

MINUTES
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETING

October 15, 2024
Tallahassee State College
444 Appleyard Dr.
Tallahassee, FL 32304

Chair Ben Gibson called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. and welcomed members and guests to the State Board of Education meeting. The following members were present: Vice Chair Petty and Esther Byrd with Kelly Garcia and Marylynn Magar, attending by phone. Chair Gibson recognized Derek McGee, Pastor of Bible Based Church, to deliver the invocation and asked the crowd to remain standing for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Welcome

Chair Gibson recognized Dr. Calandra Stringer, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, Tallahassee State College (TSC), to welcome the board. Dr. Stringer shared that TSC has seen a significant increase in credit enrollment, credit hours, and clock-hour enrollment. They hired 38 new faculty members and celebrated a historic 42 percent graduation rate.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Chair Gibson recognized Manny Diaz Jr., Commissioner of the Department of Education, to present his report. Commissioner Diaz thanked Tallahassee State College for hosting the meeting and shared the incredible responses following Hurricane Helene and Milton. After Helene, 67 school districts reopened in less than a week. Hurricane Milton caused 50 districts to close, and as of today, 49 districts are reopened. Commissioner Diaz thanked the superintendents, principals, teachers, linemen, and the Florida Department of Transportation for quickly getting kids back in school.

Commissioner Diaz thanked Governor DeSantis and Kevin Guthrie, Executive Director, Department of Emergency Management, for their collaboration in addressing district needs and providing necessary resources and support to restore normalcy.

Commissioner Diaz shared that School Safety is essential to all our students and teachers. In the first few months of the school year, numerous threats have been reported by schools, students, and teachers. False threats of any kind will not be tolerated, and he shared the importance of reporting suspicious activities to law enforcement for effective response and safety for all.

Commissioner Diaz shared that Florida's workforce education goal of becoming the top state by 2030 is on track, with a 9 percent increase in registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs over the past year. Over 2,000 apprentices completed their programs, earning an average wage of \$27.81 per hour, and Florida's workforce pipeline is being fueled by high-demand, high-wage careers.

Commissioner Diaz shared that during the 2024 legislative session, the Summer Bridge Program was created by House Bill 5101 and was funded at \$4 million. The program will provide early interventions for VPK students with low scores or non-participation status. It aims to improve literacy skills and prepare students for success. Florida leads in raising

student achievement, with a decrease from 6 percent to 4 percent in grade D or F schools, demonstrating hard work and dedication.

Vice Chair Petty stressed the importance of parents knowing what their kids are doing online. Sheriffs across the state are looking at options to hold parents accountable for these false threats.

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

Chair Gibson recognized Dr. Kevin O'Farrell, Chancellor of the Division of Career and Adult Education, to present a report on apprenticeship. Chancellor O'Farrell shared that the Division of Career and Adult Education serves as the State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA) in Florida. The apprenticeship model benefits from business involvement, structured on-the-job training, and related technical instruction. Local educational agencies play a vital role in providing theoretical knowledge, with 58 apprenticeship programs sponsored by local agencies. The Pathways to Career Opportunity Growth Grant (PCOG) has been instrumental in the success of Florida's apprenticeship model. Since its inception, \$85 million has been awarded to over 15,550 participants, primarily going to sponsors. The majority of this funding goes to Florida College System Institutions, school districts, and State University System (SUS) institutions. Additionally, the state has partnered with CareerSource Florida and other boards to provide resources and tools for employers and individuals seeking apprenticeship opportunities.

Minutes

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the July 24, 2024, board meeting. Ms. Byrd made the motion with a second by Vice Chair Petty. The motion passed unanimously.

Updates

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

Chair Gibson recognized Tim Forson, Superintendent of St. Johns County School District, to present the Florida Association of District School Superintendents update. Superintendent Forson shared that school district leaders in Northeast Florida are working together to expand student pathways and provide opportunities for career development. This includes developing 28 professional academies in St. Johns, which offer high-wage careers, and partnering with industry and professional fields to provide students with field experience. Schools in these regions have earned district-wide STEM accreditation, community partnerships, and Apple Distinguished Awards. Additionally, four school districts are focusing on reducing vaping and violent behavior among youth through preventative strategies and enforcement.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Turnaround Option Plans for the School Districts of Alachua, Bay, Duval, Gadsden, Leon, Palm Beach and Pasco County

Chair Gibson recognized Sr. Chancellor Burns to introduce seven superintendents or their staff members to present their turnaround option plans. Sr. Chancellor Burns shared how the turnaround process works. Schools with an F or two consecutive D grades face four

options: district-managed turnaround, charter school, external operator, or closing and reassigning students. District-managed turnaround is always the first option chosen by districts and for schools requires two plans: Turnaround Option Plan One and Turnaround Option Plan Two. Once the district chooses, they must turn in two plans. Plan one outlines how the district will improve performance at these schools, and Plan two merges and targets resources.

Superintendent Hanna, Leon County School District, shared that the Principal of Apalachee Tapestry Magnet School of the Arts, Dr. Pam Hightower, has been working collaboratively with the district's BSI team to address concerns and improve the school's performance. Last year, the school increased nine percentage points but is still one point away from a C. Superintendent Hanna shared that team members are monitoring data, ensuring teachers are in compliance with state statutes, and implementing professional development opportunities. Superintendent Hanna shared his confidence that Dr. Hightower will achieve marketable improvement this year.

Chair Gibson recognized Commissioner Diaz for his recommendation. Commissioner Diaz shared his recommendation for approval with conditions. Conditions include, must meet with the improvement team to review the data analysis practices and expectations of the school improvement process, and address vacancies year-round while maintaining an effective teacher percentage, requiring immediate action, and engage with colleges on apprenticeship. TOP Two Plan for Leon County, for Apalachee Elementary School, for November 20, 2024, Board meeting.

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve the commissioner's recommendation for the turnaround option plan for Apalachee Elementary School with conditions. Vice Chair Petty made the motion with a second by Ms. Byrd. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Gibson recognized Sr. Chancellor Burns to introduce Superintendent Mark McQueen, Bay County School District, to provide an overview of the turnaround option plan for Oscar Patterson Elementary School.

Superintendent McQueen shared that Bay County School District is heading in a new direction to put the A" back in Bay. The new mission statement focuses on accountability, safety, attendance, academic achievement, artistic expression, and athletics. Oscar Patterson Academy reopened after Hurricane Michael but did not perform as expected. The district acknowledged the failure of the school's third-grade class, and put in place the same administrative team that turned the school around in 2018. The school is receiving extra support for students and school on Saturdays as well. The school is aiming for a total turnaround this year, with support from Florida Atlantic University, Florida Power and Light, and third-party providers. The leadership team is in place, and the school is working with the Bureau of School Improvement to elevate academic expectations and ensure the highest quality of education for students.

Chair Gibson recognized Commissioner Diaz for his recommendation. Commissioner Diaz recommended approval of the turnaround option for Oscar Patterson Elementary School.

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve the commissioner's recommendation for Oscar Patterson Elementary School. Ms. Byrd made the motion with a second by Vice Chair Petty. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Gibson recognized Sr. Chancellor Burns to introduce Superintendent Elijah Key, Gadsden County School District, to present their plan for James A. Shanks Middle School.

Superintendent Key shared that the school faced many challenges in recruiting teachers and keeping principals. This led to the selection of Principal Floyd, who is the fourth principal in five years.

Ms. Floyd discussed the development of a turnaround option plan for James A. Shanks Middle School, focusing on attendance, discipline, and a built-in acceleration and intervention block. The plan addresses the significant percentage of students below 90 percent, assigns social workers, and ensures students' attendance and academic performance are not significantly impacted.

Chair Gibson recognized Commissioner Diaz for his recommendation. Commissioner Diaz recommended approval of the turnaround option plan for James A. Shanks Middle School with the following conditions: to place teachers on a highly effective or effective value-added model rating at James A. Shanks Middle School and Gadsden County School District. Before the November meeting, the district will be in compliance with school improvement rules and have less than the district average of needs improvement and unsatisfactory teachers at James A. Shanks Middle School. Also, a comprehensive plan to support teachers' and students' attendance and a partnership with FAMU to focus on specific issues at James A. Shanks Middle School.

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve the commissioner's recommendation with conditions. Vice Chair Petty made the motion with a second by Ms. Byrd. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Gibson recognized Sr. Chancellor Burns to introduce Dr. Christopher Bernier, Superintendent of Duval County Public Schools, to present the turnaround option plan for Annie R. Morgan, Northwestern Legends, Woodland Acres Elementary School, and Matthew W. Gilbert Middle School. All four schools have experienced significant improvements. Dr. Manabat, a turnaround expert, replaced the principal at Annie R. Morgan and is currently changing the school culture. All four schools have filled vacancies by moving district-level educators and retaining qualified teachers until a suitable, highly effective teacher is found. North Legends Elementary has seen a positive change, with 70 percent of teachers now highly effective. The change is driven by a commitment to quality education, accountability, and collaboration with the Bureau of School Improvement. District support includes human resource services, targeted recruitment, and external operators like MGT Consulting and Turnaround Solutions.

Chair Gibson recognized Commissioner Diaz for his recommendation. Commissioner Diaz recommended approval of the turnaround option plan for Matthew W. Gilbert Middle School, Annie R. Morgan Elementary School, Northwestern Legends Elementary School, and Woodland Acres Elementary School.

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve the commissioner's recommendation. Vice Chair Petty made the motion with a second by Ms. Byrd. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Gibson recognized Sr. Chancellor Burns to introduce Shane Andrew, Superintendent, Alachua County, to present the turnaround option plan for Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Elementary.

Superintendent Andrew shared that Rawlings Elementary School is a pilot for year-round school. The school has 314 students and is focusing on instructional empowerment. The school is emphasizing the importance of consistent tier-one instruction, which should be standards-based, aligned, and task-oriented. The BSI team collaborates with the school to provide teaching and learning development and has done an incredible job.

Chair Gibson recognized Commissioner Diaz for his recommendation. Commissioner Diaz recommended approval of the turnaround option plan for Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Elementary School.

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve the commissioner's recommendation. Ms. Byrd made the motion with a second by Vice Chair Petty. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Gibson recognized Sr. Chancellor Burns to introduce Vanessa Hilton, Chief Academic Officer for Pasco County Schools, to present the turnaround option plan for Pasco County.

Ms. Hilton shared that Gulf Middle School faced challenges such as teacher vacancies, student absences, behavior issues, and a leadership issue. To address these, the school partnered with the community and assessment team, recruited effective teachers, allocated additional teacher units, and provided one-to-one assistance to students. Ms. Hilton shared that Pasco Elementary has a new principal with turnaround experience, a new assistant principal, and several new academic coaches.

Chair Gibson recognized Commissioner Diaz for his recommendation. Commissioner Diaz recommended approval of the turnaround option plan for Gulf Middle School and Pasco Elementary School.

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve the commissioner's recommendation. Ms. Byrd made the motion with a second by Vice Chair Petty. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Gibson recognized Sr. Chancellor Burns to introduce Dr. Camille Long, North Regional Superintendent, Palm Beach County District, to present the turnaround option plan.

Dr. Long shared that a needs assessment indicated that staffing and lack of support as a major concern and reasons for a decline in academic performance. To address these issues, a new principal has been assigned, the lowest performing teachers were replaced with high-impact teachers, two master teachers to support literacy instruction, and two instructional specialists for coaching and professional learning in literacy and Mathematics.

Chair Gibson recognized Commissioner Diaz for his recommendation. Commissioner Diaz recommended approval of the turnaround option plan for Roosevelt Elementary School.

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve the commissioner's recommendation. Vice Chair Petty made the motion with a second by Ms. Byrd. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of New Bachelor Degree Program – St Johns River State College Proposal for a Bachelor of Science in Exceptional Student Education

Chair Gibson recognized Dr. Melanie Brown, Chief Operating Officer and Senior Vice President, for an overview of the proposed Bachelor of Science in Exceptional Student Education (ESE). Dr. Brown shared that the workforce demand for ESE-certified teachers is not being met, and this program will address this gap. The college currently offers a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Early Childhood Education and an Alternative Teacher Certification program, which has generated nearly 250 certified teachers.

Superintendent Forson shared that St. Johns River State College's Bachelor of Science Degree in Exceptional Student Education is being proposed due to a partnership between the school district and community partners. The proposal aims to fill a critical area in need, with one-third of the 35 teacher vacancies in St. Johns County being ESE teacher vacancies.

The partnership benefits both St. Johns County and other Northeast Florida regional school districts.

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve the new Bachelor Degree Program. Vice Chair Petty made the motion with a second by Ms. Magar.

Chair Gibson recognized Luke Flint in support. The motion passed unanimously.

Designation of 2023-2024 Academically High-Performing School Districts and Designation of Schools of Excellence

Chair Gibson recognized Sr. Chancellor Burns for an overview of Designation of 2023-2024 Academically High Performing School Districts. Sr. Chancellor Burns shared that these programs recognize schools and districts for their student achievement outcomes and provide administrative flexibility to reward high achievement. There will be ten districts that will be adopted as academically high-performing school districts. Schools of Excellence was established in 2017 and recognizes schools in the top 20 percent of Florida schools. These schools receive administrative flexibility, such as earning up to 60 points towards recertification each year. There are 774 schools designated as a School of Excellence.

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve the Designation of 2023-2024 Academically High-Performing School Districts. Ms. Byrd made the motion with a second by Vice Chair Petty. The motion passed unanimously.

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 New Rule 6A-6.0530, Summer Bridge Program

Chair Gibson recognized Sr. Chancellor Burns for an overview of new rule 6A-6.0530. Sr. Chancellor Burns shared that the department has proposed a new rule to support kindergarten-ready students following House Bill 5101's establishment of the Summer Bridge Program. The program aims to provide early interventions to struggling students, ensuring they become better readers and set them on a path to success throughout their educational journey. Eligible voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) students from both private and public providers will be required to participate in the program before enrolling in kindergarten. Parents will be informed about the program's eligibility and implementation requirements. The Summer Bridge Program will provide four hours of daily instruction, aiming to align with Early Learning and Developmental Standards for VPK learners. It will focus on literacy instruction grounded in reading. School districts must enroll eligible students, record attendance, notify families, and report data annually to track program success.

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve the new rule 6A-6.0530. Ms. Byrd made the motion with a second by Vice Chair Petty. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Amendment to Rule 6A-6.053, District Comprehensive Evidence-Based Reading Plan and Approval of Amendment to Rule 6A-6.0533, Determining a Substantial Deficiency in Early Mathematics Skills and Substantial Deficiency in Mathematics

Chair Gibson recognized Dr. Sunny Chancy, Deputy Chancellor for Educator Quality for an overview of the next three items. Dr. Chancy shared that these rules help schools and districts identify early literacy and math deficiencies. With the success of Florida's first

Progress-Monitoring System, the outcome in reading and math will improve for all students. Rule 6A-6.0533 helps identify early substantial deficiency in mathematics skills. The progress-monitoring plan must be developed in both literacy and mathematics in a 45-day period.

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve the amendment to rule 6A-6.053, District Comprehensive Evidence-Based Reading Plan. Ms. Byrd made the motion with a second by Vice Chair Petty. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve the amendment to rule 6A-6.0533, Determining a Substantial Deficiency in Early Mathematics Skills and Substantial Deficiency in Mathematics. Vice Chair Petty made the motion with a second by Ms. Byrd. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Amendment to Rule 6A-1.09441, Requirements for Program for Programs and Courses that are Funded Through the Florida Education Finance Program and for Which the Student May Earn Credit Toward High School Graduation

Dr. Chancy shared that Florida law defines classical schools as traditional public or charter schools that emphasize moral character, civic virtue, and liberal arts and sciences. In 2024, the board amended certification rules, becoming the first state to accept the Classical Learning Test (CLT) on a widespread scale. Florida also has \$8 million in the budget for college entrance exams and allows classical schools to prioritize enrollment for families moving between schools.

Chair Gibson called for a motion to approve the amendment to rule 6A-1.09441, Requirements for Program for Programs and Courses that are Funded Through the Florida Education Finance Program for which the Student May Earn Credit Toward High School Graduation. Ms. Byrd made the motion with a second by Vice Chair Petty.

Chair Gibson recognized Cathy Boehme and Luke Flint in opposition. The motion passed unanimously.

Member Comments

Ms. Byrd shared excitement for the apprenticeship programs, and for the Governor, legislature, and Commissioner giving attention and focus to workforce of education, by adding \$8.5 billion for education. Ms. Garcia expressed gratitude for the thoughtful consideration of turnaround plans and the efforts of various organizations, including the Sheriff's Office, City of Tampa, Police Department, Electrical Company (TECO), FEMA, and the City of Tampa Bay to ensure the schools are open, despite the challenging times. Ms. Magar shared her appreciation for the Governor and Commissioner Diaz for their focus and concern for our students and teachers during the hurricane season and give credit to school boards that have stepped up with focusing on the children and their education. Vice Chair Petty shared his gratitude for all that came together with the aid and support in our state in response to the hurricanes. Chair Gibson echoed the sentiments from all the members and thanked the board for their dedication and commitment to education and applauded Governor DeSantis for his leadership. He ended by sharing the highlights of the meeting.

Chair Gibson announced that the next meeting would be in Orlando, on November 20, 2024.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business, Chair Gibson adjourned the meeting of the State Board of Education at 1:53 p.m.

Chris Emerson, Corporate Secretary

Ben Gibson, Chair