

Minutes
State Board of Education Meeting
Thursday, October 12, 2017

The State Board of Education met Thursday, October 12, 2017, in the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality Boardroom. Chair Dr. Jay Barth called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Present: Dr. Jay Barth, Chair; Joe Black, Vice-Chair; Diane Zook; Dr. Fitz Hill; Ouida Newton; Susan Chambers; Brett Williamson; Mireya Reith; Courtney Cochran, 2017 Teacher of the Year; and Johnny Key, Commissioner.

Absent: Charisse Dean

Consent Agenda

Concern was raised over Special Education teacher shortages. Assistant Commissioner for Educator Effectiveness and Licensure Dr. Jeremy Owoh said that he would share Special Education teacher numbers to interested parties.

Ms. Reith moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to approve Consent Agenda Items 1-9 minus Consent Agenda Item 10 Consideration for Public Comment Release: Proposed Rules Governing Educator Licensure and Repeal of Rules Governing Educator Preparation Program Approval. The motion carried unanimously.

Items included in the Consent Agenda:

- Minutes – September 14, 2017
- Minutes – September 15, 2017
- Newly Employed, Promotions and Separations
- Review of Loan and Bond Applications
- Consideration of Report on Waivers to School Districts for Teachers Teaching Out of Area for Longer than Thirty (30) Days, Ark. Code Ann. § 6- 17-309
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #17-154 – Canon Hoover
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #17-186 – Chae Coan
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #17-208 – Martha Jackson
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #18-001 – David Yates
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #18-020 – Jessie Goline

Action Agenda A

Consent Agenda Item 10- Consideration for Public Comment Release: Proposed Rules Governing Educator Licensure and Repeal of Rules Governing Educator Preparation Program Approval

Assistant Commissioner for Learning Services Ms. Stacy Smith said R.I.S.E. Academy is one route to demonstrate teacher proficiency in reading. She said the Department has a partnership with AETN to develop a series of courses that provide professional development for teachers. She said the Department is using research to inform training practices for cooperatives across the state. She said the Department is building the capacity to provide high quality education.

Public School Program Coordinator Ms. Joan Luneau said teacher preparation concerning the science of reading will be implemented in 2018-2019. She said non-traditional routes to licensure will include "science of reading" professional development.

Commissioner Johnny Key said Act 1063 includes the science of reading requirement.

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Ivy Pfeffer said teachers have a role to play in rulemaking. She said by not approving the rules for public comment release, there is a chance that school districts will not have clarity on rules in time for hiring season in the spring. Dr. Pfeffer also noted that a work session regarding the rules could be held simultaneously with the public comment period.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to approve Consent Agenda Item 10- Consideration for Public Comment Release: Proposed Rules Governing Educator Licensure and Repeal of Rules Governing Educator Preparation Program Approval. The motion carried unanimously.

A-1 Resolution- Arkansas School Bus Safety Week- October 16-20, 2017

Senior Transportation Manager Mr. Jerry Owens said the Safe Schools Committee requests adoption of a resolution for Arkansas School Bus Safety Week, October 16-20, 2017. Mr. Owens recognized key staff members.

Ms. Chambers moved, seconded by Ms. Reith, to adopt resolution for Arkansas School Bus Safety Week, October 16-20, 2017. The motion carried unanimously.

A-2 Resolution- Arkansas Safe Schools Week - October 15-21, 2017

Criminal Justice Institute Director Dr. Cheryl May said the Safe Schools Committee requests adoption of a resolution for Arkansas Safe Schools Week, October 15-21, 2017.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to adopt resolution for Arkansas Safe Schools Week, October 15-21, 2017. The motion carried unanimously.

A-3 Report from the Arkansas Center for School Safety

Criminal Justice Institute Director Dr. Cheryl May said the Arkansas Center for School Safety will assist the Department to build the capacity of educators, leaders, and law enforcement professionals to meet the safety needs of Arkansas children in public schools. She said there are a number of partners involved in the Arkansas Center for School Safety. She said the center focuses on classes for school personnel and law enforcement officers.

Dr. May said the Safe Schools Committee was formed after an Arkansas school violence incident in the 1990s. She said the institute would continue in the work being done by the Safe Schools Committee as well as other initiatives.

Dr. May said there would be a press conference announcing the formation of the Arkansas Center for School Safety on October 18th at 9:30 a.m. in Greenbrier where she and Commissioner Key would be in attendance.

Ms. Chambers moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to accept the Arkansas Center for School Safety Report. The motion carried unanimously.

A-4 Act 1240 District Waiver Requests

Public School Program Advisor Ms. Kelly McLaughlin said Act 1240 of 2015 allows a school district to petition the State Board of Education for all or some of the waivers granted to Open-Enrollment Public Charter Schools that serve students who reside in the school district.

A-4 (a) Act 1240 District Waiver Requests- Little Rock School District

Public School Program Advisor Ms. Kelly McLaughlin said representatives of the Little Rock School District were appearing before the Board with a petition of waivers.

Little Rock School District Superintendent Mr. Mike Poore said Mr. Buckley O'Mell from the Little Rock Regional Chamber of Commerce sent delegations from the business community to look at workforce development in schools. He said North Little Rock School District had started workforce development programming in partnership with the Little Rock Regional Chamber of Commerce. He said the Little Rock Regional Chamber of Commerce is excited about the potential partnership with the Little Rock School District.

Career Technical Institute Principal Ms. Shameka Montgomery said the Excel Program was launched in the Little Rock School District. She said there are four areas of instruction. She said the district seeks waivers so that students have mentorship with business leaders in the community.

Mr. Poore said instruction in the Excel program is a blended model where the certification and educational background of teachers in the instructor group is mixed.

Ms. Chambers moved, seconded by Mr. Black, to approve waiver requests filed by the Little Rock School District. The motion carried unanimously.

A-4 (b) Act 1240 District Waiver Requests- Russellville School District

Director of Public Charter Schools Ms. Alexandra Boyd said representatives of the Russellville School District were appearing before the Board with a petition of waivers.

Russellville Superintendent Dr. Mark Gotcher said Advanced Placement students were concerned that they would not be prepared for the AP exam in the spring if they took one of the courses in the fall. He said the school district is seeking a flexible schedule waiver for three (3) years.

Mr. Williamson moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to approve waiver requests filed by Russellville School District. The motion carried unanimously.

A-5 Consider Classification of District in Fiscal Distress – Earle School District

Assistant Commissioner for Fiscal and Administrative Services Mr. Greg Rogers and Coordinator of Fiscal Distress Ms. Cindy Smith said the Earle School District received notice of Fiscal Distress identification status by the Department via certified mail.

Mr. Rogers said the Department classified the district as an early intervention school district in October 2016. He said the district did not have an audit as of June 28, 2017, during the Department review of the district's budget.

Superintendent Mr. Rickey Nicks said he had been superintendent since 2010. Mr. Nicks said he was not aware that funds were being used for purposes unrelated to their appropriated use. Mr. Nicks said the school district was under Fiscal Distress in 2010 when he took over his role as superintendent.

Mr. Rogers said the Department is going through a systems check on fiscal and academic issues. He said Commissioner Key would receive that report to inform his next step decisions.

Superintendent Nicks said the current bookkeeper is not the same bookkeeper employed during the previous Fiscal Distress classification period.

Mr. Rogers said about \$300,000 from Title I funds were used for unallowable expenditures in the previous year. He said the district has some unrestricted funds in the budget to pay current debt. Ms. Smith said the unallowable expenses were salary expenses that should have been paid from the operating expense budget.

General Counsel Ms. Lori Freno said classification of Fiscal Distress would mean the Commissioner of Education can take a number of actions set forth in Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-1909. She said the district cannot take on additional debt without approval.

Ms. Smith said the Department aims to have a report to Commissioner Key by the end of October 2017.

Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to approve Fiscal Distress classification of Earle School District. The motion carried unanimously.

A-6 Consideration for Approval of the Arkansas Commission on Closing the Achievement Gap's 2016 Report

Dawson Educational Cooperative Director Mr. Darin Beckwith said the Arkansas Commission on Closing the Achievement Gap is behind because of resignations and not having a full commission. He said he hopes to have the 2017 report presented in January 2018. He said his hope is to present a report that could be passed off to schools. He said he would then like to sunset the commission.

Concern for the efficacy of the group was raised by Ms. Zook based on the dated information provided in the report.

Arkansas Commission on Closing the Achievement Gap Board Member Mr. Nate Todd said the commission has studied the Wisconsin gap report. He said the work ahead is tough for a number of reasons.

Commissioner Key said the Department is looking to get a wider pool of potential appointees to the commission. He said the question of actionable recommendations was missing in the Arkansas report. He said this is part of the current efforts.

Dr. Barth urged the commission to include a focus on closing in the achievement gap in the age of ESSA.

Mr. Black moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to approve the Arkansas Commission on Closing the Achievement Gap's 2016 Report. The motion carried unanimously.

Action Agenda B

B-1 Alternative Educator Preparation Providers: Protocols for the Review and Approval of Programs of Study Leading to Educator Licensure in Arkansas

ADE Public School Program Coordinator Ms. Joan Luneau said the protocol for the Review and Approval of Alternative Educator Preparation Programs Leading to

Educator Licensure in Arkansas has been updated. She said this protocol shall be utilized by educator preparation program providers intending to offer an alternative educator preparation program that leads to educator licensure.

Ms. Reith moved, seconded by Mr. Black, to approve Alternative Educator Preparation Providers: Protocols for the Review and Approval of Programs of Study Leading to Educator Licensure in Arkansas. The motion carried unanimously.

B-2 Institutions of Higher Education: Protocols for the Review and Approval of Programs of Study Leading to Educator Licensure in Arkansas

Public School Program Coordinator Ms. Joan Luneau said the protocol for the Review and Approval of IHE Based Programs of Study Leading to Educator Licensure in Arkansas has been updated. She said this protocol ensures programs fulfill state licensure requirements and align to the standards of the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to approve Institutions of Higher Education: Protocols for the Review and Approval of Programs of Study Leading to Educator Licensure in Arkansas with one recommended change by Ms. Zook. The motion carried unanimously.

B-3 Consideration for Final Approval: ADE Rules Governing Educator Support and Development, as well as repeal of Rules Governing the Teacher Excellence and Support System, Leader Excellence and Development System, and Educator Mentoring Programs

General Counsel Ms. Lori Freno said Proposed Rules Governing Educator Support and Development are new rules that combine the Rules Governing the Teacher Excellence and Support System, Leader Excellence and Development System, and the Educator Mentoring Program rules.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Mr. Black, to approve ADE Rules Governing Educator Support and Development are new rules that combine the Rules Governing the Teacher Excellence and Support System, Leader Excellence and Development System, and the Educator Mentoring Program rules. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports

Report 1 - Arkansas Teacher of the Year Report

2017 Arkansas Teacher of the Year Ms. Courtney Cochran said according to Dr. Robert J. Marzano's research, variance in student achievement is influenced by home environment more than any other factor including school and teacher quality.

Ms. Cochran said she learned about the Springdale Schools Family Literacy Program. She said there are four (4) facets to this program: adult education, parent time, PACT time, and child time. She said there are community liaisons that include volunteers, interpreters, and grant writers among other liaisons.

Ms. Cochran said Monitor Elementary School Principal Ms. Maribel Childress said, "Value identities, but do not equate difference with deficit." She said chronic absenteeism at Monitor Elementary School has gone from 16% to 6% in the last school year under Ms. Childress' leadership. She said Ms. Childress has sought to understand cultural difference and the Marshallese community in particular.

Ms. Cochran said she has learned about effective and non-effective strategies. She said she has learned more about culturally responsive partnerships.

Report 2 - Report on Special Education Teacher Preparation Programs

Educator Preparation Coordinator Ms. Joan Luneau and Associate Director of Special Education Ms. Lisa Haley asked the board if there were any questions concerning the report.

Assistant Commissioner for Educator Effectiveness and Licensure Dr. Jeremy Owoh said the ALP waiver count in 2014-2015 was 27% of the total amount. He said the waiver count was 30% of the total for the next year. He said the ALP waiver count for Special Education was 32.41% for 2016-2017. He said the time period is from June 15-September 26. Dr. Owoh said there were 277 applications in 2016 and 12.3% were for Special Education. He said there were 250 applications in 2017 and 19.6% were for Special Education.

Report 3 - Preliminary Systems Analysis of Little Rock School District and Dollarway School District

State Superintendent Dr. Mike Hernandez said the purpose of the presentation was to highlight the districts' systems. He said the Department developed a systems core team to think through high level questions and where the Department could offer support to the districts.

Dr. Hernandez said the Department wanted to develop a tool to understand the district better and continue a fruitful relationship during this transition year. He said the Systems Analysis Report was based on the responses from the districts and the questions and recommendations developed by the Department.

Dr. Hernandez said a preliminary transitional plan is in place based on the System Analysis Report for both districts. Dr. Hernandez said the next step is to identify priorities from the report and discuss with the district. He said the plan for both districts will be solidified in November. Dr. Hernandez said the step will be the Title 1 1003 application where the Department will allocate funds to both school districts. He said Title 1 1003 funds have gone to individual schools in the past.

Little Rock School District Superintendent Mr. Poore said the district is appreciative of the two-way effort. Mr. Poore agreed with State Board Member Ms. Chambers that the report is illuminating, if not weighty. He said there are a number of innovative efforts in the district not reflected in the report. He said the district has gone back-and-forth with the Department regarding the recommendations made. He said one valuable thing stemming from the conversation with the Department was the opportunity for Little Rock School District staff to share successes in the district that are overlooked.

Dollarway School District Superintendent Ms. Barbara Warren agreed that the report is weighty. She said school district staff have considered whether all of the recommendations are needed. Ms. Warren said the district appreciated the process.

Commissioner Key said there was purposeful repetition in the questions and recommendations of the report.

Ms. Zook said she is looking forward to specific data on what the district is doing apart from what was stated in the report.

Ms. Warren said the system analysis process was an opportunity for the Department to get to know the district better. She said the 45 day reports have been challenging for Dollarway. She said the system analysis process points to the opportunity for flexibility.

Commissioner Key said the Systems Analysis Report plan defines the relationship between the Department and districts during the transition to ESSA.

Little Rock School District Associate Superintendent Dr. Marvin Burton said misalignment of meetings within the district and between the district and the Department was an issue in the past. He said with the Department's support, the district has developed a system to align meetings so that time is used effectively and goal-setting is aligned within the different systems.

Report 4 – Public School Accountability Report

ADE Assistant Commissioner for Public School Accountability Ms. Deborah Coffman said the changes needed to achieve student-focused education is a focus on systems. She said she has been working with Ms. Zook as the State Board liaison. She said

Public School Accountability focuses on support before accountability to shift the emphasis from compliance to the goal of performance.

Ms. Coffman said Public School Accountability consists of five units: Standards for Accreditation, School Performance, School Improvement, Equity Assistance Center, and Federal Programs. She said each unit is working to provide district support.

Dr. Hernandez said the Department is taking pieces of different models in the ongoing development of a school improvement model applicable to all schools. He said February is the goal for implementing the first set of tools for this purpose.

Ms. Coffman said Act 930 and the Arkansas ESSA plan were written with the goal of providing support to districts. She said the Department is working proactively. She said the goal of the Arkansas ESSA plan is to prevent schools from state intervention. She said the support model's goal is to make sure the Department identifies needed action for the district to improve so that district take-over is not necessary in the future.

Commissioner Key said districts would find themselves under state-takeover only by their inaction or decision to not take the advisement of the Department in addressing identified issues given as part of the comprehensive support model.

Report 5 – Chair's Report

Chair Dr. Jay Barth said he and Commissioner Key met concerning the Little Rock Area Public Education Stakeholder's Report. He said a meeting among public and charter school leaders is underway. He said a meeting for advocates is also being considered with the help of a facilitator.

Report 6 – Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Key said Deputy Commissioner Dr. Pfeffer and he visited Monticello Middle School. He said there is a special project underway by an art teacher at the middle school. He said the Pets for Vets project is a collaboration between the EAST facilitator and the art teacher. He said the program is in its second year.

Report 7 – State Board Standing Committees, Special Committees, Liaisons, and Appointments Report

Task Force on Family Engagement in Learning and Deeper Learning Grant Co-Chair Ms. Reith said the last meeting was productive. She said the task force will meet on October 13, 2017.

Task Force on Student Discipline liaison Dr. Hill said the task force is working on a six (6) year study on Sixth and Goal through 2024. He said the program is using football as the engagement tool, but football is not the priority of this program. He said it is exciting to hear the story in this community transformation experience through the program. He said the program is using the public bus system to address transportation issues for students. He said the program is looking to create "positive touches" twice a week to continue mentorship for student participants and keep students engaged. Dr. Hill said the program leaders are considering the OK program in order to achieve this goal.

Commissioner Key said AAA conducted the Smart Jocks 2007 study. He said Mr. Lance Taylor contacted him and Dr. Pfeffer to share that AAA plans to repeat and expand this study which does not only focus on athletics.

Liaison to ForwARd Arkansas Dr. Barth said the Walton Family Foundation is looking to strengthen the data system. DHS and ADE are working on this research. He said research on the users of data is also being examined. He said ForwARd communities are looking to expand community engagement and forwarding this information to the wider Arkansas community. He said the Clinton School of Public Service practicum team is in place. He said he will be meeting with the practicum team. He said ForwARd is looking to diversify its ForwARd communities. He said the executive committee will be meeting in the following week.

Liaison to ESSA Steering Committee Ms. Newton said the next meeting would come in the following week.

Liaison to Public School Accountability Ms. Zook said the Technical Advisory Council (TAC) brings in people from seven (7) other states. She said TAC listens to what is happening in Arkansas and gives feedback. She said Arkansas is impressive in these settings.

Liaison to ADE Human Resources Ms. Chambers said she and Dr. Pfeffer had not met since the last State Board meeting.

Liaison to National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) Ms. Reith asked whether any other board members would attend the national NASBE meeting. General Counsel Ms. Lori Freno said Deputy General Counsel Ms. Courtney Salas-Ford and Attorney Specialist Ms. Jennifer Davis would be attending the conference. Ms. Reith said her tenure on the board would terminate in the coming month.

Liaison to Special Education Ms. Zook said there were 20 sessions conducted over the state. She said a parent's guide to special education in Arkansas had been developed by the Department. She said much was done with community engagement.

Adjournment

Ms. Chambers moved, seconded by Mr. Black, to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 4:11pm.

Minutes recorded by Kelicia Hollis



Johnny Key, Commissioner



Dr. Jay Barth, Chair

