a brief history of the work that has been put into repealing and replacing the current regulations. Ms. Meadows indicated that this is the second round of public comments, and the board made a lot of substantive changes. Ms. Meadows indicated that the charge for repealing and replacing the regulation was given in 2017. The Teacher Induction Retentions Advancement Act was a bill in 2016 that charge a statewide workgroup to make recommendations regarding educator preparation licensure. There was a large report that was published and there was a total of nine chapters to be repealed and replaced. Ms. Meadow did indicate that the board would not normally repeal and replace such a large quantity of regulations at one time. Going forward, all the amendments will be typical in bringing one regulation at a time. Mr. Hornbeck wanted to commend Ms. Meadows and her team for all the hard work they put in to construct such detailed information regarding public comment. Ms. Meadows went through each public comment row by row for each set of regulations for teacher preparation and licensure. She cited the concerns of each comment from the various groups and gave a detailed explanation of why MSDE took into consideration the recommendation of the public comment or why they did not concur with said recommendations. Please see the attached copies of each set of public comments for teacher preparation and nonpublic schools and each recommended correspondence.

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Before the board took a break Ms. Kitchen asked if anyone had any questions or concerns thus far. Mr. Hornbeck stated that one of the things noticed in the feedback, especially from higher education, is the concern that there is going to be an alternative route that's going to have lower standards. Mr. Hornbeck asked if one of the ways to ensure that we are not creating some shortcut to certification is that there could be a review panel created that would have significant membership from higher education. He suggested that we had a review panel consisting of higher ed and other stakeholders' groups that would then give recommendations to the department. Ms. Kitchen made way for the board members who represent higher education to speak on that recommendation. Each higher education representative gave their opinion on that thought and Ms. Meadows addressed them.

LUNCH BREAK

Public Comment Discussion Con't

After the break, Ms. Meadows continued to review public comments received for COMAR 13A.12 and addressed each concern.

Licensure Summary

In summary, Ms. Meadows stated that MSDE is not recommending any substantive changes at this time. They are recommending that the board adopt these regulations as is and anything that the board identifies as needing to be clarified or tweaked will be done in round two.

Ms. Kitchen thanked Ms. Meadows for all her hard work in getting all the information together for the board. She also stated that regarding Programs, it will be tabled for the next meeting.

Sean Fitzgerald stated that he would not be here for the October meeting.

Ms. Kitchen entertained a motion to approve October's agenda.

MOTION: October's agenda was approved without objection.

Ms. Kitchen entertained a motion to approve June minutes with proper corrections.

MOTION: June minutes approved with proper corrections

Ms. Kitchen stated that she needed to make a change to the agenda and add a State Board update. She stated that Zachary Hands, Executive Director offered to give a state board update.

Ms. Kitchen entertained a motion to adjourn at 1:55 p.m.

MOTION: Meeting adjourned at 1:55 p.m.