

MINUTES  
of the  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
November 18, 2016

The New Jersey School Boards Association Headquarters  
Trenton, NJ

BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 18, 2016  
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BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
NEW JERSEY SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION  
TRENTON, NJ

November 18, 2016

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors was held on Friday, November 18, 2016 at the NJSBA headquarters, Trenton, NJ.

**Executive Committee members present were** Donald Webster, Jr., president; Daniel Sinclair, vice president for county activities; Michael R. McClure, vice president for finance; John Bulina, immediate past president, and Dr. Lawrence S. Feinsod, executive director.

**Association staff present were** Frank Belluscio, deputy executive director/director of communications; Cynthia Jahn, Esq., general counsel; Michael Vrancik, director of governmental relations; Joseph Hsieh, director of information technology; Jane Kershner, director of field services; Ray Pinney, director of county activities & member engagement; Patty Maillet, director of business development; Vincent DeLucia, director of training and educator-in-residence; John Faford, director of finance; Kimberly Blum, director of human resources; Kristen Krulikowski, administrative/search assistant, and Ann Marie Smith, executive administrative assistant, executive office/communications.

**The following members and alternates of the Board of Directors were present:**

Atlantic	Not Represented	Passaic	Jeff Fischer
Bergen	Diane Holzberg		Rachel Capizzi (Alt.)
	Bruce Young (Alt.)	Salem	Eileen Miller
Burlington	Jennifer Montone	Somerset	Robert Morrison (Alt.)
Camden	Gail David	Sussex	Ray Morris
	Naomi Davidson (Alt.)	Union	Not Represented
Cape May	Not Represented	Warren	Christy Tighe (Alt.)
Cumberland	Treemanisha Stewart		
Essex	Not Represented	County	
Gloucester	Peter Calvo	Association	
	Karen Vick (Alt.)	Leadership	Cynthia Auberger
Hudson	Not Represented		
Hunterdon	Laurie Markowski	Urban Boards	George Cook
	Charles Miller (Alt.)		William Monk (Alt.)
Mercer	Not Represented		Jonathan Hodges, MD (Alt.)
Middlesex	Not Represented		
Monmouth	Mark Bonjavanni	Vocational	Barbara Dawson
Morris	Michael Scarneo (Alt.)		
Ocean	Ben Giovine	NSBA Rep.	Kevin Ciak

**ROLL CALL**

President Webster called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. A roll call indicated four (4) officers, 14 counties, urban boards, county association leadership and vocational boards were represented.

**MOMENT OF SILENCE**

President Webster asked for a moment of silence to remember Geneva Moore, a member of the Tabernacle Board of Education, who recently passed away.

## **FLAG SALUTE**

President Webster led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

President Webster led the members in reciting the Association's Mission Statement.

## **OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Richard Snyder expressed his concern about the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) being seemingly unaware of the impact of PARCC on minority students and the education achievement gap in New Jersey. He encouraged NJSBA to press this issue with the NJDOE.

## **NJSBA AUDIT REPORT**

Dr. Feinsod introduced the new NJSBA director of finance, John Faford. Mr. Faford introduced the auditor, Robert Butvilla, partner, Suplee Clooney. Mr. Butvilla provided a report on the NJSBA 2015-2016 audit. The independent auditor issued an unqualified (i.e., clean) opinion on the Association's financial statements for this period. Additionally, the auditor found no deficiencies in the Association's internal controls.

## **RECOGNITION OF NEW MEMBERS AND OATH OF OFFICE**

President Webster acknowledged Rachel Capizzi, new alternate member representing Passaic County.

President Webster administered the Oath of Office to the members and alternates who were not present at the September re-organization meeting.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **Consent Agenda Items**

1. Open session minutes of September 30, 2016 meeting
2. Legislative Committee appointments
3. Resolution for the National School Boards Association Delegate Assembly for federal support for iSTEAM initiatives
4. At-Large Appointments to the Nominating Committee

President Webster asked for a motion to approve the open session minutes of September 30, 2016 meeting.

*Ms. Miller moved to APPROVE the minutes of the September 30, 2016 meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried. Abstentions: Mr. Calvo, Mr. Cook, Ms. Auberger, Mr. Bonjavanni, Ms. David, Ms. Markowski and Mr. Monk.*

President Webster asked for a motion to approve the Legislative Committee appointments.

*Ms. Miller moved to APPROVE the Legislative Committee appointments. The motion was duly seconded and carried.*

President Webster asked for a motion to approve submission of the resolution calling for federal support for iSTEAM education initiatives to the NSBA Delegate Assembly.

Background: This resolution is a new proposal that concerns the funding to implement Integrative STEAM education programs to ensure students have the knowledge and skills necessary for success in college and careers. The Executive Committee recommends the Board of Directors approve the resolution for submission to the March 2017 agenda of the National School Boards Association Delegate Assembly.

*Mr. Fischer moved to APPROVE the resolution for the NSBA Delegate Assembly for Federal support for iSTEAM initiatives. The motion was duly seconded and carried. The vote was unanimous.*

President Webster asked for a motion to approve the at-large members of the NJSBA Nominating Committee

Background: In accordance with *Bylaws* Article X, Section 3, four members of the Board of Directors were elected to serve on the 2017-2019 Nominating Committee on Friday, September 30, 2016. On Saturday, October 1, CAL elected its four representatives to the Nominating Committee. In accordance with *Bylaws*, Article X, Section 3, a(3), four at-large members of the Nominating Committee are appointed by the President, with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors. President Webster put forth the following names: Susy Golderer, Parsippany-Troy Hills Board of Education, Morris County to represent the Northwest Region; Bruce Young, Carlstadt Board of Education, Bergen County to represent the Northeast Region; Chanta Jackson, Neptune Board of Education, Monmouth County to represent the Central Region, and Dominic Miletta, Pittsgrove Township Board of Education, Salem County to represent the Southern Region.

*Mr. Calvo moved to APPROVE the At-Large appointments to the Nominating Committee. The motion was duly seconded and carried.*

### **Roll-Call Agenda Items**

1. Approval of the NJSBA 2015-2016 audit.

President Webster asked for a motion to approve the 2015-2016 audit.

*Ms. Holzberg moved to APPROVE the NJSBA 2015-2016 audit. The motion was duly seconded and carried. Vote was unanimous.*

### **OFFICERS' REPORTS**

The Board of Directors received written updates on activities from the NJSBA President, Vice Presidents and Immediate Past President. Below are the highlights of the reports made by the President and Vice Presidents during the meeting.

*President* – Mr. Webster highlighted the presentation on energy saving improvement plans presented at both NJSBA's Workshop 2016 and the New Jersey State League of Municipalities' annual conference on November 15. The presentation was moderated by Mr. Webster and the speakers included the Mayor of Cape May City; a BPU representative from the NJ Clean Energy Program; a consultant from the ACES+ Program, offered by NJSBA; and NJSBA's STEAM and Sustainable Schools Specialist. Mr. Webster spoke about the energy savings programs that the

Manchester School District has undertaken. Discussion at the conferences covered the opportunities for further energy cost savings for local school districts.

*Vice President for County Activities* – Mr. Sinclair reported that prior to Workshop 2016, every county school boards association held one meeting. Starting the second week of November, the county associations began hosting their second meetings of the year. Every county will have two meetings before January. There has been a marked increase in attendance over past years. Mr. Sinclair believes this is due to the popularity and relevance of the topics that have been presented. He acknowledged the work of Ray Pinney, Marsha Lavigne and Patti Rees who put in many hours to ensure these worthwhile training opportunities, and also acknowledged the county association leaders who have worked very hard on this year’s programming.

*Finance* – Mr. McClure reported that the Association received an unmodified opinion (a clean audit) from the auditors, Suplee, Cooney & Co. He also reported that the finances of the Educational Leadership Foundation of New Jersey are also in good standing.

*Immediate Past President* – Mr. Bulina reported that he attended the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) meeting. He also reported on his role as an honorary Commander of The Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. He has been assigned to the Air Force wing and, as such, he is trying to build a relationship with the Air Force similar to NJSBA’s unique relationship with the U.S. Army.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Before making his report, Dr. Feinsod asked Mr. Fischer to talk about his successful challenge to a 2007 statute that, up to now, has been interpreted as prohibiting a person from simultaneously serving on the school boards of an elementary school district and a high school regional school district.

Mr. Fischer, a member of the Haledon Board of Education, challenged the statute in Superior Court, Passaic County, arguing against the state Attorney General’s Office. Mr. Fischer this year ran unopposed for a seat on the Manchester Regional board and sought to retain his position on the Haledon board. Representing himself before the court, Mr. Fischer conducted extensive research into the matter.

The Superior Court judge issued the decision favorable to Mr. Fischer on Tuesday, Nov. 15.

In his decision, Judge Reddin also praised the role of school boards and the dedication of board members stating, “We need school boards. It goes to the heart of the education of the youth here in New Jersey. We ask these people who are going to fill these school board positions, to do it without pay. Very rarely are they thanked for what they do, I’m sure they are often criticized for what they do.”

Dr. Feinsod reported on the progress of the strategic plan, which included an update on NJSBA’s relationship with the New Jersey Department of Education and the State Board of Education; the roll-out of the NJSBA Accountability Regulations Task Force report, which includes 63 recommendations; the relationship NJSBA is building with the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, which included a session on school district-municipal cooperation at both Workshop 2016 and the League’s convention; the continuing successful relationship with Sustainable Jersey for Schools (membership in Sustainable Jersey for Schools has reached 554 schools in 225 school districts representing 40 % of state operating districts); and NJSBA’s

Environmental Sustainability Symposium for High School Students , co-sponsored with Rider University, which included a Green STEAM Tank Challenge, replicating the very successful feature offered at Workshop 2016.

The Board of Directors' discussion of charter schools' status within NJSBA was in response to an unprecedented meeting of the executive director, NJSBA senior staff and leaders of the New Jersey Charter Schools Association. Discussion at the October 14 meeting centered on the relevancy of NJSBA training for charter school trustees and their involvement in the Association, particularly the possibility of voting membership. The Board of Directors engaged in a lengthy discussion on the subject of granting voting membership to charter schools. The board discussed both differences between, and commonalities among, charter schools and traditional public school districts. Highlights of the discussion are listed below:

*Differences Noted:*

- Charter schools have significantly different structure and operation from traditional public school districts:
  - The selection process for charter school trustee boards does not involve elections (or appointment by elected officials);
  - Charter schools are not governed by many of the regulations as are traditional public school districts;
  - The vast majority of communities with large concentrations of charter schools have a large number of traditional public schools, which are governed by a single board of education. In comparison, each charter school in these communities is governed by its own board of trustees.
- NJSBA was founded specifically as a federation of district boards of education.
- On a number of issues, charter school interests may differ from those of traditional public schools. Voting membership by charter schools (which number 88) would have minor impact on NJSBA policy, which is set by 581 traditional public school district boards.

*Common Interests Noted:*

- Charter schools and traditional school districts serve the public school students of the same community (or communities).
- The Legislature authorized the establishment of charter schools for several reasons, including the development of innovative educational practices.
- Charter school boards of trustees have many of the same responsibilities as district boards of education, including policy-setting, administrator evaluation and, for some, collective bargaining.
- The current NJSBA Associate Membership Program provides substantial value for charter school boards of trustees in carrying out their responsibilities.

Based on the discussion, the Board of Directors reached a consensus that it would not be in the interests of NJSBA's current membership, or of charter schools, for charter boards of trustees to have voting membership in the Association.

Dr. Feinsod indicated that he would convey the Board of Directors' response to the New Jersey Charter School Association. The vast majority of charter schools are non-voting Associate Members of NJSBA, and NJSBA plans to continue its efforts to build bridges with the charter schools association.

**Advocacy Update** - The advocacy update included a presentation on the merits and issues with the three school funding proposals put forth by Governor Christie, Senate President Sweeney and Assembly Speaker Prieto. The constitutional question about pension funding that was

supposed to appear on the ballot on November 8, but did not, may appear on next year's General Election ballot. The outcome of the vote on the pension fund will dramatically affect school funding.

**Workshop 2016** - The Annual Workshop debriefing focused on NJSBA exceeding all financial, attendance, exhibitor and sponsor goals, while lowering costs. The on-site badge printing pilot program was a success. Dr. Feinsod has approved the on-site badge printing for all 21 counties next year. The STEAM Tank Challenge was very successful and well received. Learn-at-Lunch needs work, and the room for the Legislative Session was too small. Staff is working on developing ways to increase exhibit floor foot traffic on Tuesday morning and promote attendance by "other district staff."

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Bonjavanni acknowledged Mr. Bulina, who was not re-elected to his local board of education, for his service on the Tabernacle Board of Education, NJSBA and the National School Boards Association.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, *Ms. Miller moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried. The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,



Lawrence S. Feinsod, Ed.D.  
Executive Director