

**MINUTES
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**333 Market Street | 1st Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126**

March 10, 2021

The 361st meeting of the State Board of Education was convened on March 10, 2021. Due to public health measures being implemented across the Commonwealth to address the COVID-19 pandemic, members of the Board and members of the public participated in the meeting virtually via webinar and teleconference. Public notice of the meeting was made in accordance with the Sunshine Meeting Act of 1986. The meeting was called to order at 3:29 p.m. by Chair Karen Farmer White.

Attending:

James Agras	Anne Griffin	Eva Rankin
Hon. Carol Aichele	Pamela Gunter-Smith	Hon. Curt Sonney
Nathan Barrett	Jeffrey Keeling	Taiba Sultana
Jamie Bracey-Green	Hon. Maureen Lally-Green	Karen Farmer White
Nicole Carnicella	Hon. Mark Longietti	Lee Williams
Sandra Dungee Glenn	Jonathan Peri	Hon. Lindsey Williams

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the January 13, 2021, meeting of the Board were approved on a **Lally-Green/Peri** motion.

DISCUSSION ITEM

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Chair Farmer White provided an update on the matter of the Washington Township Independent School District. She said the Board conducted extensive proceedings over a number of years on the application filed by residents of Washington Township seeking to transfer from the Dover Area School District (Dover) to the Northern York County School District (Northern) and, upon consideration of the record, disapproved the transfer. Chair Farmer White said the petitioners appealed the Board's decision and, in June of 2020, Commonwealth Court issued an opinion reversing the Board's order to disapprove the transfer. Ms. Farmer White explained that Dover then appealed the opinion issued by Commonwealth Court reversing the Board's order and that the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania recently declined to hear Dover's appeal. Therefore, Ms. Farmer White said the Board now must take procedural steps necessary to grant the transfer of Washington Township from Dover to Northern as directed by Commonwealth Court. In its opinion, Commonwealth Court set forth that the transfer will take effect in the 2021-2022 school year. Upon the Board's approval of an Order granting the transfer, Ms. Farmer White said the matter will be transferred to the York County Court of Common Pleas to address financial considerations relative to the transfer of territory between districts. Ms. Farmer White then invited discussion among members of the Board on the action she intended to call for on the Washington Township transfer later in the meeting.

DISCUSSION
PETITION OF THE PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

The Honorable Carol Aichele, Chair of the Special Committee on Private School Accreditation, introduced a petition filed by the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools (PAIS) seeking to supplement its existing approved application for accrediting authority with updated evaluation standards for accreditation. Hon. Aichele said PAIS undertook a process to refresh and refine its standards as it had been nearly 20 years since they had been reviewed. She said PAIS engaged diversity, equity and inclusion specialists and financial specialists to review its existing standards and to craft language updates that reflect social, economic, and educational changes in schools and society. Hon. Aichele said the petition would supplement the association's existing evaluative standards for accreditation by updating terminology, updating the rating of accreditation indicators, and requiring schools to submit a strategic plan as part of the accreditation process. She said PAIS intends to begin using the proposed revised indicators as part of the school's self-study process in the fall of 2021. In the interim, the association intends to host orientation sessions to prepare its members on applying the updated indicators. Hon. Aichele invited Gary Niels, Executive Director of PAIS, and Lukie Wells, Director of Accreditation for PAIS, to make remarks on behalf of their association. There was no further discussion among Board members.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ACTION ITEMS

TRANSFER OF THE WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT FROM THE DOVER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT TO THE NORTHERN YORK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

A motion to approve an Order approving the transfer of the Washington Township Independent School District from the Dover Area School District to the Northern York County School District was made by Jonathan Peri and seconded by Lee Williams.

VOTE: The motion to approve the transfer was approved by a roll call vote of 12-0. (YEA: Aichele, Barrett, Bracey-Green, Carnicella, Dungee Glenn, Gunter-Smith, Keeling, Lally-Green, Longietti, Peri, Farmer White and Lee Williams; ABSTAIN: Agras, Hon. Lindsey Williams)

PETITION OF THE PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

A motion to approve the petition of the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools seeking to supplement its existing approved application for accrediting authority with updates to its evaluation standards for accreditation was made by Carol Aichele and seconded by Pamela Gunter-Smith.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Karen Farmer White reported that proposed amendments to Chapter 4 that contain updates to academic standards for science and other technical amendments were submitted to the Office of Attorney General (OAG) for review. She said the package of proposed amendments will be submitted to the House and Senate Education Committees, the Independent Regulatory Review Commission, and the Legislative Reference Bureau to publish for public comment after it is approved by the Attorney General.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:08 p.m. on a **Peri/Lee Williams** motion.



Stephanie Jones
Administrative Assistant