

**MINUTES  
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**333 Market Street | 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17126**

**November 9, 2017**

The 341<sup>st</sup> meeting of the State Board of Education was convened on Thursday, November 9, 2017. Public notice of the meeting was made in accordance with the Sunshine Meeting Act of 1986. The meeting was called to order at 8:57 a.m. by Chairman Larry Wittig.

**Attending:**

James Agras <i>(via phone)</i>	Hon. John Eichelberger	Maureen Lally-Green <i>(via phone)</i>
Andrew Ahr	James Grandon	Jonathan Peri
Carol Aichele	Pamela Gunter-Smith	Craig Snider
James Barker	<i>(via phone)</i>	Karen Farmer White
Nicole Carnicella	Kirk Hallett	Larry Wittig
Sandra Dungee Glenn	Shirlann Harmon	

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the September 13, 2017, meeting of the State Board of Education were approved on a **Peri/Dungee Glenn** motion.

**COMMITTEE REPORT**  
**AD HOC COMMITTEE ON HOLOCAUST, GENOCIDE AND HUMAN RIGHTS**  
**VIOLATIONS INSTRUCTION**

Craig Snider, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights Violations Instruction, said the Committee met yesterday and approved a draft report on the manner in which school entities offer instruction in the Holocaust, genocide, and human rights violations. Mr. Snider said the draft report was transmitted to the Board for its consideration. He explained that the Board was required to undertake the study by Act 70. Mr. Snider summarized Act 70 and reviewed the specific data that the Act directed the Board to collect for its study.

Mr. Snider said the Committee designed an electronic survey tool to collect the necessary information from school entities in the Commonwealth and requested that the Department of Education (PDE) provide information about participation in related PDE-sponsored professional development trainings. He explained how the Committee identified a population of 710 school entities for review, and said survey responses were received from 688 of those school entities. Mr. Snider said the survey found that 93% of school entities provided instruction in the Holocaust, genocide and human rights violations during the 2016-2017 school year. He said the data further showed sequential increases in the length of time in related instruction and in the number of school entities that offer related instruction as students' progress through school. Mr. Snider also reviewed the seven recommendations developed by the Committee for the improvement of instruction in the Holocaust, genocide and human rights violations.

Jonathan Peri asked for a review of statistical data from the report for those that were unable to attend the Committee meeting yesterday where this information was presented in detail. Karen Molchanow, Executive Director of the Board, provided a detailed review of the aggregate data presented in the report.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Eugene Luciw, President of the Philadelphia Area Ukrainian Congress Committee of America and member of the Manor College Ukrainian Advisory Board, provided a historical review of the Holodomor genocide in the Ukraine from 1932-1933. He thanked the Board for its work related to Act 70 and reiterated the importance of including instruction in the Holocaust, genocide and human rights violations for all students, including awareness of the atrocities committed during the Holodomor.

Hank Butler, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Jewish Coalition, thanked Sally Flaharty, PDE's Social Studies Advisor, and the Board for their work on the Act 70 Report. Mr. Butler shared that, from the beginning, the focus of efforts related to Act 70 was on effective teaching of the Holocaust, genocide, and human rights violations, to create free resources for teachers, and to train teachers how to use this information effectively and successfully. Mr. Butler stated that no other state has done what Pennsylvania has for Holocaust education this way by focusing on teachers, training and guidelines.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

### **REPORT ON HOLOCAUST, GENOCIDE, AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS INSTRUCTION**

A motion to approve the Report on Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Violations Instruction was made by Craig Snider and seconded by Jonathan Peri.

VOTE: All were in favor as indicated by unanimous voice vote.

### **RESOLUTION HONORING JAY BADAMS**

A motion to approve a resolution honoring Dr. Jay Badams was made by James Barker and seconded by Sandra Dungee Glenn.

VOTE: All were in favor as indicated by unanimous voice vote.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chairman Wittig said that the Washington Township Independent School District (WTISD) recently filed a Petition for Relief with Commonwealth Court. He announced that the Board convened an Executive Session on October 27, 2017, to receive a legal briefing from counsel on the petition and to grant counsel approval to respond on behalf of the Board. Chairman Wittig recognized the Board's counsel, Thomas Howell, for an update on the petition.

Mr. Howell summarized the contents of the petition filed by WTISD. He said he filed an answer to the application for relief that is currently under consideration by Commonwealth Court. Mr. Howell said the Court has scheduled arguments on that matter for December 20 and that a request for a continuance was made due to a personal scheduling issue. In the event that the continuance is not granted, Mr. Howell said another attorney in the Office of General Counsel will represent the Board before the Court.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further items of business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:36 a.m. on a **Snider/Peri** motion.

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Stephanie Jones  
Administrative Assistant