



MAINE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

23 State House Station
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333

STATE OF MAINE

The State Board of Education held a regular monthly meeting on March 10, 2021 virtually via Zoom. The following members were present: Chair Wilson Hess; Vice Chair Peter Geiger; Wendy Ault; John Bird; Fern Desjardins; James Ford; Martha Harris; Casey Maddock; and Greyson Orne.

Vacant: One Member

Others Present: Deputy Commissioner Daniel Chuhta; Angel Loreda, Director of Higher Education; Jason Libby, Postsecondary and Educator Preparation Coordinator (Department of Education); and Mary Becker, State Board Secretary Specialist.

CALLED TO ORDER:

Chair, Wilson Hess called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM.

The meeting was conducted in accordance with Sec. G-1. 1 MRSA §403-A, Public proceedings through remote access during declaration of state of emergency due to COVID-19. Whereas the meeting is open to the public, all votes will be taken by roll call. Nine Board members attended virtually.

Roll call was taken by Mary Becker, Secretary Specialist. The chair declared a quorum present.

VISION STATEMENT:

Read by student member, Greyson Orne: The Vision of the State Board is to ensure Maine public school students graduate with the skills, knowledge, and principles to be responsible American citizens; self-directed and dedicated to making contributions to society by pursuing further education and employment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOVED by John Bird, seconded by Fern Desjardins, and unanimously voted by those present to accept the February 10, 2021 minutes as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No Public Comment

INTRODUCTION – WELCOME OF NEW MEMBERS:

Wilson Hess welcomed two new members to the Board – James Ford and Greyson Orne.

James Ford resides in Brunswick Maine and is a graduate of Hobart and William Smith Colleges in New York. He earned a master’s degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and received his Maine Teacher Certification at the University of Southern Maine (USM) and holds a Master of Science Degree. James is engaged with Lewiston High School as a Restorative Program Coordinator and also has experience at Bayside Learning Community in Portland and Spurwink Services, among others. James is very active in his community. The Board is pleased and honored to have James join us. His appointment to the State Board is the first appointment under statute that now allows administrators and teachers to serve on the State Board of Education.

Greyson Orne was nominated by the Governor five or six months ago as a student member to serve two years on the Board. The Chair appreciates Greyson’s patience with the nominating process and his confirmation with the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee that ran many months behind schedule, largely because of COVID-19. Greyson has been a regular attendee at State Board meetings and participated in discussion and activities while waiting for his confirmation by the Senate. Greyson has a very impressive resume with an extraordinarily long list of leadership activities that he is engaged in. The Board is impressed with the work that Greyson has done on his private pilot’s license. The Board looks forward to Greyson visiting Committee meetings and joining one to serve on.

James Ford spoke about the relationship he established with Commissioner Makin in 2018 around cultural competency in his community. Commissioner Makin suggested he apply for a position on the State Board of Education. James’ name has been before the Governor since October of 2019.

Greyson Orne spoke about why he applied for the student position on the Board and his experience at Maine School of Science and Mathematics (MSSM) in Limestone.

OFFICER'S REPORTS:

Chair, Wilson Hess

- There has been a lot of activity around the legislative session. Wilson has been engaged in the background monitoring the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee Meetings and providing testimony. He has been reaching out to a number of Legislators and folks at ConnectME around topics that the Board is very interested in - CTE work coming up and Broadband.
- Wilson thanked Deputy Commissioner Dan Chuhta for his work around the agenda review process. The Board looks forward to opportunities to have the Commissioner participate in meetings as it gives Board members a chance for dialogue with her. Wilson has enormous respect for Deputy Chuhta's work with the Certification Committee, Consensus Based Rulemaking group, Professional Standards Board and his guidance and leadership.
- He has been engaged in a number of discussions related to Board transitions with new Board members coming on. He is gearing up with new assignments to Committees, etc. The Board will be doing orientation activities for new members over the next three months. This will include events in the Board's monthly workshop sessions.
- He thanked the Board for appointing him to the Charter School Commission. They are doing great week and he has attended his first Commission meeting
- Wilson reviewed the business agenda for the March 10 meeting.
 - *Unfinished Business*
 - Rule Chapter 115 will be moved forward to the April 14 agenda.
 - *New Business*
 - Initial Temporary Approval of the University of New England (UNE) Master of Science in Education - Inclusion

Vice Chair, Peter Geiger

- Peter reported that since the February meeting much of his work has been regarding the Chapter 115 rule rewrite. He served as the Board representative on the Consensus-based Panel which met weekly from early March 2020 through the conclusion of its work. Peter has also listened to the work of the Certification and Higher Education Committee as they review the Chapter 115, Part I and Part II document.
- He attended the February 23, February 24, March 1, March 3, March 4 Certification and Higher Education Committee meetings.
- He attended and chaired the February 26 and March 5 Legislative Action Committee meetings.
- He attended the February 26 School Construction Committee meeting.

- Earlier this year, Peter mentioned to the State Board that the Green Ladle (culinary arts part of LRTC) bought a food truck which increases the student food prep experience and was purchased to serve food at events and to raise funds for non-profits in the community. They discovered that the generator that came with the truck was inadequate to power all the refrigeration, stoves, and coolers effectively. This week he was able to deliver a new, more powerful generator that will be able to do the trick. The Green Ladle catered the 2021 Maine Teacher of the Year celebration last October and he hopes that the Board will have an opportunity to view this truck going forward.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

School Construction Committee (Martha Harris):

The School Construction Committee met on February 26, 2021 as scheduled.

- The Committee had a discussion on the Integrated, Consolidated 9-16 Educational Facility program. There was discussion on developing a timeline for a new rating cycle for the program. The Committee decided to hold off on a timeline for a new application and rating cycle until work can be done on project 3 which Committee members have a strong interest in supporting.

The next School Construction Committee meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 26, 2021. The meeting will be held virtually via Zoom. The approved minutes will be posted on the State Board website.

Certification and Higher Education (Wendy Ault):

The Certification and Higher Education Committee met on February 24, 2021 as scheduled. The Committee held special meetings on February 23, March 1, March 3, and March 4, 2021.

- At the morning workshop session, Deputy Commissioner Chuhta reported on where the Committee is at on the review of Chapter 115, Part I and Part II.
- At the end of March, the Committee will use their regularly scheduled meeting to continue their focus on review of Rule Chapter 115.

The next regular Certification and Higher Education Committee monthly meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 24, 2021. The meeting will be held virtually via Zoom. The approved minutes will be posted on the State Board website.

Career and Technical Education (John Bird):

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) Committee met on February 25, 2021 as scheduled.

- The CTE Committee is in regular order in terms of business.
- Due to COVID-19, there was a delay in the completion of the pilot program for grade 9 and 10 CTE programs. The Committee reviewed the final report at the last meeting. The consensus is that under trying circumstances, this has been a very successful pilot program. When the opportunity presents itself, the CTE schools would like to continue with this initiative. The initiative was halted for this year as there were more other urgent financial needs related to COVID-related equipment and supplies.
- Maine Administrators of Career and Technical Education (MACTE) presented a report on the grant given from the Briggs fund. Programs had to be done a little differently due to COVID-19. The report was that the Fall Conclave was one of the best. The Committee wants the funds that MACTE expends from the Briggs money to help advance the four priorities of the Board's CTE Strategic Plan. This report reflected important progress in each of those areas.
- The Committee spent time talking about the various CTE-related bills. There are 12 to 15 CTE related initiatives on the legislative agenda.

The next CTE Committee regular monthly meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 25, 2021. The meeting will be held virtually via Zoom. The approved minutes will be posted on the State Board website.

Legislative Action (Peter Geiger):

The Legislative Action Committee last met on March 5, 2021.

This committee is comprised of the Chair, Vice Chair and chairs of each SBE committee with other board members welcomed to attend. The Committee met on February 12, 19, 26 and March 5 to evaluate new LDs and to assess the bills on which the SBE chose to testify. Most of the early legislation has dealt with Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Charter School legislation. Chair Hess testified neither for nor against LDs 380 (An Act to Change the Statutory Cap on Virtual Schools) and LD 430 (An Act to Provide for School Choice). In both cases, the Board took the opportunity to educate the Educational and Cultural Affairs Committee about the importance of Charter schools.

There are several areas that have caught our legislative interest including LD 650 (An Act to Increase Funding for School Construction Projects); LD 702 (An Act to Authorize General Fund Bond Issue to Recapitalize the School Revolving Fund); LD 705 (Resolve to improve Air Quality in Schools); and expanded broadband throughout Maine.

Next week there will be bills heard involving Career and Technical Education. One that the Committee will discuss at the March 12 meeting includes LD 680 (Resolve to Establish the Task Force to Study the Creation of a Comprehensive CTE System). If established this panel will include 2 SBE members. The

Committee is looking into specifics before they take a position. There are other initiatives to create bonds to more fully support CTE Programs.

The next Legislative Action Committee meeting will be held via Zoom on Friday, March 12 at noon.

Nomination and Election Committee (Wendy Ault):

Wilson Hess reminded Board members that the Nomination and Election Committee was convened early to fill a vacancy in Vice Chairmanship. The Committee remains empaneled and will pick up their regular duties for preparing a slate of officers for Chair and Vice Chair. Nominations will be brought forth at May 2021 meeting. Board will vote to fill the vacancies at the June 2021 meeting. Wendy Ault is the Chair of the Nomination and Election Committee and had no report to add.

Student Voices (Casey Maddock and Wendy Ault):

Wendy Ault continues to appreciate the fact that the Commissioner has created a Student Cabinet. She enjoys every opportunity to participate in the meetings. Student voice is so important, especially giving the challenges that we are experiencing right now. Casey has very effectively participated in the Student Cabinet and is advocating for Greyson Orne to join the Student Cabinet.

Wendy turned the report over to student, Casey Maddock. Casey reported that at the most recent Cabinet meeting, students were asked to split up based on which topic they were interested in. Casey facilitated a group that was interested in improving student mental health, along with Bear Shea from the Department of Education. The students are so creative and had so many great ideas. There were other groups as well such as Real-Life Learning – Real-Life Skills in Schools and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Student Membership (Fern Desjardins):

Chair Hess appointed Fern Desjardins, Wendy Ault and Casey Maddock to the Student Membership Committee. Applications closed on March 1, 2021. The Board received 26 applications from the first congressional district. The student will be replacing Casey Maddock who represents congressional district one. In reviewing the applications, they were all amazing students. The Committee began reviewing applications on March 8 and will continue review on March 11 and March 16. The six semi-finalists will be selected and interviews will be conducted on March 29. The three finalists' names will be submitted to Governor Mills on March 30.

Charter Commission Representatives (John Bird and Fern Desjardins):

The Charter School Commission met on March 9, 2021 as scheduled.

- John Bird reported that he is nearing the end of his nine-year tenure on the Charter Commission.

- This is a challenging time for Charter Schools as they reach their first ten years.
- Jeremy Jones, the Commission's new Executive Director, replacing Bob Kautz, attended his first Commission meeting. Jeremy is still in Texas due to a family illness, but is in the process of re-locating to Maine. There was a lot of routine business and John Bird turned the report over to Fern Desjardins.
- The Commission approved the purchase of a Student Information System platform with Infinite Campus for the charter schools that wish to participate.
- Mid-Year Check-in reports were approved for ACADIA Academy, Baxter Academy, Ecology Learning Center, Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences, Harpswell Coastal Academy, Maine Academy of Natural Science, and Maine Connections Academy. The Mid-Year meetings and reports are part of the routine monitoring of Maine's charter schools.
- Jeremy Jones, Executive Director, provided a brief legislative update. He provided written and oral testimony on LD 380, but not on LD 430. He stated that he worked closely with schools in how to get parents also involved with the public hearings. He's now preparing for LD 604.

Professional Standards Board (Peter Geiger):

The Professional Standards Board (PSB) met on March 1, 2021.

By statute, the PSB was established to make recommendations to the State Board including but not limited to preservice education, continuing education, professional growth, initial certification, recertification and more. The group is comprised of 23 members appointed by Governor Mills. The Chair is Kristen Levesque and Vice Chair is Nikole Seeger. During initial meetings the group reviewed the work and supported Rule 115 recommendations made by the consensus panel. The PSB met on March 1 where the panel heard a report on the progress being made on Chapter 115, reviewed a letter being sent to the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee and established a next meeting date which will be May 3, 2021. Additionally, the PSB members are interested in making sure once Chapter 115 is in place, there is a mechanism to measure its success. That would also be true for both the DOE and the SBE. It is a point well taken.

UNFINISHED (OLD) BUSINESS:

CONSIDERATION OF RULE CHAPTER 115

At the February 10, 2021 State Board of Education meeting, the Board voted unanimously to table consideration of Rule Chapter 115 approval until the March 10, 2021 meeting.

MOTION by Wendy Ault, seconded by John Bird, and unanimously voted by those present to table consideration of Rule Chapter 115 to the April 14, 2021 State Board of Education meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

INITIAL TEMPORARY APPROVAL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND (UNE) MASTER OF SCIENCE IN EDUCATION – INCLUSION

BACKGROUND: A full review of The University of New England’s education programs had been scheduled for October 2020 but was delayed until 2021 due to the pandemic. On September 23, 2020, the Certification and Higher Education Committee agreed to allow an abbreviated review for this program to proceed so that UNE could potentially enroll students for academic year 2021-22 with state approval.

During the week of January 11-15, 2021, the review team which consisted of Heather Ball, Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs and Associate Professor of Special Education, University of Maine at Machias and Doris A. Santoro, Professor, Bowdoin College, as well as by Maine State Board of Education member Jana Lapoint and Jason C. Libby from the Maine Department of Education, reviewed the program, course curriculum, and materials, and met with multiple stakeholders, including local school administrators and UNE faculty, staff, and alumni.

The team recommends an initial temporary approval until a full review can be conducted later in 2021.

RECOMMENDATION: Recommend to the State Board of Education the University of New England Master of Education Inclusion program receive an initial temporary approval that will enable program completers to be eligible for Maine Department of Education 282 teaching endorsement, with the understanding that the program will be part of a comprehensive review during the unit’s (UNE College of Graduate and Professional Studies) review later in 2021, and that the noted recommendations in the UNE review letter be addressed during the full review when it occurs.

MOTION by Fern Desjardins, seconded by Wendy Ault, and unanimously voted by those present for the University of New England Master of Education Inclusion program to receive an initial temporary approval that will enable program completers to be eligible for Maine Department of Education 282 teaching endorsement, with the understanding that the program will be part of a comprehensive review during the unit’s (UNE College of Graduate and Professional Studies) review later in 2021, and that the noted recommendations in the UNE review letter be addressed during the full review when it occurs.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- All Board members thanked Martha Harris for her 10+ years of service on the State Board of Education. Members wished Martha well – she will be missed by all.
- Submit travel and expense account vouchers to Mary Becker at the end of this meeting.
- Chair Hess announced that expenditures for the Board were distributed by Mary Becker and the Board is on track with the budget.
- The next Board meeting is currently scheduled to be held virtually via Zoom on Wednesday, April 14, 2021, at 1:00 PM.

ADJOURNMENT:

The March 10, 2021 State Board of Education meeting adjourned at 2:31 PM.

Respectfully Submitted by
Mary Johnson Becker
Secretary Specialist
State Board of Education