

May 23, 2023

On Tuesday, May 23, 2023, Board President Clarence Crawford convened the State Board's monthly meeting and was joined by Vice President Susan Getty, Chip Dashiell, Jr., Shawn Bartley, Gail Bates, Chuen-Chin Bianca Chang, Jean Halle, Joan Mele-McCarthy, Rachel McCusker, Joshua Michael, Lori Morrow, Warner Sumpter, Holly Wilcox, and student member Merin Thomas from Wicomico County.

[Link to May 23, 2023 meeting agenda, materials, and video.](#)

### **President's Comments**

Board President Crawford remarked that he couldn't be more pleased with the leadership of the Superintendent and the Board Public and shared his appreciation for the dedication of MSDE staff to the work to transform public education for the benefit of all students.

### **Public Comments**

Public comments were delivered by the following individuals: Angie Vigliotti, Trudy Biddle, and other parents of students receiving autism waiver services from family members, shared their support for more continued funding and resources for these services, and their concerns that a pandemic-related emergency provision is now abruptly expiring. Former MSDE staff, Robert Eccles, shared that he represented more than 40 former MSDE staff who have called for an investigation of employee grievances filed regarding the employment practices of Superintendent Choudhury and others in MSDE leadership. Dr. Mark Bedell, Anne Arundel County Superintendent, shared his support for the transformation envisioned by the Blueprint but also his concerns with antiquated statutory requirements that impede transformation, such as the mandate to operate on a school calendar of both 180 days and a minimum number of hours.

State Board members asked Superintendent Choudhury to respond to the public comments regarding the autism waiver. The superintendent responded that the waiting list is largely a result of a chronic shortage of qualified personnel to provide the specialized services required. He noted that the State does not provide direct services but facilitates the provision of services of other providers with families. MSDE staff also shared that the State is providing increased funding to address the autism waiver waitlist and that MSDE has hired additional staff to support this work.

### **Consent Agenda**

The Board approved the consent agenda including personnel actions and budget adjustments.

## **Proclamation Recognizing Teacher Appreciation Week**

The State Board adopted a proclamation stating that: “The State Board formally recognizes May 8-12, 2023 as Teacher Appreciation Week and presents its gratitude to the thousands of selfless, committed educators who serve the children of Maryland every day.”

- [Proclamation Recognizing Teacher Appreciation Week](#)

## **Teachers of the Year Recognition**

Board President Crawford and Superintendent Choudhury welcomed Teachers of the Year selected from each local school system for the 2023-2024 school year. MSDE staff introduced each teacher, describing the accomplishments leading to their recognition, and members of the State Board and local school system leadership gathered for photos.

The objective of the state program is to draw public attention to the teaching profession and the contributions of our outstanding teachers. The 24 educators were selected by their school systems for outstanding commitment to education, equity, and community leadership. The cohort represents grade levels from pre-kindergarten through high school and a variety of subjects including language arts, math, social studies, science, engineering, computer science, and visual arts. From this cohort, the Maryland Teacher of the Year will be selected.

- [2023 -2024 Teachers of the Year Recognition](#)

## **Blueprint Deep Dive: College and Career Readiness Standard**

Board President Crawford welcomed members of the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) to participate in this informational session. Superintendent Choudhury stressed that the setting of the College and Career Readiness standard is one of the most important responsibilities under the Blueprint. MSDE staff described the status of the independent long-term study required by the law, including an empirical study of the skills, knowledge, and abilities needed to succeed in the first year of Maryland community college coursework. Jordan Rickles, with the American Institutes for Research (AIR), presented the interim findings and next steps. He described the content and standards alignment analysis, including inventory of content and stakeholder engagement. He also outlined the predictive validity analysis of high school measures predictive of future success. Specifically, he reviewed available options including: meeting the interim CCR standard or minimum PSAT composite score of 1000; meeting the interim CCR standard or a minimum High School GPA of 3.0; or meeting the interim CCR standard or minimum PSAT composite score of 1000 or GPA of at least 3.0. Dr. Rickles then reviewed the results of the preliminary analysis.

Ike Leggett, AIB Chair, asked about the timing of the qualitative and quantitative analysis and his concern with the public reaction to a standard that results in a dramatic increase in the numbers of students being labeled as CCR. Dr. Rickles responded that the ongoing qualitative analysis will more thoroughly inform this decision-making process. He also responded to concerns with the need to identify students who matriculate to career training experiences and educational programs rather than 2- or 4-year colleges.

- [Blueprint Deep Dive: College and Career Readiness Standard](#)

## Deep Dive: Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)

Superintendent Choudhury introduced the presentation on DORS, emphasizing his strong support for the division's work. DORS Assistant State Superintendent Scott Dennis provided a comprehensive overview of the history and operation of the Division. He noted that DORS employees constitute more than half of MSDE's staff, and described their professional duties and qualifications. He reviewed the two major disabilities programs administered by DORS. Disability Determination Services (DDS) is responsible for the adjudication of Social Security disability benefit claims. DDS handles approximately 50,000 disability claims each year. The second major program is the public Vocational Rehabilitation program, commonly referred to as DORS. DORS provides vocational training and education for disabled individuals who want to go to work or want to continue to be able to work.

Mr. Dennis also outlined public vocational rehabilitation programs, including: Business Enterprise Program for the Blind, which provides business opportunities for individuals who are blind on federal and state property; Independent Living (IL) Program, which provides funding to the seven Centers for Independent Living around the State; Independent Living Older Blind Program, which provides independent living training for individuals who are 55 or older and legally blind to live independently in their homes; Support Employment Program Adult and Youth, which is 2 separate programs: the Adult programs is for 25 and older and the Youth program is for individuals 24 and younger. Both programs support individuals who are employed. In addition, the department provides the Client Assistance Program, which provides client advocacy for individuals receiving vocational rehabilitation services.

The Board and staff discussed the concern with the level of state funding being insufficient to qualify for the available federal funding, which was recently increased and not anticipated in the FY 2024 state budget recently enacted. Mr. Dennis also described the work led by Superintendent Choudhury to increase salaries and other actions to enhance recruiting and retention of staff and to eliminate vacancies.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Board President Crawford requested an updated presentation next month toward the goal of requesting additional state resources to qualify for available federal funding to support the work of DORS.

- [Deep Dive: Division of Rehabilitation Services \(DORS\)](#)

## Regulations

The State Board approved the following requested actions on proposed regulations.

- [COMAR 13A.15.13 Family Child Care – Inspections, Complaints and Enforcement – Permission to Publish Amendments](#)
- [COMAR 13A.15.14 Family Child Care - Administrative Hearings – Permission to Publish Amendments](#)
- [COMAR 13A.16.17 Child Care Centers – Inspections, Complaints, and Enforcement – Permission to Publish Amendments](#)
- [COMAR 13A.16.18 Child Care Centers – Administrative Hearings – Permission to Publish Amendments](#)
- [COMAR 13A.17.15 Child Care-Letters of Compliance – Inspections, Complaints and Enforcement - Permission to Publish Amendments](#)

- [COMAR 13A.17.16 Child Care-Letters of Compliance – Administrative Hearings -Permission to Publish Amendments](#)
- [COMAR 13A.18.14 Large Family Child Care Homes - Inspections, Complaints and Enforcement - Permission to Publish Amendments](#)
- [COMAR 13A.18.15 Large Family Child Care Homes – Administrative Hearings – Permission to Publish Amendments](#)
- [COMAR 13A.02.06 General Financial Aid to Local School Systems – Permission to Publish Amendments](#)
- [COMAR 13A.01.07 Nondiscrimination in Education – Permission to Publish](#)

## Board Opinions

The State Board issued legal opinions for the following cases:

- *F.W. v. Baltimore County Board of Education*, denying the local school system motion to dismiss the parent’s complaint regarding the placement of their child in a virtual learning program based on a prior sexual offense.
- *L.W. v. Prince George’s County Board of Education*, reversing the school system decision regarding an involuntary student transfer to the non-traditional middle school, finding that PGCPSS violated state regulations governing student discipline under COMAR 13A.08.01.11 and their local policy.
- *Edmond Saint-Jean v. Prince George’s County Board of Education*, affirming the local board’s decision regarding an employee’s restitution and repayment of unearned wages.
- *Joseph Steiner v. Anne Arundel County Board of Education*, affirming the local board’s decision regarding the selection of another employee for promotion.
- *V.A. v. Worcester County Board of Education*, remanding the student educational placement dispute until the appellant exhausts all administrative remedies.