



Meeting of the South Carolina Commission
on Higher Education
12:30 p.m., March 5, 2026
1122 Lady Street, Suite 400, Columbia, SC 29201
and Zoom Webinar

Members

Commissioner Wes Hayes, Chair
Commissioner Paul Batson
Commissioner Amy Bigham
Commissioner Jenni Bryson
Commissioner Brian Cuddy
Commissioner Daniel Dukes
Commissioner Edgar Dyer

Commissioner Gene Fant
Commissioner Mark Masters
Commissioner Charles Schulze
Commissioner Doug Snyder
Commissioner Dino Teppara
Commissioner Mick Zais

Members Excused

Commissioner Oran Smith, Vice Chair

Commission Staff Present

Jeff Perez
Argentini Anderson
Laura Belcher
Jessica Berry
Stephanie Charbonneau
Ende Clark
Scheri Eichelberger
Chris Glenn
Monica Goodwin
Gerrick Hampton
Kathryn Harris
Matthew Hartenstine
Ellan Jenkinson, PASCAL
Marianna Manic
Diane McCree

Alfie Mincy
Noah Perry
Angela Peters
Kenita Pitts
Melissa Price
Tim Rees
Elizabeth Robinson
Atlantis Seckal
Kara Smith
Tracy Solet
Chariti Spann
Crystal Standifer
James Thompson
Tanya Weigold
Bryce Wilson
Karen Woodfaulk

Guests

Beth Bell, Clemson University
Richard Boone, Central Carolina University
Kim Burkett, SC Technical College System
Teresa Burns, Coastal Carolina University
Lewis Carter, SC House of Representatives
James Colbert, Lander University
Walter Collins, University of South Carolina
Mark Del Mastro, College of Charleston
Timothy Druke, Winthrop University
Carlos Dubois, Voorhees University
Julie Eddy, Greenville Technical College
Brian Faulkner, Charleston Southern University
Jermaine Ford, Florence-Darlington Technical College

Kenntail Grooms, Voorhees University
Christopher Harris, University of South Carolina
Daniel Heimmermann, University of South Carolina Aiken
Trena Houpp, University of South Carolina
Ronnie Hopkins, Voorhees University
Amanda Karls, University of South Carolina Upstate
Jeremy King, Clemson University
Donald Llyod, Lander University
Brian Mallory, University of South Carolina Beaufort
Michelle Mayo, Claflin University

Jessica McLees, SC Department of Education
Erin Paysinger, Lander University
Katie Smith, University of South Carolina Aiken
David Staten, SC State University
Allison Steadman, Francis Marion University
Katie Stevens, SC Higher Education Tuition
Grants Commission

Suzanne Thomas, Medical University of South
Carolina
Tangar Young, South Carolina State University
Suny Young-Dewese, Allen University
James Winebrake, Coastal Carolina University

All Attended either In-Person, by Phone, or via Video Conference

Chair Hayes convened the meeting at 12:30 p.m. and welcomed all in attendance.

I. 1. Introductions and Roll Call to Establish Quorum

Ms. Belcher introduced the Commissioners. She confirmed a quorum of the Commission and announced that the meeting was being held in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

2. Approval of Minutes

Chair Hayes introduced the draft minutes of the February 5, 2026, CHE Business meeting and asked for any additions or corrections. Commissioner Masters motioned to approve minutes as presented, and Commissioner Zais seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Chair's Report

Chair Hayes reported that there were no items to present.

4. President and Executive Director's Report

Chair Hayes called on President Perez to give his report.

President Perez provided an update on agency personnel, highlighting current staffing levels and vacancies. In response to a question from Chair Hayes, he confirmed that there is one commissioner vacancy in the Sixth Congressional District.

President Perez also reported on legislative activity, including an overview of the House Ways and Means (HWM) budget. Key items included:

- \$2 million in recurring funds for PASCAL
- \$164,344 for increased DTO fees
- Spending authorization increases

- FTE funding source realignment to reflect previously approved changes

He noted the proposed deletion of two provisos, including South Carolina Institutes of Innovation and Information (SCIII) as the program has ended and a proviso related to funded FTE revenue reporting.

President Perez further reported that some CHE requests were not included in the HWM budget, including \$215,300 to sustain personnel funding and \$60,000 to administer education scholarship enhancement loans. He also noted that certain provisos remain unchanged, including those for the College Transition Program and the National Guard College Assistance Program.

Commissioner Batson asked how the lack of personnel funding would impact staffing. President Perez explained that alternative funding sources may be used to support staffing needs. Commissioner Snyder asked whether current DTO services are sufficient for agency needs; President Perez confirmed that they are.

Commissioner Bryson asked about the impact of not having an agency governmental affairs liaison. President Perez highlighted the positive impact of serving in that capacity as President and Executive Director. He noted that the General Counsel and Higher Education Policy Analyst, once hired, will also assist, along with current CHE staff.

President Perez provided an overview of current higher education-related legislation, including residency regulations; amendments to ACT qualifying scores for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship; the CHE “clean-up” bill; a campus safety bill; a school mapping bill; the “bathroom bill”; a Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) FOIA exemption bill; and legislation related to the classroom display of the Ten Commandments and national documents.

He also shared an update on federal legislation that would promote the development of new accreditors.

President Perez announced that the Council of Board Chairs meeting would be held the following Wednesday. In response to questions, he clarified that CHE is not responsible for conducting related training but will determine whether it is responsible for tracking training completion.

Commissioner Fant asked whether tuition grants are based on institutional charters or institutional accreditation. President Perez explained that eligibility depends on when an institution was licensed.

Commissioner Fant recommended confirming that CHE does not have regional accreditation requirements

in its statutes or regulations; President Perez agreed to verify. Commissioners then engaged in further discussion on accreditation.

5. Committee Reports

5.01 Report of the Executive Committee

Chair Hayes reported that there were no items for consideration.

5.02 Report of the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

Edgar Dyer

Chair Hayes called on Commissioner Dyer, who reported that there were no items for action. He noted that the Committee is continuing to work on the Program Productivity Report and is considering revisions to its committee charter.

President Perez added that the in-depth study, new policy, and Program Productivity Report will be completed by the June CHE meeting. Both President Perez and Commissioner Dyer thanked staff for their work.

5.03 Report of the Committee on Student Services

Jenni Bryson

Chair Hayes called on Commissioner Bryson, who reported one item for action and moved for its approval. Chair Hayes called for a vote, and the item was approved unanimously. Commissioner Bryson also summarized two additional items for information.

FOR ACTION

A. Committee on Student Services Charter Revisions

FOR INFORMATION

B. SC Program for Recruitment and Retention of Minority Teachers (SC-PRRMT) Teachers Update (For information, no action)

C. African American Teacher Loan Program Update (For information, no action)

5.04 Report of the Committee on Finance and Administration (CFA)

Paul Batson

Chair Hayes called on Commissioner Batson to present the report. Commissioner Batson summarized two items for information. Commissioner Batson called on Ms. Manic to present on data visualization.

FOR INFORMATION

A. Compliance Audit Updates (For information, no action)

B. Data Visualization (For information, no action)

5.05 Report of the Committee on Strategic Planning and Accountability (CSPA)

Doug Snyder

Chair Hayes called on Commissioner Snyder, who summarized three informational items. He reported that the Committee is continuing to develop measurable initiatives aligned with the agency's three core values, ensuring timely submission of required reports, and tracking responses to external audits conducted by the Inspector General (IG) and the House Government Efficiency and Legislative Oversight Committee (GELOC). He also provided an overview of the annual agency accountability report.

FOR INFORMATION

- A. Strategic Plan Update (For information, no action)
- B. Accountability (For information, no action)
- C. External Studies Update (For information, no action)

6. Other Business

There was no other business to consider.

7. Executive Session

There was no executive session.

8. End of Business Meeting

The business meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.