

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Legislation and Bylaws Committee

October 2, 2008
7:30 a.m.
State Office Building
Hartford, CT

MINUTES

Committee Members Present

Beverly Bobroske, Janet Finneran and Jay Voss

SBE Student Members Present

Christine Larson and Brandt Smallwood

Staff Present

Mark McQuillan, Karen Flanagan, Katherine Nicoletti and Carol Basile

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 a.m.

Mrs. Bobroske thanked the committee and staff for coming to such an early morning meeting and promised that it would be the last one scheduled so early.

Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes from the September 15, 2008, meeting were approved with no changes.

Minutes of July 2, 2008, Meeting

A question was raised about a sentence in the minutes: "The Commissioner would like to have a more streamlined and efficient process in order to produce a complete and comprehensive package of legislative proposals" and whether this was done. The Commissioner explained that the process to develop the legislative package was streamlined. Mrs. Nicoletti explained that unlike previous years, both the budget and non-budget changes are combined into one package.

Discussion of 2009 Legislative Proposals

Mrs. Nicoletti reviewed the revised legislative package and indicated the changes that had been made since the committee last reviewed the document.

Interdistrict Magnet Schools

The Commissioner supported the suspension of new magnet school approvals. He will address this issue in his report to the State Board.

School Accountability

The Commissioner was asked about the school improvement plans, and he noted that he would like to have them simplified in the future.

Mrs. Nicoletti informed the committee that she was not sure if the following proposal is workable:

- Allocate a portion of the funding as an administrative set aside so that the Department of Education is able to oversee, administer and monitor the grants and the implementation of the training that will take place.

Early Reading Success Grant Program

The Commissioner would like family literacy to be a part of the Early Reading Success initiative.

Educator Certification

Mrs. Nicoletti noted that Nancy Pugliese, Chief of the Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification, will give a report to the State Board on the Revised Certification Regulations. She explained that these regulations are dependent upon the statute changes in the Department's legislative package.

The committee asked Mrs. Nicoletti to clarify the following proposal to make it clear what is being proposed with respect to the comprehensive special education endorsement:

- Specify that on and after July 1, 2014, the State Board of Education will no longer issue endorsements for comprehensive special education.

There was much discussion on the proposal to increase the number of CEUs from 90 to 150. The committee felt there would not be enough support for this change and therefore it might affect the other certification proposals. They unanimously agreed that the following proposal should be removed from the legislative package and that the current 90 CEU requirement remain. The Commissioner will inform Mrs. Pugliese of this change, so she can include it in her report.

- Require that on and after July 1, 2014, to continue a professional educator certificate the individual must have 150 hours of CEUs every five years. Currently, the individual must have not less than 90 hours.

Since the Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) program no longer exists, the committee asked that the references to BEST in the following proposal be removed:

- Currently, educators who serve in non-public schools are able to obtain a professional educator certificate without having to complete a planned program, the beginning educator support and training (BEST) program, CEUs, or 30 credits of coursework. Under this proposal, they would still be eligible for a provisional educator certificate without having completed a planned program or BEST, but they would not be eligible for a professional educator certificate.

For clarification purposes, the committee requested that the following proposal be redrafted and that both paragraphs be combined into one:

- Effective July 1, 2014, eliminate the specified subject areas for CEUs and require CEUs in areas specified by the Department of Education, and approved by the State Board of Education, based on the priorities and needs of students.
Specify that the determination of the specific professional development activities to be made available by boards of education shall be in accordance with State Board of Education priorities and not be solely up to the board of education with the advice and assistance of the teachers they employ. This will allow the State Board to review and establish professional development priorities instead of the current CEU requirements in statutes which are not updated based on changes and needs of students and teachers.
- Require boards of education every five years to submit to the Department of Education copies of their local teacher evaluation and professional development plans for review and approval. This will provide the Department the opportunity to ensure that all districts meet State Board of Education guidelines for teacher evaluation and professional development.

The committee requested that the following paragraph be removed as a technical change:

Clarify and strengthen certification denial and revocation procedures, mandate certain reporting by educators and school officials while protecting them from liability for reporting educators who may present risk to students.

The issue of middle school certification was discussed. The Commissioner suggested that this issue be raised during the State Board meeting.

Mrs. Nicoletti reported that the Department would like to add a proposal regarding the granting of credits for on-line coursework.

Other

The Commissioner indicated that in mid-October he would like to convene a joint meeting of the Legislation and Bylaws Committee and the Audit and Finance Committee, before the legislative package goes to the State Board for approval. Since budget cuts need to be made, the purpose of this meeting would be to get a sense from both committees as to what cuts are appropriate. He will ask his secretary to call members and get a date for this meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Basile