

**THE MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Minutes of the May 21, 2024 Meeting**  
**200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201**

**The Maryland State Board of Education met on May 21, 2024 at 9:02am in the State Board room located within the Maryland State Department of Education.**

The following Board members were present in the Board room:

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

Mr. Samir Paul, Mr. Nick Greer, and Mr. Shawn Bartley participated virtually.

Mr. Clarence Crawford, Dr. Irma E. Johnson, and Dr. Holly Wilcox were absent. State Superintendent Dr. Carey Wright, State Board Executive Director Zachary Hands, and Assistant Attorney General Alan Dunklow were also in attendance.

**MEETING OPENING**

Dr. Michael called the meeting to order at 9:02am and led the pledge of allegiance. Mr. Dunklow declared that a quorum was present.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

1. Sharon Saroff – Special Education
2. Angie Vigliotti – Blueprint for Maryland’s Future
3. Kelly Bostic – Drug Poisoning Crisis
4. Cheryl Bost – Legislative Wrap-Up and Funding for the Blueprint
5. Alia Roberts – Funding for Autism in Public Schools

**NEW BUSINESS**

- Approval of the Consent Agenda
  - Approval of the September 13, 2023 and April 30, 2024 Meeting Minutes
  - Personnel Actions
  - Budget Adjustments, April 2024

**ACTION:** The State Board granted approval by unanimous consent.

**RECOGNITION OF MARYLAND’S 2024-2025 TEACHERS OF THE YEAR**

Dr. Michael provided opening remarks on the outstanding work of the teachers of the year and their representation of the excellence of Maryland’s educators. Dr. Wright welcomed each of the 24 Teachers of the Year for their leadership in Maryland’s schools and introduced each

individually to the State Board. Dr. Wright and State Board members joined each teacher of the year and their local superintendents for photos.

### **STATE SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

Dr. Wright provided additional congratulations to the teachers of the year and highlighted the Teachers of Promise Program in a video presentation shared with the State Board. Dr. Wright provided the State Board an update on the work of the Assessment and Accountability Task Force and the desired goals and outcomes of the group to comprehensively review Maryland's assessment and accountability system. She also discussed the Assistant Superintendents Workgroup which is reviewing fiscal matters surrounding the Blueprint and to demonstrate how Blueprint funding formulas are calculated. This group also reviewed a demo of the PowerSchool system which is the upcoming required reporting hub for school finance data.

She shared that recently 29 MSDE and six AIB staff members reviewed Blueprint implementation plans submitted by local school systems. Dr. Wright highlighted that May is Mental Health Awareness Month and encouraged the State Board to applaud educators and staff for their efforts to address student mental health needs.

She shared that she completed a recent visit to Hampstead Hill Academy, a charter school in Baltimore City. She lifted the academic success of the school and her observation of effective restorative practices utilized in the middle school programming.

Dr. Wright presented a video highlighting the apprenticeship programs being offered in Harford County Public Schools and she invited Harford County Superintendent Dr. Sean Bulson to address the State Board to share more information on their work in Harford County.

### **BLUEPRINT UPDATE: MARYLAND EXCELS AND MARYLAND ACCREDITATION**

Presenter(s): Dr. Shayna Cook, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Early Childhood, and Jena Smith, Director of Quality Improvement Initiatives

Dr. Cook gave an introduction on quality improvement initiatives in the Division of Early Childhood and outlined the presentation for the morning. Ms. Smith provided information and background on Maryland EXCELS as the state's quality rating and improvement system for licensed child care and early childhood education programs. Dr. Cook emphasized that EXCELS is a great indicator for parents and families about program quality. Ms. Smith highlighted the increases in the number of programs with EXCELS ratings of 3, 4, and 5 and a particular increase in the quality of family child care programs.

Dr. Cook and Ms. Smith outlined the support for programs through Maryland EXCELS including user-friendly online standards, guidance and training from Quality Assurance Specialists, peer support, tutorials, toolkit resources, financial incentives such as EXCELS payments and bonuses, and promotional tools to market high-quality programs to families.

Dr. Cook briefed the State Board on the process for Maryland Accreditation which is an avenue for licensed child care centers and Public Pre-K programs to demonstrate their commitment to high-quality learning. Programs use tools such as Maryland Accreditation Standards, self-appraisals with staff and family input, a Program Improvement Plan, optional support through remote or onsite technical assistance, and a validation visit to achieve accreditation status. In Maryland, there has been an increase in the number of programs publishing first-time or higher ratings as well as an increase in the number of programs achieving accreditation status.

### **SCIENCE OF READING MICRO-CREDENTIAL**

Presenter(s): Dr. Deann Collins, Deputy State Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, Dr. Tenette Smith, Executive Director, Literacy Programs and Initiatives, and Mr. Krishnanda Tallur, Deputy State Superintendent for Finance and Operations

Dr. Wright announced a \$6.85 million partnership with the Ibis Group to provide a flexible program to provide educators and leaders access to evidence-based instructional methods and the resources needed to prepare students for reading proficiency by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and to be on a path towards college and career readiness. Dr. Collins and Dr. Smith presented this new partnership and the delivery of literacy professional development for educators.

This partnership was developed through the combined efforts of philanthropic organizations, the State University of New York (SUNY) and AIM Institute for Research, and will provide direct access to professional learning to over 30,000 educators across Maryland. MSDE will enter into an MOU with Johns Hopkins University to conduct an efficacy study on the impact of this partnership.

Mr. Tallur, Deputy described the role of the Public Education Partnership Fund in the acceptance of this philanthropic effort that is already established under state law, to facilitate the type of outside contributions being used in this literacy initiative.

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Mr. Greer, seconded by Mr. Bartley, the State Board approved the use of \$350,000 credited to the Public Education Partnership Fund to support the administration of best instructional practices in the science of reading as part of MSDE's Comprehensive Literacy Plan. (In Favor: 10, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0)

### **MILKEN EDUCATOR AWARDS**

The State Board and Dr. Wright recognized Bradley Absher and Maggie Arnold, recipients of the 2023 Maryland Milken Educator Award. Mr. Absher is a 5<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics teacher at Bodkin Elementary School in Anne Arundel County and Maggie Arnold teaches 9th to 12th grade mathematics at Frederick High School in Frederick County. The State Board and Dr. Wright presented each with formal recognition and took photos with the recipients.

## **BRIEFING ON FY 2025 BUDGET**

Presenter(s): Mr. Krishnanda Tallur, Deputy State Superintendent for Finance and Operations, and Ms. Donna Gunning, Assistant State Superintendent for Finance

Ms. Gunning presented the Department's fiscal year 2025 operating budget, including the impacts of recently enacted legislation, and explored state aid for local school systems. Ms. Gunning highlighted the growth in the MSDE headquarters budget and various actions impacting programs in the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

## **MARYLAND'S TEACHER WORKFORCE: SUPPLY, DEMAND, AND DIVERSITY**

Presenter(s): Ms. Kelly Meadows, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Educator Effectiveness, and Ms. Chandra Haislet, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Assessment, Accountability, Performance Reporting

Ms. Haislet and Ms. Meadows briefed the State Board on the supply and demand of teachers in Maryland, the diversity of the teacher pipeline, and current Maryland initiatives and opportunities to reduce the gap between teacher supply and demand and continue to diversify the teacher workforce. As part of the work to implement the Blueprint for Maryland's Future and the Strategic Plan, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is collaborating with local education agencies (LEAs), higher education institutions, and other stakeholders to attract, recruit, and retain a highly qualified and diverse workforce.

## **JOINT IMPLEMENTATION POLICY #2: MINIMUM SCHOOL FUNDING**

Presenter(s): Ms. Donna Gunning, Assistant State Superintendent for Finance

Ms. Gunning provided background on the Blueprint requirement that 75% applicable to the foundation program and seven targeted funding programs, as well as 100% of the concentration of poverty per pupil grant and 100% of per pupil funding for private providers participating in the full-day prekindergarten program. follows students to the schools they attend. Dr. Wright explored the purpose of the policy and noted that it was adopted already by the AIB. The intent is to establish a timeline for local school systems to reasonable meet the minimum school funding requirement for all students in all schools as soon as practicable, and require that school systems meet the requirement by no later than the 2026-2027 school year.

**ACTION:** Upon motion by Dr. Mele-McCarthy, seconded by Dr. Goldson, the State Board voted to adopt Joint Implementation Policy #2 Minimum School Funding Requirement. (In Favor: 10, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0)

## **UPDATE ON THE SPECIAL EDUCATION WORKGROUP**

Presenter(s): Dr. Deann Collins, Deputy State Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, Dr. Antoine Hickman, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services

Dr. Collins and Dr. Hickman provided an update on the efforts of the Special Education Workgroup, which was convened by MSDE to make recommendations on instruction and services for students with disabilities. The Workgroup is co-chaired by Dr. Wright and Liz Zogby of the Maryland Down Syndrome Special Education Policy & Advocacy Project. The Workgroup has held eight meetings since August 2023. There are approximately 50 members appointed to the Workgroup, with representatives from MSDE, school administrators, special education and general education teachers, parents, advocates and attorneys, community partners, special education directors, physicians, and others. Dr. Hickman presented policy recommendations that the workgroup has considered so far including updates to COMAR, development of a plan with tasks and timelines to address effective implementation of IEPs, ensuring that general and special educators have the knowledge skills, and expertise to effectively teach students with disabilities, and enhance supply and encourage retention of general and special educators. The workgroup is reviewing feedback on its draft interim report, will submit an interim report to the AIB by July 1, 2024, and will plan to submit its final report by December 1, 2024.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Pursuant to § 3-305(b)(1) and (7) of the General Provisions Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, and upon motion of Ms. Chang and seconded by Ms. McCusker and with unanimous approval, the State Board of Education met in closed session on Tuesday, May 21, 2024, in Conference Room #6, 8th Floor, at the Nancy S. Grasmick Building.

All board members were present except President Crawford, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Paul and Dr. Wilcox.

Also in attendance were Superintendent Dr. Carey Wright, Executive Director of the State Board Zachary Hands, and Assistant Attorneys General Alan Dunklow and Jackie LaFiandra. The Executive Session commenced at 3:30 p.m. and ended at 4:05 p.m.

The State Board reviewed and approved three Opinions and three Orders.

- *K.B. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – Poolesville High School roof work – Opin. No. 24-11. The Board affirmed the local board's decision.
- *V.B. and H.B. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – student transportation request – Opin. No. 24-12. The Board affirmed the local board's decision.
- *S.M. v. Anne Arundel County Board of Education* – student suspension (3-day) – Opin. No. 24-13. The Board affirmed the local board's decision.
- *Christopher K., N.B. and Z.E.D., Jose R., and W.J. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – stay of State Board appeal while federal case is pending – Order No. OR24-08. The Board stayed the appeal.
- *Stephanie P. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – stay of State Board appeal while federal case is pending. Order No. OR24-09. The Board stayed the appeal.
- *Fred Ragazzone v. Anne Arundel County Board of Education* – reconsideration – Order No. OR24-10. The Board denied the request for reconsideration.

Dr. Michael briefed the Board on the evaluation of the State Superintendent and Executive Director of the State Board.

#### **STATE BOARD MEMBER COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES**

Ms. McCusker reported that the Education Policy Committee did not meet in May but will meet on June 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.

Dr. Goldson reported that the Education Transformation and Accountability Committee met on May 16<sup>th</sup> to discuss aligned goals and metrics with the Accountability and Implementation Board.

Dr. Michael recognized Ms. Ayoola for her last in-person meeting with the State Board and for her service to the State Board as the student member.

Mr. Hands informed the Board members of upcoming professional development opportunities and upcoming school visits available for Board participation.

#### **FUTURE BOARD AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

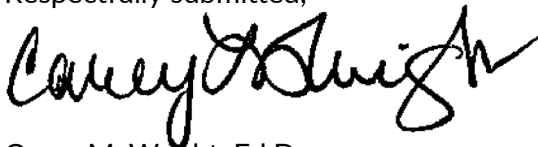
#### **LEGAL OPINIONS AND ORDERS**

Mr. Dunklow announced the following opinions:

- *K.B. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – Poolesville High School roof work – Opin. No. 24-11
- *V.B. and H.B. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – student transportation request – Opin. No. 24-12
- *S.M. v. Anne Arundel County Board of Education* – student suspension (3-day) – Opin. No. 24-13
- *Christopher K., N.B. and Z.E.D., Jose R., and W.J. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – stay of State Board appeal while federal case is pending – Order No. OR24-08
- *Stephanie P. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – stay of State Board appeal while federal case is pending. Order No. OR24-09
- *Fred Ragazzone v. Anne Arundel County Board of Education* – reconsideration – Order No. OR24-10

With no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 4:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,



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

Date: June 25, 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, June 25, 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.