

December 5, 2016

State Board [Agenda](#)

Election of New Vice President

The State Board elected Dr. Chester Finn as vice president, filling the vacancy created by the recent resignation of Dr. James Gates from the State Board.

New Deputy Director of Education Policy and Government Relations

The State Board approved the hiring of Tiffany Clark as MSDE's new Deputy Director of Education Policy and Government Relations. The position of Director remains vacant following the resignation of Amanda Conn.

Oral Arguments

The State Board heard oral arguments in the case, James D. Meyers v. Anne Arundel County Board of Education.

Blue Ribbon Schools Recognition

The State Superintendent and State Board announced the 2016 Maryland Blue Ribbon Schools. Dr. Karen Salmon announced the 6 winners of Maryland's Blue Ribbon Schools, and noted that they would be recommended for national recognition as well. She described the eligibility criteria, including being in the top 15th percentile in performance on math and reading/English language arts assessments and other academic accomplishments. MSDE's Darla Strauss thanked the many private sponsors supporting the program; and the State Board welcomed and took photos with the superintendents, principals and teachers from the winning schools.

Maryland's 2016 Blue Ribbon Schools:

- Shipley's Choice Elementary in Anne Arundel County
- Sunderland Elementary in Calvert County
- Centerville Elementary in Frederick County
- Manor Woods Elementary in Howard County
- Farmland Elementary in Montgomery County
- Ronald McNair Elementary in Montgomery County

Handout: [Blue Ribbon Schools](#)

Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) Report

MSDE presented an update on the 2016 administration of the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA). The KRA is administered to provide baseline data on whether children entering kindergarten are ready for the kindergarten curriculum, and utilized by MSDE and early education service providers to improve educational programs for children from birth to age 4. The scope and process for KRA administration was limited by legislation enacted earlier in 2016. Overall results for 2016 find that 43% of entering kindergarteners demonstrated readiness; 38% approaching readiness; and 19% emerging readiness.

Board members engaged in a lengthy discussion of their concerns with the negative impact of the 2016 legislation in eliminating the statewide KRA administration in favor of much more limited sampling assessments. Board members discussed how to build on successful implementation of aligned preK

curriculum and the potential impact on the KRA testing window of the post-Labor Day start date for the school year beginning in 2017.

Handout: [Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Data](#)

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan Update

MSDE's Assistant Superintendent Dr. Mary Gable presented an update on the work of the department's internal committee to develop the first draft of Maryland's Consolidated State Plan for ESSA. The 127 page report addresses all of the overarching components of ESSA, and specific accountability measures aligned with the State's "ambitious, long-term goals for academic achievement, graduation rates, and English language proficiency."

Board members asked questions about the timing of the State Plan submission to the U.S. Department of Education (ED) and the school year in which the provisions will take effect. Dr. Gable shared that ESSA will take effect in the 2017-2-18 school year; but that the provisions pertaining to the lowest performing schools and student groups would not take effect until the 2018-2019 school year.

Dr. Gable presented on the timeline for State Board meetings and action on the State Plan in 2017; the ongoing stakeholder process for consultation on plan development and ways to expand these efforts; the long-term goals and measurements of interim progress applying to all schools and student groups; options for assessing English Learners (EL); and educator certification and professional development. She noted that accountability measures for EL students could be weighted to reflect recently arrived students and those benefitting from multiple years of EL instruction.

Dr. Gable also noted that the federal regulations governing ESSA accountability provisions are subject to the actions of Congress and the new Trump Administration and in 2017. Board members discussed concerns with the appropriate balance of adopting aspirational and attainable goals for growth in student achievement and proficiency rates.

Board President Smarick and Vice President Finn voiced support for a bolder, stronger effort to provide meaningful and successful improvements in the lowest performing schools. Board member Weeldreyer shared the same concern and urged local school systems to begin work to develop local plans and to identify local capacity to implement them. In the absence of NCLB's prescribed intervention strategies, Ms. Weeldreyer stressed the potential to put teeth into the evidenced based practices provisions to ensure that these practices are being put into place.

Board member Iszard expressed her support for maintaining local school system autonomy to implement interventions, and the importance of a state and local partnership to turn around the lowest performing schools. Board President Smarick and Vice President Finn noted that while local control is a key concern, the State Board has the responsibility to students attending chronically low performing schools and that examples of establishing recovery schools and districts exist in other States.

Handouts: [ESSA Plan Update](#)

Charter School Standards

MSDE presented and requested State Board approval of the department's criteria for public charter schools which are determined to be eligible for operational flexibility under the 2015 Charter School Improvement Act. MSDE's Dr. Sylvia Lawson presented an overview of the guidance to local school systems and public charter schools.

Board President Smarick suggested amending the language in the third criteria which would require that "student achievement data shows that proficiency exceeds that of the local school system." He suggested adding "proficiency and/or student growth" and the Board agreed. He and board members Weeldreyer and Finn spoke to concern that charter schools not be required to exceed their school system's proficiency rate, because such a standard could create a disincentive for charter schools to serve the lowest performing students. With that amendment the State Board approved the guidance.

Handout: [Charter School Eligibility Criteria](#)

School Calendar Waiver Process

MSDE's Tiara Booker-Dwyer presented and requested State Board approval for the local board application process for a waiver from the Executive Order establishing the mandate to commence the school year post-Labor Day and end the school year by no later than June 15. She identified the three waivers available to local school systems: 1. waiver of the post-Labor Day start date; 2. waiver of the June 15 end date; and 3. waiver of both.

Dr. Salmon requested a summary of the department's Innovative School Scheduling Models Workgroup, which was established at the direction of the State Board in response to the Executive Order. Ms. Booker-Dwyer outlined the department plans to coordinate work sessions to develop recommendations to the State Board on innovative approaches to school calendar based on school system input. Board members engaged in an enthusiastic discussion of the potential for learning about innovative and effective school calendar strategies. Board members also discussed the possible sources of funding for year-round school and other options. Ms. Booker-Dwyer noted that in other states school improvement grants and other funds have been used. Board members also asked Dr. Salmo whether there was precedent for a school or schools within a school system having a different start date than other schools and she responded that there was not; and Board President Smarick clarified that this specific waiver option came from the Executive Order.

Handout: [School Calendar Waiver Process](#)

State Regulations

Following brief overviews by MSDE's Dr. Mary Gable, the State Board approved the following recommended actions on Code of Maryland (COMAR) regulations.

World of Work Competencies Regulations

- Handout: [COMAR 13A.04.10 Program in Instruction in the World of Work Competencies](#) (ADOPTION;
New Title: Program of Instruction in Career Development for College and Career Readiness)

Adult Education Regulations

- Handout: [COMAR 13A.05.03 Programs of Adult Education](#) (REPEAL - ADOPTION)

Work-Based Learning Program Regulations

- Handout: [COMAR 13A.05.08 Approved Paid Work-Based Learning Programs](#) (REPEAL - ADOPTION)

Hearing Aid Loan Bank Regulations

- Handout: [COMAR 13A.05.12 Hearing Aid Loan Bank](#) (ADOPTION)

Special Education Regulations

- Handout: [COMAR 13A.05.01 Provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education](#) (ADOPTION)

Handout: [COMAR 13A.05.02 Administration of Services for Students with Disabilities](#) (AMEND - PERMISSION TO PUBLISH)

The following regulation was not approved and instead referred for further review based on the State Board's concerns with parental notification provisions and other provisions.

Testing and Reporting Regulation

- Handout: [COMAR 13A.03.04 Test Administration and Data Reporting Policies and Procedure](#)(AMEND - PERMISSION TO PUBLISH)

Public Comment

The State Board heard public comments from individuals on the topics of reading instruction and supports, and later start-times for school days.

State Board Member Discussion & Updates

- Mental and Social Health Subcommittee Report/Update
- State Board Retreat and Strategic Planning Subcommittee Updates
 - State Board Mission/Vision/Core Values Statement
 - P-20 Council Update
 - Charter schools and voucher program alternatives to address low-performing schools
 - January Meeting Agenda Items

Board President Smarick spoke at length to his interest in having the State Board study over the next 6 to 9 months the alternatives to traditional strategies to turn around low-performing public schools by giving parents choices including charter schools and vouchers. He noted that such options would likely require legislation and would be controversial; strongly opposed by some and supported by others. Other board members discussed their interest in seeing innovative models for summer school and other interventions, and he reiterated his interest in the State Board investigating much more dramatically different approaches.

State Superintendents Update

- Master Plan
 - MSDE's Kristy Michel reviewed the State Board's request for a pause and limitation of the scope of the local comprehensive master plan updates in light of the many ongoing changes to accountability and assessment requirements. She shared that the department has received all 24 abbreviated updates to existing plans.
 - Innovative School Scheduling Models Workgroup
 - Responses to Recent School Incidents
 - Dr. Salmon described ongoing weekly conference calls among the department and local school systems and the state school safety center to address recent incidents including school walk outs and bullying. Board members expressed concerns
 - Dr. Salmon and Kristy Michel informed the State Board that MSDE did withhold the installment of state aid from the Allegany County school system due to the failure to submit the school system audit by the statutory deadline.

Handout: [State Superintendent's Update](#)

Opinions

The State Board voted to issue charges to remove Karen Harshman from the Washington County Board of Education in response to the request to do so by the local board of education. This action refers the matter to the Office of Administrative Hearings which will issue a proposed decision for the State Board's consideration prior to its final decision.