

**Minutes  
State Board Meeting  
April 13, 2023**

Present: Ouida Newton, Chair; Dr. Sarah Moore, Vice-Chair; Adrienne Woods; Randy Henderson; Kathy McFetridge; Steve Sutton; Jeff Wood, Dr. Fitz Hill; Jessica Saum, 2022 Arkansas Teacher of the Year; Jacob Olivia, ADE Secretary.

Absent: Lisa Hunter

The Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) met Thursday, April 13, 2023, at Marvell-Elaine High School, Marvell, AR. Ms. Ouida Newton called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM, followed by a moment of silence.

Dr. Katina Ray, Superintendent, Marvell-Elaine School District welcomed the State Board members, followed by recognition of Marvell-Elaine school board members, superintendents and board members from surrounding districts, community leaders: Senator Reginald Murdock; Representative Mark McElroy; Mayor Lisa Hicks-Gilbert, Elaine; Mayor Lee Guest, Marvell; parents; alumni of Marvell and Elaine; and Marvell-Elaine supporters.

Students Tryveiven Campbell and Kaydence Morant presented a historical overview of Marvell and Elaine.

**Recognition**

Dr. Ray presented student recognitions: Ms. Deane Murry, who placed in the top four in a portion of the Educator Rising Conference, as well as for performing above the national average on the ACT Aspire Standardized test in grade 9 and grade 10. Also recognized were Marvell-Elaine High School (MEHS) student ambassadors: Isaiyah Coleman, Carla Mata, Jamarion Howard, Tryeiven Campbell, Shamyah Brown, Dylan Zachary, Daylan Green, and Jordan Jacobs, the 2022-2023 MEHS basketball team and Coach James Copeland.

Dr. Ray then presented teacher recognitions: Mr. James Copeland, Ms. Jameka Lowery, and Ms. Lateil Albert, followed by recognition of Ms. Rosie Tate, Volunteer of the Year.

**Changes to the Agenda**

None

## Action Agenda

### V.1. Consideration of the Consolidation of the Marvell-Elaine School District with One or More Districts Under Ark. Code Ann. 6-13-1601 *et seq.*

Item VI.1. was presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, ADE Deputy Commissioner. Also present was Dr. Katina Ray, Superintendent.

Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. 6-13-1601 *et seq.*, if a school district has fewer than three hundred fifty (350) students according to the school district average daily membership (ADM) in the two years immediately preceding the current school year, the district must consolidate with or annex to one or more school districts, unless it receives a minimum school district size waiver from the State Board of Education. The Marvell-Elaine School District (District) fell below 350 ADM in the two school years immediately preceding the current school year. On December 8, 2022, the State Board denied the District's petition for a minimum school district size waiver. Since the District did not file a petition for voluntary annexation or consolidation by March 1, 2023, the State Board must consolidate the District with one or more school districts, no later than May 1, 2023, with the consolidation to take effect on July 1, 2023.

Ms. Smith presented options to the State Board for their consideration:

- Consolidation – Combining one or more school districts
- Legislation
  - Senate Bill 262 (does not have an emergency clause)  
An act to amend the public education reorganization act; to amend the conditions under which a public school district shall be administratively consolidated by the State Board of Education
  - HB1504 (contains an emergency clause)  
Emergency Clause that does not allow a Level 5 district to consolidate if a student has to ride a bus more than 40 miles
- AR L.E.A.R.N.S. (Literacy, Empowerment, Accountability, Readiness, Networking, Safety) Transformation Contract  
Allows the local school board or the Commissioner of Education to enter into a transformation contract with a third-party entity. It provides the opportunity to partner with a governing body of an open-enrollment charter or another entity approved by the State Board. Under the Transformation Contract, the District remains in Level 5 Support; keeps the District open and use of current facilities; allows revenue to remain in the Marvell-Elaine community; and allows school choice as an option.

DESE recommended to the State Board the option of Arkansas L.E.A.R.N.S. Transformation contract, dissolve the Marvell-Elaine school board, keeping them in an advisory-model capacity for the remainder of the school year, and the appointment of the Commissioner of Education as the school board.

A motion to accept public comments was made by Mr. Jeff Wood, seconded by Dr. Fitz Hill. The motion unanimously passed.

Public comments were heard by the State Board from:

Pastor Larry Johnson

Kayla Gatson

Elaine Scaife

Andrew Bagley

Pastor Michael Scaife

Filehsia Powell

Rosie Tate

Danielle Wright

Christopher Neal, Jr.

Johnny Gage

Netasha Brown

Martin Rawls

Representative Mark McElroy

Mayor Lisa V. Gilbert

Annie R. Pike

Sherman Tate

A motion to rescind the State Board vote of December 8, 2022, in which the State Board denied the petition of the Marvell-Elaine School District for a Minimum School District Size Waiver. The motion was made by Mr. Jeff Wood, seconded by Dr. Fitz Hill. The vote unanimously passed.

A motion was made to grant the Minimum School District Size Waiver petition filed by the Marvell-Elaine School District on November 18, 2022. The motion was made by Mr. Randy Henderson, seconded by Mr. Steve Sutton. The motion unanimously passed.

A motion was made for the State Board to assume authority over the Marvell-Elaine School District (District), which is currently classified as in need of Level 5 – Intensive Support under the Arkansas Educational Support and Accountability Act; that the State Board remove all powers of the District's Board of Directors but allow the Board of Directors to operate under the direction and approval of the Commissioner of Elementary & Secondary Education (Commissioner) in an advisory capacity through the end of the school year; and that the State Board direct the Commissioner to assume the authority of the District's Board of Directors, as may be necessary to operate the District. The motion was made by Ms. Adrienne Woods, seconded by Mr. Steve Sutton. The motion unanimously passed.

A motion was made to direct the Commissioner of Education to commence discussions with entities authorized under Act 237 of 2023, Section 14, to explore entering a contract for school transformation for the Marvell-Elaine Elementary School and the Marvell-Elaine High School. The motion was made by Ms. Adrienne Woods, seconded by Mr. Jeff Wood. The motion unanimously passed.

## **V.2. Consideration of Revisions to Arkansas Math Standards**

Item VI.2. was presented by the Office of Learning Services: Dr. Kiffany Pride, ADE Assistant Commissioner- Learning Services; Ms. Amy Counts, Director of Curriculum Projects; Ms. Kisa Morman, Math Public School Program Manager. Providing further clarity was Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner.

Consideration of the Math Standards is respectfully submitted to the State Board of Education for approval. Groups of educators, representative of the State, revised the standards for grades K-8, Algebra I, and Geometry. Schools will fully implement in the 2023-2024 school year.

A motion to approve the revision of Math Standards for K-8, Algebra I, and Geometry was made by Dr. Sarah Moore, seconded by Ms. Kathy McFetridge. The motion unanimously passed.

## **V.3. Consideration of Revisions to Arkansas English Language Arts Standards**

Item VI.3. was presented by the Office of Learning Services: Dr. Kiffany Pride, ADE Assistant Commissioner-Learning Services; Ms. Amy Counts, Director of Curriculum Projects; Ms. Sandy Shepard, Lead R.I.S.E. Specialist; and Ms. Amber Pirnique, Disciplinary Literacy Program Administrator.

Consideration of the K-12 English Language Arts Standards is respectfully submitted to the State Board of Education for approval. Groups of educators, representative of the State, revised the standards for grades K-12. Schools will fully implement in the 2023-2024 school year.

A motion to approve the revision of English Language Arts Standards for grades K-12 was made by Dr. Sarah Moore, seconded by Mr. Randy Henderson. The motion unanimously passed.

#### **V.4. Consideration of Recommendation for a Waiver of First-time Teacher Licensure Application Fees**

Item V.4. was presented by Dr. Ivy Pfeffer, Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) Deputy Commissioner.

At its regularly scheduled meeting on March 3, 2023, the Professional Licensure Standards Board voted unanimously to recommend to the State Board of Education a waiver of first-time teacher licensure application fees for the following period: May 1, 2023 - August 31, 2023. The Professional Licensure Standards Board requests that the State Board accept the recommendation and approve the waiver for the specified period.

A motion to waive the first-time teacher licensure application fees for the period May 1, 2023 – August 31, 2023, was made by Mr. Steve Sutton, seconded by Dr. Sarah Moore. The motion unanimously passed.

#### **V.5. Nominations for State Board Chair and Vice-Chair**

Item V.5. was presented by Mr. Randy Henderson, Chair, Nominating Committee.

The Nominating Committee, Mr. Randy Henderson, Mr. Jeff Wood, and Ms. Lisa Hunter will present its recommendations to the State Board for the appointment of State Board Chair and Vice-Chair, effective July 1, 2023. The State Board may vote for chair and vice-chair at its March meeting, or it may defer the vote until its regularly scheduled May meeting.

Mr. Henderson advised of the Nominating Committee recommendations of Dr. Sarah Moore as State Board Chair and Ms. Kathy McFetridge as Vice-Chair. Both nominees accepted the nominations.

A motion for Dr. Sarah Moore to serve as State Board Chair, effective July 1, was made by Mr. Randy Henderson, seconded by Mr. Steve Sutton. The motion unanimously passed.

A motion for Ms. Kathy McFetridge to serve as State Board Vice-Chair, effective July 1, was made by Mr. Randy Henderson, seconded by Ms. Adrienne Woods. The motion unanimously passed.

## Consent Agenda

Items included for consideration in the Consent Agenda were as follows:

1. Minutes 03-29-23
2. Report on Waivers to School Districts for Teachers Teaching Out of Area for Longer than Thirty (30) Days, Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-309
3. Reallocation of Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) FY23 Slots
4. Review of Loan and Bond Applications
5. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 22-126 David Clark
6. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 23-063 Donald Joseph Eveld, Jr.
7. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 23-055 Leisha Nicole Jones
8. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 23-001 Kaitlyn Barnes (A.K.A. Kaitlyn Raines)

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Ms. Kathy McFetridge, seconded by Ms. Adrienne Woods. The motion unanimously passed.

### New Business

None

### Public Comments

None

### Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the State Board meeting was made by Mr. Steve Sutton, seconded by Mr. Randy Henderson. The motion unanimously passed. Chair Ouida Newton adjourned the State Board meeting at 3:48 PM.

*Minutes recorded by Angela Scaife.*

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**Jacob Oliva, Secretary**  
Arkansas Department of Education

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**Ouida Newton, Chair**  
State Board of Education