



Conference Call
Vermont Agency of Education
Room 419
219 North Main Street
Barre, VT 05641

March 28, 2018

*Strategic Goals: (1) Ensure that Vermont's public education system operates within the framework of high expectations for every learner and ensure that there is equity in opportunity for all.
(2) Ensure that the public education system is stable, efficient, and responsive to changes and ever-changing population needs, economic and 21st century issues.*

**State Board of Education
Special Legislative Subcommittee Conference Call Meeting
Draft Minutes**

Present:

State Board of Education Legislative Subcommittee Members: Peter Peltz, William Mathis, Krista Huling, John Carroll.

Agency of Education (AOE): Maureen Gaidys

Others: None.

Item A: Call to Order

Chair Peltz called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

Item B: Sign In for Guests/Callers

No guests were present.

Item C: Amendments to Agenda

There were no amendments to the agenda.

D: Approve March 20, 2018 Draft Minutes

Carroll moved to approve the March 20 meeting minutes; Mathis seconded. The vote passed and the minutes were approved.

Item E: Update on Recent Testimony

Huling asked Peltz and Mathis to update on testimony to Senate Education committee last week. Peltz shared that a lot has changed since then. They complemented the legislation and made references to having appropriate staff. Huling asked if the position statement was brought forward on the setting of FY25. Mathis said that there were three positions and that Secretary Holcombe had said this was not enough to do the job. Huling asked again if the statement was shared. Mathis said that Peltz read the statement to the committee. Mathis said the tone was good, if not excellent. Peltz added that there were advocates of special needs students and they were critical of the bill. There was a plug for the census-based model. There was discussion on funding for the weighting study and staff.

Mathis had the chance to speak with both Baruth and Sharpe. He said that Sharpe was pushing to have the Board be the agency that determines the base amount. Peltz concurred that there was not any real feedback on that issue. Peltz asked if there were any further questions and asked if all were up to date on what the Senate Education committee had done with this bill since Friday. Peltz shared that they want to postpone this bill for a year and that they are concerned about the extraordinary costs of special education. Huling confirmed that it has not yet crossed over and asked if there was additional testimony scheduled. Mathis said he did not think any more testimony would be taken until the bill crossed over. Mathis said the President Pro Tem wants a bill; his impression is that this bill is being fast-tracked. Peltz said it crossed from the House to the Senate on March 22, 2018. Peltz read an article from VT Digger dated March 27, 2018 that quoted Baruth. There was discussion on how to interpret this article and whether the bill or its implementation is being stalled.

Item F: Strategizing for Upcoming Testimony

Huling asked if there were any updates needed at the next Board meeting so that these could be incorporated into the agenda. Huling shared that one of her students would be testifying on the civics test bill. Peltz did not see anything on the radar that would need a statement from the Board. Mathis said that he had not received legislative reports/updates from the education agencies (VSBA). Huling noted that there was no Board statement on the education funding system (H.911) and asked if the subcommittee wanted to comment or wait. There was discussion on waiting until this bill crossed over, that H.911 might be stalled, that it had passed and crossed over, continuing to wait, the need for balance in the funding base, that Senate Finance is taking that bill up today, that Campbell and Griffin were testifying, that this is a wide-ranging bill on fiscal policy and not really an education bill, being cautious about fiscal policy since it is not the area of expertise for the Board, not spreading the Board too thin, that the statement on cost-containment alludes to this, and the importance of voters understanding and being able to navigate the system. Huling suggested that we leave it with the cost-containment statement and wait to see if the Board is asked to testify.

Item G: Other

Huling shared that in regard to Act 46, the Board is in a good position. There have been two meetings added Board meetings in June and October. Huling said that both Education Committee Chairs do not wish to add or delete anything from Act 46. Huling has received several inquiries regarding Act 46 and that the State House was busy yesterday with whether or not the schedule for Act 46 should change. Carroll praised Huling's statement to the media and supported not changing anything with respect to Act 46.

Huling suggested keeping eyes on what ends up in the Miscellaneous Education Bill as that can be unpredictable. She warned that there might be a holding pattern until the end, when it might pick up again. Carroll offered that there is no opportunity for giving testimony in a committee of conference. There was discussion on asking Jones to sit in on certain committees and/or floor discussion and provide a current daily update on specific issues, when needed. Huling said she would ask about this. Peltz confirmed that H.911 and H.897 were the two bills that need to be monitored. Huling added that the bill on civics and the ethnic studies bill should be watched, as well. Mathis asked about the healthcare/teachers' health insurance bill. Huling said they are taking a lot of testimony on the health benefits for UVM.

Mathis suggested that things are going to get rough quick for the Board with a Secretary search, Legislature, and Act 46. Huling commented on how the volume of work for the Board has increased over the years and that the Board needs to be prepared to always be busy. Peltz commented that the fact that the Board is busy is a credit to the Board.

Gaidys confirmed the next legislative subcommittee meeting for Wednesday, April 4 at 2:00 p.m.

Item H: Adjourn

Carroll moved to adjourn; Mathis seconded. The vote to adjourn was unanimous. The meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Minutes recorded and prepared by Maureen Gaidys.

DRAFT