

**MINUTES OF THE ALABAMA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
THE STATE OF ALABAMA
MAY 14, 2026
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA**

The Alabama State Board of Education met for its regular meeting of Elementary/Secondary Education matters on Thursday, May 14, 2026, at 9:57 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 Mr. Christopher Mackey, Pastor, Macedonia and Druid Hills United Methodist Churches, Tuscaloosa, 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
Dr. Allen Long in person
Mrs. Marie Manning in person
Mrs. Kelly Mooney in person
Dr. Wayne Reynolds in person
Mrs. Jackie Zeigler in person

Absent

Governor Kay Ivey
Dr. Yvette Richardson
Mrs. Tracie West

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

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE APRIL 9, 2026, MEETING

On motion by Dr. Tonya Chestnut and seconded by Mrs. Jackie Zeigler, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes for the meeting of April 9, 2026.

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

**RESOLUTION COMMENDING MRS. ELIZABETH EUBANKS VON HOFE,
2026-2027 ALABAMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR AND
ELEMENTARY TEACHER OF THE YEAR
SPANISH FORT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, BALDWIN COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM**

WHEREAS, Mrs. Elizabeth Eubanks Von Hofe, an exemplary Alabama educator, has devoted her life and career to serving students through excellence in teaching, mentorship, and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Elizabeth Eubanks Von Hofe is the proud daughter of two distinguished Limestone County educators whose example inspired her enduring commitment to service and lifelong learning; and

WHEREAS, prior to entering the field of education, Mrs. Eubanks Von Hofe spent more than a decade as a successful licensed administrator in the nursing home industry, where she developed a passion for supporting others and discovered her calling to impact students through education; and

WHEREAS, determined to ensure that all students receive a high-quality educational experience, she earned a master's degree in Collaborative Education and achieved National Board Certification during her third year of teaching; and

WHEREAS, she continues to embrace opportunities to serve students as a well-rounded educator, Individualized Education Program Chairperson, and teacher mentor dedicated to supporting students, families, and fellow educators; and

WHEREAS, one of her most meaningful contributions has been her leadership as sponsor of the school's Project Outreach Gulf Coast Chapter, a dynamic school-community partnership that promotes inclusion, empathy, and belonging for students with significant disabilities; and

WHEREAS, as a special education teacher at Spanish Fort Elementary School, Mrs. Elizabeth Eubanks Von Hofe recognizes the importance of creating authentic opportunities for all students to feel valued, included, and supported; and

WHEREAS, parents and colleagues alike regard her as a compassionate advocate for families and a champion of inclusive practices whose leadership through service extends far beyond the classroom; and

WHEREAS, as the 2026–2027 Alabama Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Elizabeth Eubanks Von Hofe exemplifies the transformative power of education and remains steadfast in her commitment to helping every student thrive academically, socially, and personally:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education congratulates Mrs. Elizabeth Eubanks Von Hofe for being selected as the 2026-2027 Alabama Teacher of the Year and expresses its sincere appreciation for her dedication to excellence in Grades K–12 education.

Done this 14th day of May 2026

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

**RESOLUTION COMMENDING MR. ESHWAA GODFREY,
2026-2027 ALTERNATE STATE TEACHER OF THE YEAR AND
SECONDARY TEACHER OF THE YEAR
SELMA HIGH SCHOOL, SELMA CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM**

WHEREAS, Mr. Eshwaa Godfrey, an esteemed educator at Selma High School, has been selected as the 2026-2027 Alternate State Teacher of the Year and Secondary Teacher of the Year; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Eshwaa Godfrey is a highly respected member of the Selma City School System faculty, teaching Anatomy and Physiology with exceptional dedication, authenticity, and an unwavering commitment to student success; and

WHEREAS, his upbringing in a single-parent household and his mother's perseverance—despite not having the opportunity to complete high school—instilled in him a deep appreciation for education and motivated him to earn a college degree, setting a powerful example of resilience and achievement for both his family and his students; and

WHEREAS, during his time as a student at Georgiana High School, Mr. Eshwaa Godfrey was guided and inspired by a group of outstanding teachers whose influence shaped his desire to enter the teaching profession; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Eshwaa Godfrey now devotes his career to mentoring, supporting, and encouraging young people, fostering an engaging and inclusive classroom environment where all students feel valued, empowered, and capable of success; and

WHEREAS, he is intentional in building strong relationships with students and cultivating a learning atmosphere that promotes academic growth, personal confidence, and meaningful connections; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Eshwaa Godfrey firmly believes in the transformative power of education and works diligently to help students understand their own worth and recognize the opportunities that education provides; and

WHEREAS, his influence extends beyond the classroom, with students consistently acknowledging his ability to inspire leadership, confidence, and academic excellence; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Eshwaa Godfrey's dedication, professionalism, and profound impact on student achievement exemplify the highest ideals of the teaching profession and bring great honor to Selma High School, the Selma City School System, and the state of Alabama:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education hereby congratulates Mr. Eshwaa Godfrey on being named the 2026-2027 Alternate State Teacher of the Year and Secondary Teacher of the Year and expresses sincere appreciation for his outstanding service and commitment to the students of Alabama.

Done this 14th day of May 2026

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

**RESOLUTION COMMENDING
THE 2026-2027 DISTRICT TEACHERS OF THE YEAR**

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Board of Education seeks to recognize and encourage excellence in education, both in teaching and learning, and celebrates the commitment of educators who demonstrate each day they enter the classrooms, engage students, and communicate with families who together make learning possible; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama Teacher of the Year Program is a means of identifying and rewarding some of the state's outstanding teachers who continue to hold true to their core values and belief that all students can learn and will learn; and

WHEREAS, highly-skilled, dedicated, enthusiastic, and innovative teachers are essential in promoting excellence in Alabama's schools and empowering youth to become successful adults; and

WHEREAS, the honorees in the 2026-2027 Alabama Teacher of the Year Program exhibit these attributes and more:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education celebrates them for their commitment, sacrifice, dedication, and service to students in Alabama who have earned the distinction of District Teachers of the Year.

Elizabeth Eubanks Von Hofe, Baldwin County School System – Spanish Fort Elementary School, State School Board District I Elementary Teacher of the Year

Courtney Amanda Davidson, Coffee County School System – Zion Chapel High School, State School Board District I Secondary Teacher of the Year

Jessica Freeman, Dothan City School System – Carver School of Mathematics, Science, and Technology, State School Board District II Elementary Teacher of the Year

Kelly Sasser, Phenix City School System – Central High School, State School Board District II Secondary Elementary Teacher of the Year

Katie Smith, Vestavia Hills City School System – Vestavia Hills Elementary East, State School Board District III Elementary Teacher of the Year

Hannah Peterson, Vestavia Hills City School System – Vestavia Hills High School, State School Board District III Secondary Teacher of the Year

Kathryn Ann Busby, Tuscaloosa City School System – Tuscaloosa Magnet Schools-Elementary, State School Board District IV Elementary Teacher of the Year

John David Booth, Tuscaloosa County School System – Echols Middle School, State School Board District IV Secondary Teacher of the Year

Jennifer Ann Asberry, Mobile County School System – Council Traditional School, State School Board District V Elementary Teacher of the Year

Eshwaa Godfrey, Selma City School System – Selma High School, State School Board District V Secondary Teacher of the Year

Lacy Cameron, Cullman City School System – East Elementary School, State School Board District VI Elementary Teacher of the Year

Morgan Brooks, Albertville City School System – Albertville High School, State School Board District VI Secondary Teacher of the Year

Amanda Green, Florence City School System – Harlan Elementary School, State School Board District VII Elementary Teacher of the Year

Joseph T. Elliott, Sheffield City School System – Sheffield Junior High School, State School Board District VII Secondary Teacher of the Year

Evelyn H. Vizzinia, Fort Payne City School System – Wills Valley Elementary School, State School Board District VIII Elementary Teacher of the Year

Michael C. Fabbri May, Athens City School System – Athens High School, State School Board District VIII Secondary Teacher of the Year

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we recognize outstanding educators on this day for making our schools centers of hope and opportunity.

Done this 14th day of May 2026

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

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF
DALE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM
FOR HIGHEST COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM
PERFORMANCE ON THE ALABAMA STATE REPORT CARD**

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Board of Education recognizes, appreciates, and encourages school systems to implement instructional programs that result in higher levels of academic achievement for Alabama students; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Report Card serves as a comprehensive measure of school and system performance, reflecting student achievement, academic growth, and overall school quality; and

WHEREAS, the Dale County School System has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to instructional excellence, strategic leadership, and a focus on improving outcomes for all students; and

WHEREAS, based on the most recent Alabama State Report Card data, the Dale County School System has achieved the highest overall score among county school systems in the state of Alabama with a point difference of +2.13; and

WHEREAS, this distinguished accomplishment reflects the collective dedication, professionalism, and hard work of the system's students, teachers, administrators, support staff, Board of Education members, and community stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, the Dale County School System serves as a model of excellence for county systems across Alabama, demonstrating that high expectations, strong leadership, and a student-centered approach lead to outstanding academic success; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Board of Education recommends the recognition of this exceptional achievement and the system's commitment to educational excellence:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education hereby commends and congratulates the Superintendent, Board Members, faculty, staff, and students of the Dale County School System for achieving the highest score on the Alabama State Report Card among county school systems in the state of Alabama; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this recognition stands as a testament to the system's dedication to academic excellence and its ongoing commitment to ensuring success for every student.

Done this 14th day of May 2026

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

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF
MOUNTAIN BROOK CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM
FOR HIGHEST CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM
PERFORMANCE ON THE ALABAMA STATE REPORT CARD**

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Board of Education recognizes, appreciates, and encourages school systems to implement instructional programs that result in higher levels of academic achievement for Alabama students; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Report Card serves as a comprehensive measure of school and system performance, reflecting student achievement, academic growth, and overall school quality; and

WHEREAS, the Mountain Brook City School System has demonstrated a sustained commitment to academic excellence, innovation, and continuous improvement in teaching and learning; and

WHEREAS, based on the most recent Alabama State Report Card data, the Mountain Brook City School System has achieved the highest overall score among city school systems in the state of Alabama with a point difference of +1.31; and

WHEREAS, this outstanding accomplishment reflects the collaborative efforts and dedication of students, educators, administrators, support personnel, Board of Education members, parents, and the community; and

WHEREAS, the Mountain Brook City School System exemplifies excellence in public education and serves as a benchmark for city systems across the state; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Board of Education recommends that Mountain Brook City Schools be recognized for this exemplary achievement and continued pursuit of academic success:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education hereby commends and congratulates the Superintendent, Board Members, faculty, staff, and students of the Mountain Brook City School System for achieving the highest score on the Alabama State Report Card among city school systems in the state of Alabama.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this recognition reflects the system's commitment to excellence and its dedication to preparing all students for success.

Done this 14th day of May 2026

Vice President Marie Manning passed the gavel to President Pro Tem Kelly Mooney. On a motion by Mrs. Marie Manning and seconded by Mrs. Jackie Zeigler, 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
GOOD HOPE PRIMARY SCHOOL
CULLMAN COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM
2026 ALABAMA GREEN RIBBON SCHOOLS AWARD NOMINEE**

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Board of Education recognizes the importance of saving energy, reducing costs, creating environmentally sustainable learning spaces, and fostering wellness for all students and educators; and

WHEREAS, Good Hope Primary School in the Cullman County School System is awarded the Alabama Green Ribbon Schools Award by the Alabama State Department of Education for its commitment to reducing energy impact, improving efficiency, and strengthening environmental education efforts; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Green Schools recognizes schools nationally that demonstrate energy-efficient practices and maintain healthy school environments; and

WHEREAS, Good Hope Primary School utilizes LED lighting upgrades and strategic thermostat management to support long-term efficiency, responsible resource stewardship, and a culture of energy-conscious behavior among students and staff, positioning the school as a model for sustainable operations; and

WHEREAS, Good Hope Primary School is committed to reducing waste and improving air quality through sustainable operational practices, including the use of automatic air hand dryers, a daily food-sharing program that diverts edible items from the landfill, and a propane-fueled bus fleet that significantly lower emissions, improves local air quality, and reduces long-term maintenance costs; and

WHEREAS, Good Hope Primary School promotes environmental responsibility by integrating sustainability into instruction and hands-on learning through weekly STEAM lessons and annual student projects; and

WHEREAS, Good Hope Primary School will open an outdoor classroom in 2026 to support Farm to Table learning through partnerships with the Alabama Wildlife Federation and the Cullman County Agriplex, along with participation in the Alabama PALS Clean Campus Program;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education commends Good Hope Primary School in the Cullman County School System for its commitment to environmental education and hereby expresses its sincere congratulations.

Done this 14th day of May 2026

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

**RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING ALABAMA'S "GROW OUR OWN" INITIATIVE
AND "FUTURE TEACHERS OF ALABAMA" ORGANIZATION**

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Department of Education and the Alabama Education Association have formed a partnership dedicated to encouraging Alabama's students to pursue a career in the teaching profession; and

WHEREAS, research shows there will be an even greater demand for highly qualified teachers in the next decade; and

WHEREAS, the Future Teachers of Alabama organization and the TEACH Alabama program are innovative approaches focused on attracting more talented students to careers in the field of education; and

WHEREAS, the Future Teachers of Alabama organization and the TEACH Alabama program are rigorous, progressive, and vital parts of Alabama's total education system; and

WHEREAS, these programs are committed to providing students with opportunities to gain valuable hands-on experiences through internships, classroom observations, and project-based learning; and

WHEREAS, the Future Teachers of Alabama organization and the TEACH Alabama program launched the "Grow Our Own" initiative to give local school systems expanded opportunities to promote teaching as a career, highlight the importance of America's educators, and encourage students to consider entering the education profession.; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama Education Association and the Alabama State Department of Education also wish to recognize and honor the service, dedication, and professionalism of Alabama's educators; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Board of Education hereby recognizes and commends the following Future Teachers of Alabama students as shared first-place recipients of the 2026 Alabama "Grow Our Own" Initiative Notebook and Display Competition: Elizabeth Hensley, Riley Cosby, Elizabeth Fisher of Allen Thornton Career Center, and Lillian McCord of Elmore County Technical Education Center; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Board of Education hereby recognizes and commends Laniah Trammell, Kensley Jones, and Maleah Trammell of White Plains High School as the first-place winners of the 2026 Alabama “Grow Our Own” Initiative Video and Lesson Plan Competition:

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education encourages local boards of education and all educational organizations statewide to support these special programs through activities that demonstrate the true importance of the teaching profession and the opportunities it provides for students to achieve personal and professional success.

Done this 14th day of May 2026

EXECUTIVE (INCLUDES LEGAL AND PUBLIC INFORMATION)

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

STATE SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Dr. Mackey expressed appreciation to all Board Members present. He noted that no code changes or regulatory items were scheduled for Board action this meeting and stated that such items will return to the agenda in June. Dr. Mackey emphasized that the focus of the meeting was the recognition and celebration of Alabama educators.

Dr. Mackey recognized the 2026-2027 Alabama Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Elizabeth Eubanks Von Hofe of Spanish Fort Elementary School in the Baldwin County School System; the 2026-2027 Alternate Teacher of the Year, Mr. Eshwaa Godfrey of Selma High School in the Selma City School System; the 2026-2027 District Teachers of the Year; representatives from Dale County School System and Good Hope Primary School in the Cullman County School System. Dr. Mackey acknowledged Mr. Jonathan Thompson and Dr. Michal Robinson for their work with the Green Ribbon Schools Award Program. He noted that, although challenges exist statewide, there are numerous positive accomplishments occurring in Alabama schools. Dr. Mackey referenced the Teacher of the Year event held the previous evening and commended the 16 finalists for their outstanding presentations. He recognized Mrs. Katie Collins, the 2025-2026 Alabama Teacher of the Year and National Teacher of the Year finalist. All honorees and National Board Certified Teachers were asked to stand for recognition.

Dr. Mackey recognized Lillian McCord, accompanied by her sister Hannah, father James, and advisor Emily Ryan, as a winner in the Notebook and Display Competition at the Elmore County Technical Education Center in the Elmore County School System. Laniah Trammell, Kensley Jones, accompanied by her mother Amanda, Maleah Trammell, and advisor Karla McCaffrey were recognized as winners in the Video and Lesson Plan Competition at White Plains High School in the Calhoun County School System. Superintendent Tony Willis was present for the recognition. Elizabeth Hensley, Riley Cosby, Elizabeth Fisher, and their advisor, Somer Horton, were recognized as winners in the Notebook and Display Competition at Allen Thornton Career Center in the Lauderdale County School System; however, they were unable to attend the meeting. Lillian and Laniah were invited to address the Board. Dr. Mackey encouraged them to continue their education and consider pursuing National Board Certification in the future.

Dr. Mackey announced that May 18-22, 2026, is Employee Appreciation Week for the Department. He noted that special activities were planned and expressed appreciation to all Department employees, both those in attendance and those working throughout the building and across the state. In closing, Dr. Mackey requested that all honorees remain following the meeting for photographs with their respective Board Members.

There being no other business before the Board, on motion by Dr. Wayne Reynolds and seconded by Dr. Tonya Chestnut, Board Members voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 10:35 a.m. The next Alabama State Board of Education Meeting for Elementary and Secondary Education will be held on Thursday, June 11, 2026, at 10 a.m. in the Auditorium of the Gordon Persons Building followed by the Work Session.

Vice President

Secretary and Executive Officer