

MINUTES
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETING

May 11, 2022

Tennessee Williams Theatre
The College of the Florida Keys
5901 College Road
Key West, FL 33040

Chair Tom Grady called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem performed by College of the Florida Keys student, Jenny May Murphy. The following members were present: Vice Chair Ben Gibson, Monesia Brown, Esther Byrd, Grazie P. Christie, and Ryan Petty.

Chair Grady recognized Dr. Jonathan Gueverra, President, College of the Florida Keys to welcome the board. Dr. Gueverra welcomed the board for their first ever meeting in Key West.

Commissioner's Report

Chair Grady recognized Interim Commissioner Jacob Oliva for his report. Commissioner Oliva started by thanking President Gueverra, the College of the Florida Keys, the State Board of Education and noted that this will be his first and last meeting as Interim Commissioner, as Senator Manny Diaz Jr. starts June 1st. Continuing, Commissioner Oliva recognized two students for academic excellence: Ryan Chappa of Marathon High School and Matthew Posey of College of the Florida Keys. Also, recognizing Sue Ellen Bennett, Director of St. James Children's Center for leadership excellence. Vice Chair Gibson asked if the department has seen a recent report about nationwide learning loss from the pandemic and if Florida's data reflected the same information. Chair Grady called for a motion to approve the Commissioners Report. Vice Chair Gibson made the motion with a second by Mr. Petty. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes

Minutes from March 30, 2022 Meeting

Chair Grady called for a motion to approve the minutes from the March 30, 2022 meeting. Vice Chair Gibson made the motion with a second by Ms. Byrd. The motion passed unanimously.

UPDATES

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

Chair Grady recognized Dr. Angela Falconetti, President, Polk State College to provide an update on behalf of the Council of Presidents (COP). Dr. Falconetti thanked the board and reviewed some of the outcomes from the prior legislative session and the priority of the upcoming session. Stating that the COP requested: \$60 million dollars to strengthen the Florida College System Program Fund and received an increase to \$103 million; \$400 million dollars for Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO); \$30 million for reinvestment in performance funding for the 2+2 Student Success Incentive Fund; and \$14 million for industry certification incentives. Continuing, Dr. Falconetti outlined the initiative of the upcoming

session, Accelerate Florida. An initiative to ensure more than half a million students complete academic and workforce programs by 2025.

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

Chair Grady recognized Theresa Axford, Superintendent, Monroe County Public Schools for an update on behalf of the Florida Association of District School Superintendents. Superintendent Axford welcomed the board for their first trip to the Florida Keys and provided the board a brief overview on some of the demographics of Monroe County and what her district is doing to put students first. Stating that Monroe County overall is 45 percent free-and-reduced lunch with some schools as high as 85 percent, with 1,067 English Language Learners from 37 different countries speaking 22 different languages and a graduation rate of 92.4 percent. Superintendent Axford added that the district contains 10 public schools and 6 charter schools. Continuing, Superintendent Axford briefed the board on the Future Educators Club, a program that recruits students to do tutoring in paying summer school programs with the hope it will instill a love of education and teaching, helping to prioritize the teaching career.

Teacher Salary Increase Allocation

Chair Grady recognized Commissioner Oliva to provide the board an overview of Florida's Teacher Salary Increase Allocation. Commissioner Oliva briefed the board on the amount allocated by the legislature for teacher salary increase and how the department would review each districts, salary distribution plan, and the districts, charter school salary distribution plan, stating that each would need approval from the department by October 1, 2021; and that as of today seven districts have not submitted approved plans. Commissioner Oliva then recognized Rocky Hannah, Superintendent, Leon County to provide an update to the board on teacher salary.

Superintendent Hannah thanked the board and stated that Leon County received \$500,000 from the legislature this year and that 80 percent of the funds were for base teacher pay increase. Allowing for Leon County to provide an increase of \$378 to beginning teachers and \$31 to veteran teachers. Adding that due the lack of funds for veteran teachers his county was unable to come to a resolution on the salary increase and would be meeting again with the local union to try and get the funds distributed. Ms. Brown asked Commissioner Oliva how other districts have been managing veteran teachers pay. Chair Grady followed asking Superintendent Hannah when the funds will be distributed to teachers and if he should have declared an impasse earlier in the year to meet the October deadline.

Commissioner Oliva then recognized Will Hartley, Superintendent, Bradford County to provide an update to the board on teacher salary. Superintendent Hartley thanked the board and stated that Bradford County had ratified their plan the past week and it was just submitted to the Department of Education for review and approval. Mr. Petty asked how long the union held up the ratification. Chair Grady followed asking if the union considers following the law and their obligation to the kids as an incentive to speed things along and when should teachers in Bradford expect their pay raise. Vice Chair Gibson asked if the money once distributed will be paid back with interest.

Commissioner Oliva recognized Mark Mullins, Superintendent, Brevard County to provide an update to the board on teacher salary. Superintendent Mullins thanked the board and reported that as of Monday

night his county and union had come to a tentative agreement that would be ratified at their next board meeting and sent to the Department of Education before the end of May.

Commissioner Oliva recognized Dr. Ken Savage, Superintendent, Lee County to provide the board an update on teacher salary. Superintendent Savage thanked the board and noted that while bringing the starting teacher pay to \$47,500 is great, the average pay in Florida for teachers still ranks among the worst in the nation. Continuing, Superintendent Savage added that in the past week his board approved their teacher salary increase plan and that it would be submitted to the department shortly. Vice Chair Gibson asked the superintendent if his board members were actively discussing ways to circumvent some of the laws that were passed recently by the Legislature such as the Stop Woke Act, Parental Rights in Education Law, and a law dealing with instructional materials.

Commissioner Oliva recognized Mike Burke, Superintendent, Palm Beach County to provide the board an update on teacher salary. Superintendent Burke thanked the board and reported that as of April 20 a tentative agreement has been reached and is waiting union ratification. Adding that in the coming year his district will be starting the salary negotiations earlier allowing his district to abide by the October deadline. Chair Grady asked when the union vote on ratification was anticipated.

Commissioner Oliva recognized Tim Forson, Superintendent, St. Johns County to provide the board an update on teacher salary. Superintendent Forson thanked the board and noted that as of the previous week St. Johns County has ratified the approved salary contract and will begin distributing payments as soon as possible to teachers. Adding that St. Johns County also committed \$2 million additional dollars to move veteran teachers forward in pay. Mr. Petty commented that in the coming year the legislature is slated to pass another round of funding for teacher pay increase and it is his hope that we are not here again requesting information on why schools district have not approved and distributed the funds. Chair Grady asked if the district would be able to pay teachers their increase now, and receive a reimbursement later for the administrative gap in time.

Commissioner Oliva then notified the board that FAMU Lab School District was unable to attend due to an emergency involving the superintendent. Vice Chair Gibson asked if the teachers union that represents Leon County is the same union that represents FAMU Lab School.

Jefferson County School District

Chair Grady recognized Eydie Triquet, Superintendent, Jefferson County School District for an overview of Jefferson County. Chair Grady reminded the board that this district had been placed under charter direction due to unprecedented failing grades and financial situation. Superintendent Triquet thanked the board and noted that Jefferson County is required to submit monthly updates to the department for review. Adding that as the transition takes places from a Charter District to a School Board District they have had staff and training issues but have received help from other districts and the department. With several positions taken by Teacher of the Year winners and finalists, ensuring that students are getting high-quality teachers. Chair Grady asked if there has been a commitment made by the district that it will be a grade C or higher. Vice Chair Gibson asked what more the department can do to better assist the district during this transition. Chair Grady followed asking about the leadership at the school and if the superintendent believed the principal could deliver a C grade or higher.

ACTION ITEMS

Review of Turnaround Option Plans and Annual External Operator Contracts for School Districts of Duval, Hillsborough and Pinellas County

Chair Grady recognized Commissioner Oliva for a brief overview of the turnaround process. Commissioner Oliva reminded the board that a school enters turnaround status when it receives two consecutive years of a failing grade of D or F. Once in turnaround the district must submit a turnaround plan to the department and state board for approval and may exit turnaround once the school has made a grade of C or higher.

Commissioner Oliva recognized Dr. Diana Green, Superintendent, Duval County for an update on turnaround in Duval County. Dr. Greene thanked the board and started with George Washington Carver Elementary School. Stating that George Washing Carver will now use MGT Consulting as its external operator. Continuing to Ramona Boulevard Elementary School and Susie E. Tolbert Elementary School, Dr. Green explained that both schools experience extreme poverty and chronic absenteeism and that Ramona Boulevard would be managed by MGT Consulting and Susie E. Tolbert by Turnaround Solutions. Chair Grady opened the board for questions. Ms. Brown asked since George Washington Carver is going to have a new turnaround operator will it extend the timeline of turnaround. Vice Chair Gibson asked if the previous turnaround operator pulling out of the contract was a surprise. Commissioner Oliva then made his recommendation for approval. Chair Grady called for a motion to approve the commissioner's recommendation. Ms. Brown made the motion with a second by Dr. Christie. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Oliva recognized Shaylia McRae, Hillsborough County Public Schools for an overview of turnaround in Hillsborough. Ms. McRae thanked the board and noted the superintendent could not join due to a conflicting school board meeting. Continuing, Ms. McRae briefed the board of the demographics of Shaw Elementary School, stating that the school is high transient with 90 percent of homes in the area renting, with a high minority of Hispanic and African-American students. Ms. McRae added that the external operator they choose, Learning Sciences International (LSI) has a proven track record and offers the best return on investment. Commissioner Oliva then made his recommendation for approval. Chair Grady called for a motion to approve the commissioner's recommendation. Vice Chair Gibson made the motion with a second by Mr. Petty. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Oliva recognized Dr. Tracy Webley, Pinellas County Public Schools for an overview of turnaround in Pinellas. Dr. Webley thanked the board and stated that the district believed this year Sandy Lane Elementary School would move out of turnaround. Adding that schools in turnaround get additional supports form the district as well as the turnaround operator such as additional ELA, Math, Science, and Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) teaching coaches. Vice Chair Gibson asked if the additional support was coming from the district or from LSI. Commissioner Oliva then made his recommendation for approval. Chair Grady called for a motion to approve the commissioner's recommendation. Ms. Byrd made the motion with a second by Dr. Christie. The motion passed unanimously.

Review of Closure Turnaround Option Plan for Polk County School District

Continuing, Commissioner Oliva briefed the board on the turnaround plan to close Griffin Elementary School and move students to surrounding schools with better grades. Commissioner Oliva recognized Fred Heid, Superintendent, Polk County to provide the board a brief overview of the closure process. Superintendent Heid thanked the board and reminded them that to date the turnaround of Griffin

Elementary School has been unsuccessful. Adding that if by the end of the 2022 school year the school has not improved to a grade of C or higher the district will close of the school in 2022-23. Commissioner Oliva then made his recommendation to approve the closure of Griffin Elementary School. Chair Grady called for a motion to approve the commissioner's recommendation. Ms. Byrd made the motion with a second by Mr. Petty. The motion passed unanimously.

Review of Charter Turnaround Option Plan for Escambia County School District

Continuing, Commissioner Oliva briefed the board on the turnaround plan for Escambia County, Warrington Middle School. Stating that since 2012 the school has been in some form of turnaround and this year the district is moving to charter conversion. Commissioner Oliva recognized Dr. Tim Smith, Superintendent, Escambia County to provide the board an overview of the process. Dr. Smith thanked the board and stated that his district is in communications with Charter Schools USA to take over the school should Warrington Middle School not make a grade of C or higher in the 2022 year. Chair Grady opened the board for questions. Ms. Brown asked how many students attend Warrington Middle School annually. Mr. Petty asked what has the district done for Warrington Middle School beside what was asked of them from the board and if staff positions at the school were made a priority compared to other district positions. Chair Grady asked how much consideration went into closing the school. Commissioner Oliva then made his recommendation to approve the Charter turnaround plan for Escambia County. Chair Grady called for a motion to approve the commissioner's recommendation. Mr. Petty made the motion with a second by Ms. Byrd. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Redlands Christian Migrant Association (RCMA) as a Hope Operator

Chair Grady recognized Adam Emerson, Director, Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice for an overview of Redlands Christian Migrant Association (RCMA) as a Hope Operator. Mr. Emerson thanked the board and provided an update on Schools of Hope. Stating that Redlands Christian Migrant Association is the newest applicant to be a Hope Operator and it was recently awarded an investment from the Charter School Growth Fund, a philanthropic organization that invests in high-impact charter schools so they can serve high-need areas. Mr. Emerson added that RCMA meets all of the criteria for Hope status. And by approving their application, the board is authorizing them to submit a notice of intent, and begin opening in persistently low-performing areas. Chair Grady then called for a motion to approve Redlands Christian Migrant Association (RCMA) as a Hope Operator. Mr. Petty made the motion with a second by Dr. Christie. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Amendment to Rule 6A-1.0018, School Safety Requirements and Monitoring

Chair Grady recognized Tim Hay, Executive Director, Office of Safe Schools for an overview of the amendment to rule 6A-1.0018. Mr. Hay thanked the board and briefed them on some of the updates being made to the rule. Stating that districts had to update student identification cards for grades 6 through 12 to include telephone numbers for national or statewide crisis and suicide hotlines, and text lines. Chair Grady opened the board for public comment receiving three in support of the changes. Dr. Christie asked what the department does to combat bullying. Chair Grady then called for a motion to approve the amendment to rule 6A-1.0018, School Safety Requirements and Monitoring. Dr. Christie made the motion with a second by Mr. Petty. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of New Rule 6A-6.0531, Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence (RAISE)

Chair Grady recognized Commissioner Oliva for a brief overview of new rule 6A-6.0531, Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence (RAISE). Commissioner Oliva thanked the board and stated that the rule establishes 20 literacy support regions throughout Florida that will be staffed with regional literacy support directors. Adding that K-5 schools that have a reading level below 50 percent will qualify for as a RAISE school and receive additional support from the regional literacy directors. Chair Grady called for a motion to approve New Rule 6A-6.0531, Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence (RAISE). Vice Chair Gibson made the motion with a second by Dr. Christie. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Amendment to Rule 6M-4.735, Early Learning Professional Development Standards and Career Pathways

Chair Grady recognized Matt Mears, Chancellor, Division of Early Learning for the next two items. Mr. Mears thanked the board and stated that this rule will create a pathway for early learning professionals to get started in stackable career pathways and certificates, called micro-credentials, in addition to their degrees. Chair Grady called for a motion to approve the amendment to rule 6M-4.735, Early Learning Professional Development Standards and Career Pathways. Ms. Byrd made the motion with a second by Ms. Brown. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Amendment to Rule 6M-8.702, Removal from Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program Eligibility

Continuing, Mr. Mears briefed the board on the amendment to rule 6M-8.702. Stating that this amendment adds clarity around circumstances when it's necessary to remove a pre-kindergarten provider from eligibility, and provides a period of two to five years for removal and sets out the factors that should be and must be considered when those determinations are made. Chair Grady called for a motion to approve the amendment to rule 6M-8.702, Removal from Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program Eligibility. Mr. Petty made the motion with a second by Vice Chair Gibson. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Grady then recognized Evelio Torres, President/CEO, Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade and Monroe; and Sandi Buscaglia, Board of Trustees, Keys Community College to speak in support of the amendment.

CONSENT ITEMS

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

MEMBER COMMENTS

Chair Grady opened the board for comments. Ms. Byrd started and thanked the board and expressed her concern at the amount of districts still at impasse over teacher pay and added that these teachers need to be paid. Vice Chair Gibson thanked the board and Governor for their leadership in opening schools. Dr. Christie thanked everyone that came to present at the meeting and shared her passion for the teachers that are in difficult situations and the districts in turnaround. Mr. Petty echoed the comments of his fellow members. Ms. Brown thanked her fellow members and added that schools in turnaround deserve the board's upmost attention and thanked the department for recognizing the great

work being done in early learning. Chair Grady thanked and echoed his fellow member comments and requested an update on Warrington Middle School at the July meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business, Chair Grady adjourned the meeting of the State Board of Education at 1:07 P.M.

Chris Emerson, Corporate Secretary

Tom Grady, Chair