

**MINUTES
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

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

March 14, 2019

The 349th meeting of the State Board of Education was convened on Thursday, March 14, 2019. Public notice of the meeting was made in accordance with the Sunshine Meeting Act of 1986. The meeting was called to order at 9:14 a.m. by Chair Karen Farmer White.

Attending:

James Agras *(via phone)*
Carol Aichele
James Barker *(via phone)*
Nathan Barrett
Jamie Bracey-Green
Nicole Carnicella

Sandra Dungee Glenn *(via phone)*
Donald Fey
Pamela Gunter-Smith
Kirk Hallett
Jeffrey Keeling

Maureen Lally-Green *(via phone)*
Jonathan Peri
Arynn Pratt
Ashley Svec
Karen Farmer White
A. Lee Williams

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the January 10, 2019, meeting of the State Board of Education were approved on a **Barrett/Dungee Glenn** motion.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

Secretary Pedro Rivera presented an overview of Governor Wolf’s proposed state budget for the 2019-2020 fiscal year. He highlighted proposed increases for basic education, Pre-K Counts, Head Start, special education, early intervention, PAsmart, and the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education.

Mr. Rivera discussed the Statewide Workforce, Education and Accountability Program (SWEAP) that was introduced as a comprehensive strategy to prepare Pennsylvania’s workforce to compete in the 21st Century global economy. He said SWEAP will bring together several state agencies to implement initiatives that provide opportunities for Pennsylvanians from birth to retirement.

Mr. Rivera also highlighted a new Parent Pathways effort designed to assist single parents with accessing postsecondary education and training. He further discussed proposed investments in high-quality child care; expanded home-visiting programs for at-risk pregnant women, infants and toddlers; proposed changes to the compulsory school age so that kids are in school by age 6 and stay until age 18; and a proposal to raise the minimum salary for teachers to at least \$45,000 per year. The Secretary also discussed plans that would connect teachers with businesses to ensure classrooms are preparing students for today’s workforce, expand

investments in apprenticeships, and provide one-time grants for community college students who work in Pennsylvania.

Jonathan Peri commended proposed changes to the compulsory school age and said increases in educator compensation could aid teacher retention.

Kirk Hallett echoed support for changes to the compulsory age. Mr. Hallett said teacher pay is not the only issue that impacts retention in the field and said additional attention is needed to providing support for the stress points that teachers face on a daily basis.

Lee Williams also applauded efforts to lower the compulsory school age. Regarding compensation, Dr. Williams said that while it's important that teachers make enough money, she does not feel that is the reward that teachers work for. Dr. Williams said efficacy and recognition of support is an important focus.

Pamela Gunter-Smith shared that faculty at York College developed a new certification in diversity and resilience that will start in fall 2019.

Jamie Bracey-Green shared that the innate abilities that are seen among students of color that are teaching other students is part of a culture of communalism that is a cognitive asset. Dr. Bracey-Green asked if the Board could symbolically endorse the Governor's position on teacher compensation or other issues. Dr. Bracey-Green also asked if the Chair of the Board could serve as an ex-officio member of the SWEAP committee.

Nicole Carnicella said discussion is necessary about whether teacher retention and student performance will be driven by salary increases or by providing other supports in the classroom. She further expressed reservation about ripple effects in local communities.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Wayde Killmeyer, Executive Director of Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV, expressed concern over the proposed increase to the minimum teacher salary due to the ripple effect in small rural districts. Dr. Killmeyer said many of the districts within his I.U. pay well below the proposed new minimum and are concerned about how they would finance parity in salary increases for more senior teachers if contracts need to be revised to reflect large increases at the entry level. Dr. Killmeyer said people do not enter the education profession because of money and said a minimum salary of \$45,000 will not incentivize individuals to leave industry and enter teaching. He further shared that his daughter, who is a teacher, experiences disrespect from her students and their parents that makes her to question whether she can remain in the profession long term. He said support for more counselors would be a better investment.

ACTION ITEMS

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

A motion to approve the Board's 2018 Annual Report to the Governor and the General Assembly was made by Carol Aichele and seconded by Nathan Barrett.

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

RESOLUTION HONORING CRAIG SNIDER

A motion to approve a resolution honoring Craig Snider was made by Kirk Hallett and seconded by Pamela Gunter-Smith.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chair Farmer White called for an Executive Session of the Board for the purpose of receiving a legal briefing from counsel on the William Penn School District litigation.

The Board adjourned its Executive Session and the Chair reconvened the 349th meeting of the Board.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Karen Farmer White announced that the selection of new student members to begin terms in July is underway. She said the Pennsylvania Association of Private School Administrators will nominate a candidate to serve as the next postsecondary student representing the propriety sector. Applications for a new high school student member were due to the Pennsylvania Association of Student Councils (PASC) by March 1, and interviews for high school student finalists are scheduled for April 13.

The Chair thanked Mr. Hallett for serving as the Board’s liaison in carrying out the student member selection process. The Chair also thanked current student members Donald Fey and Ashley Svec for their work with PASC to help facilitate the application process for high school students.

Finally, Chair Farmer White announced that the Teacher and School Leader Effectiveness Committee would hold a public hearing on the Secretary’s proposed revisions to Chapter 49 following the conclusion of the Board meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items of business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m. on a **Gunter-Smith/Carnicella** motion.



Stephanie Jones
Administrative Assistant