

MINUTES
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
MIAMI, FLORIDA
JUNE 15, 2004

Chairman F. Philip Handy convened the meeting of the State Board of Education at Miami-Dade College, InterAmerican Campus, in Miami, Florida, at 9:00 a.m., on June 15, 2004, with the following members present: Linda J. Eads; T. Willard Fair, Vice Chairman; Charles P. Garcia; Julia Johnson; William L. Proctor; and Linda K. Taylor.

Welcome

Chairman Handy welcomed members and participants and introduced Dr. Eduardo J. Padron, President of Miami-Dade College, and Dr. Nora Hernandez Hendrix, Campus President. Chairman Handy thanked Miami-Dade College for hosting the Board meeting.

Member Comments

Mr. Garcia brought to the attention of the Board an article written by Cynthia Kopkowski of the Palm Beach Post entitled, "Grade 3.5 Kids Vault Failures, Leap to 5th." The article reported the progress of a group of minority students who had been retained in third grade as a result of failing the FCAT. The students were placed in an experimental program with a well-trained teacher with forty years of experience. While in this experimental program the students were doing 4th grade material including intensive reading and math. The students not only passed the 3rd grade but joined their peers in 5th grade. The class's reading scores on the FCAT jumped an average of 50 percent from the previous year. The math scores increased as well. Mr. Garcia concluded his comments by stating that this article was what the FCAT is really about and demonstrates that by having the right teacher all children can learn. There were no other comments.

Chairman's Report

Chairman Handy brought to the attention of the Board recent studies that related to the impact of choice on school grades. He stated that quantitative data indicates that when schools are threatened with opportunity scholarships, they actually perform at a higher rate in terms of learning gains. Chairman Handy highlighted a study completed at the University of Florida which correlates school grades with learning gains and test scores. He stated that there is a positive correlation between teachers who grade more stringently and student achievement.

Chairman Handy reported that a press conference had been held recently for the purpose of asking the Department and Board to increase their role in regulating and overseeing the scholarship and choice programs. Chairman Handy stated that after a review of the governing statutes and the role of the Department, it has been determined that the Department is doing everything consistent with the current law. Mr. Garcia inquired about the result of the proposed legislation to require more accountability. Chairman Handy stated that the proposed legislation was not acted on by the 2004 Legislature.

Chairman Handy concluded his report with a call for a motion on the minutes of the May 18, 2004, State Board meeting. Mrs. Taylor made the motion to approve the minutes with a second by Dr. Eads. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner's Report

School Report Card. The Commissioner briefed the Board on the newly developed report card to be completed for each school based on the school grade and the federal No Child Left Behind program. Commissioner Horne stated that this report card is designed to help parents and students better understand the correlation of school grades and No Child Left Behind. The Commissioner highlighted the information to be included on the report card in addition to the school grade and progress under No Child Left Behind. He stated that the progress in math, reading, and writing will be included, as well as information about choice options should the school receive an F grade. The Commissioner continued his report with a breakdown of the No Child Left Behind data and the ability to report how subgroups of students are progressing in reading, writing, and math.

School Grades. Commissioner Horne presented an overview of the 2004 school grades and the progress made in six years of utilizing this system of accountability. The Commissioner reported that in the six years, the number of A and B schools increased from 21 percent to 68 percent this year. The schools graded D or F in 1999 have decreased from 28 percent to 9 percent this year. In addition, in 1999 only nine percent of African-American students and twelve percent of Hispanic students attended high performing schools. This year the number has increased for African American students to 45 percent and to over 60 percent for Hispanic students.

Commissioner Horne introduced Principal Sherry Krubitch of Miami Shores Elementary School. He reported that Miami Shores Elementary had gone from a D to a C last year and had advanced to an A this year. Ms. Krubitch gave a brief overview of the actions taken to increase their grade and meet the needs of the students. Ms. Krubitch stated that class sizes were reduced and curriculum was developed consistent with the student needs. Ms. Krubitch concluded by stating that she credits the teachers and staff for the success due to their commitment to improving student achievement.

Commissioner Horne requested that Item 1 of the Action Items be taken out of order due to the relevance to the school grade overview he had presented.

Assistance Plus. Commissioner Horne continued his report with information on the assistance provided to schools which have been previously graded F and the actions recommended for consideration by the State Board for schools which have repeatedly received an F.

Chancellor Warford and Mary Jane Tappen, Bureau Chief for School Improvement, reported to the Board on the process and actions taken by the Department in providing assistance. Chancellor Warford stated that the principals followed in formulating the recommendations for F and repeated F schools included involving the educators that are in the schools and that are engaged every day with the students. The second principal was that leadership not sway from the accountability plan and continue on the path of increased student performance. He concluded with the last principal that the community, the district, and the state, work as partners to increase student achievement.

Ms. Tappen continued the report with a summary of the assistance provided to schools in 2003-2004 which included providing reading and mathematics coaches; school improvement resources; technology support; partnerships with the College Board for the high schools; and mentors through the Governor's mentoring initiative. In addition, a Community Oversight Board was established for each repeating failing high school, a research-based school improvement model, the Continuous Improvement Model, was utilized to eliminate the gap between student subgroups; and intensive tutorials were offered during school hours for students most in need. The report was completed with an overview of implementation of school choice and the requirements of school districts to implement school improvement plans.

Chancellor Warford gave an overview of the 2004-2005 District Action Plan for Repeating F Schools and the 2004-2005 District Action Plan for F Schools. The action plans included district requirements to provide quality educators, the development of a budget for 2004-2005 which includes funds targeted to the needs of F schools, adoption of policies to end social promotion, notification to parents of school choice options, establishment of a Community Oversight Committee, development of individual student success plans and contract, and submission of school action plans to the Department. The 2004-2005 District Action Plan for Repeating F Schools also included the recommendation to require school boards to declare a state of emergency for all repeating F schools, and to close the double F charter schools. Parents with students in the double F charter schools would be granted the choice of enrolling their child in another school in the same district. Mr. Fair made the motion to approve the 2004-2005 District Action Plan for Repeating F Schools with a second by Dr. Eads. Chairman Handy stated that the motion should include sanctions for consideration by the Board for districts in noncompliance, as well as the direction to the Commissioner to develop a Request for Proposal process for schools that do not comply. After lengthy discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Fair made the motion to approve the 2004 District Action Plan for F Schools as presented with a second by Mrs. Taylor. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Fair stated that he had been waiting forty years for this action and this was the greatest day for public education.

Just Read, Florida! Mary Laura Openshaw, Director, Just Read, Florida!, reported to the Board on the status of training reading coaches in school districts. Ms. Openshaw stated that for the 2004-2005 school year, approximately 400 schools will have reading coaches funded through the Reading First Grant. In addition to the Reading First Grant, state level federal dollars have been utilized to open additional opportunities of training for districts which are not eligible to receiving funds through the Reading First Grant. Ms. Openshaw concluded her report by stating that approximately 360,000 brochures had been sent to schools for distribution to parents, explaining the options for third grade students who scored level one and providing information on summer camps.

Strategic Imperatives Chief of Staff John Winn briefly updated the Board on the progress relating to the strategic imperatives. He stated that the Department is currently reassessing the benchmarks associated with each strategic imperative and additional information would soon be available based on the data accessible through the Education Data Warehouse. Vice Chairman Fair requested that the discussion be continued at the next Board meeting.

Recommendation of Guidelines to be Followed for Development of 2005-2006 Legislative Budget Request Commissioner Horne gave a brief overview of the Guidelines for Development of the 2005-2006 Legislative Budget Request. Commissioner Horne stated that the Legislative Budget would be presented for the Board's consideration at the August State Board meeting.

The Commissioner completed his report by stating that the Department is reviewing data related to the transfer of students and the administration of FCAT. Commissioner Horne stressed that no school district had been accused of any wrongdoing, but that the Inspector General at his request would be engaged in the review.

Mrs. Taylor made the motion to approve the Commissioner's report with a second by Vice Chairman Fair. The motion passed unanimously.

Reports/Updates

Legislative Update Paula Shea, Legislative Director, provided the Board with a summary of the timelines and responsibilities related to legislation adopted in the 2004 session. Ms. Shea reported that rules will be proposed for the Board's consideration as a result of the legislation. Dr. Proctor asked to be informed of public hearings related to the proposed rules.

State University System Chancellor Debra Austin reported on recent activities of the Board of Governors and actions taken since the last State Board of Education meeting. These actions included the adoption of a motion that the process for approving the new Chiropractic School at Florida State University be consistent with other doctoral programs at the state level. In addition, Chancellor Austin reported that the Board of Governors approved a doctoral program for social work at the University of South Florida, a new funding formula for the University System, and the PECO budget guidelines for the University System.

Mr. Garcia requested an update of the process and progress of the Strategic Planning Committee. Chancellor Austin reported that the committee had been in existence for ten months and began by identifying what the state's needs are, particularly in the critical areas of teaching, nursing, and engineering. Chancellor Austin stated that this is a collaborative process involving the universities, Boards of Trustees, and the Board of Governors. Mr. Garcia stated that the same process could be utilized by the community colleges.

Chancellor Austin concluded her report by stating that the next Board of Governors meeting will be held in July and that the University's Legislative Budget Request will be on the agenda for consideration.

Community College and Workforce Education Activities Chancellor David Armstrong reported that the Division of Community Colleges and four of the community colleges have been selected for a grant from the Lumina Foundation to focus on minority and economically disadvantaged students and their performance. Chancellor Armstrong stated that Florida was one of five states to receive this grant and that the four community colleges were four out of twenty-seven. Chancellor Armstrong reported that the Fourth Annual Chancellor's Leadership Session had been completed with a class of thirty-five nominated by their presidents for the purpose of training to move to the next level of leadership. Chancellor Armstrong completed his report with an update on the status of new legislation and the progress made in each of the initiatives affecting his area. Mr. Garcia requested that Chancellor Armstrong prepare a proposal for the development of a strategic plan similar to that currently under development by the State University System. Vice Chairman Fair requested clarification of the proposed Chipola Community College and Florida State University partnership. Chancellor Armstrong responded that Florida State University had determined that student enrollment in the programs would not be sufficient to warrant this partnership. Chipola Community College is pursuing a partnership with another institution.

Action Items

American Board Commissioner Horne introduced Betty Coxe, Deputy Chancellor, K-12 Educator Quality, and Kathy Madigan, Executive Director of the American Board. Mrs. Coxe stated that this item is presented as a result of the new legislation passed in Senate Bill 2986 which allows the State Board of Education to recognize certificates issued by a "national educator credentialing board." Mrs. Coxe recommended that the American Board be used to meet entry criteria for a temporary certificate in Florida. Dr. Proctor requested information on the number of states which have approved the American Board as a credentialing board and the number of teachers certified by the American Board which are currently in the classroom. Ms. Madigan responded that there are two states which have approved the American Board as a credentialing board and that while there are candidates in the process of becoming certified, there are no teachers certified by the American Board presently teaching in the classrooms. Dr. Eads requested clarification on the demonstration of competency in the classroom and the internship period for new teachers. Ms. Madigan responded that the temporary certificate will allow teachers to demonstrate their competence in the classroom immediately. Ms. Madigan stated that the average age for candidates in their program is thirty-six. Vice Chairman Fair made the motion to approve the recommendation with a second by Mrs. Taylor. The motion passed with Dr. Proctor and Dr. Eads voting no.

Charter School Appeal Apalachicola Bay Charter School vs. the School Board of Franklin County. Mr. Henry L. Kozlowsky represented Apalachicola Bay Charter School. Superintendent JoAnn Gander represented the Franklin County School Board. Vice Chairman Fair made the motion to accept the recommendation of the Charter School Appeal Commission to overturn the decision of the School Board with a second by Mrs. Taylor. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Community College Rules

Dr. Proctor made the motion to approve the community college rules with a second by Dr. Eads. The motion passed unanimously with the note that technical corrections will be made prior to filing the rules to become effective.

Consent items

Vice Chairman Fair made the motion to approve items 1 through 9 with a second by Dr. Eads. Mr. Garcia requested that the record show his vote of no on item 2, Rule 6A-1.094221, Alternative Standardized Reading Assessment and Use of Student Portfolio. The motion passed unanimously with the exception of item 2.

Adjournment

Chairman Handy stated that the next Board meeting will be held August 17, 2004, in Tallahassee. Having no further business, Chairman Handy adjourned the meeting of the State Board of Education.

F. Philip Handy, Chairman

Lynn Abbott, Corporate Secretary