

**MINUTES
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETING**

March 27, 2024
Winter Park High School
2100 Summerfield Road
Winter Park, FL 32792

Chair Ben Gibson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and welcomed members and guests to the State Board of Education meeting. The following members were present: Vice Chair Ryan Petty, MaryLynn Magar, Esther Byrd, and Kelly Garcia, with Dr. Grazie Christie and Monesia Brown attending by phone. Chair Gibson recognized Sr. Minister Wesley T. Lenoard, Southside Church of Christ in Orlando to deliver the invocation and asked everyone to remain standing for the presentation of the Colors by Winter Park High School, Navy JROTC Color Guard, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the National Anthem.

Chair Gibson recognized Scott Howat, Chief Communications Officer, to welcome the Board. Mr. Howat welcomed the board to Winter Park High School and provided a brief overview of programs offered at the school.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Chair Gibson recognized Manny Diaz Jr., Commissioner of the Department of Education, to present his report. Commissioner Diaz commenced by highlighting and thanking Secretary of the Lottery John Davis and Orange County Schools for their cooperation and support in raising awareness about Bright Futures. He shared a potential data privacy issue with a vendor being used by some districts, Tutor.com, as their headquartered in China and companies with ties to any foreign country may pose a risk of compromised student data. Florida has won a lawsuit against the Parental Rights in Education Act, ensuring the law remains in effect for children. Under Governor DeSantis' leadership, the law ensures age-appropriate, high-quality education and reinforces parental rights.

Commissioner Diaz shared that the department, along with Florida Commerce Secretary Alex Kelly and Attorney General Ashely Moddy, voiced opposition to the proposed federal rule that would inject woke Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) requirements into our valuable apprenticeship programs.

Commissioner Diaz highlighted the Governor's significant investments in workforce education, including the Workforce Development Capitalization Incentive Grant Program, which has invested over \$22 million in thirty programs to strengthen statewide workforce development. Students will receive firsthand educational experiences in aerospace, biomedical science, digital video technology, and many more. Governor DeSantis is also accepting proposals for additional grants to strengthen Florida's Agricultural industry. Over \$35 million will be allocated to Florida School Districts and college institutions to create or expand semiconductor-related instructional programs.

He shared that Florida has set a new high school graduation rate of 88% for the 2022-2023 academic year, proving its position as the number one state in education. Notable improvements were made by African Americans, American Indians, and Hispanics, including economically disadvantaged and disabled students.

Commissioner Diaz recognized Jordain Blais, a 12th-grade student at Winter Park High School, for his exceptional dedication to education and community service.

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve the Commissioner's Report. Ms. Garcia made the motion with a second by Ms. Byrd. The motion passed unanimously.

MINUTES

Minutes from January 17, 2024 Meeting

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve the minutes from January 17, 2024, meeting. Ms. Garcia made the motion with a second by Ms. Magar. The motion passed unanimously.

UPDATES

K-12 Public Schools – Superintendent Kornegay, on behalf of the Florida Association of District School Superintendents

Chair Gibson recognized Diane Kornegay, Superintendent of Lake County on behalf of the Florida Association of District School Superintendents. Superintendent Kornegay provided an overview of Lake County Schools. Lake County is the 19th largest school district in the state and is expanding acceleration pathways, such as dual enrollment and diploma options, and enhancing career and technical education programs.

College System – President Lorenz on behalf of the Council of Presidents

Chair Gibson recognized Dr. Georgia Lorenz, President of Seminole State College, on behalf of the Council of Presidents. President Lorenz shared that the Florida College System (FCS) will be able to attract and retain talent thanks to the allocation of \$80 million in recurring general revenue funds for the FCS to join the State Group Health Insurance Program in the 2024-2025 academic year. She continued by sharing projects receiving additional funds in the FCS.

Classroom Teacher and Other Instructional Personnel Salary Increase Allocation

Chair Gibson recognized Sr. Chancellor Adam Miller for an overview of the teacher salary increase allocation (TSIA). Sr. Chancellor Miller provided an overview and shared that Governor DeSantis has continued the historic funding for teacher salaries increased during the 2023 legislative session by allocating an additional \$253 million to bring the total amount appropriated for teacher salary increase in the General Appropriations Act over a billion dollars.

Sr. Chancellor Miller recognized Rob Bixler, Chief of Staff, and Teresa Jacobs, Chair, Orange County Public Schools, for an update. Mr. Bixler stated that they began negotiations on June 28th, held eight bargaining sessions, the district modified its original offer three times, declared impasse on August 23rd, a special magistrate hearing on November 28th and 29th and currently awaiting ratification.

Sr. Chancellor Millier recognized Rick Surrency, Superintendent, and Thomas Bolling, Associate Superintendent and Chief negotiator of Putnam County, for an update. Superintendent Surrency shared that the district had a tentative agreement with the union before October 1st and recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the funds being included in the April 15th paychecks.

Sr. Chancellor Miller recognized Dr. Karen Barber, Superintendent of Santa Rosa County, for an update. Superintendent Barber shared that they held twelve negotiation sessions between August 15th and March 6th, declared impasse on February 16th, tentative agreement on March 13th, and ratification on March 25th.

Sr. Chancellor Miller concluded by sharing that the department is still reviewing additional plans from Glades and Jefferson County.

Chair Gibson requested an update on the April agenda for any district that has yet to resolve the TSIA.

Warrington Preparatory Academy, Escambia County

Chair Gibson recognized Adam Emerson Executive Director, Office of Independence Education and Parental Choice, for an update on Warrington Preparatory Academy. Mr. Emerson provided a brief overview and introduced Ed Ruiz, State Superintendent, to provide the update. Mr. Ruiz shared the two main objectives they are currently focusing on in their education model, school culture and Tier 1 Standards-based instruction. Continuing, they have implemented school-wide instructional strategies, tutoring before and after school and on Saturdays, community partnerships, and parent universities.

ACTION ITEMS

Consideration of Probable Cause that Broward County School District is not compliant with section 1002.33(17), Florida Statutes, Charter School Funding

Chair Gibson recognized Commissioner Diaz to introduce the consideration of probable cause for Broward County. Commissioner Diaz shared the consideration of probable cause that Broward County School District is not compliant with Section 1002.33(17), F.S. and Charter School funding and recommended additional legal details and explanation on the probable cause be provided by Andrew King, General Counsel.

Chair Gibson recognized General Counsel Andrew King to provide additional details. Mr. King shared the legal issue of local referendum funds in Florida. Statutes allow districts to create local referendum taxes for school operating fund and requires equal funding for charter schools. Broward County has admitted that it did not share these revenues proportionally and, as a result, is currently not in compliance with state law. Chair Gibson recognized Superintendent Licata, Broward County. She shared that the School Board of Broward County and general counsel are working with charter schools to expedite this matter and to have it resolved by April 17th. The superintendent and general counsel will negotiate a mutually agreed-upon payment plan. The district is collaborating with Senator George LeMieux to mediate the matter for an update by the April 17th meeting.

Chair Gibson called for a motion to find the Broward County District School Board out of Compliance with Section 1002.33(17), F.S. and to require the district school board to document compliance before the next board meeting. Vice Chair Petty made the motion with a second by Ms. Byrd. The motion passed unanimously.

Hope Operator Designation– Success Academy

Chair Gibson recognized Adam Emerson to provide an update on Success Academy. Mr. Emerson shared that the Schools of Hope program was established in 2017 with the intent of bringing the best of the best into persistently low-performing school attendance zones in the state. Mr. Emerson introduced Founder of Success Academy and CEO, Eva Moskowitz, to

provide an overview of Success Academy. Ms. Moskowitz shared that Success Academy was founded 18 years ago in Harlem, New York, serves 20,000 students, making it the fifth-largest school district in the state. The district, which serves 94% black and brown students, 10% homeless, and 15% special education students, is the highest performing school in the state of New York, in math and reading. The students outperform affluent districts in New York and for the last six years, 100% of the students have gone to four-year colleges. The district's innovation and leadership are commendable, especially for the poorest and most vulnerable children. Commissioner Diaz expressed his gratitude for their application to become a Hope Operator in Florida.

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve Success Academy as Hope Operator. Ms. Byrd made the motion with a second by Ms. Garcia. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Appointment to the Charter School Review Commission

Mr. Emerson shared the recommendation for Matt Johnson to be appointed to the Charter School Review Commission.

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve the appointment of Matt Johnson to the Charter School Review Commission. Ms. Magar made the motion with a second by Vice Chair Petty. The motion passed unanimously.

New Bachelor Degree Program - Valencia College Proposal for a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education

Chair Gibson recognized Kathleen Plinske, President of Valencia College, to give an overview of the Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education. President Plinske shared the growing demand for qualified elementary teachers in Orange and Osceola counties. Chair Gibson recognized Mark Shanoff, Superintendent, Osceola County, and Mr. Howat with both sharing their support for Valencia College's proposal for a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education.

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve the Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education for Valencia College. Ms. Garcia made the motion with a second by Ms. Byrd. The motion passed unanimously.

Designation of Schools of Excellence

Chair Gibson recognized Sr. Chancellor Adam Miller for an overview of the designation of schools of excellence. This program was established in 2017 by the Florida Legislature in which schools are designated by the State Board each year. Schools in the 80th percentile received designation and administrative flexibilities outlined in law. The list brought before the Board includes a total of 783 schools to be designated for the 22-23 school year across 53 school districts.

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve the designation of schools of excellence. Ms. Byrd made the motion with a second by Vice Chair Petty. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Amendment to Rule 6A-6.0571, Career and Technical Education and Adult General Education Standards and Industry-Driven Benchmarks

Chair Gibson recognized Dr. Kevin O'Farrell, Chancellor, Division of Career and Adult Education, for an overview of the amendment to Rule 6A-6.0571, Career and Technical Education and Adult General Education Standards and Industry-Driven Benchmarks.

Chancellor O'Farrell explained the four new frameworks to meet the goal of becoming the number one state in the workforce education by 2030.

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve the amendment to Rule 6A-6.0571. Ms. Magar made the motion with a second by Ms. Byrd. The motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT ITEMS

Chair Gibson recognized Gensis Robison and Pastor Marcus McCoy, Jr. in opposition and Corey Bleakley in support.

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve the consent items. Ms. Byrd made the motion with a second by Ms. Garcia. The motion passed unanimously.

Member Comments

Ms. Byrd shared how impressed she is with Governor DeSantis, Commissioner Diaz and the entire Department of Education. Ms. Brown shared her excitement about the recruitment of Success Academy as a Hope Operator and thanked the commissioner and team for the work with Warrington Preparatory Academy. She also suggested bringing school districts together to share best practices for navigating TSIA. Ms. Magar thanked Winter Park H.S. for hosting the meeting and expressed her concern for the delay of funds to our hard-working teachers. Ms. Garcia also shared her excitement about the recruitment of Success Academy as a Hope Operator and is encouraged by the work being done to address teacher shortages. Vice Chair Petty echoed previous comments and thanked the board for taking on the tough issues, even when they are unpleasant. Chair Gibson echoed the sentiments from all the members and thanked the board for their dedication and commitment to education in their volunteer role. He ended by sharing the highlights of the meeting.

Chair Gibson announced that the next meeting would be at Tallahassee Community College on April 17, 2024.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business, Chair Gibson adjourned the meeting of the State Board of Education at 1:04 p.m.

Chris Emerson, Corporate Secretary

Ben Gibson, Chair