

**MINUTES OF THE ALABAMA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
THE STATE OF ALABAMA
APRIL 9, 2026
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA**

The Alabama State Board of Education met for its regular meeting of Elementary/Secondary Education matters on Thursday, April 9, 2026, at 10:00 a.m., in the auditorium of the Gordon Persons Building, Montgomery, Alabama. The meeting was called to order by the Vice President of the Board in accordance with *Alabama Code* (1975), §16-3-7, as amended.

PRESIDING: MRS. MARIE MANNING, VICE PRESIDENT

The invocation was done by Minister Kenny Hoomes, Associate Pastor, First Baptist Church, Montgomery, Alabama, and Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag that was done in unison.

The following members were present:

Present

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

Absent

Dr. Tonya Chestnut
Governor Kay Ivey

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

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE MARCH 12, 2026, MEETING

On motion by Dr. Wayne Reynolds and seconded by Dr. Yvette Richardson, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes for the meeting of March 12, 2026.

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

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF SHELLEY GRIMES
BROOKWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, ENTERPRISE CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM
2025-2026 ALABAMA ELEMENTARY PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER OF THE YEAR**

WHEREAS, Shelley Grimes, a physical education teacher at Brookwood Elementary School in the Enterprise City School System, received the 2025-2026 Elementary Physical Education Teacher of the Year Award from the Alabama State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance presents the Physical Education Teacher of the Year Award to honor outstanding teachers of physical education at the elementary, middle, and high school levels; and

WHEREAS, Shelley Grimes received her Bachelor of Science in Physical Education from Troy University, began her teaching career at Daleville High School in Daleville, Alabama, where she taught for five years; and

WHEREAS, Shelley Grimes began teaching elementary physical education at Harrand Creek Elementary in Enterprise, Alabama, where she taught for 17 years. She is now in her 26th year as a physical education educator in Alabama and currently teaches at Brookwood Elementary School in the Enterprise City School System; and

WHEREAS, Shelley Grimes was selected for this honor based on her outstanding teaching abilities to conduct a developmentally appropriate physical education program utilizing state standards for physical education, various teaching methodologies, and innovative learning experiences to meet the needs of all students; and

WHEREAS, Shelly Grimes serves as a positive role model epitomizing personal health and fitness, promoting the enjoyment of physical activity, and providing service to the profession through advocacy, consultation, in-service training presentations, and active membership in related professional organizations:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby commend and congratulate Shelley Grimes upon the honor of being selected as the 2025-2026 Alabama Elementary Physical Education Teacher of the Year.

Done this 9th day of April 2026

On motion by Dr. Yvette Richardson and seconded by Mrs. Kelly Mooney, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following.

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF RODNEY DORSEY
JACKSON-OLIN HIGH SCHOOL, BIRMINGHAM CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM
2025-2026 ALABAMA HIGH SCHOOL PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER OF THE YEAR**

WHEREAS, Rodney Dorsey, a physical education teacher at Jackson-Olin High School in the Birmingham City School System, received the 2025-2026 High School Physical Education Teacher of the Year Award from the Alabama State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance presents the Physical Education Teacher of the Year Award to honor outstanding teachers of physical education at the elementary, middle, and high school levels; and

WHEREAS, Rodney Dorsey received his Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Education from Alabama State University, began his teaching career at Wenonah Elementary School in Birmingham, Alabama, where he taught for three years; and

WHEREAS, Rodney Dorsey later joined Jackson-Olin High School in the Birmingham City School System, where he currently teaches Physical Education and Driver's Education; and

WHEREAS, Over the course of 21 years in education, Rodney Dorsey has demonstrated a strong commitment to student learning, health, wellness, and the development of lifelong fitness habits while positively influencing the culture and climate of his school community; and

WHEREAS, Rodney Dorsey was selected for this honor based on his outstanding teaching abilities to conduct a developmentally appropriate physical education program utilizing state standards for physical education, various teaching methodologies, and innovative learning experiences to meet the needs of all students; and

WHEREAS, Rodney Dorsey serves as a positive role model epitomizing personal health and fitness, promoting the enjoyment of physical activity, and providing service to the profession through advocacy, consultation, in-service training presentations, and active membership in related professional organizations:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby commend and congratulate Rodney Dorsey upon the honor of being selected as the 2025-2026 Alabama High School Physical Education Teacher of the Year.

Done this 9th day of April 2026

On motion by Dr. Yvette Richardson and seconded by Mrs. Kelly Mooney, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following.

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF JOVANKA WARD
RAMSAY HIGH SCHOOL, BIRMINGHAM CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM
2025-2026 ALABAMA HEALTH EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR**

WHEREAS, JoVanka Ward, a health education teacher at Ramsay High School in the Birmingham City School System, received the 2025-2026 Health Educator of the Year Award from the Alabama State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance; and

WHEREAS, JoVanka Ward received her Bachelor of Science degree from Hampton University, instructed seven years in the Homewood City School System, moved to Alabaster City School System for three years, and is now in the Birmingham City School System, where she has been teaching health and physical education for seven years; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance presents the Health Educator of the Year Award to honor outstanding teaching of health education at the K-12 or higher education level; and

WHEREAS, JoVanka Ward was selected for this honor based on her outstanding teaching abilities to conduct a developmentally appropriate health education program utilizing state standards for health education, various teaching methodologies, and innovative learning experiences to meet the needs of all students; and

WHEREAS, JoVanka Ward's passion for the importance of health and physical education is the foundation for her success as a teacher and a community advocate:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby commend and congratulate JoVanka Ward upon the honor of being selected as the 2025-2026 Alabama Health Educator of the Year.

Done this 9th day of April 2026

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

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF ANDREW HAMITER
CHAPMAN MIDDLE SCHOOL, HUNTSVILLE CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM
2025-2026 ALABAMA MIDDLE SCHOOL PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER OF THE YEAR**

WHEREAS, Andrew Hamiter, a physical education teacher at Chapman Middle School in the Huntsville City School System, received the 2025-2026 Middle School Physical Education Teacher of the Year Award from the Alabama State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance presents the Physical Education Teacher of the Year Award to honor outstanding teachers of physical education at the elementary, middle, and high school levels; and

WHEREAS, Andrew Hamiter received his Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology from the University of Alabama at Birmingham; and

WHEREAS, Andrew Hamiter began his teaching career at Greengate School for Dyslexia in Huntsville, Alabama, where he taught for one year; and

WHEREAS, Andrew Hamiter taught physical education at Chapman Elementary School in the Huntsville City School System for two years and has served as a physical education teacher at Chapman Middle School for the past seven years; and

WHEREAS, this is Andrew Hamiter tenth year teaching physical education in Alabama; and

WHEREAS, Andrew Hamiter was selected for this honor based on his outstanding teaching abilities to conduct a developmentally appropriate physical education program utilizing state standards for physical education, various teaching methodologies, and innovative learning experiences to meet the needs of all students; and

WHEREAS, Andrew Hamiter serves as a positive role model, epitomizing personal health and fitness, promoting the enjoyment of physical activity, and providing service to the profession through advocacy, consultation, in-service training presentations, and active membership in related professional organizations:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby commend and congratulate Andrew Hamiter upon the honor of being selected as the 2025-2026 Alabama Middle School Physical Education Teacher of the Year.

Done this 9th day of April 2026

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

**RESOLUTION HONORING ALABAMA EDUCATOR
DR. CHRISTIAN STANLEY, GOSHEN HIGH SCHOOL,
PIKE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM
2025-2026 NATIONAL MILKEN EDUCATOR AWARD RECIPIENT**

WHEREAS, highly respected Alabama teacher, Dr. Christian Stanley is a great example of both innovative classroom teaching and educational leadership; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Christian Stanley has officially been named a 2025-2026 recipient of the National Milken Educator Award; and

WHEREAS, Milken Educator, Dr. Christian Stanley is one of America's top educators and excels as a classroom teacher, student mentor, and colleague at Goshen High School, while also being a highly respected leader within the Alabama Educational Community; and

WHEREAS, as a skilled, national best practice-level teacher, Milken Educator, Dr. Christian Stanley inspires students and families to achieve greatly; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Christian Stanley is officially the first Pike County School System teacher to become a Milken Educator Award recipient and has joined this award's renowned national network of more than 3,000 top educators who span the 40-year history of this celebrated program; and

WHEREAS, Milken Educator, Dr. Christian Stanley earned a Bachelor of Science in agricultural systems and education from Southern Illinois University in 2018 and a Master of Science in agriscience education from Auburn University in 2020; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Christian Stanley is a top school system leadership team representative, mentors new teachers, leads professional development, and presents at both state and national teacher conferences; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Christian Stanley encourages all students to reach for excellence and utilizes a variety of strategies to elevate K-12 learning and masterfully coordinates classroom engagement; and

WHEREAS, Milken Educator, Dr. Christian Stanley is also the FFA Agriscience Education Leadership Development Event (LDE) state chair, the FFA Creed Speaking LDE South District chair, the South District vice president of the Alabama Association of Agricultural Educators, and a member of the Pike County Cattlemen's Association Board of Directors; and

WHEREAS, Milken Educator, Dr. Christian Stanley models exceptional learning practices and excellent cross-curricular Project-Based Learning to promote student independence and leadership; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Christian Stanley believes we all have a personal responsibility to reinforce the importance of providing quality educational experiences for all students; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Christian Stanley is an outstanding example for all educators statewide:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby recognize and commend Dr. Christian Stanley, Goshen High School, Pike County School System, for this accomplishment in earning this national award, which provides public recognition to outstanding K-12 teachers, principals, and specialists from around the country who are furthering excellence in education.

Done this 9th day of April 2026

On motion by Dr. Wayne Reynolds and seconded by Dr. Allen Long, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following.

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF ALABAMA 2026
PURPLE STAR SCHOOLS**

WHEREAS, today, over one million Americans are bravely serving in the United States Armed Services. More than 300,000 Alabamians served their nation at home and abroad; and

WHEREAS, over 40,000 children in the State of Alabama are members of military families; and

WHEREAS, students who have parents in the military may experience unique challenges as a result of their family's military service, including attending multiple schools; and

WHEREAS, frequent moves, family separations through deployments, and reintegration can cause academic difficulties for youth; and

WHEREAS, the month of April has been designated as the Month of the Military Child; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama Purple Star Class of 2026 is committed to meeting the unique needs of all students, especially those of military youth:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby commend and congratulate the Alabama Purple Star Class of 2026, comprised of the 16 school districts and 77 schools listed below, for their support and commitment to military personnel, their families, and veterans; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby proclaim April 15, 2026, as Purple Up Day and encourages local boards of education, schools, business professionals, and community organizations to participate in this celebration through activities that demonstrate the importance of Alabama's military community and Purple Star Schools.

Autauga County School System

Daniel Pratt Elementary School, Prattville High School, Prattville Junior High School, and Marbury Middle School

Baldwin County School System

Daphne East Elementary School, Daphne High School, and Fairhope High School

Chambers County School System

Fairfax Elementary School

Cherokee County School System

Cedar Bluff High School, Centre Elementary School, Centre Middle School, Gaylesville High School, Sand Rock High School, and Spring Garden High School

Cullman County School System

Holly Pond High School, Vinemont Middle School, Welti Elementary School, West Point Elementary School, and West Point Intermediate School

Daleville City School System

Daleville High School

Elmore County School System

Eclectic Elementary School, Holtville Elementary School, Holtville Middle School, Redland Elementary School, and Wetumpka Elementary School

Jackson County School System

Bridgeport Middle School and Skyline High School

Lee County School System

Lochapoka High School, Sanford Middle School, Smith Stations Junior High School, South Smith Station Elementary School, and West Smiths Station Elementary School

Madison City School System

Bob Jones High School, Columbia Elementary School, Discovery Middle School, Heritage Elementary School, Horizon Elementary School, James Clemens High School, Journey Middle School, Liberty Middle School, Madison Elementary School, Midtown Elementary School, Mill Creek Elementary School, and Rainbow Elementary School

Madison County School System

Monrovia Middle School

Mobile County School System

Taylor White Elementary School

Montgomery County School System

Bear Exploration Center, Blount Elementary School, Booker T. Washington Magnet High School, Brewbaker Tech Magnet High School, Catoma Elementary School, Forest Avenue Academic Magnet School, Garrett Elementary School, Highland Avenue Elementary School, Johnson Elementary School, Loveless Academic Magnet Program High School, MacMillian International Academy, Martin L. King Elementary School, Park Cross High School, and Percy Julian High School

Ozark City School System

Carroll High School, Lisenby Primary School, Mixon Intermediate School

Phenix City School System

Central High School, Lakewood Primary School, Ridgecrest Elementary School, Sherwood Elementary School, South Girard School, Phenix City Elementary School, Phenix City Intermediate School, and Westview Elementary School

Pike Road City School System

Pike Road Elementary School, Pike Road High School, Pike Road Intermediate School, and Pike Road Junior High School

Other

L.E.A.D. Academy - Montgomery

Done this 9th day of April 2026

Vice President Marie Manning passed the gavel to President Pro Tem Kelly Mooney. On a motion by Mrs. Marie Manning and seconded by Dr. Wayne Reynolds, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following. After the vote, President Pro Tem Kelly Mooney returned the gavel to Vice President Marie Manning.

**RESOLUTION HONORING PELL CITY HIGH SCHOOL,
PELL CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM, AS A 2025 ACT AMERICAN COLLEGE APPLICATION
CAMPAIGN SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE**

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Department of Education is committed to ensuring that every student is prepared for success in college, career, and life; and

WHEREAS, the ACT American College Application Campaign promotes access to higher education by supporting students—particularly first-generation college students and those from under-resourced communities—through the college application process; and

WHEREAS, Pell City High School in the Pell City School System has been named one of only 26 schools in the nation to receive the distinguished 2025 School of Excellence Award; and

WHEREAS, this national recognition reflects Pell City High School's outstanding commitment to guiding students through one of the most important steps in their educational journey; and

WHEREAS, the leadership, counselors, educators, and staff of Pell City High School have demonstrated dedication, innovation, and care in helping students see and pursue opportunities beyond high school; and

WHEREAS, these efforts have contributed to increased student participation, more college applications, and expanded access to postsecondary pathways in Alabama and across the nation:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education proudly recognizes and commends Pell City High School for being named a 2025 ACT American College Application Campaign School of Excellence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education celebrates the impact of this achievement on students, families, and the Pell City community, and applauds Pell City High School for serving as a model of excellence for schools across Alabama.

Done this 9th day of April 2026

On a motion by Dr. Wayne Reynolds and seconded by Dr. Yvette Richardson, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following.

**RESOLUTION HONORING MRS. NIKKESHA HOOKS
“BARBARA FANNIN MEMORIAL EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER”
APRIL-JUNE 2026**

WHEREAS, Mrs. Nikkesha Hooks, Education Administrator in the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), Office of Educational Technology, is a reliable and highly dedicated professional who consistently demonstrates excellence and a deep passion for supporting educators and students across the state of Alabama; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Nikkesha Hooks administers the Alabama Technology in Motion (ATiM) program and Alabama Learning Exchange (ALEX), and plays a key role in coordinating the Alabama Educational Technology Conference (AETC), carrying out these responsibilities with professionalism, attention to detail, and a collaborative spirit; and

WHEREAS, during a critical period this quarter, Mrs. Nikkesha Hooks stepped forward to assume leadership of the eLearning program following an unexpected staff absence, ensuring continuity, quality, and support for educators across the state; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Nikkesha Hooks demonstrated exceptional commitment by working beyond standard hours to maintain and facilitate eLearning courses, directly supporting educators in their professional growth, certification, and instructional improvement; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Nikkesha Hooks leads by example, communicates with clarity and professionalism, and is a trusted team member who consistently supports colleagues and stakeholders with a positive and solutions-oriented approach; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Nikkesha Hooks exhibits servant leadership that is calm, steady, and rooted in service to the Educational Technology Section and the ALSDE:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Department of Education expresses its deepest gratitude to Mrs. Nikkesha Hooks for her outstanding service, strong work ethic, and significant contributions to public education in Alabama; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby commend Mrs. Nikkesha Hooks for her exceptional service, unwavering dedication, and exemplary professionalism, and congratulates her as the “Barbara Fannin Memorial Employee of the Quarter” for the second quarter of 2026.

Done this 9th day of April 2026

On a motion by Dr. Allen Long and seconded by Dr. Yvette Richardson, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following.

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF APRIL 2026 AS
SCHOOL LIBRARY MONTH IN ALABAMA SCHOOLS**

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Board of Education and the Alabama State Department of Education recognize the school library as a vital and enriching segment of children's well-rounded education; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama School Library Association has designated April 2026 as Alabama School Library Month; and

WHEREAS, school libraries promote literacy and the enjoyment of reading, viewing, and listening; and

WHEREAS, school libraries use knowledge of their students to differentiate resources and instruction to serve all students and meet individual needs; and

WHEREAS, school libraries provide resources and learning activities designed to enhance reading motivation and establish the information literacy skills necessary for lifelong learning; and

WHEREAS, school libraries provide access to a wide variety of print and digital educational materials and the technology needed to utilize these resources; and

WHEREAS, school libraries promote competencies in new and developing technologies; and

WHEREAS, school libraries support the classroom curriculum and are integral to a quality educational program; and

WHEREAS, Alabama recognizes the importance of qualified, certified school librarians by allocating a school librarian for every school with 250 or more students:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That school libraries are an essential component of a well-rounded K-12 public education in Alabama; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby express its appreciation to school librarians, classroom teachers, and administrators for their efforts to support library media programs in Alabama public schools; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby designate April 2026 as School Library Month in Alabama public schools.

Done this 9th day of April 2026

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

**ANNOUNCE INTENT TO REPEAL AND REPLACE ALABAMA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE
CHAPTER 290-3-2, PERTAINING TO TEACHER CERTIFICATION PROFESSIONAL
SERVICES**

EXECUTIVE (INCLUDES LEGAL AND PUBLIC INFORMATION)

Dr. Mackey stated that there was no report necessary for the month of April.

STATE SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Mackey expressed his appreciation to all educators in attendance. He noted that as the school year winds down, the Board Members are engaging in numerous recognitions. The Teacher of the Year committee met yesterday with the Sweet 16 finalists. Dr. Wayne Reynolds serves as the Board's representative on that committee. Dr. Mackey noted that the committee has narrowed the selection to four finalists. The four finalists are scheduled to be interviewed in May. The Teacher of the Year celebration is a meaningful way to close out the school year and highlight the outstanding work educators are doing across our state.

Dr. Mackey noted that the Department expects to receive several items from the legislative session. He added that this year will not involve as many rule changes as those seen over the past decade. One significant item is the new pathway allowing military veterans to become teachers. Governor Kay Ivey has signed the bill, and it has now been incorporated into the chapter. Dr. Mackey stated that he is thankful to the legislators, noting that the Department has received the largest budget in its history. He noted that while transportation operations are fully funded, the fleet renewal program remains underfunded. The legislators passed a two percent pay raise for employees and most of the cost of the Public Education Employees' Health Insurance Plan (PEEHIP). The PEEHIP Board will need to determine how to cover certain costs to prevent teachers' health insurance premiums from doubling.

Dr. Mackey emphasized that the requirement for reading proficiency beyond Grade 3 has been maintained. He said the Department will continue to support and strengthen that program. The Department was awarded ten million dollars, which is double the amount provided when the program first began a few years ago. The School Safety appropriation was the largest the Department has received in many years. A major investment in Career Technical Centers through a new round of grants. According to Dr. Mackey, a large number of center administrators asked for funding to upgrade equipment rather than for new construction.

Dr. Mackey noted that the number of National Board Certified Teachers in the state is rising, supported by a new budget line that will place regional mental-health specialists in every inservice district to support those pursuing certification. The state expanded both Dual Enrollment and Advanced Placement course offerings. Dr. Mackey emphasized that a great deal of progress is being made for our young people. Dr. Mackey shared that he is especially looking forward to May because the Department expects to announce several significant updates, supported by Alabama's strong performance data.

Dr. Mackey highlighted that Code.org has named Alabama the first state in the country to fully embed artificial intelligence into its computer science programs, with Georgia following in second place. He shared that next month will include a review of a new textbook committee for computer science and digital literacy resources for next year. He concluded by asking all honorees to remain after the meeting for portraits.

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 10:42 a.m. The next Alabama State Board of Education Meeting for Elementary and Secondary Education will be held on Thursday, May 14, 2026, at 10 a.m. in the Auditorium of the Gordon Persons Building followed by the Work Session.

Vice President

Secretary and Executive Officer