

MINUTES

State Board of Education Meeting

Date

Tuesday, January 11, 2022

Time

1:00 p.m.

Location

Rutledge Conference Center
1429 Senate Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Alan Walters., Chair

Crissy Stapleton, Chair-Elect

Molly M. Spearman, State Superintendent of Education,
Secretary and Administrative Officer to the Board

If you require Section 504 or ADA accommodations to attend or participate in this public meeting, please contact Tracy Moore.

Notice: Due to allergies of staff and visitors, we ask that visitors refrain from wearing scented products when attending the State Board of Education meetings in SCDE facilities.

SBE Mission: The State Board of Education's mission is to provide a leadership role in helping South Carolina set policy and direction to transform teaching and learning so that students are prepared with the necessary knowledge and skills, including innovation, to compete globally and live a productive life.

The following State Board of Education (SBE) members physically attended: Chair Alan Walters, Fifteenth Judicial Circuit; Chair-Elect Crystal Stapleton, Second Judicial Circuit; Delaney K. Frierson, Third Judicial Circuit; Cathy D. Chapman, Fourth Judicial Circuit; and Carl Hinze, Seventh Judicial Circuit. Members attending virtually were Cynthia A. Downs, Ed.D., Eighth Judicial Circuit; David Whittemore, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit; Mary Cordray, Fourteenth Judicial Circuit; and Kristi Woodall, Sixteenth Judicial Circuit. Dr. J.R. Green, Sixth Judicial Circuit; Larry Kobrovsky, Ninth Judicial Circuit; Sallie R. Lee, Tenth Judicial Circuit; and Michael Brenan, Governor's Appointee, were absent.

The following South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) staff were physically attending: Molly Spearman, State Superintendent of Education; Barbara A. Drayton, Deputy General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, Division of Legal Affairs; Katie Nilges, Director, Office of Governmental Affairs, Division of Legal Affairs; Tracy Moore, SBE Minutes Taker/Administrative Coordinator, and Office of General Counsel, Division of Legal Affairs; Kinzie Riddle, Administrative Coordinator, Office of Governmental Affairs, Division of Legal

Affairs; Frances “Cricket” Katsos, Administrative Coordinator, Office of Governmental Affairs, Division of Legal Affairs; Betsy Carpenter, Deputy Superintendent, Division of Data, Technology and Agency Operations; David Mathis, Ed.D., Deputy Superintendent, Division of College and Career Readiness; Kimberly E. Mack, Director, Office of School Transformation, Division of Federal Programs, Accountability and School Improvement; Sarah Longshore, Director, Federal and State Accountability, Division of Federal Programs and Comprehensive Education Services; Rebecca Davis, Director, Special Education Services, Division of Federal Programs and Comprehensive Education Services; Derek Phillips, Public Information Director, Office of Communications; Travis Huggins, Information Technology Manager I, Chief Information Office, Division of Data, Technology and Agency Operations; Rashard Huntley, IT Specialist II, Chief Information Office, Division of Data, Technology and Agency Operations; and Quinn Murphy, IT Specialist III, Chief Information Office, Division of Data, Technology and Agency Operations.

I. WELCOME/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SBE meeting convened at 1:00 p.m. Chair Walters called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone who attended either physically or virtually.

Chair-Elect Stapleton led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance. (Due to the pandemic, all JROTC performances are discontinued until further notice.)

II. APPROVAL OF STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES FOR DECEMBER 14, 2021

Chair Walters asked if there were any objections to approving the minutes as presented for the SBE meeting on December 14, 2021. Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

III. APPROVAL OF STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AGENDA FOR JANUARY 11, 2022

Chair Walters asked if there were any objections to approving the agenda as presented for the January 11, 2022, SBE meeting. Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

IV. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS AND NEWS MEDIA

Chair Walters welcomed any media and asked if any had signed in. Chair Walters recognized Wayne Floyd, Scott Floyd, James Floyd, Kathy Manness, Sherry East, Jean Neils-Strunjas, and Dr. Brannon Traxler.

V. STATE BOARD CHAIR REPORT

Chair Walters ceded his time to the Superintendent and her guests.

VI. STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION REPORT

Superintendent Spearman reported that as president of Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), she had attended the previous night's college football playoff game as they honored all Teachers of the Year, including Sarah Gams, 2021 S.C. State Teacher of the Year. The teachers were treated royally and were recognized for the great work that they're doing.

Superintendent Spearman then introduced Dr. Brannon Traxler, Public Health Director, SC DHEC.

Dr. Traxler gave a brief overview of what COVID-19 looks like in our state right now, particularly with children, and the testing options that have been available and remain available to schools. Dr. Traxler's main focus was the updated DHEC School and Childcare Exclusion List and our School Guidance Booklet, which elaborates on the exclusion list.

Currently, in South Carolina, as you can see from this graph, we are in a surge. We are seeing this omicron surge happening in South Carolina. Referring to her presentation, these cases are the highest, by a fair amount, that we have seen in our states thus far. While we are seeing increases in hospitalizations, I'm happy to report that it sounds, at this point, like it is not as severe of an illness for many people, certainly for those who are vaccinated. We are not seeing as sharp of an increase at this time with hospitalizations. However, certainly the concern is that the cases continue to rise, and, based off of sheer volume, we could end up with overrun hospitals. Based on what we have seen in other countries where the omicron surge is completed, this usually runs its course in about six to eight weeks. There is no guarantee that will happen here, but we are certainly hopeful. I have shared that if we can get through January, hopefully, February will be on the decline. But that, again, remains to be seen.

Referring to her presentation slides, going back to this July, looking at the school year at cases in school-age children in the state. While you can see that we have seen an increase, you can see it's not as sharp of an increase compared to the delta surge with the overall case counts. We are seeing children being infected, and we are seeing more children hospitalized than we have before. Again, the severity, thankfully, is not correspondingly as high as the case counts.

While this looks impressive, the majority of our cases, driven by the 20 to 40 and 20- to 50-year-olds, are where the majority of the cases with this surge are occurring. The CDC puts out community transmissions, drilling down to the county level on their data

tracker website. As of this morning, they rank it by high, substantial, moderate, or low levels of community transmission based on an algorithm using the number of new cases and the percent positive for the last rolling seven days. As you can see, all 46 counties in South Carolina are high. The number that isn't quite visible there is that in the United States, there are only 24 counties that are not high, out of 3,219 counties total. As for omicron and the surge, it is occurring nationwide.

Looking at vaccination rates as of last week, looking at all who are eligible, and everybody who is five years and older is now eligible for, at least, a primary series, which is two shots of Pfizer or Moderna or one dose of Janssen Those 12 and older are eligible for a booster. For the primary series, five and up, we are sitting just above 50 percent in the state. We are a little over 60 percent with those have at least one dose. The children, the five- to 11-year-olds are not certainly as high as it was not authorized for them nearly as long, and there was no additional rush that we saw with adults. However, that number does continue to increase at a slow but steady rate. We are approaching 9 percent who have completed their primary series or what we call fully vaccinated, and 14 percent who have gotten at least one dose. We're only sitting about a month out, roughly, from when the first of those children even became eligible for their second dose, based on timing.

The testing programs for schools, we've had three programs that we've made available to schools throughout the state during this school year. One of them actually went into place last year, and it is the rapid tests. We provide the Abbott BinaxNOW Antigen Tests, similar to the ones you can buy over the counter, if you can find them, but slightly different. They come just packaged more economically, 52 a box, et cetera. We provide those for school nurses for the school districts that want to participate in that. We have 40 districts and then 13 charter schools who are utilizing those. And those are again, 15 minutes, they're the rapid antigen tests.

The Cue nucleic acid amplification test, which is similar to a PCR is another roughly 20-minute test. We have a limited number of those. And those are currently in use by 19 private schools. Through the federal program, Operation Extended Testing or Operation ET, we have the ability to connect schools and school districts, though we are not involved in the actual operation of it. At this time, we just have one charter school and one private school who were participating in that, though we are certainly always happy to connect others who are interested. I'm afraid I don't know a lot of the ins-and-outs of that, again, because we don't manage it, but it is available.

The other very popular option is the Turnkey Testing Vendors. And I will say there's 39 school districts and six charter schools that are using this. Some of those overlap with Binax. Some of them really are doing an outstanding job with testing and are utilizing

both systems. The Turnkey Testing Vendors is a full service, basically, start-to-finish PCR testing. We have several vendors throughout the state. We pair them up then with the school or school district, they set up on designated dates and times. It can be set up for every single day testing and it is certainly for free. My reports indicate a pretty good job of maintaining a 48-hour result turnaround. They have not been affected, that I'm aware of, by any of the recent backlog issues. But that is a 24- to 48-hour turnaround on that test, it is the gold standard test.

Where do we stand at the moment? With the antigen test, BinaxNOW, we are getting the maximum number that we can through a federal contract. We are receiving roughly 20,000 a week, and those are for schools. So that is our top priority with those tests. For many of these, we don't know what the supply chain looks like, but we are committed to really making sure that we provide schools with the testing materials that they need, recognizing that the antigen tests, rapid tests are very difficult to find these days. But we are pursuing every avenue and lead that we're given. We're committed to prioritizing schools for this.

The last couple of weeks have been busy when it comes to isolation and quarantine guidance. On Monday, December 27th, the CDC, around 5:30 that afternoon, announced a change in their overall isolation and quarantine guidance for the public. This is one week before our schools in South Carolina were to start resuming in-person. We scrambled and worked very hard over the next week. The CDC was not certain when they would be providing updated K-12 school-specific guidance. We knew from what we were hearing from schools that they needed updated guidance for return to school. We did update our school exclusion lists that Friday, New Year's Eve actually, and then, subsequently, a few days later, our guidance. In typical irony, two days after we updated our big thick guidance booklet, the CDC came out with their new K-12 guidance. We went back and reviewed theirs and reviewed the data and science behind theirs and compared it to ours. A number of our medical epidemiologists were involved, as well as some of our experts in schools, with some school-specific coordination. We then published on Friday and updated the exclusion list, and on Sunday, an updated guidance booklet. The school exclusion list is the high level what's required for isolation and quarantine. The guidance booklet goes into a lot more detail and more scenarios. It's meant to augment really the exclusion list. They don't oppose each other.

As for isolating, and I want to make a point that for both isolation and quarantine, it's gotten easier, it's gotten more relaxed. It is based on science and data, we looked at it and made sure that we were comfortable that this was safe to do. For isolation, previously, if you tested positive, you were isolated for 10 days from when your symptoms began, or if you never developed symptoms from when your test was performed. Also, at the end of that 10 days, you needed no fever for 24 hours without

taking fever-reducing meds and your symptoms had to be improving significantly or improved. The new isolation requirements, which are based on the fact that omicron has a shorter incubation period, and it looks like a shorter infectious period, are down to five days. You have to isolate for five instead of 10. Again, no fever for those last 24 hours, your symptoms have to be significantly improving. The caveat with this new guidance, because there may be a few people who are still slightly contagious at the end of that five days is that everybody needs to wear a mask when they come back for the next five days. So instead of really taking away five days, it just converted this last five to in-person but masked. You do not have to have a negative test to come back. The CDC has changed their guidance for the general public again and it made that optional. We're certainly never going to tell anybody they can't, but it is not necessary for return.

As to quarantine, and I want to point out that all of these options assume that the person has no symptoms. If they have symptoms, they need to stay out until they can get tested and such. Previously, there were three options.

A full quarantine was 14 days, and didn't require a test. There were two options to shorten in place for this school year. One was 10 days without a test. And the other was seven days, as long as you tested negative on day five or later.

The shortest you could shorten quarantine to was for seven days if you were a close contact.

Now a full quarantine is down to 10 days from 14. We left 10 days, without a test, as an part of the guidance. We did clarify in our recent update that we intend this, really, for schools experiencing significant cases, especially if they're seeing transmission, potentially, in the school. This gives them more ability to break those chains of transmission. We intend for it to be used temporarily in those situations. The new normal quarantine is five days, but you do need to test negative on day four or later. You need to wear a mask on days six to 10, but you can be in-person just wearing a mask. It is important for that testing on day four or later, especially with children. I have anecdotally heard from friends who are pediatricians that they have identified two situations with asymptomatic kid who was getting that test on day four or five, were positive. That's what makes it safer, that and the mask-wearing, to come back in the shortest time of five days.

The other option, the CDC released data from two pilot programs they did back in mid-December is a Test-To-Stay program, that eliminates the need to quarantine, for anyone who would otherwise need to quarantine. You have to have two negative tests within seven days, and you do need to wear a mask for that whole 10 days that you would have otherwise potentially been quarantined, but this would have the ability then to keep anybody in-person in school. A limiting step is the availability of the rapid test and having staffing to perform it. We'll get to that in a minute because we are accepting

home tests.

People can avoid quarantine altogether are if they are vaccinated. If you're 18 years or older, if you've gotten that primary series, and then if you're eligible for a booster. We know that the booster gives significantly more protection for omicron. For many of the students, if they are 12 to 17, they just need to be fully vaccinated. If they have a documented infection with a PCR or antigen test, not an antibody to know exactly when they were infected within the last 90 days, we can assume they have some protection still and they do not have to quarantine, but both of these folks would need to, of course, have no symptoms. They do need to wear that mask for 10 days.

Our other guidance, the big highlights, there are two big highlights in the updates. In the past, we certainly left it to the discretion of schools as to whether or not they accept the at-home, over-the-counter rapid test results. But we did discourage it out of concern for the validity of results and/or people performing them correctly. At this time, more of a push towards rapid tests, and especially using them to shorten quarantines and eliminate the need for quarantine, we agreed to and encourage schools to accept them. We are requiring an attestation form. We provided the template in our guidance booklet.

Previously, the CDC definition on classroom outbreaks was three or more cases anytime during a two-week period within a classroom. As you can imagine with omicron, as easily as it can be spread, we would have had what would be classified as an outbreak in many classrooms. We decided we would adopt our flu-type definition, and the CDC seems to have departed from that, but have not provided a new definition. Now 20 percent or more of a class absent at any one time with COVID would be considered an outbreak. In that situation, our local epidemiologists work with the schools to determine what steps need to be taken with the class. Potentially unvaccinated students might want to stay home for several days to, again, break that chain of transmission in the classroom, but we certainly made that more reasonable based on the science with flu.

This is from the CDC. I thought it was simple, but very true. We know we have the tools to fight omicron; vaccinating, testing and masking. For testing, we are committed to doing everything we can to prioritize schools and get them the testing that they need. Masks, we know, especially with omicron, are important. Plain cloth masks, just cotton masks are probably not as effective against omicron as they were against Delta and others. They recommend that you either pair those with a disposable one or use a KN-95. But again, any mask is better than no mask. You will get some protection from even the cloth cotton one. It may just not be the maximum amount, but it is certainly better than no mask. Finally, the vaccines, and again, the booster if you're eligible, are the best way to protect yourself. I'm happy to take any questions. Thank you.

Chair Walters asked Dr. Traxler if the home tests were optional for districts? Dr. Traxler responded in the affirmative.

Chair Walters asked if the rapid tests could be shipped to schools. Dr. Traxler responded in the affirmative.

Chair Walters voiced a concern he's heard about home testing versus proctored testing at the school and asked if tests would be distributed specifically to schools without nurses. Dr. Traxler responded that the preference is distributing tests to schools with nurses but will work with all schools.

Chair Walters asked Dr. Traxler to clarify the attestation form where the home-test kit has two tests but only one block for listing results and Dr. Traxler clarified.

Chair Walters asked about maximally vaccinated versus fully vaccinated, with the 12-year-olds and up now being eligible, but not currently required, for boosters, is there a possibility that could change anytime soon? Dr. Traxler reported no indication of that changing, understanding that this is an ever-evolving pandemic. She noted that the 12 to 15 age group just hit the five-month timeframe needed about a month ago and were not eligible for boosters.

Chair Walters asked if there was a chance of South Carolina adopting a similar policy to Georgia in which if you're asymptomatic, you go to school or work. Dr. Traxler responded in the negative.

Chair Walters asked if anyone else had questions and thanked Dr. Traxler for her time today.

Superintendent Spearman also thanked Dr. Traxler.

Superintendent Spearman then recognized Dr. John Payne, for a special recognition.

Dr. Payne provided that today, as part of Superintendent Spearman's update, the SCDE has a special presentation to make in memory of Dr Susan Weathers Floyd, a previous and longtime employee of the South Carolina Department of Education, who passed away back in October. Her husband, Dr. Lane Floyd, himself with a lifetime of service to public education, as well as their sons, Dr. James Floyd and Dr. Scott Floyd are joining us here today.

In the early 2000s, we began two projects aimed at reducing the shortages of special education teachers and providers in our public schools through our SC CREATE Program, as well as through a separate project, SLP, Speech-Language Pathologist:

Recruitment and Retention in Schools. Susan Floyd, in her tenure here, in concert with leadership from the Speech-Language Pathology Programs at University of South Carolina in South Carolina State University created Project SLP, which, like it's SC CREATE counterpart, provide scholarship opportunities for public school employees to obtain a master's degree in speech-language pathology to address the critical shortages and shortfalls of these important providers. In 2013, our Project SLP was incorporated into our larger SC CREATE program. But our Project SLP continues to provide school districts an opportunity to address any shortages of speech-language pathologist. The progress we have seen in South Carolina would not have been possible without the vision and the cathedral-building that Susan undertook in starting Project SLP. So today we come before you, as we name, as we rename our SLP scholarship program as the Dr Susan Weathers Floyd Speech-Language Pathology Scholarship Program in memory of Susan. As part of that, we would like to present her husband and family, a plaque that commemorates this memorial and dedication. And I would simply ask if they could join me here now at the front.

The plaque reads, "The State Board of Education and the South Carolina Department of Education, on this 11th day of January, 2022, hereby establishes the Dr Susan Weather Floyd Scholarship Fund in memory of Susan Weathers Floyd for her passionate dedication and outstanding leadership as State Coordinator of Speech-Language Pathology, and Assistive Technology, development of the SLP Preparation component of the Centers for the Reeducation and Advancement of Teachers in Special Education and Related Service Personnel Program and a lifetime of distinguished service. Signed by State Superintendent Spearman and Chairman Alan Walters.

VII. PARLEMENTARIAN COMMENT

Chair Walters recognized Barbara Drayton, standing in for Cathy Hazelwood, Parliamentarian. Ms. Drayton reminded everyone to submit their ethics statements if they have not already done so.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Kathy Maness, Executive Director, Palmetto State Teachers Association commented, "Governor McMaster has proclaimed January as School Board Recognition Month throughout the state and encourages all South Carolinians to recognize the contributions that school boards make to the academic success of public-school students across the Palmetto State. The PSTA would like to thank you for what you do every day for the students, teachers, and parents in our South Carolina schools. "

Sherry East, President, South Carolina Education Association, commented, "Thank you for your service on the school board at the state level and to all the other school board members out there. She shared the story, "Find Your Marigold: The One Essential Rule for New Teachers" relating the story created for a first-year teacher to the role of Board Members."

IX. STATE BOARD ITEMS

PL POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE—COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Walters reported that the sub-committee met and heard 3 action item(s) and 1 item(s) for information. The action items were placed on the Consent Agenda.

This concluded Chair Walters' report.

FOR APPROVAL

- 01. Online Testing and Testing Window Extension Waiver Requests**
- 02. Request for Approval of Property Disposal – Greenwood School District 50**
- 03. Request approval of Best Practices and Model Policy for Library Materials and the Reconsideration of Library Media Center Materials Form**

FOR INFORMATION

- 01. School District Waiver Requests Update**

EP EDUCATOR PROFESSIONS—COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Walters recognized Ms. Stapleton, standing in for Committee Chair Lee, who reported that the sub-committee met and heard 8 action item(s) and 1 item(s) for information. The action items were placed on the Consent Agenda.

This concluded Ms. Stapleton's report.

FOR APPROVAL

- 01. Withdrawn**
- 02. Critical Need Geographic Areas (Schools) for 2022-23**
- 03. New Educator Preparation Program Approval Recommendation: Clemson University Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Modern Languages**
- 04. New Educator Preparation Approval Recommendation: Clemson University Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) in Modern Languages**

05. New Educator Preparation Program Approval Recommendation: Clemson University Residency Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) in Modern Languages

06. New Educator Preparation Program Approval Recommendation: Clemson University Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) in Secondary Education Social Studies

07. New Educator Preparation Program Approval Recommendation: Lander University Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) in Special Education

08. National Accreditation Decisions: Clemson University, The Citadel, Furman University and Erskine College

09. Request by Educator Preparation Provider for Out-of-Country Clinical Experience Placement: University of South Carolina-Columbia (UofSC-C)

FOR INFORMATION

01. Professional Review Committee (PRC): Educator Preparation Provider and Program Updates

SLA STANDARDS, LEARNING AND ACCOUNTABILITY—COMMITTEE REPORT

Did not meet.

ELC EDUCATOR LICENSURE—COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Walters recognized Ms. Chapman who reported the sub-committee met and took action upon the following ten cases; eight suspensions and two revocations. Ms. Chapman further reported that these matters were ratified during the Full Board ELC meeting.

FB-ELC FULL BOARD EDUCATOR LICENSURE—COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Walters reported that the Full Board ELC met only to ratify the work of the ELC.

IX. CONSENT AGENDA

All Committee Items presented to the State Board for approval by motion make up the Consent Agenda. Ms. Chapman made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Chair-Elect Stapleton seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

X. SOUTH CAROLINA BOARD OF EDUCATION REPORT

01. Literacy Update—David Mathis, EdD, Deputy Superintendent, Division of College and Career Readiness

The College and Career Readiness Division is prioritizing our work to help districts and making every effort to maximize the potential that we have to help districts deepen student learning. As everyone across the state is working diligently to address unfinished learning, that's been impacted by COVID, the division wants to make certain that we are strategically focused and that we're meaningfully helping districts. Our directors in the division have determined that we need to work a little bit smarter. There are so many things that we can have on a plate, but we want the things on the plate that make the difference. We want to do what works, but more than that, we want to do what works best. We have identified two priorities. In the handout I gave you, identifies those priorities that our division, seven offices, are really going to focus on. And this does really have its greatest impact on unfinished learning. And priority one is that we assist districts with a cohesive system, assessment system, formative, interim and summative assessments that effectively assess our content standards. What we really want to do is take the guesswork out of what is going to be in the preparation for the summative assessment. We want to prepare students, make sure we prepare students all throughout the year for that state summative assessment. The second priority is that we develop robust resources in our State Learning Object Repository that will provide all teachers in the state, and particularly those in underserved areas with the tools they need to effectively deliver instruction. I think one of the things that we have noticed during the pandemic is throughout the state, we have a resource gap. Some districts have far more resources than others, but we want to make sure the resources that we provide all of our teachers align strategically and that they provide robust instruction and rigor necessary to meet the academic standards. And so we shared these priorities with our state, the district, throughout the state with our district instructional leaders. And we asked them for their feedback. And the division further defined our scope of work after received that information, again, to stay focused on what matters the most and how we can best deliver our help from the department. On that third slide, you will see how we plan to align our focus, it's very simple. We cannot remediate ourselves to better student performance. We have got to strengthen tier one, core one instruction that every student gets in the state. And for those students who need extra help with that unfinished learning, then we need to provide the interventions for them. But, clearly, to deepen student learning, we need to strengthen tier one core instruction that every student gets in the state. And so how can we do that? We're going to do that by making sure that all of our schools understand the effectiveness of MTSS, which is the Multi-Tiered System of Support in core instruction, what that looks like in every class, every day for every student. We want to make sure that teachers understand their content and they understand the depth of the standard. You probably know, oftentimes teachers look at those standards and they ask, "What am I supposed to do here?" Because it is oftentimes difficult to understand. So how can we structure our help to make sure they understand the depth of that standard? And then once you do that, that you teach and assess, day in and day out to the level of where that standard, the depth of that standard because if you don't, you're not providing the most effective instruction. And then we want to make sure that teachers understand the evidence that they need to accept from students that the student has mastered that skill. And as we look at the standards, we understand there are certain

standards that emerge through the year. We understand that there are certain standards that are going to spiral and come back again later in the year and in the years that may follow. But there are some standards that we call the jumping off point. Those are the ones you must know before you go to the next grade. And helping teachers understand and administrators understand where those standards fit. For those students who need interventions, we want to make sure that, again, they understand the multi-tiered system of support and what's expected for those students who need a level of intervention support. And as they do that, the interventions must meet the individual needs of the student. It's not a cookie-cutter approach for interventions. Everybody doesn't need the same thing, but what do the individual students need and how do you personalize that? One of the most important times of the day are for those students who need help with interventions, the planning that goes into those interventions is some of the most important times of the day. So we make sure that those are planned effectively. But if the intervention isn't working, we want to give teachers the ability to recognize that and then refocus for other help. And then the third area that we want to align our focus on is those curricula and resources that teachers need. And there again, in our learning object repository, making sure that it is loaded for all teachers with the most robust standards, I mean, robust materials that address our standards. We realize that all districts don't need the same help. And I mean, we're positioned to help districts personalize that with what they may need. Just to give you an example of where we are with how we want to help districts, you've heard us talk about, I mentioned in meetings past that book, "Annual Growth for All Students and Catch Up Growth for Those Who are Behind". And we realize that every student has to make annual growth, but those are behind having to make annual growth. And the author of the book gives this sobering quote, and you take, for example, a primary student who's just come to school out of kindergarten and may be behind, that means for those students, she says, "They must make one year of annual growth and one year of catch-up growth for each year." And if they're behind, another way to say that is, by year three, there has to be two years' worth of growth in first grade and second grade and third grade. That's the sobering reality of where we need to help our districts. But we could do this. And so, I just want to give you that update, that that's going to be the focus as we go out. How do we help with our tier one instruction for all districts or for all students? And then how do we focus on the interventions that matter the most?

Chair Walters asked if there were any questions. Hearing None, Chair Walters recognized Dr. John Payne, standing in for Kimberly Mack, on updates on school districts.

02. Allendale County School District (ASCD) Update—Dr. John Payne, on behalf of Kimberly E. Mack, Director, Office of School Transformation, Division of Federal Programs, Accountability and School Improvement

With respect to Allendale County School District, on December 3rd, Allendale County Schools hosted a monthly COVID-19 vaccination clinic at Allendale Fairfax High School Gym that was

open to students, staff, and the Allendale community. 97 percent of the Allendale County School District employees are fully vaccinated, and 35 percent of the students are fully vaccinated. The district has seen a decrease in the COVID-19 positive cases and quarantine cases since securing on-site weekly testing in September 2021 with Rapid Reliable Testing, LLC.

03. Florence County School District Four (FCSD-4) Update— Dr. John Payne, on behalf of Kimberly E. Mack, Director, Office of School Transformation, Division of Federal Programs, Accountability and School Improvement

In Florence Four, Timmonsville seniors and juniors at Timmonsville High School, participated in a lunch and learn with college recruiters, a Marine recruiter presented the benefits of a career in the armed forces, one Timmonsville high school students scored an 83 on the ASVAB and another scored 52. The district collaborated with the Farrah Turner Foundation fallen officer from Florence County to provide three families within the Timmonsville community to receive donated Christmas toys, clothing, and other necessities.

04. Williamsburg County School District (WCSD) Update—Dr. John Payne, on behalf of Kimberly E. Mack, Director, Office of School Transformation, Division of Federal Programs, Accountability and School Improvement

In Williamsburg, three teachers at Anderson Primary and two teachers at Kingstree Middle Magnet School have received an SEC Bright Ideas Grant to fund classroom project and activities. Student teachers in the USC Elementary Teaching Program visited Hemingway Elementary to learn about the advantages of teaching in a rural community. And lastly, a local industry, Palmetto Synthetics, hired four local high school students as apprentices. And those are the updates that I had, but I will defer to the State Superintendent.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

Superintendent Spearman: As we're moving now into January of 2022. I have held a meeting and have one planned. We've already met with the Williamsburg County Board of Education to talk with them about the transition from state management back to local control. When we went into Williamsburg a few years ago, the primary deficiency there was they were out of compliance with special ed programming and other federal programs. There were other issues, audit issues, lack of teaching on standard. On standards, I'm happy to say that now the district is in compliance. They have been able to manage all special education programming. There are two cases that are ongoing because the amount of services need to be provided over a certain amount of time, but the district is doing that well, and we are working with them. They submitted an on-time clear audit. We have given tremendous amounts of professional development there, and it is time for us to begin transitioning out. The agreement with the board, and this is going out to their board chair in writing, but we have met in a verbal agreement that over the next few months, they will begin training,

having some training provided for the board members, several of them are new to the board, by the South Carolina School Boards Association. We will discuss and work with them as we develop the budget for the 2022-23 year with them. It will be our final decision, but we certainly want to give them that practice of going through how to build a good budget, as well as other decisions that they will began making. And I have told them if all goes well, we plan to complete that transition sometime near the end of this year, or definitely by January of 2023.

We have a meeting scheduled with the Allendale County Board. Dr Wilder, of course, in Williamsburg has done a wonderful job, Dr Gilmore in Allendale, similar situation there. The stability of the district with administrative personnel, amount of professional development for the teachers and staff to make sure that they're teaching on standard, rigorous standards, rigorous curriculum for the student, as well as reports being on time. We're very, very satisfied with the way the district has progressed and it's time they are also to begin talking about a transition. And my anticipation is that it will follow a very similar timeline if all goes well, as we work together during the spring, summer and beginning of next fall, that the state will be able to lift the emergency declaration in Allendale as well.

Timmonsville Four, I have met with the chair of the Florence One Board, and I have sent a letter to the board members. They will be meeting on Thursday night of this week. And I've asked the Florence One Board to begin immediately the preparation that they need to complete the consolidation of Florence Four in with Florence One by June 30th of 2022, just a few months from now. The immediate things that need to happen are that they began meeting with parents and students because the Timmonsville High School and Johnson Middle School will be closed. The middle school students and high school students will select classes from any school in Florence District One. The board will vote on this Thursday night, but we anticipate that they will continue to offer choice for all the Timmonsville students to select the school that best fits their need and their family. And, of course, the students need to register for classes. Brockington Elementary will remain open and serve the children of Timmonsville. It will also become an enhanced school for the arts, a magnet school, and will be a choice school that other families in Florence One may select to send their children to. I'm very excited about the expansion that may happen there at Brockington Elementary. I will ask the board to allow Dr Richard O'Malley to become the designated superintendent of Florence Four as I would work with him during the next few months. He will be reporting to me, working with me and our folks here at the agency for all of these activities that would need to take place. And then, of course, he would become the superintendent should their board continue on with him in the leadership there in Florence One on July 1. I have asked the board to please give priority to all the teachers and staff members of Johnsonville Middle and of Timmonsville High school as vacancies are open in Florence One. With the teacher shortage that we have, I feel comfortable that those teachers will be able to be placed, hopefully, in Florence One. If they're not enough positions open, I have committed to them

that I will contact surrounding superintendents. I cannot guarantee everyone a job, but I can promise them that I will do my best to let it be known that they are available and that they can find a match, also that they can stay in the teaching force. So those are a lot of details that are going on. There will be a lot of action happening. This news that you're hearing is being discussed this afternoon with the Timmonsville staff and I'm sure will be in the press shortly and will be discussed at the board meeting Thursday night in Florence. I'm happy to answer any questions.

Chair Walters asked if there were questions for the Superintendent or for Dr Payne.

Superintendent Spearman responded on the difficulty of change and thanked SCDE staff and local district staff on their hard work during this period of transition. Chair Walters thanked Superintendent Spearman.

Chair Walters reminded all members to turn in their travel forms prior to their departure.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the SBE adjourned at 1:50 p.m.