



Minutes State Board of Education June 11, 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, June 11, 2020, in person at the Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, ICN Room, 400 E. 14th Street, Des Moines, Iowa, and via Zoom. State Board members present were Brooke Axiotis, Bettie Bolar, Joshua Byrnes, Brian Kane, Mike Knedler, Georgia Van Gundy, Mike May, John Robbins, Kimberly Wayne, and Hannah Groos. Iowa Department of Education staff members present were Ann Lebo, David Tilly, Erika Cook, Brad Niebling, Thomas Mayes, Amy Williamson, Shan Seivert, Matt Coulter, Jeremy Varner, Larry Bice, Janell Brandhorst, Eric Heitz, Kris Kilibarda, Matt Ludwig, David Canaday, Holly Barnes, Janet Boyd, Tom Cooley, Heather Doe, Jim Donoghue, Jim Flansburg, Kassandra Cline, Sara Nickel, Barbara Ohlund, Marietta Rives, Bill Roederer, Rob Olsen, Isbelia Arzola, Pam Spangler, Carla Schimelfenig, Mary Beilke, and Jody Crane. Also in attendance were Robert Hull, National Association of State Boards of Education; Robert Kobylski, TJ Schneckloth, Susan Downs, and Brenda Thie, Davenport Community School District; Dan Gosa and Allison Beck, Davenport Community School District Board; Tom Lane; Sandy Schmitz; Rodrigo Acevedo, Lora Vargason, Robin Madison, and Michael Guanci, Legislative Services Agency; Lisa Bartusek, Iowa Association of School Boards; Rebecca Bates, Region 9 Comprehensive Center; Margaret Buckton, Urban Education Network and Rural Schools of Iowa; Jennifer Coombes, Kim Hofmann, Shane Williams, and Bill Decker, Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency; Tom Downs; Kari Dugan; Charles Flesher; Timothy Grieves; Andy Herrick; David King; Karleen Stephens and Lorna Paxson, Diagonal Community School District; and Amy Kelsey, Diagonal Community School District Board.

STATE BOARD RETREAT

Goals of the Retreat/Introductory Comments

Brooke Axiotis welcomed State Board members and spoke about the agenda.

Ann Lebo, Director, Iowa Department of Education, welcomed attendees and provided comments regarding the format of the meeting.

What is the Department doing to assist schools related to COVID-19?

Director Lebo shared comments regarding what the Department has been doing to assist schools related to COVID-19. The Department's goal is to make sure it is providing all the support schools need for the fall.

Amy Williamson, Chief, Bureau of School Improvement, presented a PowerPoint that addressed the following:

- Iowa's COVID-19 Response for Schools
 - Guidance: Big Topics
 - Guidance: Spring and Summer
 - Return-to-Learn

Department staff responded to questions regarding information that was presented.

Robert Hull, President and Chief Executive Officer, National Association of State Boards of Education

Brooke Axiotis welcomed Robert Hull, President and Chief Executive Officer, National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE). State Board members introduced themselves.

Hull provided opening comments and presented information regarding how to be an effective State Board during a pandemic. A PowerPoint was presented that addressed:

- Mission Statement
- Core Values
- Doctrine
- State Board Authority
- Finding Your Leadership Voice
- Leadership Voice (Individual Leadership and Collective Leadership)
- Your Voice Matters
- Lens of the Current Landscape
- Resources for Equity
- NASBE Website

Review Current Priorities and Goals

Robert Hull presented the following questions for consideration when reviewing the State Board's current priorities and goals:

1. Is this priority significantly impacted by the health and wellness ramifications of the global pandemic? If so, what mitigation efforts are needed by the state board?
2. Is this priority significantly impacted by the fiscal/budgetary ramifications of the global pandemic? If so, what mitigation efforts are needed by the state board?

3. How is this priority impacted by national discourse of racial inequities and systemic racism? What bold actions and mitigation efforts are needed by the state board?

Brooke Axiotis shared background information regarding the establishment of the State Board Equity Committee. Kimberly Wayne provided an update on the work of the committee and presented a PowerPoint that addressed:

- Who Are We?
- Equity Committee as of 3/2020
- Recap: The Process Cont.
- Agenda
- Committee's Focus that Directly Impacts State of Education Goals
- Preparing Teachers for Equity
- Performance Development and Professional Learning Communities Work for Equity
- Recruiting and Retraining Teachers of Color
- Community Alignment for Equity

State Board members discussed changes to the 2020 priorities and goals.

Meeting Schedule (2021 Meeting Dates and Master Calendar)

State Board members reviewed the proposed 2021 meeting dates. There was discussion regarding the meeting format (in person and Zoom), paperless meetings, and the master calendar.

The retreat adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

STATE BOARD BUSINESS MEETING

Brooke Axiotis called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m.

It was moved by Mike Knedler and seconded by Brian Kane to approve the agenda. The motion passed.

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 May 26, 2020.

COMMUNICATION

Public Comment

Kari Dugan provided public comment regarding the Davenport Community School District.

Director's Report

Director Lebo spoke about the difference between Return-to-Learn plans and Reopening Guidance along with current guidance related to summer sports (baseball and softball) and summer learning activities.

The next decision point on reopening guidance is anticipated by July 1.

Lebo described the following funding through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act:

- Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER)
- Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund
- Rethink K-12 Education Models Grant

Lebo announced that Iowa received a limited number of thermometers that were donated to schools. As additional needs are determined, the Department can help find pathways for resources that may not already be available for schools.

Lebo spoke about the factors being considered by state agencies for bringing employees back to the building.

Legislative Update

Shan Seivert, Policy Liaison, Division of Policy and Communications, provided a legislative update. The legislative session was paused mid-March due to COVID-19 and resumed on June 3, 2020. Seivert highlighted the following bills:

- House File 2454 - State Accreditation Standards and Process (signed by the Governor)
- Senate File 2082 - Technical Corrections (signed by the Governor)
- Senate File 2261 - Telehealth in Schools (sent to the Governor)
- House File 2443 (Department Bill) - Senior Year Plus Proficiency Requirements
- House File 2359 - Assessment Score Reporting
- Senate File 2356 - Dyslexia Provisions
- Senate File 2360 - Classroom Management/Classroom Clears
- Senate File 2310 - Online Learning
- House File 2629 - Future Ready Iowa
- House File 2463 - Appropriations

There was discussion regarding Senate File 2360 and how it relates to the 281 Iowa Administrative Code chapter 103, whether legislators have expressed an interest in regulating schools return in the fall, and liability if students return to the classroom and contract COVID-19.

CONSENT AGENDA

Thomas Mayes, Attorney, Division of Learning and Results, explained an error in the attendance list on the May 7 minutes. Mary Ellen Miller's name needs to be stricken and Joshua Byrnes's name needs to be added.

Motion: Joshua Byrnes made a motion and Mike Knedler seconded to correct the meeting minutes from May 7, 2020, in that respect.

Vote: The motion carried.

Brooke Axiotis asked if there were any additional corrections.

Motion: Brian Kane made a motion and John Robbins seconded to approve the minutes as corrected.

Vote: The motion carried.

Board Reports

Bettie Bolar spoke about work of the NASBE Early Childhood Education Work Group and the State Board's priority of eliminating achievement gaps.

Joshua Byrnes shared information regarding his son's graduation and prom in light of COVID-19.

Kimberly Wayne talked about the membership of the State Board Equity Committee.

Mike Knedler reported that the Council Bluffs Community School District is having an outdoor graduation ceremony. He also reported on efforts that are underway as Iowa Western Community College searches for a new president.

John Robbins stated that the Iowa Falls and Alden Community School Districts will be having an outdoor graduation ceremony.

Hannah Groos shared information regarding an initiative called "Move School Forward." She also announced that she joined a coalition of student state board members that was started by Student Voice.

Brooke Axiotis reported on plans for the NASBE annual conference.

Diagonal Community School District Accreditation Update

Amy Williamson introduced Karleen Stephens, Superintendent, and Lorna Paxon, Principal, Diagonal Community School District; Amy Kelsey, President, Diagonal Community School District Board; and Eric Heitz, Administrative Consultant, and Janet Boyd, Consultant, Bureau of School Improvement.

A PowerPoint was presented that addressed:

- Differentiated Accountability Monitoring Process
- Diagonal Community School District

Williamson stated that the Department has been as differential as possible to the district due to the COVID-19 pandemic; therefore, due dates that are not essential have been pushed back.

Heitz reported that the district has completed 45 of the 60 noncompliance items. He provided an update on the status of the remaining items. Boyd shared additional information regarding evaluations and offer and teach.

Stephens and Paxon provided an update on the remaining noncompliance items and spoke about how the process has made them a better district.

There was discussion regarding offer and teach and the impact of online learning, what the district is doing proactively to deal with offer and teach, and whether the Department feels the district is making reasonable progress on correcting the deficiencies.

Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency Accreditation Update

Amy Williamson introduced Bill Decker, Chief Administrator, Shane Williams, Director of Educational Services, and Kim Hofmann, Director of Special Education, Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency (MBAEA); and expert mentors Tom Downs, Tim Grieves, and David King.

Williamson provided background information. At the March 2019 State Board meeting, the board voted to place MBAEA on conditional accreditation. Those conditions included items included in the “MBAEA Corrective Action Report June 11, 2020” in addition to reporting a positive ending balance for the fiscal year. Williamson reviewed the status of the corrective actions.

Williams shared comments and provided an overview of a document titled “Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency Programs & Services 2019-2020.”

Motion: Mike Knedler made a motion and Bettie Bolar seconded that the monthly reports be suspended from Mississippi Bend until the financials are in.

Vote: The motion carried.

David King, Tim Grieves and Tom Downs provided final reports for their expert areas.

There was discussion regarding MBAEA’s total yearly budget and self-insurance.

Davenport Community School District Accreditation Update

Amy Williamson shared background information regarding the Davenport Community School District, which was placed on conditional accreditation at the May 2019 State Board meeting. Information was presented regarding the board’s authority in the decision-making process, the process that takes place when a district is conditionally accredited, and potential board decisions.

She reviewed a document titled “Davenport CSD Conditional Accreditation Progress” and indicated that not all of the corrective actions listed in the plan were complete.

She also reviewed in detail a document titled “Davenport Conditional Accreditation Plan 2020-21.” 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 action plans will be completed.

There was extensive discussion regarding item 5 of the 2020-21 plan relating to Crisis and Violence Prevention and Response and Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports. Williamson provided an update on the status of corrective action items 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12. There was discussion regarding suspension reporting, who will bear the cost of the expert coaches, and the State Board’s options and authority depending on which route is chosen.

Discussion continued regarding whether the proposed 2020-21 dates were realistic, the amount of time the situation in Davenport has been ongoing, how much more time is needed, and the number of students who feel unsafe in school.

Robert Kobylski, Superintendent, Davenport Community School District, provided comments regarding the sense of urgency and commitment to sustainable success in the district.

Williamson and Ann Lebo explained option 3 under potential board decisions. State Board members were reminded of the need to give Davenport sufficient time to prepare for the next meeting.

Comments were made regarding the School Budget Review Committee's action, the mindset that Davenport is too big to fail, the State Board's responsibility to act on behalf of the students, and what would improve if the Department took over Davenport's operations.

Kobylski provided additional comments regarding structural decisions, processes and systems Davenport has in place to solve the safety and security issues in Davenport. Keystone Academy was also discussed.

Davenport School Board members Dan Gosa and Allison Beck shared comments.

There was lengthy discussion regarding next steps and whether an emergency meeting was needed in July. It was determined that three members of the State Board (Brooke Axiotis, Brian Kane, and Hannah Groos) will work with Davenport and Department staff regarding development of a negotiated plan.

The State Board's options were discussed. Clarification was sought regarding the information needed for an emergency meeting in July. The difficulty for Davenport to produce a detailed safety plan in July and develop a Return-to-Learn plan at the same time were also discussed.

Motion: Joshua Byrnes made a motion and Bettie Bolar seconded that the Davenport Community School District will provide the State Board its safety plan at the August 5 State Board meeting and review considerations included in number 3.

Brooke Axiotis requested unanimous consent to withdraw all prior motions. The motion carried.

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

John Robbins made a motion and Mike Knedler seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Brooke Axiotis
President

Ann Lebo
Director