

**New Jersey State Board of Education
Minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting
In the Conference Room on the First Floor
100 River View Executive Plaza
Trenton, NJ**

February 1, 2012

Presiding: Arcelio Aponte, President

Secretary: Christopher D. Cerf, Acting Commissioner

PRESENT CONSTITUTING A QUORUM

Dr. Ronald Butcher
Ms. Claire Chamberlain
Ms. Edithe Fulton
Mr. Joseph Fisicaro
Mr. Jack Fornaro
Mr. Robert Haney
Dr. Ernest Lepore
Mr. Andrew Mulvihill
Mr. Ilan Plawker
Mr. Peter Simon
Dr. Dorothy Strickland

ABSENT

Mr. Mark Biedron

CONVENING

State Board of Education President Arcelio Aponte convened the public meeting with the reading of the statement pertaining to the public session of the State Board meeting as it complies with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act.

The Open Public Meetings Act was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meeting of public bodies at which any business affecting their interest is discussed or acted upon.

In accordance with the provisions of this Act, the State Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time and place thereof posted in the Department of Education, Secretary of State's Office and notice also having been given to the State House Press Corps, the Governor's Office and the State Board agenda subscribers.

And seeing there was a quorum, the meeting of February 1, 2012, was called to order.

ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

President Aponte then read the resolution pertaining to the executive session of the State Board meeting as it complies with the Open Public Meetings Act.

WHEREAS, in order to protect the personal privacy and to avoid situations wherein the public interest might be disserved, the Open Public Meetings Act permits public bodies to exclude the public from that portion of a meeting at which certain matters are discussed, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that consistent with the provision of *N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b)*, the State Board of Education will now adjourn to executive session to discuss personnel and legal issues.

The State Board immediately adjourned to executive session on February 1, 2012. President Aponte reconvened the open meeting at 10:30 a.m. with the reading of the resolution pertaining to the resumption of the public session of the State Board meeting as it complies with the Open Public Meetings Act.

WHEREAS, consistent with the provision of *N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b)*, the State Board will now adjourn from executive session to resume the open session of this meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

STUDENT SPEAKERS

Acting Commissioner Cerf acknowledged Samantha Puja, the student representative for the 2011-2012 school year, and her advisor in attendance, Kelly Mauri.

INTRODUCTIONS

Acting Commissioner Cerf acknowledged Dr. Kathleen Serafino, Executive County Superintendent for Morris and Somerset Counties.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS

On a motion duly seconded and carried, the State Board members approved the minutes of the public meeting conducted on January 4, 2012. State Board member Robert Haney abstained.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Closing the Achievement Gap Task Force Report

Michael Nettles chair, of the Closing the Achievement Gap Task Force provided a status report on the work of the Task Force to this point that also included the steps that the Task force will be taking next. He stated that the Task force consists of eleven members who were appointed by the President of the Board for three purposes to: (1) identify the most prominent achievement gaps in the state; (2) identify the most prominent correlates of the gaps; and (3) recommend actions that can be taken to close the gaps.

Mr. Nettles stated that since its formation in the fall of 2011, the Task Force has been meeting each month and will continue to meet monthly until it completes its work, and produces and presents its report and recommendations to the State Board of Education later this year. He also stated that work of the Task Force falls into the following four categories: (1) Data and information gathering and analyses; (2) Policy and Program Analyses; (3) Public hearings; and (4) Writing a report of findings and recommendations.

Mr. Nettles stated that to this point, the Task Force has been involved in the first two categories of work—(1) data and information analyses and (2) policy and program analyses. He also stated that the task force has examined the following data about achievement gaps:

- test and assessment scores of elementary and secondary students in New Jersey, statewide and by district,
- Pre-school and early childhood assessment results of New Jersey children participating in early childhood programs; and
- Employment statistics of the state's population by educational attainment

He further stated that the Task Force has concluded the following findings to this point:

- (1) Despite higher achievement by New Jersey's students compared to students of other states on national assessments, the state's achievement gaps by race and socioeconomic status are comparable to the average gap of the fifty states;
- (2) The state's achievement gaps exist in every school district, vary in size among school districts, and are wider in more affluent districts than in the states poorer school districts;
- (3) Existing and emerging efforts by the state are aimed toward addressing gaps between/among district and finding solutions for failing schools and districts. Less visible emphasis upon addressing the gaps within existing schools and districts many of which are succeeding but individual and clusters of students within are failing or are at risk of failing;
- (4) Too little is known about innovative and successful strategies that schools and districts in the state have instituted to solve achievement gaps; and
- (5) Need to ensure that effort to improve, reform and closing gaps are accompanied by research and evaluation that will allow the state to measure and monitor the effects upon closing gaps and assess the benefits of the investment;

Mr. Nettles stated that the next steps of the Task force include:

- (1) Continue with the analyses of the data with a focus on finding the source and sustenance of achievement gaps in the state's schools and school districts;
- (2) Search for innovations and solutions that are in effect in the schools and school districts in the state;
- (3) Write a report of findings and recommendations and present them to the State Board of Education for consideration; and

Literacy Education Committee Report

State Board member Dorothy Strickland provided an overview of the initial initiatives and recommendations of the Literacy Education Committee on the Achievement Gap Task Force; Early Childhood Education, Educator Evaluation Pilot, Common Core Standards initiative, PARCC and NJQSAC. She also expanded on those initial recommendations stating that the literacy committee proposes to work with the Department to develop a clearly defined, transparent infrastructure for delivering information and professional development related to the initiatives. She further stated that the committee will strive to have a final report to the State Board in May.

Adult Education Task Force Report

President Aponte stated he is working with the New Jersey Department of Labor to identify the location of and resources available to fund Adult Education programs. He also stated that the Adult Education system is a complex and fragmented system as evidenced in the report completed by the Heldridge Center. He further stated that 1.2 million adults in the state of New Jersey are in need of adult education services, which is almost equal to the number of children under the age of 18 that are currently receiving education services in New Jersey.

President Aponte stated that he is working with Dr. Aaron Fichtner, Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development who is in the process of developing a report on the state of Adult Education in New Jersey. He also stated that Dr. Fichtner will share the information about the state of Adult Education programs in NJ before the end of this academic school year. He further stated that throughout the state there are many agencies including the Newark Alliance whom he is working with that are focused on Adult Education program issues. President Aponte stated that he would continue to keep the State Board informed of this work over the coming months.

Legislative Committee Update

Vice President Plawker provided an update of the unfunded mandate decision by the Council on Local Mandates regarding the Anti-bullying Law.

Public Testimony

President Aponte public testimony session would not be held today. He also stated that public testimony would be held on March 7, 2012 and the topic would be the Student Transportation regulations.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Teacher Evaluation Pilot Program

Peter Shulman, Chief Talent Officer provided a mid-year update on the Excellent Educators for New Jersey Evaluation Pilot Program.

Paterson Promise Communities

Anthony Bland, provided an overview of the Promise Communities initiative and partnership with Harlem Children's Zone. He stated initiative empowers community-based organizations, to help schools advance and operate more efficiently, and to break down the "silos of government," ensuring a more efficient and coordinated use of resources toward a common goal of positive outcomes for children. He also stated that this initiative is designed to recreate the success of Harlem Children's Zone here in New Jersey by restructuring and organizing programs that reach across the community under a common goal – improving the lives of children and revitalizing the community.

Mr. Bland stated that Promise Communities are designed to create a comprehensive continuum of solutions including educational programs and family and community support systems, with great schools at their center. He also stated that utilizing the participation of community partners

and stakeholders, including state and local governments, local businesses, higher education institutions, among others, Promise Communities are designed to significantly improve the educational and developmental outcomes of children and youth, from birth through college and onto a career.

2011 State Summary Results

Bari Erlichson, Chief Performance Office presented the results on the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK) and the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) for the 2010-11 school year. She stated that while overall performance continued to hold steady or improve slightly in nearly all grades and subjects, a persistent achievement gap remains for economically disadvantaged, African American, and Hispanic students. Overall statewide performance stayed statistically constant or increased slightly on both the NJ ASK and HSPA in 2010-11 in both math and language arts literacy (LAL).

Implementation of the Common Core Standards and Model Curriculum Update

Penny MacCormack, Chief Academic Officer, Division of Academics, Curriculum and Assessment provided an overview of the implementation of the Common Core State Standards in New Jersey. She also stated why the state is embarking on the development of a Model Curriculum and described the alignment of the Model Curriculum with the Common Core State Standards.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION:

On motions duly seconded and carried, the State Board of Education took the following action:

***A. Appointment**

- There were no appointments.

***B. Certification of School Districts**

Certified for a period of three years, the following school district recommended by the Commissioner, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-14a and b.

Certified School District	County
Gloucester County Vocational Technical School	Gloucester

WORK SESSION

State Board of Education Draft Public Relations Plan

The State Board members discussed their draft Public Relations Plan. The State Board approved a motion directing the State Board Office staff to draft a statement of support of the teacher evaluation pilot program process and leadership of the Department.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion duly seconded and carried, the State Board of Education adjourned its February 1, 2012, public meeting at 1:40 p.m.

Christopher Cerf, Acting Commissioner
Acting Secretary, State Board of Education