

MINUTES
State Board of Education Meeting

Date

Tuesday, June 13, 2023

Time

1:00 p.m.

Location

Rutledge Conference Center
1429 Senate Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Dr. Crissy Stapleton, Chair
Dr. David O'Shields, Chair-Elect
Ellen E. Weaver, 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 attended: Chair Crystal Stapleton, Second Judicial Circuit; Chair-Elect David O'Shields, Eighth Judicial Circuit; Delaney Frierson, Third Judicial Circuit; Joyce Crimminger, Sixth Judicial Circuit; Dr. Joette Johnson, Seventh Judicial Circuit; Dr. Christian T. Hanley, Jr., Ninth Judicial Circuit; Sallie Lee, Tenth Judicial Circuit; Tammie Shore, Eleventh Judicial Circuit; Richard Harrington, Twelfth Judicial Circuit; Cheryl Collier, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit; Mary Cordray, Fourteenth Judicial Circuit ; Alan Walters, Fifteenth Judicial Circuit (Remote); and Rita Allison, Governor's Appointee. Jackie Terrible, Sixteenth Judicial Circuit, was absent.

New Member in attendance today; Ms. Beverly Frierson, Fifth Judicial Circuit. New members in attendance today were not eligible to vote but will be eligible in August.

The following South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) staff attended: John Tyler, Deputy Superintendent, Parliamentarian, General Counsel, Division of Legal Affairs; Barbara Drayton, Deputy General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, Division of Legal Affairs; V. Henry Gunter, Deputy General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, Division of Legal Affairs; Devan Davis, Assistant General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, Division of Legal Affairs;

Larry Huff, Chief of Staff; Matthew Ferguson, Deputy Superintendent, Division of College and Career Readiness (Chief Academic Officer); Stephen Strother, Interim Chief Financial Officer, Office of Finance; Phillip Cease, Director, Office of Governmental Affairs, Division of Legal Affairs; Lisa Widener, Assistant Director, Office of Governmental Affairs, Division of Legal Affairs; Ian Headley, Deputy Superintendent, Senior Advisor Strategic Projects; Felix Childs, Director, Office of Technology Support Services; Tracy Moore, SBE Administrative Coordinator, Office of General Counsel, Division of Legal Affairs; Frances “Cricket” Katsos, Administrative Coordinator, Office of General Counsel, Division of Legal Affairs; Felix Childs, Director, Office of Technology Support Services, Chief Information Office, Division of Data, Technology and Agency Operations; 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 1:00 p.m. Chair Stapleton called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone who attended.

Chair-Elect O’Shields led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. APPROVAL OF STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES FOR MAY 9, 2023, AND FOR THE SPECIAL CALLED MEETING ON MAY 25, 2023

Chair Stapleton asked if there were any objections to approving the minutes as presented for the SBE meeting on May 9, 2023, and the Special Called Meeting on May 25, 2023. Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved.

III. APPROVAL OF STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AGENDA FOR JUNE 13, 2023

Chair Stapleton asked if there were any objections to approving the agenda as presented for the June 13, 2023, SBE meeting. Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

IV. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS AND NEWS MEDIA

Chair Stapleton welcomed any media and asked if any visitors had signed in. Chair Stapleton recognized visitors, including Martin Jules, EdVenture, and deferred introductions for a special report given later on the agenda. She recognized news media from WIS, WLTX, ABC, and Queen City News.

V. STATE BOARD CHAIR REPORT

Chair Stapleton welcomed everyone and thanked all participants for their interest in education. Chair Stapleton recognized newly appointed Board Member, Beverly Frierson, Fifth Judicial Circuit and welcomed her to the State Board of Education.

Chair Stapleton then congratulated all of the South Carolina public school graduates, Class of 2023. She shared that when speaking with her district staff, she opined that if you ever want to know our “why”, look into the eyes of a graduate as they walk across the stage, football field or wherever you have them graduating. You will remember why we do what we do, and it is so powerful. “I think we are truly blessed to be able to work within education, and those are the moments that truly just make it so worth it. We are so happy for all of the graduates of South Carolina, and I know I speak for everyone when I say, we truly want to congratulate them, and are excited to see what the next part of their journey will be.”

This concluded the Chair’s report.

VI. STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION REPORT

Chair Stapleton recognized Superintendent Weaver.

Superintendent Weaver reported, “I will attempt to keep my remarks brief today, because I know we're excited to hear about the hard work and presentation of the teacher retention and recruitment task force.”

The Superintendent provided handouts to the Board and reported that the first was a highlight of the education budget as it currently stands. The General Assembly will be in town tomorrow to pass that budget. This has not yet been formally passed, but this is where the numbers currently are. The Superintendent reported, “I want to stress that this has been an incredible year of investment in public education. I want to be public in my recognition of Governor McMaster for his willingness to make education a priority of his administration and he prioritized that in his State of the State this year.” She also recognized the incredible work, cooperation, and collaboration between both the House and the Senate in prioritizing the needs of our students.

“First, there is 600 million in new spending, recurring and non-recurring. Reviewing the recurring dollars year over year, we have seen a 7% increase in our public education budget this year, which I think is a pretty remarkable investment in the future of our teachers and our students. The minimum teacher salary schedule will be raised by that \$2,500, with a line item budget of 324 million. There is money in the budget for bus driver raises. I know districts have had real difficulty in recruiting and retaining the bus drivers who get our students to and from school. Continuing to invest in early childhood, both our Child Development Education Pilot

Program (CDEPP) and our First Steps program. The teacher supply line increases from \$300 per teacher to \$350 per teacher. An innovation grants fund here at the department; we will be rolling out information in the coming weeks on that application and decision making process. There is continued increased investment and career and technical education (CTE), CTE investment is really critical.

South Carolina is actually leading the nation in computer science and in the development of AI curriculum. We know that, as scary and as controversial as some of these AI conversations can be, this is the workforce of the future, and our students have to be prepared for that. I was just at the Southern Regional Education Board meeting (SREB), this last weekend, and they are partnering with the Department of Education to develop first in the nation AI curriculum. I'm very proud that we are leading that work with our students. Continuing funding for instructional materials, prioritization, high intensity tutoring, high dose tutoring, which is how we really focus on, I think catching students up who have suffered learning loss has been a priority in this budget.

I would like to focus on the school bus, lease, and purchase. I don't know if any of you saw the news story from a couple of weeks ago in Lexington, that terrible accident. That we saw where fully loaded a tanker truck, broadsided one of our school buses, and thankfully it was one of our new school buses. If it had not been, I'm sure there would have been student fatalities. Because of the investment of the General Assembly in our fleet and the hard work of former Superintendent Spearman, our students sustained minor injuries. That is something to be so grateful for. This money here will allow us to continue that 15 year replacement cycle for our buses. I am very, very grateful for that investment.

We have continued to prioritize capital funding for our rural districts, and within that capital funding, there is also some really important school safety money. While I did not list the school safety line items here as it that falls under the Department of Public Safety (DPS) budget. There have been significant investment increases in school safety and School Resource Officers (SROs) and other things too. That is also a great highlight.

Finally, literacy instruction, we talked about that in our last board meeting. I am thankful and encouraged to see that work of giving our teachers, the professional, resources that they need in order to able adequately diagnose and differentiate instruction, in that early literacy space, it's really critical.

The second handout that I wanted to give you all this information is a page that now lives at www.ed.sec.gov/volunteer. This is just the very beginning stages of a community engagement project that we are seeking to do here at the department. I have a vision for us mobilizing an army of volunteers to support our educators and students in the classroom. I was able to speak to the Columbia rotary yesterday and present this to them. I wanted to have a centralized page that we could direct people to as a call to action, to really create a pool of

volunteers that our districts can draw from. Whether that is pushing people to information about how they can become a substitute teacher, how they can volunteer, how they can mentor in the classroom. I think that this can be a really exciting project and something where the Department of Education can help bring scale to the effort and really support our districts and the great work that they're doing.

I wanted to introduce Ian Headley. Ian has just joined the department as my Senior Advisor for Strategic Projects. He will be working within the Office of the Superintendent, helping ensure that we are pushing forward on the key priorities that we know we need to push forward on. I am grateful to have him on board."

The Superintendent then called for Dr. Kimberly Howard, Lilla Toal-Mansanger, and Beverly Hyatt Flythe, to say a special thank you to each of them all for the incredible work performed on this task force. Superintendent Weaver reported, "We know that the most important resource that a student has in a school is a great teacher. There is nothing more important, therefore, that we can do to support the learning of our students than to make sure we are recruiting and retaining great teachers. I know you all put in countless hours above and beyond your regular job descriptions in order to make this report happen. I wanted to publicly thank you.

My final item, madam chair, is for a special guest with us here today. This person is truly a force of nature. She led this department with distinction for many years, and she has also capably chaired this task force and is here to report on it to us today. I would like to call Dr. Barbara Nielsen forward. She presented Dr. Nielsen with a plaque that was inscribed, "The South Carolina Department of Education extends its thanks to Dr. Barbara Nielsen, Chair of the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Task Force for her exceptional leadership and vision in advancing the recruitment and retention of exceptional educators for the students of South Carolina".

Chair Stapleton welcomed and congratulated Dr. Nielsen, announcing her report to be given later in the meeting.

This concluded Superintendent Weaver's report.

VII. PARLIAMENTARIAN COMMENT

Chair Stapleton recognized Parliamentarian, John Tyler, General Counsel, Deputy Superintendent, Division of Legal Affairs.

Mr. Tyler reported, "As we are going through here and there making some comments on the efficiency of Robert's Rules of Order, I thought I might point out a helpful tool that might be useful in future meetings. From time to time, a committee or perhaps the full board may need

to take an agenda item out of order. Perhaps there's someone running late due to the construction on I26 coming from out of town or elsewhere. There is no need to wait to start the meeting. Instead, someone within the meeting can make a motion to consider something out of its scheduled order and skip over an item and wait till the person arrives. You would do so by saying I move we suspend the rules and consider such and such item. There is a second required and a two-third vote necessary, so you only want to make that motion if you're quite sure it's going to pass. But I just thought as summer travels are in place and we want to move meetings efficiently, that might be a helpful tip to keep us going."

This concluded Mr. Tyler's report.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Stapleton welcomed those signed up for public comment. She recognized Attorney Patrick McLaughlin, Wakila Law Firm. Mr. McLaughlin spoke to the Board about his client's views on the amendment to S.C. Regs. § 43-80. Chair Stapleton thanked Mr. McLaughlin for his comments.

IX. STATE BOARD ITEMS

PL POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE—COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Stapleton reported that the sub-committee met and heard three action item(s) and zero item(s) for information. Item 1 was presented, considered, and voted on. However, because it is a regulation amendment, it will be presented again for first reading later in the meeting for the full board to vote on. The other 2 action items were placed on the Consent Agenda.

FOR APPROVAL

- 01.** First Reading of Proposed Amendments to Regulation 43-80. Operation of Public Student Transportation Services
- 02.** Greenwood County School District 52's (District) Request for Flexibility Pursuant to the 1.116 Competency-Based Education Proviso Adopted by the General Assembly in the 2022-2023 General Appropriations Bill
- 03.** The School District of Pickens County (District) Request for Flexibility Pursuant to the 1.116 Competency-Based Education Proviso Adopted by the General Assembly in the 2022-2023 General Appropriations Bill

FOR INFORMATION

- 04.** Approved Waivers

EP EDUCATOR PROFESSIONS—COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. Lee reported that the sub-committee met and heard six action item(s) and one item(s) for information. The action items were placed on the Consent Agenda.

FOR APPROVAL

05. State Accreditation Decision: Spring 2023

06. National Accreditation Decisions: Anderson University, Southern Wesleyan University, and Francis Marion University

07. Approval of Out-of-State Clinical Experience Placement: Anderson University

08. Approval of Out-of-State Clinical Experience Placement: Bob Jones University

09. New Educator Preparation Program Approval Recommendation: North Greenville University Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Early Childhood Education (PK-Grade 3)

10. New Educator Preparation Program Approval Recommendation: North Greenville University Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Elementary Education (Grades 2–6)

FOR INFORMATION

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

SLA STANDARDS, LEARNING AND ACCOUNTABILITY—COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Stapleton recognized Ms. Delaney Frierson who reported that the sub-committee met and heard one action item(s) and one item(s) for information. The action item was placed on the Consent Agenda.

FOR APPROVAL

12. Selection of State Textbook Depository

FOR INFORMATION

13. Instructional Materials Allocation Methodology 2022–2023 School Year.

ELC EDUCATOR LICENSURE—COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Stapleton recognized Mr. Walters who reported that the sub-committee met and took action upon the following 26 cases; one denial for initial certification, six public reprimands,

and 21 suspensions.

FB-ELC FULL BOARD EDUCATOR LICENSURE--COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Stapleton reported that the Full Board ELC committee met and took action upon the following two cases; one denial for entrance into the PACE program and one suspension. Chair Stapleton also reported that the actions of ELC were ratified during the FB ELC meeting. Chair Stapleton commented, "To our office of General Counsel, thank you again for all the work you do to help prepare us. We are greatly appreciative of that and how smoothly everything is done and how well you prepare everything for us to review."

IX. CONSENT AGENDA

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

Ms. Crimminger made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Ms. Allison seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

X. SOUTH CAROLINA BOARD OF EDUCATION REPORT

FOR APPROVAL

- 01.** First Reading of Proposed Amendments to Regulation 43-80. Operation of Public Student Transportation Services — Phillip Cease, Director, Office of Governmental Affairs, Division for legal Affairs

Mr. Cease reported, "The regulation you have in front of you today, 43-80, is before you because members of the House Education and Public Works Committee, asked the Department to review this regulation. The following changes are proposed, and this amendment updates the term disabled student to student with a disability and clarifies the priority in which aides are assigned to the buses and the circumstances in which an aid for a student with an IEP or 504 plan may serve as an aid for the bus. During the public comment period closed on May 28th, the department received comments asking us to protect children; mandating aides on buses with students in a child safety restraint system; and ensuring the student's IEP and 504 plans are adhered to when allocating aides to the buses. This regulation was drafted in consultation with the department and legal affairs and transportation personnel."

Dr. Stapleton asked about the timeline and next steps for promulgating the regulation. Mr. Cease reported that after first reading, the item is placed in the State Register. Part of the first reading is a 30-day period for public comment, ending on August 28th. The second reading will be before the Board at the September 12th Board meeting.

Ms. Allison asked if this change applied only to special needs transportation or all pupil transportation. To clarify, she posed the example of a special needs student on a regular bus. Mr. Cease responded that if a student's IEP or 504 plan designates an aide, then this regulation would apply.

Ms. Delaney Frierson asked if there was any attempt to reconcile whatever perceived deficiencies were brought up in public comment earlier in the meeting. Mr. Cease responded that "When the bill was drafted, it was a mandate for aides on buses. This is problematic because we have aides, and the bus drivers call out sick every day. That will leave children unable to get to school".

Ms. Frierson asked, "If there was a situation," (as what earlier public comment contemplated) "where a child is nonverbal and the child is injured... If we don't have an attendant present, would that not put the state in some legal jeopardy if something were to happen to a child in that situation?" Mr. Cease responded that it was a possibility. Ms. Frierson asked if there was a way to reconcile that. Mr. Cease responded that the promulgation process was how we worked through all of the considerations.

Dr. O'Shields commented, "As I understand, approval of this first reading is an effort to continue to provide additional input such that second reading could indeed be different than the first. This is merely getting something in place, because if I understand you, one of the concerns... and being the superintendent of a district, I understand that in the event of there not being an aide available... is that theoretically a bus may not run at all." Mr. Cease responded that Dr. O'Shields was correct.

Hearing no other questions or discussion, Chair Stapleton called for a vote. Ms. Collier made the motion. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

02. Request for Approval of 2023 Model Safe Schools Checklist — Laura Bayne, Deputy Superintendent, Strategic Engagement

Chair Stapleton recognized Laura Bayne. Ms. Bayne reported, "James Rawl, who is our director of Safe Schools, is unable to be present today. He is at a conference for school resource officers, making those connections and learning more about what matters to folks on the ground.

Today we request the approval of the 2023 version of the Model Safe Schools Checklist. That checklist is required, I believe by proviso, to be updated annually. In April, we asked for feedback from districts on ways to improve that checklist. We received none. The version you have in front of you has the dates updated and no other revisions from the previous year. We respectfully ask for your input. Thank you."

Chair Stapleton called for questions or discussion.

Mr. Walters commented, "This is my field of work in my day job. For the new board members benefit, I share that last year we did an extensive review of the model checklist involving district level safety directors and others and made those changes to it. It was approved last year. That is why there are not any changes this year other than the dates. It was pretty well overhauled and reviewed thoroughly last year."

Chair Stapleton thanked Mr. Walters and added, "You are correct, that was a huge undertaking last year, updated and made a lot more thorough".

There being no further questions or comments, Chair Stapleton called for a vote of the board. Ms. Allison made the motion. Mr. Walters seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Dr. O'Shields commented, "I'd like to say thank you to the department, the agency, for their diligence in this work. We do want our schools to be as safe as possible. I appreciate the effort and the energy from the view as a as a superintendent. I appreciate the fact that they have attended meetings as recently as last Thursday we had with private schools, public schools, all within our county. We were working together to try to create some degree of consensus and I just appreciate this. And the man up there from the voice from above (referring to Mr. Walters who appeared virtually) has been very instrumental too in helping us secure and maintain this because we need our school safety. Safety is essential and you, Superintendent Weaver, we most appreciate it".

FOR INFORMATION

1. Teacher Recruitment & Retention Task Force Report — Laura Bayne, Deputy Superintendent, Division of Communications and Strategic Engagement
Ms. Bayne introduced Dr. Barbara Nielson, former SCDE Superintendent, and head of the Teacher Recruitment & Retention Task Force.

Dr. Nielson reported, "Thank you for everything Superintendent Weaver, it's been a really neat journey. When we started this, we said this was a unique opportunity. We are focused on teacher shortages and stuff, but we're also focused on having every one of our schools be the best. Now all the other states are also doing this, so we had to ensure that we were one-upping them and doing better. It really has been a labor of love for all of us, it's been a long time. We started and we said we are going do our very best, we're going to look at everything. We looked at research, we listened to national and state experts, we listened to input of anybody who wanted to give input, we listened to surveys from everybody. It brought together a real "family of people" saying let's all do this together. Why I am saying it's unique, we have the Governor at the table, the Superintendent, the leaders of the House, the Senate, and even though you're retired, you are state, you were at the table Ms. Allison. But we were all talking with each other with a common goal, and I think that's the success that is what has been produced. Now that doesn't say that there aren't other ideas, and there's a lot more details that will come that have

to be worked out because that's how the process works. But I do think it provides us with a framework that is focused on the right direction. Our professionals that work in our schools need to be respected, they need to be recruited, they need to be retained, and they need to be supported, it's not an easy job. I do not know how many of you have darkened the days of a classroom lately, but it's very different schools. It is very different even from when I was State Superintendent, and it's not an easy task. Everything that is going on in a community, walks through those doors every single morning, and our whole school teams have to work with that. Those were the things we were really trying to be able to deal with. We also had the opportunity, even though the proviso said teachers, included in the proviso were media specialists, counselors, psychologists, speech therapists, and nurses. They are part of that school team, as well as the principal. All of us have heard a school is a unit of change, that's where the learning goes on. For any of you who might have been principals, or are principals now, I often hear a school goes as the principal goes. Again, you build that team, you build that culture of working together.

Some of the thank-yous have already been said, and I thank you for the Department's help in all of this. I do want to thank Melanie Barker from the Governor's office, Nancy Ferguson from the State Department, Pierce McNair who is from the analysis education side of it, Katie Nilges, she works for Senator Hembree. They all have helped unbelievably above and beyond. I do want to thank our subcommittee chair, Senator Hembree, Rita Allison, Representative Jim McGuinness, and Carolyn Styles could not be here. She's in a Greenville County school board meeting all day today, so they're all there today. You've already recognized Lilla, Kim, and Beverly. I cannot say this enough, this report would not be in front of you today if it wasn't for their hard work and dedication. That meant weekends after they were doing their regular job and keeping us all focused.

Survey is different groups and includes professional organizations, and so in the attendees of this report we have tried talking to everyone that submitted, every article we read, all the research that was going on. We tried to make sure that we covered all the basics, that broad foundation out there. At your discretion look at some of those. We began January on 3rd, we were lucky enough to have Mark Crews from EdVenture hosting the entire task force. A lot of people don't know this because he really didn't get credit for this or the group over there. There was a group of professional organizations meeting throughout and then discussions about how they can support the schools and everything they were doing during the day. Thank you.

The highlights of the recommendations are comprehensive, and they are designed to be in strength for further discussion for implementation. We tried to back up in the narrative part why we arrived at this, what was some of the reasoning behind it, and so forth. It quickly became evident to us that as we started as one thing, there were so many things interrelated. You could not do just one thing, like teacher salary, without looking at working conditions. You couldn't do another thing without looking at what goes on in the school with support. What

goes on in getting the communities engaged? One thing kind of led to another, it became very comprehensive, and I think you'll appreciate that there were two things that were very evident at the beginning. We have a lot of people doing a lot of good things in education and in preparing our teachers and recruiting and retiring. Unfortunately, it isn't happening everywhere, it also sometimes isn't shared everywhere, and it is not aligned or coordinated. We also have agencies, very well meaning, they are all factored in the budget doing things with education. Sometimes that education activities don't come back to you. As the agency and the board that's responsible for education, we feel there needs to be more coordination, more partnerships as a result of the funding. The third thing, and I know everybody is busy, but a lot of the programs out there don't have any evaluations. Evaluations do not have to be a negative. The evaluation can be this is what's being done right, then here's where you need some areas of improvement. It was approved to set an annual evaluation and you will see that in the recommendations. Is it worth the money we're spending? What is the return on our investment? Is this the direction that we want to go? How do we know that this report is not going to sit on the shelf like so many? Well, number one, they do not do that at the Department. Second of all, we assign dates of completion and things that the State Department and the Board, and organizations they can provide reporting on those dates.

Let me start with compensation and evaluation recommendations. We know our teachers are professionals and they need to be paid as professionals. There are several general things Governor McMaster has been adamant about giving the minimum salaries, beginning salary to \$50,000, at least. We have really good teachers who we make really good leaders, but they leave the classroom because they want to go to leadership because it pays more money. How can you keep teachers in the classroom? The salary schedule, and you'll see some diagrams in the back. There is a suggestion about a career ladder. For instance, if you're measuring a new teacher, if you're doing induction teaching, if there's something in the school that is also a leadership position, but that you could still stay in that classroom. What would be the extra money for being able to do that. There is a recommendation to extend to 30 years the steps on the salary and so forth. Those are just some of the highlights. You can see that it is in the General Assembly's hands, but that's also for us to help them with. The teacher career ladder helps them move up. That is not in lieu of getting an extra degree like a master's or a doctorate, they would still keep that as well. I do have to say that Frank Rainwater helped us look at it and develop those with the help of the teachers' organizations, the superintendents' organizations, all the different professional organizations giving their input. We received some pretty realistic kinds of things.

Critical needs statement, this was kind of a discussion. We all know there are critical needs in math, science, and especially in special ed, how is the best way to remedy this? Things are suggested, we may need to look at others. Because then we also heard from the other side, that we know it's a competitive world. Stipend may not be the best word, maybe there's a signing bonus or something like that. Hawaii is mentioned in here because they cut their vacancies in half for special ed by doing that.

Now this is one of my favorites, the school support professionals. You heard me talk about nurses, psychologists. They need to be paid appropriately because it is not just their pay, but we have to look at their ratios. You can take a high school of 3,500 students, and when you look at the counselor ratio for that school for 3,500 students, you are saying to them I want you to have these students college and career ready, I want you to be there if they need somebody to talk to. The ratios need to be examined in all of these areas. Psychologists, they need to be competitive with the private areas. You will see a lengthy discussion on school nurses. I have to tell you, I was surprised that our school nurses, in some districts they're not even paid as certified teachers, and yet they have to be licensed or certified. They don't have enough nurses in the hospital, so I don't know how we're supposed to compete to get them in a school. Look at the society we live in today and the challenges that our young people face, we need those school nurses on site.

Consistent evaluation, looking at some of the things in the evaluation that we do now to make sure that it is going to fit. The other one was recruitment recommendation. We all are advertising, different groups are advertising, and everybody's trying to say hey, we need message out. What we need, though, is a coordinated effort. We suggested that the State Department lead that effort and bring all the partners in.

Loan forgiveness is a big thing. The South Carolina lottery loan forgiveness program, they may need to look at those numbers for teachers and the school educators as well. The teaching fellow scholarships, that greatly needs to be expanded, because the research tells us that most of those that go through that program when they go to college, they stay, and so help with their tuition really does help them.

Grow your own, all our school districts have aides that work in the school. We need to be able to think about finding or creating programs we can help them get education, some alternative pathways that even though they're an aide they can gain an ability to be a teacher. Giving districts that capability and funds to do that would be extremely, extremely helpful for them.

Streamlining processes, I know you had your report this morning. The committee report this morning talked about some people you had to revoke their licenses, that goes into a national database. If that teacher for a very serious reason had to have their certificate revoked, if you're in North Carolina you can look it up. You can look it up within this state too, the problem is we have to do it. We really have to make sure we do our homework on those.

Education preparation, and I will have to admit this is one of my favorites. We went to the department, CHP, state and national organizations, our professional organizations. You all have worked very hard on putting together a student profile, what should our K through 12 students know and be able to do? We would like to see a teacher preparation profile put together. We know that colleges teach things in different ways and so forth. But the recommendation is to

build that profile of once graduate in teaching, be ready to go the first day, and they should know this, and this, and this. Colleges and universities, or any of the alternative pathways, can take that profile and gear their courses to it. We don't approve their courses, but there's so many new things that have come along that probably are still in the curriculum that may need to go away. One example is community engagement. As you prepare a teacher, how do you work with parents? Some are happy, some are not happy, how do you work with them? How do you get your community more engaged? How do you focus more on targeted standards? We've heard from a lot of people that our standards are too wide, that we need to target down to make sure the basics are in there. I was very curious when the civics report came out about how many students did not get civics. I went to the website, and I looked at the sample questions. I'm not sure I could answer some of those questions myself, and some of them I felt I was on Jeopardy. Different pathways for certification, there's all different ways. It doesn't have to be a four-year college, it could be two years, an induction period, and so forth.

The other thing that came up is teachers need more hands-on experiences earlier. You walk in that classroom the first day, and of course you think you know everything because you have a degree. Then you meet the reality, and those are the children, bless their hearts. They have to know that it is going take a while to grow into the job. There are some suggestions on two-, three-, and four-year coaching and induction. This lets another good teacher at that school take them on and work with them. Because sometimes you may not know how to do something, you're not going to go to your principal, and you're not going to go to your superintendent. You're not going to say I don't know how to do this, because they are the ones that evaluate you. It is your colleagues that do that. We also talked about what kind of networks can be set up among teachers to support each other; English teachers, math teachers, etc.

Number 15 is going to have a lot of discussion, eliminate the basic skills assessment. The practice core at the beginning, not what they have to know to be successful, but that core that can keep a lot of kids out. They may do well on ACT, they may do well on something else, but they just do not take a test right, that does not mean they won't become a good teacher. We also thought that the pro-team at the schools and the teacher programs, that's our list of people coming in. The more we can enhance that and make that stronger, the more we have a lot of people that will say I want to go teach, and I want to stay here to teach. We do prepare teachers, but then they go to Georgia and North Carolina, someplace else, so that was the other one.

The consistency of student teachers. I do think that we need to ask; "What are the important things student teachers should learn?". We all would probably think classroom management, but sometimes that's a little hard to teach in today's world unless you have been there. So that came back to having more experiences of prospective teachers being in front of young students and saying what do I do now? Because on any given day, they are kids. I hope I've covered the basic ones on there.

I hope I'm not scaring you off, because guess what, it's a lot of work for the State Board members.

I skipped one thing on marketing and recruitment. We are asking the State Department to produce a tool kit for districts, what are the best ways of marketing, what is the best way to do recruiting? Sometimes when you bring people in for interviews, it might just be one or two people, and maybe you need teachers on that recruitment interview, so there are some ideas for that. I know that Tennessee has done a good job on that, one other state which I will not mention did a good job on that, but it is in the report.

People came with constructive things to say at the listening sessions. They had some concerns, they had some ideas, but they didn't whine about it, and they were very eager to help solve the problem. I think that one of the things that came up everywhere, especially even in elementary school, is the need for planning time. When I first taught, we were never allowed to leave our kids in the classroom by themselves. If you had to go to the restroom you would have to go next door and have the teacher next door, come over and watch your class and her class. A planning time is a good thing, especially when we're talking about focusing on standards and being able to do that.

Prioritizing through learning. We test for two different reasons. We have to have accountability; we all know that. We have to know our children are learning based on a certain criterion. But the things where we're falling short is assessment should be for informing instruction in what you need to change and do better, okay? You have to be able for a teacher to see what standards did they miss and what did they know? First for re-teaching, but second of all how do I correct what I do next year, otherwise you don't know that. I know percentages are good, and I know rankings, everybody accepts them. But as a parent I would like to know; "What did my child miss, and what do we need to work on this summer?" It is also the children the next year, they need to know what they didn't know, and be able to do as well so they can adjust how they start the year off in their instruction. That narrative with assessment, guys, is pretty long, but it's a basic fundamental thing. We have gotten so used to the reports we see, but the most important thing of why we test and what we test is to be able to see what they know. This is going to change some thinking. It's also going to change the training. You go back to how teachers are prepared, and that's not in a whole lot of curriculums. Even if you have statistics, it does not tell you about assessments that are for instruction, and so you might want to be able to look at that as well. I did mention about the profile of the teacher, and one of the reasons I'm citing this here under working conditions is that all of us understand that it is difficult to be in school. It is difficult to be the principal of a school and run a school. I think what we are hearing is people want more people working together. Teachers want more input into decisions, or at least a discussion of it before it comes down from anywhere, you know, from the General Assembly, from you all, from the districts to the classroom. I think they feel very strongly if we are the ones that are in that class (and we don't pretend to know everything), we sure would like to have some input.

One of the other profiles that we did suggest was the principal profile as well because the principal is a leader of that school. Really, they develop the culture there. That probably has not been part of their training in years. Is anybody from Ohio State, from Ohio? We used to call the administration courses the Ohio State Command and Control. But I think they have gotten away with that now. We need to prioritize the assessment.

I'm going to come back to the standards. We have to pare those standards down somewhat. It's overwhelming. I don't know if any of you have read through all those standards before. I don't know if you've looked at some of the sample test items. We have to pay attention to that and that's going to need a lot of work, and a lot of cooperation. A suggestion was made that perhaps we should review our standards more than the length of time that we are doing it now, check where we are. Are they still pertinent?

Community engagement. We really do feel that we have to do something to keep the parents more involved, get the communities more involved and as partners in this process, not as adversaries. And that's going to take some training, that needs to be built into our preparation programs, because there are ways to do that where we can talk with each other, not at each other. That was suggested to do then.

The last one I am going to cover on there is student discipline and student behavior. What walks across that door every morning? Variety, and they come with attitudes, they come with real concerns and so forth. We are living in a society where we are dividing people, we are not uniting them. Kids are going to do something wrong, all right. I mean we have got our own kids, not quite your own. There are some things you don't want anyone to know about. But on the other hand, if there is an infraction, there has to be consistent rules and it has to be reported fairly and consistently. The parents need to be involved or family need to be involved. I hesitate to say this, but nobody wants to look bad on the report card. If you have too many suspensions or too many expulsions, people are going to say, look what they're doing over there. That school is just totally unruly, and yet they are being fair, and they are being consistent. Somehow, we have to come together and come up with a system criterion that is applied fairly everywhere. There are ways, you don't have to expel. You can give in-school suspension. You can do everything you think. Students have to learn there are consequences. And so that's as brief as I can be, guys.

We have the opportunity. We got all the leaders in the room, guys. If we cannot do it now, shame on us."

Chair Stapleton thanked Dr. Nielson and asked if the members had any questions.

Dr. O'Shields commented, "In looking at this, as it relates to teacher recruitment and retention, one of the things that we're finding in administration is that there is also a shortage of

administrators. Does this consider them as part of that subset or subgroup and that they are also certified or does this more explicitly, and please understand me, there is nothing more important than the teacher. I just know that if you look at induction programs percentage wide, statewide, you will find that there is twice the number of principal induction applicants as there would be first year teacher, and just as concerning”.

Dr. Nielson responded, “I agree with you whole heartedly, even on as far as district and so forth. I think that is where the School Boards Association can partner with us too. There should be that induction period because you're green on the job too. There are new and creative ways of doing things. There is a call for clearinghouses, where it will be posted on a site all the good ideas and who's doing what. I do know that and some of the organizations have their networks of support. You know, we didn't really look at, I know we have regional organizations. They could step up to the plate a little bit and help us with this as well. We don't need to recreate the wheel and put mini-State Departments all around. It just adds.

Dr. O’Shields responded, “I want to say thank you very much for this. This is an incredibly exhaustive opportunity for us to look at things”.

Dr. Nielson then reported, “We have to have an evaluation of this. Things evolve and people have other ideas that are created that may change these recommendations. But you're going to have a huge responsibility in all of this. But it will not get done if we don't meet. Thank you very much”.

Dr. Hanley commented, “Thank you so much to you and your team for this work. I am looking forward to digesting this, and then also working with legislators in my area on how we might accomplish some of these things. I had the opportunity to interview about 15 former teachers in my area, teachers that have left in the last five years. I will tell you, so I looked at it maybe a little differently than you and your team did. But the reasons that educators left the field, I think you have covered them pretty well just in the brief skimming that I have done of the report so far. I am looking forward to, like I said, getting into this a little bit more. Thank you very much for your work, this is extremely important”.

Dr. Stapleton concluded, “Dr. Neilson, thank you for being here today. We do appreciate the time, the dedication, and the commitment for everyone involved on the task force, so thank you so much for that”.

2. Requirements to Employ Retired Individuals – School Year 2022 - 2023— Steven Strother, Interim Chief Financial Officer, Financial Office

Mr. Strother reported, “Good afternoon, Chair Stapleton, Superintendent Weaver, and members of the Board, thank you for having me here today. Requirements to employ retired individuals. According to § 9-1-1975, the State Board of Education designates annually areas of

critical academic need, and critical geographic need for the employment of retired certified teachers. Teachers meeting these criteria can request via a waiver to be exempt from the earning limitation imposed by that code. The earning limitation is \$10,000 and applies to individuals who retired after January 1st, 2013, and prior to reaching the age of 62. Teachers desiring for exemption from the earning limitation may complete, submit to the South Carolina Department of Education an assurance form stating that they meet the requirements for exemption. The district, however, must certify that no other qualified, non-retired teacher is available to teach in that critical academic or geographic needs area.

What happens is the South Carolina Department of Education receives these assurance forms and must review and approve the assurance forms. After the approval from the South Carolina Department of Education, we must notify the State Board of Education of the engagement of the retired member as a teacher. Afterwards, the South Carolina Department of Education will notify the State Retirement System of the individual's exemption from the earning limitation so that the individual's monthly retirement allowance will not be affected, so that they can continue to receive that and continue to teach. I am here today to present to you § 9-1-1975, the notification required regarding the engagement of retired members of teachers for school year 23.

I believe you have before you, we have provided a listing of a number of teachers approved for the retirement limitations waiver by district. Just for your information, about 97%, or most all districts in South Carolina, submit assurance forms for this purpose, the number of waivers continues to increase annually”.

Chair Stapleton asked for questions.

Ms. Allison asked, “Is there a cap once they receive the waiver”? Mr. Strother indicated there was no cap.

Mr. Harrington commented, “I see 1,600 teachers that applied, is that right, or 1,700.” Mr. Strother responded, “This year 1,700, and that number continues to increase. To give you an idea of what's happening with the numbers, I believe there were 1,211 teachers that applied last year. That is approximately a 43% increase over last year. We are seeing a continual increase to help that teacher shortage with these retiree assurances. I believe the first numbers I have are from 2020, 995 waivers that year, 1,734 this year. That is a 74% increase over the school year 2020. We continually see the increase of these retiree waivers coming in. That helped close that gap for people we cannot find in these critical geographic areas or the critical subject areas. That is where the benefit comes in. The district has to certify that we were unable to find any teacher to fill these positions”.

Chair-Elect O’Shields commented, “The thing that I have found is somewhat more rural districts, when you're wedged between two larger communities, Spartanburg You find yourself

in a battle that is difficult, and often, what we have found is new teachers will come to us for their first two to three years and then go to Great North Spartanburg. And this is allowing us something that we keep our own in a, their experience, a, they're involved, and they're a in the community, so I do appreciate that."

Ms. Crimminger commented, "Would you by chance have this information written down by subject area?"

Mr. Strothers, "I do not at this time."

Ms. Crimminger, "Since we're talking about certification issues, how it would affect what decisions we might certification?"

Mr. Strothers, "I am sure I could probably gather that information myself here. I will do that and bring it back and present it to some of my associates."

Chair-Elect O'Shields, "Stephen, in asking again, this applies to teachers, correct, at this juncture, it applies to teachers, certified teachers. Administrators, in this case, would not be part of this, or are they?" Mr. Strothers, "That is correct, there's some language that says people who own a certification, so I think that's kind of vague to me, at least, that it doesn't apply to anyone other than teachers. But the language states that anyone who holds a certification, but right now we are concentrating on."

Chair-Elect O'Shields, "I was just wondering, in the future, and I think this was brought up by the attorney earlier as a very valid point in the need for aides in busses. Well heck, I just wrote it down cafeteria workers, bus, maintenance, technology, because there are a lot of people who are older, but it doesn't mean they're old. And yet they don't get the opportunities that I would think and would like at some point maybe for us to consider. Because often, we look, and the teacher is the foot soldier, the teacher is the most important. But much like in any army, you need a cadre of individuals that are specialized. And I think sometimes we overlook what we call the least of these, and the least of these are some of the most important people we have in our district. And that, as I say again, cafeteria staff, bus aides, special ed aides, there are so many aides out there that we need to protect and provide. I know that's not under your immediate purview. But it would be something that I would like for us to look at over time, because there are people with a wealth of knowledge, who can't participate, and I know it's a PEBA thing, I know it's a PEBA thing.

But the reality is, if you do the math, as I have with my finance director, PEBA actually comes out and they don't get it, and I don't get why they don't get. But the reality is it would be something that could expand. We do need bus aides, we do. We need aides, because if you go now, since COVID, Arby's paying \$15 minimum, QT's \$20 an hour. It's hard and that's why I'm saying, if and as, and you've done an excellent job, and thank you for the continued expansion with critical geographic areas, critical academic areas. Thank you, tremendously, you and your staff, State Superintendent for allowing these things. Because often those most invested are the ones that will give you everything they have to help the children, and that to me is critically

important. But I also don't want to forget the ones who do other things, because they, too, are important. And I think we have to remember them and not discount them and assume, you'll just find somebody there, because it's hard to find bus drivers right now.”

Chair Stapleton asked if there were further questions.

Ms. Cordray, “This list though, doesn't represent every retiree that might be working, because this is only the people that need the waiver. If, for example, you were 62 when you retired, you are not here. Do you have a list of the number of retirees?”

Mr. Strothers, “Not before January 1, 2013, or who retired after they were 62. There are a number of other retirees that did it prior to that deadline.”

This concluded Mr. Strother’s report.

3. Literacy Update — Matthew Ferguson, Deputy Superintendent, Division of College and Career Readiness

Mr. Ferguson reported, “I do have a few important updates that I want to share with you today. First, the literacy and the work that is in keeping with the LETRS across the nation, Superintendent Weaver mentioned where we are in the budget, there is \$30 million that is currently approved. This all goes as planned towards the supplementation of professional development teachers in South Carolina in foundational literacy skills. We have started with a coalition of the willing. I am pleased to announce that there are many more who are wanting to sign on to be a part of the coalition of the willing than those who do not. That has necessitated us really working over the summer to build out the Department's capacity to provide more trainers. Dr. Duggins has been working to create some cohorts, and we will be sending out surveys to superintendent’s districts to ask for folks who are interested in coming to LETRS training across the state. We will start cohorts in July and also the following to build out the Department's ability to provide more training, because everybody is wanting to participate, so that's a good problem to have.

The other piece that I wanted to make sure that you were aware of is that we are currently in the process of approving instructional materials. That process is kicking off today actually with a committee of the viewers who will continue through the summer and fall, and those selections will be presented to all of you in late fall. It will be forwarded on to districts for districts to make their approval throughout the spring, so that those new materials are in schools by the beginning of the 2024-25 school year. That will be the first year that the ELA standards are implemented and will also be the first year of our SC rated ELA assessment that will be assessed with new software standards that you have heard about.

4. Allendale County School District (ASCD) Update—Matthew Ferguson, Deputy Superintendent, Division of College and Career Readiness

Mr. Ferguson reported, “For Allendale, our update is that we would like to thank Dr. Margaret Gilmore for her six years of effort in the district. She has recently announced her retirement. We have a newly appointed district administrator who will be serving in the interim over the summer to set up the school district for successful start of the school year. Ms. Angela Jacobs is currently a Department of Education employee, she is almost done running the day-to-day operations there, as Dr. Gilmore's transitioned to her, we wish her well. That is much well-deserved and earned after six years of very hard work.

So that all of you are also aware, we have publicly posted the position for Superintendent for Allendale, so that posting is out. We are accepting applications for a permanent placement until the first week of July. Our plan is to have interviews during July, to take finalists to Allendale to meet with the community, and to have a permanent replacement for the Superintendent in Allendale in place in the early fall.

5. Williamsburg County School District (WCSD) Update— Matthew Ferguson, Deputy Superintendent, Division of College and Career Readiness

Mr. Ferguson reported, “We also have been working with Williamsburg and Allendale to plan a start to a successful year, and to bring in planning and alignment that is really focused on student outcomes for next year. We are aligning the processes and programs in collaboration with those folks on the ground in the district and also the directors here in the Division. We're really excited about the work that is beginning to come together and set us up for any success.”

Chair Stapleton asked for questions.

Ms. Allison asked, if the LETRS training is only K through Three. Mr. Ferguson confirmed that it was for kindergarten through 3rd grade.

Chair-Elect O'Shields commented, “I wanted to say thank you to you and you. LETRS was not something any of us really looked forward to. I think after now, a year into a two-year cycle, many of our teachers are beginning to say I'm beginning to understand. I think it's hard and it's onerous, but as Abby Duggins will say, it's been one of the most meaningful professional developments we've done in our district in a long time. You and you and you should know how appreciative we are, and more importantly, how we hope this will be of strong benefit. We were talking about this at lunch, reading by fourth grade is essential. Reading by fourth grade is critically essential to being on grade level. For us to have these opportunities to have these meaningful professional developments, to have a plan of action that looks at the science of reading is something that I did not want to do it, but I am glad we have done it. I just want to say thank you”.

Mr. Ferguson commented, "As Superintendent Weaver and I are both taking the classes, we admire those currently taking the time. I can tell you that it is very difficult. Having a Masters in Literacy, I thought I would know more than I actually do, but I am learning. I think of one of the quotes that says, "The most powerful thing is that programs don't teach children, teachers do." As we build capacity, we will see the results."

Mr. Harrington commented, "I am curious to know what the participation level is statewide". Mr. Ferguson responded, "Currently there are 227 schools that have begun the process of LETRS, either in year one or year two. That is about 56 teachers. We are gathering a coalition of the willing for next year, but we would like to be able to offer 227 more schools beginning next year, an add-on in the spring, and then the next year bring along those that not yet. The limitation is being able to provide the training more so than the willingness to take the training. Right now, that is the case, yes sir. I am sure we are going to get to a point where we're going to have to offer more encouragement to participate, but right now that is not the place we are at".

This concluded Mr. Ferguson's report.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

Chair Stapleton reminded all members to turn in their travel forms prior to their departure. She further reminded the board that a separate public hearing was scheduled after the regularly scheduled board meeting.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the SBE adjourned at 2:42 p.m.