



Meeting of the South Carolina Commission
on Higher Education
12:30 p.m., August 6, 2026
1122 Lady St., Suite 400, Columbia, SC, 29201
and Zoom Webinar

Members

Commissioner Wes Hayes, Chair
Commissioner Oran Smith, Vice 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

Commission Staff Present

Jeff Perez
Argentina Anderson
Laura Belcher
Jessica Berry
Stephanie Charbonneau
Marian Chukes
Scheri Eicheberger
Ashley Harper-Stanley
Kathryn Harris
Matthew Hartenstine
DJ Holland
Mariana Manic
Diane McCree
Alfie Mincy
Noah Perry
Angela Peters

Kasey Peterson (PASCAL)
Kenita Pitts
Melissa Price
Christopher Robinson
Elizabeth Robinson
Holly Robinson
Shardai Solone
Kara Smith
Tracy Solet
Ashley Harper-Stanley
Mark Swart
Tanya Weigold
Leslie Williams
Bryce Wilson
Karen Woodfaulk
Lishu Yin

Guests

Yvonne Barnes, Trident Technical College
Beth Bell, Clemson University
Betty Boatwright, South Carolina State
University
Teresa Burns, Coastal Carolina University
Jean Carrano, University of South
Carolina Palmetto College
Lewis Carter, SC House of
Representatives
James Colbert, Lander University
Michelle Cook, Clemson University
Kristen Cuthrell, Clemson University
Zachary Christian, Higher Education
Tuition Grants Commission

Mark Del Mastro, College of Charleston
Joey Derrick, University of South Carolina
Elizabeth Donaldson, Northeastern
Technical College
Rob Essaf, Clemson University
Kelli Fookes, Coastal Carolina University
Emily Fox, SC Technical College System
Melissa Frank- Alston, Northeastern
Technical College
Douglas Gannt, South Carolina State
University
Lane Goodwin, SC Technical College
System

Patricia Greene, University of South Carolina Beaufort
Joseph Greenthal, Lander University
Joel Hamilton, Schiller & Hamilton Law Firm
Bennie Harris, University of South Carolina Upstate
Edward Hill, Voorhees University
Trena Houpp, University of South Carolina
Jeremy King, Clemson University
Gibbs Knotts, Coastal Carolina University
Donald Lloyd, Lander University
Brian Mallory, University of South Carolina Beaufort
Marci Middleton, Denmark Technical College
Erin Paysinger, Lander University
Stanley Pritchett, Allen University
Jay Ragley, Advocatus USA
Karin Roof, The Citadel
Lillian Sims, University of South Carolina Palmetto College

Steven Simmons, Aiken Technical College
Allison Steadman, Francis Marion University
Pam Steinke, University of South Carolina Upstate
Katie Stevens, SC Tuition Grants Commission
Suzanne Thomas, Medical University of South Carolina
Sebastian van Delden, Winthrop University
Louis Whiteside, South Carolina State University
Jennifer Wilbanks, Coastal Carolina Technical College
Craig Wilson, University of South Carolina Palmetto College
James Winebreak, 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 June 4, 2026, CHE Business meeting and asked for any additions or corrections. Commissioner Zais motioned to approve minutes as presented, and Commissioner Bryson seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Chair's Report

Chair Hayes thanked the Commissioners for their attendance. He announced that the Board would consider proposed CHE Bylaw changes and elect a Vice Chair during the September CHE Business Meeting. He also announced that Commissioners would have an opportunity to indicate their 2026-27 standing committee preferences ahead of the next meeting.

4. President and Executive Director's Report

Chair Hayes called on President Perez to give his report. President Perez introduced one new CHE staff member:

- Marian Chukes, Senior Auditor in the Office of Fiscal Affairs.

President Perez provided an overview of the State budget and highlighted the following items impacting CHE:

- \$215,300 to sustain personnel funding;
- \$160,344 for an increase in the IT shared services rate;
- \$60,000 to fund administration of education scholarship enhancements; and
- \$2 million in recurring funds for PASCAL.

President Perez also reviewed additional budget items affecting CHE and higher education, including \$29 million for tuition mitigation, \$1 million allocated to Clemson for its new veterinary school related to the phase-out of SREB veterinary slots at out-of-state schools, \$9 million for HEEEP, and funding for SC WINS. He also highlighted other significant provisions unrelated to higher education, including income tax changes, changes to the property tax homestead exemption, and increases in teacher and state employee pay.

President Perez provided an update on CHE's technology needs and outlined a phased approach extending into next year. He explained that the first phase will focus on immediate, lower-cost needs. The second phase, anticipated to occur between January and June, 2027, will include additional actions requiring funding. The final phase will identify items that may need to be included in the agency's future budget request and will involve higher costs. President Perez said he is currently evaluating the available funding and determining which actions can be implemented.

President Perez provided an overview of Act 152, the Privacy Act, and CHE's role in implementing the requirements. He explained that CHE has worked with the General Assembly to clarify the agency's responsibilities and has developed a policy to address the requirements. He reported that CHE's Executive Committee approved the policy, and it will be presented to the full Board for consideration during today's meeting. President Perez said that communications will be sent to institutions by September 1, 2026 regarding the required attestation.

Commissioner Dyer asked whether complaints received by CHE could be shared with the Attorney General's Office. He inquired how individuals would know how to report complaints to CHE. President Perez indicated that he would consult with the General Assembly for additional guidance.

Commissioner Dukes requested that the Board discuss a potential additional appropriation for engineering programs during the September Retreat.

5. Committee Reports

5.01 Report of the Executive Committee

Wes Hayes

Chair Hayes reported that there was one item for consideration. He motioned for approval of the policy, then called for the vote. The policy passed unanimously.

FOR ACTION

A. Consideration of Act 152, Student Physical Privacy Policy

5.02 Report of the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

Edgar Dyer

Chair Hayes called on Commissioner Dyer to report for the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing (CAAL). Commissioner Dyer reported that the Committee has one item for consideration and called on Dr. Peters to give an update on the program in-depth review process.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. In-depth Review of Newly Implemented Academic Programs-Review Year: 2026

Dr. Peters reported that the ad hoc committee had met twice and would continue developing a draft policy, which is expected to be considered by CAAL in October. She announced that the next meeting is anticipated to occur in August or September.

Dr. Peters provided an overview of the in-depth review process and explained that there are seven criteria used to determine whether a program meets the established standard. She explained that an institution may be determined to be successful or placed under review.

Commissioner Masters asked whether graduation rates should be considered as a metric in the review process. Dr. Peters explained that a specific graduation rate percentage was not used in the current consideration.

Commissioners engaged in an extended discussion regarding the review process, including concerns about the four-year correction plan period. Commissioner Teppara and Commissioner Zais expressed the opinion that institutions should have a shorter correction period, such as two years, to correct identified issues. Commissioner Dyer noted that the Board has the authority to change the review timeline.

President Perez explained that CHE is currently following the existing policy and that changes could be considered in the future. He further clarified that the matter under

consideration was more appropriately characterized as a new program review rather than an in-depth review.

Commissioner Dyer moved to approve the consent agenda. Chair Hayes called for the vote, and the motion was approved.

5.03 Report of the Committee on Student Services

Jenni Bryson

Chair Hayes called on Commissioner Bryson to report for the Committee on Student Services (CSS). Commissioner Bryson reported that there were four items for information only, which she summarized.

Commissioner Zais asked about the allocation methodology for need-based grants and noted that South Carolina State University may have a greater need than Clemson University. Mr. Wilson explained the methodology used to allocate the grants. Commissioner Zais also asked to what extent Pell Grants are considered in determining need-based grant allocations.

FOR INFORMATION

- A. Scholarship Appeals Cycle 2025-26 Overview (For information, no action)**
- B. Tucker Hipps Transparency Act 2024-25 Annual Review (For information, no action)**
- C. SC Need-Based Grant and College Transition Program Grant 2024-25 Annual Review (For information, no action)**
- D. Palmetto Fellows Scholarship 2024-25 Annual Review (For information, no action)**

5.04 Report of the Committee on Finance and Administration

Paul Batson

Chair Hayes called on Commissioner Batson to present the report for the Committee on Finance and Administration (CFA). Commissioner Batson summarized four items for information.

Commissioner Teppara expressed concern regarding the way certain funds were spent by one of the institutions and suggested that additional oversight may be appropriate to prevent questionable purchases before they occur.

Commissioner Zais expressed the opinion that the CERRA program should be administered by the South Carolina Department of Education.

Commissioner Batson reported that CHE remains within budget and anticipates having carryforward funds available for the next fiscal year.

FOR INFORMATION

- A. Proviso 117.21, Organizations Receiving State Appropriations Report (For information, no action)**
- B. Quarter 4 Budget Report (For information, no action)**
- C. FY26 Year End Cash Balance Review (For information, no action)**

D. FY28 Budget Request Outline (For information, no action)
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5.05 Report of the Committee on Strategic Planning and Accountability

Doug Snyder

Chair Hayes called on Commissioner Snyder to report for the Committee on Strategic Planning and Accountability (CSPA), who summarized three informational items.

Commissioner Snyder provided an update on the committee's work to develop metrics for each of the strategic plan initiatives. He stated that the committee would like to distribute the proposed metrics to institutions for feedback.

President Perez recommended that the proposed metrics also be distributed to the full Commission for review.

Commissioner Snyder motioned to distribute the proposed metrics to institutions for feedback. Chair Hayes called for the vote, and the motion was approved.

FOR INFORMATION

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Strategic Plan Update (For information, no action)B. Accountability (For information, no action)C. External Studies Update (For information, no action) |
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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 2:10 p.m.