



**Minutes  
State Board of Education  
May 7, 2020**

Brooke Axiotis  
President  
Des Moines

Bettie Bolar  
Vice President  
Marshalltown

Joshua Byrnes  
Osage

Brian J. Kane  
Dubuque

Michael L. Knedler  
Council Bluffs

Mike May  
Spirit Lake

John Robbins  
Iowa Falls

Georgia Van Gundy  
Waukee

Kimberly Wayne  
Des Moines

Hannah Groos  
Student Member  
Norwalk

Ann Lebo  
Director and  
Executive Officer

The State Board of Education meeting was held on Thursday, May 7, 2020, via Zoom. State Board members present were Brooke Axiotis, Bettie Bolar, Joshua Byrnes, Brian Kane, Mike Knedler, Mike May, John Robbins, Kimberly Wayne, and Hannah Groos. Iowa Department of Education staff members present were Ann Lebo, David Tilly, Jeremy Varner, Thomas Mayes, Amy Williamson, Erika Cook, Tom Cooley, Matthew Coulter, Eric St Clair, Shan Seivert, and Jody Crane. Also in attendance were Sandy Schmitz; Tom Lane; Robert Kobylski, Davenport Community School District; and Lori Sundberg, Connie Thurman, Jim Choate and Patrick Clemence, Kirkwood Community College.

**STATE BOARD WORK SESSION – NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION**

Brooke Axiotis welcomed new State Board of Education members Brian Kane, John Robbins, Georgia Van Gundy and Hannah Groos.

Ann Lebo, Director, Iowa Department of Education, welcomed new board members and shared information about her work with the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners. State Board members and Department staff introduced themselves.

Department staff and State Board members presented information on the following topics:

- State Board Meeting Dates
- The State Board's Responsibilities:
  - Rules Adoption
  - Appeals
  - Open Meetings and Open Records
  - Regulatory Role
  - Accrediting School Districts
  - Approving Charter School Applications
  - Reviewing and Approving the Budgets of Area Education Agencies and Community Colleges
  - Adopting Standards
  - Accrediting Practitioner Preparation Programs

- Community College Council
- Interrelationship Between Department and State Board Responsibilities
- Iowa Department of Education Table of Organization
- Process Used to Develop State Board Agenda
- Master Calendar
- Framework for Policy Development and Decision Making
- State Board Operating Guidelines
  - Operating Guideline #3 – Meeting Procedures
  - Operating Guideline #9 – Handling of Public Concerns
  - Operating Guideline #10 – Planning, Goal Setting and Accountability
- Travel/Expense Reimbursement
- Information Technology

## **STATE BOARD BUSINESS MEETING**

Ann Lebo called the meeting to order at 10 a.m.

### **Welcome New State Board Members**

Ann Lebo welcomed new board members Brian Kane, John Robbins, Georgia Van Gundy and Hannah Groos.

It was moved by John Robbins and seconded by Brooke Axiotis to approve the May agenda.

A roll call vote was taken: Aye: Brooke Axiotis, Bettie Bolar, Joshua Byrnes, Brian Kane, Mike Knedler, Mike May and John Robbins. Nay: None. The motion carried.

This meeting was conducted in electronic format, with remote access information provided in the notice of the meeting, as permitted by section nine of Governor Reynolds's proclamation of March 19, 2020.

### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Mike Knedler nominated Brooke Axiotis for president of the board. Axiotis had no objection to the nomination.

Brian Kane made a motion and Mike Knedler seconded to close nominations.

A roll call vote was taken to close nominations: Aye: Brooke Axiotis, Bettie Bolar, Joshua Byrnes, Brian Kane, Mike Knedler, Mike May and John Robbins. Nay: None. The motion carried.

A roll call vote was taken to elect Brooke Axiotis as president. Aye: Brooke Axiotis, Bettie Bolar, Joshua Byrnes, Brian Kane, Mike Knedler, Mike May and John Robbins. Nay: None. The motion carried.

Axiotis was elected president.

Mike Knedler nominated Bettie Bolar for vice president of the board. Bolar had no objection to the nomination.

A roll call vote was taken to close nominations: Aye: Brooke Axiotis, Bettie Bolar, Joshua Byrnes, Brian Kane, Mike Knedler, Mike May and John Robbins. Nay: None. The motion carried.

A roll call vote was taken to elect Bettie Bolar as vice president. Aye: Brooke Axiotis, Bettie Bolar, Joshua Byrnes, Brian Kane, Mike Knedler, Mike May and John Robbins. Nay: None. The motion carried.

## **COMMUNICATION**

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

### **Director's Report**

Director Lebo stated that the majority of the work she has been doing has been tied to the Department's coronavirus (COVID-19) response. She reported on the role she has been playing as part of the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC), which is located at the National Guard Building.

All Department guidance on COVID-19 is located on the Department's webpage along with recordings of biweekly conference calls that are held with school leaders.

Lebo spoke about continuous learning plans and Return-to-Learn guidance. She also shared details on the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) funding, of which Iowa received over \$71.6 million.

In addition to written guidance and biweekly conference calls with school leaders, Lebo speaks at press conferences and has conference calls with caucus staff to address any questions.

A comment was made thanking the Department for doing an outstanding job in communicating with schools in a timely manner. There was discussion regarding the allocation of the CARES Act funding to K-12 schools and community colleges, and how Return-to-Learn plans will help schools prepare for the fall.

### **Legislative Update**

Shan Seivert, Policy Liaison, Division of Policy and Communications, reported that during the legislative session she provides a verbal legislative update at State Board meetings and also provides written legislative updates. At the end of the session, the Department sends school districts a "letter to the field," which is a summary of legislation.

The Legislative Council extended the session suspension through May 15. The Legislature continues to look at different ways to process bills. At this time, it is uncertain what the legislative session will look like when it resumes. When the Legislature reconvenes, it needs to address appropriations and budget bills. Action on policy bills is unknown at this time.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Mike May made a motion and Joshua Byrnes seconded to approve the consent agenda.

A roll call vote was taken. Aye: Brooke Axiotis, Bettie Bolar, Joshua Byrnes, Brian Kane, Mike Knedler, Mike May, John Robbins and Kimberly Wayne. Nay: None. The motion carried.

## **BOARD ACTION/DISCUSSION AGENDA**

### **Kirkwood Community College Comprehensive Accreditation Report – Fiscal Year 2020**

Chris Russell, Consultant, Bureau of Community Colleges, spoke about the community college accreditation visit cycle. He introduced the following Kirkwood Community College representatives: Lori Sundberg, Connie Thurman, Jim Choate and Patrick Clemence.

The Kirkwood Community College Comprehensive Accreditation Report was presented. This report is an evaluation of Kirkwood for continued state accreditation as an associate degree-granting institution. The Department conducted the on-site portion of the evaluation on February 25-26, 2020. The report reflects the review team's observations and determinations made during Kirkwood's comprehensive desk and site reviews.

As mandated by Iowa Code section 260C.47, the accreditation team, including two external peer reviewers, assessed Kirkwood's compliance with eight Iowa State Accreditation Standards via a structured process of document review and on-site interviews. The team also reviewed the most recent Higher Learning Commission (HLC) regional accreditation report to ensure that any findings have been addressed. Iowa's process has been designed not to duplicate the HLC accreditation process.

Russell shared background information on Kirkwood, the institution's special topic (co-curricular assessment), compliance with HLC criteria, and the findings for the following state accreditation standards:

- Faculty Qualifications
- Faculty Teaching Load
- Special Needs
- Career and Technical Education Evaluations and Timelines
- Strategic Planning

- Physical Plant and Facilities
- Quality Faculty Plan
- Senior Year Plus Programs

Kirkwood representatives presented a PowerPoint that addressed:

- Kirkwood Overview
- Strategic Planning
- Accreditation
- Community Impact
- COVID-19 Pandemic
- Future Vision for Kirkwood

There was discussion about whether Kirkwood is prepared for an influx of students in the fall and retention rates for minority students.

**Motion** Bettie Bolar made a motion and Mike Knedler seconded that the State Board grant continued accreditation for Kirkwood Community College. A state interim visit will be conducted in fiscal year 2024.

**Vote:** A roll call vote was taken. Aye: Brooke Axiotis, Bettie Bolar, Joshua Byrnes, Brian Kane, Mike Knedler, Mike May, John Robbins and Kimberly Wayne. Nay: None. The motion carried.

### **Iowa Community Colleges Certified Budget Report – Fiscal Year 2021**

Eric St Clair, Consultant, Bureau of Career and Technical Education, presented the Iowa Community Colleges Certified Report. The State Board has statutory responsibility for approval of the community college certified budgets. The annual certified budget report is prepared by the Department each year in an effort to provide the State Board with background information necessary to review and approve these budgets.

St Clair reviewed the budget process and noted an error in the report on Table 1.

Jim Choate, Chief Financial Officer, Kirkwood Community College, provided an overview of the community college budget process.

There was discussion regarding how COVID-19 has impacted community college expenditures, revenues, and projections for next fiscal year.

**Motion:** Mike Knedler made a motion and Bettie Bolar seconded that the State Board approve the community college certified budgets as provided.

**Vote:** A roll call vote was taken. Aye: Brooke Axiotis, Bettie Bolar, Joshua Byrnes, Brian Kane, Mike Knedler, Mike May, John Robbins and Kimberly Wayne. Nay: None. The motion carried.

## **2019 Iowa Teacher of the Year - End-of-Year Report**

Isbelia Arzola, Consultant, Bureau of School Improvement, introduced Chris Burke, 2019 Iowa Teacher of the Year. Burke shared comments and presented a PowerPoint that highlighted his travels and experiences while serving as the Teacher of the Year. He also spoke about the work he did to attract, recruit and retain teachers in the field.

## **Davenport Community School District Accreditation Update**

Amy Williamson, Chief, Bureau of School Improvement, reported that the Davenport Community School District was placed on conditional accreditation in May 2019. She reviewed a broad timeline and provided background information regarding how it transpired that Davenport became conditionally accredited.

Tom Cooley, Chief, Bureau of School Business Operations, provided historical information on Davenport's financial position and action taken by the School Budget Review Committee. There was discussion regarding Davenport's allocation of approximately \$4 million through the CARES Act.

Robert Kobylski, Superintendent, Davenport Community School District, responded to a question regarding how the district is dealing with students' social-emotional problems (abuse, bullying and cyber bullying), while school is not in session due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Williamson shared background information regarding the development of a document titled "Davenport CSD Conditional Accreditation Progress." She reminded the board, that members of the State Board and Davenport's administrative team met to negotiate goals and benchmark dates by which their corrective actions will be completed. Williamson pointed out that the final due date for completion of corrective action items is currently August 2020.

Williamson provided an update on the status of corrective action items 13, 16, 18, and 19. There was a question regarding Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports and crisis intervention.

Tom Lane, expert coach, shared information regarding his previous work experience and work he is doing with Davenport. He also provided an update on corrective action item 20.

Sandy Schmitz, implementation advisor, talked about her previous work experience and work she is doing with Davenport to address the district's special education noncompliance issues.

Kobylski spoke about his work experience and changes that are occurring in Davenport. He referenced a document provided to the board titled "Davenport CSD Updates for the May 7, 2020, State Board Zoom Meeting."

It was requested that the Department make recommendations to the State Board regarding the necessary adjustments to the corrective actions.

### **State Board Retreat Planning**

Brooke Axiotis and Ann Lebo led the discussion on the State Board retreat. The agenda and format of the retreat were discussed.

### **Board Reports**

Brooke Axiotis spoke about services and conferences offered by the National Association of State Boards of Education.

Joshua Byrnes talked about how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected his children who are graduating from college and high school. He reported that his employer is offering free internet to families who can't afford that service so the children can do online learning. Broadband connectivity is a major concern in the state of Iowa.

Hannah Groos spoke about efforts that are underway to hear education-related issues students are facing during the COVID-19 pandemic. She will serve as the executive director of the Iowa Student Learning Institute this coming year.

John Robbins presented a workshop for new Iowa School Business Officials.

Kimberly Wayne spoke about a STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) program change and work of the State Board equity meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

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Brooke Axiotis  
President

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Ann Lebo  
Director