**MINUTES**
**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**333 Market Street | 1st Floor**
**Harrisburg, PA 17126**

**May 14, 2015**

The 326th meeting of the State Board of Education was convened on Thursday, May 14, 2015. Public notice of the meeting was made in accordance with the Sunshine Meeting Act of 1986. The meeting was called to order at 8:48 a.m. by Chairman Larry Wittig.

**Attending:**

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| James Agras | James Grandon | Justin Reynolds |
| Carol Aichele | Kirk Hallett | Colleen Sheehan |
| Jay Badams | Teresa Lebo | Craig Snider *(via phone)* |
| James Barker | Donald LeCompte | Karen White *(via phone)* |
| Nicole Carnicella | Jonathan Peri | A. Lee Williams |
| Sandra Dungee Glenn | Mollie Phillips *(via phone)* | Larry Wittig |

The minutes of the March 11, 2015 meeting of the State Board of Education were approved on a **Grandon/Dungee Glenn** motion.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

## SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Chairman Jonathan Peri reported on activity at the May 13, 2015 meeting of the Special Committee on the Washington Township Independent School District. The committee discussed its plans for a public hearing on the application of the Washington Township Independent School District (WTISD) scheduled for June 3-4, 2015 at the York County Judicial Center. Mr. Peri also reported on the March 11, 2015 meeting of the Committee, at which time the Committee accepted petitions seeking to intervene on the transfer of the WTISD from Northern York County School District, Dover Area School District, Keep Us in Dover Schools (KIDS) and the Dover Area Education Association (DAEA). The Committee admitted KIDS and DAEA as interveners subject to limitations.

In preparing for the hearing, Mr. Peri said all parties to this matter were directed to work together to stipulate issues relevant to the application for transfer. He then reviewed the issues jointly identified as relevant by all parties as well as additional issues that were objected to by one or more of the parties. Mr. Peri said the parties also had stipulated to portions of the available record, and reported that the Committee took action to adopt the stipulated portions as its pre-hearing record while also including the Secretary of Education's fact-finding and determination of educational merit as part of the pre-hearing record.

## AD HOC COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

Chairman Kirk Hallett reported that the Committee met on May 13, 2015 to receive an update from the Department of Education (PDE) on the progress of The Educational Enrichment Initiative (TEEI) in satisfying conditions set forth for it by the Board. He noted that TEEI has one last periodic progress report due to PDE by June 24, 2015 and that PDE will bring its final recommendation on the application to the Board in July.

Chairman Wittig asked if Mr. Hallett could give remarks about the action filed that might impact the Board's decision regarding TEEI's application. Mr. Hallett deferred to Karen Molchanow, the Board's Executive Director. Ms. Molchanow explained that Kumon tutoring centers currently accredited by TEEI have requested that the State Board for Private Academic Schools (SBPAS) issue a formal determination as to whether or not they meet the definition of a school that is required to either hold state licensure or be accredited by an approved accreditor. She explained that this decision falls outside the jurisdiction of the State Board of Education (SBE) and that a decision from the SBPAS likely would not be presented until after the date by which the SBE needs to take action on TEEI's application.

## REPORT OF THE ACTING SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

Mr. Pedro Rivera, Acting Secretary of Education, discussed activity during the first 100 days of Governor Wolf's tenure and provided an update on revisions to make PDE's website more user-friendly. He urged the Board to visit www.schoolsthatteach.com to see how members' local school districts perform and recommendations made relative to the Governor's proposed budget. He said the Department is soliciting feedback on interest in filling expanded opportunities for early childhood education that would be made available under the proposed budget.

The Acting Secretary then discussed his outreach to school administrators to solicit feedback in establishing priorities for the Department. He identified key concerns raised during that outreach surrounding school funding and establishing equity across the Commonwealth; assessments, including Keystone Exams and project-based assessments; school performance profiles and educator effectiveness. Mr. Rivera said the Department also has been engaging institutions of higher education in discussion about program alignment as well as aligning to industry needs so students can find gainful employment.

Sandra Dungee Glenn asked if the Department has adopted a framework of 21st century skills and if the Secretary anticipates working with higher education institutions in alignment to the new standards to which students are being held accountable. Mr. Rivera replied that the Department is focused on college and career readiness skills to prepare for careers that exist now and careers that do not yet exist and providing multiple pathways to success. He discussed the varied stakeholders that the Department is engaging in implementing this vision and will use input from this outreach to identify the Department's goals. He also noted that the Department work with schools of education to ensure that preservice educators are prepared to provide instruction in the new standards.

Chairman Wittig inquired about initiatives to mandate articulation agreements between community colleges and state-owned institutions. James Grandon raised a concern about data on less students graduating from high school and decreased attendance at community colleges. Members of the Board felt that the data point in question was related to the total population of high school students being lower than in the past, so there are fewer students available to graduate from high school, and noted that higher education collectively is facing an enrollment decrease.

Dr. Jim Barker thanked Governor Wolf and Secretary Rivera for their focus on investing in education through a mission-driven model that will ensure that there is a return on investment.

## REPORT OF THE PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMISSION

A representative of the Professional Standards and Practices Commission (PSPC) was unable to attend the meeting. Chairman Wittig noted that the PSPC submitted a written report that was made available both to the Board and members of the public.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Bill Matthews, a parent from the Mt. Lebanon School District, raised concerns about the administration of the Mt. Lebanon School District. Mr. Matthews stated that the district has never genuinely embraced the reformed principles of Act 1, and said the district engages in budget engineering in developing its proposed budget. He expressed concern with data on assessed valuation used by the district to develop its proposed budget that he said has the effect of underinflating the certified value as determined by the county in support of unwarranted requests for Act 1 exceptions. He stated that the district intentionally crafts proposed budgets that exceed the Act 1 index in order to preserve its right to seek exceptions to the Act 1 index. Mr. Matthews said he has attempted to engage the Department of Education on this matter, but has not received assistance. He welcomed assistance and suggestions on whether a remedy could be found through administrative, regulatory or legislative paths. Mr. Matthews said the use of insincere figures to prepare a proposed budget is just one example of the district's rogue behavior, and that he felt it is unacceptable for a school district or staff member working under required state certification to demonstrate anything but the highest possible competency and integrity.

## ACTION ITEMS

### RESOLUTION HONORING BRUCE GROVER

A motion to approve a resolution honoring Bruce Grover was made by Kirk Hallett and seconded by Jim Grandon.

VOTE: All were in favor as indicated by unanimous voice vote.

### RESOLUTION HONORING JUSTIN REYNOLDS

A motion to approve a resolution honoring Justin Reynolds was made by Kirk Hallett and seconded by Lee Williams.

VOTE: All were in favor as indicated by unanimous voice vote.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

## ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items of business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:54 a.m. on a **Badams/Agras** motion.

Stephanie Jones

Stephanie Jones
Administrative Assistant