

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

Capitol Building 6, Suite 600
1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East
Charleston, West Virginia

MINUTES October 9, 2024

I. Call to Order

Following the welcome and Pledge of Allegiance, President Nancy J. White called the meeting of the West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) to order at 10:00 a.m. on October 9, 2024, in Capitol Building 6, Suite 600, 1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East, Charleston, West Virginia.

The following members were present: President White, Vice President Victor L. Gabriel, Robert W. Dunlevy, L. Paul Hardesty, F. Scott Rotruck (via remote), Daniel D. Snively, Debra K. Sullivan, Christopher A. Stansbury, and ex officio Michele L. Blatt, State Superintendent of Schools, West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE). Gregory F. Wooten and ex officio member Sarah Armstrong Tucker, Chancellor, West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission and West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education were absent.

II. Approval of Agenda

President White called for a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Hardesty moved, and Dr. Snively seconded, that the agenda be approved. Upon the call for the question, the motion carried unanimously.

III. Delegations

Ms. Tara Raymo addressed the Board by reading from the Bible. Dr. Mickey Blackwell, Executive Director, West Virginia Principals Association, addressed the Board regarding domestic violence, suicide prevention and principal's month. He also informed the Board that the Principals Conference will be December 8 – 10, 2024 at the Greenbrier Resort. Mr. Dale Lee, President, West Virginia Education Association (WVEA), addressed the Board regarding the lack of certified teachers and how an increase in insurance premiums will further complicate the ability to recruit teachers.

IV. Consent Agenda

President White called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Dunlevy moved, and Dr. Stansbury seconded, that the Consent Agenda be approved. Upon the call for the question, the motion carried unanimously approving the following agenda items:

- Approved the WVBE minutes from September 11, 2024.
- Approved the Employment of Substitute Teachers in Areas of Critical Need and Shortage policies for Braxton, Preston, Wayne and Webster counties.

- Approved the Employment of Retired Bus Operators as Substitutes in Areas of Critical Need and Shortage policies for Braxton and Webster counties.
- Approved the Harrison County Board of Education's request to amend their 2020-2030 Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan to amend its project priority list with additions to Robert C. Byrd (RCB) High School and renovations to the Mountaineer Middle School (MMS) building. To better accommodate recently approved closures, RCB is proposed to receive a cafeteria addition and additional career technical education shops for agricultural and airframe mechanics. MMS is proposed to receive kindergarten and preschool classroom renovations to accommodate its future transition into an elementary school. The projects are expected to be funded through local funds and a grant from the SBA.
- Approved the Lincoln County Board of Education's request to amend their 2020-2030 Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan to include a safe school entrance and HVAC upgrades and repairs to Lincoln County High School. The projects are expected to be funded through local funds and an SBA grant award.
- Approved the Morgan County Board of Education's request to amend their 2020-2030 Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan to include roof replacement at Berkeley Springs High School Building A to their project priority list. The project is expected to be funded through local funds and an SBA grant award.
- Approved the Pocahontas County Board of Education's request to amend their 2020-2030 Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan to include roof replacement at Berkeley Springs High School Building A to their project priority list. The project is expected to be funded through local funds and an SBA grant award.
- Approved Policy 2423, Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, effective 30 days from filing.
- Approved Policy 8500, Competitive Grant Application and Award Process, effective 30 days from filing.
- Placed Policy 5202, Minimum Requirements for the Licensure of Professional/Paraprofessional Personnel and Advanced Salary Classifications, on public comment for 30 days.
- Placed Policy 8400, Charter Public Schools Stimulus Fund, on public comment for 45 days.

V. Statewide Waiver of Policy 6204, School Closings or Consolidations, Section 3.4.

Mr. Micah Whitlow, Director, WVDE Office of School Facilities, presented the need for the statewide waiver to the Board by explaining that a waiver of Section 3.4 of Policy 6204 would allow counties to complete the required procedures for closing a school on, or before, February 28, 2025, of the calendar year in which the closures or consolidations are to be effective. Additionally, Mr. Whitlow explained that approval of the waiver would not remove counties' responsibility to meet the statutory requirements for the transfer and reduction-in-force of county personnel. Decreases and uncertainties in student enrollment, personnel shortages, and limited school finances warranted additional time for county boards to evaluate their needs.

Following discussion, Dr. Stansbury moved to approve a statewide waiver of Section 3.4 of Policy 6204, Ms. Sullivan seconded, the motion carried unanimously.

VI. Annual County Board of Education Accountability Report.

Ms. Alexandra Criner, Director, WVDE Office of Accountability, explained the process for determining a county board's approval status and accreditation. She provided information regarding the 11 operational effectiveness indicators used to ensure that each county provides a thorough and efficient education for its students. The report is required pursuant to the provisions of *W. Va. Code* §18-2E-5 and Policy 2322.

After discussion, Ms. Sullivan moved that the Board accept the information submitted in the report and issue the designated approval status to each county board of education as indicated in the report. Dr. Stansbury seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

VII. WVBE and WVDE Personnel Matters and Civil Action No. 2:24-cv-18, *Krystle Perry and Anthony Perry, individually and on behalf of their minor child K.P. v. Stacy Marteney, et al.*; Civil Action No. CC-20-2024- P-361, *West Virginia Conference of the NAACP v. West Virginia Department of Homeland Security, et al.*; and, Civil Acton No. 24-C-49, *Jeffrey and Vanessa Perkins vs. Upshur County Board of Education et al.*

Mr. Gabriel moved, and Dr. Snaveley seconded, that the Board enter Executive Session for WVBE personnel and/or legal matters as provided in *W. Va. Code* §6-9A-4(b)(2)(A) [personnel exception] and/or §6-9A-4 [matters involving attorney-client privilege per *Peters v. County Commission*, 205 W. Va. 481 (1999)]. Upon the call for the question, the motion carried unanimously. The Board entered Executive Session at 10:49 a.m.

Return from Executive Session

President White announced the Board had returned from executive session at 11:07 p.m. with no action taken in executive session and called for a motion to approve the WVBE personnel matters included in the agenda attachment. Mr. Gabriel moved, and Dr. Stansbury seconded, that the WVBE personnel matters included in the agenda attachment be approved. Upon the call for the question, the motion carried unanimously.

After discussion, President White called for a motion to approve the WVDE personnel matters included in the agenda attachment. Mr. Gabriel moved, and Mr. Hardesty seconded, that the WVDE personnel matters included in the agenda attachment be approved. Upon the call for the question, the motion carried unanimously.

VIII. Special Remarks

First Lady Cathy Justice addressed the Board on the success of the Communities in Schools (CIS) Program expanding to all 55 counties. The Board viewed videos depicting various events held during the expansion including the Friends with Paws initiative. Governor Jim Justice also addressed the Board on the importance of making education the centerpiece of West Virginia. Afterwards,

President White and State Superintendent Blatt recognized Governor Justice and First Lady Justice for their support of the public education system and commitment to West Virginia students. The Board then took a break to participate in a reception to celebrate the success of the CIS program with West Virginia's First Family. West Virginia's First Dog, Babydog, also participated in the celebration.

IX. WVDE Reports

The following informational reports from WVDE were received and discussed without any action by the Board.

Accountability

Superintendent Blatt informed the Board that Lewis County Schools in on financial watch.

Alternative Certification Program

Superintendent Blatt provided the Board with a booklet relating to TeachWV. The detailed booklet included information regarding approved program endorsements, eligibility requirements for enrollment, and obtaining a professional teaching certificate after completion.

STRIVE Initiative

Assistant Superintendent Margaret Williamson, Division of Federal Programs & Support, explained that ten counties (Berkeley, Boone, Clay, Hancock, Marion, Mercer, Monongalia, Raleigh, Roane and Wyoming) are participating in the STRIVE Campaign and explained the selection process. Additionally, Ms. Williamson also discussed the upcoming District and School Team Conference scheduled for November 18 -19, 2024, designed for representatives from the participating counties to engage in two days of tiered systems of support analysis and development with the goal of identifying the next steps for their individual school district.

X. WVBE Member Updates and Requests for Information

Ms. Sullivan participated in the West Virginia Teacher Preparation Standards Committee meeting, the Educator Rising Board meeting, and read to kindergarten students as part of the West Virginia Public Broadcasting Mountain Readers Become Leaders Program. She also requested information relating to policy requirements for homeschool students and SAT math classes. Dr. Stansbury requested an update on school safety and security. Mr. Dunlevy agreed that the Board needs more information regarding the requirements for homeschooling. Mr. Gabriel and President White attended the Middle College ribbon cutting ceremony at Fairmont State University. President White also discussed visiting the STEAM Technical Assistant Center (TAC) and observing students engaged in computer coding.

XI. Recognition

President White announced the departure of Dr. Snavelly from the Board after completing his unexpired term ending November 2024. Board members individually expressed appreciation to Dr. Snavelly for his service and commitment to the West Virginia public school system and the students it serves. Dr. Snavelly addressed his Board colleagues and the WVDE employees by expressing his appreciation for their friendship and support during his tenure as a board member.

XII. Future Meetings

President White announced that the next regular meeting of the WVBE will be held November 13, 2024, in Charleston, West Virginia.

XIII. Work Session

Dr. Derek Lambert, Manager, Office of PK-12 Academic Support, provided the Board with an overview of the Content Standards Revision Cycle, Adoption Schedule, Instructional Resources Timeline, and Standards Revision Timeline. Dr. Lambert explained decisions regarding content standard revisions are made by teachers in the field and take approximately 2.5 years to complete the process. Mr. Joey Wiseman, Director, Office of Student Enrichment, informed the Board that representatives of higher education are also involved in reviewing and revising content standards. The Office of Student Enrichment works closely with vendors to ensure that county boards are receiving all the instructional resources they are entitled to receive including teacher editions, professional development, etc. Content standards for Social Studies and Pre-k are currently under review and expected to be before the Board for consideration in Spring 2025 for implementation beginning school year 2025-2026.

IX. Adjournment

President White called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Gabriel moved, and Mr. Dunley seconded, that the meeting be adjourned. Upon the call for the question, the meeting was adjourned at 12:42 p.m.

Minutes approved by the Board on November 13, 2024

Nancy J. White, President

Victor L. Gabriel, Vice President

NOTE:

All agendas, attachments, materials distributed during the meeting, and audio recordings are available through the WVBE website or office pursuant to Policy 1241, Notice and Conduct of Meetings.

Minutes were recorded by:

Tina Payne, Board Secretary

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