

PENNSYLVANIA
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



2018 ANNUAL REPORT

March 2019

Dear Governor Wolf and Members of the General Assembly:

On behalf of the State Board of Education, it is my pleasure to present you with our Annual Report for 2018 – my first full year as Chair of the Board. I would like to thank Governor Wolf for entrusting me with the responsibility to serve in this statewide leadership role and for the opportunity to work collaboratively to advance access to high-quality, equitable education for students across the Commonwealth.

Our Annual Report summarizes the Board's work and actions taken by the Board during the 2018 calendar year. Throughout the year, the Board also received updates from the Department of Education on implementation of Pennsylvania's State ESSA Plan. As part of this work, our Special Committee on ESSA Implementation Oversight traveled to Allentown and Pittsburgh to hear directly from the school districts involved in a pilot of the state's new School Improvement System. The Board intends to continue monitoring Pennsylvania's progress related to ESSA as this work advances in 2019.

This report also includes membership lists produced by the Board periodically throughout the year as we experienced transitions in our composition. In 2018, we bid farewell to our colleagues James Grandon, Colleen Sheehan, and Craig Snider.

In addition to changes among our voting membership, the Board welcomed two new student advisory members in July 2018 – Ashley Svec, a student in the Norwin School District, and Aryn Pratt, a student at Cheyney University. The Board also recognized the service of two student members whose terms came to a close in May 2018 – Shirlann Harmon, Seneca Valley School District, and Andrew Ahr, The Pennsylvania State University.

The Board looks forward to working together with the Wolf Administration and with the General Assembly to meet the challenges that lie ahead to ensure that the schools of this Commonwealth meet the needs of all of our children. If you need additional information about this report or the Board's activities, please contact me or the Board office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Farmer White". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Karen Farmer White, Chair

MEMBERSHIP

The State Board of Education consists of 21 members, ten of whom serve on the Board's Council of Basic Education and ten of whom serve on the Board's Council of Higher Education. Seventeen members are appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate, for overlapping terms of six years, or until their successors are appointed and confirmed. Four members of the Board are members of the General Assembly who serve as long as they hold the position of majority and minority chairs of the House and Senate Education Committees. The Chairperson of the Board and its Councils are designated by the Governor and serve at his pleasure. The 21 members of the board also serve as the State Board for Vocational Education.

The Board meets at least six times per year. Additional Council or Board meetings are held at the call of the chairpersons or at the request of a majority of members. The chairperson of the Board and any of the members are entitled to attend the meetings of the Councils. Board committees are appointed by the chairperson of the Board to formulate policy proposals in those areas which fall within the purview of the Board. Council committees are appointed by the chairperson of each respective Council to formulate policy proposals in those areas which fall within the purview of either Council.

The Secretary of Education is the head of the Department of Education and chief executive officer of the State Board of Education. He is a member of the executive department of the Commonwealth and is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Secretary of Education, or his designated representative, is entitled to attend all meetings of the Board and Councils and has the right to speak on all matters before the Board and the Councils, but not to vote.

The chairperson of the Professional Standards and Practices Commission (PSPC), or a PSPC member designated by the chairperson, serves as an ex officio, non-voting member of the Board. Likewise, a member of the State Board serves in the same capacity on the PSPC.

Four student representatives serve as non-voting, advisory members of the Board – two high school students who sit on the Council of Basic Education and two postsecondary students who sit on the Council of Higher Education. Annually, two new students are selected to serve a two-year term on each respective Council. High school students are selected through an application process managed by the Pennsylvania Association of Student Councils. Postsecondary students are selected to represent the various sectors of higher education in the Commonwealth on a rotating basis. Student members were added by the Board in 2008, and their participation is supported through private grant funds.

The following are listings of the State Board of Education's membership, reflecting transitions throughout the 2018 calendar year.

State Board of Education

January 2018

Ms. Karen Farmer White (Pittsburgh)
Chair, State Board of Education

Mr. Pedro Rivera
Secretary of Education & Chief
Executive Officer of the Board

Council of Basic Education

Dr. James E. Barker (Erie)
Chairman, Council of Basic Education

Council of Higher Education

Mr. James Grandon (Mechanicsburg)
Chairman, Council of Higher Education

Hon. Carol Aichele (Malvern)

Mr. James R. Agras (Pittsburgh)

Mr. Nathan Barrett (Scranton)

Mr. Andrew Ahr
Senior Student Member

Senator John Eichelberger
Majority Chair, Senate Education Committee

Dr. Nicole Carnicella (Bellefonte)

Mr. Donald Fey
Junior Student Member

Senator Andrew Dinniman
Minority Chair, Senate Education Committee

Mr. Kirk Hallett (Camp Hill)

Ms. Caroline DeWitt
Junior Student Member

Ms. Shirlann Harmon
Senior Student Member

Ms. Sandra Dungee Glenn (Philadelphia)

Hon. Maureen Lally-Green (Mars)

Dr. Pamela Gunter-Smith (York)

Representative James R. Roebuck
Minority Chair, House Education Committee

Representative David Hickernell
Majority Chair, House Education Committee

Dr. A. Lee Williams (Slippery Rock)

Mr. Jonathan Peri (Glen Mills)

Dr. Colleen Sheehan (Wayne)

Mr. Craig Snider (Bryn Mawr)

Dr. George Drake
PSPC Ex-officio Member

Ms. Karen Molchanow
Executive Director

Ms. Stephanie Jones
Administrative Assistant

State Board of Education

July 2018

Ms. Karen Farmer White (Pittsburgh)
Chair, State Board of Education

Mr. Pedro Rivera
Secretary of Education & Chief
Executive Officer of the Board

Council of Basic Education

Dr. James E. Barker (Erie)
Chairman, Council of Basic Education

Hon. Carol Aichele (Malvern)

Mr. Nathan Barrett (Scranton)

Senator John Eichelberger
Majority Chair, Senate Education Committee

Mr. Donald Fey
Senior Student Member

Mr. Kirk Hallett (Camp Hill)

Hon. Maureen Lally-Green (Mars)

Representative James R. Roebuck
Minority Chair, House Education Committee

Ms. Ashley Svec
Junior Student Member

Dr. A. Lee Williams (Slippery Rock)

Council of Higher Education

Mr. Jonathan Peri (Glen Mills)
Chairman, Council of Higher Education

Mr. James R. Agras (Pittsburgh)

Dr. Nicole Carnicella (Bellefonte)

Ms. Caroline DeWitt
Senior Student Member

Senator Andrew Dinniman
Minority Chair, Senate Education Committee

Ms. Sandra Dungee Glenn (Philadelphia)

Dr. Pamela Gunter-Smith (York)

Representative David Hickernell
Majority Chair, House Education Committee

Ms. Aryn Pratt
Junior Student Member

Mr. Craig Snider (Bryn Mawr)

Dr. George Drake
PSPC Ex-officio Member

Ms. Karen Molchanow
Executive Director

Ms. Stephanie Jones
Administrative Assistant

State Board of Education

November 2018

Ms. Karen Farmer White (Pittsburgh)
Chair, State Board of Education

Mr. Pedro Rivera
Secretary of Education & Chief
Executive Officer of the Board

Council of Basic Education

Dr. James E. Barker (Erie)
Chairman, Council of Basic Education

Hon. Carol Aichele (Malvern)

Mr. Nathan Barrett (Scranton)

Senator John Eichelberger
Majority Chair, Senate Education Committee

Mr. Donald Fey
Senior Student Member

Mr. Kirk Hallett (Camp Hill)

Dr. Jeffrey Keeling (Hadley)

Hon. Maureen Lally-Green (Mars)

Representative James R. Roebuck
Minority Chair, House Education Committee

Ms. Ashley Svec
Junior Student Member

Dr. A. Lee Williams (Slippery Rock)

Council of Higher Education

Mr. Jonathan Peri (Glen Mills)
Chairman, Council of Higher Education

Mr. James R. Agras (Pittsburgh)

Dr. Jamie Bracey-Green (Philadelphia)

Dr. Nicole Carnicella (Bellefonte)

Ms. Caroline DeWitt
Senior Student Member

Senator Andrew Dinniman
Minority Chair, Senate Education Committee

Ms. Sandra Dungee Glenn (Philadelphia)

Dr. Pamela Gunter-Smith (York)

Representative David Hickernell
Majority Chair, House Education Committee

Ms. Arynn Pratt
Junior Student Member

Dr. George Drake
PSPC Ex-officio Member

Ms. Karen Molchanow
Executive Director

Ms. Stephanie Jones
Administrative Assistant

**There are currently three vacancies on the State Board of Education*

INTRODUCTION

The Pennsylvania State Board of Education was created by the General Assembly in 1963 and reestablished in 1988. It is the principal administrative regulatory body for both elementary and secondary education and higher education in the Commonwealth. It has the power and duty to review and adopt regulations that govern educational policies and principles and establish standards governing the educational programs of the Commonwealth, upon recommendation of its Councils. The Board also has the authority and duty to approve or disapprove an application for the creation of a new school district, or change in the boundaries of an existing school district; establish committees of professional and technical advisors to assist the councils in performing research studies undertaken by them; manage and have custody of the State School Fund; apply for, receive and administer Federal grants, appropriations, allocations and programs within its purview; adopt policies with regard to institutions of higher education; and, adopt master plans for basic and higher education.

The State Board of Education engages in constant review and appraisal of education in the Commonwealth. The Board's evaluation takes into account such matters as educational objectives, alternative organizational patterns, alternative programs of study, and the operating efficiency of the education system. The chairperson of the State Board refers all studies and investigations to one of its Councils, and receives and places on the agenda the findings and recommendations of the Council for appropriate action by the Board.

For purposes of studying issues and developing policy proposals, the Board is divided into two councils – the Council of Basic Education and the Council of Higher Education. The Council of Basic Education has the power and duty to develop a master plan for basic education in the Commonwealth for adoption by the Board; investigate programs, conduct research studies and formulate policy programs in all educational areas not within the purview of higher education; encourage and promote such agricultural, industrial, vocational and technical education programs as the needs of this Commonwealth may require; and investigate and make recommendations pertaining to the work of any schools of design, schools of industrial arts or industrial schools to which the General Assembly may make an appropriation.

The Council of Higher Education has the power and duty to develop a master plan for higher education in the Commonwealth for adoption by the Board; develop standards for the approval of colleges and universities for granting of certification and degrees; develop standards for all higher education building projects involving the use of state funds or the funds of any Commonwealth instrumentality; and, investigate programs, conduct research studies and formulate policy proposals in all areas pertaining to higher education in the Commonwealth, including a system of community colleges and technical institutions as provide by law.

The Board also serves as the State Board for Vocational Education and, in this capacity, sets policy and promulgates regulations regarding vocational and technical education in Pennsylvania for both secondary and postsecondary vocational-technical education, now more commonly referred to as career and technical education.

Much of the Board's work occurs in meetings of its standing committees, including the Committees on Academic Standards/Chapter 4; Teacher and School Leader Effectiveness; and Vocational-Technical Education. Ad hoc committees also are established from time to time to oversee special projects.

Board committees are the bodies that conduct public meetings to solicit comments, concerns and questions from members of the general public, as well as those involved in the education enterprise on a particular education regulation or issue. When the Board decides to review a current regulation or develop a new one, it begins the process with roundtable discussions or public hearings conducted in several locations throughout the state. The committee takes the information it learns during this exercise and develops recommendations that can take the form of a report or revised regulations.

Proposed regulations are published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*. Additional public comments on a proposed regulation, as well as comments received from the House and Senate Education Committees and the Independent Regulatory Review Commission, are considered and, based on this stakeholder input, the Board may make further refinements to the regulation that it deems necessary in crafting a final regulation.

State Board of Education Activity: 2018

Pursuant to Section 2603-B of the Public School Code of 1949, 24 P.S. § 26-2603-B, the State Board of Education is pleased to provide a report on its activities for the year 2018.

Computer Science Standards

The Board endorsed the K-12 Computer Science Standards developed by the Computer Science Teachers Association and encouraged local education agencies across the Commonwealth to voluntarily adopt these standards to guide their practice in the delivery of Computer Science instruction. The standards were informed by leading experts in the field through an effort co-chaired by a Pennsylvania educator.

In endorsing the standards, the Board recognized that there are nearly 300,000 jobs in the Commonwealth that require candidates to possess skills in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and that projections show that 71 percent of new jobs over the next decade will require computer science skills. Moreover, the Board reviewed data on opportunities in Computer Science that showed there are 21,000 unfilled computer science and software development jobs in Pennsylvania, yet only 2,820 students graduated from postsecondary Computer Science programs in the Commonwealth.

The Board further recognized the efforts of the Department of Education and the Pennsylvania STEM Coalition to diversify and increase the number of Pennsylvania educators prepared to provide effective STEM education, increase the number of students engaged in STEM education from Pre-K through postsecondary, and increase the number of Pennsylvania residents that are STEM literate.

Revised PSSA Performance Level Descriptors for English Language Arts

The Board supported efforts of the Department of Education to shorten the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) exams administered in English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and Science. The Department enacted changes to the PSSAs in 2017-18 that were designed to reduce the length of testing while maintaining technical soundness and appropriate coverage of content and reliability.

In enacting these changes, the Department conducted a standards validation process for the ELA exam only due to a change in the design of that assessment to include one, rather than two, extended writing responses. The purpose of the standards validation was to review the Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) and the cut scores for the PSSA ELA exam relative to the change in test design. While the number of multiple-choice items on the Mathematics and

Science PSSAs were reduced, those assessments did not undergo a standards validation because the test design did not change.

As a result of the standards validation, the Board approved revised Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) for the PSSA ELA exam. The PLDs are qualitative descriptors of student performance at different levels based on the state’s academic content standards. They include general PLDs for Advanced, Proficient, Basic, and Below Basic that apply to all content areas. They also include specific PLDs for Advanced, Proficient, Basic, and Below Basic for each content area that is part of the state assessment system.

Postsecondary Attainment Goal

The Board’s Council of Higher Education adopted a motion establishing a postsecondary attainment goal for the Commonwealth. The Council determined that the Commonwealth should strive to have 60 percent of the population ages 25-64 hold a postsecondary degree or industry recognized credential by 2025, with a particular focus on closing attainment gaps for historically underrepresented populations.

Final-Omit Chapter 14 (Special Education)

The Board acted to update terminology in its regulations governing Special Education Services and Programs (Chapter 14). The amendments approved to Chapter 14 replace the terms “mentally retarded” and “mental retardation” with the terms “intellectual disability” or “intellectual disabilities.”

The Board found the term mental retardation to be archaic and supported updating the terminology used in its regulations to promote respect, community integration, and an array of opportunities for individual with intellectual disabilities through the use of positive language. In adopting this change, the Board followed suit with changes previously made at the federal level to the Rehabilitation Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Higher Education Act, and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

AVTS Attendance Area Changes

The State Board for Vocational Education, which is comprised of the same membership as the State Board of Education, is responsible for defining Area Vocational Technical School (AVTS) attendance areas. The Board received petitions seeking to amend the established attendance boundaries of two AVTSs – the Clearfield County Career and Technology Center and the

Admiral Peary Area Vocational Technical School – to move the Harmony Area School District from Clearfield to Admiral Peary.

Upon reviewing the petitions, the Board determined that the changes would not impede Clearfield’s ability to continue offering career and technical education (CTE) to students from other districts within its boundaries and that Admiral Peary had adequate capacity to absorb current CTE students from Clearfield without adversely affecting its program offerings. The Board further noted that Clearfield’s other sponsoring districts had reached an agreement with the Harmony Area School District for the repayment of Harmony’s share of debt service, and that the petitions were supported by all local school districts affected by the proposed changes. Further, no concerns regarding the changes were heard from members of the public.

The Board approved the petitions to alter the attendance boundaries of the Clearfield County Career and Technology Center and the Admiral Peary Area Vocational Technical School in September.

Chapter 16 (Gifted Education)

The Board’s Special and Gifted Education Committee commenced a required periodic review of the regulations governing Special Education for Gifted Students (Chapter 16) in the fall. The Committee invited interested stakeholders to participate in public roundtable discussions on issues impacting gifted education in the Commonwealth. Roundtables were held at the Allegheny Intermediate Unit (Homestead), the Department of Education (Harrisburg), and the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit (Norristown).

Through the roundtables, the Committee engaged in open dialog with more than 90 individuals, including gifted education teachers, gifted education coordinators, school psychologists, parents of gifted students, Intermediate Unit staff, and higher education faculty. The Committee invited individuals who could not attend the roundtable to submit their thoughts on gifted education in writing and gained additional perspective from those submissions.

Numerous issues were brought to the Committee’s attention concerning the qualifications of gifted educators, state compliance monitoring, the screening and evaluation processes used to identify gifted students, and elements required to be addressed on a student’s gifted individualized education plan. The Committee also heard concerns related to the use of acceleration for delivering gifted services, caseload assignments for educators, a lack of dedicated state funding for gifted services, and more.

A summary report of the issues raised by stakeholders was provided to the Board for review. The Committee will continue to discuss these issues in 2019 and will formulate recommendations for the Board's consideration to address the concerns that were heard.

Master Plan for Basic Education

The Board adopted a new Master Plan for Basic Education in November. The Plan offers guidance and recommendations for the Governor, General Assembly, and public schools of the Commonwealth in the following 10 areas: 1) school program approval, evaluation, and requirements; 2) school personnel training and certification; 3) student testing and assessment; 4) school governance and organization; 5) curriculum materials and development; 6) school finance; 7) school buildings and facilities; 8) transportation; 9) technical services and support services to local education agencies, and 10) projected long-range needs of the public school system of the Commonwealth.

The plan reflects input from members of the State Board and leadership of the Department of Education. It was further informed by a review of similar strategic guidance documents produced by other states and national agencies, as well as data secured from the Pennsylvania State Data Center. Before adopting the new Master Plan, the Board also posted a draft of the plan on its website for public review and invited interested stakeholders to participate in public roundtable discussion to provide citizens of the Commonwealth with a voice in contributing to the Plan.

Chapter 49 (Certification of Professional Personnel)

In November, the Board's Teacher and School Leader Effectiveness Committee received draft proposed amendments to Chapter 49 (Certification of Professional Personnel) from the Secretary of Education. The Committee accepted the Secretary's proposal on its agenda and announced its intention to consider the proposal as the Board begins a required major review of the Chapter. The Committee's first steps will be to hold public hearings across the state to gather feedback on the Secretary's proposal from interested stakeholders.

In preparation for conducting a major review of Chapter 49, the Committee spent the beginning of 2018 meeting with resource experts to learn about the issues impacting educator quality and the educator pipeline in Pennsylvania. The Committee also received an annual report on certifications from the Department of Education (PDE). Data from PDE showed a continued decline in the number of Instructional Certificates issued annually, as well as an increase in the number of emergency permits issued annually to address areas where the state is experiencing teacher shortages. The Committee also learned about state-level initiatives to address shortages through clinical residency programs for teachers and principals.

Pennsylvania Public Postsecondary Vocational Education Accreditation

Per approval granted by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), the State Board for Vocational Education (SBVE) holds the authority to accredit public postsecondary vocational education programs. The SBVE's scope of authority is limited to accrediting career and technical centers that offer PDE- approved non-degree granting career and technical programs for adults that are 300 hours or longer in duration. The SBVE evaluates institutions that seek voluntary accreditation under this authority through a partnership with the Bureau of Career and Technical Education (BCTE) within PDE. The SBVE, through the Pennsylvania Secretary of Education, authorizes BCTE to manage the State's accreditation program.

In 2018, the Board received periodic updates on the Lebanon County Career and Technology Center's (LCCTC) efforts to come into compliance with certain accreditation standards that previously were identified as areas in need of improvement by LCCTC. The Board, in 2017, granted LCCTC one year of probationary accreditation with stipulations that LCCTC must take action to meet accreditation standards during the probationary period. In July of 2018, the Board determined that LCCTC satisfied the corrective actions necessary to meet the Accreditation Guidelines for Pennsylvania Public Postsecondary Vocational Education and granted LCCTC full accreditation for a four-year period.

College Textbook Policies Advisory Committee

In January 2011, the Board formed the College Textbook Policies Advisory Committee, a Standing Committee of the Board established by Act 104 of 2010. The Advisory Committee was tasked with issuing a report to the Governor and the General Assembly with recommendations to improve college textbook affordability and accessibility. Per statute, the Committee is to update its report every three years. With the support of the Department of Education, the Board continued to convene the Advisory Committee quarterly throughout 2018 and the Committee issued an update to its report in September.

Boundary Changes

In 2017, an independent hearing officer was appointed to conduct an administrative hearing on the application of the Washington Township Independent School District (WTISD) seeking reassignment from the Dover Area School District to the Northern York County School District. The hearing officer carried out those proceedings in 2018 and, in October, submitted a proposed report and proposed order on the application to the Board. Parties to the case then were afforded the opportunity to submit exceptions to the hearing examiner's proposed report and to file

objections to those exceptions. The proposed report, exceptions, and objections were scheduled for consideration by the Board in 2019.

Application to Establish a New Community College

A plan to establish a new community college in Erie County was submitted to the Board in June 2017. Per Section 1902-A of the Public School Code, the Board is responsible for determining whether to approve or disapprove applications to establish new community colleges in the Commonwealth. The determination will be made based on standards that are established in the Public School Code.

The Board appointed a Special Committee to undertake proceedings related to Erie's plan and to make a report and recommendation on the plan to the full Board. In 2018, Erie County responded to questions the Special Committee submitted to the county in a supplemental information request seeking clarification or additional information on the county's community college plan. The information received from the county was shared with the Department of Education for review as the Department prepares a report of finding on the plan for the Board.