

Minutes
State Board of Education Meeting
Friday, October 10, 2014

The State Board of Education met Friday, October 10, 2014, in the Auditorium of the Department of Education Building. Chairman Sam Ledbetter called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

Present: Sam Ledbetter, Chairman; Toyce Newton, Vice-Chair; Alice Mahony; Dr. Jay Barth; Diane Zook; Mireya Reith; Joe Black; Vicki Saviers; Kim Davis; Jonathan Crossley, Teacher of the Year; and Tony Wood, Commissioner

Absent: none

Reports

Chair's Report

Chairman Ledbetter said October 23-31 is Red Ribbon Week. He said students that talk with their parents are 42% less likely to use drugs.

Dr. Barth said October is Bullying Prevention Awareness Month. He referenced the website, <http://www.stopbullying.gov>.

Ms. Mahony attended the STEM Conference in Magnolia. She recognized Ms. Newton for her contribution to the conference.

Ms. Saviers said the recent report on the number of Advanced Placement test takers was exciting. She said she is also encouraged by the partnership with KIPP, the Lee County School District and the Helena-West Helena School District. She said she appreciated the Walton Family Foundation funding for this project.

Ms. Reith said the Opportunity to Learn Campaign met last weekend. She said there are opportunities to partner with grass roots campaigns and the Department to encourage more teacher and parent communication.

Mr. Crossley said he attended the Next Steps Conference for Teacher of the Year.

Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Wood had no report.

Update on Content Standards and Assessment

Dr. Debbie Jones, Assistant Commissioner for Learning Services, provided the annual Professional Development Report, Public Charter School Report, and the ALE Report. She said the Learning Services Division is working with Education Renewal Zones, Co-ops and STEM Centers to collaborate and better share resources with schools. She said the College Career Readiness transition math course must count as a fourth math course. She said SREB and the Department have collaborated on the math and literacy courses and the intent is to reduce college remediation. She said PARCC professional development is scheduled for regional trainings in the fall.

Academic Distress Special Committee

Ms. Saviers said the Academic Distress Special Committee met September 15, 2014. She read the minutes of the September meeting. Ms. Saviers said the next committee meeting would be October 14.

Quarterly Report for Horatio School District

Assistant Commissioner for Public School Accountability Ms. Annette Barnes said the Horatio School District was classified by the State Board of Education as Year Two Probation for Accreditation on June 12, 2014. She said the Standards and Assurance team conducted a recent onsite review. Standards and Assurance Director Mr. Johnie Walters said the team would visit again in December and all items must be corrected at that time.

Quarterly Report on Strong-Huttig School District

The Strong-Huttig School District was classified by the State Board of Education as being in Academic Distress on April 8, 2013.

Coordinator of Public School Accountability Mr. Elbert Harvey said there was a change in leadership at Strong High School. He said Ms. LaDonna Spain, ADE School Improvement Specialist, would be working in the High School and at the district level with Mr. Lusk. He said Fetterman and Associates, external provider, is also working in the district.

Mr. Saul Lusk, Superintendent of the Strong-Huttig School District, said the district had a high turnover in leadership and teaching staff. He is confident with the new employees. He said the staff was engaged in training on how to better

differentiate instruction for students. He said the Taking School to the Church Initiative is a small group of administrators and students that provide brief presentations to congregations. He said the district enrollment is declining.

Quarterly Report on Pulaski County Special School District

The Pulaski County Special School District (PCSSD) was classified by the State Board of Education as being in Fiscal Distress on May 16, 2011, and the State assumed authority on June 20, 2011.

Mr. Bill Goff, PCSSD Financial Officer, said the NSLA carry-over is within the statutory requirements. He said a plan is in place to expend these funds for the 1-1 iPad initiative. He said the certified stipends were a one-time stipend, non-recurring bonus.

Mr. Wood said PCSSD has been under state authority for 3 years and 4 months. He said the district has done an outstanding job meeting the fiscal distress plan. Mr. Wood said PCSSD might ask the Board to add additional items to the fiscal distress plan as a result of the detachment of the Jacksonville/North Pulaski School District.

Quarterly Report on Helena-West Helena School District

The Helena-West Helena School District was classified by the State Board of Education as being in Fiscal Distress on September 30, 2010, and the State assumed authority on June 20, 2011. The Office of Intensive Support is on-site two days per week.

Helena-West Helena School District Superintendent Mr. John Hoy said the district's attorney is working on a bid process to announce the opportunity to offer vacant buildings to the community. He said the ability to recruit and retain excellent teachers is a priority for the district. He said the Helena-West Helena Community Advisory Board is working to revise the vision and mission for the district. He said the enrollment was declining historically in the district and in the Delta.

Quarterly Report on Lee County School District

The Lee County School District was classified by the State Board of Education as being in Academic Distress on April 8, 2013. The State assumed authority for the Lee County School District on April 10, 2014. The Lee County School District was classified by the State Board of Education as being in Fiscal Distress on

May 8, 2014. The Lee County School District was classified by the State Board of Education as being on Year Two Probation for Accreditation on June 12, 2014.

Office of Intensive Support Superintendent Mr. Andrew Tolbert said most of the issues at Lee County have been addressed such as computers, technology, and instructional technologist. He said the district was making progress in technology. Mr. Tolbert said he is on-site three days each week. He said all students had schedules on the first day of school and the school had an organized method for assisting students that needed schedule changes. He said the district had a new external provider, Fetterman and Associates. He said the Office of Intensive Support was coordinating meetings to ensure proper protocols are followed, information shared and operational procedures are in place.

Office of Intensive Support Director of Learning Services Ms. Janice Streeter said the educators were involved in Response to Intervention Training and Dyslexia Training.

Office of Intensive Support Director of Finance Mr. Jeff Martello said the district had met the thresholds regarding expenditures for federal and categorical funds.

Lee County School District Superintendent Mrs. Willie Murdock said the district was building partnerships with businesses and churches, holding meetings with area pastors, inviting parents to school activities, and talking with community groups such as the Men of Action, a local retired group of men and women dedicated to progress in Lee County.

Quarterly Report on Academic Distress Schools

Assistant Commissioner for Public School Accountability Ms. Annette Barnes submitted reports on the 26 schools that were classified in Academic Distress by the State Board of Education on July 10, 2014.

Little Rock School District Superintendent Dr. Dexter Suggs said the district does consider the students attending feeder patterns where schools are classified as academic distress. He said the district is planning to expand ELL services at other schools in the district.

Pine Bluff School District Superintendent Dr. Linda Watson said the University of Virginia School Turnaround program was working on leadership, school culture, and examining data. She said the district was looking at each student's progress. She said the provider was working in schools in distress to use modules and module assessments, become more data-driven in decision-making, see a decline in discipline and increase in student attendance, and work to tighten structures in the schools. She said each school has a 90-day action

plan. Dr. Watson said the district was meeting with community leaders quarterly and leaders are interested in the Pine Bluff community and schools succeeding.

Dollarway School District Superintendent Mr. Bobby Acklin said the district was partnering with city and county officials to address declining enrollment. He said there was a turnover in the district. He introduced new central personnel, Dr. Melvin Bryant and Dr. Patsy Hughey. He also introduced Dollarway High School Principal Mr. Arnold Robertson.

Covenant Keepers Charter School Director Dr. Valerie Tatum said the school had developed a data management system with each child working toward goals.

Fordyce School District Superintendent Dr. Albert Snow said the district had turnover. He said the district was working with an external provider to take a systematic approach to data-driven decision-making.

Watson Chapel School District Superintendent Mr. Danny Hazelwood said declining enrollment affects funding. He said he was confident in the district goals of providing 1-1 Chromebooks for K-6, working on the wireless network, and building a new K-1 building.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:42 a.m.

Minutes recorded by Deborah Coffman.

Sam Ledbetter TW
Sam Ledbetter, Chair
no gas phone conv.
11/17/14

Tony Wood
Tony Wood, Commissioner of Education