



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

February 26, 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, Connor Solimano.

**Agency of Education (AOE):** Haley Jones, Maureen Gaidys

**Others:** None.

**Item A: Call to Order**

Chair Peltz called the meeting to order at 12:02p.m.

**Item C: Amendments to Agenda**

There were no amendments to the agenda.

**D: Approve February 7, 2018 Draft Minutes**

Huling moved to accept the minutes; Mathis seconded. The vote was unanimous and the minutes were approved.

**Item B: Sign In for Guests/Callers**

Mathis asked for a roll call. Peltz called a roll call. No guests were present.

**Item E: Discuss/Prepare Testimony for House Education Committee on H.794**

Huling said she requested this meeting because she was asked to testify on H.794 and because it was only mentioned at the last Board meeting, and not discussed, she wanted to convene the subcommittee. Huling asked if she had the most recent version of the bill. Peltz and Mathis discussed that 3.1 is the most recent version, provided by Jones at the end of last week. Gaidys requested that Jones send the most recent version to this group. Mathis said having an outside organization implement a bill is improper procedure and there is no reference to the Board, who has the authority over this. Huling shared that she has spoken with Deputy Secretary Fowler and there was discussion on this bill being based off a bill in Oregon. VSBA testified that they cannot be compelled by the Legislature to create something. The State Board is the body who has authority to adopt standards. Huling would like to bring that up tomorrow and reference EQS, which addresses curriculum

content, per 16 V.S.A. § 261. Huling has concerns with this bill and can see it fit in under Global Citizenship or Transferable Skills/Problem Solving/Communication. Huling is not sure about adopting these standards; the biggest concern is staffing/resources for implementation. Much of this bill discusses implicit bias. AOE will testify that if this passes, \$150K is needed for implementation; Huling said she thought this money might be better spent on additional teacher training. Huling expressed concern with the timeline of 18 months. Mathis agreed with Huling's concerns and added that it distracts the work, lists an improper agency, the cost is big and there is question about what will be accomplished. Peltz asked if everyone agrees this is needed, specifically at this finely-defined level.

Huling asked Solimano for a student perspective, as Montpelier students will be testifying on this tomorrow. Solimano expressed agreement with the goals of the bill and what it is trying to accomplish, but shared concerns that this might be another piece of legislation that complicates things. He asked if other schools are already doing this. He would like to know what these changes would look like in a school system. Solimano also said he was not sure how much the Board should get into micro-managing what is taught in schools; he expressed concern over the level of specificity and over this being mandated. Solimano spoke about his school's Global Issues Network (GIN) conference. Huling asked to be advised of this conference. Peltz asked about textbooks and standardized material. Mathis suggested there would be some expenditure, that is inescapable.

Huling spoke of her two hats, Board chair and educator and that perhaps she should testify separately under each hat. She spoke about resources for teachers and their access to these. She suggested having a committee to identify resources, as a better option. Mathis and Peltz agreed that Huling's two roles were compatible. Peltz asked about national standards; Mathis suggested that we not discuss this. Huling feels that if we have standards, she wants to make sure that we have resources for teachers.

There was discussion on where this bill came from and if it has legs, other states with more robust state agencies that have done crosswalks on this, needing to do our own work or recycle Oregon's work, and that Deputy Secretary Fowler will be asking for funding for implementation. Peltz asked if Huling would support this bill. Huling said she thought from what the committee was saying, she would support the premise of the bill, but indicate that the Board was unsure that it is the best use of resources. Mathis suggested not going that far, and instead say that the Board has not discussed this, but that the Board has the following issues that it hopes will be addressed. There was discussion on the Legislature controlling curriculum, statewide standards and local curriculum, the Board's role, reminding the Legislature of the process of adopting standards and curriculum, EQS, replacing vital results, positions lost at the AOE, supporting the mission of the bill and the importance of making our schools as equitable as possible, addressing equity through other avenues, the opiate crisis, and addressing this in federal law. Huling shared that she and Fowler would be testifying together on Tuesday.

#### **Item F: Legislative Update – Haley Jones**

Peltz asked if version 3.1 had been updated. Jones said there were no changes. Mace provided edits on Thursday, but the bill version has not yet been updated. Mathis asked if Mace had testified that

this was not the proper thing for her organization; Jones replied yes. Mathis asked if Jones heard Mace's testimony; Jones was not present for Mace's testimony.

Jones said draft 17 of the special education funding bill was voted out of the House Education committee and is moving into House Appropriations; Holcombe and Byrne will testify on it this week. Regarding PreK, the Senate Education committee is taking a lot of testimony on this and putting this into their Miscellaneous Education bill. The Senate Education committee does not like the recommendation of having a licensed teacher on site for the 10 hours and will be taking this part out. Regarding the two trauma bills, the one in Senate originated in the Health and Human Services committee and this has the most legs and has moved to Senate Finance. The House bill was introduced by Representatives Webb and Mrowicki and that bill speaks to toxic stress in educational settings and has only been introduced. AOE is watching this as it could end up including school safety components. Mathis asked for an update on the education funding formula bill. Jones did not attend, but reported that it is still in the House Ways and Means committee. Brad James is working with JFO to stay informed; Jones will share James' update with this subcommittee. Peltz heard that Representative Ancel is slowing this down. On S.229, Molly Bachman testified last week with Krista and the Senate Education committee plans to vote this out soon; this will be included in the weekly legislative update. Mathis asked if they resolved the special education piece; Jones said testimony on this was included in her update from last week. Peltz asked if there was any more testimony; Jones said there was a letter from Mill Moore, but nothing else at present. For H.794, Huling and Fowler will be testifying on this. Huling expressed concern with the committee as proposed as it does not have any educators or curriculum coordinators on it or anyone with school experience. Huling asked if the subcommittee was ok with her bringing this up as a concern. The subcommittee supported this.

#### **Item G: Next Steps - Peltz**

Peltz asked for thoughts on the last Board meeting, specifically the AGS issues.

#### **Item H: Other**

Huling shared that regarding the State Plan, the Legislature is really getting involved and having local legislators sign off on Section 9 plans. Huling said the intent of the legislation was to remove politics from this exercise. She cautioned the Board to give these proposals fresh eyes and a clean shot. Peltz asked who was receiving this correspondence. Huling and Mathis confirmed; Mathis is not opening/reading his as he feels it is improper. Huling asked if this should be discussed with the Legislature. There was discussion on asking the Legislature to approve the State Plan. Mathis would like to stop the letter lobby and suggested that Huling speak with Sharpe about this. There was discussion on speaking with Sharpe and Baruth and/or go to Johnson and Ashe. Mathis and Peltz concurred that she should speak with the committee chairs. Huling cautioned the subcommittee to not to engage in any of the lobbying efforts. Mathis would like to preempt this, starting with a conversation with the committee chairs.

#### **Item I: Adjourn**

Mathis moved to adjourn; Huling seconded. The vote to adjourn was unanimous. The meeting adjourned at 1:03 p.m.

Minutes recorded and prepared by Maureen Gaidys.