

**THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK**  
**THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**  
**STATE BOARD FOR MASSAGE THERAPY**  
December 6, 2024

**Public Locations:** Albany, New York City, Rochester, Syracuse

**Present:** Michele Naumann Carlstrom, Chair (New York City)  
Kyle Hierholzer, Vice Chair (Syracuse)  
Mary Chiappone-Filson (Syracuse)  
Kiersten Fisher (nonpublic location)  
Chad Hunkins (Syracuse)  
Dale Montelione-Grust (Albany)  
Amy E. Warcup (Rochester)

**Guests:** Kyle Farmer (FSMTB)  
Debra Persinger (FSMTB)  
Linda Toomey

<b>Staff:</b>	Carolyn Ferrick	Professional Examinations Unit
	Diane Martin	Board Staff
	Karen Shier	Board Staff
	Paul Thompson	Board Executive Secretary

**Meeting Convened**

The Executive Secretary called the meeting to order at 10:20 a.m. Board members, guests, and staff introduced themselves. The Executive Secretary reviewed the agenda and noted that comments and discussion are restricted to State Board members and Department staff.

**MBLEx—Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards (FSMTB)**

- The Board welcomed Debra Persinger (Executive Director) and Kyle Farmer (Director of Examinations and Innovation) from FSMTB, who were invited to speak about the MBLEx licensure examination.
- Ms. Persinger provided background on the MBLEx, touching on the job task analysis; construction of multiple-choice items; focus on clinical scenarios and entry-level practice; the exam administrator (Pearson Vue); and the work by subject matter experts, writers, reviewers, and peer evaluators.
- The MBLEx is a computer adaptive test; adaptive tests respond to the candidate's level of performance as they attempt to progress through increasingly complex material.
- Candidates are presented four potential answers to each question; the Federation may reduce this to three choices at a future date.
- Candidates get immediate feedback on their performance (pass or fail) and a diagnostic report that summarizes performance by content categories.
- There is no process for appealing exam scores or reviewing test items, other than a candidate reporting a perceived problematic question at the test site.
- The Federation does not limit the number of exam attempts, but states may choose to impose restrictions.

- About 100-150 candidates per year sit for the MBLEx in New York State, across 19 Pearson Vue sites that are available at least 6 days per week. FSMTB does not require a state authorization to test; Ms. Ferrick noted New York's education and moral character review requirements.
- The Federation has seen evidence of human trafficking at test centers, such as candidates appearing with "handlers" who purchase access for multiple candidates.
- The massage therapy licensure compact requires jurisdictions to use the MBLEx to participate in the compact.
- Vice Chair Hierholzer inquired about the possibilities of a New York jurisprudence section; such an addition could be administered separately or as an add-on at the MBLEx site.
- Members commented that the MBLEx may lack sufficient coverage of Eastern modalities, which would necessitate a New York State addendum.

### **Report on the FSMTB Annual Meeting**

- Linda Toomey summarized the activities at the October FSMTB annual meeting, which she attended on the Board's behalf. Sessions included presentations on FSMTB business and administrative reports as well as discussions on business ethics, implicit bias, legal trends, and licensure innovations. The Board thanked Linda for both her report and her service to the Board over the past five years.

### **Conclusion of Public Session**

Motion: To end the public session and enter executive session to discuss matters relating to the State Massage Therapy examination – Dale Montelione-Grust; second: Kyle Hierholzer.

Vote: Unanimous approval (12:00 p.m.)

### **Executive Session (12:10 p.m.)**

Discussion of matters relating to the New York State licensure examination.

Motion to conclude meeting: Michele Naumann Carlstrom; second: Dale Montelione-Grust.

Unanimous approval (1:15 p.m.)