

BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES

May 11-12, 2023
Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind
3911 Central Ave
Great Falls, MT 59401

Thursday May 11, 2023
8:30 AM

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Quinlan called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM. Students from the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind (MSDB) led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Stockton took Roll Call and the Chair read the Statement of Public Participation and welcomed guests.

Board members present: Ms. Madalyn Quinlan, Chair; Ms. Susie Hedalen, Vice-Chair; Ms. Renee Rasmussen; Dr. Ron Slinger; Dr. Tim Tharp; Ms. Jane Hamman; Mr. Charles Fox, Student Representative; Mr. Gavin Mow, Student Representative-Elect. Ex Officio members: Dr. Angela McLean, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE); State Superintendent, Elsie Arntzen, Office of Public Instruction (OPI). Staff present: Ms. McCall Flynn, Executive Director; Ms. Kris Stockton, Administrative Specialist; Ms. Julie Balsam, Accounting Technician. Guests: Mr. James Russell, Superintendent, North Star Schools; Ms. Sarah Russell, North Star Schools; Ms. Amanda Curtis, Montana Federation of Public Employees (MFPE); Mr. Paul Furthmyre, Superintendent, MSDB; Deputy Superintendent, Sharyl Allen, OPI; Ms. Wendi Fawns, OPI; Ms. Cedar Rose, OPI; Dr. Julie Murgel, OPI; Mr. Jay Phillips, OPI; Ms. Barbara Quinn, OPI; Mr. Chris Sinrud, OPI; Ms. Marie Judisch, OPI; Ms. Krystal Smith, OPI; Ms. Crystal Andrews, OPI; Ms. Ellery Bressler, OPI; Ms. Ashley Repko, OPI; Mr. Dan Rispens, Superintendent, East Helena Public Schools; Mr. Brian Kessler, Principal, East Helena High School; Dr. Rob Watson, School Administrators of Montana (SAM).

PRESENTATION BY MSDB VI PERFORMERS GROUP

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

CONSENT AGENDA

Dr. Ron Slinger moved to adopt the consent agenda. Motion seconded by Ms. Jane Hamman.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

ADOPT AGENDA

Ms. Jane Hamman moved to adopt the agenda. Motion seconded by Ms. Renee Rasmussen.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

❖ **REPORTS – Madalyn Quinlan (Items 1-2)**

Item 1 **CHAIRPERSON REPORT**
Madalyn Quinlan

Ms. Madalyn Quinlan thanked Superintendent Furthmyre and the MSDB staff for hosting the Board. Ms. Quinlan reviewed the status of the Yellow Kidney et al case for Board members and thanked all the members of the Certification Standards and Practices Advisory Council (CSPAC), whose last meeting was in April. Ms. Quinlan briefly reviewed bills passed during the Legislative Session affecting the Board and MSDB, and updated Board members on committee meetings held since the March meeting. Ms. Quinlan concluded her report by thanking Student Representative, Charles Fox, for his work on the Board over the past year, wishing him the best in his future.

Item 2 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**
McCall Flynn

Ms. McCall Flynn opened her report by updating the Board on the applications received to date for the Seal of Biliteracy and announced that she will be attending Seal of Biliteracy celebrations in Bozeman the following week. Ms. Flynn reviewed the 2023 Legislative Session and bills passed that impact the Board including HB 2 which is the state budget. Ms. Flynn noted that the Board received an increase in funding for Legal Fees and increased funding to implement one of the two charter school bills. Ms. Flynn discussed the early literacy bill (HB 352), and reviewed each of the charter school bills (HB 549 and HB 562), differences between them, and duties assigned to the Board in each bill. Also reviewed was the alternative educator preparation program bill (SB 373), which allows licensure for applicants who received training from alternative educator preparation programs approved by the Board. Ms. Flynn discussed convening Board committees to work on the implementation of the bills to begin determining how the Board will implement the new laws. Board members asked questions and made suggestions regarding how to begin implementing the new laws. Ms. Flynn reviewed the recommendations from CSPAC regarding advisory councils that the Board may create and areas CSPAC felt were important for the Board to recognize when considering creating any future councils. Ms. Flynn noted that HB 231, which eliminated CSPAC, does not take effect until July 1, 2023, and answered Board member questions. Board members held a general discussion on ideas they have for advisory councils and the possible creation of “special” councils, especially regarding the Class 8 Educator License applications. Chair Quinlan noted that the existing Board committees will be used to implement the bills passed. Ms. Flynn noted that the Board holds Strategic Planning in July, and this will also be the time to continue discussions on future advisory councils and implementing new laws.

❖ **MACIE LIAISON – Susie Hedalen (Item 3)**

Item 3 **MACIE REPORT**
Jordann Lankford Forster

Ms. Jordan Lankford Forster gave the MACIE report to the Board, updating the Board on the most recent MACIE meeting held on May 3. Ms. Lankford Forster discussed that the Governor of Oklahoma has banned regalia from graduation ceremonies, and Ms. Lankford Forster reminded the Board that there is a law in Montana which protects regalia and asked that the Board remind education partners that regalia is protected in Montana. Ms. Lankford Forster discussed a survey she completed regarding Indian Education for All for her master’s degree program. Ms. Lankford Forster discussed ongoing MACIE budgets discussions, and other items covered at the meeting, including establishing a meeting schedule, position statements, and open positions on the Council. Ms. Lankford Forster answered Board member questions. The Board discussed promoting the application process for the student representative position on MACIE.

❖ **REPORTS – Madalyn Quinlan (Items 4-7)**

**Item 4 STATE SUPERINTENDENT REPORT
Superintendent Elsie Arntzen**

Superintendent Elsie Arntzen presented her report to the Board noting MSDB has earned a Purple Star School Award and announced that nominations are open for Teacher of the Year. She reviewed the Legislative Session as it pertains to OPI and answered Board member questions. Ms. Cedar Rose discussed spring assessment testing, including Smarter Balanced testing, ACT testing, and commended the work of the OPI Assessment Team and answered Board member questions. Ms. Krystal Smith updated the Board on the MAST pilot testing cycle. Ms. Wendi Fawns presented the ESSER update, including the data collection from schools in which there was a 97% completion rate. Ms. Fawns answered Board member questions. Mr. Chris Sinrud gave the Data Modernization Update to the Board including an update on the Request for Proposal process underway to secure a vendor for the program. Mr. Sinrud answered Board member questions.

**Item 5 COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION REPORT
Dr. Angela McLean**

Dr. Angela McLean announced the hiring of a new President at Bitterroot College, Christine Burger, who will begin her new position soon. Dr. McLean updated the Board on work done on the Apply Montana College Access Portal, the Grow Your Own Program, Apprenticeship Program for the Trades, and Montana's Future at Work Program. Dr. McLean answered Board member questions.

**Item 7 STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT
Charles Fox**

Mr. Charles Fox presented the Student Representative Report, introducing Gavin Mow as the new student representative to the Board. Mr. Fox discussed the recruitment and application process for the new representative, noting that this year had the most interest and applications to date. Mr. Fox reviewed the State Student Council Conference for the Board, including a newly hired Executive Director, and new student leadership. The next conference will be held in Helena. Mr. Fox reviewed student activities over the last month including national conferences for DECA, BPA, HOSA, and other student groups. Mr. Fox discussed the success of the ACT testing this year and reported that students notified him that it went well. Mr. Fox thanked the Board and staff for the experience over the last year and expressed his appreciation. Board members individually thanked Mr. Fox for his service. Mr. Gavin Mow introduced himself to the Board and thanked Mr. Fox for his leadership.

❖ **MSDB LIAISON – Renee Rasmussen (Items 8-9)**

**Item 8 MSDB REPORT
Paul Furthmyre**

Ms. Renee Rasmussen opened the MSDB item noting that she was on campus in April for meetings with the Foundation Board and the Accreditation team and expressed how impressed she is with both groups. Ms. Rasmussen noted the dedication of the Foundation Board to training and continuing education. Mr. Paul Furthmyre, Superintendent of MSDB, presented his report to the Board. Mr. Furthmyre discussed the accreditation meeting with the National Association of the Deaf, the MSDB Foundation breakfast for the community, and the completion of a comprehensive needs assessment for Indian Education for All, in which MSDB scored very high. Mr. Furthmyre discussed the support the school has from the MSDB Foundation which provides funding to the school, including national experts being brought in for ASL and for visually-impaired students. Mr. Furthmyre discussed the 6 FTE positions allocated to the school by the Legislature, new hires, resignations, and retirements, and noted that MSDB has been successful in recruiting good applicants from Montana as well as outside of Montana. Mr. Furthmyre discussed upcoming collective bargaining agreements and his hope to increase pay for the specialists on staff. Mr. Furthmyre discussed MSDB's state accreditation with the Board, deficiencies noted in the state report,

Dr. Ron Slinger moved to approve the BASE Aid Payment Schedule for fiscal year 2024. Motion seconded by Ms. Renee Rasmussen.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

*****TIME CERTAIN AT 1:00*****

❖ **LICENSURE COMMITTEE – Susie Hedalen (Items 11-12)**

**Item 11 INITIAL REVIEW OF BPE CASE #2023-01, CASE
Rob Stutz**

Mr. Rob Stutz reviewed the revocation request for BPE case #2023-01, Case. Mr. Stutz answered Board member questions and noted that the educator was given the opportunity to surrender his license but has chosen not to surrender. Ms. Flynn noted this will be on the agenda for July.

Ms. Susie Hedalen moved to forward BPE Case #2023-01 to a contested case hearing at the July 2023 meeting. Motion seconded by Dr. Ron Slinger.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Item 12 ACTION ON CAEP MOU
Dr. Julie Murgel**

Dr. Julie Murgel reviewed the CAEP MOU for the Board, how the joint accreditation process works, and the option to include new national accreditation programs, given the changes in Chapter 58. Discussion ensued regarding the benefits of Educator Preparation Programs having both state and national accreditation, and how joint accreditation is beneficial.

Ms. Susie Hedalen moved to approve the CAEP MOU effective July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. Motion seconded by Dr. Ron Slinger.

Public comment from Dr. Tricia Seifert, Montana State University (MSU), regarding CAEP Accreditation and the joint site review between MSU, CAEP, and OPI.

Public comment from Ms. Kristi Steinberg, University of Montana (UM), who thanked Dr. Murgel for her hard work, then spoke about the partnership between the three entities and the benefits of having a joint site review. Ms. Steinberg also spoke about the value of the process and the positive outcomes of the joint review.

Public comment from Dr. Laura Straus, UM Western, who echoed the comments from Dr. Seifert and Ms. Steinberg, and spoke about UM Western's recent joint site review and accreditation process.

Public comment from Dr. Dan Lee, UM, who agreed with all the previous comments, and commended Dr. Murgel for the work she does.

Ms. Jane Hamman asked the commenters to speak to the fact that the mission of CAEP is to “promote equity”.

Dr. Dan Lee stated that “promoting equity” is not their only mission and that there are other aspects that are more important to the accreditation process.

Ms. Steinberg addressed where the word “equity” is mentioned in the CAEP Standards and how it is applied, clarifying that it is only mentioned in Standard 1.

Public comment from Ms. Amanda Curtis, MFPE, who spoke about equal outcomes for students to be career and college ready. Ms. Curtis spoke about how the word equity has been used historically in education.

Ms. Renee Rasmussen addressed her concerns with having an MOU with only one accrediting body, recognizing that there is another option, and that she has concerns with partnering with a body that’s first words of their mission is “equity”.

Dr. Tim Tharp commented that Education Preparation Providers (EPP) still have an option to obtain national accreditation, but it is not a requirement, and that while he has concerns with the state being tied to one entity, he does not want to disrupt anything that an institution may be in the middle of.

Chair Quinlan noted that some legitimate concerns had been brought forward, and that disrupting processes already underway is a concern. Ms. Quinlan stated that she would like to have some input from the Montana Council of Deans of Education on the various questions and concerns from Board members.

Ms. Susie Hedalen agreed with the comments from Ms. Quinlan that obtaining more information is critical but does not want to negate something that has been so beneficial to the EPPs.

Dr. Ron Slinger reminded the Board that this agreement is only for one year, and that it would be wise to approve the MOU and then give the Board a year to determine other options and possibly enter into an agreement with other accrediting bodies. Dr. Slinger stated that he supports the MOU.

Ms. Hamman asked for clarification from Dr. Murgel on the EPPs that are currently in the pipeline. Dr. Murgel noted MSU has completed the work and will be having their follow up site visit in the fall of 2023, with final approval to the Board in January 2024, and MSU Billings is set to begin their accreditation review process in the Spring of 2024.

Ms. Rasmussen agreed that she does not want to impact MSU and their accreditation in any way but would prefer that the EPPs be able to choose their own process for national accreditation.

Dr. Angela McLean echoed support for Dr. Slinger’s comments to move the motion forward today and to pull a group together to research and discuss the issues that have been brought forward. Dr. McLean noted that approving the CAEP MOU today does not preclude any other options going forward, and that OCHE will support the Board in any future work.

No further discussion. Motion passes with Board members Hamman and Rasmussen dissenting.

Dr. Tharp stated that he voted “aye” but with hesitation and would like to explore why the MOU involves the Board of Public Education, and not the Board of Regents.

Ms. Rasmussen added that now that there is a second accrediting body, she is concerned an institution would get stuck with one body.

❖ **ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE – Dr. Tim Tharp (Items 13-14)**

Item 13

ACTION ON THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS AND SCHEDULE FOR THE 2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR

Crystal Andrews

Ms. Crystal Andrews reviewed the 2023-2024 Accreditation Process per the Chapter 55 Standards of Accreditation rules that are effective July 1, 2023. Ms. Andrews noted that data collection will still be done this fall, but will now be done in Infinite Campus, not TEAMS, and that a new accreditation collection system is being developed. Ms. Andrews reviewed how the new process will work with collection being done in the spring. Ms. Andrews concluded her report by stating that OPI will publicize guidance documents, review next steps and training for districts. Ms. Andrews answered Board member questions.

Dr. Tim Tharp moved to approve Superintendent Arntzen’s recommendation for the proposed accreditation process and schedule for the FY24 school year. Motion seconded by Dr. Ron Slinger.

A question from Ms. Hedalen as to whether OPI has enough support for schools and Ms. Andrews answered that they do.

Public comment from Mr. James Russell, Superintendent of North Star School District stated that from a Class C School District perspective he has concerns about the time a new process will require, while still doing all the other aspects of his job.

Public comment from Dr. Rob Watson, SAM, questioning what exactly the Board is approving today. Dr. Watson commended Ms. Andrews and her team for the work they have done with the new process but presented some suggestions to enhance the process. Dr. Watson noted that SAM stands available to help with implementation then reviewed his concerns with the Board.

Public comment from Ms. Amanda Curtis, MFPE, supporting comments from the administrators.

Dr. Murgel responded to the timeline concerns raised by Dr. Watson.

Chair Quinlan suggested postponing the vote until tomorrow to consider a new motion.

Discussion ensued on whether to postpone the vote until the following day or to move forward with sections of the proposed process and have OPI come back with revisions to others.

Dr. Tim Tharp withdrew the motion. The item was revisited on Friday.

Item 14

ACTION ON FULL ACCREDITATION FROM PROBATION FOR EAST HELENA HIGH SCHOOL AND LOCKWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

Crystal Andrews

Dr. Tharp opened the item and turned it over to Ms. Andrews who highlighted the work going on in the districts. Mr. Dan Rispens, Superintendent, East Helena Schools, and Mr. Brian Kessler, Principal, East Helena High School addressed the process of bringing on the new high school in East Helena. The representatives answered Board member questions.

Dr. Tim Tharp moved to approve Superintendent Arntzen’s recommendation to approve East Helena High School’s Exit Report and upgrade to full accreditation. Motion seconded by Ms. Jane Hamman.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Ashley Repko briefly reviewed highlights of Lockwood High School for the Board. Dr. Tharp noted that Lockwood High School has a group called “Hope Squad” that addresses mental health for students.

Dr. Tim Tharp moved to approve Superintendent Arntzen’s recommendation to approve Lockwood High School’s Exit Report and upgrade their probationary status to full accreditation. Motion seconded by Ms. Renee Rasmussen.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

*****CLOSED SESSION*****

❖ **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Madalyn Quinlan (Item 15)**

Item 15

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PERFORMANCE EVALUATION
Madalyn Quinlan**

Friday May 12, 2023

Chair

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Quinlan called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM. Students from the MSDB led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Stockton took Roll Call and the Chair read the Statement of Public Participation and welcomed guests.

Board members present: Ms. Madalyn Quinlan, Chair; Ms. Susie Hedalen, Vice Chair; Dr. Tim Tharp; Ms. Jane Hamman; Dr. Ron Slinger; Ms. Renee Rasmussen; Mr. Charles Fox, Student Representative; Mr. Gavin Mow, Student Representative-Elect. Ex Officio members present: Deputy Superintendent, Sharyl Allen, OPI; Mr. Dylan Klapmeier, Governor’s Office. Staff present: Ms. McCall Flynn, Executive Director; Ms. Kris Stockton, Administrative Specialist. Guests: Ms. Amanda Curtis, MFPE; Dr. Rob Watson, SAM; Dr. Julie Murgel, OPI; Ms. Ellery Bresler, OPI; Ms. Crystal Andrews, OPI; Ms. Sarah Russell, North Star Schools; Mr. James Russell, Superintendent, North Star Schools; Ms. Laurie Barron, Superintendent, Evergreen Schools; Ms. Jenny Murnane Butcher, Montanans Organized for Education (MOFE).

PRESENTATION BY MSDB FLYING HOOVES

❖ ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE – Dr. Tim Tharp (Items 13 and 16-19)

**Item 13 ACTION ON THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS AND SCHEDULE FOR THE
2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR
Crystal Andrews**

Dr. Tharp reviewed the discussion on Item #13 carried over from the previous day where several different options were discussed relating to the timeline for implementing the 2023-2024 Accreditation process. Ms. Sharyl Allen disseminated and reviewed an updated timeline for the Board to consider, providing additional context regarding the implementation of the new process. Dr. Julie Murgel discussed several additional points and clarified the action requested of the Board by the Superintendent. Dr. Murgel explained the rubric that will be used to evaluate that a district is following the accreditation standards and addressed concerns expressed by Board members the previous day regarding holding schools harmless, whether the new process is easier or more difficult than what is currently in place, and if schools will score lower or higher in the first year of the new process. Board members thanked Dr. Murgel for the additional clarifying information that addressed concerns members had the previous day.

Dr. Tim Tharp moved to approve Superintendent Arntzen’s recommendation for the proposed accreditation process and schedule for the FY24 school year. Motion seconded by Ms. Susie Hedalen.

Public comment from Superintendent Laurie Barron, Evergreen Schools, who thanked OPI staff for their efforts working on the new process and agreed that the process needs to be approved to work through issues that may arise. Ms. Barron expressed concerns she is hearing from others in the field that the process has moved too quickly.

Dr. Rob Watson commented on the revised timeline which still does not address the concerns he has with the proposed process and encouraged the Board to consider training opportunities for districts.

Public comment from Ms. Jenny Murnane Butcher, MOFE.

Public comment from Ms. Amanda Curtis, MFPE.

Chair Quinlan ensured that Board members were clear that the motion on the floor pertains to the documents from OPI distributed this morning.

No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Item 16 PRESENTATION OF ACCREDITATION DEVIATION ANALYSIS REPORT
Ellery Bresler**

Ms. Ellery Bresler presented the Deviation Analysis report to the Board explaining changes in the report from the previous year before answering Board members’ questions and concerns.

**Item 17 ACTION ON ADDENDUMS TO THE ACCREDITATION STATUS REPORT FOR
THREE SCHOOLS
Ellery Bresler**

Ms. Bresler explained the corrections from the three districts are due to data entry errors.

Dr. Tim Tharp moved to approve the addendums for Sweet Grass County High School, Great Falls High School, and CM Russell High School. Motion seconded by Ms. Renee Rasmussen.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Item 18 ACTION ON THE 2023-2024 VARIANCE TO STANDARDS APPLICATIONS
Ellery Bresler**

Dr. Tharp noted the details in the reports from the districts and applauded their work.

Dr. Tim Tharp moved to approve the Initial Application for a Variance to Standards for Hellgate Elementary Intermediate School. Motion seconded by Dr. Ron Slinger.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Tim Tharp moved to approve Superintendent Arntzen's recommendation for the Renewal Applications for: Troy Public Schools 7-8; Columbia Falls Public Schools Junior High; St Ignatius Middle School; Elysian Elementary Middle School; and Big Fork Elementary and 7-8. Motion seconded by Ms. Jane Hamman.

Comments from Ms. Bresler regarding the renewal applications.

No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Item 19 PRESENTATION ON THE ACCREDITATION CORRECTIVE ACTION PLANS
Ellery Bresler**

Ms. Ellery Bresler noted this is an information item. Corrective plans are due to the OPI by June 1st and will go before the Board for approval at the July 2023 meeting.

**Item 6 GOVERNOR'S OFFICE REPORT
Dylan Klapmeier**

Mr. Dylan Klapmeier updated the Board on legislative action and laws passed during the 2023 session regarding public education and specific to the Board.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS July 13-14, 2023, Helena, MT

Strategic Planning Meeting

CSPAC Annual Report

MACIE Update

Annual HiSET Report

Annual Special Education Report

Assessment Update

Federal Update

Chair Quinlan noted the next meeting will be in July in Helena and thanked Mr. Charles Fox for his service this past year and welcomed Mr. Gavin Mow to the Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dr. Rob Watson expressed his appreciation for Ms. Flynn and her hard work for public education.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 9:55AM.

10:00 AM – RECEPTION WITH MSDB COTTAGE STAFF

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Agenda items are handled in the order listed on the approved agenda. Items may be rearranged unless listed "time certain". Public comment is welcome on all items listed as "Action" and as noted at the beginning and end of each meeting.

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