

# BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES

May 9-10, 2024  
Montana School for the Deaf and Blind  
3911 Central Ave  
Great Falls, MT 59401

**Thursday, May 9, 2024**  
**8:30 AM**

## **CALL TO ORDER 04:08**

Chair Tharp called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM. Montana School for the Deaf and Blind (MSDB) Superintendent Paul Furthmyre introduced students and staff, before MSDB students led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance and performed a brief presentation. Ms. Kris Stockton took Roll Call, the Chair read the Statement of Public Participation, and welcomed guests.

Board members present: Dr. Tim Tharp, Chair; Ms. Susie Hedalen, Vice Chair; Ms. Renee Rasmussen; Dr. Ron Slinger; Ms. Lisa Schmidt; Ms. Madalyn Quinlan; Ms. Jane Hamman; Mr. Gavin Mow, Student Representative. Ex Officio members: Mr. Joe Thiel, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, (OCHE); Mr. Dylan Klapmeier, Governor's Office; State Superintendent Elsie Arntzen, Office of Public Instruction (OPI). Staff present: Ms. McCall Flynn, Executive Director; Ms. Kris Stockton, Administrative Specialist; Ms. Julie Balsam, Accounting Technician. Guests: Superintendent Furthmyre, MSDB; Ms. Marie Judisch, OPI; Ms. Rachel Cutler, Great Falls Public Schools (GFPS); Ms. Jackie Mainwaring, GFPS; Superintendent Laurie Barron, Evergreen School District; Superintendent Les Meyer, Frenchtown School District (FSD); Principal Riley Devins, FSD; Superintendent Craig Crawford, Stanford Public Schools; Mr. Brenton Craggs, Attorney, OPI; Dr. Julie Murgel, OPI; Ms. Crystal Andrews, OPI; Ms. Jordann Lankford Forster, Chair, Montana Advisory Council for Indian Education (MACIE); Ms. April Grady, OPI; Ms. Carrie Kouba, OPI; Ms. Krystal Smith, OPI; Mr. Sonny Tapia, Helena Independent Record; Ms. Ashley Perez, OPI; Ms. Cedar Rose, OPI; Ms. Kim Popham, Montana Federation of Public Employees (MFPE); Mr. Tom Cabbage, Great Falls Education Association; Ms. Kristi Steinberg, University of Montana (UM); Assistant Superintendent Christy Mock-Stutz, OPI; Ms. Aislinn Brown, Attorney, Agency Legal Services.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment was made.

## **CONSENT AGENDA 12:48**

**Board member Quinlan moved to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Board member Rasmussen.**

***No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.***

## **ADOPT AGENDA 13:13**

**Board member Schmidt moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Board member Hamman.**

***No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.***

## **❖ REPORTS – Dr. Tim Tharp (Items 1-5)**

### **Item 1 CHAIRPERSON REPORT 13:33 Dr. Tim Tharp**

Chair Tharp thanked Board members and educators across the state for their work in public education before reviewing meetings he has attended and work he has done on behalf of the Board since the March meeting.

**Item 2 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT 17:27  
McCall Flynn**

Ms. McCall Flynn discussed the ongoing work of the Board Charter Committee in creating financial reports from the newly approved charter schools and beginning preparations for the upcoming application cycle. Ms. Flynn discussed the Early Literacy Home-Based Program Request for Proposal (RFP) and the action item the Board will consider at the meeting to approve the selection. Ms. Flynn provided a brief update on rulemaking and an overview of items on the agenda then concluded her report with an update on the Seal of Biliteracy applications for the current school year.

**Item 3 STATE SUPERINTENDENT REPORT 26:15  
State Superintendent Elsie Arntzen**

Superintendent Arntzen opened her report by updating the Board on the Purple Star School recipients for 2024, including MSDB, and reviewed items OPI staff will be presenting at the meeting.

**Assessment Update:** Ms. Cedar Rose discussed school site visits conducted by the Assessment team and reviewed the types of assessments the team observed school districts using. Ms. Rose discussed the Assessment Help Desk that is now available, and the types of requests they are receiving from schools before answering Board members' questions. Ms. Rose concluded her report by announcing that the ACT contract is being finalized for use for the 2024-2025 school year for high school juniors.

**MAST Update:** Ms. Krystal Smith provided an update of the MAST assessment, including the recently completed MAST Roadshow providing support and training for districts, an update on the Federal Testing Waiver submitted to the Department of Education, and future events planned for districts ahead of the full implementation of MAST. Ms. Smith announced the upcoming MAST Summit in August, another MAST Roadshow, upcoming trainings, and feedback the team is receiving from schools. Ms. Smith answered questions from Board members.

**Federal Update:** Ms. Carrie Kouba presented the Federal Update which included updates on e-Grants and schools exiting targeted support services. Dr. Julie Murgel presented additional information on schools receiving comprehensive or targeted support services and how the OPI is assisting those school districts to resolve the problems they are experiencing.

**Accreditation Update:** Ms. Crystal Andrews discussed the completion of the Accreditation cycle and work the Accreditation team is doing to assist schools with the reporting process, noting that the team is evaluating and scoring the reports received. The final process will result in a report to be presented to the Board at the July BPE meeting. Ms. Andrews answered Board members' questions.

**Content Standards Revisions Update:** Ms. Marie Judisch presented an overview of the Mathematics Content Standards, World Language Content Standards, and ELA Content Standards, which are all currently under revision.

**Data Modernization Update:** Ms. Ashley Perez gave an update on the Data Modernization Project by reviewing ongoing activities, pieces of the project that have been completed, and an update on the Data Lake housing information provided by Infinite Campus. Ms. Perez answered questions on how data from Power School will be brought in without manual intervention.

Superintendent Arntzen introduced April Grady as the new Chief Financial Officer at the OPI. Ms. Grady introduced herself to the Board and highlighted goals she has for the OPI.

Superintendent Arntzen discussed the budget line item the OPI is requesting in their budget for funding for MACIE.

**Item 4 COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION REPORT 02:09:35  
Joe Thiel**

Mr. Joe Thiel discussed ongoing high school and college graduation ceremonies occurring statewide and his attendance at a ceremony of college graduates at the Montana State Prison through Helena College. Mr. Thiel discussed the updated Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form, issues surrounding the rollout, and noted that FAFSA completion and college acceptance numbers are down compared to previous years due to the problems with the new form. Mr. Thiel reviewed the GEAR UP Grant and changes made to the grant, noting that





**No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Item 14 ACTION ON COUNCIL FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION  
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING 07:05:09  
Dr. Julie Murgel and Crystal Andrews**

Dr. Julie Murgel reviewed the Memorandum of Understanding with the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation for the Board. Vice Chair Hedalen thanked Dr. Murgel for the work she has done.

**Vice Chair Hedalen moved to approve the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation Memorandum of Understanding effective July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025. Motion seconded by Board member Rasmussen.**

**No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Item 15 ACTION ON PROPOSED PRAXIS TEST SCORE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION  
07:09:22  
Crystal Andrews**

Ms. Crystal Andrews presented an overview of the PRAXIS Test Review for Special Education. Ms. Lisa Colon Durham, Educational Testing Service, provided background information regarding what has changed within the test, the multi state standard study to recommend a passing score, and presented adopted passing scores of surrounding states for the Special Education test. Ms. Andrews reviewed the work completed by the Special Education Expert Panel to determine the passing score of 153 for Montana. The score was brought to the PRAXIS Working Committee and then to the Montana Council of Deans of Education. Both groups voted unanimously on the passing score of 153. Board members asked questions of Ms. Andrews and Dr. Murgel. Board members expressed concerns about the recommended passing score and Ms. Kristi Steinberg reviewed reasons the Expert Panel gave for setting the passing score of 153.

**Vice Chair Hedalen moved to approve the adoption of PRAXIS test #5355 Special Education with a qualifying score of 153. Motion seconded by Board member Hamman.**

***Vice Chair Hedalen asked that this test score be monitored.***

**No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Item 16 ACTION ON THE NOTICE OF ADOPTION PERTAINING TO THE AMENDMENT OF  
ARM, TITLE 10, CHAPTER 57, EDUCATOR LICENSURE STANDARDS, AND  
AUTHORIZE FILING OF THE NOTICE WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE  
FOR PUBLICATION IN THE MONTANA ADMINISTRATIVE REGISTER 07:30:07  
Susie Hedalen**

Ms. Flynn reviewed the comments received and the responses from the Board.

**Vice Chair Hedalen moved to approve the Notice of Adoption pertaining to the amendment of ARM Title 10, Chapter 57, Educator Licensure Standards, and authorized filing of the notice with the Secretary of State's Office for publication in the Montana Administrative Register. Motion seconded by Board member Quinlan.**

**No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.**

**❖ EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Dr. Tim Tharp (Item 17)**

**4:00 PM GOALBALL ACTIVITY WITH MSDB STUDENTS 07:32:55**  
Board members participated in a game of Goalball with MSDB students.

**Item 17 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PERFORMANCE EVALUATION 08:21:09  
Dr. Tim Tharp**

Dr. Tharp closed the meeting for Executive Session at 4:40 PM for the evaluation of the Board's Executive Director. Executive Session ended at 5:28 PM.

The Board recessed for the day at 5:30 PM.

**Friday, May 10, 2024**

**8:30 AM**

**CALL TO ORDER 01:57**

Chair Tharp called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM. MSDB students led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance and gave a musical performance. Ms. Kris Stockton took Roll Call, the Chair read the Statement of Public Participation, and welcomed guests.

Board members present: Dr. Tim Tharp, Chair; Ms. Susie Hedalen, Vice Chair; Ms. Renee Rasmussen; Dr. Ron Slinger; Ms. Lisa Schmidt; Ms. Madalyn Quinlan; Ms. Jane Hamman. Ex Officio member: Mr. Dylan Klapmeier, Governor's Office. Staff present: Ms. McCall Flynn, Executive Director; Ms. Kris Stockton, Administrative Specialist. Guests: Ms. Marie Judisch, OPI; Ms. Trish Schreiber, Chair, Community Choice Schools Commission; Mr. Chris Averill, Chair, MT 250<sup>th</sup> Commission; Dr. Julie Murgel, OPI; Ms. Kim Popham, MFPE; Ms. Kristi Steinberg, UM; Assistant Superintendent Christy Mock-Stutz, OPI; Ms. Laci Novark, OPI; Ms. Nancy Hall, Office of Budget and Program Planning.

❖ **ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE – Madalyn Quinlan (Items 18-19)**

**Item 18 INITIAL REVIEW OF SUPERINTENDENT'S PROPOSED REVISIONS TO ARM TITLE 10, CHAPTER 54, WORLD LANGUAGE CONTENT STANDARDS 10:37 Marie Judisch, Dr. Julie Murgel**

Ms. Marie Judisch opened the item and Dr. Julie Murgel presented an overview of the revisions process and Ms. Judisch reviewed the proposed revisions and the Economic Impact Statement for the Board. Ms. Judisch and Dr. Murgel answered Board members' questions at the conclusion of the presentation. Ms. Flynn reviewed the Administrative Rulemaking timeline for the Board and answered questions.

**Item 19 INITIAL REVIEW OF SUPERINTENDENT'S PROPOSED REVISIONS TO ARM TITLE 10, CHAPTER 53, MATHEMATICS CONTENT STANDARDS 01:06:55 Marie Judisch**

Dr. Murgel gave a summary of the work of the Task Force and the Negotiated Rulemaking Committee which took place over the course of five months. Ms. Judisch reviewed the proposed changes by grade level for the Board and answered Board members' questions. This item will be reviewed again at the July 2024 BPE meeting.

❖ **CHARTER COMMITTEE – Jane Hamman (Items 20-22)**

**Item 20 UPDATE ON COMMUNITY CHOICE SCHOOLS COMMISSION 02:28:54 Trish Schreiber**

Ms. Schreiber discussed the April Work Session held by the Commission and work that subcommittees are doing to implement goals and objectives established at the work session.

**Item 21 REVIEW OF REVISED PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION AND EVALUATION CRITERIA 02:37:52 Jane Hamman**

Board member Hamman discussed work the Charter Committee has completed to review and revise the 2024 Public Charter School Application before reviewing the upcoming application cycle. Board members discussed the proposed revisions to the application and offered additional revisions.

**Item 22 REVIEW PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK METRICS AND EVALUATION AND RENEWAL CRITERIA 02:56:21 Jane Hamman**

Board member Hamman reviewed the draft documents for the Performance Framework Metrics and Evaluation and Renewal Criteria and Ms. Flynn discussed how the documents were drafted. Board member Hamman discussed options for developing standards and discussions the Charter Committee held regarding developing standards. The Board discussed next steps in the process of developing the Performance Framework Metrics, and directed Ms. Flynn to convene a Work Group of public charter school representatives to bring a recommendation on the Public Charter School Performance Framework to the Board at the July 2024 meeting for approval.

❖ **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Dr. Tim Tharp (Items 23-25)**

**Item 23**                            **UPDATE ON 250<sup>TH</sup> COMMISSION** 03:10:37  
**Chris Averill**

Mr. Chris Averill gave a presentation on the Montana 250<sup>th</sup> Commission, discussing the purpose of the Commission created by the Legislature, and the expectations of the Commission to celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the nation. Mr. Averill reviewed members of the committee, quarterly meetings held to date, work subcommittees have completed, the adopted vision and key themes, and goals of the Commission. Mr. Averill answered Board members' questions. Mr. Averill will update the Board on the progress of the Commission at future Board meetings.

**Item 24**                            **ACTION ON K-12 PAYMENT SCHEDULE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025** 03:26:44  
**Laci Novark**

Ms. Laci Novark presented the K-12 Payment Schedule for Fiscal Year 2025 to the Board.

**Board member Slinger moved to approve the K-12 Payment Schedule for Fiscal Year 2025. Motion seconded by Board member Quinlan.**

***No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.***

**Item 25**                            **DISCUSSION ON BOARD PRIORITY BUDGET ITEMS FOR EXECUTIVE PLANNING PROCESS** 03:29:49  
**McCall Flynn**

Ms. Flynn reviewed the current budget planning process and stated that agencies have until June 6<sup>th</sup> to submit any budget requests. Ms. Flynn reviewed the Board budget and noted that since the Board currently has sufficient funding, no specific budget requests will be made. Board members discussed potential requests and whether any budget requests should be made.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS July 17-19, 2024, Helena, MT**

Strategic Planning Meeting  
MACIE Update  
*Assessment Update*  
*Federal Update*  
*OPI Staffing Report*  
*Accreditation Report*  
*Content Standards Revision Update*

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment.

**ADJOURN**

Meeting adjourned at 12:16 PM.

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*Agenda items are handled in the order listed on the approved agenda. Items may be rearranged unless listed "time certain". Public comment is welcome on all items listed as "Action" and as noted at the beginning and end of each meeting.*

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