

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
State Board for Occupational Therapy
January 11, 2024

Public Locations: Albany, New York City, Syracuse

Present: Rebecka Cox, Chair (Albany)
Janet Falk-Kessler (Albany)
Richard Sabel (NYC)
Sharon Sedlak (nonpublic location)
Jaime Spencer-Edelmann (NYC)
Kelly Van Auken (Syracuse)

Absent: Patricia Mahan
Kim Ann Mahoney

Staff (Albany):	Christine Amato	Board staff
	Kim Anderson	Board Staff
	Sarah Benson	Deputy Commissioner
	Stephanie Maes	Deputy Commissioner's staff
	Diane Martin	Board Staff
	Kellie Murphy	Deputy Commissioner's staff
	Karen Shier	Board staff
	Paul Thompson	Board Executive Secretary (Acting)
	David Wiech	Deputy Commissioner's staff

Meeting Convened

Mr. Thompson called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. Board members and staff introduced themselves. Mr. Thompson noted that comments and discussion are restricted to State Board members and Department staff.

Presentation on Licensure Compacts

- Deputy Commissioner Sarah Benson provided an overview of the types of national licensure compacts, their purposes and benefits, challenges for implementation, and alternatives to reach similar goals. Board members commented on compact functions and features of the proposed occupational therapy compact.

“Professions Connections”

- Kellie Murphy and Stephanie Maes described outreach to engage students and educators in learning more about careers in the licensed professions. The dedicated “Careers” section of the Office of the Professions website includes profiles of each profession, tools to help students identify their career interests, and features on how the professions serve the public.
- They encouraged Board members to help refine the existing OT profile, and Board members offered suggestions on resources and encouraged further refinements to better reflect the State’s practice environment and diversity. Members may reach out to Mr. Thompson or Ms. Murphy with suggestions for improving content and outreach. Ms. Murphy mentioned the

possibility of developing partnerships with education programs to develop videos depicting a “day in the life” of students in preparation programs.

Executive Secretary’s Report

- The Board recognized former Board members Karen Newman and Serena Wen, both of whom completed their terms of service. Mr. Thompson described the role of Extended Board Members, who are appointed to advise on licensure disciplinary and moral character matters.
- Mr. Thompson noted the Board’s need for a physician member and public members, and he described the application and appointment processes.
- At its November 2023 meeting, the Board of Regents approved amendments to Commissioner’s Regulations to implement Chapter 601 of the Laws of 2022, which authorized qualified occupational therapists to treat patients without a referral from a physician or nurse practitioner. Next steps: Mr. Thompson will develop a revised draft of the proposed guidance document for Board review. Department counsel will need to provide a final review before the document is posted on the Professions website.
- As the legislative season progresses, Mr. Thompson may reach out to Board members for advice as bills are brought forward for the Department’s review.
- Member Spencer described school practices that require prescriptions for OT services; Mr. Thompson invited suggestions for updating the Department’s existing guidance at <https://www.op.nysed.gov/professions/occupational-therapists/professional-practice/when-occupational-therapy-services-require-prescription-or-referral>. Ms. Spencer also highlighted the challenges that arise when OT practitioners in school settings are not classified as instructional staff.
- The Department is seeking approval for a Board Executive Secretary in multiple professions.

Adjournment

Motion: Kelly Van Auken

Second: Sharon Sedlak

Resolved: That the meeting be adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Next meeting: April 4, 2024