

**BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
Via VisionNet Conference  
OPI Conference Room  
1300 11<sup>th</sup> AVE  
Helena MT

**Friday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015**  
**8:30 AM**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Carroll called the meeting to order at 8:31 AM. The Board said the Pledge of Allegiance and Executive Director Pete Donovan read the Statement of Public Participation.

Board members present via VisionNet included: Ms. Sharon Carroll, Chair; Mr. Paul Andersen, Vice-Chair; Ms. Erin Williams, Ms. Lila Taylor, Mr. John Edwards, Mr. Bernie Olson. Ms. Mary Jo Bremner – excused. Staff present in Helena included Mr. Pete Donovan, Executive Director; Ms. Kris Stockton, Administrative Assistant. Ex-Officio members present in Helena included; Dr. Neil Moisey, OCHE; Dr. Shannon O'Brien, Governor's Office; Superintendent Juneau, OPI. Guests present in Helena included: Ms. Nancy Coopersmith, OPI; Dr. Linda Vrooman-Peterson, OPI; Ms. Donna Sorensen, MSDB Superintendent; Ms. Donna Schmidt, MSDB; Ms. Donell Rosenthal, OPI; Mr. Michael Hall, OPI.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Consent agenda adopted as presented.

**ADOPT AGENDA**

**Mr. John Edwards moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Mr. Paul Andersen.**

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

**INFORMATION ITEMS**

***\*\*Items are listed in the order in which they are presented.\*\****

**❖ REPORTS – Sharon Carroll (Items 1-6)**

**Item 1                      CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**  
**Sharon Carroll**

Chair Carroll reviewed for the Board her attendance at the HiSet Conference in December 2014. 12 states, including Montana, have adopted the HiSet exam. Chair Carroll also discussed a conference call she had with Executive Director Donovan and CSPAC Chair Tammy Lacey regarding a model for a Professional Educator Code of Ethics. Chair Carroll reviewed the 2015 Legislative process and updates from the office. Chair Carroll stated she plans to attend the State of Education Address given by Superintendent Juneau on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015, weather permitting.

**Item 2 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT  
Pete Donovan**

Mr. Donovan reviewed the 2015 Legislature to date. The BPE budget was presented to the House Appropriations Committee on Monday January 12<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Donovan discussed SB 124 to have audio/video minutes loaded to the Board website within 24 hours and some of the bill drafts that have been proposed.

**Item 3 STATE SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT  
State Superintendent Denise Juneau**

Superintendent Juneau discussed the release of the 2013 graduation rate of 85.4%, and the upcoming State of Education Address on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015. The Superintendent reviewed some of the bills that the OPI is requesting including increasing the minimum drop out age to 18, or upon graduation, to eliminate winter enrollment count, and to provide ANB funding for 19 year olds.

**Item 4 COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION'S REPORT  
Commissioner Clayton Christian**

Dr. Moisey gave the report for the Commissioner of Higher Education's office. Dr. Moisey discussed some of the bills the Commissioner is watching including supporting the Governor's Early Edge program. Dr. Moisey and Dr. John Cech worked with the Tribal Colleges this fall, touring the colleges and discussing issues of transferring, and common course numbering. The office is also working on prior learning assessments, developmental education, and watching for the Smarter Balanced Assessments results this spring. Chair Carroll discussed that she now has 2 math classes up and running on the Ed Ready site as of this week and discussed how she is using the program in her classroom.

**Item 5 GOVERNOR'S OFFICE REPORT  
Shannon O'Brien**

Dr. O'Brien thanked the Board members, Executive Director Donovan and staff for their support. Dr. O'Brien stated that she has been working with Mr. Donovan on a regular basis. Dr. O'Brien congratulated Superintendent Juneau on the new graduation rates released this week. Dr. O'Brien discussed the Dual Enrollment Initiative and that the Governor's goal is to have 60% of Montanans to have at least a 2 year degree, and how Dual Enrollment complements that initiative. Dr. O'Brien discussed the Governor's priorities for this Legislative session including funding for Early Edge, K-12 Education funding, Indian Education for All, supporting increasing the drop out age, ANB funding for 19 year olds, a tuition freeze for Higher Ed, performance based funding, increasing the number of students in medical exchange program, and research investments for Higher Ed.

**Item 6 STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT  
Greta Gustafson**

Ms. Gustafson reviewed activities at Cut Bank High School with semester testing this week, including the bomb threat the school experienced this week as well as the high schools in Havre and Chinook. Ms. Gustafson reviewed her preparation for the upcoming State Student Council meeting, Student Advisory Board meeting, and organizing for prom this spring. She also discussed the student question of the month she posed at her school which was to ask whether students preferred to have a longer summer break or longer Christmas break. The results will be presented to the School Board. Ms. Gustafson also informed the board of a new social media app causing some bullying issues at Cut Bank High School. She has been invited to attend a Future Physicians conference in Massachusetts this summer and is currently preparing for the ACT test.

**ACTION**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

***The public was afforded the opportunity to comment before the Board on every action item on the agenda prior to final Board action.***

❖ **MSDB LIAISON - Lila Taylor (Item 7)**

**Item 7**

**MSDB REPORT**

**Donna Sorensen, MSDB Superintendent**

Ms. Donna Sorensen gave a brief update on activities at the MSDB including their IT Director having a kidney transplant. Ms. Sorensen stated that she will be asking for the Board to approve the school calendar. The school's enrollment is currently at 51 students with 2 possible new students. A new TVI staff person has been hired as of yesterday and will begin teaching at the school February 1<sup>st</sup>. A finalist has been chosen for the Accounting Technician position and the school hopes to have that position filled soon. The school had a visitor from Tanzania who works with Deaf and Blind individuals in Tanzania. Ms. Sorensen also discussed the relationship they have with a Deaf and Blind school in Russia and that those folks will be visiting April 27-May 4th. On May 7<sup>th</sup> and small group from MSDB will be going to Russia. Ongoing sign language training was also discussed, as well as changes in the unified Braille Code System.

Ms. Donna Schmidt discussed Safety and Worker's Comp Claims which are down 50% this year, that First Aid kits have been purchased for the vans used to transport students, and that step ladders will be purchased for staff. Ms. Schmidt gave an update on the cottage that has been remodeled due to a water leak last fall. The MSDB Foundation has donated the funding for a great deal of the project, but the agency has also used some carry forward monies from FY14 they are using to finish the remodel.

Discussion took place regarding the Significant Writing Policy and how many readings of the policy should be completed prior to adoption. It was determined that Action will take place after the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading which will be at the March 2015 BPE meeting.

**Ms. Lila Taylor moved to approve the amended MSDB calendar. Motion seconded by Mr. Bernie Olson.**

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

The Board members were emailed a budget sheet and Ms. Donna Schmidt discussed the numbers with the Board.

Discussion took place on future updates to the Board from MSDB. Does having an update at each BPE meeting suffice or as the School Board for the MSDB, or should the Board be more involved and resume the monthly MSDB Committee meetings that were occurring under Superintendent Gettel? Ms. Sorensen added that she will comply with whatever the Board wishes to do. The Board asked Mr. Donovan to review statutes regarding the BPE's oversight responsibilities for the MSDB and to have this as a discussion item for the March BPE meeting.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

❖ **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Sharon Carroll (Items 9-10)**

**Item 9**

**FEDERAL UPDATE**

**Nancy Coopersmith**

Ms. Coopersmith updated the Board on happenings in education at the Federal level including the funding received by the OPI from the Federal government for funding for preschools for high need areas. four areas have been identified and staff is currently being hired. Ms. Coopersmith detailed other funding increases in School Food, IESA, and that there will be no funding for Race to the Top, since Montana does not receive RTT funds. Ms. Coopersmith discussed the Reauthorization of the Elementary and

Secondary Education Act and upcoming changes which are being drafted. No final bill is in place yet so the end product is not yet determined.

❖ **MACIE LIAISON – Mary Jo Bremner (Item 8)**

**Item 8**                                **MACIE UPDATE**  
**Norma Bixby**

Ms. Nancy Coopersmith gave a brief update from the MACIE meeting highlighting staffing issues for the Indian Education Program across the state, Title III monitoring, new grants received by OPI for school climate and wrap around health services, early warning systems to give educators a sense of helping to identify possible drop outs, an update from the Superintendent, and a legislative update from the Deputy Superintendent.

**Item 10**                                **ANNUAL TRANSPORTATION REPORT**  
**Donnell Rosenthal**

Ms. Rosenthal highlighted some of the results from the Annual Transportation Report for 2014, reviewed the upcoming Pupil Transportation Conference in June 2015, and how the new school bus driver qualification requirements are being completed. Ms. Rosenthal will be attending the National Pupil Transportation Conference where the transportation committee will be voting on new national standards. Those new national standards will be brought back to Montana to be discussed and voted on.

❖ **LICENSURE COMMITTEE – John Edwards (Item 11)**

**Item 11**                                **EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROVIDER REPORT**  
**Dr. Linda Vrooman Peterson**

Dr. Peterson gave the annual report of the Educator Preparation programs. The data is retrieved from Title II of the Higher Education Act. Dr. Peterson briefly reviewed the report then discussed the 7 year review cycle for the Educator Preparation Programs and the 2 reviews coming up in the next year for University of Montana Western in October 2015, and MSU-Bozeman in November 2015. Dr. Peterson invited any interested Board members to observe the reviews.

❖ **ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE – Erin Williams (Item 12)**

**Item 12**                                **ACCREDITATION PROCEDURES FOR SMALL AND STATE-FUNDED SCHOOLS**  
**Dr. Linda Vrooman Peterson**

Dr. Peterson updated the Board on a new procedure adopted by the OPI which will be implemented this season for Small and State-Funded Schools. This procedure deals with schools with a select population including Yellowstone Academy, MSDB, Pine Hills Correctional Facility, and Riverside Academy. These schools have enrollment numbers that fluctuate due to the makeup of their student populations and Dr. Peterson discussed how that affects their accreditation status. Beginning 2014-15 the OPI would like to accredit the schools based upon assurance standards only. OPI will monitor this procedure for unintended consequences. Dr. Peterson fielded questions from the Board.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS March 12-13<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

*Assessment Update*

*Alternative to Standards Requests & Renewals*

*MACIE Update*

*Federal Update*

*Accreditation Report*

*Annual School Food Services Report*

*BPE Oversight of MSDB*

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment was given.

## **ADJOURN**

**Mr. Bernie Olson moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Ms. Erin Williams.**

**No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.**

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 AM

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