

**MINUTES  
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
COUNCIL OF BASIC EDUCATION**

**333 Market Street | 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17126**

**September 14, 2022**

The meeting was called to order at 2:18 p.m. by Council Chair Dr. Lee Williams.

**Attending:**

James Agras	Pamela Gunter-Smith	Sen. Scott Martin
Hon. Carol Aichele	Natalie Imhoof	Hon. Pedro Rivera
Nathan Barrett	Sarah Jordan	Hon. Curt Sonney
Nicole Carnicella	Jeffrey Keeling	Karen Famer White
Claire Chi	Hon. Maureen Lally-Green	Lee Williams
Sandra Dungee Glenn	Hon. Mark Longietti	Hon. Lindsey Williams

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the July 13, 2022, meeting of the Council of Basic Education were approved on an **Aichele/Barrett** motion.

**COMMITTEE REPORT**  
**ACADEMIC STANDARDS/CHAPTER 4**

Dr. Lee Williams, Chair of the Academic Standards/Chapter 4 Committee, reported that the Committee met earlier in the day to discuss continuing work related to its responsibility to shepherd periodic reviews of state academic standards. Dr. Williams noted that the Committee is designated by the State Board of Education to oversee issues governed by the regulations in 22 Pa. Code Chapter 4, which includes academic standards, and is responsible for recommending draft revised regulations to the Board. She further noted that Chapter 4 calls for periodic reviews of the academic standards that are promulgated through the Board's regulations. Now that the Committee's most recent effort to review the standards for Science and Technology and Environment and Ecology is complete, Dr. Williams said the Committee met to discuss where to next focus its efforts.

Upon consideration of the standards that have not been reviewed since they were adopted, Dr. Williams said the Committee came to a consensus recommendation that the following three sets of standards be opened next for review: Career Education and Work, Family and Consumer Sciences, and Economics. Dr. Williams said these standards were identified as important pathways that equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to know how to explore and find careers, obtain employment and training, and live independently. Further, Dr. Williams noted that these standards all connect to concepts related to financial literacy, which is

essential to making informed financial decisions and managing personal finances. Dr. Williams said the need to ensure students are well-versed in matters related to financial literacy has been elevated by state policymakers and multiple other stakeholders.

Dr. Williams said work to review these standards will be strengthened by including the voices of educators and other content experts who can lend their expertise to developing recommendations on the standards for the Committee's consideration. She said the Committee intends to request that the Department of Education serve as a partner in this effort by convening Committees of educators and other content experts to conduct an initial review of the standards and to develop recommendations on whether the Committee should consider revisions to them. Dr. Williams said the Committee will provide additional opportunities for broader stakeholder input on any recommended updates before the Committee would develop its own recommendations to present to the State Board.

Dr. Williams then invited discussion on the Committee's recommendation and intended plan of work to continue reviewing academic standards.

### **REPORT OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

Dr. Jeffrey Fuller presented his inaugural report as Deputy Secretary of Elementary and Secondary Education. Dr. Fuller recognized members of his staff, Mr. Brian Campbell, Mr. Richard Maraschiello, and Mr. Brian Truesdale, for an update on state assessment results for the 2021-22 school year as annually required by Chapter 4. Department staff reviewed data on the statewide percentages of students who were proficient or advanced on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) in English Language Arts, Math, and Science, along with the percentage of students who were proficient or advanced on the Keystone Exams in Literature, Algebra I, and Biology. Department staff also reviewed data on statewide participation rates in state assessments and discussed important contextual information about how participation rates and the ongoing effects of assessment waivers issued in response to the COVID-19 pandemic effect data reporting.

Dr. Jeffrey Keeling, member of the Council of Basic Education, shared background on the challenges he's seen in the field between the concept of Keystone Exams in theory and their use in practice. Dr. Keeling presented potential solutions to these challenges, including providing more details individual assessment score reports, enacting a timelier process for returning state assessment data to schools, reviewing questions on the Algebra I Keystone Exam to focus more on function than on crafting the wording of problems in a manner that requires deductive reasoning to determine the meaning of the question, and reexamining the success of Keystone Exams and potentially replacing them with an assessment that measures student's basic education knowledge and ability to succeed post-high school regardless of what path a student pursues. Dr. Keeling invited feedback on his concerns and suggestions from the Department and from his colleagues on the Board.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Gina Gullo, of the Pennsylvania State Education Association, urged the Department to be thoughtful about how state assessment data is presented. She said that data on standardized assessments is always hard to interpret and, as this data will go out to leaders, parents, and others, communications about this year's results should be conveyed in a manner that does not contribute to criticisms of today's educators and in a manner that does not potentially scare away future educators from the field in a time of shortage. Ms. Gullo further noted that a recent communication from the Biden Administration recognized that data from the most recent state assessments is not appropriate to use for the purpose of teacher evaluation. She stated that she understands the Council of Basic Education does not have the power to change that, but asked Council members to use their voices to highlight that matter.

### **ACTION ITEM**

There were no action items.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further items of business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:48 p.m. on an **Aichele/Keeling** motion.



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Stephanie Jones  
Administrative Assistant