



## this issue

- Policy Pipeline Subscriptions **P.2**
- Upcoming Webinars **P.2**
- All-New School Board U Course **P.2**
- Convention Clinic Proposals **P.2**
- City Board Salary Raises **P.2**

## National Teacher Appreciation Week

The National Parent Teacher Association encourages your participation in the 2019 Teacher Appreciation Week May 5-11. Visit [PTA's](#) website to get involved.

### It's a Date!

**April 16 (2 hours)**

[Advocacy Day: Districts 1-3 Montgomery, Ala.](#)

**April 18 (1 hour)**

[Webinar: Student Protests & Teacher Walkouts](#)

**April 30 (2 hours)**

[Advocacy Day: Districts 7-9 Montgomery, Ala.](#)

**May 16 (1 hour)**

[Webinar: Telling your Story Tools & Tips for School Systems](#)

**May 21 (2 hours)**

[Advocacy Day: ALL DISTRICTS Montgomery, Ala.](#)

**June 14 (3.5 hours)**

[School Safety Summit Orange Beach, Ala.](#)

**June 14-16 (7 hours)**

[AASB Summer Conference Orange Beach, Ala.](#)

**June 15 & 16 (6 CLE hours)**

[ACSBA Summer Conference Orange Beach, Ala.](#)

**June 17-19**

[AAA Summer Conference Orange Beach, Ala.](#)

## Board Approves Teaching Certificate for Middle-Level Grades, Discusses High School Assessment Options and Strategic Plan Process

The State Board of Education held its regular meeting Thursday with just enough members present to have a quorum. Dr. Yvette Richardson (District 4), Ella Bell (District 5), Jeff Newman (District 7) and Dr. Wayne Reynolds, District 8) were not in attendance.

Gov. Kay Ivey presided over the meeting, which began with the board approving changes to the Alabama Administrative Code pertaining to professional development and to middle-level teaching fields (grades 4-8). Specifically, new rules were adopted to strengthen the standards by which the state's in-service centers operate and a new teaching certificate for middle-level grades were approved. Previously, certificates were available for early childhood, grades k-6 and grades 7-12. Several universities are expected to begin offering middle-level grades certification programs this fall, including programs at the University of Alabama and Jacksonville State University approved during Thursday's meeting. The board also approved a plan for the Perkins V transition year related to career technical education funding.

While four nominations were approved to fill vacancies for the Alabama School of Fine Arts Board of Trustees, a vote on nominees to fill an open position on the Alabama Public Charter School Commission had to be postponed. Stephanie Bell (District 3) abstained from the vote, raising concerns about the board being asked to approve Charter School Commission members with little knowledge about the nominees.

"I think in recent months it has been clear that the law that sets up the charter commission needs some clarification," Bell said. "In reality, our board does not officially appoint. We have two names from which to select an appointment that's actually made by (Lt. Gov. Ainsworth). I've never met these individuals; I don't know them, and I feel it's inappropriate for me to make a selection based on minimal information."

Bell also raised concerns about the recent controversy surrounding the commission's approval of a Washington County charter school after its application was rejected by

the National Association of Charter School Authorizers. Her abstention and the absence of four board members meant it was not possible to reach the majority vote required to approve the nominees.

In the superintendent's report, State Superintendent Dr. Eric Mackey provided an update on the strategic plan framework he introduced at the board's retreat last month. He said former Decatur City Schools Superintendent Dr. Ed Nichols has been tapped to work with the board and stakeholders to develop the plan, beginning with a two-hour board training next month. Mackey said the plan will include involvement from a 40-person committee comprised of at least one board member, department staff, teachers, principals, superintendents, parents, students and other representatives from across the state, as well as a "massive data collection effort" to gather thousands of responses to a survey being developed to capture public feedback. A draft of the strategic plan is expected to be completed by this fall.

Mackey ended the meeting with a request that the board conduct his first evaluation this month rather than waiting until December as his contract states. He explained the plan to conduct the evaluation in December was intended to provide him a full year of working with the board's newest members, Tracie West (District 2) and Reynolds. He added that he has had time to develop a good working relationship with West and Reynolds and would like to get early feedback from the board. Mackey said the evaluation forms will be mailed to board members next week with a return envelope for completed forms to be sent to Gov. Ivey's legal staff for tallying. The results will be discussed at the May board meeting.

The board work session began with recommendations from Gov. Ivey that future work session agendas start with a list of updates from the superintendent, followed by a list of board member updates and items expected to be discussed at the next board meeting. She also requested that the board be provided with brief executive summaries to accompany lengthy reports from department staff.



In a discussion about the agenda item regarding the Alex Hoover Act, a law passed last year requiring the ALSDE to develop a task force addressing palliative care requirements for students with DNR orders, Mackey informed the board that rules changes are necessary to accommodate the administrative code dealing with end-of-life care plans. Mackey said the law allows very little discretion in changes.

The board watched a [recent segment from the CBS "School Matters" program](#) that highlighted Alabama's initiative training school staff to administer the opioid overdose reversal drug, naloxone. Alabama is the first state in the nation to provide this training to staff other than school nurses.

A lengthy discussion took place about high school assessment options, including the state's use of the English portion of the ACT as an accountability assessment under the ESSA plan. Mackey said there is concern that the use of the English portion of the test without the reading portion may not pass peer review from the U.S. Department of Education. The ALSDE has three options: 1) to keep the ACT assessment as is until hearing from the USDOE, 2) to reconvene the assessment task force to consider adding the reading option, or 3) to have DRC, the company currently building the state assessment for grades 3-8, develop a new high school assessment.

The work session also included a [presentation](#) from Drs. Molly Killingsworth and Melissa Shields about the ALSDE's Office of School Improvement, which supports struggling schools and those schools identified on the Comprehensive Support and Improvement list under ESSA. Deputy State Superintendent of Instruction Dr. Daniel Boyd conducted a [presentation about specialized treatment centers](#), which serve students referred from DHR, the court system and other entities. Boyd explained the ALSDE is working to ensure the needs of the roughly 2,000 students currently being served in STCs are met.

The work session ended with board members Stephanie Bell and Ella Bell requesting an update on the state's dyslexia advisory council due to concerns that efforts are moving in the wrong direction. Other suggestions included the board being provided with daily legislative updates and an improved communication structure informing the board about the status of various information requests.

The next State Board of Education meeting will take place May 9 at 10 a.m. in Montgomery, followed by a work session.

### Don't Miss Final Two Webinars of 2018-19

#### April 18: Student Protests & Teacher Walkouts

Would your system be prepared if caught in the wave of recent protests sweeping the nation? Join AASB as **Dave Ryan** of Ryan Law and **Lesley Bruinton**, coordinator of public relations with Tuscaloosa City Schools, take you through the legal and PR ramifications of student protests and teacher walkouts. [Register now.](#)

#### May 16: Tools & Tips for Telling Your Story

There are wonderful things happening every day in Alabama's schools, stories waiting to be told. Sharing those stories can help your school system strengthen community support and engagement. This webinar will teach valuable communication strategies to help your system share its story. [Register now.](#)

### Subscribe to Policy Pipeline; Don't Miss Aug. 22 Policy Conference Call

Policy experts who have kept a close watch on the new laws, state rules, court cases and other issues impacting board policies will provide an update for Policy Pipeline subscribers during the annual maintenance conference call on **August 22, 2019**. The subscribers-only call is a great opportunity to ask questions about policy maintenance and new developments that affect policies. [Subscribe now to the 2019-2020 Policy Pipeline.](#)

If your school board contracts with AASB for its [Policy Review & Analysis service](#), you will get a free, one-year subscription to the Policy Pipeline to ensure those policies remain up to date. Alabama school board members also receive a 10 percent discount on the Simbli by eBOARDsolutions Policy Module, and AASB will upload your policies to that module at no charge. Call 800/562-0601 for more information, or email [policy@AlabamaSchoolBoards.org](mailto:policy@AlabamaSchoolBoards.org).

### New, FREE School Board U Course Available

Boost your communication IQ with AASB's newest School Board U course, "Beginner's Guide to Communication Patterns," which is a FREE course full of helpful video, tips and advice that will help your board have more productive discussions. Register: [bit.ly/InsightEdgeIntro](http://bit.ly/InsightEdgeIntro).

### Orientation: Not Just for New Board Members

Whether you're a new school board member or a veteran seeking a refresher, AASB's Orientation courses provide critical information about the nuts and bolts of schools board service in Alabama. Both courses, which are required by the Governance Act of 2012, will be held at AASB's office in Montgomery.

**Friday, July 19**, AASB will present Roles & Responsibilities, an eight-hour Academy core course that covers board basics such as ethics, legal issues, finance and more.

**Saturday, July 20**, the Effective Boards and Relationships Orientation course will be held. This six-hour Academy core course goes further in depth on learning effective board leadership, engaging your community and advocating for your school system.

### AASB Summer Conference June 14-16

[There's still time to register](#) and join your school board peers from across the state at AASB's annual Summer Conference, June 14 -16, at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach, Ala. Also, don't miss this year's early bird session, the [School Safety Summit](#), for tips and information from school safety experts.

### AASB Convention Clinic Proposals Due June 29

Have a governance best practice or innovative program you'd like to share with school board peers? Present a clinic session during the annual AASB Convention at the Hyatt Regency Birmingham -The Wynfrey Hotel, Dec. 5-7. Topics may include effective board leadership and governance practices, navigating legal issues, technology that engages students, programs proven to improve student achievement and more. Clinic proposal forms will be available on the AASB website Monday, April 15 and must be submitted by June 29.

### Innovation Zone Applications

State Innovation Zone applications allow school systems greater flexibility in meeting the needs of diverse student populations. Through the program, school systems can seek ALSDE approval to waive a specific state statute or regulation in exchange for added benefits in student achievement and success. [Learn more](#) about how your school system can take advantage of opportunities to use the innovation waiver process.

### How City Boards Should Raise Their Salary

Ala. Code §16-1-26 authorizes members to receive compensation up to \$600 a month, unless a higher figure is set by local act. The compensation must be approved by a majority of the board at the annual meeting. Please note this compensation is in addition to actual traveling and other expenses members incur by attending meetings and transacting board business. Any increase in compensation approved at this year's annual meeting would become effective at the time the next board member begins a new term of office. For further information, [see Attorney General's Opinion](#)