

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Consent Item
February 12, 2020

SUBJECT: Appointment to the Education Practices Commission (EPC)

PROPOSED BOARD ACTION

For Approval

AUTHORITY FOR STATE BOARD ACTION

Section 1012.79, Florida Statutes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Section 1012.79, Florida Statutes, requires that the Education Practices Commission be comprised of 25 members appointed by the State Board of Education from nominations by the Commissioner of Education and subject to Senate confirmation. Of the 25 members, 10 must be teachers, 5 administrators (at least one of whom shall represent a private school), 6 lay citizens (4 of whom shall be parents of public school students and who are unrelated to public school employees) and 2 of whom shall be former charter school governing board or district school board members or former superintendents, assistant superintendents, or deputy superintendents; and 4 sworn law enforcement officials.

Nomination for appointment:

Christopher Gunter, Lieutenant, Highlands County Sheriff's Office.

Supporting Documentation Included: Lieutenant Christopher Gunter Letter of Interest and Resume; List of Current Education Practices Commission Members and Section 1012.79, Florida Statutes

Facilitator/Presenter: Dr. Paul O. Burns, Deputy Chancellor for Educator Quality



Highlands County Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Paul Blackman

400 S. Eucalyptus Street

Sebring, Florida 33870



Dually Accredited

TO: Gretchen Brantley, (Executive Director) Education Practices Commission
FROM: Chris Gunter, Lieutenant (School Resource Unit)
DATE: July 15, 2019
REFERENCE: Letter of Interest

I am humbly requesting to be considered for one of the law enforcement positions on the Education Practices Commission (EPC). I have been a law enforcement officer over fifteen (15) years and have held several different positions within my law enforcement organization. I am also an adjunct instructor at the South Florida State College where I instruct a variety of law enforcement topics. Currently, I am the supervisor over our School Resource Unit that consists of twenty-three (23) personnel. I have overseen the School Resource Unit for over a year. Our primary goal is school safety and the safety of children within our county.

I understand EPC members are appointed to a four (4) year term by the State Board of Education, and confirmed by the Florida Senate. The commitment includes seven (7) to nine (9) days a year to actively serve on the Commission. My organization and I are aware of this commitment to the State of Florida's Board of Education.

After reviewing Sections 1012.79 and 1012.795, *Fla. Stat.* (2018), I have made myself familiar with the rules that govern the EPC. I look forward to the opportunity to review educator discipline cases and comparing facts to law, and potentially preparing to take final actions at a state disciplinary hearing. I realize the importance of the EPC and how they strive to ensure the professional integrity of Florida's teachers. I have attached a copy of my resume and encourage you to reach out to my references if you feel necessary. If you have any questions or follow up, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. Thank you for this opportunity to be considered for one of the EPC law enforcement positions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chris Gunter

Chris Gunter,

Lieutenant, Highlands County Sheriff's Office

Christopher G. Gunter
"Chris Gunter"

cgunter@highlandssheriff.org

OBJECTIVE

I am currently applying to serve on the Education Practices Commission (EPC), as a law enforcement member to have the ability to expand my knowledge on educational discipline, and offer opportunities for personal and professional growth.

EDUCATION

(Education / Training in excess of one month)

Saint Leo University, Dade City, FL	Masters of Public Administration / Master of C.J. Mang.	Current
Hodges University, Naples, FL	Bachelor of Science in Legal Studies	2013
South Florida State College, Avon Park, FL	Associate of Science in Criminal Justice	2011
Polk State College, Winter Haven FL	Basic Recruit Certificate of Compliance for L.E.O.	2003
Lake Region High School, Eagle Lake, FL	High School Diploma, * High Honors	2002

WORK HISTORY

Highlands County Sheriff's Office, Sebring, FL	2018 - Current
• Lieutenant, School Resource Unit, SWAT (Assistant Team Leader)	
Highlands County Sheriff's Office, Sebring, FL	2018
• Sergeant/Crime Suppression Unit, Narcotics Team/SWAT (Assistant Team Leader)	
Highlands County Sheriff's Office, Sebring, FL	2015 – 2018
• Sergeant/Training Coordinator/SWAT Member, T.C. (Training Unit)	
Highlands County Sheriff's Office, Sebring, FL	2014 – 2015
• Sergeant (Uniform Patrol Division)/ SWAT Member	
Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Port St. Lucie, FL	2013 - 2014
• Task Force Officer (TFO)/ Clandestine Lab Tactical Team	
Highlands County Sheriff's Office, Sebring, FL	2012 – 2014
• Detective (Special Investigations Unit)/ SWAT Member	
Highlands County Sheriff's Office, Sebring, FL	2010 – 2012
• Safe Neighborhood Unit – "Tac Team" (Deputy Sheriff)/ SWAT Member	
Highlands County Sheriff's Office, Sebring, FL	2005-2010
• Canine Unit/SWAT Member (K9 Deputy Sheriff)	
Highlands County Sheriff's Office, Sebring, FL	2004 – 2005
• Deputy Sheriff (Uniform Patrol Division)	
South Florida State College Institute of Public Safety, Avon Park, FL	2007 - Current
• Law Enforcement Instructor <i>General Instructor, High Liability Instructor (Firearms, Defensive Tactics, Driving)</i>	
Play it Again Sports, Winter Haven, FL	2003-2004
• Sales Associate	
State of Florida (Agriculture Division), Winter Haven, FL	2002-2003
• Citrus Inspector	

RECOGNITION

Highlands County Sheriff's Office Valor Award, three Exceptional Achievement Awards, several Certificates of Achievement, multiple Letters of Commendations, multiple Safe driver awards, Highlands County Sheriff's Office Certificate of Recognition, Polk County Sheriff's Office Letter of Appreciation.

Educational Recognition: Dean's List, Honor Roll, Phi Theta Kappa, and National Honor Society.

PROFESSIONAL / CIVIC ASSOCIATIONS

(Past and Present)

Masonic Lodge – Sebring Lodge # 249, Florida SWAT Association, National Tactical Officers Association, International Law Enforcement Educators and Trainer Association, Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Region 6 Fast Action Response Team, Florida Sheriff's Association, Florida Deputy Sheriff's Association, Florida Gang Investigators Association, National Law Enforcement Training Association, National Police Work Dog Association and Florida Police Work dog Association.

Supplemental Education/ Miscellaneous Certifications of Training:

Acquired over 2,200 hours of advanced training including but not limited to: FDLE Florida Leadership Academy (Class # 34), National Tactical Officer's Association SWAT Command and Leadership, Middle Management, Field Training Officer, National Incident Management System (FEMA) IS-00100 – IS00800, Human Diversity, Radar Speed Measurement Certified, Criminal Patrol Drug Enforcement, Ethics, Injury and Death Investigations, OC aerosol Spray Course, Defensive Driving, U.S. Coast Guard Boating Skills, Domestic Violence, Intervention, Search Warrant Law, Street Survival Course, Advanced Report Writing & Review, Advanced Interviews & Interrogations, Human trafficking (FBI), Advanced Narcotics Identification and Investigation, Hazardous Materials Course, Elderly Abuse & Exploitation, Sex Crimes Investigation, Introduction to Community Policing, Police Mountain Bike School, Techniques for Financial Investigations, Violent Street Gangs, Crisis Intervention, Laser Speed Measurement, Active Shooter, DEA Basic Clandestine Laboratory investigation and safety, Active Shooter Incidents, WMD – Awareness and response, and Building search techniques.

*** More to list: Additional training and documents furnished upon request ***

SKILLS

Effective Leadership and Management skills, Fiscal approach to budgeting, computer proficiency on multiple platforms: Word, Excel, Access, Publisher, Power Point, IE, Small Business Tools and more. Ability to use various office equipment, certain tools and heavy machinery.

Interests: Spending quality time with immediate and extended family, Farming, Cattle and Agriculture, Fishing, Boating, Hunting, Outdoor recreational sports, Collegiate sports, Cultural Languages such as Spanish and Creole, and Personal Fitness.

REFERENCES

Dr. Brenda Longshore, School Board Highlands County Superintendent,

Colonel Michael Brown, Highlands County Sheriff's Office Undersheriff,

Mr. John McClure Esq., McClure & Lobo (Law Firm),

Education Practices Commission Member List as of September 26, 2019

Name:	Aadil Ameerally
Term:	First Term
Term Dates:	July 2017 - July 2021
Category:	Lay Citizen - Parent
District:	Broward
Name:	Cristina Basso
Term:	Second Term
Term Dates:	October 2015 - September 2019
Category:	Teacher
District:	Miami-Dade
Name:	Daniel Ceaser
Term:	First Term
Term Dates:	October 2018 - September 2022
Category:	Administrator (Private School)
District:	Sarasota
Name:	Marielena DeSanctis
Term:	First Term
Term Dates:	October 2018 - September 2022
Category:	Former Assistant Superintendent
District:	Palm Beach
Name:	E. Jane Gallucci
Term:	First Term
Term Dates:	October 2015 - September 2019
Category:	Former School Board Member
District:	Pinellas
Name:	Douglas V. Hardie
Term:	First Term
Term Dates:	August 2016 - August 2020
Category:	Law Enforcement
District:	Saint Lucie
Name:	Jeffrey L. Johnson, Sr.
Term:	First Term
Term Dates:	October 2016 - September 2020
Category:	Teacher
District:	Saint Lucie
Name:	Ric Mellin
Term:	First Term
Term Dates:	October 2015 - September 2019
Category:	Administrator
District:	Pasco
Name:	Nigel Pillay
Term:	First Term
Term Dates:	October 2018 - September 2022
Category:	Administrator
District:	Saint Johns
Name:	Kevin Rowe
Term:	First Term
Term Dates:	November 2017 - November 2021
Category:	Law Enforcement
District:	Marion
Name:	Elizabeth Trop-Roberts
Term:	Second Term
Term Dates:	August 2016 - July 2020
Category:	Lay Citizen - Parent
District:	Broward

Name:	Jared Barr
Term:	First Term
Term Dates:	January 2017 - January 2021
Category:	Lay Citizen - Parent
District:	Hillsborough
Name:	Ana Armbrister Bland
Term:	Second Term
Term Dates:	October 2018 - September 2022
Category:	Teacher
District:	Palm Beach
Name:	Ann Copenhaver
Term:	Second Term
Term Dates:	October 2017 - September 2021
Category:	Teacher
District:	Escambia
Name:	Vacant
Term:	
Term Dates:	
Category:	Teacher
District:	
Name:	Christie Gold
Term:	Second Term
Term Dates:	October 2015 - September 2019
Category:	Teacher
District:	Hillsborough
Name:	Martha Jaureguizar
Term:	First Term
Term Dates:	October 2017 - September 2021
Category:	Administrator
District:	Miami-Dade
Name:	James Garry Lowe
Term:	First Term
Term Dates:	August 2016 - August 2020
Category:	Law Enforcement
District:	Manatee
Name:	Nicholas Pietkiewicz
Term:	Second Term
Term Dates:	September 2016 - September 2020
Category:	Teacher
District:	Lee
Name:	Jillian Rose
Term:	Second Term
Term Dates:	October 2016 - September 2020
Category:	Teacher
District:	Duval
Name:	Vacant
Term:	
Term Dates:	
Category:	Teacher
District:	
Name:	Kathy Wilks
Term:	First Term
Term Dates:	October 2017 - September 2021
Category:	Administrator
District:	Sarasota

Education Practices Commission Member List as of September 26, 2019

Name:	Celita Wilson
Term:	First Term
Term Dates:	February 2016 - February 2020
Category:	Lay Citizen - Parent
District:	Duval
Name:	Vacant
Term:	
Term Dates:	
Category:	Law Enforcement
District:	

Name:	Brandon Wright
Term:	First Term
Term Dates:	October 2016 - September 2020
Category:	Teacher
District:	Hernando

EPC member criteria and term information are identified in s. 1012.79, F.S. (2018).

1012.79 Education Practices Commission; organization.—

(1) The Education Practices Commission is composed of the following 25 members: 10 teachers; 5 administrators, at least 1 of whom represents a private or virtual school; 4 lay citizens who are parents of public school students and who are unrelated to public school employees; 2 former charter school governing board or district school board members or former superintendents, assistant superintendents, or deputy superintendents; and 4 sworn law enforcement officials, appointed by the State Board of Education from nominations by the Commissioner of Education and subject to Senate confirmation. Before making nominations, the commissioner shall consult with teaching associations, parent organizations, law enforcement agencies, and other involved associations in the state. In making nominations, the commissioner shall attempt to achieve equal geographical representation, as closely as possible.

(a) A teacher member, in order to be qualified for appointment:

1. Must be certified to teach in the state.
2. Must have practiced the profession in this state for at least 5 years immediately preceding the appointment.

(b) A school administrator member, in order to be qualified for appointment:

1. Must have an endorsement on the educator certificate in the area of school administration or supervision.
2. Must have practiced the profession as an administrator for at least 5 years immediately preceding the appointment.

(c) The law enforcement official members must have served in the profession for at least 5 years immediately preceding appointment and have background expertise in child safety.

(d) The Commissioner of Education, upon request or recommendation from the commission, may also appoint up to 5 emeritus members from the commission's prior membership to serve 1-year terms. Notwithstanding any prior service on the commission, an emeritus member may serve up to five 1-year terms. An emeritus member serves as a voting member at a discipline hearing and as a consulting but nonvoting member during a business meeting.

(e) All members must be residents of the state.

(2) Members of the commission shall serve for 4-year staggered terms. No commission member may serve more than 8 years.

(3) The State Board of Education may remove any member from the commission for misconduct or malfeasance in office, incapacity, or neglect of duty.

(4) From among its members, the commission shall elect a chair who shall preside over meetings of the commission and perform other duties directed by the commission or required by its duly adopted rules or operating procedures. School districts shall be reimbursed for substitute teachers required to replace commission members, when they are carrying out their official duties, at a rate established by the school district for substitute teachers. The department may reimburse local school districts for substitutes.

(5) The commission, by a vote of three-fourths of the membership, shall employ an executive director, who shall be exempt from career service. The executive director may be dismissed by a majority vote of the membership.

(6)(a) The commission shall be assigned to the Department of Education for administrative purposes. The commission, in the performance of its powers and duties, shall not be subject to control, supervision, or direction by the Department of Education.

(b) The property, personnel, and appropriations related to the specified authority, powers, duties, and responsibilities of the commission shall be provided to the commission by the Department of Education.

(7) The duties and responsibilities of the commission are to:

(a) Interpret and apply the standards of professional practice established by the State Board of Education.

(b) Revoke or suspend a certificate or take other appropriate action as provided in ss. [1012.795](#) and [1012.796](#).

(c) Report to and meet with the State Board of Education at least once each year.

(d) Adopt rules pursuant to ss. [120.536](#)(1) and [120.54](#) to implement provisions of law conferring duties upon it.

(8)(a) The commission shall, from time to time, designate members of the commission to serve on panels for the purpose of reviewing and issuing final orders upon cases presented to the commission. A case concerning a complaint against a teacher shall be reviewed and a final order entered by a panel composed of five commission members, at least one of whom must be a parent or a sworn law enforcement officer and at least three of whom must be teachers. A case concerning a complaint against an administrator shall be reviewed and a final order entered by a panel composed of five commission members, at least one of whom must be a parent or a sworn law enforcement officer and at least three of whom must be administrators.

(b) A majority of a quorum of a panel of the commission shall have final agency authority in all cases involving the revocation, suspension, or other disciplining of certificates of teachers and school administrators. A majority of the membership of the panel shall constitute a quorum. The district school board shall retain the authority to discipline teachers and administrators pursuant to law.

(9) The commission shall make such expenditures as may be necessary in exercising its authority and powers and carrying out its duties and responsibilities, including expenditures for personal services, general counsel or access to counsel, and rent at the seat of government and elsewhere; for books of reference, periodicals, furniture, equipment, and supplies; and for printing and binding. The expenditures of the commission shall be subject to the powers and duties of the Department of Financial Services as provided in s. [17.03](#).

(10) The commission shall be financed from the following: certification fees; fines, penalties, and costs collected pursuant to s. [1012.796](#)(9); and general revenue.

History.—s. 756, ch. 2002-387; s. 1976, ch. 2003-261; s. 72, ch. 2004-41; s. 20, ch. 2004-295; s. 31, ch. 2008-108; s. 8, ch. 2016-58.