

**Minutes**  
**State Board of Education Special Session**  
**Friday, April 13, 2007**

The Arizona State Board of Education held a Special Session at the Amphitheater Unified School District Board room, 701 West Wetmore, Tucson, Arizona. The meeting was called to order at 9:38AM.

**Members Present**

Mr. Jesse Ary  
Dr. Vicki Balentine  
Ms. Martha Harmon  
Superintendent Tom Horne  
Ms. Joanne Kramer  
Mr. Larry Lucero  
Ms. Anita Mendoza  
Dr. Karen Nicodemus  
Ms. Cecilia Owen

**Members Absent**

Dr. John Haeger  
Mr. Jacob Moore

1. GENERAL SESSION

A. Welcome and introductions

Dr. Karen Nicodemus expressed appreciation to Dr. Balentine and her staff who provided the meeting place and accommodations for the meeting. Dr. Nicodemus stated that today's purpose was to have good dialogue in a more informal setting, resulting in clear direction and understanding.

B. Facilitated discussion regarding State Board of Education's vision and guiding principles for the purpose of developing strategic priorities. Discussion may include identification of critical issues, planning and timelines. The Board may take action regarding this item.

Ms. JoAnne Hilde began the session by asking members to tell something unique about themselves as an exercise in learning more about one another and setting the tone for today's discussions. Ms. Hilde outlined the areas of today's discussion and members added criteria for each topic:

- **Norms**
  - Participation from all members
  - Disagreement is okay
  - Take care of your own creature comforts
  - Find common ground where there are disagreements
  - Listen to one another
  - Look forward to an opportunity to follow up on goals that have been set/accomplished
  - Future work will be based on decisions made today
  - Be honest with each other
- **Red Hot Topics to be answered or at least addressed today**
- **Parking Lot Issues to be answered at a later date**
  - Cooperative efforts with ADE, SBE, Legislative representatives, Governor's representatives in preparation for sessions

- No sanctions/pending legislation
- Communications plan
- **Expectations**
  - Framework for next two years
  - Ability to respond to public concerns
  - Thoughtful reflection
  - Plan regarding Priority Issues
  - Define who we are, what we are supposed to be doing, how to stay clear of local district issues
  - Ask questions of fellow SBE members
  - Legislative agenda
    - Legislators should visit with SBE to get our priorities
    - Meeting with Mr. Horne, SBE representative, Legislative representatives, Governor's representatives in preparation for sessions
    - Wording for Vision Statement
  - Equity
  - Positive perception of public education in Arizona
  - Student achievement
  - Student diversity
  - Excellence in education
  - Continuous learning
  - Individual student needs
  - Access
  - Opportunity
  - Reference to Illinois vision statement
  - System that is held in high esteem
  - Rigor
  - Continuous learning/improvement
  - High expectations/high support for teachers (professional development and finance)
  - Systemic actions tie to vision
  - Provide clarity about SBE's vision/role as opposed to duties/responsibilities of the ADE
  - Policy supportive of implementation
  - State Board relationship with ADE
    - How do we build platforms that we are able to continue to build on to affect change
    - Basic philosophy of State Superintendent of Public Instruction and Arizona Governor are the same at this time and situation seems to be improving
    - We are in a political arena
    - Public negative comments hurt the Governor, The State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education
  - Field of trust eroded
  - What are the unintended consequences
  - Who do we need to consult before a decision is made
  - NCLB is considered oppressive-change dynamics (need to find the golden mean)

Ms. Hilde noted that members may have come with assumptions and reminded them that these should be used as a springboard for further discussion.

## **Vision and Mission**

Mission: *To aggressively set policies that foster excellence in public education.*

## **Assumptions**

1. The Arizona State Board of Education recognizes its statutory responsibilities and chooses to proactively pursue its leadership role as K-12 education policymakers for the State of Arizona.

Mr. Yanez noted the statutes relating to this assumption that include the following responsibilities of the SBE:

- supervising and controlling the certification process
  - Academic stand
  - Statewide assessments
  - School finance
  - Courses of study
  - Information to be dealt with is brought to SBE as necessary
  - A.R.S. § 15- 203 (A)(1); can adopt any rule deemed necessary to improve public education
  - A.R.S. § 15-204; determine policy and work undertaken by it
  - Not limited to specific items on monthly agenda; this body has ability to develop its own agenda, think outside the box; should focus on these two statutes
  - Mr. Ary noted that this has not been carried out to the extent that is implied
  - Dr. Nicodemus responded that this confirms that the SBE should not be doing business as usual
  - Enforcement power of SBE
  - Resources for enforcement of policies
  - Mr. Yanez gathers bill and factual information around each bill for members
2. The Arizona State Board of Education supports policies to ensure Arizona's high school graduates are prepared for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
    - Implies that for 21<sup>st</sup> century ready, college readiness and work ready are the same
    - Need to fully define what this means regarding minimal requirements, etc
    - Superintendent disagreed that some jobs require greater academic background than others
    - Issue with P-20 is that some students may be denied a high school diploma
  3. In pursuing K-12 education reform, the Arizona State Board of Education believes the following priorities must be addressed:
    - a. Articulate, for the purpose of discussions, a common understanding of college and work-readiness specific to high school graduation expectations.
    - b. Establish high school graduation requirements with accompanying alignment of K-12 standards/students expectations and establishment of multiple pathways to best meet the needs of a divers student populations
    - c. Close the achievement gaps at every level for K-12 students
    - d. Establish graduation goals and identify policies in support of increasing graduation rates, reducing drop out rates while maintaining curricular rigor and relevance
    - e. Establish policies, such as in the area of professional development, in support of addressing issues of teacher capacity and quality

4. The Arizona State Board of Education recognizes the value of strong partnerships and leveraging resources in its efforts to meet the needs of the Arizona community through the education of Arizona children. Build in the state scholars, partnerships with AEA, ASBA, others.
5. The Arizona State Board of Education supports the establishment of key indicators of effectiveness, specific to the Board's policymaking role and overall effectiveness of the state's K-12 education system.

Additional comments for consideration:

- Positive proof of substantive public education
- Actively "branding" to show support of public education
- Using dashboard concept to take "snapshot" of state policies; how they are being implemented and the public perception
- Make changes/adjustments to parent survey to make it more reflective
- State Board responsible for public perception
- Relationship with press, districts, alphabets
- Develop a true communication plan

These items become indicators and not new ideas

### **CIRCLE OF FUTURE VISION**

It is 2012, what will Arizona leaders/decision makers say about the education of Arizona children in Arizona and the role of the State Board of Education?

- Implementation today would be effective for students 5 years from now
- Fantastic
- That is not how I was taught
- In the past I had a scaffolding plan to get from 8<sup>th</sup> grade to 12<sup>th</sup> grade with a complete course of study
- Rigor, relevance, and relationship
- High school counselors are necessary
- Arizona public education system should drive business re-locators to this state
- Small learning communities

Promoting good news:

- Leaders that support public education
- Goal to have Arizona ranked in the top 10
- Legislature raises per pupil spending again

Teachers:

- Colleges of Education expand
- High school students are flocking into education
- Arizona colleges of education to be known as top educators
- Legislature lifts regulations for districts/schools that are meeting high standards
- Arizona schools meeting state board goals
- Arizona schools reversed drop-out rate
- In five years media headlines regarding the SBE:
  - Visionary
  - Accomplished goals
  - Leads education dialogue

*The Board broke for lunch at 12:12PM and reconvened at 12:55PM*

**S.W.O.T. (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)**

Members submitted ideas regarding actions/priorities/ideas/improvements to assist in moving forward, including:

- online in-time state assessments
- de-politicize education policy
- help schools address and understand financial responsibilities
- identify key liaisons
- close achievement gap of all students plus ELL teaching and learning
- standards are viewed highly
- policies to see that standards are not ignored
- aligned with college readiness
- college work plans
- endorse student appeal bill
- plan regarding all 3<sup>rd</sup> graders reading at grade level
- close the achievement gap
- agree on graduation requirements
- increase graduation rate
- improve school accountability formula
- align K-12 reflecting reform efforts
- relevance to multiple pathways
- more qualified teachers
- create a SBE communication plan
- develop legislative agenda
- plan to entice students into teaching field
- improve teacher preparation through college
- alignment with world of work
- accountable real time
- create state board legislative committee
- create charter position at ADE
- review ADE timeline/create connections between ADE and SBE timeline
- develop yearly timeline for SBE
- more resources
- review teacher compensation
- align high school graduation with college entrance exams
- various pathways to high school graduation
- definition of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills
- funding priorities
- focus SBE time on policy rather than certification

Ms. Hilde guided members in collapsing the above ideas into main categories, listing the specific concerns to be addressed within each category, and volunteering to take the lead in specific categories:

*21<sup>st</sup> Century Graduation Requirements (Dr. Karen Nicodemus)*

- Graduate every student

- Align state standards and expand pathways to success
- Address drop-out/graduation rates
- Increase graduation rate
- Create various pathways to high school graduation
- Align K-12 reflecting reform efforts
- Align with college readiness
- Pass a policy for high school graduation
  - Lessen the gap between equity and diversity, including definition of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills
- Agree on graduation requirements
- Align high school graduation requirements with college/university entrance requirements
- Alignment with world of work
- Relevance to diverse student population; multiple pathways
- Increase graduation requirements
- College/workplace readiness programs in middle schools/high schools

#### Advocacy

- *Legislative (Larry Lucero)*
  - Exempt public schools from paying state sales tax
  - Review legislative funding priorities
  - Improve the public perception by educating from top down: public, districts, boards, administrations, teachers
  - Create a SBE communication plan
  - Create a SBE legislative committee; be active; Develop legislative agenda
  - More resources for education
  - Endorse a student appeal bill
  - Invite House and Senate Education Committees
  - De-politicize education policy
- *Stakeholder (Dr. Vicki Balentine)*
- *Media (Martha Harmon)*
  - Improve SBE public perception, public participation, use of “public” resources
  - Promote positive perception of public education

#### School Finance (Cecilia Owen)

- Accountable real time
- Help school address/understand financial responsibilities

#### State Board Operations (Vince Yanez)

- Identify key liaison roles Board needs to deliberately develop
- Work in partnership to really leverage resources and implementation
- Develop yearly timeline for Board planning
- Develop/institute common opportunities for Board development
- Create connections between ADE timeline and SBE timeline
- Review ADE timeline
- Focus Board time on policy rather than certification/professional conduct matters

#### Teacher Quality (Joanne Kramer)

- Increase number of qualified teachers ( math and science)

- Improve effectiveness of professional development for teachers
- Review teacher compensation
- Improve teacher preparation through colleges
- Plan to entice students into teaching field
- More qualified teachers

Assessment, Accountability, Achievement (Anita Mendoza)

- On-line (in-time) state assessments
- Improve school accountability formula
- Plan regarding all 3<sup>rd</sup> graders reading at grade level
- Standards are viewed highly; policies to assure they are not ignored
- Close achievement gap including ELL students (teaching/learning)
- Final plan for how students should be assessed

Charter Representation at ADE

- Create a charter school position at ADE; Assistant Superintendent level

**Prioritizing:**

Reframe Board Time:

- Allocate 30 minutes of each SBE meeting to discuss each priority issue
- Discussion regarding certification cases heard at each SBE meeting
  - some feel unqualified to deal with the cases
  - SBE responsibility is to oversee the certification process
  - assuming that there is legal support limited presentations was encouraged and ability to continually withdraw and re-submit should be limited
  - Comfortable with hearing if due process has been followed
  - Is it possible for a SBE member to serve on the PPAC as “eyes and ears” of SBE
  - Makeup of the PPAC can be changed via SBE rule

Special Sessions

- Too many Study Sessions tend to reduce attendance
- Suggestion is for quarterly sessions
- Special meetings should not cover operational items
- Commitment to stay on subject at meetings
- Agree to hold extra meetings on the second Mondays, quarterly

**WHAT ACTION STEPS MUST THE STATE BOARD TAKE TO MOVE ARIZONA TOWARDS THE VISION?**

- Organize
- Prioritize

For each item, members were asked to list

1. What information do we need to make informed decisions?
2. Does the Governor’s P-20 Council have a position?
3. How does this impact lower grades and higher grades?
4. Is there greater risk to some students than others?
5. Is there an impact on teacher preparation programs, professional development, district resources?
6. What are other states doing?
7. Timeline for implementation

## **HOW WILL WE ACCOMPLISH THESE TASKS?**

- How do we find time?
- What are the responsibilities of individual Board members?
  - SBE commitment around these issues
  - Meet quarterly to discuss progress
  - If still want to have discussion regarding advocacy, need study session in May to discuss what has been accomplished/decided
  - How will this be conveyed to legislators?
  - Some connection with P-20
  - Next quarterly meetings to be held in August, November, etc.

### **Next steps:**

Second Monday of the month committed for special sessions as needed to discuss progress on the above subjects/projects.

**FIRST STUDY SESSION WILL BE HELD ON MAY 14, 2007, TO OUTLINE PRIORITIES TO BE DISCUSSED WITH STATE LEGISLATORS.**

- Concepts regarding graduation requirements
  - ask what they are planning to do so the SBE will be informed
- Legislative leadership wants to know the issues that the SBE is looking at and the direction it may go
- SBE needs to indicate to the legislature that it intends to be a player
- Important to have graduation requirements as part of the discussion
- Will begin to schedule a meeting with Superintendents, Legislative representatives and SBE representatives as soon as possible

## **2. ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 3:00PM.