

MINUTES

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Virtual Meeting as Allowed by
Executive Directive 2020-2 and Executive Order 2020-15

April 14, 2020
9:30 a.m.

Present: Dr. Michael F. Rice, Chairperson
Dr. Casandra E. Ulbrich, President
Dr. Pamela Pugh, Vice President
Ms. Michelle Fecteau, Secretary
Mr. Tom McMillin, Treasurer
Ms. Tiffany Tilley, NASBE Delegate
Dr. Judith Pritchett, SBE Legislative Committee Co-Chairperson
Ms. Lupe Ramos-Montigny, SBE Legislative Committee Chairperson
Ms. Nikki Snyder, SBE Legislative Committee Member
Ms. Brandy Johnson, representing Governor Gretchen Whitmer, ex officio

Also Present: Ms. Cara Lougheed, 2019-2020 Michigan Teacher of the Year

REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Rice called the meeting to order at 9:42 a.m.

Dr. Rice said due to the COVID-19 national emergency and in accordance with Executive Directive 2020-2 and Executive Order 2020-15, the State Board of Education Regular and Committee of the Whole meeting is being convened with remote access technology.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND ORDER OF PRIORITY

Dr. Ulbrich moved, seconded by Mr. McMillin, that the State Board of Education approve the agenda and order of priority.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion.

**Fecteau – Aye
McMillin – Aye
Pritchett – Aye
Pugh – Aye
Ramos-Montigny – Aye
Snyder – Aye
Tilley – Aye
Ulbrich – Aye**

The motion carried unanimously.

III. INTRODUCTION OF STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS

Dr. Rice asked that the members of the State Board of Education be introduced. Mrs. Marilyn Schneider, State Board Executive, introduced the members of the State Board of Education.

IV. RECESS

The Board recessed the Regular Meeting at 9:44 a.m. and convened the Committee of the Whole.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

V. CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Rice called the Committee of the Whole Meeting to order at 9:45 a.m.

VI. EDUCATIONAL UPDATES RELATED TO COVID-19

Executive Order 2020-35 – Provision of K-12 Education During the Remainder of the 2019-2020 School Year

Dr. Rice said the board meeting is dedicated almost exclusively to public education since the advent of the COVID-19 crisis in the state. He said on March 10, 2020, five weeks ago, the board held its last State Board of Education meeting. He said at the beginning of the meeting there were no known COVID-19 cases in the state, and by the end of the meeting the first two cases had been announced. He said on March 20 there were 19 cases and the governor issued Executive Order 2020-5 to close school buildings across the state for three weeks. He said on March 23 the governor issued Executive Order 2020-21 the Stay Home, Stay Safe order, which extended the period of school building closure through April 13, 2020. Dr. Rice said on April 2, the governor issued Executive Order 2020-35 to close school buildings for the rest of the school year and to establish a means by which schools would continue instruction.

Dr. Rice said he appreciates the governor's aggressive leadership during this period unprecedented in modern times. He said in addition to closing school buildings for the remainder of the school year Executive Order 2020-35 required local school districts and public school academies to establish continuity of learning plans for submission and approval by intermediate school districts. He said the executive order set aside the state requirement to administer assessments and suspended all statutory requirements that utilize assessment data. He said local districts must develop a plan to give grades to seniors, award credits needed for graduation, certify transcripts, and confer diplomas. He said districts will need to provide compensatory services to students with special needs during and after the emergency. He said the executive order allows flexibility to issue initial educator certifications and educator renewals.

Dr. Rice thanked Ms. Brandy Johnson, the governor's representative on the State Board of Education and others in the administration and outside for their partnership while working to flesh out and interpret Executive Order 2020-35. He said the executive order provides an enormous amount of direction, which was only possible from the governor or state legislature given the need to set aside a number of laws. He said he is continuing to work with the governor's office on additional elements including early childhood programs and teacher tenure issues.

Dr. Rice said guidance documents regarding food preparation and distribution, social and emotional supports, learning at a distance, and special education have been issued. He thanked organizational partners, Michigan Teachers of the Year, superintendents, and department staff who have collaborated to develop the guidance as well as educators, support staff, and administrators who are doing their best to educate children in the midst of a pandemic.

He said the board has been kept apprised of the work during the last five weeks, and the board meeting is an opportunity to share information and answer questions.

Feeding Children

Mr. Kyle Guerrant, Deputy Superintendent, Finance and Operations, and Dr. Diane Golzynski, Director, Health and Nutrition Services, shared information on providing food to children who are learning at a distance, and not in school buildings.

Information was shared via a [PowerPoint presentation](#).

Board member comments included appreciation for leadership and quickly providing meals to students, partnerships used to develop safety guidance for workers providing meals, importance of students seeing their teachers, delivery methods, and clarification of funding streams.

Child Care

Dr. Scott Koenigsknecht, Deputy Superintendent, P-20 System and Student Transitions, and Ms. Lisa Brewer-Walraven, Director, Child Development and Care, provided information on child care programs.

Information was shared via a [PowerPoint presentation](#).

Board member comments included making child care available for health care workers is a support that allows them to focus on their job; location of child care centers; ensuring healthy environments through intermediate school districts connecting with local health departments and emergency managers; families being asked to pay to hold future child care spots; partners working together; and Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding.

Socioemotional Supports

Mr. Kyle Guerrant, Deputy Superintendent, Finance and Operations, and Dr. Diane Golzynski, Director, Health and Nutrition Services, provided information on socioemotional supports.

Information was shared via a [PowerPoint presentation](#).

Board member comments included 20% local match for 31n(6) funds; distribution of 31n(6) funds equally to 56 intermediate school districts, as specified before COVID-19; and use of Caring 4 Students funds in areas of greater need.

Learning at a Distance

Ms. Sheila Alles, Chief Deputy Superintendent, and Dr. Venessa Keesler, Director, Educator, Student, and School Supports, provided information on learning at a distance.

Information was shared via [PowerPoint presentation](#).

Board member comments included geographic location of students without computer access and/or connectivity; supports for students at home, preparing for next school year, and taking care of students' socioemotional needs; local district continuity of learning plans approved by intermediate school district and forwarded to Michigan Department of Education; students' learning supported by educators varies in each district; guidance for learning at a distance, socioemotional, and family engagement provided for educators and parents; long-term funding for technology, and interest by foundations in digital equity; mobility of families; continuity of learning plans to reach all students in their unique circumstances; adjustment of learning plans moving forward; e-mails, telephone calls, and notes from educators let students know their educators care about them; parental input and notification; and the potential opportunity for student learning programs to occur at the same time as adult learning and training programs as parents work with children at home.

Assessment and Accountability

There was board consensus to reorder the agenda.

Dr. Venessa Keesler, Director, Educator, Student, and School Supports, provided information on assessment and accountability.

Dr. Keesler said Michigan received a waiver from the federal government for all assessments and accountability that are required under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, so those tests are not being administered. She said Executive Order 2020-35 issued on April 2 temporarily suspended compliance with the state laws that are affiliated with testing.

Dr. Keesler said as Executive Order 2020-35 specifies, the Department is working with the College Board on optional SAT and PSAT tests to be administered in the fall for students who want them.

Dr. Ulbrich said it is good that we are foregoing any testing or assessment for this year, because obviously it would be very difficult under these circumstances.

Dr. Ulbrich said she is very appreciative of the fact that there will be an optional SAT for students in the fall, which is free for Michigan students. She said she knows it has been a concern for a lot of the high school juniors who are looking forward to applying to colleges and universities.

Dr. Ulbrich said she is thankful to the governor for the executive order that suspended some of the state laws related to education that were in question during the health crisis. She said she hopes that this is a learning opportunity so in the future there can be more conversations regarding accountability and how it should be used.

Board member comments included thanks to Dr. Rice and Dr. Ulbrich for sending a letter to US Education Secretary Betsy DeVos requesting a nationwide waiver of statewide student assessments, and thanks to department staff for working with College Board to ensure the opportunity for students to take the SAT in the fall.

VII. RECESS

The Board recessed the Committee of the Whole Meeting at 11:49 a.m. and reconvened at 12:33 p.m.

VIII. EDUCATIONAL UPDATES RELATED TO COVID-19 (continued)

Special Education

Dr. Scott Koenigsknecht, Deputy Superintendent, P-20 System and Student Transitions; and Ms. Teri Chapman, Director, Special Education; provided information on special education.

Information was shared via [PowerPoint presentation](#).

Board member comments included learning platforms for students with special needs, response from the US Secretary of Education on the special education waiver request, compensatory services for regression, consideration of trained and licensed behavioral therapists to help with behavioral issues, and addressing gaps with all children over a period of years.

School Finances

Mr. Kyle Guerrant, Deputy Superintendent, Finance and Operations; and Ms. Joetta Parker, Director, Human Resources; provided an update on school finances; the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act; and the impact on the state budget.

Information was shared via [PowerPoint presentation](#).

Board member comments included the adverse impact on state revenue caused by the pandemic; State School Aid budget and general fund budget, which is too early to estimate; allocation of nonrecurring federal dollars to states; and discussion of funding and how to fill the gap in the future.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned the Committee of the Whole Meeting and reconvened the Regular Meeting at 1:14 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING

X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

1. Ms. Lisa Massat from West Bloomfield, Michigan, provided comments on students who have had access to the internet experiencing a loss of learning and encouragement to not lose sight of honors and advanced placement students.
2. Mr. Paul Kolin from Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, provided comments on pass/fail grading and encouragement for the Michigan Department of Education to provide specific guidelines on grading for school districts.

XI. APPROVAL OF STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

Approval of Minutes of Regular and Committee of the Whole Meeting of March 10, 2020

Dr. Pritchett moved, seconded by Ms. Fecteau, that the State Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Regular and Committee of the Whole Meeting of March 10, 2020.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion.

**Fecteau – Aye
McMillin – Aye
Pritchett – Aye
Pugh – Aye
Ramos-Montigny – Aye
Snyder – Aye
Tilley – Aye
Ulbrich – Aye**

The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes of Closed Session of March 10, 2020

Dr. Pritchett moved, seconded by Ms. Ramos-Montigny, that the State Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Closed Session of March 10, 2020.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion.

**Fecteau – Aye
McMillin – Aye
Pritchett – Aye
Pugh – Aye
Ramos-Montigny – Aye
Snyder – Aye
Tilley – Aye
Ulbrich – Aye**

The motion carried unanimously.

XII. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Dr. Ulbrich said this is the first time in the history of the State Board of Education that it has met using remote access technology, and she thanked department staff for making the remote meeting possible.

Dr. Ulbrich said everyone is experiencing a crisis of epic proportions and many people are overwhelmed and struggling. She said it is an opportunity to focus on what works well and immediate needs, many of which were quickly addressed within one week of Executive Order 2020-5 that closed school buildings to students. She said the crisis highlighted inequities in the system, which were known, including the digital divide with potentially 500,000 students not having access to digital devices and/or connectivity.

Dr. Ulbrich said this is also an opportunity to recognize those who have gone above and beyond including health care workers, first responders, educators, and school personnel. She said high school seniors should be celebrated and recognized for the amazing work they have done. She said the department staff, and Michigan Teachers of the Year have provided an enormous amount of information in a short amount of time. She said parents and citizens are staying home for the safety of all. She said her heart goes out to those who have lost people close to them. Dr. Ulbrich said thank you and keep up the good work.

XIII. REPORT OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT

Reports

D. Human Resources Report

- E. Report on Approved Changes to the Newaygo County Regional Educational Service Agency Plan for the Delivery of Special Education Programs and Services
- F. Report on Approved Changes to the Mecosta-Osceola Intermediate School District Plan for the Delivery of Special Education Programs and Services
- G. Report on Approved Changes to the Oakland Schools Plan for the Delivery of Special Education Programs and Services
- H. Report on Property Transfer
- I. Report on Cosponsorships

Grants

- J. Report on Grant Awards
 - 1. 2019-2020 Section 35a94) – Summer School Reading Program Grant - Initial; \$5,000,000 (Educational Supports – Paula Daniels)
 - 2. 2019-2020 Section 35c – Multisensory Structured Reading Instruction Professional Development Program Grant - Initial; \$300,000 (Educational Supports – Paula Daniels)
 - 3. 2018-2019 Flint Declaration of Emergency Grants: Section 11s(2) – School Social Workers - Amendment; \$1,811,605 (Health and Nutrition Services – Diane Golzynski)
 - 4. 2019-2020 Grant Programs to Build the Capacity of Michigan Schools to Impact the Health, Wellbeing and Educational Outcomes of LGBTQ Students – Amendment; \$214,590 (Health and Nutrition Services – Diane Golzynski)
 - 5. 2019-2020 Title IV – Student Support and Academic Enrichment – Initial; \$59,108 (Health and Nutrition Services – Diane Golzynski)
 - 6. 2018-2019 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Preschool Indicators Grant – Amendment; \$249,990 (Preschool & Out-Of-School Time Learning – Richard Lower)

Dr. Rice thanked staff from the department, Governor’s office, local school districts, and intermediate school districts who have helped establish and adjust daily food distribution sites and operations, child care operations, social and emotional supports, learning at a distance, and special education services. He thanked teachers and other educators who are working in a very challenging new environment in new ways to support children. He thanked the Michigan Teachers of the Year for their leadership on learning at a distance.

Dr. Rice encouraged students to work to get the absolute most from their education at this time and appreciate that parents, grandparents, teachers, support staff and administrators are trying to help them continue their education in this important time.

Dr. Rice said let's not let this dark cloud be without a silver lining. He said let's close the digital divide, reduce summer slide, and use this opportunity to reduce the achievement gap between working class and poor children on the one hand and middle class children on the other.

XIV. REPORT OF THE MICHIGAN TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Ms. Cara Lougheed, 2019-2020 Michigan Teacher of the Year, provided the Michigan Teacher of the Year Report.

Ms. Amanda Clemons, Region 2 Teacher of the Year, who teaches English and Advanced Placement Psychology at Manistee High School, introduced herself and provided a report. She said, as the first generation in her family to attend college, she believes education is the great equalizer and it needs to be affordable, open and accessible for all.

Ms. Lougheed said school buildings closed on March 16th, and at that time it was for three weeks, which was later extended until the end of the school year. She said Ms. Sheila Alles contacted the Teachers of the Year asking them to develop learning at a distance guidance. She said all ten of the Teachers of the Year worked from April 1-5, meeting several times a day through technology to develop the guidance. She said it was an absolute honor to be included and respected to do the work and be treated as professionals with expertise.

Ms. Lougheed said they focused on flexibility and giving grace, connection in relationships with students and each other, collaboration between all staff and stakeholders, acknowledgement that every district's best efforts will look different, seeing parents and caregivers as partners in learning, learning over grades, and compassion over mandates and requirements.

Ms. Lougheed and Ms. Clemons shared messages from each of the Regional Teachers of the Year, and thoughts from students during this time of crisis.

Dr. Rice said the Teachers of the Year were very impressive under very tight time constraints, and they were outstanding in their writing and their leadership.

Dr. Pugh thanked the teachers of the year, and said the board appreciates their work as professionals.

Ms. Fecteau said it is important to have the voices of teachers in all meetings.

XV. COMMENTS BY STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS

Ms. Fecteau asked if data is being collected on gaps and areas of focus. Dr. Rice said in the coming months the Education Policy Innovation Collaborative (EPIC), the university research partners, will be involved.

Ms. Fecteau asked if there is a guidance document for higher education institutions on issues such as pass/fail grading and SAT scores during this time of crisis, and the disadvantage to students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Dr. Rice said that is a good point that has not yet been discussed.

Ms. Ramos-Montigny said she salutes Governor Whitmer on her executive orders to stay home, stay safe, and save lives, and provision of education for the remainder of the school year. She said the Michigan Department of Education and its partners have developed many resources that can be used by all in a diverse state.

Dr. Ulbrich said she is following up on an earlier comment regarding transitions to higher education. She said institutions of higher education were already becoming less reliant on standardized tests, and the COVID-19 crisis will probably cause them to move further away from standardized testing.

Ms. Tilley thanked Dr. Rice and team for their commitment and working around the clock under a stressful situation to make sure children have what they need. She said she is concerned for children under this stressful situation, and counseling will need to be made available as we emerge from the crisis.

Dr. Pugh thanked staff and Dr. Rice for his leadership, and quickly taking action. Dr. Rice said he is thankful for his strong team.

Mr. McMillin said he was not happy about seat time waivers not being issued, and he thought he should comment on it at the board meeting.

Ms. Snyder said she is echoing Mr. McMillin and staying positive in working together and staying focused while thinking, reflecting and being honest.

XVI. FUTURE MEETING DATES

- A. Tuesday, May 12, 2020 Regular Meeting at 9:30 a.m.
- B. Wednesday, May 20, 2020 State Board of Education Work Session at 9:30 a.m.
- C. Tuesday, June 9, 2020 Regular Meeting at 9:30 a.m.
- D. Tuesday August 11, 2020 Regular Meeting at 9:30 a.m.

XVII. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

Dr. Rice asked Board members if there are additional agenda topics they would like to be considered for future meeting agendas. He said they may contact Mrs. Schneider or himself to offer topics.

XVIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:04 p.m.

The video archive of the meeting is available on Michigan's State Board of Education website (www.michigan.gov/sbe).

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Fecteau
Secretary