



**Minutes  
State Board of Education  
August 6, 2015**

Charles C. Edwards, Jr.  
President  
Des Moines

Michael L. Knedler  
Vice President  
Council Bluffs

Brooke Axiotis  
Des Moines

Michael Bearden  
Gladbrook

Diane Crookham-Johnson  
Oskaloosa

Angela English  
Dyersville

Rosie Hussey  
Clear Lake

Mike May  
Spirit Lake

Mary Ellen Miller  
Mason City and Wayne County

Hannah Rens  
Student Member  
Sioux City

Ryan M. Wise  
Director and  
Executive Officer

The State Board of Education meeting was held on Thursday, August 6, 2015, in the State Board Room, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa. The following State Board members were present: Charlie Edwards, Mike Knedler, Angela English, Rosie Hussey, Mike May, Brooke Axiotis, Mary Ellen Miller, Hannah Rens, and Diane Crookham-Johnson (via telephone). Iowa Department of Education staff members present were: Ryan Wise, Staci Hupp, Jeff Berger, David Tilly, Nicole Proesch, Shan Seivert, Kent Farver, Amy Williamson, Phil Wise, Carol Richardson, Larry Bice, Thomas Mayes, Erika Cook, Dianne Chadwick, Brad Niebling, Janet Boyd, Isbelia Arzola, and Jody Crane. Also in attendance were: Alan Greiner, Iowa High School Music Association; Jodi Grover; Maria Filippone, Climate Parents; Ellie Filippone, Students of Iowa; Jake Parizek, Data Recognition Corp; Richard Lee, WHO Radio; Kris Kilibarda, Grandview University; Jim Pifer, Southeast Polk Community School District; Tom O'Donnell; Joan Kindle and Laurie Hanson, Eastern Iowa Community Colleges; Karen Woltman; M.J. Dolan, Iowa Association of Community College Trustees; Jeff Moorman; Frank Hilton; Michele Crystal; Deborah Reed and Sara McInerny, Iowa Reading Research Center; Mackenzie Ryan, Des Moines Register; Susan Lagos Lavenz, Iowa Association of Colleges for Teacher Education/University of Iowa; Dave Epley, House Democratic Caucus; Leslie Beck; Roger Maxwell; Heather Stancil; Phil Jeneary, Iowa Association of School Boards; Jane Schmidt, Iowa Teacher of the Year (2014); Clemencia Spizzirri, Iowa Teacher of the Year (2015); Rob Dillard, Iowa Public Radio; and Denise Crawford, Iowa State University.

### **STATE BOARD BUSINESS MEETING**

Charlie Edwards, President, State Board of Education (Board), called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

The agenda was amended by switching the order of item 5 (Assessment Update and Discussion) and item 6 (Science Standards Review).

It was moved by Mike Knedler and seconded by Rosie Hussey that the agenda be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

## **COMMUNICATION**

### **Public Comment**

Maria Filippone, Climate Parents, provided public comment encouraging the Board to adopt the Next Generation Science Standards. She presented a petition from Climate Parents supporting the adoption as well.

Ellie Filippone provided public comment in support of the Next Generation Science Standards. She specifically addressed climate change.

Heather Stancil provided public comment opposing the Next Generation Science Standards. She expressed concern with the lack of knowledge base/expertise on the Science Standards Review Team. She talked about the difference between science and engineering. She encouraged soliciting scientists to get their objective opinion on the standards.

Michele Crystal provided public comment opposing the Smarter Balanced Assessments. She outlined four reasons why not to select the Smarter Balanced Assessments over the Iowa Assessments.

Roger Maxwell provided public comment supporting the decision *In re Religious Music (New Hampton Community School District)*.

Written comments were distributed to the Board from the Center for Law and Religious Freedom supporting the decision *In re Religious Music (New Hampton Community School District)*.

Written comments were also distributed to the Board from Alan Greiner regarding *In re Religious Music (New Hampton Community School District)*.

### **Director's Report**

Board members welcomed and congratulated Ryan Wise as the new director of the Iowa Department of Education (Department). Wise shared information regarding the message that he has been presenting both internally and externally.

A PowerPoint was presented that addressed:

- Purpose
- Mission and Vision
- Role of the Department
- Director Priorities
- Other Key Issues
- Positively Impacting a PK-12 System

Wise indicated that he has been meeting with Department managers and work teams and is in the process of scheduling meetings with external organizations, school districts, and community colleges.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Rosie Hussey made a motion and Angela English seconded to approve the consent agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

There was a question about whether any of Iowa's online programs are being taken out of the state.

## **BOARD ACTION/DISCUSSION AGENDA**

### **Science Standards Review**

Mike Knedler indicated that the Board has a long history of advocating for high-quality standards for all Iowa students. The establishment of the science standards has been a Board priority. The purpose of this session was for the Board to hear and discuss the findings of the Science Standards Review Team that was established by Governor Branstad's Executive Order 83.

David Tilly, Deputy Director, introduced Erika Cook who is the new chief in the Bureau of Standards and Curriculum.

Cook introduced two members of the Science Standards Review Team: Kris Kilibarda, Director, Jacobson Institute, Grandview University; and Jim Pifer, Science Coordinator, Southeast Polk Community School District.

A PowerPoint was presented that addressed the following:

- Purpose of the Standards Review Process
- Participants
- Previous Presentation to the Board
- Process and Outcomes
- Report Overview
  - Cook distributed a document that contained an omission from the Science Standards Review Team Report 2015. Specifically, HS-LS1 (page 62).
- Recommendation to the Board:
  - We (Science Standards Review Team) recommend the Next Generation Science Standards performance expectations be adopted as Iowa's science standards, grade specific for grades K-8 and grade span for grades 9-12, acknowledging the importance of integrating the disciplinary core ideas, cross-cutting concepts, and science and engineering practices in achieving these standards. The performance expectations are statements of what students should be able to do to demonstrate their learning. They represent big ideas that combine content from the disciplinary core ideas, cross-

cutting concepts, and science and engineering practices portions of the Next Generation Science Standards.

Kilibarda and Pifer talked about why the standards should be adopted, what this would mean for the students of Iowa, and what will look different if the standards are adopted.

The PowerPoint presentation continued and addressed:

- Voices from the Review Team
  - Guiding Principles for Standards Review
  - The Composition and Rigor of the Standards
  - Progression of Standards K-12
  - Exciting Shifts for Science Instruction

There was discussion regarding evolution and global warming, the difference in science and engineering practices, how long it will take for teachers to be prepared for this new method of teaching and how institutions are preparing teachers, and how computer science fits into the standards.

**Motion:** Mike Knedler made a motion and Rosie Hussey seconded that the State Board adopt the Iowa Science Standards, as presented by the Science Standards Review Team's report dated August 6, 2015, and direct the Department to develop guidance on implementation of the standards.

Knedler complimented the Science Standards Review Team and the Department staff for their work with the review team. He reported that he had a science instructor review the standards. The instructor had two concerns that Knedler requested Department staff focus on. The concerns dealt with the heavy emphasis on engineering and the assurance that there are assessments that assess the standards.

**Vote:** The motion carried unanimously.

### **Assessment Update and Discussion**

Mary Ellen Miller shared background information relating to how the Assessment Task Force arrived at its recommendation for a new accountability assessment tool for Iowa.

She referenced House File 215, signed by Governor Branstad, that began the process on several elements of education reform in Iowa. Two early elements of the reform package are currently underway - the early literacy initiative and the Teacher Leadership and Compensation System. A third part of the reform package called for rigorous content education standards. Several years ago, the Board approved updated math and literacy standards which are now in place and the science standards were approved at this Board meeting. The fourth piece of the Governor's reform package was to put in place an accountability system that was aligned to those standards.

Miller talked about the membership and work of the 21-member Assessment Task Force. The task force submitted their final recommendation to the Legislature at the end of

2014. The Board endorsed the task force's recommendations at the January 2015 meeting and forwarded that concurrence to the General Assembly.

David Tilly and Nicole Proesch, Legal Counsel, Office of the Director, talked about next steps. Tilly indicated that the Iowa Code directs the Board to adopt administrative rules related to assessment in the state of Iowa. Proesch described the rules promulgation process.

Tilly reminded the Board that Iowa schools are required to implement the new assessment in the spring of the 2017 school year.

**Motion:** Mary Ellen Miller made a motion and Mike Knedler seconded that the State Board direct the Iowa Department of Education to draft administrative rules, to become effective for the 2016-2017 school year, implementing recommendation 1 contained in the Iowa Assessment Task Force's report of December 31, 2014, and to reconvene the Assessment Task Force to recommend a science assessment for Iowa.

The Iowa Assessment Task Force Recommendation 1 reads:  
*Through a vote of 20 to 1, the Task Force recommends the Smarter Balanced Assessments as the statewide assessment of student progress on a set of core academic indicators in mathematics and reading.*

There was discussion regarding the cost of implementing a new assessment and the Board's role in advocating funds from the Legislature to help school districts to offset these costs, possible options for school districts in administering the new assessment, and the importance of communicating with legislators.

**Vote:** The motion carried unanimously.

### **Rules: Chapter 15 - Use of Online Learning and Telecommunications for Instruction by Schools (Notice)**

Nicole Proesch and Amy Williamson, Chief, Bureau of School Improvement, presented the 281 Iowa Administrative Code chapter 15 rules which outline the use of online learning and telecommunications for instruction by schools. The amendment to this chapter is to reflect legislative changes pursuant to Senate File 510, section 99, enacted by the 86<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in 2015, which amended Iowa Code section 256.7, subsection 32, paragraph c, to provide exceptions to prior enrollment limitations and to provide additional reporting requirements for the school districts.

**Motion:** Angela English made a motion and Mike May seconded that the State Board give public notice of its intent to amend Chapter 15.

**Vote:** The motion carried unanimously.

***In re Religious Music (New Hampton Community School District)***

Nicole Proesch, Designated Administrative Law Judge, presented *In re Religious Music (New Hampton Community School District)*. Under Iowa Code section 290.1, the Board has authority to hear appeals from local school boards. She recommended that the Board approve the proposed decision affirming the decision of the local board of directors of the New Hampton Community School District to continue its current practices of the school choir performing on a Church Tour, singing religious songs at the Winter Music Festival, and performing “In This Very Room” at the final Coffeehouse Concert.

The Appellants appealed the decision of the New Hampton Community School District Board to continue its current practices of the school choir performing on a Church Tour, singing religious songs at the Winter Music Festival, and performing “In This Very Room” at the final Coffeehouse Concert. The Appellants argued that these practices convey a preference for Christianity and as such violate the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. In reviewing governmental action for a violation of the Establishment Clause, a three-prong test set out in *Lemon v. Kurtzman*, 403 U.S. 602, 612-613 (1971), and its progeny were applied. After applying these prongs to the facts and circumstances in this case, it was found that the district had correctly applied the Establishment Clause jurisprudence to the facts and as such the district has not abused its discretion in choosing to continue its current practices.

Proesch reminded the Board of their authority and recommended that it affirm the decision of the local board.

There was discussion regarding what would constitute a preference for Christianity; the district’s legal counsel’s advice stating that the action was questionable, but not illegal; how the Board’s personal judgement can’t substitute the action of the local school district; the district’s appointment of a diversity committee; the district’s reasonable and thoughtfulness in trying to find the balance of finding places to perform in a public forum; the Board’s responsibility and latitude; legal options for the family if the Board approves the recommendation; the need for choral song selections to be more inclusive; personal conflict with the laws and rules that the Board must abide by; and potential positive outcomes as a result of this case.

Representing the Board, Thomas Mayes, Attorney, Division of Learning and Results, responded to questions as needed.

**Motion:** Mike May made a motion and Mike Knedler seconded that the State Board approve the proposed decision affirming the decision of the local board of directors of the New Hampton Community School District to continue its current practices of the school choir performing on a Church Tour, singing religious songs at the Winter Music Festival, and performing “In This Very Room” at the final Coffeehouse Concert.

**Vote:** A roll call vote was taken. Aye: Axiotis, English, Hussey, Knedler, and May, Nay: Crookham-Johnson, Edwards, and Miller. The motion passed.

## **Eastern Iowa Community Colleges Interim Accreditation Report - Fiscal Year 2015**

Kent Farver, Chief, Bureau of Community Colleges, introduced Joan Kindle and Laurie Hanson, Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC). The Department conducted the on-site portion of the EICC visit on April 15-16, 2015. The interim report focuses on compliance issues.

A number of strengths and best practices were identified during the visit. They include the Career and Technical Education program evaluation and review, quality faculty plan, senior year plus, and physical plant and facilities review.

There were noncompliance issues identified in the areas of Faculty (Qualifications), Faculty Teaching Load, and Special Needs. The Department will follow-up in fiscal year 2016 to ensure the issues have been corrected.

EICC is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), a commission of the North Central Association. The state accreditation process reviews state requirements, but does not duplicate the HLC process. HLC documentation is reviewed during the visit to identify any follow-up that may be required. State standards are reviewed through a structured process by Department staff and community college peer reviewers.

Kindle and Hanson provided comments about the process.

**Motion:** Mike Knedler made a motion and Angela English seconded that the State Board grant continued accreditation for Eastern Iowa Community Colleges. A state comprehensive accreditation evaluation will be conducted in fiscal year 2020.

**Vote:** The motion carried unanimously.

### **Iowa Teacher of the Year (2014) – End-of-Year Report**

David Tilly introduced Isbelia Arzola, Consultant, Bureau of Educator Quality. Arzola introduced Jane Schmidt, Iowa Teacher of the Year (2014). The Iowa Teacher of the Year Award was established in 1958 and is sponsored by the Department through an appropriation from the Legislature. The award provides an opportunity to recognize an Iowa teacher who motivates, challenges, and inspires excellence; who is respected by students and peers; who is a dedicated professional that helps nurture hidden talents and abilities; who is a creative, caring individual; who takes teaching beyond textbooks and blackboards; and who is an exceptional teacher helping to redefine American education. The Iowa Teacher of the Year serves in the role of Ambassador to Education.

Schmidt shared highlights of her year as Iowa's Ambassador to Education. Among many accomplishments, she had an opportunity to visit all 99 counties in Iowa.

## **Introduction to the Iowa Reading Research Center New Director**

David Tilly explained the background to the development of the Iowa Reading Research Center (IRRC) which is a critical part of Iowa's early literacy initiative. The IRRC used to be located at Grant Wood Area Education Agency and has been relocated to the University of Iowa.

Tilly introduced Sara McInerney who has been with the IRRC since the beginning and indicated that the past director, Michelle Hosp, had accepted a position at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Tilly co-chaired the search committee for a new IRRC director and indicated that a national search was conducted. Tilly introduced the IRRC's new director, Deborah Reed, and talked about her experience and background.

Reed provided additional details about her experience and background.

There was discussion regarding plans to mesh current summer programs and IRRC's programs, the third grade retention policy that goes into effect in 2017, concern with the lack of resources available to school districts for literacy efforts, and the need for Board members to be better informed so they can effectively communicate throughout the state and to colleagues in the field regarding what needs to be done.

## **Educator Preparation Program Accreditation Follow-up Reviews - Central College, Iowa State University, and Waldorf College**

Larry Bice, Administrative Consultant, Bureau of Educator Quality, indicated that educator preparation programs at Central College, Iowa State University, and Waldorf College were reviewed and approved by the Board. A follow-up review of the concerns identified in each final report was required and conducted approximately one year after Board approval. Bice presented reports that provided evidence of compliance on the concerns from each follow-up review. He explained the follow-up review process and indicated that all programs are also monitored through annual reporting.

There was discussion regarding best practices being shared with other institutions.

## **State Board Policy Development Priorities for 2015-2016**

Board members reviewed and discussed the proposed State Board Policy Development Priorities for 2015-2016 and Board member assignments to each priority.

Ryan Wise reported on the process that will be used once the priorities are approved by the Board. Department staff will review the priorities and the master calendar will be developed. Indicators of progress and Board support activities will be developed for each priority.

The proposed priorities and Board members assigned to each priority are:

- Reducing Achievement Gaps (with a focus on Multi-Tiered System of Supports and Early Literacy) - Brooke Axiotis, Diane Crookham-Johnson, and Mike May
- Assessment - Charlie Edwards and Mary Ellen Miller
- Iowa Academic Standards - Ryan Wise, Mike Knedler, and Hannah Rens
- Improving Teacher and Leader Preparation - Mike Bearden, Angela English, and Rosie Hussey
- Innovative Learning Opportunities - Mike Bearden, Angela English, and Rosie Hussey
  - Competency-based Education (continue to monitor and support)
  - Online Learning
  - Summer Learning
  - Career and Technical Education

**Motion:** Mike Knedler made a motion and Mike May seconded that the State Board approve the Policy Development Priorities for 2015-2016.

**Vote:** The motion carried unanimously.

### **Board Reports**

Ryan Wise has been meeting with staff and working on how the Department should be organized and identifying where there are the greatest needs.

Mary Ellen Miller talked to a special education literacy teacher. This made her aware of the challenges teachers face.

Hannah Rens visited five counties this summer. One of the countries was Haiti where she had exposure to their education system.

Angela English attended the National Association of State Boards of Education New Member Institute.

Mike May has been in contact with administrators and teachers regarding the Next Generation Science Standards.

Mike Knedler reported that when he encounters someone that is involved in education, he visits with them regarding education matters.

Charlie Edwards adjourned the meeting at 2:20 p.m.

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Charles C. Edwards, Jr.  
President

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Ryan M. Wise  
Director