

May 21, 2019

Agenda

Board President Justin Hartings called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance, and adoption of the [Agenda](#). Members in attendance included: Board Vice President Stephanie Iszard, and board members Gail Bates, Vermelle Greene, Jean Halle, Rose Li, Joan Mele-McCarthy, Michael Phillips, and Warner Sumpter.

MABE representatives and local board members in attendance were recognized including: MABE Board of Directors President Tolbert Rowe and board members Joy Schaefer, Pamela Cousins, Michael Garman, and William Malesh.

Public Comment

MABE President Tolbert Rowe provided comments requesting the State Board's consideration of MABE's concerns as it considers modifications to regulations governing intra-district student transfers within local school systems. He referred to [MABE's letter to the State Board](#) which provides the rationale for the association's strong support for maintaining the current, locally controlled, process of reviewing and deciding on requests for intra-district student transfers. Mr. Rowe commented on the inter-district student transfer requests. He also emphasized that the vast majority of such requests are already granted at the local level.

Linda Thomas, the education chairperson for the Maryland NAACP, provided comments on the need for fair and effective school discipline practices, specifically in Prince George's County.

Consent Agenda

The State Board approved the Consent Agenda, including Meeting Minutes for the April 23, 2019 meeting with recognition of Amalie Brandenburg, the new chief operating officer of the State Board of Education who was in attendance.

State Board Analysis and Review of School Transfer Appeals and Other Similar Cases

Board counsel Liz Kameen briefed the board on their regulatory and legal options in deciding whether to change the way the State Board analyzes and reviews school transfer appeals and other similar cases. She reviewed that in each of the 24 school systems in Maryland, the most common reasons for the granting of transfers are: Employee parent works in school;

- Siblings attend school;
- Proven hardship/extraordinary circumstances;
- Documented safety issues; and
- Health/medical reasons.

Ms. Kameen also noted that only five school systems list access to a course of study not offered in the student's zoned school as a reason for transfer. They are: Cecil, Frederick, Harford, Washington, and Worcester School Systems.

The reasons for denial of transfers include:

- Failure to fit into a transfer category;
- Failure to prove hardship or other reason for transfer;
- School or class is at capacity;
- Transportation; and
- Student does not have the grades, attendance and/or good discipline record.

State Board can only determine if the state as applied their local policy and procedure which opened the discussion about how they can handle appeals.

After Ms. Kameen's presentation, the board engaged in a discussion of topics including:

- Adding accommodation (teleclass, online, etc.) to the reason for denial
- School districts not offering certain programs or classes that would result in transfers
- Cases come to local boards that have one thing on the board, but they know of other reasons (sports, demographics, etc.) so it is best handled at a local level so they can look at the student first
- Clear language is needed, so parents have a solid understanding of the process and what is needed for a transfer.
- How transportation will play a role in educational equity

[Handout](#)

Maryland High School Graduation Task Force - Diploma by Examination

The board received an informational report from Terry Gilleland, Jr., Director of Adult Education and Literary Services with Maryland's Department of Labor, on the Maryland High School Diploma by Examination. This was one of the policy areas addressed by the Maryland High School Graduation Task Force convened in January 2018 at the request of the Board and Superintendent. The task force was charged with making recommendations on the Code of Maryland Regulation (COMAR) 13A.03.02 Graduation Requirements for Public High Schools in Maryland. Specifically, the Task Force was asked to focus on three areas: credit and program requirements (number of credits, subject areas, and other requirements), assessments, and options for awarding high school diplomas.

Mr. Gilleland fielded questions from the board regarding procurement for an examination as the GED contract expires in 2019. These products included the GED Exam, National External Diploma Program, and the Adult High School Program.

One area of concern is the cost to change from GED to a new product. Also, the question was raised about how states with multiple test company contracts determine which test is administered. Mary Dugan explained there are online options as well as pencil/paper, and the decision is made on a local level. Forty-one states offer GED, 21 offer GED, and other options. Local states generally offer only GED. ESSA was a concern, but GED, where Mr. Gilleland has the most experience, aligns with ESSA.

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Teacher of the Year Recognition

The 2019 Teachers of the Year were recognized by the State Board, joined by their local superintendents, members of their local boards, and their families. Maryland's newly named 2019-2020 District Teachers of the Year will represent their school systems in Maryland's Teacher of the Year Program and competition for Maryland and National Teacher of the Year.

[Handout](#)

Praxis Assessment Deadline

Dr. Salmon asked the board to change the deadline of the newest addition of the Praxis to be extended to September 1, 2019. The board voted in favor of this change.

Revised State Standards in Social Studies

Bruce Lesh, MSDE's Director of Social Studies, Science and Disciplinary Literacy, presented the recommendations from Phase 1 of the State Social Studies Standards Review, including the Maryland's Social Studies Standards found in COMAR 13A.04.17.01, the Protocol for Developing and Revising Standards, results from the statewide survey, and draft social studies standards containing recommended edits.

The board asked clarifying questions about the expectations of the next steps and how finely into the details the board needs to get. A discussion was had around:

- The phrase 'democratic skills and attitude' was 'clumsy' and Mr. Lesh was asked to look into alternative phrasing.
- The phrase 'Geographic Concept' was confusing to some board members and Mr. Lesh explained it in the context of migration patterns within the United States and how it impacts politics.
- Some board members thought that there was a bias and slant with the buzz words in the review. They asked Mr. Lesh to review the document for bias instruction. President Hartings summed it up by saying, 'no politics in the classroom.'

[Handout](#)

Maryland Digital Learning Standards

Val Emrich, MSDE's Director Instructional Technology and School Library Media, presented to the board and asked for their approval of the Maryland Digital Learning Standards. These standards would replace the existing Maryland Technology Literacy Standards for Students (MTLSS) that were accepted by the Maryland State Board of Education on February 27, 2007. The board was very complimentary for the work done and topics covered. The board voted to approve Phase I and to approve the request to proceed to Phase II of Protocol for Developing and Revising Standards.

[Handout](#)

Maryland General Assembly Legislative Update

Tiffany Johnson Clark, MSDE's Director of Education Policy and Governmental Relations, recapped the end of the 2019 Legislative Session. She highlighted the passage of bills regarding MSDE reporting requirements, training to board members on restorative approaches, and The Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

[Handout](#)

Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR)

Educator Preparation Program Regulations

Sarah Spross, Assistant State Superintendent for the Division of Educator Certification, presented proposed regulatory language for discussion, emphasizing that what was being presented is all new language. She also noted that significant revisions were made to the Reading Specialist requirements because the current requirements were outdated.

Ultimately, the purpose is to request permission to publish the repeal and replacement of amendments to the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13A.07.06 Programs for Professionally Certificated Personnel (Attachment I). Amendments are being proposed to increase the rigor and accountability of educator preparation programs that lead to an initial Maryland license.

- 13A.07.06 Programs for Professionally Certificated Personnel
- Licensure of Specialists
- Licensure of Administrators
- Professional and Technical Education and Specialized Areas of Fine Arts Licensure

[Handout](#)

School Supplies Regulations

The current regulations, under COMAR 13A.06.05 – School Supplies and Equipment, focus on the management and accessibility of print textbooks. Over the past 10 years, a transformation in teaching and learning has occurred that includes digital formats of textbooks, resources, and equipment. A repeal and replacement of the current chapter is required in order to address this transformation. The State Board granted permission to publish the proposed regulations. The newly proposed title of these regulations is: “Purchase and Use of Accessible Teaching and Learning Materials.”

[Handout](#)

Blind/Visually Impaired Regulations

The State Board granted final adoption of regulations under COMAR 13A.12.02.23 governing Blind/Visually Impaired instruction. Amended regulatory language removes the requirement that a teacher certified in Blind/Visually Impaired must present a qualifying score on an approved test of braille competency at the time of the first renewal. With the removal of this renewal requirement, those individuals seeking certification in the area of Blind/Visually Impaired will be required to present a test in braille proficiency at the time of application.

[Handout](#)

Board Member Reports

Members of the State Board shared updates from their respective committees and task forces, including: Strategic Planning, the Student Discipline Regulations Task Force, Online Learning, and the Maryland Association of Student Councils.

Legal Opinions

Opinions and Orders were announced in the following cases by the State Board:

- Order No. OR 19-21 – Michael Donaldson v. Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners, reversed the decision of the local board to deny the renewal of a teaching certificate.
- Opinion No. 19-22 – Shane and Kimberly G. v. Carroll County Board of Education, affirming the local board's decision to deny the Appellants' request to create a new bus stop at their residence.
- Opinion No. 19-05 – In the Matter of Maryland Public Ethics Law (II), request for declaratory ruling dismissed for lack of jurisdiction.
- Opinion No. 19-06 – Izabella Sweeney v. Prince George's County Board of Education, dismissed because it is moot.