

MINUTES OF THE MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Monday

March 27, 2017

Maryland State Board of Education
200 W. Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

The Maryland State Board of Education met in special session on Monday, March 27, 2017 at 10 a.m. at the Nancy S. Grasmick State Education Building. The following members were in attendance: Mr. Andrew R. Smarick, President; Dr. Michele Jenkins Guyton, Ms. Laurie Halverson; Ms. Stephanie R. Iszard; Dr. Rose Maria Li; Ms. Barbara J. Shreeve; Mrs. Madhu Sidhu; Ms. Laura Weeldreyer and Dr. Karen Salmon, State Superintendent of Schools. Dr. Chester Finn Jr., Vice-President, Mr. David Edimo and Mr. Guffrie M. Smith were absent.

Elizabeth Kameen, Esq., Assistant Attorney General, and the following staff members were also present: Dr. Miya Simpson, Executive Director to the State Board, Dr. Sylvia Lawson, Deputy State Superintendent, Office of School Effectiveness, Dr. Carol Williamson, Deputy State Superintendent, Division of Teaching and Learning and Kristy Michel, Deputy State Superintendent, Finance and Administration.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan Discussion

The Superintendent asked Mary Gable, Assistant State Superintendent, Academic Policy and Innovation, and Danielle Susskind, Lead Academic Policy Specialist, to update the Board on the progress of Maryland's ESSA State Plan.

Ms. Gable reported that a second draft Plan will be presented by the end of April with a final Plan presented in June. She explained that today's presentation will focus on the following items:

1. Supporting Excellent Educators
2. Support to Low Performing Schools
3. Board discussion of priorities/big issues to be addressed

Support to Excellent Educators

Ms. Gable provided ESSA listening tour feedback and preliminary recommendations from the ESSA Sub-Committee. Ms. Gable and Sarah Spross, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Educator Effectiveness also provided information from the Teacher Induction, Retention and Advancement Act of 2016 Workgroup. Preliminary recommendations included best-practice partnerships between LEAs and educator preparation programs, expanding the routes to certification, increasing the types of certification, revising the Conditional Certificate, and reviewing the basic requirements for initial certification and renewals.

In response to a question by President Smarick about whether the State Board approves the standards for teacher certification programs, Ms. Kameen said she will research this and provide the Board with the answer.

Dr. Salmon noted that Maryland does not produce enough teachers and that there will be more and more shortages across the state over the next few years.

Mr. Smarick requested a presentation at another Board meeting on teacher preparation.

Ms. Weeldreyer said, “Other cities are putting teacher candidates into the neediest schools where they are likely to get hired. Teachers need to be exposed to the state curricula. We need residencies. There are ways to sweeten teacher preparation.”

Dr. Li suggested accelerating retired people into teaching. She said, “We need to ease the transition for people to get back into teaching.”

Ms. Spross explained that there are some significant changes such as the addition of an Adjunct Certification for teachers of very highly skilled programs.

Dr. Salmon suggested that local school systems (LSS) could be encouraged to provide financial incentives for student teachers, as well as not allowing new teachers into challenging schools. Ms. Gable also suggested that the law could state that the principals name be announced prior to a teacher accepting a post at that school.

In response to a question by Dr. Li, Dr. Salmon said that some LSSs choose to add financial incentives for teachers to work in challenging schools. Ms. Gable said that salary negotiations for teachers is a local control issue but that there were some federal grants under the Race To The Top (RTTT) Program that were available for financial incentives.

Dr. Salmon said, “We need to nurture and motivate teacher candidates.”

Ms. Spross said that the ESSA tours were very helpful noting that teacher preparation programs must be linked to certification.

In response to a question by Ms. Sidhu about standards for Adjunct Teachers, Ms. Spross said that this is a difficult issue.

Ms. Gable reviewed recommendations based on feedback from the listening tours to include: 1) induction and mentoring, 2) developing teacher leaders, and 3) professional learning based on teacher and student needs.

She discussed equity issues showing that the least qualified teachers continue to be disproportionately assigned to the most challenged schools across the state and provided preliminary recommendations for promoting equity.

Ms. Gable provided a chart outlining what other states are doing to support educators.

In response to a comment by Ms. Weeldreyer about the lack of accountability measures for teacher preparation programs, Dr. Salmon said that the Maryland Higher Education Commission is working on a new plan that includes some accountability measures. Ms. Weeldreyer said, “There are models out there. I would like to see something in the ESSA Plan on this.”

Dr. Li requested information on what Virginia, the District of Columbia and Pennsylvania are doing in the way of supporting excellent teachers. She noted that teacher salaries need to be increased and asked if the state could offer matching funds to meet this need.

In response to a request by Mr. Smarick, Ms. Gable agreed to provide information on a comparison of teacher salaries in the state to teacher retention rates.

Dr. Guyton said, “We need to differentiate data to show whether teachers are leaving to go into another teaching job or leaving the profession.”

Board members thanked the presenters for a very informative presentation.

Support to Low Performing Schools

Tiara Booker-Dwyer, Director, Office of School, Teacher, and Principal Involvement, provided charts depicting support for Comprehensive (CSI) and Targeted Schools (TSI) and discussed the types of schools in these categories.

In response to a question by Dr. Guyton about adjusted graduation rates, Ms. Gable said, “we want to have a five-year rate and a four-year rate. Maryland does have a five-year goal and may consider a six-year goal.

In response to a concern expressed by President Smarick about CSI schools being identified every three years, Dr. Salmon said, “We should look at the numbers.”

Dr. Williamson explained that it takes time to make improvements. She reported that LSSs are watching their data and they want to catch schools before they fail. She said, “We will be looking at all data, every year.”

Ms. Booker-Dwyer discussed exit criteria and what is required for low-performing schools as follows:

- School improvement resources
- Technical assistance regarding evidence-based interventions
- More rigorous interventions
- Periodic resource review

In response to a question by Ms. Halverson related to understanding underlying causes, Ms. Booker-Dwyer said, “We would establish guidelines on root cause analysis which would include interviewing and viewing what is happening in the schools. It needs to be done by an external person not connected to the school.”

Dr. Salmon said, “The creation of this school improvement area is new. This is very different than what we have done before.”

Ms. Booker-Dwyer said, “It will take time to do the root cause analysis. That has been a problem in the past.”

Ms. Gable said, “There will be a tight timeline.”

Ms. Booker-Dwyer noted that the community should be included and that needs should be prioritized. She provided a graphic depicting the four domains of rapid school improvement. She

discussed the targeted and differentiated support that will be provided to low-performing schools noting that MSDE will provide customized professional learning experiences for school administrators designed to address the unique needs of low-performing schools. She explained that models to support leaders have already been established.

Dr. Salmon said, "We need to tap the collective wisdom of Blue Ribbon Schools and work with Teachers of the Year."

Ms. Booker-Dwyer discussed revised practices for accountability for improvement with more rigorous interventions, noting that there will be a lot more MSDE involvement.

In response to a question by Ms. Halverson about principals being moved from a failing school to another school, Ms. Gable said, "It is a local decision."

Dr. Williamson said, "We are doing a better job on evaluations."

Ms. Booker-Dwyer reported on periodic resource reviews that will take place.

In response to a comment by Dr. Guyton about wrap-around services, Ms. Booker-Dwyer explained that other Divisions are working on this and that those resources can be included in the Plan.

In response to a concern expressed by Dr. Guyton about the need to evaluate wrap-around services, Dr. Salmon said, "We can add that language."

Ms. Sidhu suggested that low-performing schools should have elementary, middle and high school counselors available for students.

Ms. Booker-Dwyer provided charts depicting state examples of support to low-performing schools.

In response to a comment by Ms. Shreeve, Dr. Salmon said, "We can add local boards to the Plan along with superintendents." She agreed to discuss this further at the April Board meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
Secretary/Treasurer

Date: May 23, 2017