

MINUTES – Board Meeting
Thursday, November 9, 2023
Teams Meeting

The Education Standards and Practices Board (ESPB) meeting was called to order at 8:00am by Board Chair Cory Steiner. Board members present by video conference were Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Amber Fridley, Deb Follman, Sonya Hansana, Evan Kritzberger, Angela Nagel, Patti Stedman, Cory Steiner, and Superintendent Kirsten Baesler.

Also present were ESPB Executive Director Rebecca Pitkin, Assistant Director Mari Riehl, and Amy Bigelow from ESPB, Allyson Hicks and Mark Openshaw from Office of Attorney General, Joe Kolosky from DPI, Amy Flicek from NDUnited, Jen Wallender from Western Governors University, and other online guests.

Introductions were held.

Additions/Changes to the Agenda – Changes to the agenda include an additional case for Raymon Holmberg, discussion on drafting new language for administrative rules related to grooming, and removing the Teacher Support System budget. Patti Stedman motioned to accept the agenda as amended. Motion seconded by Deb Follman. Board members who voted yes were Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Amber Fridley, Deb Follman, Sonya Hansana, Evan Kritzberger, Angela Nagel, Patti Stedman, and Cory Steiner. Motion carried.

Motion to Ratify October Licensure List – Evan Kritzberger made a motion to ratify the October 2023 licensure list. Seconded by Siri Coleman. Board members who voted yes were Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Amber Fridley, Deb Follman, Sonya Hansana, Evan Kritzberger, Angela Nagel, Patti Stedman, and Cory Steiner. None opposed. Motion carried.

CASES

Arnold, Annie – Ms. Arnold's file was reviewed after it was determined there was reason to believe she was teaching without a valid license. She was listed on school's website as kindergarten teacher, but has an interim substitute license with a 30 day restriction. The district's response to the request for information indicates that because she was in the para to teacher program, they believed she was alright to be the teacher of record. Ms. Arnold was subbing without a valid license until October 30, 2023, when her interim substitute license was issued.

Deb Follman stated the issue she sees is that the administrator should not have hired a teacher without a valid license. Patti Stedman made a motion to fine Ms. Arnold \$100 for teaching without a license through the end of October. She does not feel the Board needs to request a response from the administrator, as that has already been provided. Motion seconded by Sonya Hansana. Patti said she agrees with Deb that people cannot be teaching without a license and there were multiple attempts to remind her to submit payment so her license could be issued. Board members who voted yes Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Amber Fridley, Deb Follman, Sonya Hansana, Evan Kritzberger, Angela Nagel, Patti Stedman, and Cory Steiner. None opposed. Motion carried.

Houchin, Koby – Mr. Houchin's file was reviewed by the Board due to self-disclosed background offenses on his application for an interim substitute license. Patti Stedman made motion to grant Mr Houchin's license with a requirement that he self-report any

new offenses. Motion seconded by Angela Nagel. Patti said Mr. Houchin has been honest about his past offenses. Angela agreed. Cory Steiner agrees that people can learn from their past mistakes, and it seems Mr. Houchin has done this. Board members who voted yes Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Amber Fridley, Deb Follman, Sonya Hansana, Evan Kritzberger, Angela Nagel, Patti Stedman, and Cory Steiner. None opposed. Motion carried.

Holmberg, Raymon – At a special meeting on November 2, 2023, the Board voted to suspend Mr. Holmberg’s license until the outcome of his case. Board attorney Allyson Hicks has been in contact with Mr. Holmberg’s attorney about the settlement agreement and he’s proposed a change that Allyson would like the Board to review.

When someone is charged in state court there are a number of charges things can be plead down to. Federal court is different and our usual settlement agreement is geared toward state court – the change to the settlement agreement would state that in the event Mr. Holmberg pleads guilty to or is convicted of one or more of the pending charges or pleads guilty to or is convicted of any lesser or amended charge constituting a crime against a child or sexual offense actionable under NDCC 15.1-13-26 in the pending federal criminal case, Mr. Holmberg’s license to teach in North Dakota will be permanently revoked without further action or hearing.

Siri Coleman made a motion to allow Allyson to amend the settlement agreement as presented. Motion seconded by Amber Fridley. Siri said she believes the Board should follow attorney’s advice. Board members who voted yes Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Amber Fridley, Deb Follman, Sonya Hansana, Angela Nagel, Patti Stedman, and Cory Steiner. None opposed. Motion carried. Evan Kritzberger was not present for the vote.

Discussion on Upcoming Administrative Rule Language Changes Regarding Grooming – Becky would like to pull this out of the Director’s Report and have Allyson discuss possible upcoming rule changes. This comes from NASDTEC and is a recurring issue across states. Changes would update administrative rule that would directly address sexual conduct, boundary violations, and grooming in the licensure realm. This would make it very clear for districts and teachers to determine boundaries between teachers and students. Allyson would like to request that the Board draft language to include in administrative rules.

Patti Stedman made a motion to have Becky and Allyson draft language to include the updated sections regarding grooming in administrative rule. Seconded by Evan Kritzberger. Patti thanked Becky for this and said it will be very good to have everyone on the same page. Evan agreed and said it helps clear up ambiguities. Cory Steiner agrees this new language will help determine guidelines. The topic has come up quite often in the past few years and will continue to be an issue the Board reviews. Board members who voted in favor were Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Amber Fridley, Deb Follman, Sonya Hansana, Evan Kritzberger, Angela Nagel, Patti Stedman, and Cory

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Steiner. None opposed. Motion carried.

Allyson Hicks and Mark Openshaw left the meeting at 8:35am.

October Meeting Minutes, License, Financial Reports, and PAAC Minutes – The October 2023 financial report showed \$90,337.85 in total income received, \$86,752.28 in total expenses, with a net income of \$3,585.57. The October 2023 licensure report documented 1,133 items issued. This number includes background checks, endorsements, late fees, and application fees. Jenny Bladow gave a review of the September 2023 PAAC meeting minutes.

Sonya Hansana moved to accept the October meeting minutes, license, financial reports, and PAAC minutes. Seconded by Amber Fridley. Board members who voted yes were Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Deb Follman, Sonya Hansana, Angela Nagel, Patti Stedman, and Cory Steiner. None opposed. Motion carried. Evan Kritzberger was not present for the vote.

Waiver Requests – Minot State University has students from California who have completed the CBEST test and they are requesting that ESPB use the CBEST in place of the Core Writing. Deb Follman made a motion to approve the waiver request from Minot State University on behalf of their student. Motion seconded by Jenny Bladow. Board members who voted in favor were Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Amber Fridley, Deb Follman, Sonya Hansana, Evan Kritzberger, Angela Nagel, Patti Stedman, and Cory Steiner. None opposed. Motion carried.

Disability Waivers – The Board has received a request for a disability waiver from Tierra Velure, asking for waiver of the elementary content and PLT tests. All materials are here and well documented. Siri Coleman made a motion to grant Ms. Velure's request for the disability waiver. Motion seconded by Sonya Hansana. Siri stated all information is documented. Board members who voted yes were Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Amber Fridley, Deb Follman, Sonya Hansana, Evan Kritzberger, Angela Nagel, Patti Stedman, and Cory Steiner. None opposed. Motion carried.

Director's Report – Becky thanked the Board for their motion to allow her and Allyson to draft rules to expand on the definition of grooming. Becky has attended a couple recent conferences and it's become apparent that alternately prepared teachers most often don't have ethics. The landscape of ethics is changing, so it's important to be sure pre-service teachers are getting this.

An essay has been received from an individual who was required to complete the ETS ethics course, with good reflection. Sonya Hansana asked if Becky or anyone from ESBP goes to schools to present on the Model Code of Ethics for Educators (MCEE), as she's learned that some current teachers and administrators have not heard of the MCEE. Becky does present at schools when asked and is more than willing to go. Deb

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Follman said she believes pre-service and new teachers should have some kind of ethics requirement. She believes that possibly having educators complete the ETS ProEthica course during the hiring process would be valuable.

A reading consultant has been hired and will be leading meetings in November and December to collaboratively implement program approval standards and legislative requirements.

Becky provided Board members an updated budget that was reviewed by the budget subcommittee. Changes include a small adjustments to the travel budget for conferences, as well as an adjustment due to the hiring of a part-time office staff member.

The Board has policy regarding past offenses dealing with alcohol and marijuana. Becky asked if the Board would like to look at possibly drafting policy regarding theft charges. She has an example of this type of policy from the medical imaging Board. Cory Steiner said any examples would be good to review to help the Board make decisions moving forward.

At the October meeting Superintendent Baesler had asked for information on different occupations and the amount of re-education hours/credits needed to keep a license current. That information has been provided to the Board. Cory has had ongoing conversations and has and wonders if it would be an option to offer courses to teachers between years 25 and 30 at no cost through the ND Education Hub that is working to be developed. Additional consideration will be given to this idea going forward. Sonya Hansana asked if a survey would need to be sent to veteran teachers to see if this would be appealing. Becky said stakeholder feedback is always gathered and would get feedback from NDCEL, NDUnited, ect. Evan Kritzberger wondered if there was a way to document veteran teachers leading professional development and give them credit for those activities. Other states are exploring this as well. Becky will research this and bring ideas forward to the Board.

The license report reflects the steady licensure numbers and increase in interim substitute license numbers over the past years.

License Presentation – ESPB Assistant Director Mari Riehl has been meeting with a couple districts in eastern North Dakota about licensure and options available. It's been valuable to both the districts and to ESPB. She has an upcoming trip to meet with three districts in western ND. As a result of meeting with the Fargo district, Mari and Becky will be attending classroom observations in Arizona to see the co-teaching model through Arizona State University.

Executive Director Evaluation – Board members have returned their evaluations for Becky to Cory Steiner and all were positive. Cory reported some of the comments

received - many addressed Becky's work ethic, recruitment and retention of teachers, and leading her team.

Becky thanked the Board and said she couldn't do her job without the help of the office staff. Cory also said the Board also has the highest regard for ESPB staff and thanked Becky and staff for all they do for students and education in the state. Evan Kritzberger made a motion to accept the executive director evaluation as satisfactory. Motion seconded by Jenny Bladow. Board members who voted yes were Jenny Bladow, Siri Coleman, Amber Fridley, Deb Follman, Sonya Hansana, Evan Kritzberger, Angela Nagel, Patti Stedman, and Cory Steiner. None opposed. Motion carried.

Board Member Reports

NDACTE – NDACTE met with Lisa Johnson from NDUS to gather information on what teacher education programs are doing. Discussions on what student teaching could look like while still meeting current requirements, in relation to apprenticeship programs. EPPs can apply for grants and a year-long apprenticeship would be required. Jenny Bladow has volunteered to be a part of that committee and will report as information is gathered.

Association of Non-Public Schools – Siri Coleman has been in correspondence with Erin Jacobson at Teacher Support System and has learned of non-public school teachers who have taken advantage of the first-year mentoring program. She was pleased to hear of the participation of non-public schools.

Association of School Administrators – Deb Follman reported people appreciate all avenues that are available to allow people to become licensed teachers. Cory Steiner said administrators felt gratitude for the special session. The agenda was followed and there weren't new bills added that related to schools. He agreed with Deb's comment about different routes to licensure.

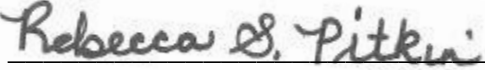
School Boards Association – State convention was held at the end of October.

NDUnited – Not present.

DPI – Joe Kolosky reported that DPI is going through state accreditation. North Dakota will be the first state education agency in the US to be accredited through Cognia. Working on mandated reporter training – 10,617 teachers have been reported as completed mandated reporter training on the MIS03. Next year a field will be added on the MIS03 that will allow DPI to track mandated reporter training by a licensed individual.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:33am.


Chair


Secretary/Executive Director