Opening, Call to Order, Roll Call, Approval of Agenda

The April 19, 2018 meeting of the State Board of Education/State Board for Vocational Education was called to order at 5:08 p.m. by President Dennis L. Loftus. The following members of the State Board were present: Dr. Dennis Loftus, President; Nina-Lou Bunting, Vice President; Barbara Rutt; Wali Rushdan II; Dr. Audrey Noble; and Liane Sorenson. Secretary of Education Dr. Susan S. Bunting was present to serve as the Executive Secretary for the State Board, and the Board’s Executive Director, Donna Johnson, also was present.

The Board’s Agenda was posted on April 10; a motion was made by Mrs. Sorenson, and seconded by Mrs. Rutt, to approve the agenda. The motion passed by voice vote.

A revision of the minutes of the State Board’s regular meeting of March 15, 2018 was made by Mr. Rushdan to change his name to “Wali Rushdan II” as to not be confused with his father. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mrs. Bunting and seconded by Mr. Rushdan. It passed unanimously by voice vote.

Board member Reports, Executive Director Update, Literacy Campaign, and Secretary’s Report

Updates were also provided on involvement with DSBA, upcoming NASBE events and resources, and the P-20 Council. Dr. Loftus shared the events surrounding the Campus Compact Mid-Atlantic Launch at University of Delaware.

Ms. Johnson updated the Board on the work related to the Literacy Campaign, including one item that would be coming before the Board for action, and that was directly aligned with its policy briefs connected to the campaign focus areas. This was her last update as Executive Director.

Secretary Bunting provided a comprehensive report to the Board which included details about the second meeting of the newly created Teacher Advisory Council, which was attended by 27 teachers from 16 districts and 3 charter schools. SBE member Nina Lou Bunting attended the meeting as the representative of the Board. Dr. Bunting also provided details about her participation in the Annual Teacher of the Year Forum, which was attended by over 40 Educators, legislators, and community partners. Her other notable engagements included the recognition of April as the Month of the Military Child, participation in the Campus Compact Mid-Atlantic launch, continued visits at schools throughout the state and invite to a number of early child education centers, and the K-12 schools.

Graduation and Dropout Report Presentation, and Charter School Update

The Board recognized Courtney Fox as the Charter School Impact Leader of the Year. Dr. Loftus presented The Order of Excellence to their Executive Director, Donna Johnson, for seven years of service and wished her well in her new position in DC.

The Department provided additional information following the prior month’s presentation of the annual graduation and dropout rate report which are available online.
The Board took action on the major modification for Academia Antonio Alonso and the major modification for Delaware Design Lab High School. Both modifications were approved unanimously by voice vote.

The Board also assented to the Secretary’s approval of a new charter school, Sussex Montessori. The school was approved with the following conditions:

1. Meet 80% enrollment by May 1, 2019, including all documentation required to be properly accounted for in the Unit Count;
2. Acquire a facility in accordance with 14 Del. Code § 511 (n);
3. Meet other deadlines specifically defined in statute or regulation.

Should the charter fail to meet other pre-opening conditions, not defined above, as outlined by the Charter School Office, the charter may be placed on formal review.

Professional Standards Board, Forgiveness of Days

The Professional Standards Board presented Regulation 1521 Elementary Teacher for final approval. The regulation was approved unanimously by voice vote.

PSB Executive Director Chris Kenton then presented the following regulations for discussion: Regulation 1504 Certificate of Eligibility, Regulation 1510 Issuance of Initial License, 1511 Issuance and Renewal of Continuing License, and 1565 World Language Teacher were all approved for publication and will be brought before the Board next month for discussion. These regulations will be out for public comment during the entire month of April.

The Secretary recommended the “forgiveness” of one snow day, although the Board in recent years hasn’t granted any. She invited Dr. Mark Dufendach, Superintendent from Polytech, to present the views of the Chief School Officers regarding their submitted request submitted for the forgiveness of instructional days/hours for students and teacher days/hours, lost during “snow days”. After a robust discussion the board unanimously approved the request for the forgiveness of a single day.

Mrs. Kendall Masett signed up for public comment to thank Ms. Johnson for her time with the SBE.

Since there was no further business, a motion was made by Mrs. Bunting to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rushdan and carried unanimously by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan S. Bunting, Ed.D.
Executive Secretary and
Secretary of Education