

Senate Education Committee Meeting

**Official Minutes
151st General Assembly
First Session**

**Committee Meeting
Tuesday, May 18, 2021
11:00 a.m.
Virtual Zoom Meeting**

Meeting Attendance

Committee Members:

Present:

Senator Laura Sturgeon	Laura.Sturgeon@delaware.gov	302-744-4135
Senator Elizabeth Lockman	Elizabeth.Lockman@delaware.gov	302-744-4168
Senator Colin Bonini	Colin.Bonini@delaware.gov	302-744-4169
Senator David Sokola	David.Sokola@delaware.gov	302-744-4139
Senator Bryan Townsend	Bryan.Townsend@delaware.gov	302-744-4165
Senator Ernesto Lopez	Ernesto.Lopez@delaware.gov	302-744-4136

Staff:

Anthony Bernadzikowski	Anthony.Bernadzikowski@delaware.gov	302-477-4629
Taylor Hawk	Taylor.Hawk@delaware.gov	
Valerie McCartan	Valerie.McCartan@delaware.gov	
Rebecca Calvella	Rebecca.Calvella@delaware.gov	

Attendees:

Email:

Organization:

Sarah	Stowens	sstowens@rodelde.org	Rodel
Madeleine	Bayard	mbayard@rodelde.org	Rodel
Dawn	Alexander	dawn.alexander@colonial.k12.de.us	Colonial School District
Diane	Frentzel	dcfrentzel@gmail.com	Delaware Readiness Teams
Rebecca	Cotto	becca2cotto@gmail.com	N/A

Linnea	Bradshaw	linnea.bradshaw@psb.k12.de.us	Professional Standards Board
Linda	Barnett	luvchocdog@hotmail.com	League of Women Voters of Delaware
Barbara	Johnson	Barbsjohnson711@gmail.com	Delaware Readiness Teams
Nicole	Polite	nicole.polite@delaware.gov	Controller General's Office
Robert	Overmiller	rdo1979@aol.com	RDO Refrigeration
Anna	Shields	anna.shields@delaware.gov	Senate
Kendall	Masset	kendallm@decharternetwork.org	Delaware Charter Schools Network
Rita	Wright	ritawright7@msn.com	na
Carol	Clapham	carolclapham@gmail.com	IHB
Kelly	Sherretz	Kscollon@udel.edu	IPA
Dr. John	Marinucci	delawaresba@gmail.com	Delaware School Boards Association
Jamie	Schneider	jamie@eecde.org	delaware association for the education of young children
Carrie	Cole	carrie.cole@byrdgomes.com	ByrdGomes
Greg	Lavelle	glavelle@puglisiassoc.com	Self
Ruth	Lavelle	rlavelle@puglisiassoc.com	parent
Jack	Guerin	jackguerin7@gmail.com	Unitarian Universalist Delaware Advocacy Network
Kristin	Dwyer	kristin.dwyer@dsea.org	DSEA
Nicole	Freedman	nfreedman@morrisjames.com	Morris James
Valerie	Longhurst	Valerie.Longhurst@delaware.gov	DE House of Representatives
Linda	Zankowsky	lindaz@montessorionworksde.org	Sussex Montessori School, Inc.
Dr. Tammy	Croce	tjcroce@edasa.org	Delaware Association of School Administrators
Mary	Wheeling	wheeling@gbc.edu	self
Jenny	Grady	jennyg.thoughtpartners@gmail.com	Thought Partners
Traci	Murphy	tracimurphy@mac.com	Brandywine Buzz
Jalyn	Powell	Outloud@jalynpowell.com	Delaware Racial Justice Collaborative
Christine	Alois	christine.alois@doe.k12.de.us	DOE
Kimberly	Klein	kimberly.klein@doe.k12.de.us	DOE
Mary	Mieczkowski	maryann.mieczkowski@doe.k12.de.us	DOE
Dale	Matusevich	dale.matusevich@doe.k12.de.us	DOE

Susan	Bunting	susan.bunting@doe.k12.de.us	DOE
Mara	Gorman	maragorman@gmail.com	None
Sarah	Bucic	sarah.bucic@delawarepta.org	Delaware PTA
Iskeisha	Stuckey	istuckey83@icloud.com	Delaware United
Kathleen	Rutherford	kruther4d@gmail.com	public
Barry	Townsend	barrytownsend@mac.com	N/A
Rebecca	Calvello	rebecca.calvello@delaware.gov	delaware state senate
Kaneisha	Trott-Savage	kaneisha.trott@sussexms.k12.de.us	Sussex Montessori School
Krista	Griffith	krista.griffith@delaware.gov	Legislator
Michael	Sheridan	michael.sheridan@delaware.gov	'--None--
Carina	Slater	carina.slater@gmail.com	Carina Slater
Emily	Cunningham	emily.cunningham@doe.k12.de.us	Department of Education
Pam	Weir	pam.d.weir@delaware.gov	Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC)
Kathie	Cherry	kathie.cherry@delaware.gov	GACEC
Valerie	McCartan	valerie.mccartan@delaware.gov	Delaware State Senate staff
Kristine	Bewley	kristine.bewley@redclay.k12.de.us	Red Clay Consolidated School District
Joanne	Schlosberg	joanne.schlosberg@ncs.k12.de.us	Newark Charter School
Franklin	Newton	franklin.newton@ncs.k12.de.us	Newark Charter School
DJ	McAneny	dmcaneny@forevermediainc.com	WDEL
Michael	Soyka VI	michael.soyka@delaware.gov	DE Senate
Joe	Irizarry	idiriza@yahoo.com	Delaware Public Media
Kim	Williams	Kimberly.Williams@delaware.gov	Houses of Rep.
Carolyn	Martin-Pettaway	carolyn.martin-pettaway@delaware.gov	State of Delaware staff
Ethan	Morgan	ethan.morgan@delaware.gov	House of Reps.
Syl	Woolford	Sylwlf@aol.com	Self
Alexa	Adams	alexa.adams@delaware.gov	State Senate
Bailey	Brooks	bailey@ruggieriowillson.com	NA
Elizabeth	Zubaca	Elewis@hamiltongoodmanpartners.com	Hamilton Goodman Partners

Jenna	Ahner	jenna.ahner@sbe.k12.de.us	State Board of Education
kevin	perna	kevin.perna@delaware.gov	Delaware State Police
Carina	Slater	carina.yasiejko@gmail.com	Carina Slater
Brenda	Wise	brenda.wise@delaware.gov	State of DE
Verity	Watson	Verity@ruggeriowillson.com	RWA
Rachel	Valentin	rachel.valentin@csnc.k12.de.us	CSNC
Alicia	Jones	jonesalicia349@gmail.com	SDARJ; Community Liaison, Sunshine Circle Club
Sherry	Dorsey Walker	Sherry.dorseywalker@delaware.gov	House of Representatives
Shanika	Perry	Ssperry3@gmail.com	Bethel AME Church
Rebecca	Byrd	rebecca.byrd@byrdgomes.com	ByrdGomes
Tierra	Fair	tfair@uwde.org	United Way of Delaware
Keri	Rapa	keri.rapa@delaware.gov	Delaware General Assembly - Dover, DE
Brian	Tinsley	Tinsley98@msn.com	None
James	Nutter	jdutter@comcast.net	Parkowski, Guerke & Swayze, P.A.
Adriana	Bohm	abohm@dccc.edu	Red Clay
Rhetta	Church	rchurch@stmichaelsde.org	St. Michael's School
Jenevieve	Worley	jenevieve.worley@delaware.gov	Delaware General Assembly
Evan	Park	evrpark@udel.edu	UD
Joann	Yasiejko	joann.yasiejko@gmail.com	none
Jon	Offredo	jon.offredo@delaware.gov	ODS
J.	C.	Jeremyckr@yahoo.com	Concerned Parents of Delaware
Scott	Cora	cora.scott@bsd.k12.de.us	Brandywine School District
Jennifer	Gordon	Jennifer@oteywhite.com	NA

Agenda:

SS 1 for SB 82

HB 128 w/ HA 1

HB 198 w/ HA 1

Senator Sturgeon convened the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

The Committee approved the meeting minutes of May 11, 2021.

I. SS 1 for SB 82 (Lockman) – AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOL REGISTRATION.

Synopsis: This Act is a substitute for Senate Bill No. 82. Like Senate Bill 82, this Substitute does all of the following: (1) Codifies the Department of Education’s (“Department”) current efforts to establish a uniform public school registration process and requires that, beginning with the 2023 through 2024 school year, all public schools shall use the uniform public school registration process. This registration process will simplify the process for families, enable public schools to engage with families and plan in advance of the school year, and integrate data systems to eliminate duplication of effort. (2) Requires the uniform public school registration process to be Internet-based and in paper form and in English and Spanish and may be in other languages. This Act also requires that certain information must be provided in the process and that the Internet-based uniform public school registration process must include certain features. (3) Requires the Department to provide training to certain school district and charter school employees regarding the uniform public school registration process and issue guidelines for privacy of information submitted as part of the registration process. (4) Requires the Department to report to the Governor and General Assembly, no later than March 14, 2022, on the Department’s ability to connect the Internet-based uniform public school registration process to other Internet-based systems that are used to collect student data by the State; the Department; a licensed child care provider, including Head Start; or a public school serving preschool through age 21. This Substitute differs from Senate Bill No. 82 by doing all of the following: (1) Clarifying that a student must be registered in the student’s school district of residence before being eligible for the school choice process. (2) Requiring a public school be certified as completing training from the Department on the uniform public school registration process before providing paper forms as part of the in-person registration process. (3) Requiring the Department to provide uniform information about the uniform public school registration process to public schools and requiring the public schools to post the information on the school’s website and in other publications. (4) Requiring a public school to provide a parent with certain information after the parent completes the registration process, including the public school and school in which the child is enrolled.

Senator Lockman introduced the bill to the Committee. She explained that it was the product of years of work with the Delaware Readiness Teams who identified inconsistencies in the kindergarten registration process. She noted that it passed the Senate in a previous iteration in the 150th General Assembly. She said that the bill’s purpose is to help bring the registration process online.

Senator Sturgeon acknowledged **Secretary Bunting**'s presence and then deferred to **Dawn Alexander** of the Colonial School District, a witness for SS 1 for SB 82.

Ms. Alexander stressed that a lack of uniformity among existing registration systems would make them more accessible and equitable. She said that feedback on existing online registration systems had been very positive.

Diane Frentzel of Delaware Readiness Teams emphasized the challenges and barriers that have existed for many families with the registration process. She noted that the process was especially challenging for Spanish speakers.

Senator Sokola thanked Sen. Lockman for working on the bill. He asked about lines 64 and 65 of the bill, specifically noting an issue with the phrasing of "and must permit a public school to require additional information or documents". He said he would be more comfortable with an addition of "as approved by the secretary" to the language or something to that effect. **Senator Lockman** thanked him for the input. **Senator Sturgeon** echoed this concern.

Senator Sturgeon then opened the floor for public comment.

Robert Overmiller said that he supported the bill but with an amendment to address Sen. Sokola's concerns.

Kendall Massett of the Delaware Charter Schools Network said that DCSN supported the concept of the bill but had concerns about it as written, particularly about barriers to registration that would occur over the next few years and the belief that it excluded charters from the registration process.

Jamie Schneider of DAEYC expressed support for the bill on behalf of her organization.

Rep. Kim Williams thanked Sen. Lockman for the bill and expressed her support for the bill.

Dr. Tammy Croce of DASA said that she had just seen the bill and would examine it with her colleagues to share their thoughts.

Traci Murphy spoke on behalf of newly-elected Red Clay school board member Kecia Nesmith, expressing support for the legislation.

Mara Gorman spoke in support of the bill.

Sarah Bucic spoke in favor of the bill on behalf of the Delaware PTA.

Adriana Bohm of the Red Clay school board spoke to support the bill and thanked Sen. Lockman for drafting the bill.

Linda Zankowsky of the Sussex Montessori School expressed support for the principles of the bill, but echoed Kendall Massett's concerns about the registration process accommodating school choice.

Joanne Schlosberg of the Newark Charter School expressed support for universal registration, but said that Charter schools were public schools and that they needed to be treated as such.

Rhetta Church of St. Michael's expressed support for the bill on behalf of her organization.

Kristin Dwyer of the DSEA thanked Sen. Lockman for the bill and its amendment and expressed support for it on behalf of her organization.

Kristine Bewley of the Red Clay Consolidated School District expressed support for the bill on behalf of the District.

Sen. Sturgeon asked Sen. Lockman if the process could still be completed in-person. Sen. Lockman confirmed this.

SS 1 for SB 82 was reported out of the Committee: 3 Favorable; 2 on its Merits; 0 Unfavorable

II. HB 128 w/ HA 1 (Griffith) – AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN.

Synopsis: This Act permits the extension of special education and related services to those students with a disability who turn 21 during the 2020-2021 school year to address unfinished learning as a result of the pandemic which resulted in the COVID-19 Declaration of a State of Emergency for the State of Delaware Due to a Public Health Threat declared by the Governor on March 12, 2020. The IEP for the child must be revised to reflect the specific basis for extending services and the specific education and related services that will be provided.

Representative Griffith introduced the bill and explained its significance in improving the lives of students with a disability – something particularly necessary when many lost crucial in-person learning time during the pandemic. She noted that the bill unanimously passed the House with its amendment (which clarifies that the program uses federal funds) the previous week.

Sen. Sturgeon stressed the importance of the bill's passage and its necessity to help students with disabilities. She said she looked forward to supporting its passage in the Senate and thanked Senate leadership for helping move it through quickly.

Sen. Lockman expressed her support for the bill.

Sen. Bonini expressed his support for the bill.

Sen. Sturgeon then opened the floor to public comment.

Ruth Lavelle thanked Rep. Griffith for drafting the legislation and Sens. Sturgeon and Poore for sponsoring it in the Senate. She spoke about how the bill would help her son's educational and professional development as a student with disabilities.

Robert Overmiller expressed support for the legislation, and said that the GACEC supported the concept but hoped to issue an official recommendation soon.

Adriana Bohm expressed her support for the legislation.

Pam Weir of GACEC expressed support for the bill on behalf of her organization but requested clarification on the safeguards attached to the assessments made by the IEP team.

Dale Mastusevich of the Department of Education's Exceptional Children's Resources Group expressed support for the bill.

HB 128 w/ HA 1 was reported out of the Committee: 4 Favorable; 1 on its Merits; 0 Unfavorable

III. HB 198 w/ HA 1 (Dorsey Walker) – AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO BLACK HISTORY EDUCATION.

Synopsis: This Act requires each school district and charter school to establish and implement a curriculum on Black History for students in grades K through 12. This Act incorporates contemporary events into discussions of Black History and the tools of experience.

Sen. Sturgeon expressed her support for the bill and brought up Delaware's involvement in the Brown v. Board of Education decision as an example of its necessity.

Sen. Lockman said it was an honor to be bringing the bill forward as the Senate prime sponsor for the legislation and stressed the importance of passing the legislation for the

sake of educational equity. She also acknowledged the numerous stakeholders who helped draft the bill.

Rep. Dorsey Walker thanked Sens. Lockman & Sturgeon for their support of the bill. She read a list of innovations, inventions, and achievements of various Black Americans. She said the Delaware Black Student Coalition contributed to the shaping of the legislation and thanked the legislators who had helped move the bill forward. She said that Black history is American history.

Sen. Bonini thanked Rep. Dorsey Walker and expressed support for the concept of teaching Black history year-round. He said that some of his constituents had expressed concerns about the 1619 Project and critical race theory and wanted clarity on their presence in the bill. **Rep. Dorsey Walker** said that neither concept was even mentioned in the bill and that the bill maintains the ability of school districts to locally determine their own curricula. **Sen. Bonini** thanked Sen. Lockman and Rep. Dorsey Walker.

Sen. Sturgeon opened the floor for public comment.

Jack Guerin of the Unitarian Universalist of Delaware Advocacy Network spoke in favor of the bill on behalf of his organization.

Jalyn Powell of Out Loud LLC and the Delaware Racial Justice Collective spoke in favor of the legislation on behalf of both of her organizations and said that she hoped her state Senator, Senator Wilson, would support it.

Sarah Bucic expressed support for the bill on behalf of the Delaware PTA.

Secretary Susan Bunting said that because curricula are local decisions the DOE was neutral on the bill but was happy to help in any way needed.

Iskeisha Stuckey of Delaware United expressed support for the bill on behalf of her organization.

Dawn Alexander expressed her support for the bill and urged Committee members to release it.

Robert Overmiller expressed his opposition to the legislation.

Carina Slater expressed her opposition to the legislation.

Adriana Bohm expressed her support for the legislation.

Alicia Jones expressed her support for the legislation.

Senator Bonini clarified that the legislation did not enforce concepts of guilt or racial supremacy or division – rather heritage and inclusion. **Sen. Lockman** and **Rep. Dorsey Walker** agreed. **Rep. Dorsey Walker** expressed her thanks for Sen. Sokola’s support of the bill. She said that she now represents the district where her father was denied the ability to own a home – and said she carried no bitterness but rather wanted to open hearts and minds.

HB 198 w/ HA 1 was reported out of the Committee: 4 Favorable; 1 on its Merits; 0 Unfavorable

Senator Bonini motioned to adjourn the meeting and **Senator Lockman** seconded the motion.

Senator Sturgeon adjourned the meeting at 12:49 p.m.