

MINUTES

State Board of Education Meeting

Date

Tuesday, December 13, 2022

Time

1:30 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; Maya Slaughter, First Judicial Circuit; Delaney K. Frierson, Third Judicial Circuit; Cathy D. Chapman, Fourth Judicial Circuit; Joyce Crimminger, Sixth Judicial Circuit; Carl Hinze, Seventh Judicial Circuit David O'Shields, Eighth Judicial Circuit; Larry Kobrovsky, Ninth Judicial Circuit; Sallie R. Lee, Tenth Judicial Circuit; Cheryl Collier, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit; Mary Cordray, Fourteenth Judicial Circuit; Kristi Woodall, Sixteenth Judicial Circuit; and Michael Brenan, Governor's Appointee.

The following South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) staff were physically attending: Cathy Hazelwood, Deputy Superintendent, General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, Division of Legal Affairs; Barbara Drayton, Deputy General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, Division of Legal Affairs; Betsy Carpentier, 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; Tracy Moore, SBE Minutes

Taker/Administrative Coordinator, Office of General Counsel, Division of Legal Affairs; Kenzie Riddle, Program Manager, Office of Governmental Affairs, Division of Legal Affairs; Frances "Cricket" Katsos, Administrative Coordinator, Office of Governmental Affairs, Division of Legal Affairs; Whitney Barnes, Law Clerk, Office of General Counsel, Division of Legal Affairs; Laurie Traewick, Executive Assistant to Superintendent, Office of Superintendent; Derek Phillips, Public Information Director, Office of Communications; Travis Huggins, Information Technology Manager I, Chief Information Office, Division of Data, Technology and Agency Operations; Quinn Murphy, IT Specialist III, 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 Raymond Dues, IT Specialist II, Chief Information Office, Division of Data, Technology and Agency Operations.

I. WELCOME/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SBE meeting convened at 1:32 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.

II. APPROVAL OF STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES FOR NOVEMBER 8, 2022

Chair Walters asked if there were any objections to approving the minutes as presented for the SBE meeting on November 8, 2022. Chair Walters requested that the Chair for Standards, Learning and Accountability be corrected to reflect Ms. Frierson as the Chair. Hearing no other objections, the minutes were approved, with one change, by unanimous consent.

III. APPROVAL OF STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AGENDA FOR DECEMBER 13, 2022

Chair Walters asked if there were any objections to approving the agenda as presented for the December 13, 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 visitors had signed in. Chair Walters recognized Kathy Manness with the Palmetto State Teacher's Association.

V. STATE BOARD CHAIR REPORT

Chair Walters reported, "The December meeting is always a special meeting and we're glad you could be with us as well as those folks that are joining us online this afternoon. This will be my

last time presiding over the meeting of the state board today. Certainly, a bittersweet thing to do. I have enjoyed my year of service. Unfortunately for some of you, I will be here again next year. I do have a year left in my term, I'll just be sitting in a different seat.

Part of what makes this meeting so special is recognizing those who have given their times and talents to serve. We are going to do that here today. As I call you, please join me in the center. Somebody's going to have to be my Vanna White and help bring these things over.

Chair Walters called for Molly Spearman. "You've meant so much to us for giving your service for the past eight years. I know I first got to meet Molly, right? She took office and she came in, great ideas, and she was looking for help on various task force and committees. And so that was my introduction to Molly and seems like we've been working together ever since and I have certainly enjoyed every minute of it. You would be hard pressed to find anybody, not only this state, but in the country, more devoted to public education than Molly Spearman. And so, it's my honor, today on behalf of our board to give you this very small token of our appreciation for your service to the state of South Carolina, our students, our teachers, and also all you've done for us here, at the State Board of Education."

"This is also the time that we make presentations to our outgoing state board members. We will invite them to come up. First, Cathy Chapman, if you'll join us up here please. Cathy is representative of the 4th Circuit, which is in Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, and Marlboro counties. She joined us in 2019. They actually calculated this for us, three years, 11 months and 24 days, depending on what time we adjourn we'll add the average to your time. Certainly we appreciate your service. You have been a tremendous help to me, especially dealing with these license cases this year. We found out this morning that we probably have more licensure cases this year than ever before. Certainly that's a testament not only to our staff but your leadership of that committee. We thank you for your service, and there is your recognition".

"Mr. Carl Hinze is representing the 7th Circuit, Spartanburg and Cherokee counties. He was appointed in April, 2019. His first meeting was June of 2019. He has three years, eight months and 27 days. This will be his final meeting and we'll wait for his successor to be appointed for us. Certainly you've been a valuable member for our board and we appreciate all that you've done for us. So on behalf of our board, we thank you Mr. Hinze".

"Mr. Kobrovsky is in the 9th Circuit. Larry Kobrovsky, Berkeley and Charleston counties. He was appointed on March 28th, 2019. His first board meeting was in June of 2019. He has three years, nine months, four days of service, and he's going to have a new gig coming up here shortly. He will be a Charleston County Council member. Thank you, Mr. Kobrovsky".

"Dr. Kristi Woodall. Dr. Woodall represented the 16th circuit for York and Union counties from January of 2019. March, 2019 was her first meeting. Three years, nine months, and four days.

She was my predecessor chair of State Board of Education, and certainly was a role model and mentor for me and kept me out of trouble”.

“Madam Superintendent, we're going off the scripts here, but I think we're going to need you to come back and join us here.”

The Chair introduced Ronnie Townsend, South Carolina Association for Pupil Transportation (SCALP). The organization and many members were in attendance to recognize Superintendent Spearman’s support of transportation.

Appearing for the recognition award were: Ronny Townsend, SCAPT Executive Director; Monica Cox, School District of Pickens County; Will Williams, Lexington/Richland School District Five; Robbie Adams, Spartanburg School District Seven; MaShannon Rice, Anderson School District Five; Ross Hunter, Clover School District; Sharon Harris, Aiken County School District; Sammy Tucker, Union County School District; Darryl K. Webb, Anderson School District Five; Rick Grisham, Richland One School District; Jacob Shealy, Lexington/Richland School District Five; and Keith Terry, Orangeburg County School District.

SCDE Transportation Department employees appearing for the recognition award were: Richard Podmore, Director of Safety And Information; Mike Bullman, Director; Robert Hoffman, Area Supervisor; Thomas Holmes, Lead County Supervisor; Bill Tindal, Assistant Director; Trey Thomas, County Supervisor; Patrick Nesmith, Central Office Maintenance Specialist; Marion Mack, County Supervisor; James Miller, Engineering Associate; Luke Patrick, Engineering Associate III; and Wayne Southard, Maintenance Specialist at Central Office.

Chair Walters: “Thank all of you for all that you do, from a grateful board. We appreciate it and we do not say it enough. Thank you. So yes, the bus is out front and at the conclusion of this meeting, you're welcome to stop by, take a quick tour of it”.

Chair Walters then recognized Chair-Elect Stapleton.

Chair-Elect Stapleton reported as follows: “We can not let you sit down without recognizing your year of service as well Mr. Walters. I know I speak on behalf of the entire board when I say we are so grateful this year for your leadership. You are truly a dynamic person, and we are so glad you are going to be with us another year. We present you with this gavel, in honor of this past year. Thank you, Chair Walters”.

VI. STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION REPORT

Chair Walters recognized Superintendent Spearman.

Superintendent Spearman thanked the Chair, the Board and SCAPT for their recognitions. She reported that part of her report included the information provided by SCAPT.

Ms. Spearman: "Thank you Mr. Chair. It's been an honor to serve with you. Thank you for your service and all of you board members. You know, I think people don't realize you all don't get paid for this. You are reimbursed for your travel if you live far enough away, but it is true public service what you all do. I appreciate you. I'm so thankful that we have had such good boards during my eight years. I think it's because we all came to the board, all of you came to the board to do your part in supporting public education in this state. The intent is not that we always agree. We don't really want that. We want different opinions, but I'm just so grateful for the spirit of camaraderie and purpose that you all have served with over my eight years. It has really been wonderful to watch you and I think elevate, you all have elevated the work of the state board by not only the policies that you have developed, but in the way that you have carried on your business. It's a good role model for all of us across South Carolina and the nation as to how boards and adults need to come together and work together. So thank you. It has been a true honor.

I will share with you just a couple of things that have happened over the last few weeks. This last week, I wish you all could have been with me and a few of our staff. About three weeks ago, we entertained for lunch the 10 finalists for the United States Senate Youth Program. Outstanding young people from high schools across the state. Their parents were invited as well. They were interviewed by a distinguished group for a selection of the top two, which was extremely difficult to do, I'm sure. Each student came up and told about something that they had done that they were proud of. It really was magnificent, from starting foundations that had raised over a quarter million dollars for some community projects to helping register people to vote, whatever it was just... you would be so proud. We need not forget that because our young people in our schools we are under such criticism. But even with that criticism, we're producing wonderful young people, who are so talented and well prepared, and not just in academics and skills, but they're skilled in citizenship. The judges then selected two young people to represent us at the United States Senate Youth Program in Washington, DC.

Kshiraj Talati of J.L. Mann High School in Greenville County, that's the young gentleman on the right. By the way, he was also selected this past summer as the vice president of Boys Nation. Pretty strong. He has his own philanthropic group that he has created and works with.

The young lady, Madison Hahn of May River High School in Beaufort County. I met her this summer at Palmetto Girls State. She is quite accomplished in Model United Nations and in her debate skills.

We will be well represented and they each receive a \$10,000 scholarship. So, congratulations

to their families, and to their school, and communities for how they have been raised up in their community.

Then also another happy thing was, you know, I grew up on a farm and I'm always happy to see anything that we can do to promote agriculture in this state. This is in Virgie Chambers' office. The South Carolina Department of Agriculture (SCDA) was awarded, from United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), a \$3.1 million grant that will supply fresh and local foods to districts across the state. It will assist in paving the way for us work with local farmers. This is so important and I know that the SCDA has promoted that grant during the last couple weeks. We are happy to work with them.

There are a lot of issues now and I am sure you are seeing that. I think it's something that the legislature will be looking at this next year. You know, during COVID, we fed all of our children in the United States for free, and that changed, that sun set. There are a lot of children now who are paying. Many families are able to pay, but there are still some children who we need to make sure that they have access to meals at school. I believe there will be a large number of feeding related items to deal with that in the upcoming year. We are very proud of the work that our office here does across with our food service programs across the state.

This is my last state board meeting. You all have decided that the next board meeting, as you should and I recommended, that you move the date of that so that the new state superintendent will be able to attend in January. I have been meeting with Superintendent-Elect Weaver. She has been here in the building. We are trying to have a very smooth transition. She has been here meeting with our staff, learning, planning. I feel very good that we are in good hands. I think you will enjoy working with her very much.

I would be remiss if I did not recognize the people who have really done the work and deserve the credit. That is all of our employees here at the Department of Education. A hardworking group who do not get to see the students very much, but they know that their work impacts students. That's what it is really all about. I am so proud of them". Superintendent asked that all employees in attendance at the meeting to stand and be recognized.

"I appreciate you all. I love you very much and just thank you for your dedicated service. But particularly, I do want to thank the folks who have served as my deputies over the last eight years. A few have been here the entire time, and I really appreciate them so much. That's Betsy Carpenter, Cathy Hazelwood, and Virgie Summers, they started with me in January, 2015. When we came in on that momentous day, we had no academic standards, we had no parking. There were a lot of things we didn't have. I mean things like the employees did not have reserved parking. Through Ms. Carpentier, we fixed that.

There are other deputies who joined along the way, David Mathis and Nancy Williams. Nancy

worked in our finance department and became, I think, probably the youngest ever and first homegrown financial officer to run the entire State Department of Education and overall the funding that goes out to school districts. Nancy, graduate of Denmark High School, we're so proud of her. Nancy, thank you for what you've done.

Finally, my dear friend and my local superintendent, Dr. David Mathis decided he was going to retire from Saluda. I called him and said, "Would you come help me do early learning, be the director of early learning?" He said, "Sure I will." He came down and we had him here for about four weeks. I said, "Now, will you be a deputy and take on the rest of the agency?" Over the course of the last few years, he has taken more and more, as we have reorganized. You have done a fantastic job, David. Thank you. David Mathis, please stand.

There are other folks, I'd love to recognize all of you, but thank you so much. It has been a hard job, but it has been a fun job. We talked in staff this week. I can clearly say that every decision we made, and it was us making it as a group, we made it in the best interest of students. Sometimes it upset folks, and sometimes there were tough decisions. We made some very bold decisions to manage districts, to consolidate districts, even close schools. Those are tough, but truly, in my heart, we made the decisions and we can sleep well. I say, job well done. It has been a pleasure to serve the people of South Carolina, thank you."

VII. PARLEMENTARIAN COMMENT

Ms. Hazelwood reported, "I will take one final opportunity to remind you about your appointments. Mr. Hinze has taken the correct route and has formally resigned as of today, following today's meeting. He is free at last, free at last from the burden of statements of economic interest. March 30th is your deadline. If you are still sitting in a seat on March 30th, then you must file. The next person who will be up here as parliamentarian, may not have that knowledge. I hope he will. I will talk to him about it and tell him how many times he has to talk about it.

I did want have just a second to say I have enjoyed working with all of you. I have worked with Mr. Brenan for the entire eight years and he was our chair twice, when we really needed that kind of strong leadership. His second term was COVID. He was our chair when COVID began. If you go back, remember..... I have tried to block out all the meetings we had where no one could get on and all of it. But we have mastered it. IT has mastered it. We can have a meeting at the drop of a hat now. I really just appreciated your leadership throughout those times. You are a wonderful group and I hope that we can find equally responsive and dedicated members for this board because you do a yeoman's work every time. Thank you."

Chair Walters recognized Mike Brenan.

Mr. Brennan: "Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and Cathy, thank you for that. That means a great deal to me. I do not know how many general councils I have had to work with since I have been on the board. It has only been one in this administration. The others may have had more than one, I can't remember. You are clearly at the top of the list in general counsels and you have been a joy to work with. It is also my third superintendent that I have worked with, and Molly, I have to tell you, this is really a tribute to what you just said about your team. This has been the greatest team that I have had the opportunity to work within the department for all eight years. I have such admiration for all of you, for what you do and how you do it. You are making a difference in lives. You are making a difference in lives of parents and students, bus drivers, the list goes on, and on, and on. I have known Ellen Weaver for a long time. She is going to have a tough time trying to top this administration. I am just grateful for each of you. As Roy Rogers once said, "Happy trails to you, until we meet again"."

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

VIII. STATE BOARD ITEMS

PL POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE—COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Walters reported that the subcommittee met and heard one action item and 1 item for information. He further explained that Item 2 was removed from the Consent Agenda and placed as an Information item, explaining the reason for the change in the agenda. Chair Walters indicated the adoption of a statewide policy for unencumbered time needed to be discussed and developed, including input from our stakeholders, before action is taken by the Board.

FOR APPROVAL

1. 2022 Capital Needs Report

FOR INFORMATION

2. Adoption of statewide policy for unencumbered time.

EP EDUCATOR PROFESSIONS—COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Walters recognized Ms. Lee, who reported that the subcommittee met and heard 6 action items, and 1 item(s) for information.

FOR APPROVAL

3. State Accreditation Decision: Columbia College
4. Professional Review Committee (PRC): New Membership Approval
5. New Educator Preparation Program Approval Recommendation: University of South Carolina—Columbia Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Special Education
6. New Educator Preparation Program Approval Recommendation: Anderson University Bachelor of Science (BS) in Physical Education
7. Educator Preparation Program Modifications: Winthrop University Bachelor of Science (BS) in Early Childhood Education
8. Educator Preparation Program Modifications: Winthrop University Bachelor of Science (BS) in Elementary Education

Chair Walters recognized Superintendent Spearman, who stated, “May I just say I am happy that you all heard about the Collective Leadership, a summary on that. When I was campaigning in 2014, I was down in Sumter and this lovely lady friend that I knew asked me a tough question, “What’s your stance on collective leadership?” I made up some answer because I really didn’t know what she was talking about. She said afterwards, it was my dear friend Libby Ortman, who said, “If you get elected, I want to help you with this.” She explained it to me and came and worked with us. It is one of the programs that I’m very proud of where teachers have a voice and work with their school administrative team to help run the school and make really good decisions. We have got a number of schools and districts now that are involved, it is growing, and I am so happy that y’all had that report today.”

FOR INFORMATION

9. Collective Leadership Initiative

SLA STANDARDS, LEARNING AND ACCOUNTABILITY—COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Walters recognized Ms. Frierson, who reported that the subcommittee met and heard 4 action items, and 1 items for information.

FOR APPROVAL

10. Integration of American Sign Language (ASL) standards into the 2019 SC College-and

Career-Ready Standard for World Language Proficiency—First Reading

11. Online Testing and Window Extension Waiver Requests
12. Report of Recommendations from the Instructional Materials Advisory Committee for the 2023 Adoption Cycle
13. Report of Recommendations from the 2022 Instructional Materials Review Panels

FOR INFORMATION

14. South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) Early Learning Curriculum Review 2022

ELC EDUCATOR LICENSURE—COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Walters recognized Ms. Chapman who reported the sub-committee met and took action upon the following 17 cases; 15 suspensions, and two public reprimand(s).

FB-ELC FULL BOARD EDUCATOR LICENSURE—COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Walters reported that the Full Board ELC met and took action upon seven cases, resulting in two denials for initial certification; one public reprimand and four suspensions. Chair Walters also confirmed that the FB ELC ratified the work of the ELC.

N REPORT FROM THE 2023 CHAIR-ELECT—COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Walters recognized Committee Chair, Cathy Chapman, who reported that the sub-committee met in person on November 8, 2022, to discuss the nomination for the 2023 SBE Board Chair-Elect. Ms. Chapman, on behalf of the committee, made the motion to nominate Dr. David O'Shields as the 2023 SBE Chair-Elect. The motion does not require a second.

Chair Walters asked if there were any nominations from the floor. There being no other recommendations or objections, the Chair called for a vote. The motion was passed by unanimous consent.

Chair Walters invited Dr. Crystal Stapleton and Dr. David O' Shields to join him to be sworn in by taking the Oath of Office.

- **OATH OF OFFICE**

01. Swearing in of the 2023 Chair—Chair Alan Walters, South Carolina State Board of

Education

Chair Walters recognized Chair-Elect Stapleton, who introduced her family who were in attendance for the ceremony.

Chair Walters administered the Oath of Office to Dr. Crystal Stapleton, the 2023 Chair of the South Carolina State Board of Education. This was Chair Walters' last official duty.

02. Swearing in of the 2023 Chair-Elect—2023 Chair Dr. Crystal Stapleton, South Carolina State Board of Education

Chair Stapleton administered the Oath of Office to Dr. David O'Shields, the 2023 Chair-Elect of the South Carolina State Board of Education. This was Chair Stapleton's first official duty.

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA

All Committee Items presented to the State Board for approval by motion make up the Consent Agenda.

Mr. Brennan made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Hinze seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

IX. SOUTH CAROLINA BOARD OF EDUCATION REPORT

FOR APPROVAL

No items.

FOR INFORMATION

- 1. Literacy Update** - David Mathis, EdD, Deputy Superintendent, Division of College and Career Readiness

Chair Stapleton recognized Dr. David Mathis. Dr. Mathis reported, "Thank you Chair Stapleton. Congratulations. It is fitting in that my final literacy update today is the Annual Report Information on Summer Reading Camps. You have heard a lot about Summer Reading Camps through the years, but they are a very important part of what our teachers and administrators put into place every summer. In 2014, the South Carolina General Assembly passed some legislation, Act 284 called Read to Succeed. You have all heard a lot about Read to Succeed. It was Molly's task to actually implement that legislation, which addresses reading proficiency and comprehension. It is a comprehensive system for students of literacy in grades K through 12. A core component of Read to Succeed is Summer Reading Camp. Each district identifies third

grade students who are not reading proficiently or own grade level and provides them with the opportunity to attend Summer Reading Camp where they receive targeted instruction from certified teachers in reading and in writing. Districts may also invite other struggling readers in other grades to attend Summer Reading Camp. Districts continue the recent trend of offering Summer Reading Camp and expanded the numbers this summer. All districts offered in-person Summer Reading Camp in 2022, and will be offering in-person Summer Reading Camp in 2023. But if you remember back in the 2017-2018 school year, what went into effect with Read to Succeed was a student must be retained in third grade. If a student fails to demonstrate proficiency at the end of third grade as determined by the "Not Met/One" category on the state Palmetto assessment state standards assessment. But a student may be exempt from that for good cause. There are six good causes. One of those is Summer Reading Camp. A good cause exemption for those students is if they successfully complete Summer Reading Camp at the end of third grade and demonstrate through a norm reference assessment, they can promote to fourth grade.

Here's a key thing about Summer Reading Camp. It must be six weeks in duration, a minimum four hours a day, and at least four days per week, or the equivalent of that time. School transportation is provided, and I guess this summer more will travel on a electric bus, which is neat. The camps must be taught by compensated teachers who have at least an add-on literacy endorsement or who have demonstrated substantial success in helping students read at grade level. Districts are expected to offer 96 hours of literacy instructions for students during Summer Reading Camp. These are led by teachers who are endorsed through Read to Succeed legislation, and there are several key components that must be observed in those classes. The student teacher engagement, the instruction materials that are selected, the planning, and the small and whole group instruction are the key parts of that.

In 2020, that summer was an interesting summer because of COVID. Our early learning and literacy office developed month long units of instruction for students in ELA and math. It is interesting, those units are still used by many districts today and those were designed for remote instruction, but teachers have adopted those to face-to-face instruction as well. Those lessons were videotaped for teachers as exemplars and helped to distribute across the state. In summer of '22, we served 11,517 kindergarten through third grade students. This is slightly lower than the summer before, which was as we came out of the pandemic served about 13,000 students. Prior to that, the average number was between 8 and 9,000 in Summer Reading Camps. So that number continues to grow. All districts are required to offer face-to-face camps. And while state funding for Summer Reading Camp is limited, we offer about \$700,000 in grants where they can partner with community organizations to offer that camp. Districts offer Summer Reading Camp, at the conclusion of that, they must give one of six approved pre and post assessments. It is interesting that this year, 75% of our students at the end of Summer Reading Camp either maintained or grew in their reading proficiency. I think that's a testament to our good teachers in those classrooms. In 2021, additional federal funding

was allowed. I think that was one of the reasons we saw an increase in the numbers in Summer Reading Camp. But I think as we continue to invest in programs like Summer Reading Camp, you will see the trend increase, and we will see more students reach our proficient level. That is my report and I'll be glad to answer any questions or take any comments".

Chair Stapleton commented, "Thank you so much Dr. Mathis. I know I speak on behalf of the board, but also all of our schools and districts, thanking you for all the work you do and your entire division does to support schools across the state. So thank you for that, we appreciate it".

2. Allendale County School District (ASCD) Update—Dr. Margaret Gilmore, Superintendent, Allendale County School District

Dr. Stapleton recognized Kim Mack, who recognized Dr. Margaret Gilmore to give the Allendale County School District update. Dr. Gilmore utilized a Power Point presentation with her report.

Dr. Gilmore reported, "Afternoon. I am super excited about sharing with you this afternoon. Let me just tell you that I am the proud superintendent for Allendale County School District and before I give my report, I do have a PowerPoint, and I really didn't really come to give updates. I wanted to come to express to our State Superintendent Molly Spearman, the impact that she has had on Allendale County School District. I can tell you, Molly, that you have saved the students of Allendale County School District. The takeover was unfavorable for many, but I can tell you, because of your leadership, because of the takeover, Allendale County School District students have been saved. I can't even explain to you the impact that you've had on Allendale County School District. We are going to celebrate Molly the first week in January, so don't tell anybody, but we are going to celebrate her in a big way. We have been planning, because we want the State Superintendent of Education, Ms. Molly Spearman, to know that you've saved our lives. I want you all to give her another round of applause.

Here are a few updates for Allendale County School District. Everything that we do, it always goes back to the profile of a South Carolina graduate. It is important to me that our students, they know the competency statements because we call it in Allendale for the students, "I can state this". We say to the students all the time, everything that we do has to align to the profile of a South Carolina graduate.

This year we started new themes for our schools. Our elementary school is a STEAM school, so we focus on STEM and the arts at the elementary school, and we're going to talk about those in a few minutes. Our middle school is a leadership school, and the Maxwell book that Molly introduced us to, we are engulfed in that book. We are developing leaders at the middle school. At the high school, we are early college high school because a lot of our students, more than

ever, are taking more dual enrollment classes, taking more AP classes on campus and off campus. We are super excited about the impact that that's having on our high school students.

I want you to take a look at our state report card. This may not mean a lot to you, but for years, Allendale County School District has been unsatisfactory. I want to report to you today, I want you to take a look at the elementary school. We were two points from being average. I want you to think about us being unsatisfactory for so many years, but we were just two points from being average. At the middle school, we are in the good category and we're going to be excellent next year, I promise you. At the high school, look at the progress that the high school has made. So we were at the high school, two points from being average. Think about unsatisfactory below average, two points from being average. The students of Allendale County School District are making lots and lots of progress. Graduation rate is improving, and 2020, our graduation rate was 87.6, but it didn't count that year. But I want you to know that we are making progress with our graduation rate.

One of the things that we utilize for our graduation rate, we started evening schools. We had students who were 19, 20 and 21 years old with three credits. We started evening school to target those students and provide additional support for them. These are some of the academic support updates.

We, just three weeks ago, hired two math consultants to help us with our Algebra 1. We also hired a reading consultant to work with our students with writing. These are additional supports, and all of this is because of the support that we receive from Molly Spearman; the financial support, the personal support that we receive from her and her staff.

We have at the elementary school, we have a afterschool STEM academy. We have afterschool tutoring. We have a Baby Tigers cheerleading squad at the elementary school, which means a lot to the community. Our new chief of police started a soccer program at the elementary school this year. We have Saturday school. It is important to me that we started Saturday school for those students who need that additional support beyond what we provide for them during the day. The middle school, we have a Practice Makes Perfect Homework Center that we have about 75 students who are involved in that program Monday through Thursday. We also have tutoring at the middle school and all the other activities. High school, we have the same thing. We just started a new smart STEM lab. It's brand new, hot off the press and it looks so good. Our focus is on STEM and the arts at the elementary school. We are just so proud of our new STEM lab. At the middle school, students are actively involved in activities that extend beyond the classroom. They had a great time with their Take Flight Aviation Camp for our sixth graders and it was just a wonderful opportunity for our scholars. At the high school, we're working on the Drone Pilot License program. Our students deserve every opportunity that we provide for them because they're very special to us. At the elementary school, we're involved with the STEM activities. Allendale County School District received a \$2.5 million arts grant, and

we are actively involved in that involvement of the arts. Also, a \$30,000 Arts Education program granted we are excited about. These are our iReady Reading Growth Data scores. Look at the typical growth and look at the stretch growth. We are well on our way with improving student outcomes in Allendale County School District. These are our Math Growth Data scores. We have a great partnership with the community in Allendale, and one of our pastors who lives in Barnwell is pastoring in at First Baptist in Allendale. He wanted to celebrate and incentivize our students and he had them at the church. It was just a great opportunity for our students to be incentivized for the great work that they're doing in the classroom.

We have lots and lots of professional development in Allendale. We are ensuring that our scholars are getting what they need and that our teachers are getting what they need as well. I want you to take a look at that top slide, "Fall" into the Arts Saturday Academy. We do have Saturday Academy for our teachers. This one was especially important to me because we are focusing on the arts. This is the high school JROTC Military Ball. I can't even explain to you the impact that that had on our scholars. It was just a great, great time for them. Summer Learning Exploration. We are well on our way to providing summer learning for our scholars. And we have three pathways this summer, accelerate, create, and stimulate. We are super excited to provide that opportunity for our scholars as well.

I want you to take a look at all the progress that Allendale County School District have made. I know, I couldn't list all of them, but there are great things that are happening in Allendale County School District, and I am just honored and just so proud to lead that. This is the current status of the district. We've met all of our objectives for the State of Emergency Takeover. We're no longer under fiscal watch. We had a perfect financial audit. No findings. That's huge for Allendale, and I am so honored to be a part of it. We are changing the headlines in Allendale County School District and we are moving forward. Thank you all so much".

Chair Stapleton recognized Superintendent Spearman, who commented, "Dr. Gilmore is way, way too complimentary to me because honestly, none of this would happen, none of this. It's not Molly Spearman, it's our team. But it's particularly, you know, it all rises and falls on the leadership. Dr. Gilmore has become the strongest advocate for Allendale that I have ever seen. And it is her great leadership and dedication to these wonderful children and community that has really changed the headlines. So thank you Margaret. It's been an honor to work with you. Thank you for your dedication. And if I may just say, Allendale has met all of the requirements that we set as our goal for their district, for our district. And by the way, is your district. We had planned to transfer authority back to the Allendale School Board right now. We had a little glitch with the election and we still have two vacancies. One of the school board members was elected to county council, I believe. And another board member was elected who was unqualified to serve. We are holding a special election and I hope that just as soon as that is completed, I believe it's supposed to happen February 8. We will be working with Superintendent-Elect Weaver, but we've already talked and when that happens and it goes

well, I anticipate that the transfer of authority will happen very, very quickly after that. So thank you Margaret, Dr. Gilmore, for your leadership”.

Williamsburg County School District (WCSD) Update—Kelvin T. Wymbs, B.S., M.ED, ED.S, ED.D, Superintendent, Williamsburg County School District

Dr. Stapleton recognized Kim Mack, who recognized Kevin Wymbs, B.S., M.ED, ED.S, ED.D, Superintendent, Williamsburg County School District to give the Williamsburg County School District update. Dr. Wymbs utilized a Power Point presentation with his report.

Dr. Wymbs reported as follows: “Like Superintendent Gilmore, I express unbelievable debt of gratitude to Madam Superintendent Spearman. Without you, the children of Williamsburg County would suffer immensely and greatly. I have had the astute pleasure to work with State Superintendent Spearman, as well as the late Dr. Rose Wilder. This has been a tough year for me personally, as well as the county of Williamsburg, and Rose.

I would be remiss if I didn't say some thoughts about Rose to this state board before I begin this presentation, because Rose was a great champion for education and a great champion for South Carolina. Period. Rose would often say, "We must be ready to be uncomfortable because discomfort often ushers in growth, and a new and better life." I truly believe the vineyard is ripe and the harvest is plentiful in Williamsburg County. I am most excited because our scholars are ready to be engaged in a productive struggle. Together we will reach higher levels of collective efficacy, which will bring us academic achievement. Pessimism and optimism cannot exist in the same vessel. Our scholars cannot afford us to not be ready to move with a sense of urgency.

As we begin this presentation, as I said, Dr. Wilder was a great mentor as well, a better friend and leader. What we have tried to do, and what I am committed to doing is implementing all of her plans, policies, and future dealings in Williamsburg County. None of this is possible without State Superintendent Molly Spearman. Her love for children, her support of impoverished districts and what she, her team has been unbelievable. I can tell you, when we lost Rose, I leaned on her as well as her team on a daily basis just to make it. Our community has rallied behind this merger. Our kids have really aligned with what we were doing when we merged Kingstree High School with C.E. Murray and they've grown from this experience as well as our adults. I was at an event yesterday with Senator Ronnie Sabb and Billy Jenkinson. Both of them tell me to tell you, "Hello". They were not always in favor of this merger. They are, right now, because they are seeing the positives in this community. So once again, I give you a heartfelt thanks for what you have done. You will always be a part of the Williamsburg County community. Thank you.

Our basic mission like Superintendent Spearman has said, is Students first in everything we do. Everything we want to align, everything that we do, every department, we want to think about

students. Our schools. When I first started working with Rose in May of last year, our infrastructure in Williamsburg County was in bad shape. Without the help of the State Department and State Superintendent Spearman, we would not have some of the quality educational environments that we have now. I think that's one of the big things that have motivated our students this year, that they have come back to several refurbished buildings that have ignited their flame for learning.

Our students. Our students are unbelievable. I was more of a numbers guy until I met Rose. Rose often told me, "You have to look beyond the numbers. You have to really get to know these young people for what they are and who they are. You have to have daily conversations, get out, get in the car, throw away the pen and paper, and just go into schools some days and just talk to the students, see what's working, see what's not working." That has been a tremendous influence on my life. Our students deserve the best because when given the opportunity to succeed and when we reach out to them, they can make anything happen. I am convinced of that.

Our staff. It's been a tough year in Williamsburg County. We lost Rose and we also lost two teachers in a car accident during the Thanksgiving holidays. But because of the influence and the culture and climate that Rose built along with State Superintendent Spearman, we have a can-do attitude in Williamsburg County. We know that all things are possible, and we see examples like what's going on in Allendale and we know that our data will change, we will change the narrative.

One of the most important initiatives that we started in this community, it is a poor, impoverished communities. I worry whenever we are out of school, like the incoming holidays are our students eating? In this community, Free Meal for All Students program has been essential because if kids are hungry, there's no way they're going to learn.

Williamsburg County passed all of the... was accredited district last year by Cognia. Rose worked tremendously hard to assure this and up until the time of her death, Rose was working an unbelievable amount of time. I had no idea how sick she truly was, and that in itself has left an indelible impression on this community.

One of the most important parts of what we do every day in Williamsburg is we want to concentrate on rigor, relevance, and relationships. We want to cultivate an environment where that our kids and our teachers, everybody's in a productive struggle daily to make sure that we assure academic achievement and success, whether it be the workforce, military, or two- or four- year colleges. We want to make sure that our students understand that we are going to be successful in whatever endeavor we choose.

Our framework and support for schools. The first is talent management. I think we've started very well in that direction of setting a foundation. We hired a young man, Michael White, two

weeks ago, who's going to do tremendous things for Williamsburg County. On instructional infrastructure and leadership, we've realigned all of our pacing guides, our syllabi, and we're making sure everything matches up with state standards.

The culture climate and programming, that was one of Rose's biggest achievements. It is unbelievable to me what she did in Williamsburg from when she first got there. Every place I go, people tell me about the influence that Rose has had on her. And once again, Rose's influence and she always repeated that none of the things would be possible without Molly's direct influence and support.

Family and community engagement. That has been the hardest task. I think a lot of what's going on in Williamsburg this year with the merger, our community's rallying around the school, around these students, and that's very important, but also very encouraging to see. In our instructional focus, we just really, sometimes you have to back up and punt and make sure you're going in the right direction.

Academically, we are making sure all of our tools, all of our everything that we use academically is aligned with state focus and the state standards. On our report card, we see movement. We see we have long way to go to change this narrative academically, but what we are doing currently is setting the foundation. We have schools that are maintaining, have maintained out of COVID, and now we want to raise everybody up to standing. We want to move forward in every school that we have. We want to make sure that there's a push, an academic push. These are some very vital programs that Rose had talked about that we wanted to make sure that we really focused on and really implemented. I can tell you she left a great blueprint. A lot of what we're doing now is things that she was committed to before she lost her life and we're going to make sure that these things happen, that they happen successfully, and it happen correctly.

Several points of pride, one that really stands up, stands out to me. The Flexible Learning Academy is for overage students, middle school, high school students that are behind, students that were not on track to graduate. We're seeing a lot of movement in that area. We're seeing a lot of parents coming back. We have a night school started. We've also rebranded the district with a new logo. All of our schools and our STEM electives, we've strengthened that area because we want to give our students every opportunity to be successful as well as the fine arts. Several new programs. As we were starting from scratch, but this was already on the board, we've started a commitment with Dr. Fred Carter, Francis Marion, and Darla Moore, the continuum. Our dual enrollment numbers are up. Our early college is beginning, and we are committed to doubling those numbers and tripling those numbers and really recruiting in our community and giving our kids the encouragement and the motivation that they can do anything.

This was one of Rose's points of pride. This is the merge band. It's 115 members. They have just

been invited to the Vietnam Veterans Day Parade in Honolulu, Hawaii. 115 members strong, very talented group of young people. Once again, with the support of the State Department, we were able to purchase new uniforms, new instruments. These kids are unbelievable. They work just as hard as any of my athletic teams and they're on fire, and I'm really proud of them.

The next slides are just some examples of how we re-envisioned the high school. Rose really walked us through these steps. She never actually got to walk in this high school, but these are points of pride for me because this is her vision. I think she was very committed to environment, that if you give kids a positive and committed learning environment that they would achieve. That is one of the things that we are going to make sure happens. This is another example. She was big on looking first class, being first class. She was a lady. We make sure when our kids go out, they're first class, that they can compete with anybody, anywhere, any place. Also, two of our new projects are our STEM lab that we will open in a couple of days, which we are very excited about that in our community.

Our CATE Pathways, we've added our gaming lab as well. We just want to give our students opportunities that everyone else has, and we want to make sure we maximize their abilities. Basically, we've really doubled down on our commitment with our community, and we know we can't do this alone. It's got to be a team effort.

The next couple of slides are just about our partnerships and what we're doing on a daily basis to have a better environment and community for our kids. It's not going to happen overnight. It's not going to happen with just me. It's not about me. It's about us and where we can go. These are several of our partners that do an unbelievable job and have really come to our support in our time of need.

As I leave, I want to say again, thank you, Molly Spearman. I have had the pleasure of working with you for a number of years. One thing about you, you are first class. You have always been about kids, and you've always done what you said you would do. I thank you and God bless you and your family, and I hope you enjoy yourself. If you ever need me, I'm a phone call away. Thank you".

Chair Walters recognized Superintendent Spearman for remarks.

Superintendent Spearman: "Mr. Chair. If I may, I hope you all are very filled by both of these reports. Dr. Wymbs, thank you for being there and available. I am so grateful to you, Dr. Gilmore, and my dear, dear friend Rose Wilder, who we miss so much. But her legacy goes on forever. None of these successes would have happened without these great leaders, and all I had to do was make the decision and then support them, with our staff to put them in place. Great things happen when you got great leaders. I am just so thankful for you all. You cannot really appreciate this unless you've been there and seen where it was, saw some of the things

that these two districts faced when we took over management, but oh my goodness.

In Williamsburg, Rose found out they had not ordered textbooks in four or five years. There were old books that, the kids didn't even have the new books that had been adopted. The list could just go on and on. But where we started and where we've come, is just amazing. The decision to close C.E. Murray was difficult in a way because the community loved their school so much. It was also pretty easy because it was so obvious and it was the right thing. How those students have led the way to make that success there is just extraordinary. There are still decisions that need to be made in Williamsburg. They too, were meeting with their board and I had hoped to transfer the authority back, but we're not quite there, I anticipate the end of this school year. That will be up to Superintendent-Elect. I just feel really good about what's happened. They have come so far and are at a place now where I think the community, we wanted to get them in a place where the community then could be successful with great leaders.....just, thank you all. Thank you. It is amazing what you all have accomplished.

To the Board, I appreciate your support. You never questioned it. You saw it, you saw the need, and you have supported us in every way. I know Dr. Kim Mack has given us reports. And Kim, thank you for your dedication. Dr. Latoya Dixon started this work. Kim came in after Dr. Mack, and has carried it on. Thank you. She spent so much time with these communities. Dr. Wymbs was with us in Timmonsville in Florence to help the Timmonsville work there. Thank you all so much for what you've done, and I appreciate you all sitting through a little longer presentation. But I thought it was so important for the board to see what has been accomplished there. I'm so proud of you".

Chair Stapleton thanked both Superintendents for their district reports. "We do echo that. And thank you Dr. Gilmore, who I get to work with side because we're neighbors, neighboring districts. Dr. Wymbs for being here today and sharing with us firsthand, the dynamic programs and initiatives that are going on within your districts. We truly appreciate that".

X. OTHER BUSINESS

Chair Stapleton remarked, "As we close, Superintendent Spearman, I know that the events today, and so many other things that have happened in these last several weeks, just attest to the legacy you are leaving behind and the work you're doing. We know we are better people for having worked alongside you with that. We do appreciate that. We appreciate your entire team".

Chair Stapleton reminded all members to turn in their travel forms prior to their departure. Chair Stapleton recognized Richard Podmore, who offered the Board members the opportunity to look at and ride on the electric bus that was on the property.

Chair Stapleton reminded the board members that the electric bus that was outside and encouraged them to take a tour and possibly take a ride.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the SBE adjourned at 2:54 p.m.