

THE MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Minutes of the December 3, 2024 Meeting
200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201

The Maryland State Board of Education met on December 3, 2024 at 9:02 am in the State Board room located within the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

The following Board members were present in the Boardroom:

Dr. Joshua Michael (Board President), Dr. Monica Goldson (Board Vice President) (virtual - present for portions of the meeting), Ms. Rachel McCusker, Ms. Chuen-Chin Bianca Chang, Mr. Clarence Crawford, Mr. Nick Greer, Mr. Abhiram Gaddam, Dr. Joan Mele-McCarthy (virtual), Mr. Samir Paul, Mr. Kenny Clash, Dr. Kim Lewis, Ms. Xiomara Medina, and Dr. Irma Johnson (arrived late) were in attendance.

Dr. Susan Getty was absent.

State Superintendent Dr. Carey Wright, State Board Executive Director Zachary Hands, and Assistant Attorney General Elliott Schoen were also in attendance.

MEETING OPENING

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

Dr. Michael offered opening remarks that included recognizing the International Day of Persons with Disabilities; emphasizing the importance of academic growth in determining school quality as the Board hears a presentations on the Maryland Report Card and the Assessment and Accountability Task Force recommendations; and an overview of the progress since the October Board meeting to improve communication between school districts as it relates to students with reportable offenses.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Alita-Geri Carter - Special education and request audit of Prince George's spending and practice
2. Tanisha Wooten - Special education in Prince George's, MSDE's complaint process, requests audit
3. Paula Dixon - Special education discrimination in Prince George's
4. Riya Gupta - discrepancy in timeline of roll out of public dashboard of Financial Management System; engage with stakeholders to ensure accessibility and usability of public dashboard; provide better supports for ML Pre-K providers
5. Charo Torress - Translate Pre-K Grant, TA, and guidance into Spanish; forward funding reimbursement
6. Eliza Urizar - Translate Pre-K Grant, TA, and guidance into Spanish; lack of staff to manage reporting requirements

7. Arileydi Ledesma - The urgent need of full-day PreK expansion in MD
8. Ramatou Bakori - Expansion of PreK and improving access and revisiting application requirements for families to MD Childcare Scholarship Program
9. Paul Lemle - Vote against Teacher Working Time
10. Sharon Saroff - Special Education and reading intervention

NEW BUSINESS

- Approval of the Consent Agenda
 - Approval of October 22, 2024 Meeting Minutes
 - Personnel Actions
 - Budget Adjustments, October 2024

ACTION: Dr. Michael requested Board approval of the consent agenda. Mr. Greer motioned, Dr. Lewis seconded. (In Favor: 11, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0, Absent: 3)

BLUEPRINT HIGHLIGHT: CONCENTRATION OF POVERTY GRANT SPENDING

Dr. Wright introduced MSDE's Donna Gunning, Senior Executive Director of the Office of Policy and Program Support, Mary Gable, Assistant State Superintendent of the Division of Student Support and Federal Programs, and Derek Anderson, Executive Director of Community Schools, to provide a state-level overview of community schools. Dr. Wright shared that community schools focus on the whole student, with an emphasis on wraparound services, which is particularly important for students from families living in poverty. Dr. Wright emphasized that MSDE only has one staff member directly supporting Community Schools, which are currently 40% of all MD's schools.

Mr. Anderson shared more about the requirements community schools must undertake, including both assets and needs assessments in year one, an implementation plan in year two and three, and annual reporting. Ms. Gunning shared more about the Concentration of Poverty Grant's (CPG) personnel and per-pupil funding streams, which are based on a school's Free and Reduced-Price School Meals (FARM) populations and are phased in over years. The per-pupil funding stream mainly supports improving wraparound service offerings.

Baltimore City Schools CEO and School Board President, Robert Salley, presented on their district's community schools. Dr. Santelises shared how the district spends Concentration of Poverty dollars with a particular focus on arts education, athletics, expanded learning opportunities, and school-based staff. Some staff hired using these dollars include counselors, math and literacy support, interventionists, and paraprofessionals. Dr. Santelises mentioned that the early roll out of CPG dollars to schools was bumpy, but they have seen improvement. In Baltimore City Public Schools, approximately 64% of Community School Coordinators are hired by an outside lead agency such as the YMCA. The Baltimore City Schools team also highlighted specific community schools.

Dr. Mele-McCarthy asked about chronic absenteeism in the district. Dr. Santelises mentioned contributing factors such as student and family mental health and grief, child care, and partnering with public transit to help students get to school. Ms. Medina asked about elevating best practices for serving students in the community schools model, particularly for high school students. Mr. Greer asked about what a Coordinator's work looks like and about the licensure requirements for the health professionals. Mr. Crawford asked about staff capacity to implement this model with fidelity.

BREAK

ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY TASK FORCE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Dr. Wright introduced Geoff Sanderson, Deputy State Superintendent for Accountability, and the Center for Assessment's Chris Domaleski, who led the Task Force's work. Dr. Domaleski shared an overview of the Task Force's work. Dr. Pepukayi, Talbot Co. Superintendent, shared her experience as a member of the Task Force.

Dr. Domaleski went through the recommendations for academic achievement and growth indicators and the possible models and metrics the Task Force considered. The Task Force recommended maintaining the current structure for the graduation rate indicator. On the post-secondary success indicator for high school, the Task Force decided to focus on 9th Grade On-Track, 10th Grade Blueprint College and Career Readiness Standard, and Post-High School Opportunities. Dr. Domaleski shared that many of these recommendations are not finalized and may require additional research, particularly for the English Learner Progress indicator and the grade 3-8 and high school School Quality and Student Success (SQSS) indicators. Dr. Domaleski then reviewed approaches for presenting states' accountability systems. Next steps involve working with the Technical Advisory Committee to build out business rules for the accountability system.

Dr. Fagan, a member of the Task Force and professor at University of Maryland (UMD), shared his perspective on its work, particularly as it pertains to Multilingual Learners. Mr. Miller, a middle school principal, then joined to share his experience as a member of the Task Force.

Lastly, Dr. Domaleski shared the Task Force's recommendations and priorities to choose the state's next assessment, ensuring that it is equitable, fair, and a reasonable length.

Ms. McCusker thanked the Task Force for their work and shared her appreciation of the focus on limiting testing time. Ms. Chang asked how Maryland's requirements compare to other states. Mr. Greer asked about scoring open responses and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to support that.

ACTION: Dr. Michael called for a vote to accept the Task Force's recommendations. Ms. McCusker motioned, Mr. Paul seconded. (In Favor: 12, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0, Absent: 2)

STATE SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Dr. Wright discussed the roundtable with the Governor's Office on supporting public schools in advance of the next legislative session. She also shared information about her recent school visits, including a video of her visit to Washington County Technical High School. She met to discuss Early College High School models with the Chancellor of the University System of Maryland and presented at the Council of Chief State School Officers and ExcelinEd national conferences. MSDE has also had their first meeting with the Department of Budget and Management on the next year's budget. Further, Dr. Wright previewed the formation of a cell phone work group, an AI Hub, a two-year KhanMigo pilot in Baltimore City and Dorchester Counties, and the recent publication of CCR Guidebooks, which include instructional practices for all age groups.

LEA UPDATES

Dr. Andrae Townsel, Superintendent of Calvert County and President of Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), expressed his support for the adoption of the Teacher Working Time definition that is before the Board as well as the Assessment and Accountability Task Force's recommendations.

MARYLAND REPORT CARD

Mr. Sanderson presented an overview of the current accountability system, which is the basis of the Maryland Report Card. Most schools had the same star rating in 2023-24 as they did in 2022-23. Mr. Paul asked about the small number of schools that increased two star ratings and what they did that caused that jump. Dr. Wright said she would follow up with an answer at the January Board meeting.

Dr. Johnson asked if the schools that maintained the star ratings were stagnant. Dr. Michael said schools could still increase or decrease within the same star rating. Dr. Wright said they are looking to rebuild a more sensitive accountability system that gives schools credit for change.

Dr. Michael asked what the state and local districts are doing in light of this data. Dr. Wright said they are really focused on increasing professional development for data-driven instruction, high-quality instructional materials, and literacy.

At 12:45pm, Dr. Michael called for a motion to adjourn to an Executive Session. Dr. Lewis motioned, Ms. Medina seconded. (In Favor: 13, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0, Absent: 1)

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pursuant to § 3-305(b)(7) of the General Provisions Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, and upon motion of Mr. Crawford and seconded by Mr. Paul and with unanimous approval, the State Board of Education met in closed session on Tuesday, December 3, 2024 in Conference Room #1, 8th Floor, at the Nancy S. Grasmick Building. All board members were present. Also in attendance were State

Superintendent Carey Wright, Executive Director Zachary Hands, and Assistant Attorneys General Elliott Schoen and Jackie LaFiandra. The Executive Session commenced at 12:45 p.m. and ended at 2:30 p.m.

The State Board reviewed and approved five Opinions.

The State Board approved the local boards' decisions in:

- *C.C., et al. v. Frederick County Board of Education* – Opinion No. 24-23
- *S.H., et al. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – Opinion No. 24-24
- *D.D. v. Baltimore County Board of Education* – Opinion No. 24-25
- *Y.J. v. Anne Arundel County Board of Education* – Opinion No. 24-26

In the Matter of Commensurate Funding for Frederick for Frederick County Charter Schools – Opinion. No. 24-27. The Board granted the Petition for Declaratory Ruling and ordered the local board to revise its charter school funding for fiscal year 2025 consistent with this ruling.

State Board President, Joshua Michael signed the following orders:

- *Jessica Bronson v. Carroll County Board of Education* – Order No. OR24-20. The Board denied the request for reconsideration.
- *Goldie F. v. Baltimore County Board of Education* – Order No. OR24-21. The Board dismissed the appeal for mootness.
- *J.W. and K.Y. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – Order No. OR24-22. The Board dismissed the appeal for mootness.
- *Wendy Novak v. Carroll County Board of Education* – Order No. OR24-23. The Board dismissed the appeal for lack of standing pursuant to COMAR 13A.01.05.03B(1)(c).

Dr. Michael provided several general updates to the Board.

Mr. Crawford shared information about a non-profit literacy project.

MARYLAND CENTER FOR COMPUTING EDUCATION (MCCE) UPDATE

MCCE supports PK-12 grade computer science educators and focuses on growing the number of computer science educators. MSDE and MCCE entered into an agreement to build out standards, professional learning, and programming, dramatically increasing MSDE's investment. Richard Kincaid, MSDE's Senior Executive Director of the Office of Career and College Pathways, also shared more information on computer science pathways for students and MSDE's focus on ensuring their alignment with labor market needs. Each pathway consists of two core courses that result in industry-recognized credentials.

Mr. Crawford appreciated the alignment of industry and labor market information into these pathways. Ms. McCusker thanked the presenters for their work and said it will help students enter college ready for college-level coursework. Mr. Paul spoke to the importance of computer

science education for students and encouraged MSDE to explore portfolio-based education in tandem with credential-based progression.

Ms. Chang asked if computer science was available in all high schools across the state, and MSDE said they were in all high schools. Ms. Chang asked about student enrollment, and MSDE shared that they are working to increase student enrollment by increasing awareness and increasing the number of teachers. Generally most computer science classes are full, and most high school freshmen enroll in a foundational computer science class. She then asked if computer science courses were woven into any Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways, and Mr. Kincaid said they were part of some, but not all, CTE pathways.

Dr. Michael asked which educator preparation programs in the state have computer science credential programs or alternate certification programs to bring in people from industry to teach. MSDE said about ten institutions have computer science certification programs, and they are working with the state's higher education institutions and industry to strengthen pathways into teaching. Mr. Crawford shared more information about the federal government's Intergovernmental Personnel Act, which facilitates an exchange program between federal agencies to share talent.

CAREER LADDER: WORKING TIME POLICY

MSDE's Alex Reese, Chief of Staff, and Phil Lasser, Senior Executive Director of Strategic Initiatives, provided an overview of the Career Ladder policy as a key lever in supporting the professionalization of teaching. It works to ensure teachers have collaborative time, and that the longer teachers are in the classroom, the more time they have to engage in leadership activities within the school day. In the proposed definition of "teacher working time", MSDE recommends that teachers' working time now includes their contractual time outside of the student school day and year. This policy would be implemented over 8 years.

Ms. McCusker asked if MSDE had data on how this would impact individual teachers' work days and the number of additional teachers that would be needed to implement this. Mr. Reese did not have that data in front of him, but said that currently, based on an informal survey of superintendents, teachers have about 20% of time for collaborative time. Ms. Medina asked what flexibility administrators have over teachers' scheduling. Mr. Reese said that teacher time is often up to negotiations between the union and school district. Dr. Johnson asked if this policy covers all teachers or just core content teachers. Mr. Reese said it would apply to all teachers.

Ms. McCusker said these changes are more important to teachers than they appear, and that this seems like a deficit in implementation planning. Dr. Michael said this should be something we bring back and study the impact. Ms. Medina said she wants to know how this policy will actually impact a teacher's day. Dr. Lewis asked how this impacts districts that have already negotiated a contract. Mr. Reese said this would likely undo multi-year contracts.

ACTION: The State Superintendent requested that the State Board approve the proposed definition related to the teacher working time requirements of the educator career ladder. Mr. Crawford motioned, Mr. Greer seconded. The motion did not pass. (In Favor: 5, Opposed: 5, Abstained: 3, Absent: 1)

PROPOSED PREK-4 SCIENCE EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS

MSDE's Shayna Cook, Assistant State Superintendent for the Division of Early Childhood, shared an overview of the development of these standards, which bridge the gap between Next Generation Science Standards and Early Learning Standards. The next step is to put the standards out for public comment.

Mr. Greer thanked MSDE for these standards and asked that they think about building our state's youngest students' science identity. Ms. McCusker thanked MSDE for these standards' emphasis on learning through play.

ADOPTION OF TEACHER LICENSURE FOUNDATIONS OF TEACHING READING ASSESSMENT

MSDE's Kelly Meadows, Assistant Superintendent of the Division of Educator Effectiveness, said that because Maryland is an "import state" bringing in 50-60% of our teachers from out of state, and that this Pearson exam is used by 13 other states, this additional licensure test option is important. Ms. McCusker said the Education Policy Committee recommended adoption of this exam.

ACTION: Dr. Lewis motioned, Dr. Johnson seconded. (In Favor: 13, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0, Absent: 1)

STATE SUPERINTENDENT'S GUIDANCE: TELEHEALTH GUIDELINES

Ms. Gable shared that these guidelines were required by statute and developed by a broad range of stakeholders. School districts have to develop their own telehealth policy. Ms. Chang asked if guardians can consent to telehealth. MSDE staff said those decisions are up to the district. Dr. Johnson asked if the staff support would be a counselor. MSDE said that while that is up to the school district, MSDE does encourage this. Ms. McCusker said the Education Policy Committee recommended adoption of these guidelines.

ACTION: Ms. McCusker motioned and Mr. Paul seconded. (In Favor: 13, Opposed: 0, Abstained: 0, Absent: 1)

STATE BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

The next Education Policy Committee will be on January 16th at 4 pm, and the Education Transformation and Finance Committee will be on January 14th at 4 pm.

FUTURE BOARD AGENDA ITEMS

None.

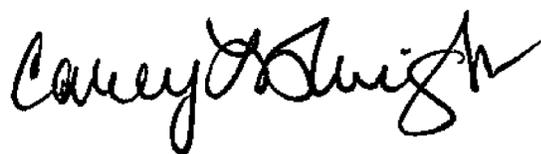
LEGAL OPINIONS AND ORDERS

Mr. Schoen announced the following opinions and orders:

- *C.C., et al. v. Frederick County Board of Education* – Opinion No. 24-23.
- *S.H., et al. v. Montgomery County Board of Education* – Opinion No. 24-24.
- *D.D. v. Baltimore County Board of Education* – Opinion No. 24-25.
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Dr. Johnson motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ms. McCusker. With no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 4:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



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

Date: January 28, 2025

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, January 28, 2025**.

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.