Members of the State Board of Public School Education met at the Bismarck State Capitol, CTE Conference Room, and via Teams on Monday, December 20, 2021. Chairwomen Sonia Meehl called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM with the following State Board members in attendance:

Chairwoman Sonia Meehl
Maria Effertz Hanson
Steve Holen
Burdell Johnson
State Superintendent Kirsten Baesler

In attendance virtually
Josh Johnson
Jeff Fastnacht

Also present: Patty Carmichael, Donna Fishbeck, Ann Ellefson, and Adam Tescher, NDDPI. Allyson Hicks, ND Attorney General’s Office; Maria Neset, ND Governor’s Office; and Kayla Effertz Kleven, Olson Effertz Consulting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Burdell Johnson moved that the minutes of the November 22, 2021, meeting be approved. Steve Holen seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION of NORTH DAKOTA LEARNING CONTINUUM
Ann Ellefson from the NDDPI was a guest presenter and provided a process, procedures, and status update on ND Learning Continuum. Handouts were shared and presented to the Board.

Ann explained that the North Dakota Learning Continuum was identified in SB 2196 and provided some flexibility for students and how they may obtain learning credit and ultimately a pathway and flexibility for graduation for North Dakota students. She went over the Learning Continuum design process timeline and explained a bit of each part of the process. Ann shared a slide deck with the Board.

Ann explained that work began in October and November 2020 with state-level partners. Educators participated in committee work on social studies, English language arts, mathematics, science or 21st-
century skills Ann emphasized that classroom teachers were a part of this effort, but a very diverse group of people who work in education were also a part of the group.

Ann shared North Dakota’s Portrait of a Graduate (POG) with the Board. She explained that a partnership between the Governor’s Office and the ND Council of Educational Leaders (NDCEL) created the POG. After the POG was complete, it was presented in testimony from NDCEL to the 67th Legislative Assembly. After SB 2196 was approved, a team of 80 individuals from across ND worked on writing competencies around seven attributes contained in the POG; critical thinking, empathy, a learner’s mindset, communication, collaboration, adaptability, and perseverance. Ann noted that our content standards still exist, have relevance, and are reflected in the continuum. The learning continuum is assessed for accountability just as standards-based, scope, and sequence courses are assessed by either the ND State Assessment or a nationally-recognized standardized assessment.

Public comment was accepted from Sept – Nov 2021. A Review Council met on October 6, 2021. K-12 Coordination’s Council subcommittee reviewed and provided recommendations on October 28. The entire K-12 Coordination Council reviewed and provided guidance on November 23, 2021. The State Board of Public Education met to discuss the established and certified ND Learning continuum on September 20 and December 20, 2021.

Ann went on to explain SB 2196 is a mastery framework policy. This policy allows districts to exercise local control. This learning continuum is optional for districts. It is not required for districts to participate. Board member Jeff Fastnacht added that standards are still the building block to developing the framework.

The State Board determined it had three questions to establish and certify the learning continuum 1) accept the review committees amendments that the writing committee accepted 2) include samples of POGs from local school districts as recommended by the K12 coordination council, 3) draft a forward as recommended by the K12 coordination council.

The Board continued to express concerns over the POG portion of the learning continuum, and Assistant Attorney General Hicks expressed legal concerns about the Board adopting an official POG without expressed authority. Superintendent Baesler asked Ann Ellefson if a change to the title would substantially change the writing committee’s competencies around the seven attributes in the continuum. Ann said it would not. Superintendent Baesler made a motion to move ahead with the discussed heading change from Portrait of a Graduate to Essential Skills. Ms. Effertz Hanson seconded the motion. The working committee will adopt the name change of essential skills.

Result of roll call vote:
  Effertz Hanson – yes
  Holen – yes
Fastnacht – yes
Johnson – yes
Superintendent Baesler – yes
Chairwomen Meehl – yes

Motion passed 6-0.

The review committee will draft the forward and present it at the next meeting. It has been noted the committee saw and reviewed the public comments, and the revisions will be made after seeing the comments. Ann shared a copy of the fall revisions with the committee. Ann will find a day to bring the review committee together as soon as possible to make the approved revisions.

Superintendent Baesler thanked Ms. Effertz Hanson for her work on the Board. Baesler shared the interview process to replace Effertz Hanson. It is not sure how soon Governor Burgum will select the replacement. Superintendent Baesler asked if the Board would like to move forward with the next meeting without a replacement or ask Ms. Effertz Hanson to come back for the next meeting. Allyson Hicks stated that Ms. Hanson is on the Board until she is replaced and Governor has completed the paperwork.

OTHER BUSINESS

January 24 Meeting will include Christoferson Annexation: LaMoure to Litchville-Marion.

Chairwoman Meehl asked for an update on the Board’s vacant administrative assistant position status. NDDPI Chief of Staff D. Fishbeck stated the first round of applications didn’t garner the number of qualified applicants. Human Resources will reopen the position after the holidays.

NEXT MEETING
The next meeting will be Monday, January 24, 2022, at 1:00 PM.

There being no other business before the Board, Chairwoman Meehl adjourned the meeting at 3:28 PM.