

THE MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Minutes of the April 30, 2024 Meeting
200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201

The Maryland State Board of Education met on April 30, 2024 at 9:00am in the State Board room located within the Maryland State Department of Education.

The following Board members were present in the Board room:

Mr. Clarence Crawford (Board President), Dr. Joshua Michael (Board Vice President), Ms. Rachel McCusker, Ms. Chuen-Chin Bianca Chang, Mr. Nick Greer, Dr. Susan Getty, Ms. Abisola Ayoola, Dr. Irma E. Johnson, Dr. Joan Mele-McCarthy, Mr. Samir Paul and Dr. Monica Goldson were in attendance.

Mr. Shawn Bartley and Dr. Holly Wilcox were absent. State Superintendent Dr. Carey Wright, State Board Executive Director Zachary Hands, and Assistant Attorney General Elliott Schoen were also in attendance.

MEETING OPENING

Mr. Crawford called the meeting to order at 9:01am and led the pledge of allegiance. Mr. Schoen declared that a quorum was present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Rana Ulutin – Internship Hours/Graduation Requirement
2. Dr. Patricia Saelens, Superintendent, Queen Anne’s County Public Schools – Update from the Local Superintendents

NEW BUSINESS

- Approval of the Consent Agenda
 - Approval of the March 22, March 26, April 13, and April 24, 2024 Meeting Minutes
 - Personnel Actions
 - Budget Adjustments, March 2024

ACTION: The State Board granted approval by unanimous consent.

STATE SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Dr. Wright provided the State Board several updates. She highlighted the beginning of the MCAP assessments in Maryland and shared the administration window for the coming weeks. She discussed the shift in language from English Learners (EL) to multilingual learners (MLL), highlighted the number of students learning multiple languages, and those students graduating with Maryland's Seal of Biliteracy. Dr. Wright described the ongoing engagement with local school systems through the workgroup that has been established with local superintendents. She also shared the news of recent Milken Award winning teachers in Maryland and recent successful school visits.

REPORTS TO THE STATE BOARD FOR DISCUSSION/ACTION:

COMAR 13A.05.09 Programs for Homeless Children (Permission to Publish)
(Presenter: Ms. Mary Gable, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Student Support and Federal Programs)

ACTION: Upon motion by Dr. Mele-McCarthy, seconded by Ms. McCusker, the State Board granted permission to publish amendments to COMAR 13A.05.09 Programs for Homeless Children (In Favor: 11, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0)

COMAR 13A.03.02.12 Graduation Requirements for Public High Schools in Maryland (Permission to Publish)
(Presenter: Ms. Mary Gable, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Student Support and Federal Programs)

ACTION: Upon motion by Mr. Paul, seconded by Ms. McCusker, the State Board granted permission to publish amendments to COMAR 13A.03.02.12 Graduation Requirements for Public High Schools in Maryland (In Favor: 11, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0)

Garrett County Public Schools Calendar Modification Request

ACTION: Upon motion by Ms. McCusker, seconded by Dr. Johnson, the State Board granted approval of the request to waive one day of the 180-day instructional requirement for Garrett County Public Schools to end the 2023-2024 school year on Friday, June 7, 2024, at 179 days consistent with COMAR 13A.02.01.04D(2)(a). (In Favor: 11, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0)

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SESSION:

National Blue Ribbon Schools Recognition

President Crawford welcomed all of the representatives from the recently named National Blue Ribbon Schools in Maryland and provided context for the selection of the schools which is based on requirements and criteria set forth by the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program. The initial selection of schools is handled by MSDE's Division Assessment, Accountability and Performance Reporting. The final selection of schools is narrowed down to determine high performing schools and schools that are closing the gap in reading (or English Language Arts) and Math. Dr. Wright provided brief opening comments and then introduced the six recently named Blue Ribbon Schools in Maryland. They are: Northeast Elementary School in Allegany County, Oakdale High School in Frederick County, Stone Mill Elementary School in Montgomery County, Church Hill Elementary School in Queen Anne's County, Atapeake Elementary School in Queen Anne's County, and Smithsburg Middle School in Washington County.

Representatives from each school were recognized. State Board members and Dr. Wright took photos with representatives from each school.

Arts Education in Maryland Schools (AEMS)

(Presenters: Ms. Rachel McGrain, Executive Director, AEMS, Mr. Peter Dayton, Director of Operations, AEMS)

President Crawford welcomed Arts Education in Maryland Schools (AEMS). Ms. McGrain provided an overview of AEMS' priorities, collaboration with various organizations and stakeholders to advance arts education in Maryland. She also highlighted improved engagement with MSDE leadership on issues critical to AEMS since a letter sent from AEMS to the State Superintendent in 2023.

Mr. Dayton provided an update on the landscape and requirements surrounding comprehensive arts education in state law, regulations, and the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. Mr. Dayton described a general concern that arts education is being cited as an unintended casualty of funding decisions made in Blueprint implementation despite the Blueprint's explicit call to avoid this outcome.

Ms. McGrain highlighted that several of AEMS's major concerns related to the Blueprint, including over-emphasis on standardized testing subjects, the CCR emphasis on 10th grade impacting arts education in the latter high school years, and LEAs considering cuts to the arts to meet budget goals in other Blueprint mandated areas.

Mr. Dayton reviewed the AEMS Data Project to collect information on which schools provide access to arts education and in what disciplines (Dance, Music, Theatre, Visual Arts, Media Arts). 83.5% of Maryland K-12 public school students were enrolled in an arts course in the 2021-2022 school year and all 24 school districts provide access to courses in Music, Visual Arts, and Theatre but not all offer courses in Dance and Media Arts.

Dr. Getty shared a concern with how data is reported on county-level offerings in the arts versus by school and how the county metric may not provide the clearest picture. Dr. Michael spoke about the value of embracing the arts and how they are a core part of our curriculum and aid in the development of more well-rounded students. Ms. McCusker spoke about the requirements of becoming an arts educator in Maryland. Ms. Ayoola shared her concerns about the priority not being placed with the arts as it should be.

PRIORITIES:

High-Quality Instructional Materials Instructional Frameworks

(Presenter: Dr. Deann Collins, Deputy State Superintendent, Mr. Phil Lasser, Executive Director, Office of the State Superintendent, Ms. Amreena Hussain, Senior Advisor on HQIM)

Dr. Collins, Mr. Lasser, and Ms. Hussain each explained the requirements in the Blueprint for Maryland's Future for MSDE to develop a system to identify and promote High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) that support students in meeting and exceeding the CCR standard. They explained that MSDE has created an HQIM framework document that outlines the core tenets of the process to identify HQIM and that this framework was developed in consultation with various experts and educators from Maryland and nationally. Ms. Hussain described that this framework will be used to inform the development of the Maryland HQIM evaluation rubrics and to train Maryland HQIM reviewers. Several members of the State Board emphasized the need to not only align standards and instruction with HQIM but to ensure that implementation is going beyond that and into the classroom. Several Board members also noted that teachers need training on utilizing HQIM. Dr. Wright spoke about an ongoing learning process from educators regarding successes and challenges with instructional materials and practices.

ACTION: Upon motion by Ms. McCusker, seconded by Dr. Joan Mele-McCarthy, the State Board adopted the High-Quality Instructional Materials Identification Frameworks (In Favor: 11, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0)

Purple Star Schools Program

President Crawford and Dr. Wright welcomed Governor Wes Moore to recognize the 2024 Purple Star School designees. Governor Moore provided opening remarks thanking the school teams for their work and service and commended the partnership with MSDE and the State Board. He also welcome Maryland Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Anthony Woods and thanked him for his work. Dr. Wright outlined the parameters of the Purple Star Schools Program and how through legislation Maryland has participated in this nationwide network designed to support military-connected children and their families and their unique needs. Col. Michael Sapp described his experience as a military parent and the challenges that can come with frequent moves, especially for students with different learning needs. Capt. Douglas Burfield spoke about the benefits of the Purple Star School designation for military families and their communities.

Each school received a banner and commendation from the State Board and pictures were taken with Governor Moore, military representatives, all State Board members, Dr. Wright, and representatives of the schools.

Trauma Prevention and Postvention

(Presenter: Ms. Mary Gable, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Student Support and Federal Programs)

Ms. Gable provided a presentation to the State Board on trauma-informed prevention practices and efforts required by law and regulation being conducted in school systems across the State. Ms. Gable shared information on Maryland-specific and national data related to youth behavior and mental health trends and local education agency (LEA) suicide prevention practices.

Ms. Gable spoke about next steps to include the development of model training materials to incorporate emerging best practices and previous professional development feedback. MSDE will also develop sample communication materials which LEAs can share with school staff, parents, and community members, and provide training and technical assistance upon request. Ms. Chang asked about data collection and accountability for staff completing the model training. Mr. Paul inquired about how MSDE is communicating best practices to LEAs.

CTE Program and Blueprint Alignment Updates

(Presenter: Dr. Deann Collins, Deputy State Superintendent, Mr. Richard Kincaid, Senior Executive Director, Office of College and Career Pathways)

Dr. Collins and Mr. Kincaid provided information to the State Board on Maryland's Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and alignment of Maryland's CTE programs to the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. They highlighted a visit of the State Board and MSDE officials to the Carroll County Career and Tech Center in Westminster. Dr. Collins provided an overview of CTE programs in Maryland and Mr. Kincaid discussed how MSDE is seeking to align CTE programs with industry standards and coordination of high school and post-secondary programs.

Carroll County Superintendent Cynthia McCabe and staff from Carroll County joined the State Board meeting to provide context for their robust CTE program and how the team work with community partners to provide opportunities to students.

Joint Implementation Policy – Dual Enrollment

(Presenter: Mr. Phil Lasser, Executive Director, Office of the State Superintendent)

Vice President Michael described the genesis of the proposed joint guidance between the AIB and MSDE because of the timing of actions by the State Board regarding the CCR standard not coinciding with the funding mechanism process. He noted that school systems are receiving about \$8 million less than in the previous year due to the State Board's delayed action to adopt a new CCR standard. The content of the proposal is a result of legislative language and ongoing conversations with local school system superintendents.

Mr. Lasser spoke in more detail about the budgetary constraints imposed on local school systems due to the increased enrollment of students in dual enrollment courses and more students being identified as CCR with the new standard as opposed to the interim standard which this upcoming year's funding is based on. To address this issue and ensure broad access to dual enrollment courses, but within parameters outlined in the authorizing legislation, the State Board and Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) agreed in principle to adopt Joint Implementation Policy #1 – Dual Enrollment which states that for students who have met the CCR standard, as it relates to the responsibility to cover the costs of tuition and fees of dual enrollment courses that are part of the Post-CCR Pathways taken during the school year. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are responsible for, at a minimum:

- a. Two dual enrollment courses per Fall and Spring academic semester per student, for a possible total of four dual enrollment courses per year per student;
- b. Exam fees directly connected to courses that students are enrolled in for their first attempt at a specific exam.

This joint policy will not take effect until the AIB votes to approve it at their May meeting. Dr. Wright shared how appreciative local superintendents are that the State Board and AIB are taking this action.

ACTION: Upon motion by Dr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Ayoola, the State Board adopted Joint Implementation Policy #1 – Dual Enrollment (In Favor: 11, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0)

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

(Presenters: Dr. Akilah Alleyne, Executive Director, Government Affairs, Education Policy, and External Relations, and Ms. Laurel Cratsley, Education Policy Analyst)

Dr. Alleyne and Ms. Cratsley provided an overview of education bills that passed during the 2024 legislative session. They discussed bills where MSDE collaborated with various stakeholders, the impacts of bills on MSDE and local school systems, and implementation timelines and requirements.

They offered that several of the major bills would be presented in more detail at future meetings and previewed a presentation on the FY 2025 would be forthcoming in May.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pursuant to § 3-305(b)(1) and (7) of the General Provisions Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, upon the motion of Ms. Chang and seconded by Mr. Paul and with unanimous approval, the State Board of Education met in closed session on Tuesday, April 30, 2024, in Conference Room #6, 8th Floor, at the Nancy S. Grasmick Building. All board members were present except Mr. Bartley, Dr. Goldson, and Dr. Wilcox. Also in attendance were Superintendent Dr. Carey Wright, Executive Director of the State Board Zachary Hands, and Assistant Attorneys General Elliott Schoen and Jackie La Fiandra. The Executive Session commenced at 4:15 p.m. and ended at 5:20 p.m.

The State Board reviewed and approved three Opinions and one Order.

- *D.C. and N.C. v. Carroll County Board of Education* – student transportation request – Opin. No. 24-08. The Board affirmed the local board’s decision.
- *M.D. and D.C. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – student grade/course dispute – Opin. No. 24-09. The Board dismissed the ADA claim and affirmed the local board’s decision on the remaining issues.
- *T.J. and D.J. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – health curriculum opt-out – Opin. No. 24-10. The Board affirmed the local board.
- *Vincent Shipp v. Anne Arundel County Board of Education* – reconsideration – Order No. OR24-07. The Board denied the request for reconsideration.

The State Superintendent discussed her reflection to the Board as part of the evaluation set forth in the State Board Governance Manual.

STATE BOARD MEMBER COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

Ms. McCusker reported that the Education Policy Committee members met on April 10th. The next Ed Policy Committee meeting will be held on May 8th.

Mr. Hands reported that the Education Transformation and Accountability Committee met on April 11th.

Ms. Chang updated the Board on the actions of NASBE committees that she represents and asked Board members for any feedback on the development of NASBE’s annual public education positions document. Ms. Chang also provided an update on the work of a governance committee subgroup to review the State Board’s Governance and Operations Manual. She estimated that revisions would come to the Board by the June meeting.

FUTURE BOARD AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Paul requested that the Board receive a briefing on building best practices in school systems surrounding the use of artificial intelligence.

LEGAL OPINIONS AND ORDERS

Mr. Schoen announced the following opinions:

- *D.C. and N.C. v. Carroll County Board of Education* – student transportation request – Opin. No. 24-08
- *M.D. and D.C. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – student grade/course dispute – Opin. No. 24-09
- *T.J. and D.J. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – health curriculum opt-out – Opin. No. 24-10
- *Vincent Shipp v. Anne Arundel County Board of Education* – reconsideration – Order No. OR24-07

With no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 5:33pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Carey M. Wright, Ed.D.
Secretary/Treasurer

Date: May 21, 2024

The information included here provides a summary of the agenda items presented. The video recordings of the meetings are the official record and can be located at:
<https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/stateboard/Pages/Meetings-2024.aspx>

Meeting materials, Opinions, and Orders can be found at:
<https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/stateboard/Pages/default.aspx>

The next Maryland State Board of Education meeting will be held on **Tuesday, May 21, 2024.**

Appropriate accommodations for individuals with disabilities will be provided upon request. Eight business days' notice prior to the event is required. Please contact Charlene Necessary at (410) 767-0467 or TTY at (410) 333-6442 so arrangements can be made.