MINUTES

State Board of Education Meeting

Date

March 12, 2024

Time

1:00 p.m.

Location

Rutledge Conference Center
1429 Senate Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Dr. David O'Shields, Chair
Ms. Rita Allison, Chair-Elect
Ellen E. Weaver, State Superintendent of Education,
Secretary and Administrative Officer to the Board

Visitor Information

If you require Section 504 or Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations to attend or participate in this public meeting, please contact Tracy Moore.

Due to allergies of staff and visitors, we ask that visitors refrain from wearing scented products when attending the State Board of Education (SBE) meetings in South Carolina Department of Education facilities.

State Board of Education 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 David O'Shields, Eighth Judicial Circuit; Chair-Elect Rita Allison, Governor's Appointee; Maya Slaughter, First Judicial Circuit; Crystal Stapleton, Ed.D., Second Judicial Circuit; Delaney Frierson, Third Judicial Circuit; Jacqueline "Jackie" Lynn, Fourth Judicial Circuit; Beverly Frierson, Fifth 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; and Jackie Terribile, Sixteenth Judicial Circuit.

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; Henry Gunter, Deputy General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, Division of Legal Affairs; Tracy

Moore, SBE Executive Liaison, Office of General Counsel, Division of Legal Affairs; Frances "Cricket" Katsos, Administrative Coordinator, Office of General Counsel, Division of Legal Affairs; Matthew Ferguson, Deputy Superintendent, Division of College and Career Readiness; Laura Bayne, Deputy Superintendent, Strategic Engagement; Travis Huggins, Information Technology Manager I, 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; Brando Butler, IT Specialist III, Chief Information Office, Division of Data, Technology and Agency Operations; Raymond Dues, IT Specialist II, Chief Information Office, Division of Data, Technology and Agency Operations; and Jonathan Glover, IT Specialist III, Chief Information Office, Division of Data, Technology and Agency Operations.

I. WELCOME/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SBE meeting convened at 1:01 p.m. Chair O'Shields called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone who attended.

Chair-Elect Allison led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. APPROVAL OF STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 13, 2024

Chair O'Shields asked if there were any objections to approving the minutes as presented for the regularly scheduled SBE meeting on February 13, 2024. Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved.

III. APPROVAL OF STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AGENDA FOR MARCH 12, 2024

Chair O'Shields asked if there were any objections to approving the agenda as presented for the March 12, 2024, SBE meeting. Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved.

IV. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS AND NEWS MEDIA

Chair O'Shields noted there was no media present at today's meeting and welcomed visitors: Chase Ferguson, Sumter School District; Craig King, PSTA; Tremaine Owens, Sumter School District; Pam King, Sumter School District; Denise Robinson, Sumter School District; Jennifer Rainville, Appleseed Legal Justice Center; David Driscoll, Public Consulting Group, (PCG); Erica Harold, Sumter School District; Tahisha Fortune, Sumter School District; Denisha Griffin, Sumter School District; Charlene McKnight, Sumter School District; Sheila Pace, Sumter School District; Karen Ressler, Sumter School District; Cynthia Stallgiven; and Tammy White, Teach Right USA.

V. STATE BOARD CHAIR REPORT

Chair O'Shields reported, "Remember last month, I talked briefly about St. Valentine, St. Valentine's Day. Well, this month's public educational homily is about St. Patrick's Day and the

common misconceptions about it. First, St. Patrick was not Irish. He was British. He was never really concerned with four-leaf clovers for him and his ministry. The three-leaf clover, or shamrock, was far more important. Granted, the much rarer four-leaf clover exists, but was not in any way associated with him and only later came to signify good luck. Second, St. Patrick did not chase snakes out of Ireland. In fact, Great Britain itself only has three species of snakes, but none of them made it to Ireland, an island that at its closest point is still fourteen miles away from the Mull of Kintyre in Scotland. For anybody old, you may remember that Paul McCartney and Wings had a song, the Mull of Kintyre. If you have not listened to it, you should. Third, green was not the original color associated with Ireland, especially with St. Patrick's Day. You can read about it if you want, but the color was blue, as John's tie here. It was not until the 17th or 18th century that the omnipresent green shamrock became the national symbol.

So why do I wax long about these misconceptions or misperceptions? I think, far too often, we view public education with a blurred or faulty lens. We on this board take seriously the role we play in improving and in strengthening our public schools. Are public schools above reproach, absolutely not. We can always be better, but schools, and I would say many, do exceptional jobs educating students from all levels of society. Today, we have far more choices than ever before. Private schools, parochial schools, home schools, charter schools, magnet schools, and traditional community public schools. Do not be deceived that all public schools are failing. They are not. If you get right down to it, most of the educators with whom I am familiar, are pillars of their local society, good church members, and do not fit into some of the categories that the political or journalistic spectrum would consider us to be. And we believe, as public educators, in the beauty of America as the hallmark of excellence and opportunity. As you go, and as you think what you know, always be reminded that what you think you know may not be as you know you know. And in the words then of the great philosopher Forrest Gump, “That's all I have to say about that”. For now.”

VI. STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION REPORT

Chair O’Shields recognized Superintendent Weaver. Superintendent Weaver reported, “I am so pleased to be able to bring four primary things that I wanted to call to your attention today as members of the State Board.

The first is just an update on the state budget process. This week is budget week in the house. I am incredibly grateful for the partnership that the House of Representatives has extended to the State Department of Education in our budget requests. We faired very, very well especially relative to other agencies within the state system, and it just speaks again to the important priority that our general assembly members put on exactly what you are talking about, which is our public education system. I am very thankful for that. I will be presenting to the Senate Finance Subcommittee this Thursday, the same presentation that I gave to the house earlier this year, so the budget will be making its way over to the Senate. I will be glad to provide more specific updates to you all once we have a better sense of where the final product might ultimately land. As Ms. Allison knows, the House has just taken the first swing at it, there is still

a lot of negotiating to be done between the two bodies and then of course the Governor has his say.

The second thing that I wanted to mention to you is that I previewed for you a few months ago what the department is calling Project Raise Your Hand. Which is a school support initiative that we are undertaking as employees of the department. We actually are allowing employees within the department, who wish to participate in this voluntary program, the ability to use up to eight hours of their monthly work time to support a school. That is vital as we seek to truly connect our agency's work with the frontline work that is happening in classrooms. I have had at least six people within this agency stop me in the hall, completely unsolicited, and just share what a joy their experience had been. We are partnering with our neighborhood schools here at the Department our Richland One. We are zoned for Richland one here at the State Department of Education. We have ten schools that have raised their hands to say yes, please send us employees of the Department to help. We are now deployed into ten schools here locally.

I have heard a story about a young lady who was helping to catalog books in the library. I have been able to go and read in several schools. Even just passing out computers and supplies for a teacher while her children are at lunch allows her to have time to actually get her mind around her planning for the afternoon instruction. These teachers are so grateful for every little bit of time that we give them. Another impactful story that I heard is one of our math specialists here is actually now modeling a lesson. She was placed in the classroom of a first-year teacher. She is now coaching that teacher, giving some ideas for how you can use math manipulatives to improve your practice and your instruction. We never know going in what we are going to be called to do. But the fact is, is that whatever we are called to do is impactful and is making a difference. My quote would be, it is more blessed to give than to receive. I have certainly seen that in terms of the department staff and just the joy that they have received from being able to be back in a school setting. So that was a quick update on Project Raise Your Hand.

I am also excited to hear that Sumter is in the house today because March the 25th is National Science of Reading Week. One of my favorite people to talk about in terms of literacy is Mary McLeod Bethune. Someone who the state of Florida has tried to steal from us as South Carolina, but we know that she was born and raised right here in Maysville. She taught in Sumter County before she moved to Florida, and her famous quote is, “The whole world open to me when I learned how to read”.

And that is the gift that we are seeking to give to each student and why I have put such a priority focus on the science of reading in my first year. And so just today, the new rewrite of the Read to Succeed law, which Ms. Allison was part of passing in its original form, has become law. We look forward to hopefully having a ceremonial bill signing here with the Governor in the next few weeks. Which would be very appropriate, the week of March 25th if we are able to work that out, for the science of reading week. Just a quick synopsis of what the reboot, our

Read to Succeed 2.0, does. It really narrows the focus of the legislation from K-12 to K-5. It is not that sixth to twelfth grade is not vitally important, it is absolutely critical. However, you have to have that strategic focus on the early grades to really leverage your resources for impact. It narrows the focus of the bill. It eliminates many of the endorsement requirements for those middle and upper grades that we heard were onerous and duplicative and frankly, not really delivering much value to teachers. We are always looking for how we can streamline and save teacher time. It provides for ongoing professional development, such as the letters training that we are already rolling out that I've talked to you all about in the past. It also streamlines testing, which is something that we have heard repeatedly from teachers is important. This streamlines the universal screener and the formative assessment requirements that we have as a state, and this will actually save time for students and for teachers. I am excited to see this become law and obviously now the real work starts, right? As hard as it is to get something done in the General Assembly, that is just the first step. I had the opportunity to speak to the Senate Education Committee about two weeks ago as they were passing this to the Senate floor. What I shared with them was that we can have the best plan on paper here at the state level. If it is not actually translated and supported in classroom practice it does not matter and that is why I am so thankful for the work. Abby Duggins is sitting here, as well as Matthew Ferguson. I am so thankful for the work that they are doing, because they are helping to translate this policy on paper into real impact and support for teachers and students in the classroom. That is the quick update on that.

Finally, many of you may not be aware, because what is old is new, that we actually have a law here in South Carolina called the Parental Involvement in their Children's Education Act. There are many pieces of this act that are already being implemented. As I think about changing some of the perceptions, like you were talking about, David, one of the things that we have to do within the public education system is build strong bridges of trust between parents and teachers because that's ultimately where impact is made. You cannot have success in one without the other. We are looking to lean really into that legislation from over 20 years ago, to really see what ideas they may have had in that bill. We could do more as a Department of Education to support our districts in their parent engagement program, and also to just engage and build capacity within parents. I genuinely think that the vast majority of parents want to get engaged, they want to know how to help their children. but they do not always have the resources to do it. There is so much that we can do with this early literacy piece, to provide parents with things that they could do at home with their children to help promote early literacy, to help tutor their children in math. We will be working a lot on that in the coming years as a department. But in view of that law, I was really privileged a few weeks ago to go out into Lexington Four to their Early Childhood Development Center. They have an initiative there that they have run for over a decade, I believe, now called Parents as Leaders. They bring parents of their three, four, and five-year-olds and they serve there at that school one morning every month, to talk about how the parent can support what the child is learning at school within the home. These parents are so engaged. We talked to parents out there who have actually had multiple children now who have gone through that early learning center. They sign

up to do PALs every time because they said we always get value out of it. I was excited to see the excitement of the parents, the students loved it, and the level of support that the teachers felt and being able to engage with those parents.

With that, we will go ahead and queue for a short video about the work that they are doing in Lexington Four. (A video was shown, depicting the Parents as Leaders Program at Lexington School District Four)

Again, having the program to remind us about how to do those things has just been amazing. Please give them a big hand, Lexington Four.

This concluded the Superintendent's report.

VII. PARLIAMENTARIAN COMMENT

Parliamentarian, John Tyler, General Counsel, Deputy Superintendent, Division of Legal Affairs, reported, "It is March, and you are now all no doubt, planning your wardrobe, your attire for the weekend to be royal blue and not green after our instruction from the Chairman. I would note for the record, he is using a green pen. Whether you wear green or blue, please remember to file your statement of economic interest. Just prior to this meeting, I sent you all an email, a reminder with instructions and links that you can use. I will stay after adjournment to assist while you all have laptops in front of you, to the extent that you have the information that you need for that. So that concludes the comment for today".

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair O'Shields welcomed those signed up for public comment. He recognized Kelly Howard from Sumter County School District, who commented about her delegation of district Teachers of the Year being in Columbia for their Legislative Hill Day and thanked the Board for their time and gratefulness for being able to be present.

IX. STATE BOARD ITEMS

POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE (PL) — COMMITTEE REPORT

Did not meet.

FOR APPROVAL
No items.

FOR INFORMATION
No items.

EDUCATOR PROFESSIONS (EP) — COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair O'Shields recognized Dr. Johnson, Chair, who reported that the sub-committee met and heard one action item(s) and three item(s) for information. The action items were placed on the Consent Agenda.

This concluded Dr. Johnson's report.

FOR APPROVAL

1. Critical Need Subjects and Schools for Employment of Retired Educators: 2024–25

FOR INFORMATION

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

3. Annual Report on Individuals Certified through American Board

4. Report on Individuals Certified through the South Carolina Teach for America Program 2022-23

5. Annal Report on Individuals Certified through Teachers of Tomorrow

STANDARDS, LEARNING AND ACCOUNTABILITY (SLA) — COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair O'Shields recognized Jacqueline Lynn, Chair, who reported that the sub-committee met and heard one action item(s) and no item(s) for information. The action items were placed on the Consent Agenda.

This concluded Ms. Lynn's report.

FOR APPROVAL

6. Appointment Recommendations for the 2024 Instructional Materials Review Panels

FOR INFORMATION

No items.

EDUCATOR LICENSURE (ELC) — COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair O'Shields recognized Ms. Crimminger who reported the sub-committee met and took action upon the following thirteen cases; one public reprimand, two revocation, and ten suspensions. Ms. Collier recused herself from matter numbers 7 and 11.

This concluded Ms. Crimminger' s report.

FULL BOARD EDUCATOR LICENSURE (FB-ELC) — COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair O'Shields reported that the FB ELC met and took action upon the following three cases; one approval and two denials for initial certification. Dr. Stapleton recused herself in matter three. Chair O'Shields reported that the matters coming from the Educator Licensure Committee were ratified in the Full Board Educator Licensure Committee meeting.

This concluded Dr. O'Shields report.

X. CONSENT AGENDA

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

Chair O'Shields called for a vote. Dr. Stapleton made the motion. Ms. Allison seconded the motion. The motion passed.

X. SOUTH CAROLINA BOARD OF EDUCATION REPORT

FOR APPROVAL
No items.

FOR INFORMATION

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

Mr. Ferguson reported, "Thank you, Mr. Chair, and members of the board. Doctor O'Shields, very soon you are going to be able to call me doctor and it actually be accurate. It is Mr. Ferguson until May, but hopefully in May, it will finally be Doctor.

I wanted to take a few moments and talk about Read to Succeed to begin with. It is going to be wonderful to have some of the changes in the new Read to Succeed law. As Superintendent Weaver alluded to, the devil is in the implementation. We have been working on how to roll those changes out in a way that benefits children and has an impact on their student outcomes. One of those that I know Mr. Harrington has been really interested in is how we get ahead of the (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) training and make sure that we are collaborating with our educator prep programs to provide that training through educator prep. I wanted to start by saying that the Read to Succeed legislation does include a requirement for those seeking initial certification to pass a reading assessment that is based in the science of reading. I am also happy to report that we have started a LETRS cohort of Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) faculty in those educator prep programs. Those are going strong, and those professors are showing up to those meetings and are participating and are actively engaged in collaborating with the department to learn that new learning for them and to think through how to implement that in their educator prep practice.

Building off of that, I also wanted to share with you today about another collaboration that we are working on. The literacy specialists who are specifically focused on our 4K, our Child Development Education Pilot Program (CERDEP) classrooms, are also beginning the early childhood LETRS training this month. They are working to complete that before the beginning of the next school year so that they can also begin supporting the 4K teachers in their learning of the LETRS journey. We are partnering with a school district and inviting other interested parties across the state to participate in that training as well to get ahead of our rollout of 4K early childhood LETRS, hoping that that makes it all the way through the budget this season so that we can begin that in August as well.

As an update, we are currently working through English Language Arts (ELA) adoptions across the state. Boards and districts are asked to have their selection made and have that to the department in the beginning of April, so that we can have the new materials shipped and in classrooms by the beginning of next school year. We are also working with districts to finalize details around the completion of the statewide rollout of LETRS beginning next year. There are about 8,000 teachers who will begin their LETRS journey in August, and working through scheduling and making sure that that goes as smoothly as possible, we are working through that and our vendor. It keeps us up at night, but we feel like it is going to go off without any hitch beginning in August next year. Mr. Chair, that concludes the literacy portion of my update."

02. The HOPE Network Updates—Matthew Ferguson, Deputy Superintendent, Division of College and Career Readiness

Mr. Ferguson reported, "Moving on to our Helping Our Pupils Excel (HOPE) Network update. Like the state, Allendale and Williamsburg are both working through the budget process currently and looking at what the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) cliff looks like in those districts and how to plan accordingly for that. We will hopefully have that finalized in the next few months to be able to present it to the Superintendent. We are also working with both Allendale, Williamsburg and other districts who are tracking towards participation in our HOPE Network, in a district transformation academy. Those meetings happen monthly, and folks from the district office on the instructional team come together and plan for how they will organize their system to focus on student outcomes and instruction. All of our districts have been participating in that for the last several months and working very deliberately on how to collaborate around improved student outcomes.

Finally, I also wanted to let you know that both districts are busy recruiting teachers for next year, because this is the intent season and we are moving into contract season, so both districts are out recruiting heavily. As an update, we have been able to connect Williamsburg specifically with Clemson and a grant that they have around bringing teacher residencies to the PeeDee. Williamsburg is now going to be participating as a partner in that. Allendale, thanks to the Chair, has now been approved to be a site for Teach for America. Teach for America will be an additional partner to bring teachers to Allendale beginning next school year.

Mr. Chair, that concludes my HOPE Network update."

Superintendent Weaver commented, "I wanted to comment briefly how thankful I am for the hard work that this Hope Network work is forcing us to do within the agency. In terms of us breaking down internal silos and figuring out how we really align our work across offices to provide a compendium of support for these districts that we are serving. I will not say that we are there by any stretch of the imagination yet, but Mr. (Almost) Dr. Ferguson is doing a great job leading that work. With the folks here, PCG and the audience, are also helping us think through how we continue to do continuous quality improvement here in the agency. I never want it to be said that we are out there telling other people how to get their house in order, and we do not have our own house in order. It is really critical to me that as a department we are leading by example in terms of how we are aligning our resources for strategic impact around student outcomes. I wanted to say thank you to Matthew for the work that he is doing with his team on the Hope Network. Thank you, thank you all".

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

Chair O'Shields reminded all members to turn in their travel forms prior to their departure.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the SBE adjourned at 1:36 p.m.