

MINUTES
STATE BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
Regular Meeting
December 18, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the State Board of Higher Education (Board) was convened in-person at 607 South Drive, Harrisburg, PA 17120, and virtually via MS Teams on Thursday, December 18, 2025. Public notice of the meeting was made in accordance with the Sunshine Act. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Dr. Cynthia Shapira, Chair.

II. ROLL CALL

Ms. Lubna Mian, Chief of Staff, performed roll call. A quorum of members was present as follows:

Ms. Diane Acri (designee for Hon. Jesse Topper)
Dr. Brenda Allen
Dr. Ann Bieber
Ms. Hayley Butler
Hon. Jay Costa
Ms. Marylouise Esten
Dr. Christa Heyward
Dr. Kara Laskowski
Mr. Kenneth Long
Dr. Cheryl McConnell

Hon. Dr. Pedro A. Rivera
Hon. Dr. Carrie Rowe
Dr. Cynthia Shapira
Ms. Andrea Shirk
Hon. Paul Takac
Dr. Michael Wade Smith
Mr. Michael G. Warfel
Mr. Kevin Washo
Hon. Nancy Walker
Ms. Bobbie Jo Zapor

Absent: Hon. Wayne Langerholc

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

IV. WELCOME REMARKS BY THE CHAIR

Dr. Shapira provided a brief summary of the strategic planning process leading up to this meeting. She then reiterated that the Board would be voting today on a motion to post a draft strategic plan for a 30-day public comment period before putting the plan forward for adoption.

V. PRESENTATION AND VOTE TO APPROVE DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 30-DAY POSTING

Dr. Kate Shaw described the timeline for the plan's next phase:

1. Upon approval by the Board, the current draft will be posted to the [State Board of Higher Education website](#) for public comment. During this time:
 - a. A public hearing will be held in Harrisburg on January 14, 2026.
 - b. An online survey will be launched for additional feedback.
 - c. Meetings will be held with key constituents from multiple sectors.
 - d. Additional input will be solicited from Board members.
2. After the 30-day comment period, the Strategic Planning Committee will review all feedback.
3. A revised draft will be submitted to the Board for review.
4. The final draft will be presented for approval and adoption at the February 19 meeting.

Dr. Shaw then outlined the details of the plan's six primary goals and the individual elements within each goal.

When Dr. Shaw completed her presentation, Dr. Shapira requested a motion to approve the draft plan to be posted for public comment.

A motion was made by Mr. Warfel and seconded by Secretary Walker.

VOTE: All were in favor as indicated by unanimous voice vote.

VI. ADOPTION OF RULE PERMITTING CONSENT AGENDAS

A. Vote for Adoption of Rule Permitting Consent Agendas

A motion to adopt a rule permitting consent agendas covering routine matters such as the meeting agenda, minutes, etc., was made by Representative Takac and Dr. Laskowski.

VOTE: All were in favor as indicated by unanimous voice vote.

B. Approval of Consent Agenda

1. Vote to approve SBHE public meeting schedule for 2026 calendar year
 - a. Proposed dates: January 14, February 19, March 19, April 16, July 9, October 8
 - b. Proposed time and location: 1 – 3 pm, Forum Building, virtual and in-person
2. Vote to approve minutes from the October 23, 2025, meeting

A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Mr. Warfel and Mr. Long.

VOTE: All were in favor as indicated by unanimous voice vote.

VII. MOTION TO DELEGATE AUTHORITY TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO APPLY FOR FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

A motion was made by Secretary Walker and seconded by Ms. Butler to delegate authority to the Executive Director to apply for external funding opportunities from public and private sources and enter into related agreements, with the authority being subject to the funding and its use aligning with the strategic plan and any other Board approved initiatives, and requiring the Executive Director to provide timely notice to the Board of all funding applications, initiatives, and agreements resulting from this authority.

VOTE: All were in favor as indicated by unanimous voice vote.

VIII. UPDATE BY BOARD CHAIR ON CONVERSION OF TRANSFER AUTHORITY COMMITTEE TO POLICY COMMITTEE

Dr. Shapira reported on the transition of the Transfer Authority Committee to the newly formed Policy Committee. Chaired by Dr. Bieber, the new committee membership comprises Dr. Rivera, Ms. Fitterer, Dr. Allen, Mr. Washo, Dr. McConnell, Representative Takac, and Representative Topper.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Dr. Shapira adjourned the meeting at 2:18 pm.

NEXT MEETING: January 14, 2026