MINUTES
State Board of Education Meeting

Date

Tuesday, August 8, 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); Jackie Terribile, Sixteenth Judicial Circuit; and Rita Allison, Governor's Appointee. Ms. Beverly Frierson, Fifth Judicial Circuit, was absent.

New Member in attendance today; Ms. Jacqueline (Jackee) Lynn, Fourth 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; Matthew Ferguson, Deputy Superintendent, Division of College and Career Readiness (Chief Academic Officer); Abbey Duggins, Director, Early Learning and Literacy , Division of College

and Career Readiness; 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; Tracy Moore, SBE Administrative Coordinator, Office of General Counsel, Division of Legal Affairs; Travis Huggins, Information Technology Manager I, Chief Information Office, Division of Data, Technology and Agency Operations; Quinn Murphy, IT Consultant, Chief Information Office, Division of Data, Technology and Agency Operations; Rashard Huntley, IT Specialist III, Chief Information Office, Division of Data, Technology and Agency Operations; Raymond Dues, IT Specialist III, Chief Information Office, Division of Data, Technology and Agency Operations; and Brando Butler, IT Specialist III, Chief Information Office, Division of Data, Technology and Agency Operations.

I. WELCOME/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SBE meeting convened at 2:30p.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 JUNE 13, 2023

Chair Stapleton asked if there were any objections to approving the minutes as presented for the SBE meeting on June 13, 2023. Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved.

III. APPROVAL OF STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AGENDA FOR AUGUST 8, 2023

Chair Stapleton asked if there were any objections to approving the agenda as presented for the August 8, 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 from Teach Right USA and Advocates USA.

V. STATE BOARD CHAIR REPORT

Chair Stapleton welcomed everyone and thanked all participants for their interest in education. She took a moment to welcome everyone to the 2023-24 school year. Chair Stapleton recognized newly appointed Board Member, Jacqueline (Jackee) Lynn, Fourth Judicial Circuit and welcomed her to the State Board of Education.

This concluded the Chair's report.

VI. STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION REPORT

Chair Stapleton recognized Superintendent Weaver.

Superintendent Weaver reported, "There were three key things that I wanted to run through today. First of all, I had got to have a wonderful visit up in Williamson, South Carolina on the first day of school. Got to see some sweet little freshmen who were wandering around, lost and we got to guide them to their class. It was just a wonderful, wonderful experience there at Palmetto High. The Department of Education executive team over the last few weeks took two days to really step back and evaluate where we are and where we want to go.

I think you always have to begin with the end in mind. I've said it in this context before, but I truly believe that one of the primary jobs of leadership is creating clarity of the vision and mission, and then alignment of resources to accomplish that mission and vision. The document that I gave you today is called a 1 4 1 4 Strategic Plan. You say, what does 1414 mean? Well, if you look on the back, there's a little rubric, that's 1 4 1 4, so it is very literally named. This is a strategic planning tool that we are using as an executive team to really help focus and drive our efforts.

If there is one thing that I have found in this department is that there is no end of things competing for your time. You could go down 20 rabbit holes in a day and never come back up again. I think we always have to keep that big strategic vision and mission in mind. I was able to share this weekend actually with the Education Oversight Committee at their annual retreat and wanted to bring it before you all as well.

This is my vision for how this could potentially help inform our work together is that I would love for us to be able to sit down with the Education Oversight Committee and really come up between the agency, the board, and the committee with a shared vision for where we want to be in 2030. I think that that's how creating that vision and then aligning our individual capacity and resources behind that vision is how we're really going to see transformative change in education in the state.

My team and I thought about where we want to be in 2030. Obviously, our main goal is that every child is college career or military ready by the time they leave a South Carolina school. But in order to set a tangible benchmark, we said that our goal in six years is for at least 75% of students in South Carolina to be at or above grade level. We have big deficits right now, that is an ambitious goal, and it's going to take a lot of people working very hard and pulling together in the same direction to do that. When we stepped back and said, all right, if that's our six-year goal, what do we have to hit? What are some three-year targets and milestones that we really need to focus on if we are going to accomplish that mission? I'll speak a little bit later about our

literacy initiative, that obviously is critical. We know we've lost ground in math as well, so really prioritizing math standards and high intensity tutoring and many other things that we can do to move our math numbers. And then of course, statewide community engagement, I think this is something I've mentioned in my reports in the past. Something I have a strong passion for here is using the platform at the Department of Education to really help put out a statewide call to action for an army of volunteers.

I think there are so many people who want to engage in our school system, in our education system to support our teachers and our students, but who may not have. A clear pathway for how to do that. I hope that that's a service that over the coming year, we can really help build up here within the department, to offer as a service to our folks in the districts who may need those substitute teachers or need some tutors or mentors from a pool that they can draw from.

The fourth thing here on the three-year goal that I wanted to briefly highlight, is the idea of what I'm calling a CARE program, which is Character and Resilience Education. That is not a one-size-fits-all curriculum or really even a curriculum at all, but it's more of an umbrella of resources that I want to see us pull together as the Department of Education, that can be helpful to our districts as we think about what it's going to take. To prepare our children to meet the profile of the South Carolina graduate with some of those soft skills, those intangible skills, that we know that all of us have to have to be successful. When I think about those skills, I think about what are values that unite us as a community, as a state, as a nation, and how can we help support the character development of our students and build that resilience?

So, I was privileged a couple of weeks ago to be able to go down to the USS Yorktown. You all may be aware that the Congressional Medal of Honor Museum actually lives there on board the Yorktown. Congress has actually designated South Carolina, and that location as the official home for the US Congressional Medal of Honor Society, which is an incredible honor for all the states in the country for that to be located here in South Carolina. While I was there, I learned about a curriculum that teachers have developed for teachers, by teachers for teachers. It is built on the six civic virtues that we want every American, and I think every South Carolina student, to graduate with. I brought the program here that I got from them, it's the virtues of courage, commitment, sacrifice, patriotism, integrity, and citizenship. This curriculum uses the stories of these Medal of Honor recipients to illustrate the resilience, and these different virtues that it takes to overcome obstacles. Because I think as we as we honestly acknowledge the mental health challenges that we know that our children are having, I think it's incredibly important that we talk about how we build an I can mentality within them, because we all are going to face tremendous obstacles in life. They may look different, and they will look different from person to person, but what defines us as individual is how we respond to those obstacles. How can we help our students build the character and the resilience that they need, to face life challenges with strength and with commitment, and with the resilience that will take to see them through.

I actually have a book here, and I am fortunately going to have to duck out a little bit early, since we are starting late. I welcome you to look at it, I would just ask the staff to get it back to my office. This is a very treasured possession. It was given to me by General Livingston in Charleston, who is in his 80s and is a Medal of Honor recipient himself.

We actually were privileged here at the department, just a couple of weeks ago, to welcome Leroy Petri, a Medal of Honor recipient, who received it in 2011 from President Obama, for his courage in Afghanistan. He is missing a hand and just his story in brief. He was in a firefight in Afghanistan. There was a grenade that was lobbed at them. He picked up the grenade to toss it back, it exploded. He lost his hand instantly, and what's so amazing about his story is that he radioed in that three of his fellow Rangers were down, and then he said yeah by the way I lost my hand, and he wouldn't be evacuated out until the enemy had been defeated. These are the kinds of stories of real-life bravery and heroism that I believe our students can benefit from knowing. I am very excited to continue to go deeper, learn more about this curriculum and other resources like that that I think we as a department can really help collate and curate, to provide as a resource for our teachers who are out in the field trying to assist our students.

The last thing that I will mention to you that obviously is a big part of this strategic plan is literacy. I wanted to give you a very quick update about where we are in the rollout of the Letters program that we have talked about previously. I am very excited to share that Abby DeGance has let me know that we have 67 of 76 of our districts who have at least one cohort of educators who are engaged in this LETRs professional development. Across all of the different cycles of training that we have had, 11,200 teachers have either begun or are in the process of completing this Letters training. We have a cohort of just over 5,000 that's going to be starting this fall. Another cohort that will be starting in the winter. We are incredibly excited about this. I actually had a very short video that I wanted to share (video of Chester School District educators and leaders talking about the LETRS Program, showing educators in classrooms working with students utilizing the tools of the program).

A big shout out, I am so proud of our teachers in Chester, and their incredible students who have started this journey. What I want to emphasize to you all is that we are on the very front end of this. We are already seeing such encouraging anecdotal results, and I truly believe that that impact is only going to continue to grow over time as we equip more and more of our teachers across the state with this skill.

I will close by saying we actually are about to offer a LETRS cohort to professors in our education prep programs, because I think that that's really where this starts. It is wonderful that the state of South Carolina is investing this money to give our teachers these skills, but it is absolutely essential that our teachers start to get these skills and their Ed Prep programs. We will build a coalition with our colleges and institutions of higher education across the state, to make sure that they are getting this learning as well. With that, Madam Chair, I'll conclude my report. Thank you.

This concluded Superintendent Weaver's report.

VII. PARLIAMENTARIAN COMMENT

No Parliamentarian comments.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

IX. STATE BOARD ITEMS

PL POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE—COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Stapleton reported that the sub-committee met and heard one action item(s) and one 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.

FOR APPROVAL

01. Proposed Amendments to State Board of Education (SBE) Regulation S.C. Code Ann. Regs 43-243.1 (R.43-243.1), Criteria for Entry into Programs of Special Education for Students with Disabilities (First Reading)

FOR INFORMATION

02. 2022-23 Report of the Accreditation of School Districts in South Carolina

EP EDUCATOR PROFESSIONS—COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. Lee reported that the sub-committee met and heard four action item(s) and no item(s) for information. The action items were placed on the Consent Agenda.

FOR APPROVAL

03. 2023-24 Updates to the South Carolina Certification Assessment Program—Mary Hipp, Director, Office of Educator Services, Division of College and Career Readiness

04. New Educator Preparation Program Approval Recommendation: Coastal Carolina University Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT)—James Ritter, PhD, Education Associate, Office of Educator Services, Division of College and Career Readiness

05. New Educator Preparation Program Approval Recommendation: Network for Alternative Preparation in Teaching (NetAPT) at Winthrop University—James Ritter, PhD, Education Associate, Office of Educator Services, Division of College and Career Readiness

06. Alternative Route Program Approval: Additional Certification Fields for Teachers of Tomorrow (ToT)—Jaclyn Walsh, Education Associate, Office of Educator Services, Division of College and Career Readiness

FOR INFORMATION

01. No items.

SLA STANDARDS, LEARNING AND ACCOUNTABILITY—COMMITTEE REPORT

Did not meet.

FOR APPROVAL

FOR INFORMATION

ELC EDUCATOR LICENSURE—COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Stapleton recognized Mr. Walters who reported that the sub-committee met and took action upon the following 25 cases; three public reprimands, 20 suspensions, and two permanent revocations.

FB-ELC FULL BOARD EDUCATOR LICENSURE–COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Stapleton reported that the Full Board ELC committee met and took action upon the following seven cases; three denials for initial certification; three suspensions, and one permanent revocation. Chair Stapleton also reported that the actions of ELC were ratified during the FB ELC meeting. Chair Stapleton commented, “Thank you for the work that your committee does. And to all of our board members for all of the preparation you do in preparing for those cases, and to the Office of General Counsel for preparing them so that we can be prepared”.

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. Mr. Walters seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

X. SOUTH CAROLINA BOARD OF EDUCATION REPORT

FOR APPROVAL

01. Proposed Amendments to State Board of Education (SBE) Regulation S.C. Code Ann. Regs 43-243.1 (R.43-243.1), Criteria for Entry into Programs of Special Education for Students with Disabilities (First Reading)— Lisa McCliment, Education Associate, Office of Special Education Services, Division of College and Career Readiness

Mr. McCliment reported, "Thank you. IDEA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, provides us with very specific requirements for states in developing criteria for eligibility for entry into special education. There are 13 disability categories under IDEA. The last time South Carolina revised that criterion was in 2011, so it's been about 12 years. We are requesting revisions to account for developments in the field over those last 12 years, guidance that the Office of Special Education Programs on the federal level has provided to states and to South Carolina in particular, and to provide clarity and more uniform implementation of our eligibility criteria. These are just the basics, but any questions that I can answer for you"?

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

FOR INFORMATION

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

Mr. Ferguson reported, "Good afternoon, everyone. As you probably have already heard, Superintendent Weaver shared all my fun-facts about the literacy update, which I think speaks to the fact that she is really focused on moving the needle forward in student achievement around literacy in the state. I think it is. I would like to underline that for us there are 67 out of 76 districts that have joined the "Coalition of the Willing," they have signed up and said we want to participate in this professional development. I think that's a great first start. We have 5000 teachers who are starting in August or September. Our plan is to add an additional 5,000 teachers in January. After we start this year, there will be about 10 to 12,000 still left, so there will be work to do next year as well.

To clarify, this does not account for some of the attrition in teachers moving in and out of the state or teacher recruitment and retention. We are looking at 5,000 starting. We know we have 12,000 more, but there will be some leakage in that. We are thinking through how we are planning for those additional teachers after that too. It has been very well received by

the vast majority of districts. We are looking forward to getting that started, many have already started.

That has been great and Superintendent Weaver also mentioned but we have also gotten a lot more positive interest from our Institutes of Higher Ed and the EPPs who are saying they want to be a part of this training as well. We have not yet started that cohort, but we are looking forward to beginning that in the fall too so that we can go upstream of this problem and provide the training during Educator Prep, not just after someone has graduated with a teaching certificate. So that is our literacy update, any questions about that?

Dr. O'Shields commented, "I just want to say thank you. Thanks also to Abbey and company, the way that it has been rolled out, the fact that it focuses on the science of reading and not merely the philosophy of it. It has been very well received, making it so that it allowed us to use it as corporate and collective professional development, and no one feels that it came with a "gotcha". I really do think this will move the needle. We are part of the first group because we had a school that required it and we decided that all of our elementary schools would do it. I just think it is something that will indeed make an impact. Seeing Chester on screen, we emulate Chester in some respects, and to see that excitement I think is an exciting part for all students of all ability levels and all socioeconomic levels."

Mr. Ferguson responded, "I'll add to what Superintendent Weaver mentioned, that we are hearing anecdotally that it's moving the numbers. I promise as soon as I have the real numbers that I will report those to you. I think we should be able to do that around October. I'm an English teacher but I'm also a numbers person. If it doesn't show up in the numbers, I don't quite believe it. The buzz is out there, I'm hearing from principals and superintendents who are saying, have you seen our data this year? It is really up, and a lot of those folks are attributing it to the work that they've done over the last two years in LETRS through the PLP movement. Just as soon as I can publicly talk about those numbers and show you graphs, I will ensure I share them."

Ms. Allison commented, "I'm very excited about that. But I know I am so appreciative to for the foresight to include the professor cohort and the teacher prep program that is so important for those entering the field."

Ms. Crimminger asked if there was access to the districts currently using it.

Mr. Ferguson responded that he would gather the information and provide it as soon as he could. He noted that not all schools in all districts participated for various reasons.

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

Mr. Ferguson reported, “As alluded to earlier, about 50% of the districts have already started school. Allendale began school on August the second. They have had a successful start to the school year. The schedules were in place, there were teachers in the rooms. It was a successful start to the school year.

We have been working through with district office and building capacity and working towards a plan that moves the academic needle in both Allendale and Williamsburg. For example, the expectation that we are setting for both Allendale and Williamsburg, academically, is that there will be no school in the district that receives an overall rating of unsatisfactory or below average. There will also be no school in the district that receives an academic rating of unsatisfactory. As it stands, there are many schools in both districts that meet that criterion.

Since we have set that expectation, we have been walking through at the district level and at the school level. If this is our expectation, what actions, what changes need to take place programmatically, professional development, with curriculum that move the needle so that we are meeting that expectation. We are working collaboratively with the schools and the districts to do that. It is not the State Department coming in and telling you, you have to do this, or you have to make that work. We are trying to build capacity because the idea behind this work is that we are building capacity. We are working towards improvements so that we can return control back to the local districts, and it's been a refreshing reset. There is much work to be done, but we are working towards those improvements and developing plans with the districts, with the schools, to move us forward.”

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

Mr. Ferguson reported, “Thinking through the superintendency in Allendale, just an update. We have conducted the first round of interviews. We had many qualified candidates apply. We will be going to round two interviews in the coming weeks and take some of those folks out to meet the community and do some community engagement. It is our hope that we will have someone permanently in place in September to be the long-term superintendent in Allendale County.”

Chair Stapleton asked for questions from the Board.

Ms. Allison asked, “Did you have difficulty in placing staff, primarily teachers, in both of those districts this time?”

Mr. Ferguson responded, “Ms. Allison, that is a great question. We have been working through that and thinking all the classes are covered, we've also been looking at class size. For example, in some of the districts there are class sizes that are 10 and 11 to a teacher. We

are combining those classrooms so that may be 20 to one. That also is not an unreasonable number, so we have been looking at how to combine classes to make sure that every child has a certified teacher in front of the classroom. We have also looked at district office certification and administrator certification to say, you're certified in middle school science. You may be doing this for part of the day, but you can cover a period or two during middle school to make sure that those students benefit from a certified teacher. Because we are about the students and making sure that they are covered. All classrooms are covered, and we have also looked at how to ensure we are using our personnel in the most effective way."

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 3:06 p.m.