Maryland Association of Boards of Education
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The Monitor

a summary of the monthly
Maryland State Board of Education Meeting

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Agenda

President DeGraffenreidt opened the meeting by thanking interim state superintendent Dr. Bernard Sadusky for serving MSDE well and giving the board time needed to conduct a national search for a new superintendent.

The board voted on the new state superintendent's contract, and it was passed unanimously. President DeGraffenreidt introduced Dr. Lillian Lowery, who expressed appreciation and excitement over the new job. She stated it was an honor to be a part of a high functioning school system, and looked forward to the opportunity to serve with the MSDE staff.

Race to the Top (RTTT) Update

Jim Foran provided the board with an update on RTTT. He said great progress had been made with colleagues at Towson University and University of Maryland-Baltimore County with program evaluation. He stated they are having meetings with projects managers and evaluating teacher evaluation plans with the LEAs. He added they are beginning LEA onsite visits to review where each is with implementing projects and their scope of work, and that onsite reviews should be finished by June 1, followed by a written report to USDE.

Board member Walsh asked if specific areas of concern had been identified. Mr. Foran stated that to date, there was only one monthly report that identified the same areas MSDE identified, which was MSDE infrastructure. He added there was the ongoing concern of every state over teacher-principal evaluation, but Maryland's concerns were minimal compared to some other states that had received "nasty letters."

Board member Sidhu asked if the technology issues with MSDE were shared by other states. Mr. Foran stated that the same concerns were shared, some states more than others. He added that one project is providing grants to LEAs to support their infrastructure; however, it is not as much money as MSDE would like. Mr. Foran shared the former superintendent Dr. Linda Burgee had been hired to visit LEAs to discuss their needs, and appointments with all 24 had already been made.

Board member Walsh asked about the status and timeline of principal and teacher evaluations. Mr. Foran stated they were in the final states of the first year of the pilot of seven districts. He stated he'd met with the Teacher Effectiveness Council recently, and all were where they expected to be, gearing up for the second year of what will be the statewide pilot.

Dr. Finan added that the Teacher Effectiveness Council meeting was productive, with good updates from the pilot districts, an excellent update from St. Mary's County that was promising, and the council was reassured they are on the right path.

Race to the Top Focus Area: STEM Standards of Practice

MSDE staff members Mary Carey and Donna Clem provided the board with a written definition of STEM Education and Maryland's STEM Standards of Practice, and requested acceptance of the draft documents.

Dr. Carey explained they were generated by STEM Task Force, building a STEM curriculum. She explained the first step is to create standards, which was what she was bringing to the board. Dr. Carey added that no other state had these standards yet, and she was requesting they accept, not adopt, STEM standards, the same as had been done with the Common Core Standards. She stressed they would be kept in draft form so as more was learned about PARCC and professional development, they could be easily revised. She added that in June of 2013, all would be brought before the board for will acceptance. Dr. Carey stated that in June of this year, model lessons and units will be brought before the board, and the same process will be followed for other content areas.

Ms. Clem stated it was a challenge for the Governor's task force to write a definition of STEM: "STEM education is an approach to teaching and learning that integrates the content and skills of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. STEM Standards of Practice guide STEM instruction by defining the combination of behaviors, integrated with STEM content, which is expected of a proficient STEM student. These behaviors include engagement in inquiry, logical reasoning, collaboration and investigation. The goal of STEM education is to prepare students for post0secondary study and the 21st century workforce." Ms. Clem stated they are moving forward with the intention to have fully integrated stem standards by 2014.

Board member Gates asked how to bring arts more in line with STEM, and also asked how college and math faculty were involved.

Ms. Clem stated the survey was first sent to those colleges that have teacher preparation programs, then engineering departments were included as well as college deans. She added they hoped to have further input from this area as they continued to define the standards of practice. Ms. Clem also stressed that STEM does not happen in isolation, and partners included higher education and the business community.

Board members Gates and Sidhu, Ms. Clem and Dr. Carey, along with Kathy Oliver, engaged in a discussion of the purpose of STEM, and all stressed that STEM goes beyond producing more engineers and into the realm of producing people qualified for manufacturing careers. Dr. Oliver stressed that both groups, college and technical, need to be nurtured through STEM education. Dr. Carey stated the objective with professional development is to have all teachers, including art and science, integrating STEM into the curriculum so that all students have exposure.

Board member Gates questioned the amount of attention being paid to doctrine, and expressed concern as to whether LEAs understand STEM isn't an isolated subject, but rather about 21st Century skills and securing the American dream for the future. Ms. Clem stated that the vision had been

presented to the assistant superintendents, and will continue to be stressed, but that change will not happen overnight.

The board voted unanimously to accept the STEM standards of practice and definition.
(Memo & Handout)

Transition to the New Assessment System and Common Core

MSDE staff Carolyn Wood, Mary Carey, Steve Brooks, and Mary Gable updated the board on the transition from the current High School Assessments (HSAs) to the New PARCC Assessments, and from the current Maryland State Curriculum to the Maryland Common Core State Curriculum. They gave a presentation on the cost implications of transition decisions for accountability and graduation requirements.

Highlights of the presentation included: English 9, English 10, English 11, Algebra 1, Geometry and Algebra II will be implemented 2014-2015; with standards in 2015-2016. Common Core: Maryland Common Core State Curriculum for English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics (full implementation 2013-2014). If student is in PARCC class then they would not have to take the HSAs, but all students will be required to take the HSAs until this requirement is met. The incoming class of 2015-2016 9th grade class be fully in Common Core which would have started in the 7th grade; they will not take the English HSA because they took the PARCC.

It was asked what would happen if a student does well on the PARCC, but did not do well on the HSA. Mary Gable said although she was not sure at this time, it could be said that if the student passed the HAS, that result would be kept.

Steve Brooks explained the cost implications of transition decisions for accountability and graduation requirements, and shared that the investment is substantial with $43 million in the budget. He added with the flexibility principle, the schools can spend the money as they see fit, but are held accountable with assessments.

Board member Walsh stated that the transition was complicated, and that it may be helpful to develop a bill of rights for students, for teachers, and for LEAs, so certain principles of fairness are established.

President DeGraffenreidt stated they must always be informed by clear vision of what they are trying to accomplish for those group, and added that a bill of rights doesn't address what they are trying to accomplish, but perhaps a preamble would. He added that everyone needed to understand the importance.
(Memo & Handout)

Maryland's 2011-2012 Milkin Award National Educator

Darla Strauss, MSDE, announced the recipient of the Milkin Award National Educator, Madeline Hanington, an educator at Gaithersburg Middle School in Montgomery County. Ms. Hanington made remarks before the board.
(Memo)

Government High School Assessment

Mary Gable provided the board with an update on the administration of the Government High School Assessment (HSA). She recommended beginning the Government HSA again in 2013-2014 beginning with the ninth grade class, and requiring the assessment the year they take the course.

Board member Walk asked why money would be spent to put the test back in place for one year when after that the state would be moving onto another assessment. Dr. Carey explained the legislative background requiring that the test be reinstated, and that it was funded in the Governor's supplemental budget. She stated the MSDE's assessment office has a version of the test with constructed responses which meets Common Core standards but that the legislation added a social studies assessment in 2014-2015, so that will have to be dealt with.

Board member Walsh asked why the assessment would not continue to be used. Dr. Carey explained that there would be national social studies and history standards, and the PARCC assessment, all of which had to be reviewed for alignment. She added that would all be brought before the board soon. (Memo & Presentation Slides)

Remarks by Governor Martin O'Malley

Gov. O'Malley welcomed Dr. Lowery and praised her leadership skills. He thanked Dr. Sadusky for his service as interim superintendent. He mentioned Green Ribbon schools, four of which are in Maryland and added that there are only 78 across the country.

Gov. O'Malley stated it was a hope filled occasion with new leader, and discussed the success of education, adding that Maryland's economic future is inextricably tied to education's success. He said progress was not inevitable, but was hopeful everyone can work together and fulfill funding responsibilities, and avoid big cuts to education that would then land on the jurisdictions. He discussed b securing a large amount for construction, and the success of Maintenance of Effort reform, but said there was more work to do on budget side.

Gov. O'Malley stated that four years in a row of ranking number one in tough economic times was good but we could not be satisfied with number one in America; we have to be world class. He stated that in 2009, his administration had a goal of improving student achievement and readiness, and he applauded the increase in scores and readiness. He mentioned being awarded a Race to the Top Grant, money for early childhood education and the goal of increasing number of STEM graduates by 2014.

Gov. O'Malley stated there was new evidence suggesting STEM skills were bolstered by arts education, and that environmental literacy and financial literacy also spark interest in STEM . He called for the creation of single longitudinal data system (LDS) that follows students pre-k through higher education, and said Maryland was lagging behind in that area. He thanked President DeGraffenreidt for his leadership in moving MSDE forward with the LDS, and stated he hoped it will be available to parents, staff, students online by the end of the year.

Gov. O'Malley said he'd been frustrated in the area of principal recruitment, and stated Maryland needed to come up with a better unified strategy for recruiting qualified principals. He added that every turn around school involved effective leader. He said he hoped that Dr. Lowery's fresh eyes will help with that issue.

Gov. O'Malley touched on the topic of Career and Technology Education (CTE) which he stated was another way of saying opportunity. He said that in 2011, there were fewer students graduating as CTE completers than in 2008. He said CTE needed to be embraced as a part of the learning experience, and that the most need was among students with parents of the most humble means. He added there was a dignity to all work, not just post graduate work, and that education needed to figure out way to change the culture with the racial overtones in the past and the bigotry of low expectations; but there is tremendous skills shortage in Maryland. He added that CTE is drop out prevention and a way to close the achievement gap.

Gov. O'Malley thanked the board for being a great board, and said he was proud of education in Maryland.

President DeGraffenreidt thanked governor for his leadership on education issues, and said the board was the most stimulating volunteer job one can do.

Board members Walks, Gates, Walsh and Smith, and student member Marks all thanked the governor and remarked on various areas of education.

State Legislative Session

Renee Spence updated the members of the State Board of Education on the outcomes of the significant legislation. Ms. Spence explained that the gaming bill SB 892 did not pass although the Maryland General Assembly website shows it as passing. Mr. DeGraffenreidt asked about compulsory education bill and Renee reported that it did pass.

Steve Brooks began with a budget update and stated there are a lot of adjustments that cannot be implemented through the budget bill, and it often requires separate legislation. He explained this year there was a three legged stool with a lot of strategic moves with the BRFA, Revenue Enhancement Package and the Budget Bill, and the only one of these three to pass was the budget. He said there were contingent reductions with regard to education - GCEI , agency cuts and COLAs, and health insurance that impacted MSDE. He explained some of the areas listed could not be addressed only in the budget bill included the Thornton funding and the reductions are deemed to be invalid.

Ms. Spence explained 2,600 bills were introduced, and MSDE tracked less bills than normally; however, there seemed to be more work in amending those bills. She stated they were successful in making sure education policy remains in the State Board room, and highlighted a few of the pieces of legislation.

Ms. Spence reported on the Compulsory Age bills, stating the General Assembly understood the need to have academic interventions in place to make sure students succeed. She stated the bill includes many reasons for exemptions and that the State Superintendent can waived the compulsory age requirement. She added that the bill included working with DLLR to look at the GED options program, and the three month waiting program will be looked at further by MSDE.

Ms. Spence reported on the financial literacy legislation, stating the General Assembly killed the bill early on, and a commission was established to look at issues that went beyond just financial literacy.

Ms. Spence reported the collective bargaining bill did pass for the state which includes MSDE.

She explained there were several virtual opportunity learning bills introduced, one of which starts a council; the other stating that MSDE may charge fees for online courses as well as delegate the process to local boards.

Ms. Spence reported that the bill regarding Master Plans passed, extending the time systems may provide an update to the plan rather than rewriting.

She shared that the Governor felt there was good progress that morning in a meeting with President Miller and Speaker Busch, and that he plans to get some of the conferees together to start making recommendations.

Ms. Spence reported on the Maintenance of Effort (MOE) bill which was signed by the Governor as an emergency bill. She explained there will be 9 factors considered by the state board when considering a waiver.

She reported on the bill regarding assessments, explained there was a great deal of support in Annapolis for continuing the HSAs.

Professor Gates asked about the Epi Pen passage which was reported as enrolled.
(Memo & Handout)

Oral Argument - Gwin v. Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners

The board heard an oral argument in Gwin v. Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners.

Department of Labor, Licensing & Regulation (DLLR) Update on Diploma by Exam

Staff members from DLLR informed the board of changes to the delivery system of the GED tests that are being implemented by the national GED Testing Service. DLLR requested MSDE continue in partnership in the awarding of the Maryland High School Diploma for all students who pass the GED tests, whether they have taken paper and pencil versions of the test or the computer-based version. They reported the test will be changed to a computer based model on January 2014, and there will no longer be a paper version of the GED. They also reported an increase in the costs with the national portion increasing, and the State portion deceasing.

They explained the new assessments which will be launched in 2014, and will have two performance levels with the first as a high school equivalency with the second for college career and readiness. They explained the test will be more prescriptive, and stressed it is not an online test, but rather a computer based test.

They reported students can register online to a center and there will be online registration and scheduling, and the cost of the test is $24 per content area, but they converted to $120 for full battery. They stated students will get an immediate score.

Board member Finan said having the test online is what it should be since the PARCC is going to be a computer based test, and that if students lacked computer skills, then that needed to be addressed.

Several board members voiced concerns about the cost of the test increasing, despite the fact that costs of administering the test will reportedly decreasing when moving away from paper and pencil.

Several board members questioned the rigor of the exam, and expressed concerns that with it having the endorsement of the Maryland State Board of Education, it should represent all that a Maryland high school diploma represents.
(Handout)

Alternative Governance Proposals

The State Board approved the alternative governance (AG) proposals for the following schools: Barnaby Manor, Francis Scott Key, Thomas S Stone Elementary schools and James Madison Middle School in Prince George's County with Option I-Replace Staff in all schools named.

Board member Naved asked if the number of staff and/or principal to be replaced to be highlighted in future reports. Dr. Hite explained that federal law does not dictate how much staff must be replaced, and that many of these schools had made improvement in reading and math in past 7 years. He explained these schools have missed making AYP by 5%.

Board member DeGraffenreidt recommended a book called the Ajax Paradox which is about linking compensation with performance and that this is not an easy process.

Board member Finan said to keep in mind that teachers want to work in excellent schools with the best leaders, and how they are evaluated will help teachers.
(Handout)

COMAR 13A.05.09.02 Programs for Homeless Children (Permission to Publish)

The proposed amendment adds some children in the custody of DJS to the definition of "child awaiting foster care placement" so that those children would be considered homeless students under COMAR 13A.05.A.05.09.02B(4).
(Handout)

COMAR 13A.01.05.02 Appeal Contents (Amend)

The proposed amendment adds an additional mode of mailing (Express Mail) as a means of transmitting an appeal to the State Board. ADOPTED
(Handout)

COMAR 13A.12.02.28-World Languages

The proposed change reflects a national trend in world languages instruction. The proposed regulation expands the grade band designation from 7-12 to pre-Kindergarten to 12 and recommends specific methodology in the teaching of World Languages as part of the professional education course work. The regulations also recommend a higher standard of testing proficiency for those individuals who may be fluent in the specific world language. ADOPTED
(Handout)

COMAR 13A.12.02.06-General Secondary Areas (Grades 7-12)
COMAR 13A.12.02.15-Trades and Industry (Grades 7-12)
COMAR 13A.12.02.17-Other Academic Subjects (Grades 7-12)

These three amendments to the regulations incorporate recommendations of the Work Group whose members included local Directors of Career and Technology Education Centers, local school system human resource personnel, and representatives from higher education teacher preparation programs. In addition to repealing specific CTE related certification areas, namely, Data processing, Family and Consumer Sciences/Technology Education, and Marketing Education-Teacher Coordinator), the proposed changes include:

1. Contemporizing the name of the existing certification area;
2. Eliminating the experience requirement for an applicant whose preparation was from an approved program in career and technical education;
3. Eliminating references to degrees in outdated areas;
4. Reducing the number of years in the career area to meet the occupational experience requirement;
5. Accepting a Department-approved, industry recognized certification for one year of the occupational experience;
6. Customizing the professional education course work to the specific group of applicants; and
7. Recognizing the governance of State licensure and regulatory authorities over the career areas to be taught.

ADOPTED
(Handouts)

Report on the Joint Conference Committee Meeting

President DeGraffenreidt reported that the conference committee meeting between the state board and Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board (PSTEB) was productive, and PSTEB would produce a proposal that addresses all concerns. He expressed surprise that there were areas of agreement and said that was why communication was good.

Interim State Superintendent Update - School Year Calendar Waiver Requests

1) Request by Dr. Sydney Cousin, Superintendent (Howard County) and Dr. Carol Williamson, Superintendent (Queen Anne's County) to waive the last day of school for students in their respective

school systems, which falls on Monday, June 11, 2012; and now Kent and Worcester County with others expected.

2) To provide the authorization to the Interim State Superintendent of Schools to approve additional requests from local school superintendents that may be made for the remainder of the school year to waive the last day of school, if the final day needed to complete the 180-day schedule falls on a Monday.

Both requests were passed by the state board.

Dr. Sadusky commented on the Educator Effectiveness Workgroup, stating all pilots were in different stages, and adding that Prince George's County has an outstanding program. He provided members with copies of the handbook which describe all of the processes, and stated they are in the development stage to start the ratings for teachers. He added this needs to be field tested, with the data and impact analyzed, with other districts implementing models based on different data points. Dr. Sadusky stated he is very pleased with progress to date.

Opinions

The State Board issued legal opinions in the following cases:

- Stacey Messick and Stephanie Moses v. Wicomico County Board of Education, dismissing two separate appeals for untimeliness.

- In Re Anne Arundel County Maintenance of Effort, denying the county's appeal and finding that it failed to provide the minimum maintenance of effort in FY 2012 and underfunded the school system by $11.9 million.