

State Board of Education Business Meeting Minutes

April 10, 2019 at 9:00AM EDT

Indiana Government Center South, Conference Room B

302 W. Washington Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Board Members Present: Mr. Gordon Hendry (Secretary), Dr. Byron Ernest, Dr. Maryanne McMahon, Dr. Steve Yager, Mr. Gregory Gastineau, Mr. Tony Walker, and Mrs. Cari Whicker

Board Members Absent: Mr. BJ Watts (Chair), Dr. David Freitas, Dr. Jennifer McCormick, Ms. Kate Mote (Vice Chair)

I. Call to Order

- a. Board members recited the Pledge of Allegiance

II. Approval of the Agenda

- a. The agenda was approved by a voice vote.

III. Approval of Minutes

- a. The minutes from February 6, 2019 approved by a voice vote.
- b. The minutes from March 6, 2019 approved by a voice vote.

IV. Statement from the Chair

- a. Mr. Hendry, who presided in Mr. Watts' absence, provided a statement regarding the Department of Education's recently released report on foster youth. Mr. Hendry spoke on behalf of the board and the Department in sharing that these organizations take this issue very seriously. The board plans to hear proposals on these issues this summer.

V. Board Members Comments and Reports

- a. Ms. Whicker reported that IREAD assessments went very smoothly.
- b. Mr. Walker echoed Mr. Hendry's sentiments and emphasized the number of homeless children in Indiana. He renewed his request for the Board to create a committee to study student nutrition education.
- c. Dr. Ernest reported back from the National Association of State Boards of Education Conference, which he and several board members attended in Washington D.C. over the past week.

VI. Public Comment

- a. State Senator Erin Houchin spoke about the lack of accommodations for students with reading disabilities on the reading comprehension section of the ILEARN. She had several meetings with the Department and felt that her attempts at advocacy to the Department were not successful, who made the policy decision to disallow text-to-speech due to validity concerns.
 - i. Mr. Hendry asked the Department to give their view on the issue.
 - ii. Dr. John Keller and Dr. Charity Flores, from the Department, shared concerns of validity on the reading comprehension of the exam if text-to-speech were turned out. This policy is not different from prior ISTEP

testing, with the exception of the directional statement, which has been suppressed. Because ILEARN aggregates five different sets of exams, the DOE decided to suppress this statement for logistical reasons.

- iii. Ms. Whicker agreed that the instructions should be read in the way that they have been in the past.
 - iv. Mr. Gastineau shared that he hopes the DOE takes a hard look and this issue so that the success of students can be put first.
 - v. Senator Houchin spoke again, reiterating that she feels ILEARN is in violation of the ADA, and that ISTEP was also in violation.
 - vi. Ms. Whicker shared that the DOE did not send a directive for School Corporations to change IEPs. Sen. Houchin agreed that there was no directive, but there was a lack of communication from the DOE on this issue.
 - vii. Dr. Ernest urged the TAC to meet and consider this issue.
 - viii. Dr. Flores shared that any changes to this year's exam would come with a significant risk of delay of test administration.
- b. Cheryl Clemmons of Decoding Dyslexia shared that her organization believes that denial of accommodations is extremely alarming, and that an outside organization should evaluate ILEARN to ensure the test is in compliance with the ADA.
- i. Dr. Ernest asked Ms. Clemmons what she thought should be done. Ms. Clemmons responded that she believes ILEARN is in violation of the ADA.
- c. Donna Walker, the Director of the Education Liaison Program at Child Advocates, shared that her organization aided 1,182 students over the last year to develop positive educational plans. Over the past year, the organization has learned the importance of including social and emotional growth plans with education plans. Students in the foster care system need safety and stability.
- d. Dr. Demetrees Hutchins, an institutional education researcher at Indiana University, felt that stakeholders must be included in discussions regarding policy proposals. She also stressed that children experiencing homelessness and foster youth should not be lumped into a homogeneous group. She thought that databases between the DOE and DCS should be reconciled to provide a more accurate baseline.
- e. Brent Kent, executive director of Indiana Non-Profit Connected by 25, had questions about how the data for the report was collected. Mr. Kent shared that his organization is a ready and willing partner.

VII. Consent Agenda – Consent agenda approved unanimously by voice vote.

- a. **Initiation of Rulemaking IC 20-31-8-4.5: Alternative Accountability**
- b. **Homeless and Foster Youth Educational Outcomes Report**
- c. **Core 40 Science Requirement Recommendations**
- d. **Freeway Contract Amendment – Mooresville Christian Academy**
- e. **Freeway Waiver – Crown Point Christian School**
- f. **Elementary/Middle Course Titles and Descriptions**
- g. **Common School Fund Applications**
- h. **Alternative College and Career Planning Tool**
- i. **Approval – Dr. Byron Ernest to Run as Chair-elect of NASBE**

- j. **Delaware Christian Academy**
 - k. **Teacher Preparation Programs**
 - i. **Indiana Wesleyan – Fine Arts: Theater**
 - ii. **University of St. Francis – School Psychologist**
 - iii. **Relay – Transition to Teaching**
 - iv. **University of Indianapolis – Building Level Administration**
 - v. **Noble Education Initiative (NEI) – Transition to Teaching** – Dr. Ernest recused himself.
- VIII. New Business – Action**
- a. **Intervention – Academy for Innovative Studies**
 - i. Katie Minihan, a representative for the school, updated the Board on the progress of the Academy.
 - 1. Mr. Walker commended Ms. Manahan on the school’s work.
 - ii. Approved unanimously.
 - b. **A-F Appeals**
 - i. **Independence Academy – Recommended for denial**
 - 1. John Elcesser, director of the Indiana Non-Public School Association spoke in support of the Independence Academy’s request for a null grade. He asked that the school not be penalized for the Board’s inability to develop an alternative model for accountability.
 - 2. Marissa Gill, Director at the Independence Academy, echoed Mr. Elcesser’s sentiments. She emphasized that she holds her students to high standards, and that she is not requesting lesser expectations, but different expectations.
 - 3. Ms. Julie Bert, parent of an Independence Academy student, shared her support for the school given her daughter’s social, emotional, and academic growth.
 - 4. Chad Ranney, Deputy Counsel for the SBOE, shared that a null grade is used for smaller schools than Independence Academy, and therefore a null grade would not be appropriate.
 - 5. Ms. Whicker cautioned the Board against setting a precedent for awarding a null grade for a school who does not fall under the size requirements of the accountability system.
 - 6. The vote failed for lack of majority, the issue was moved to the next SBOE meeting on May 10, 2019.
 - ii. **Oakland High School – Recommended for denial.**
 - 1. Motion to deny appeal passed unanimously.
 - iii. **George M. Riddle Elementary School – Recommended for denial.**
 - 1. Motion to deny appeal passed unanimously.
 - iv. **Rochester Community Middle School – Recommended for denial.**
 - 1. Motion to deny appeal passed unanimously.
 - c. **Choice School Scholarship Waivers**
 - i. **Indiana Academy – Recommended for Approval (starts at 2:22)**
 - 1. Motion to grant waiver approved unanimously.
 - ii. **Trinity Christian School – Recommended for denial**

1. Motion to deny waiver granted unanimously

d. IPS Transformation Zone Update

- i. Brynn Kardash, Executive Director of School Supervision, presented on behalf of IPS' nine transformation zone schools. Five of six grade levels performed "above projected" on NWEA Growth for Reading, and two of six performed "above projected" on NWEA Growth for Math. The Zone has implemented Instructional Rounds including school walk-throughs with principals and instructional coaches.

IX. Adjournment