

MINUTES
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETING

July 14, 2021
St. Petersburg College
Seminole Campus,
Conference Center (CC316),
9200 113th St,
Seminole, FL 33772

Chair Andy Tuck called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. The following members were present: Vice Chair Marva Johnson, Ben Gibson, Ryan Petty, Tom Grady and Joe York, with Monesia Brown via telephone.

WELCOME

Chair Tuck thanked members and guests for attending the meeting and recognized, special guest, Governor Ron DeSantis.

Governor DeSantis started by thanking the board and announced \$44 million in school improvement grant funds that will be used to support 153 struggling schools across 29 different districts with up to \$15,000 bonuses for teachers recruited at these particular schools based on their performance. Also included in the funding is recruitment and retention bonuses for principals and assistant principals, up to \$100,000 to fund an early literacy coach, up to \$100,000 to fund a school-based strategic initiatives coach and funds for curriculum materials and to support school safety. Governor DeSantis also announced \$106 million for additional civics initiatives most of which will be geared towards new certificate credentials for civics teachers. Governor DeSantis then introduced First Lady DeSantis.

First Lady DeSantis started by thanking the board and commissioner for inviting her to speak. Then briefed the board on the Hope Innovators that went around the state of Florida to listen and get perspective from students, teachers, and parents about the stigma surrounding mental health. Leading to the launch of Resiliency Florida, an initiative created to help reframe the narrative on mental health and empower kids with the tools and skills to become resilient to mental health by learning how to persevere through life's challenges.

Chair Tuck then recognized Dr. Tonja Williams, President, St. Petersburg College (SPC) to welcome the board. Dr. Williams thanked the Governor, First Lady DeSantis, and the board for coming to St. Petersburg College. She then briefed the board on some of the workforce initiatives SPC has been working on in conjunction with local educational partners. Such as graduating 800 student's in in-demand programs like IT, allied health, electrical line worker, public safety, drone technology, as well as respiratory therapists, nurses, EMT's and paramedics. Continuing, Dr. Williams, also noted SPCs enhanced virtual classes and online support services that have led to single-digit achievement gaps for male African-Americans. Chair Tuck opened the board for questions. Vice Chair Johnson asked what is going to be the biggest challenge this fall for her and the students she serves.

Chair Tuck then recognized and thanked Senators Darryl Rouson and Ed Hooper and Representatives Linda Chaney and Chris Latvala for attending the State Board Meeting.

Chair Tuck recognized Dr. Mike Grego to provide an update on behalf of the Florida Association of District School Superintendents. Dr. Grego started by thanking the board and introduced newly elected school board member, Laura Heinz and thanked her for her commitment to students. Continuing, Dr. Grego briefed the board on the governor's investment in civics learning, transportation to summer remediation programs, and technology advancements in the districts. Dr. Grego also briefed the board on starting teacher salary, the excitement surrounding early literacy, the legislator's push toward workforce education and First Lady DeSantis' initiative on mental health.

Commissioner's Report

Chair Tuck recognized Commissioner Corcoran for his report. Commissioner Corcoran started by thanking President Williams for hosting the State Board of Education. Commissioner Corcoran then recognized five finalists for the 2021 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching; starting with the two Math finalist: Benjamin Cory Ellis, Seminole High School; Lazslo Nagy, South Dade High School. Continuing to the science finalists: Euan Hunter, Vanguard High School; Michael Mury, KIPP Pride High School; and Yung Romano, Strawberry Crest High School.

Commissioner Corcoran then recognized Kathy Hebda, Chancellor, Division of Florida Colleges to provide recognitions for the Florida College System. Chancellor Hebda started by briefing the board on the \$1.5 million received from the Helios Foundation to help students enroll in college, leading to over 400 student scholarships in the summer term. Chancellor Hebda then recognized student Ashlyn Wells, an upcoming freshman at SPC, as being one of the first students to take advantage of the scholarship. Lastly, Chancellor Hebda recognized the Florida College System Foundation, awarding \$1,198,361 in scholarship funds to the colleges of Florida.

Chair Tuck then called for a motion to approve the commissioner's report. Mr. York made the motion with a second by Mr. Grady. The motion passed unanimously.

UPDATES

Florida College System – President Williams on behalf of the Council of Presidents

Chair Tuck recognized President Williams for an update on behalf of the Council of Presidents. President Williams started by briefing the board on the prior academic year's successes and the excitement to be returning to campus the coming fall. President Williams also thanked the governor for his workforce bill and spoke about updating campus workforce programs and protocols in collaboration with CareerSource Florida and the Department of Economic Opportunity.

Hillsborough Financial Update

Chair Tuck recognized Addison Davis, Superintendent, Hillsborough County and Lynn Gray, Chair, Hillsborough County Public Schools for an update on Hillsborough's Financials. Chair Gray started by thanking the board, commissioner, and governor for letting her speak today and let the board know they have met the three percent fund balance requirement without using ESSR funds. Superintendent Davis then briefed the board on some of the efforts being made to put Hillsborough in a stable financial position. Such as, cutting overtime, suspending the usage of P-Cards, removing 425 vacant positions, implementing a hiring freeze, and reducing divisional budgets.

Commissioner Corcoran then made a recommendation to the board requesting that the district submit a monthly financial summary report for each type of the governmental funds, comparing budget to actual revenue and expenditures, including beginning and ending fund balances with separate amounts for assigned and unassigned fund balances.

Vice Chair Johnson asked with the reduction of 700 staff for the upcoming year will Hillsborough be able to provide an adequate learning environment. Mr. York asked how long the superintendent had been on the job in Hillsborough and as COVID relief dollars run out will Hillsborough be able to maintain a budget that is student first. Mr. Grady asked if the superintendent would commit to voting no on spending any dollars on litigation should Hillsborough be sued by district charter schools. Chair Tuck then called for a motion to approve the commissioners' recommendation. Vice Chair Johnson made the motion with a second by Mr. Grady. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

Hillsborough County School Board, Nonrenewal of Charters

Chair Tuck recognized Dr. Graham, Executive Director, Office of Independent Education and School Choice for an update on the nonrenewal of charters in Hillsborough. Dr. Graham then briefed the board on the performance and demographics of the charter schools and the surrounding schools within a 3-mile radius, stating that the charter schools are all on-par or outperforming schools within their zones. Dr. Graham recognized Matt Mears, General Counsel, Florida Department of Education to provide the board some additional background on the case. Mr. Mears briefed the board on section 1002.33(8), F.S., Causes for Nonrenewal or Termination, and some of the findings from the departments' investigation. Findings include not meeting the 90-day notice, giving the charters a 90-day after-the-fact notice, and non-renewing when each school is academically performing.

Chair Tuck then asked for the commissioners' recommendation. Commissioner Corcoran recommended the Hillsborough County School Board follow the law, renewing the charter schools as they are in compliance with the law. Chair Tuck opened the board for questions. Mr. Gibson asked if the superintendent was for or against approving the charter schools. Mr. Grady asked the Superintendent if he was to attempt to close a public school in Hillsborough in 90 days for the same reasons if it would go through. Vice Chair Johnson asked what needed to be done to align Hillsborough County with the law. Chair Tuck then opened the board for public comment.

Chair Tuck then called for a motion to approve the commissioners' recommendation. Vice Chair Johnson made the motion with a second by Mr. York. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Amendment to Rule 6A-1.09401, Student Performance Standards

Chair Tuck recognized Dr. Paul Burns, Deputy Chancellor, Division of Educator Quality for an overview of the amendment to rule 6A-1.09401. Dr. Burns briefed the board on the changes including, revised Social Studies standards for civics and government, a new strand of Social Studies standards-which are the new Holocaust education standards. Two new strands in Health Education standards, including our new Character Education standards, and our new Substance Use and Abuse standards. Also, some minor revisions to our ELA B.E.S.T. standards, updates to our Access Points Standards for our B.E.S.T. ELA and Math standards. Chair Tuck opened the board for public comment. Mr. Gibson then presented an amendment to the amendment, see attached. Chair Tuck then called for a motion to approve the

amendment to the amendment to rule 6A-1.09401, Student Performance Standards. Mr. Gibson made the motion with a second by Mr. Grady. The motion passed unanimously. Chair Tuck then called for a motion to approve the rule as amended. Mr. Grady made the motion with a second by Mr. Gibson. The motion passed unanimously.

Request for Approval of Revised Turnaround Option Plan and Annual External Operator Contract for Escambia County Public Schools

Chair Tuck recognized Melissa Ramsey, Director, Office of School Improvement for an update on Escambia County Public Schools Turnaround Plan. Ms. Ramsey briefed the board on the following approved actions for Escambia: replace the principal, replace the external operator, and hire experienced and competent teachers with at least 80 percent at three years of experience. Ms. Ramsey then recognized Superintendent Smith to provide an update on the status of these actions.

Superintendent Smith then briefed the board on the status of Warrington Middle School. Starting with an update on the new principal, Mr. Denny Wilson, who was previously an elementary school principal with experience in turnaround. Continuing, Superintendent Smith briefed the board on the new external operator, Learning Sciences International and educator recruitment. Chair Tuck asked if Principal Wilson was previously overseeing Warrington as the School Improvement Director for that region. Commissioner Corcoran then made a recommendation to approve the Turnaround Option Plan. Chair Tuck then called for a motion to approve the commissioners' recommendation. Vice Chair Johnson made the motion with a second by Mr. York. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Guidelines for Development of 2022-23 Legislative Budget Request

Chair Tuck recognized Suzanne Pridgeon for an update on the guidelines for development of 2022-23 Legislative Budget Request. Ms. Pridgeon started by thanking the board for the opportunity to speak and provided an overview of the education budget in Florida showing an increase of \$3.3 billion from the previous year. Chair Tuck asked about special facilities funding. Chair Tuck then called for a motion to approve the guidelines for development of 2022-23 Legislative Budget Request. Mr. Grady made the motion with a second by Vice Chair Johnson. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Amendment to Rule 6A-1.0017, School Environmental Safety Incident Reporting (SESIR)

Chair Tuck recognized Tim Hay, Executive Director, Office of Safe Schools for an overview of amendment to rule 6A-1.0017, School Environmental Safety Incident Reporting. Mr. Hay briefed the board on the federal civil rights mandatory data collection and proposed changes to the rule such as incident definitions, adding two federal requirements- capturing allegations of sexual assault or sexual battery against school personnel, and if they were found responsible or not. Chair Tuck then called for a motion to approve the amendment to rule 6A-1.0017, School Environmental Safety Incident Reporting. Mr. York made the motion with a second by Mr. Gibson. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Tuck then amended the agenda to move consent item 11, approval of appointment to the Education Practices Commission to action.

Approval of Appointment to the Education Practices Commission (EPC)

Chair Tuck recognized Dr. Burns to provide an update on the appointment to the Education Practices Commission. Dr. Burns provided the board an overview of what the EPC does, serving as a quasi-judicial body that is outlined in statute that hears cases that the commissioner has found probable cause on. Chair Tuck then opened the board for public comment. Chair Tuck called for a motion to approve the appointment to the Education Practices Commission. Mr. York made the motion with a second by Vice Chair Johnson. The motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT ITEMS

Chair Tuck called for a motion to approve the consent items. Mr. Gibson made the motion with a second by Mr. York. The motion passed unanimously.

Action Item

Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair

Chair Tuck made a motion for Mr. Grady to be the new Chair of the State Board of Education with a second by Vice Chair Johnson. The motion passed unanimously.

Vice Chair Johnson made the motion for Mr. Gibson to be the new Vice Chair with a second by Mr. York. The motion passed unanimously.

MEMBER COMMENTS

Chair Tuck opened the board for comments. Mr. Petty started by thanking Chair Tuck and Vice Chair Johnson for their leadership on the board and thanked department staff for their work on the standards. Mr. Grady thanked both Chair Tuck and Vice Chair Johnson for their service and the entire board for their confidence in this new role. Ms. Brown echoed the comments of her fellow members. Mr. Gibson echoed member comments and added that he is proud of the role the board played in standing up for charter schools. Mr. York thanked the governor and first lady for attending and speaking at the meeting and remarked on Hillsborough's financial situation and the potential closing of charter schools. Vice Chair Johnson thanked Chair Tuck for his leadership and thanked the governor for his priorities in civics education. Chair Tuck thanked the parents in attendance at the meeting and added that it is the primary job of local school boards to manage their budget.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Tuck announced the next meeting will be on August 18th at Miami-Dade College. Having no further business, Chair Tuck adjourned the meeting of the State Board of Education at 1:26 P.M.

Chris Emerson, Corporate Secretary

Andy Tuck, Chair