

WYOMING STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
January 18, 2018
970 N. Glenn Road
Casper

Wyoming State Board of Education members present: Sue Belish, Ken Rathbun, Megan Degenfelder proxy for State Superintendent Balow, Scotty Ratliff via Zoom, Ryan Fuhrman, Dean Ray Reutzel via Zoom, Dan McGlade, Max Mickelson, Belenda Willson via Zoom, Kathryn Sessions, and Robin Schamber via Zoom.

Members absent: Chairman Wilcox, Nate Breen, and Jim Rose.

Also present: Kylie Taylor, WDE; Julie Magee, WDE; Kari Eakins, WDE; Thomas Sachse, SBE Coordinator; and Mackenzie Williams, Attorney General's Office (AG).

January 18, 2018

CALL TO ORDER

Madam Chair Sue Belish called the State Board of Education to order at 8:27 a.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Megan Degenfelder, proxy for Superintendent Balow, made a motion to amend the agenda and move Chapter 29 to Board Reports and Updates, rather than Action Item.

Madam Chair Belish added an additional amendment to include nominations for SBE officers, SBE policies, and funds for SBE gifts in "other issues."

Max Mickelson moved to approve the agenda with amendments, seconded by Ken Rathbun; the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 17 2017 MINUTES

Minutes from the November 17, 2017 State Board of Education meeting were presented for approval.

Max Mickelson moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Ryan Fuhrman; the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 11 2017 MINUTES

Minutes from the December 11, 2017 State Board of Education meeting were presented for approval.

Max Mickelson moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Kathryn Sessions; the motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

SBE Treasurer, Ken Rathbun, presented the summary review and expenditures report for the board's budgets, and went over the remaining balances and time left in the current biennium.

Kathryn Sessions moved to approve the presented Treasurer's Report, seconded by Dan McGlade; the motion carried.

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Megan Degenfelder gave Superintendent Balow's update and informed the board that registration for S5S is now open. Governor Mead signed the Wyoming Computer Science Education Week Proclamation for the second year in a row and has recently joined the Governor's Partnership for K-12 Computer Science. The Chapter 41 rules are released for public comment through February 18. Math and Science Extended Standards are expected to be submitted to the SBE mid-January. This will provide for a 4-week review prior to the February meeting. Wyoming's consolidated state plan, in fulfillment of requirement under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), has been approved by the U.S. Department of Education.

COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Thomas Sachse, SBE Coordinator, updated the board on the current status of Chapter 31. Chairman Wilcox received a confidential opinion on the legal issues surrounding the board's inability to frame Chapter 31 Rules consistent with legislative intent. Representatives of the board met with staff from the Attorney General's Office as well as district leaders and WDE staff to make a new plan for promulgating new Chapter 31 Rules. With the AG's opinion, the same group will meet again on January 24 to determine a path forward.

Planning for the contract to facilitate the PJP process has begun, the board will have to conduct a Request for Proposals, rather than a bid waiver. There will likely be two independent PJPs; one for the WY-TOPP/ACT program for all schools and a distinct process for alternative high schools.

There are six pieces of draft legislation that the board might want to discuss. Two of those bills deal with military families, two are major fiscal bills addressing how much districts will receive, and two are bills addressing topics specifically within the purview of the state board.

BOARD REPORTS AND UPDATES

Accreditation Task Force Update

Julie Magee, WDE, gave an update on the accreditation task force that took place on January 9. The task force provided input on the following topics and discussed what the process would look like moving forward:

- The definition and purpose of accreditation
- Revisions to the Chapter 6 rules
- The annual accreditation report and required evidence
- Voluntary options for external reviews
- Effective practices and professional development

ESSA Update

Kari Eakins, WDE, described that with the feedback the U.S. Department of Education gave to the WDE, changes were made to the State's ESSA plan and the plan was approved by Secretary DeVos. The two most significant changes were around participation rate and the equity indicator. The bulk of the changes regarded clarification of the process for ranking and identifying schools for support, with other minor clarifications made in several sections.

Input for Advisory Committee on Accountability

Madam Chair Belish informed the board that the Advisory Committee on Accountability will be meeting to discuss the issue of participation rates for ESSA and WAEA. Since the SBE has responsibility for WAEA, Madam Chair Belish put together a list of questions regarding participation rates in school accountability for the board to consider.

Madam Chair Belish said she would like to add one other thing to the participation rate, not to punish districts because it does make a difference in schools.

Megan Degenfelder indicated that Superintendent Balow would like the State and Federal plan to be as close as possible. She said the WDE understands it's not possible to have them 100% aligned but Superintendent Balow would like to see them as aligned as possible.

Julie Magee gave a brief timeline for reports for school performance ratings. The September 1 report will be delayed because of the new statewide assessment system. In August is when the WDE will receive final cut scores and November 1 is when school performance ratings would be sent to LSO.

Formal Process for Communication

Megan Degenfelder explained that because there is so many different methods of communication from the SBE, she would like to have a discussion and possibly a motion to vote on surrounding SBE communications. Megan suggested that any board communication go through the entire board before going out, especially if its opinion based. Data or informational based should just be sent out but not necessarily voted on.

Kathryn Sessions agreed that the board should all look at something that goes out on behalf of the board.

Belenda Willson said if it's informational or official letter going out it should go through the whole board but maybe not approved or voted on. If there is a change in policy or opinion then it should be voted on and that is policy the board has followed.

Madam Chair Belish asked how the board would go about getting approval and what would need to be voted on (i.e. press releases, committee letters, etc.) and how does the board thread the needle for getting approval on things.

Ken Rathbun said it is not feasible to function if the board has to approve every communication that goes out on behalf of the board. He said he doesn't think that's what Megan is saying, but referring more to opinion based materials.

Megan Degenfelder agreed with Ken and said it would become unmanageable to do that but board members should be able to provide feedback on opinion based materials, especially on behalf of Superintendent Balow as a voting member.

Max Mickelson said the conversation is due to the letter that was received by the Joint Appropriations Committee on behalf of the SBE. The letter did not go out to the board as a whole which meant the WDE had not seen the letter. Because the letter did not go out to the whole board, it did not reflect well on the SBE as the WDE was unaware of it. If the board sends something, everyone should get a copy, it's in the board's interest that everyone is aware of positions taken.

Madam Chair Belish said having talked to Chairman Wilcox, he regretted not having sent the letter out to everyone. She also indicated that the administrative committee had been talking about it for several months and it was in the administrative committee meeting minutes.

Megan Degenfelder made a motion, based on what Max mentioned, if something is position based, the entire board should receive a copy.

Max Mickelson seconded.

Madam Chair Belish suggested that instead of making a motion, the board take a look at the policies instead.

Megan Degenfelder said she was comfortable rescinding her motion but indicated there still seems to be confusion on whether it should be a policy or vote.

Madam Chair Belish asked the board if everyone was comfortable putting this in board policy to be more specific. Board members agreed, Megan withdrew her motion.

Chapter 29 Update

Laurel Ballard, WDE, updated the board on the work the Certified Personnel Evaluation System (CPES) Advisory Panel has done surrounding Chapter 29. The CPES Advisory Panel has reviewed extensive research and proposed standards for education leaders and developed recommendations for changes to Chapter 29. To assist with providing support to districts, the advisory panel also created the glossary of terms and leader evaluation system components guidance documents. They have also worked with REL Central to create a crosswalk between the State Model standards and standards contained within several commonly used leader evaluation systems.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Administrative Committee

Madam Chair Belish indicated that the biggest update from the administrative committee was the review of the SBE Coordinator contract and received feedback from the WDE.

Communications Committee

Ryan Fuhrman gave an overview of the work the communications committee is doing for stakeholder invitations to SBE meetings. Ryan asked if the board should focus on anyone that can come speak to the board or focus on individuals that can speak as it relates to the agenda.

Ken Rathbun said the board should find someone from the area where are holding the meeting. He said it's not in the cards to plan our business where we are holding our meetings, it's unlikely to be able to do that.

NASBE Update

Scotty Ratliff suggested that the board look into cutting back on sending people to NASBE conferences in an effort to cut back on travel expenses.

Kathryn Sessions said because Wyoming is such an isolated state, being a member of NASBE is a great opportunity for the SBE to have contacts with others states. The board should cut back on the number of people sent to conferences but shouldn't discontinue the membership with NASBE.

Madam Chair Belish said Chairman Wilcox said that he supports maintaining NASBE membership as it is a rich source of educational experience and collaboration with other states. The SBE has also received grants from NASBE in the past which has been a great resource.

ACTION ITEMS

Technology Options

Kylie Taylor gave an overview of the survey results from SBE members indicating if they would like a new technology device or not. Kylie proposed that the board vote to have SBE members let her know by a given deadline if they would like a new device and she will let Paula Smith know.

Max Mickelson moved to purchase technology devices if a board member needs, seconded by Kathryn; the motion carried.

Rescinding of December 1 Report

Max Mickelson proposed the SBE approve the January 19 report to replace the December 1 report, seconded by Kathryn; the motion carried.

Accreditation of Sweetwater 1

Max Mickelson will be abstaining from the vote

Ken Rathbun moved that the 2016-17 accreditation status for Sweetwater County School District #1 be amended from Accreditation with Follow Up to Full Accreditation, Dan McGlade seconded; the motion carried.

Legislative Priorities

Megan Degenfelder clarified the board cannot lobby on legislative issues and doesn't think the board should take a position and indicated she will vote no.

Max Mickelson said as a point of clarification he wanted the board to formally decide whether it would be a motion to be in support or just agree on the support of a fully funded Coordinator position and computer science.

Megan Degenfelder said in terms of computer science going forward the WDE can provide as much information as possible for board members to be fully equipped to answer any questions Legislators might have.

Kathryn Sessions said the board needs the legislative committee and Tom to explain to Legislators why the SBE needs a fully funded Coordinator.

Max Mickelson said in that particular area he would like someone to make a motion that the SBE would like a fully funded Coordinator.

Max Mickelson moved that the SBE support a fully funded Coordinator position in order to meet statutory requirements, seconded by Ken Rathbun.

Megan Degenfelder voted against on behalf of Superintendent Balow because she feels the position should not increase unless there is an emergency or it's in statute.

The motion carried.

OTHER ISSUES

Nominations for SBE Officers

Ken Rathbun won't be able to continue as SBE Treasurer, the board will be looking for a new Treasurer and if anyone is interested in being Board Chair or Vice Chair, let Chairman Wilcox know. Elections will take place in February.

SBE Policies

Tom Sachse and Kylie Taylor will make changes to the SBE policies, including formalizing the communication process and bring them to the next meeting in February.

Money Donations for SBE Gifts

There was an envelope passed around for donations for gifts from the SBE.

NEXT MEETING

The board's next meeting will take place in Cheyenne on February 15-16, 2018.

The State Board of Education adjourned at 2:55 p.m.