

# State Board of Education Operating Standards Committee

## Meeting Minutes November 20, 2013

**Committee Members Present:**

Ron Rudduck – Chair  
Darryl Mehaffie – Vice Chair  
Mike Collins (late arrival)  
Stephanie Dodd  
Sarah Fowler (late arrival)  
Debe Terhar  
Bryan Williams

**ODE Staff Present:**

Richard Ross – State Superintendent  
John Richard  
Kevin Duff  
Sandra Hay  
Sharon Jennings  
Anna Chapman

**Committee Members Absent:**

Kathleen McGervey

**Call to Order and Minutes**

Mr. Rudduck called the meeting to order at 1:46 PM. With all present members voting AYE, the minutes were approved with an exception noted by Stephanie Dodd that she was late to arrive to the November 12, 2013 meeting and requested this be noted in the minutes.

**Discussion on the Purpose of the Operating Standards**

Mr. Rudduck began the discussion regarding the “Blue Book” he used when he was a building principal and the purpose of the operating standards, including their history and evolution. Mr. Rudduck stated the operating standards acted as the Ohio Revised Code prior to its inclusion of education laws and were intended to serve as a guide in the operation of schools.

There was discussion on the implications on the operating standards should definitions be removed from the Ohio Revised Code. Mr. Rudduck requested input on ways to make the operating standards functional and beneficial to school administrators while ensuring the standards’ relevance.

Ms. Terhar asked what would cause an administrator to refer to the operating standards. Mr. Rudduck stated that during his time as a principal, he seldom referred to the operating standards. He also stated that upon becoming a superintendent, he referred to the operating standards with greater frequency. Mr. Rudduck also added that he oftentimes referred to the “Blue Book” for guidance on day-to-day operations.

Ms. Terhar asked if a current version of the “Blue Book” exists. Sandra Hay, Education Consultant in the Office of Educational Reform stated that ODE developed an operating standards book in 2006 which was updated in 2011. No paper copies of the standards exist, but rather, a PDF document is posted on ODE’s website. Ms. Hay provided a hard copy of operating standards which were developed by ODE in 1983, 2001 and 2006.

Ms. Terhar requested a copy of the current standards and suggested the committee should begin their charge by referring to this document. She then requested feedback from stakeholders present.

Damon Asbury of the Ohio School Boards Association commented that, as a superintendent, he used the standards to help talk to the community. He would suggest not deleting them, but putting in another place. We need a handbook, perhaps an online website, which would have sections geared toward staff, parents, and community members.

Mr. Williams asked if the operating standards ought to be considered as a playbook on running a school. He further asked if districts would find this information beneficial. Mr. Rudduck suggested a simple fix by renaming the document, which may alleviate schools' concerns.

Deb Tully of the Ohio Federation of Teachers suggested a discussion of what operating standards should be. She stated that the districts with resources will use best practices and follow them and the districts without resources will cut corners and in turn will hurt the children.

Ms. Dodd requested holding additional discussions with stakeholders, as she believes a roundtable-type discussion lends itself better to suggestions, as opposed to an internet forum where the public is able to post comments.

Mr. Rudduck suggested instead of spending time reviewing specific operating standards that the committee spend the time in a roundtable-type discussion to have the stakeholders participate in the committee.

John Richard, Senior Executive Director for ODE's Center for Accountability and Continuous Improvement, suggested that ODE could reach out to all stakeholders and invite them to attend a roundtable-type discussion.

Ms. Terhar noted that she would prefer these discussions with stakeholders to be candid and honest. She prefers to avoid stakeholders attending and reading a prewritten speech. Mr. Rudduck asked if any additional stakeholders wished to provide input.

Mr. Rudduck noted that he developed a simple spreadsheet that could help explain the various laws and rules in customer friendly language. He reviewed the spreadsheet with the committee.

Cindy Peterson of the Ohio Education Association thinks there is an advantage to being able to post the operating standards on the website. She believes this will provide ease of access for users.

Sharon Jennings, ODE Deputy Legal Counsel, reminded committee members of their charge to review the operating standards and of the opportunity for the State Board to make policy decisions and changes with regards to the operating standards. Mr. Rudduck requested clarification of how the operating standards are ordered and organized. Ms. Jennings stated that historically the operating standards were a repeat of the Ohio Revised Code.

### **Stakeholder Input on Previously Reviewed Rules**

Rules two and three were not changed and finalized.

Ms. Fowler asked for clarification of the color-coding system that is being used on the draft of the standards. Kevin Duff, ODE Senior Policy Analyst, explained that pink represents comments regarding the changes or additions to the rule to explain why it was moved or changed.

A discussion was held regarding comments provided through the operating standards web page as they related to rule four. Ms. Dodd requested a copy of all stakeholder comments be sent to all committee members.

Mr. Dan Dodd of the Ohio Association of Independent Schools discussed the operating standards as they pertain to chartered non-public and independent schools. He stated that these schools must follow the operating standards unless they are specifically excluded. Chartered non-public and independent schools are not the same as public schools and their administration is not always referred to by the same titles as the public schools. The committee members received a communication from Mr. Dodd.

Ms. Donna Collins of the Ohio Alliance for Arts Education agreed with Ms. Peterson's earlier comments regarding ease of use of the website. Additionally, she fears removing references to the arts from the rule, stating that it would be harmful for the arts education in schools. Ms. Terhar expressed that she is in agreement with Ms. Collins' sentiment.

Mr. Duff brought to the committee's attention a resolution approved by the State Board at the November meeting. At the direction of the resolution, ODE presented the recommended changes to the operating standards that would add world history as a graduation requirement.

Ms. Terhar and Ms. Dodd would prefer to wait to see if action is taken by the General Assembly to add world history as a graduation requirement before making a decision. Mr. Mehaffie stated that he would like to see world history added to the operating standards, and not wait for legislative action.

Mr. Williams asked if any of the committee members have an opinion on including a world history requirement in the operating standards. No stakeholders expressed an opinion.

Ms. Terhar moved that the committee does not add World History at this time and requested a vote of committee members. With five AYES (Terhar, Dodd, Williams, Rudduck and Fowler) and one NAY (Mehaffie), the world history requirement was not added to the operating standards.

### **Initial Review of Rule 5**

Mr. Rudduck asked committee members for comment on rule 5 and there was a discussion of unfunded mandates and ratios.

Mr. Rudduck presented a selection of student-teacher ratios for districts that he created. Ms. Tully stated that she does not believe ratios presented by Mr. Rudduck are accurate, and thinks elementary school students are the ones that suffer the most as a result.

A discussion ensued regarding how the student-teacher ratios are calculated. Ms. Hay explained special education categories are specific. Data on this does not include special education. Dr. Richard A. Ross, Ohio Superintendent of Public Instruction, referenced the ratio that is present in the pending blended learning rule.

Mr. Collins feels as though the data in front of the committee is not helpful, as it seems to compare two separate items. He would prefer to have usable data which will be beneficial to the committee.

Mr. Mehaffie expressed that he is pleased to hear from people in the field and thanked them for taking the opportunity to meet with committee members.

**Adjournment**

With no further business to come before the committee, Mr. Rudduck adjourned the meeting.