



A Publication for Members of the
N.C. Association of School Administrators

August 6, 2020

The State Board of Education (SBE) held its monthly meeting in-person and remotely on August 5-6.

The pages that follow summarize highlights from the meeting and the Board's actions for this month.

For complete SBE information, visit their website: <http://stateboard.ncpublicschools.gov/>

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

- **ADM Hold Harmless** — The SBE passed a resolution urging the NC General Assembly to pass legislation mitigating the effects of ADM decreases on school district funding for the 2020-21 school year. Many district leaders had expressed to Board members their concerns regarding potential drops in student enrollment due to COVID-19.
- **NC Education Corps** — Chairman Davis announced the creation of the “North Carolina Education Corps”—a team of volunteers who will travel to districts across the State to serve as tutors, coaches, and mentors for students. Davis noted he would share a formal announcement, including opportunities to participate, in the days ahead.
- **2020-21 Student Testing Update** — SBE members approved a plan for administering mandatory tests to students during the 2020-21 school year. Under the plan, students attending school remotely would take federally-required statewide assessments upon the student’s return to school for face-to-face instruction, or at a school-sanctioned site at the public school unit’s discretion. The plan also provides public school units with the option of providing end-of-grade assessments during Fall 2020 “for the purpose of providing educators and parents with information on student’s performance on the previous grade level content standards.” The results from these optional assessments would not be used for accountability purposes, and these tests would be made available at schools and remotely. DPI staff also recommended that NC Check-Ins be voluntarily administered both at schools and remotely. Additional information is available below under the Student Learning & Achievement (SLA) Committee Item 2.
- **2020 Virtual Charter School Enrollment**—The SBE amended its agenda to add discussion of removing enrollment restrictions for the NC Virtual Academy and NC Charter Academy. Staff from the Charter School Advisory Board (CSAB) noted there are approximately 8,908 students on the waiting lists for these schools, and that removing enrollment restrictions may alleviate some of the stress traditional public schools would face with additional students in classrooms during the ongoing pandemic. Some Board members expressed concerns over raising enrollment in the two virtual charter schools, as these schools continue to be some of the lowest-performing schools in the state. Ultimately, Board members decided to push its final decision on this issue to a later date.

ACTION ITEMS

EDUCATOR STANDARDS & PREPARATION COMMITTEE

Action On First Reading

EICS 1 – BLUE GREEN Academy’s Request To Relinquish Its Charter

B.L.U.E. G.R.E.E.N. Academy (“BGA”) is a charter operating in Winston-Salem. BGA received its charter in 2019 and opened for its first year in the fall of 2019. BGA ended the 2019-2020 school year with 37 enrolled 5th and 6th grade students. The BGA Board of Directors has decided to relinquish the school’s charter due to the inability to meet minimum enrollment requirements and issues related to the school facility. The BGA school administration and board of directors have begun closure procedures with the NC Department of Public Instruction and seeks State Board approval of its charter relinquishment.

Recommendations: *The Charter Schools Advisory Board recommended that the SBE approve B.L.U.E. G.R.E.E.N. Academy’s request to relinquish its charter.*

APPROVED

Action

EICS 2 - NC ACCESS Subgrant Recommendations

The NC ACCESS Program conducts an annual competitive application process designed to award funding for North Carolina charter schools that propose to serve an increased number of educationally disadvantaged students. Applications were evaluated using the approved NC ACCESS Program subgrant application scoring rubric. Of the forty-nine (49) charter schools that submitted a letter of intent and were designated as eligible to submit a full subgrant application, thirty-six (36) applied. Of the thirty-six (36) applicants, thirty-four (34) were recommended for subgrants as detailed [here](#).

Recommendations: *The Charter Schools Advisory Board recommended that the SBE approve the NC ACCESS Program 2020 Subgrant Recommendations.*

APPROVED

STUDENT LEARNING & ACHIEVEMENT COMMITTEE

Action On First Reading

SLA 1 - SBE Policy COVID-19 Impact: Requirements Regarding Assessments (TEST-003 & TEST-011)

SBE Policy TEST-003 —SBE Policy TEST-003 allows public school students to drop a course with a required End-of-Course (EOC) assessment within the first 10 days of enrollment in a semester block schedule, or within the first 20 days of enrollment in a yearlong traditional schedule. Students who are enrolled for credit after the 10/20 days, regardless of course delivery (e.g., traditional classroom, NC Virtual Public School, vendor-based online) shall not drop a course with a required EOC assessment and shall participate in the appropriate EOC assessment at the completion of the course. With public school units providing either all remote learning or a blend of remote learning and on-site instruction, additional days for determining whether a student is best served by dropping an EOC-associated course is recommended for the 2020–21 school year. Additional days will ensure this decision is based on a complete assessment of the student’s capabilities and readiness. The recommended modification is to allow 30 days for a semester block schedule and 60 days for a yearlong traditional schedule.

SBE Policy TEST-011— SBE Policy TEST-011 requires students who may be English Learners (Els) to be screened with the W-APT™ or the WIDA Screener™ within the first 30 days of enrollment in a school. The recommended modifications for the 2020–21 school year only include: (1) an extended window of 45 days for this requirement to be met; and (2) the use of the WIDA Remote Screener or Family/Caregiver Interview for eligible students who cannot attend a school for W-APT™ or the WIDA Screener™ administration. Students who do not take the W-APT™ and the WIDA Screener™ because of being served

wholly by remote instruction, must be administered these assessments within 45 days of returning to face-to-face instruction.

Recommendations: *It was recommended that the SBE **approve** the recommendation to amend TEST-003 for the 2020–21 school year only to allow a student to be removed from an EOC-associated course within the first 30 days of a semester block schedule or the first 60 days of a yearlong traditional schedule, and **approve** the recommendation to amend TEST-011 for the 2020–21 school year to allow (1) an extended window of 45 days for this requirement to be met; and (2) allow the use of the WIDA Remote Screener or Family/Caregiver Interview to identify English Learners (ELs) until students are able to be administered the W-APT™ and the WIDA Screener™ in a face-to-face instructional setting.*

APPROVED

SLA 2 - Accountability Update: Testing 2020-2021

The August SBE meeting included the following discussion of testing for the 2020–21 school year:

Federally Required Statewide Assessments for the 2020-21 School Year — If students are attending school remotely, provide the Beginning of Grade 3 Test (Fall 2020), End-of-Grade Reading, Mathematics, and Science Tests (Spring 2021), End-of-Course Tests of NC Math 1, NC Math 3, Biology, and English II (Fall 2020/Spring 2021) either (1) when students return to school for face-to-face instruction or (2) at the public school unit’s discretion, administer the tests to students at a school-sanctioned site that meets the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services guidelines for COVID-19.

Optional Assessments:

1. For optional use as determined by public school units, provide the end-of-grade assessments for administration in fall 2020 for the purpose of providing educators and parents with information on student’s performance on the previous grade level content standards. It is recommended the results from these tests not be used for accountability or any comparison of public school units, and it is recommended that these tests be available at schools and remotely.
2. Provide the classroom-based voluntarily administered NC Check-Ins at schools and remotely.

Recommendations: *It was recommended that the SBE approve for the 2020–21 school year the following: (1) If students are attending school remotely, provide the Beginning of Grade 3 Test (Fall 2020), End-of-Grade Reading, Mathematics, and Science Tests (Spring 2021), End-of-Course Tests of NC Math 1, NC Math 3, Biology, and English II (Fall 2020/Spring 2021) either when students return to the school for face-to-face instruction, or at the public school unit’s discretion, administer the tests to students at a school-sanctioned site that meets the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services guidelines for COVID-19.*

It was also recommended that for optional use only as determined by public school units, the unused 2019-20 end-of-grade assessments will be available (where possible) for administration in fall 2020 for the purpose of providing educators and parents with information on a student’s performance on the previous grade level content standards. It is recommended the results from these tests not be used for accountability or any comparison of public school units, and it is recommended that these tests be available at schools and remotely for access.

APPROVED

Action

SLA 3 - K-12 Computer Science Standards Adoption

All K-12 standards are reviewed on a perpetual cycle of five-to-seven years. The review process is designed to ensure clear, rigorous, and measurable standards that are easily understood by teachers, parents, and students, and are articulated K-12 by grade, proficiency level, and/or course. During the August SBE meeting, members discussed the proposed [K-12 Computer Science Standards](#).

Recommendations: *It was recommended that the SBE approve the adoption of the proposed NC K - 12 Computer Science Standards.*

APPROVED

BUSINESS OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Action on First Reading

BSOP 2 – Remaining Allotment for SL 2020-4 COVID-19 Recovery Act: Cybersecurity, School Nutrition & Low-Wealth

[Session Law 2020-4: COVID-19 Recovery Act](#) was signed into law on May 5, 2020, appropriating funds from the Coronavirus Relief Fund, or Title V of the CARES Act. Section 3.3 (6) – (18) directs appropriations to DPI and public school units to mitigate and respond to the COVID-19 Emergency. Each appropriation that is disbursed to the public schools shall be authorized by the State Board of Education as individual allotment policies. This item is a recommendation for the allotment policies of the following items:

- (11) **\$4,500,000 for cybersecurity**
- (6) PRC125 School Nutrition – **updated for expiration date**
- Session Law 2020-27, Section 4: appropriates **\$22,000,000 for growth in low wealth counties.**

Recommendations: *It was recommended that the SBE approve the allotment policies.*

APPROVED

BSOP 3 – Session Law (SL) 2020-4 COVID 19 Recovery Act: Extended Learning and Integrated Student Support (ELISS) Recipients

In May 2020, the General Assembly of North Carolina appropriated five million dollars (\$5,000,000) from [House Bill 1043: 2020 COVID-19 Recovery Act](#), for the Extended Learning and Integrated Student Supports (ELISS) Competitive Grant Program. The purpose of the Program is to fund high-quality, independently validated extended learning and integrated student support service programs for at-risk students whose learning has been negatively affected by COVID-19 impacts. Nonprofit corporations and nonprofit corporations working in collaboration with local school administrative units may participate in the ELISS program. Programs must serve one or more of the following student groups:

1. At-risk students not performing at grade level as demonstrated by statewide assessments or not on-track to meet year-end expectations as of March 16, 2020, as demonstrated by existing indicators, including teacher identification;
2. Students at risk of dropping out; and
3. Students at risk of school displacement due to suspension or expulsion as a result of antisocial behaviors.

Since all funds allocated by the 2020 COVID-19 Recovery Act must be incurred by December 30, 2020, grant participants are eligible to receive grants adjusted from their original grant applications submitted in October 2019 for amounts up to five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000). Initially, of the 47 eligible organizations who had previously submitted proposals for the ELISS Program in October 2019, nine organizations uploaded addendums indicating a withdraw from the program due to the limited time constraint for the use of the funds, change in purpose of grant funds, or a staffing capacity limitation due to COVID-19. An additional seven organizations never uploaded an addendum file or uploaded a file that could not be opened, and two organizations were deemed “Not in Good Standing.”

The twenty-nine remaining organizations uploaded Application Addendums in CCIP and were initially screened for all required components. Two organizations did not check all of the required Assurances, so they were deemed ineligible and pulled from review. Therefore, twenty-seven Addendums were reviewed and scored by the Review Team. Based on the results of the review process and the amount of remaining funding available, which is \$4,800,000.00, twenty-seven (27) application addendums are recommended for approval for a total of \$4,782,543.00.

Recommendations: *It was recommended that the SBE approve the recommendations in order to appropriate funds in a timely manner to enable local programs to provide services to students whose learning has been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.*

APPROVED

BSOP 4 – NC Public School Employee Salary Manual Amendment (SLRY-000)

Several recent session laws resulted in salary changes for NC public school employees, necessitating [modifications to the Employee Salary and Benefits Manual \(SLRY-000\)](#). Changes include the Salary Schedules for Public School Employees, principal pay, and bonuses. This item was requested for Action on First Reading due to the urgency in ensuring accurate salary and bonus payments to public school personnel, and to ensure that the SBE policies are consistent with legislation.

Recommendations: *It was recommended that the SBE approve the modifications to the NC Public School Employee Salary Manual (SLRY-000).*

APPROVED

BSOP 5 – Allotment Policy – Amendments and Additions Related to Session Law

Several recent session laws amended various allotment policies related to public school funding, resulting in modifications in the Allotment Policy Manual (ALOT-003). This item was requested as Action on First Reading due to the urgency in ensuring accurate allocations to the public school units, and to ensure that the SBE policies are consistent with legislation.

Recommendations: *It was recommended that the SBE approve the modifications to (ALOT-003) Allotment Policy Amendments and Additions Related to Session Law.*

APPROVED

BSOP 6 - Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee: Start and End Dates

Per [G.S. 115C-84.2](#), each local board of education shall report to the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the SBE on the start and end dates of the instructional calendar for students for the next academic year. The local board of education shall report this information for each school under the control of that board and shall identify the statutory reference authorizing an earlier start date for all schools that start earlier than the Monday closest to August 26. Under the law, the local boards of education shall report annually by April 1 to the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education shall report no later than June 15 to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee. Due to changes in the school calendar as a result of COVID-19 and the passage of SL2020-03, an extension was requested and received to submit the report by August 15, 2020. In addition, [SL 2020-3: COVID-19 Recovery Act](#) modified the start date for students for the 2020-21 school year to August 17. DPI has modified the report requirements to reflect this change in law.

Recommendations: *It was recommended that the SBE receive the Start and End Dates report for submission to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee.*

APPROVED

Action

BSOP 7 - GOVR - New Policy: Superintendent's Communications and Reporting Obligations

The SBE, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Department have the legal obligation to compile and submit certain reports to state and federal officials. Therefore, consistent with its constitutional and statutory mandates and powers, the Board discussed the implementation of rules regarding the Superintendent's responsibilities to facilitate Board communications to and with the Board's constituents and state and federal officials regarding its supervision and administration of the public school system, and to compile and submit reports to the Board.

Recommendations: *It was recommended that the SBE approve [GOVR - New Policy: Superintendent's Communications and Reporting Obligations](#).*

APPROVED

To view the agendas for the State Board of Education's meetings, including links to all handouts and PowerPoint presentations presented to the Board, which may include discussion and informational items not discussed above, please click [here](#).

To view the monthly State Board of Education newsletter archive, including this month's newsletter, please click [here](#).

Members of the NCASA staff represent NCASA at all meetings of the State Board of Education. If you have questions about the issues discussed in this State Board Review, please contact Katherine Joyce, Executive Director, at kjoyce@ncasa.net or Elizabeth Yelverton, Legal Affairs & Policy Manager, at eyelverton@ncasa.net.