

**MINUTES OF THE ALABAMA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
THE STATE OF ALABAMA
OCTOBER 9, 2025
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA**

The Alabama State Board of Education met for its regular meeting of Elementary/Secondary Education matters on Thursday, October 9, 2025, at 10:00 a.m., in the auditorium of the Gordon Persons Building, Montgomery, Alabama. The meeting was called to order by the President of the Board in accordance with *Alabama Code* (1975), §16-3-7, as amended.

PRESIDING: GOVERNOR KAY IVEY, PRESIDENT

The invocation was done by Pastor Josh Agerton, Lead Pastor, Embrace Church, Auburn, Alabama, and Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag that was done in unison.

The following members were present:

Present

Dr. Tonya Chestnut in person
Governor Kay Ivey in person
Dr. Allen Long in person
Mrs. Marie Manning in person
Mrs. Kelly Mooney in person
Dr. Wayne Reynolds in person
Dr. Yvette Richardson in person
Mrs. Tracie West in person
Mrs. Jackie Zeigler in person

Dr. Eric G. Mackey, State Superintendent of Education, was also present.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

On motion by Dr. Wayne Reynolds and seconded by Mrs. Marie Manning, the Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE SEPTEMBER 11, 2025, MEETING

On motion by Dr. Yvette Richardson and seconded by Dr. Tonya Chestnut, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes for the meeting of September 11, 2025.

On motion by Dr. Wayne Reynolds and seconded by Mrs. Tracie West, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following.

FISCAL YEAR 2027 FOUNDATION PROGRAM APPROPRIATION REQUEST

On motion by Mrs. Jackie Zeigler and seconded by Mrs. Tracie West, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following.

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF MR. STEPHEN PHILLIPS, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
HOLLY HILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, ENTERPRISE CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM
AS ALABAMA'S 2025 NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS
(NAESP) NATIONAL OUTSTANDING ELEMENTARY ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL**

WHEREAS, the Alabama Association of Elementary School Administrators (AAESA) has named Mr. Stephen Phillips, Assistant Principal of Holly Hill Elementary School in the Enterprise City School System, as Alabama's NAESP National Outstanding Elementary Assistant Principal; and

WHEREAS, this prestigious recognition program is awarded through AAESA, the Alabama chapter of the NAESP, and is dedicated to honoring assistant principals who demonstrate excellence in their roles and make significant contributions to the educational experience of their students; and

WHEREAS, during Mr. Stephen Phillips' nearly two years of service at Holly Hill Elementary School, he has played an instrumental role in elevating the school's performance, evidenced by a state report card score of 97 for the 2023–2024 academic year, the maintenance of a perfect 100 in academic growth, and a significant reduction in chronic absenteeism; and

WHEREAS, under Mr. Stephen Phillips' leadership, innovative initiatives such as the enhancement of the Response to Intervention (RTI) process, improved school safety protocols, and the mentorship of new teachers have fortified Holly Hill Elementary School's capacity to nurture every student's success; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Stephen Phillips was formally recognized during a special presentation held at Holly Hill Elementary School on January 31, 2025, in acknowledgment of his outstanding leadership and commitment to the well-being and academic success of his students:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby commend and congratulate Mr. Stephen Phillips upon the honor of being selected as Alabama's NAESP 2025 National Outstanding Elementary Assistant Principal.

Done this 9th day of October 2025

On motion by Mrs. Tracie West and seconded by Mrs. Jackie Zeigler, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following.

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF MRS. ELIZABETH ANTOINE, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
AUBURN HIGH SCHOOL, AUBURN CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM
AS ALABAMA'S 2025 HIGH SCHOOL ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR**

WHEREAS, Mrs. Elizabeth Antoine, Assistant Principal at Auburn High School in the Auburn City School System, has been named the 2024-2025 Alabama High School Assistant Principal of the Year by the Alabama Association of Secondary School Principals (AASSP); and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Elizabeth Antoine has devoted 21 years to the field of education, including eight years as an assistant principal, demonstrating unwavering commitment to student success, innovative problem-solving, and dynamic leadership; and

WHEREAS, through Mrs. Elizabeth Antoine leadership, Auburn High School has experienced significant academic growth, a strengthened school culture, and enhanced community engagement; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Elizabeth Antoine has championed impactful initiatives such as the "Tiger Connect" advisory program, which fosters meaningful relationships between students and trusted adults, and a professional development program rooted in Robert Marzano's instructional framework; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Elizabeth Antoine efforts in implementing a comprehensive ACT preparation program have yielded notable gains, including three-point and four-point increases in mathematics and English, respectively; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Elizabeth Antoine has enriched the school's cultural and community engagement through events such as the World's Fair, which celebrates Auburn High School's diverse student body, and the Homecoming Festival, which fosters school spirit and supports club fundraising; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Elizabeth Antoine contributions extend beyond the school working tirelessly to cultivate a positive environment for students, staff, and families; and

WHEREAS, the dedication, leadership, and innovation displayed by Mrs. Elizabeth Antoine set a standard of excellence in education that merits the highest commendation:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby commend and congratulate Mrs. Elizabeth Antoine upon the honor of being selected as the 2025 Alabama High School Assistant Principal of the Year.

Done this 9th day of October 2025

On motion by Mrs. Kelly Mooney and seconded by Mrs. Marie Manning, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following:

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF MRS. JENNIFER NABORS, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
CALERA MIDDLE SCHOOL, SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM
AS ALABAMA'S 2025 MIDDLE SCHOOL ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR**

WHEREAS, Mrs. Jennifer Nabors, Assistant Principal at Calera Middle School in the Shelby County School System, has been named the Alabama 2025 Middle School Assistant Principal of the Year by the Alabama Association of Secondary School Principals (AASSP); and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Jennifer Nabors has dedicated 26 years to the field of education, including four years as an assistant principal, demonstrating unwavering commitment to student success, faculty development, and school improvement; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Jennifer Nabors' innovative leadership and deep commitment to fostering a positive school culture have been transformative for Calera Middle School, leading to the implementation of key programs such as PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports), which has enhanced classroom management and fostered consistency in behavioral expectations throughout the school; and

WHEREAS, through Mrs. Jennifer Nabors' proactive approach, she has developed systems to support both teachers and students, including a New Teacher Orientation program that pairs incoming educators with mentors to ensure a smooth transition and cultivate a family-oriented atmosphere; and

WHEREAS, under Mrs. Jennifer Nabors leadership, Calera Middle School has experienced significant advancements, including a 10-point increase in its school report card score, a testament to her dedication and effectiveness as an educational leader; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Jennifer Nabors' dedication to education extends beyond the school walls as she has played a pivotal role in organizing community initiatives, such as backpack and supply giveaways and community feeding programs, further demonstrating her passion for service and her investment in the well-being of students and families; and

WHEREAS, as the Alabama Middle School Assistant Principal of the Year, Mrs. Jennifer Nabors will represent Alabama in the National Middle School Assistant Principal of the Year program hosted by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), bringing honor and distinction to our state:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby commend and congratulate Mrs. Jennifer Nabors upon the honor of being selected as the 2025 Alabama Middle School Assistant Principal of the Year.

Done this 9th day of October 2025

On motion by Mrs. Kelly Mooney and seconded by Mrs. Tracie West, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following:

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF DR. MATHEW EPPS, PRINCIPAL
CAREER TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL, SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM
AS ALABAMA'S 2025 HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR**

WHEREAS, it is with great pride and admiration that we recognize outstanding educators in the State of Alabama who have demonstrated exceptional leadership and commitment to student success; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Mathew Epps, Principal of the Career Technical High School in the Shelby County School System, has been named the 2024-2025 Alabama High School Principal of the Year by the Alabama Association of Secondary School Principals (AASSP); and

WHEREAS, Dr. Mathew Epps has dedicated 19 years to the field of education, including nine years in administrative leadership, tirelessly working to enhance the learning experience of students through innovation and dedication; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Mathew Epps leadership has significantly transformed the Career Technical High School by fostering a positive school culture, expanding academic and career opportunities, and implementing specialized programs in robotics, welding, and emergency medical services, among other fields; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Mathew Epps has established and nurtured strong community and industry partnerships that provide students with invaluable work-based learning experiences and career readiness opportunities; and

WHEREAS, through Dr. Mathew Epps' commitment to fostering an inclusive and supportive educational environment, he has ensured that students not only achieve academic excellence but also gain practical skills essential for success in the workforce; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Mathew Epps leadership philosophy, which emphasizes collaboration, community involvement, and empowerment, has been instrumental in shaping the future of countless students and staff members; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Mathew Epps is an exemplary educational leader whose innovative approach, dedication to student achievement, and ability to cultivate meaningful partnerships have set a standard of excellence; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Mathew Epps will represent Alabama in the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) High School Principal of the Year program:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby commend and congratulate Dr. Mathew Epps upon the honor of being selected as the 2025 Alabama High School Principal of the Year.

Done this 9th day of October 2025

On motion by Dr. Yvette Richardson and seconded by Dr. Tonya Chestnut, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following:

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF MR. ANTHONY SANDERS, PRINCIPAL
GREENSBORO MIDDLE SCHOOL, HALE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM
AS ALABAMA'S 2025 MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR**

WHEREAS, Mr. Anthony Sanders, Principal of Greensboro Middle School in the Hale County School System, has been named the 2024-2025 Alabama Middle School Principal of the Year by the Alabama Association of Secondary School Principals (AASSP), a distinction that reflects his exemplary leadership and commitment to education; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Anthony Sanders has devoted 28 years to education, including 16 years as an administrator, and has served as principal of Greensboro Middle School since 2011; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Anthony Sanders leadership philosophy emphasizes the creation of a positive school culture and climate that fosters both academic success and personal growth; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Anthony Sanders has worked tirelessly to inspire students to achieve their full potential while also empowering faculty and staff to innovate and collaborate in fostering a strong educational environment; and

WHEREAS, under Mr. Anthony Sanders' leadership, Greensboro Middle School has launched and sustained exemplary programs, including the Greensboro Middle School STEM After-School Program, which has been supported by nearly \$500,000 in grant funding and has created a STEM ecosystem for rural west Alabama, featuring a virtual reality (VR) lab and competitive student teams excelling in robotics and sustainability competitions; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Anthony Sanders holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Alabama State University and a Master of Education from the University of Phoenix, and his extensive career in education has been marked by notable achievements, including being named Alabama Middle School Principal of the Year in 2020 and receiving The University of Alabama ACCESS Virtual Learning Administrator of the Year Award in 2022; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Anthony Sanders is a leader who embodies dedication, vision, and excellence, transforming Greensboro Middle School into a model of success and positively influencing middle school education across the state through his service on the Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools' Board of Directors and as a past president of the Alabama Association of Middle School Principals (AAMSP); and

WHEREAS, Mr. Anthony Sanders will represent the state of Alabama in the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) Middle School Principal of the Year program, competing among other outstanding educators from across the nation while his exceptional contributions to education serve as an inspiration to educators throughout Alabama and beyond:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby commend and congratulate Mr. Anthony Sanders upon the honor of being selected as the 2025 Alabama Middle School Principal of the Year.

Done this 9th day of October 2025

On motion by Dr. Tonya Chestnut and seconded by Mrs. Jackie Zeigler, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following:

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF DR. STAN STOKLEY, PRINCIPAL
SARALAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, SARALAND CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM
AS ALABAMA’S 2025 NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS
(NAESP) NATIONAL DISTINGUISHED PRINCIPAL**

WHEREAS, Dr. Stan Stokley, Principal of Saraland Elementary School in the Saraland City School System, has been named Alabama’s 2025 NAESP National Distinguished Principal by the Alabama Association of Elementary School Administrators (AAESA), a prestigious recognition program; and

WHEREAS, since assuming the role of principal at Saraland Elementary in 2014, Dr. Stan Stokley has demonstrated exceptional leadership, guiding the school to national recognition, including being named a National Blue Ribbon School and a two-time National Title I Distinguished School; and

WHEREAS, under Dr. Stan Stokley’s leadership, Saraland Elementary School has cultivated a culture of high expectations and academic excellence, earning a 99 on Alabama’s state report card and ranking among the top elementary schools in the state; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Stan Stokley is widely respected for his dedication to student achievement, faculty collaboration, and community engagement, implementing data-driven instruction, teacher development programs, and student motivation initiatives that have resulted in sustained academic growth; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Stan Stokley’s innovative approach to education was exemplified during the COVID-19 pandemic with the launch of “Good Morning Saraland,” a program that provided students with a sense of normalcy and encouragement during challenging times, as well as his personal outreach to every student during state testing season to boost morale and motivation; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Stan Stokley’s outstanding leadership has been recognized by esteemed colleagues, as his innovative approach to fostering academic achievement and community involvement sets a high standard for principals across Alabama; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Stan Stokley contributions extend beyond Saraland Elementary School, as he served as President and Vice President of AAESA, mentoring and serving as a role model for new principals throughout Alabama; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Stan Stokley was selected from a pool of distinguished finalists by a panel of judges for the 2025 Alabama’s NAESP National Distinguished Principal award, further solidifying his impact on education within the state:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby commend and congratulate Dr. Stan Stokley upon the honor of being selected as Alabama’s 2025 NAESP National Distinguished Principal.

Done this 9th day of October 2025

On motion by Mrs. Kelly Mooney and seconded by Mrs. Tracie West, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following:

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF MALINDA NICHOLS
OAK MOUNTAIN MIDDLE SCHOOL, SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM
AS ALABAMA’S 2025 HISTORY TEACHER OF THE YEAR**

WHEREAS, Malinda Nichols, a teacher at Oak Mountain Middle School in the Shelby County School System, was selected as the Alabama recipient of the 2025 History Teacher of the Year Award; and

WHEREAS, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, the nation’s leading organization dedicated to K-12 American history education, sponsors the History Teacher of the Year Award to honor outstanding teachers of American history from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Department of Defense, and U. S. territories; and

WHEREAS, through the state selection committee, Malinda Nichols was selected based upon her outstanding leadership and teaching abilities in the field of American history, her creativity and imagination in the classroom to excite and engage students, and her effective use of a wide range of primary sources to make ancient times come alive for today’s students, allowing them to relive what our forefathers did many years ago; and

WHEREAS, as Alabama’s 2025 History Teacher of the Year, Malinda Nichols receives a certificate and \$1,000 from the Gilder Lehrman Institute for American History, and Oak Mountain Middle School receives an archive of primary historical materials; and

WHEREAS, Malinda Nichols will represent Alabama as the state finalist for the National History Teacher of the Year Award in a selection process to be held in New York City this fall:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby commend and congratulate Malinda Nichols upon the honor of being selected as Alabama’s 2025 History Teacher of the Year.

Done this 9th day of October 2025

On motion by Dr. Yvette Richardson and seconded by Dr. Tonya Chestnut, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following:

**RESOLUTION OF DISTINGUISHED RECOGNITION
2024 ALABAMA SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM OF DISTINCTION**

WHEREAS, the Alabama School Counseling Program of Distinction recognizes school counseling programs that demonstrate an exemplary level of implementation of a comprehensive, data-driven school counseling program; and

WHEREAS, the program components align with the Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance Model for Alabama Public; and

WHEREAS, comprehensive developmental school counseling programs are considered an integral part of the educational process that enables all students to achieve success in school; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama School Counselor Association recognizes schools and school systems as 2024 Alabama School Counseling Programs of Distinction:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby commend the following school counselors on achieving the status of an Alabama School Counseling Program of Distinction in 2024.

Auburn City School System

Auburn City High School - Isalie Corneil, Marie Harris, Heather Langford, Sherylyn Smith, James Tindell, and Nichole Warren

Birmingham City School System

Green Acres Middle School - Quintin Jackson
R. C. Hemphill Elementary School - Dr. Samantha Bookman

Chilton County School System

Jemison Intermediate School - Lauren Barnes

Covington County School System

Straughn High School - Stephanie Bryan

Cullman County School System

West Point Elementary School - Susan Lewis

Homewood City School System

Homewood Middle School - Jimicka Alexander, Annagrace Baldwin, and Leigh Graham

Madison County School System

New Market Elementary School - Savannah Parker
Walnut Grove Elementary School - Nancy Scruggs

Mobile County School System

Baker High School - Jennifer Lee, Kristie J. Matthews, Christy Melton, Leanne Smith, and Heather Weaver

Booker T. Washington Middle School - Jermaine A. Walker

Burns Middle School - Avory Richardson and Latoya Williams

Castlen Elementary School – Alicia Clevenger

Citronelle High School - Heather Byrd and Stephen Watts

Grand Bay Middle School - Christine Acosta and Summer Davis

John L. Leflore Magnet High School - Malinda S. Gray and Laceria J. Hill

Leinkauf Elementary School - Stephanie Bradford

Nan Gray Davis Elementary School - Kimberly Jones

Scarborough Model Middle School - Monae Ivory
Vigor High School - Ebony McDowell and Lakasha J. Scott

Sheffield City School System

Sheffield High School - Tracy Parker

Trussville City School System

Hewitt-Trussville Middle School - Krista Dement, Caroline Kidd, and Melanie McGee

Done this 9th day of October 2025

On motion by Dr. Tonya Chestnut and seconded by Dr. Yvette Richardson, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following:

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF VERONICA PITTS
SELMA HIGH SCHOOL, SELMA CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM
AS THE 2025-2026 NATIONAL CIVICS TEACHER OF THE YEAR**

WHEREAS, Veronica Pitts, a social studies teacher at Selma High School in the Selma City School System, received the 2025-2026 National Civics Teacher of the Year Award; and

WHEREAS, the National Civics Teacher of the Year Award is presented to honor outstanding teachers of civics education at the elementary, middle, and high school levels; and

WHEREAS, Veronica Pitts was selected based upon her outstanding teaching abilities to empower her students with a deep understanding and application of America's Charters of Freedom; and

WHEREAS, Veronica Pitts received her Bachelor of Arts in History from Tuskegee University and her Master of Education in Secondary Education and Social Science from Auburn University at Montgomery; and

WHEREAS, Veronica Pitts began her teaching career in 2014 at Selma High School in Selma, Alabama, where she is also an alumna; and

WHEREAS, Veronica Pitts has been teaching social studies in Alabama for 12 years; and

WHEREAS, Veronica Pitts serves as a teacher-leader in Alabama through her contributions as chair of the social studies department at Selma High School, a member of the 2024 *Alabama Course of Study: Social Studies* committee, an officer in the Alabama Council for Social Studies, and as a consultant with A+ College Ready;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby commend and congratulate Veronica Pitts upon the honor of being selected as the 2025-2026 National Civics Teacher of the Year.

Done this 9th day of October 2025

On motion by Dr. Yvette Richardson and seconded by Mrs. Tracie West, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following:

**RESOLUTION HONORING MRS. SUSANNE ESTES
"BARBARA FANNIN MEMORIAL EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER"
OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2025**

WHEREAS, Mrs. Susanne Estes, Education Specialist in the Alabama State Department of Education, Division of Instructional Services, exhibits a positive and professional attitude, encourages collaboration between all staff members, and shows dedication in her service to the educators and students of Alabama; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Susanne Estes, the Department's Library Media Specialist. She consistently delivers exceptional performance in her role, advocates for school librarians, and is dedicated to growing exemplary school library programs across the state; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Susanne Estes has been an employee of the state for more than 25 years. Her extensive background in education, instructional coaching, and digital learning positions her as a trusted expert and advisor on multiple initiatives at the Alabama State Department of Education; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Susanne Estes facilitates high-impact professional learning, provides direct support, and brings attention to detail, care, and excellence to every task she is assigned; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Susanne Estes's tackles challenges with creativity, possesses a solutions-focused mindset, and conducts the Department's business with grace, respect, and clarity. She fosters collaboration, exemplifies servant leadership, and serves as a mentor to others:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Department of Education expresses their deepest gratitude to Mrs. Susanne Estes for her commitment to public education, her tireless work ethic, and her impactful contributions to the students and educators of Alabama; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby commend Mrs. Susanne Estes for her deep commitment, continuous improvement and devotion to education and congratulates her as the “Barbara Fannin Memorial Employee of the Quarter” for the third quarter of 2025.

Done this 9th day of October 2025

On motion by Dr. Yvette Richardson and seconded by Mrs. Marie Manning, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following:

**RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING OCTOBER 2025 AS
“PRINCIPALS MONTH”**

WHEREAS, the Alabama Association of Elementary School Administrators, the Alabama Association of Middle School Principals, and the Alabama Association of Secondary School Principals have declared the month of October 2025 as “National Principals Month” in coordination with the efforts of the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals; and

WHEREAS, the vision, dedication, and determination of a principal provides the mobilizing force behind any school reform effort; and

WHEREAS, principals are expected to be educational visionaries, instructional leaders, assessment experts, disciplinarians, community builders, public relations experts, budget analysts, facility managers, special programs administrators, and guardians of various legal contractual, policy mandates and initiatives, as well as being entrusted with our young people, our most valuable resource; and

WHEREAS, principals set the academic tone for their schools and work collaboratively with teachers to develop and maintain high curriculum standards, develop mission statements, and set performance goals and objectives for schools to achieve educational excellence; and

WHEREAS, principals work tirelessly in communities across Alabama to maintain academic accountability, to ensure a safe and productive learning environment, and to encourage and facilitate teachers and parents’ efforts to make a positive difference in the lives of our young people; and

WHEREAS, in celebration of “National Principals Month,” the state of Alabama honors elementary, middle level, and high school principals and recognizes the importance of school leadership in ensuring that every child has access to a high-quality education; and

WHEREAS, to honor and recognize the contribution of all school principals and assistant principals, at all grade levels, to the success of students in Alabama’s elementary, middle, and high schools and to encourage residents of Alabama to observe “Principals Month” with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of school leadership in ensuring that every child has access to a high-quality education:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby proclaim October 2025 as “Principals Month” in the state of Alabama.

Done this 9th day of October 2025

On motion by Dr. Wayne Reynolds and seconded by Mrs. Tracie West, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following:

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF OCTOBER 2025 AS
DYSLEXIA AWARENESS MONTH**

WHEREAS, dyslexia is defined as a language-based learning challenge or disability that is neurological in origin and characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities; and

WHEREAS, dyslexia impacts approximately one out of five children in Alabama schools; and

WHEREAS, through effective dyslexia screening, students with dyslexia can be identified as early as kindergarten, long before their learning challenges have resulted in learning disabilities; and

WHEREAS, early identification and intervention will equip many students with dyslexia for success in school and in life; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Board of Education has specifically addressed dyslexia within the *Alabama Administrative Code*; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Board of Education has committed itself to supporting Alabama schools and teachers with resources, materials, and professional development; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Board of Education has committed to the goal that every child will read on grade level; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama Legislature has passed, and Alabama's Governor has approved the *Alabama Literacy Act* to support all struggling readers and demonstrated this with their ongoing financial support:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education recognizes October 2025 as Dyslexia Awareness Month and encourages school systems to engage their schools, families, and communities in activities that create a culture of understanding, support, encouragement, and learning for students having dyslexia.

Done this 9th day of October 2025

On motion by Mrs. Marie Manning and seconded by Dr. Tonya Chestnut, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following:

RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING OCTOBER 2025 AS MANUFACTURING MONTH

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Department of Education has proclaimed October 2025 as Manufacturing Month; and

WHEREAS, recognizing October 2025 as Manufacturing Month in Alabama is an effective way to raise awareness of modern manufacturing, inspire the next generation of workers, and promote educational pathways aligned with industry needs; and

WHEREAS, Alabama has prioritized bold initiatives to support and expand manufacturing through robust workforce development programs, strategic infrastructure investments, and a steadfast commitment to fostering a pro-growth business climate; and

WHEREAS, Alabama's manufacturing sector contributes approximately 16 percent of the state's gross domestic product, generating 50 billion dollars in annual economic output; and

WHEREAS, the state of Alabama stands tall among America's manufacturing leaders, ranking in the top five nationally for manufacturing job concentration and producing a diverse array of high-quality products, including automobiles, aerospace components, ships, and advanced materials, with precision, innovation, and global impact; and

WHEREAS, manufacturing companies directly employ over 290,000 individuals in Alabama which signifies 13.1 percent of the workforce; and

WHEREAS, these ongoing efforts have resulted in significant job creation, the recruitment of global industry leaders, and enhanced prosperity for Alabama families and communities; and

WHEREAS, manufacturing is a pathway to lifelong careers with advancement opportunities, and the continued growth of this sector depends on a skilled and educated workforce; and

WHEREAS, high schools and career technical centers across Alabama serve as critical engines of workforce development, equipping students with the academic foundation, technical expertise, and career readiness essential for success in manufacturing and allied industries, with 82 local education agencies offering manufacturing programs that engaged over 5,300 students in the 2024-2025 school year and resulted in the attainment of more than 740 industry-recognized credentials; and

WHEREAS, collaboration between high schools and carer technical centers, local industries, and community partners strengthens career and technical education programs, apprenticeships, and work-based learning opportunities that connect students to real-world experience; and

WHEREAS, celebrating Manufacturing Month in Alabama's high schools and career technical centers will help students, families, and educators better understand the exciting opportunities available in the manufacturing sector; and

WHEREAS, the State Superintendent of Education recommends approval:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby proclaim October 2025 as Manufacturing Month and encourages local boards of education, schools, business professionals, and local educational organizations to participate in this celebration through activities that demonstrate the importance of Alabama's education programs in preparing students for great career opportunities and academic excellence.

Done on this 9th day of October 2025

On motion by Dr. Allen Long and seconded by Dr. Tonya Chestnut, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following:

**RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING OCTOBER 2025 AS
STATEWIDE PARENT ENGAGEMENT MONTH IN ALABAMA**

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Board of Education and the State Superintendent of Education strongly support parent and family engagement in the education of Alabama students, and parent engagement is critical to student and school success; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Board of Education is committed to parent and family engagement in our schools as it strives to provide all public-school children with an opportunity for a quality education with high academic standards that offer every student an opportunity to graduate and to obtain the necessary skills to be equipped for success; and

WHEREAS, more than 30 years of research identify parental engagement as a key component in ensuring a child's academic achievement, and a successful partnership between educators and parents is one of the most crucial factors influencing positive student outcomes; and

WHEREAS, Statewide Parent Engagement Month provides parents with the opportunity to learn how they can become more actively engaged in their children's education by visiting their children's school, learning about the curriculum, consulting with their children's teachers, and participating in school activities; and

WHEREAS, Statewide Parent Engagement Month is an excellent opportunity for Alabama's public schools to emphasize and increase parent engagement, to partner with communities to raise awareness, and increase support for public education:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education proclaims October 2025 as Statewide Parent Engagement Month in Alabama; declares this year's theme as **United for Learning: Families and Schools Partnering to Empower Every Child**, which encourages educators, communities, parents, and families to participate in this observance, and challenges educators to solicit sustained, year-round parent and family engagement.

Done this 9th day of October 2025

On motion by Dr. Yvette Richardson and seconded by Mrs. Marie Manning, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following:

**RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING OCTOBER 6–10, 2025 AS
ALABAMA COLLEGE APPLICATION CAMPAIGN WEEK**

WHEREAS, all students must have an opportunity to reach their full potential and to realize their lifelong aspirations; and

WHEREAS, over the past decade, there has been a growing movement among educators, national employers, and top business professionals to further focus America's high school curriculum on college preparation and career development; to remain competitive in today's growing global economy, Alabama's students must continue to be provided the highest quality educational experience; and

WHEREAS, this October, for the eleventh consecutive year, our state will celebrate the Alabama College Application Campaign—an annual event developed by the Alabama State Department of Education to celebrate the importance of students continuing their educational goals after high school graduation; and

WHEREAS, to celebrate the Alabama College Application Campaign special activities, official proclamation ceremonies, and other events have been planned statewide; this celebration will also highlight the importance of the “college and career readiness” concept, which focuses on creating a seamless transition between students leaving high school, entering college, and moving into the workforce; and

WHEREAS, increasing awareness about FAFSA and other financial aid resources will help students and parents be informed about postsecondary learning; being college ready also means students are prepared for the entire postsecondary experience—ready to earn associate and bachelor's degrees, professional licenses, specialty certifications, a master's and doctoral degree:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby proclaim October 6–10, 2025, as Alabama College Application Campaign Week.

Done this 9th day of October 2025

On motion by Mrs. Jackie Zeigler and seconded by Dr. Tonya Chestnut, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following:

**RESOLUTION ENDORSING ALABAMA SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK
(October 20-24, 2025)**

WHEREAS, nearly 354,094 of Alabama's elementary and secondary students are transported to and from school each day of the school year; and

WHEREAS, the safety of these students is of utmost importance to all citizens of the state; and

WHEREAS, Alabama's school bus drivers and other transportation employees work diligently to ensure safe transportation for all of Alabama students:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby endorse October 20-24, 2025, as Alabama School Bus Safety Week and urges all Alabamians, particularly motorists, to be especially cautious where school buses and schoolchildren are involved:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education calls on every citizen of Alabama to make every week a safe one for the students and school buses of our state.

Done this 9th day of October 2025

On motion by Dr. Yvette Richardson and seconded by Dr. Tonya Chestnut, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following:

**ADOPT AMENDED ALABAMA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE RULE 290-2-1-.01, PERTAINING
TO ANNUAL APPORTIONMENT OF FOUNDATION PROGRAM FUNDS**

On motion by Dr. Wayne Reynolds and seconded by Dr. Tonya Chestnut, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following:

**ADOPT NEW ALABAMA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE RULE 290-2-1-.06, PERTAINING TO
ANNUAL APPORTIONMENT OF RAISE ACT FUNDS**

EXECUTIVE (INCLUDES LEGAL AND PUBLIC INFORMATION)

Dr. Mackey reminded the audience that three local education agencies are currently under state intervention. Several times a year, we provide the Board Members with public updates highlighting positive developments within those school systems. The Bessemer City School System began the academic year with Mr. Michael D. Turner serving as its new superintendent. Mr. Turner replaced the previous superintendent who departed for a job in Texas. Dr. Mackey reported that construction projects within the Bessemer City School System are progressing steadily toward completion. In 2024, following the Alabama State Department of Education's intervention in the Bessemer City School System, we collaborated to develop a comprehensive strategic plan and have been working diligently to implement it. Over the past five months, the Bessemer City School System Board Members have completed intensive boardmanship training and prescriptive professional development. Dr. Mackey said much thanks to Alabama Association of School Boards. Implementing the new payroll system is essential, as it addresses one of the initial challenges identified within the Bessemer City School System. The Bessemer City School System has had a strong start to the school year, with things progressing well since opening.

Dr. Mackey stated that the Dallas County School System is the latest district to undergo state intervention, with our involvement beginning just a few months ago. During that period, the school system experienced the departure of both its Chief School Financial Officer and its Superintendent. Dr. Mackey reported that the Dallas County School System has Mr. Brent Mims as its new Chief School Financial Officer and Dr. Corey Jones, who began his tenure as Superintendent on October 1, 2025. Dr. Mackey stated that two schools had to close due to a decline in enrollment. He said they are working on a long-term plan for financial responsibility and accountability in the Dallas County School System.

Dr. Mackey reported that the Sumter County School System has been in state intervention the longest. Dr. Mackey stated that a very strong construction project is ongoing in the Sumter County School System. He said they had to close two schools and are in the process of consolidating to one campus in Sumter County. The Board Members of the Sumter County School System have also taken part in leadership training. Dr. Mackey stated that they are working through the Cognia accreditation report. Some of you may recall that the Sumter County School System received an unfavorable accreditation report, and the Department is actively working to address the identified deficiencies. Dr. Mackey noted that as part of each state intervention, the Department engages the accreditation agency to conduct a thorough review and identify areas of deficiency. He stated that the Department will address and resolve the identified deficiencies before returning control of the school system to the local voters and taxpayers.

STATE SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Mackey gave a thank you to all the honorees and representatives in the audience. Recognitions and initiatives covered were principals, assistant principals, History Teacher of the Year, National Civics Teacher of the Year, School Counseling Programs of Distinction, initiatives in dyslexia and manufacturing, statewide parent engagement efforts, the Alabama College Application Campaign, and Alabama School Bus Safety. Dr. Mackey asked all school counselors to stand and remain standing because he has some others to join them. He noted that we will get a first look at a new school counseling plan that has not been updated since 2003. It has been 22 years. The work has been ongoing this year to update this plan. Dr. Mackey gave a big thank you to Mrs. Kelly Mooney for her willingness to join the counseling committee. Dr. Mackey stated that the committee was chaired by Dr. Lewis Brooks, Superintendent of the Shelby County School System, but he was unable to attend due to a family situation. Dr. Mackey asked all the principals and assistant principals who were recognized this morning to join the counselors in standing. He acknowledged that two honorees were unable to be in attendance today. Dr. Farrell Seymore, Executive Director of the Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools (CLAS), and Mrs. Whitney Miller-Nichols, CLAS Director of Governmental Relations, have worked hard to bring this group together. This year, principals and assistant principals across schools were honored for their contributions. Dr. Mackey expressed his gratitude to both individuals for their collaboration with the Department throughout the process.

Dr. Mackey acknowledged Mrs. Malinda Nichols, Alabama's 2025 History Teacher of the Year, and Ms. Veronica Pitts, the 2025-2026 National Civics Teacher of the Year. He thanked them both for investing in the students every day. Dr. Mackey stated that this is why October's meeting is a celebratory one. He acknowledged that while the educators are spending a day away from their students, each of them interacts with hundreds of children daily and makes a meaningful difference in their lives through their dedication and investment. Dr. Mackey expressed his appreciation for the vital contributions the honorees make each day.

Dr. Mackey reminded everyone that the Board Members conducted significant business this morning, including approving rule changes that reflect the major shift brought about by the *RAISE Act*. Dr. Mackey emphasized that this represents the most significant change in school funding in three decades. The Alabama Legislature enacted the law, Governor Kay Ivey signed it earlier this year, and now the Board Members have implemented the rule. Dr. Mackey stated that the remaining items included approving the annual apportionment of Foundation Program funds for the current year, as well as the appropriation request for the upcoming year. He emphasized that those three actions are a major milestone, representing over five billion dollars annually in school funding—yet much of the work happens behind the scenes. Dr. Mackey thanked Governor Ivey and the Board Members for their vote today, for their confidence in the budget plans and requests, and for the dedicated work that brought us to this moment. He said they look forward to presenting those items to the Legislature in the coming weeks.

Dr. Mackey recognized all the representatives of dyslexia awareness in attendance—staff members, teachers, Certified Academic Language Therapists (CALTs), and others—who were dressed in red, and invited them to stand in honor of the important work they do to support students with dyslexia. Dr. Mackey affirmed that this is meaningful work making a real difference. Dr. Mackey noted that Alabama is gaining national recognition for its substantial investment in students. Alabama currently faces a significant shortage of CALTs. Dr. Mackey indicated that this is an initiative the Department will continue to promote, encouraging individuals to pursue that pathway and providing a substantial stipend upon completion. Dr. Mackey invited all the honorees to remain for portraits after the meeting.

There being no other business before the Board, on motion by Dr. Wayne Reynolds and seconded by Dr. Yvette Richardson, Board Members voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 10:27 a.m. The next Alabama State Board of Education Meeting for Elementary and Secondary Education will be held on Thursday, November 13, 2025, at 10 a.m. in the Auditorium of the Gordon Persons Building followed by the Work Session.

Vice President

Secretary and Executive Officer