

**Minutes
State Board Meeting
October 9, 2025**

Present: Adrienne Woods, Chair; Lisa Hunter, Vice-Chair; Dr. Aaron Abbott; Dr. Gary Arnold; Ken Bragg; Randy Henderson; David Peacock; Jeff Wood; Jeanie Wilcoxon, 2025 Arkansas Teacher of the Year; Stacy Smith, ADE Ex-Officio Secretary.

Present via Zoom: Leigh Keener

The Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) met Thursday, October 9, 2025. Adrienne Woods, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM, followed by a moment of silence, pledge of Allegiance, and the National Anthem, which was sung by eight Bryant High School students, directed by Tanner Oglesby, Director of Choirs, Bryant School District. Additionally, from Parkview Arts & Science Magnet High School, Crystal Kirkland, American Sign Language (ASL) teacher introduced ASL student, Brooklyn Malvin, who signed the National Anthem alongside the choir.

Recognition

V.1. Two Bryant Students Receive Air Force Flight Academy Scholarships and Earn Private Pilot Licenses

Two Bryant School District students, Marian Budu and Kennedy Torres were selected from 1,200 applicants to receive Air Force Flight Academy Scholarships, each worth \$27,000. Over the summer, Mr. Budu took his flight training at Purdue University while Ms. Torres received her training at East Carolina University. These two young adults were the first in Bryant School District to be awarded Air Force Flight Academy Scholarships, and each earned a private pilot license.

Changes to Agenda

None

Action Agenda

VII.1. Poyen School District Waiver Request – Standards for Accreditation 1-A.5 (Class Size)

Item VII.1. was presented by Hope Worsham, Education Division Administrator – Office of Public School Accountability. Also present via zoom was Susan Kissire, Superintendent, Poyen School District.

Due to increased enrollment in the current Grade 2 class, Poyen School District requested a one-year waiver of Standard 1-5.A, concerning the Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load Section 3.01.2, "For Grades One through Three (1-3), the average student/teacher ratio in

a school district shall be no more than twenty three (23) students per teacher in a classroom. There shall be no more than twenty-five (25) students per teacher in any classroom."

A motion to grant the Poyen School District waiver request for one year of standard 1-5.A. *Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load, Section 3.01.2* was made by Ken Bragg, seconded by Dr. David Peacock. The motion unanimously passed.

VII.2. Westside Consolidated School District Waiver Request - Standards for Accreditation 1-A.5 and Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load

Item VII.2. was presented by Hope Worsham, Education Division Administrator – Office of Public School Accountability. Also present was Mr. Chris George, Superintendent, Westside Consolidated School District.

The Westside Consolidated School District (district) requested waivers for Standards 1-A.5 (Class Size) and 1-A.6 (Teaching Load) for more than one (1) year for two teachers who exceed the teaching load limits. The district has a fixed weekly schedule that replaces the A/B week model and includes intervention/enrichment time on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.

A motion to deny the Westside Consolidated School District waiver requests for Standards 1-A.5 (Class Size) and 1-A.6 (Teaching Load) was made by Jeff Wood, seconded by Lisa Hunter. The motion unanimously passed.

VII.3. Petition from the Ozark Mountain School District to Close Its Bruno-Pyatt Campus

Item VII.3. was presented by Daniel Shults, Chief Legal Counsel. Also present was Jeffrey Lewis, Superintendent, Ozark Mountain School District.

Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-602, the Ozark Mountain School District, petitioned the State Board to allow the Ozark Mountain School District (district) to close the Bruno-Pyatt Campus. At a meeting on August 6, 2025, the Ozark Mountain School District Board of Directors voted 6 to 1 to close the school. Since the vote was not unanimous, the district was required to have State Board approval to close the campus.

A motion to grant the petition from Ozark Mountain School District to close the Bruno-Pyatt Campus was made by Dr. Aaron Abbott, seconded by Dr. Gary Arnold. The motion unanimously passed.

VII.4. 2026 State Board of Education Meeting Dates

Item VII.4. was presented by Courtney Salas-Ford, Chief of Staff.

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-11-104(b) states, "In any of its meetings before the end of the calendar year, the state board shall determine the meeting dates for the following year." In keeping with the tradition of meeting every second Thursday of the month, the following Thursdays were proposed for State Board meetings:

- January 8, 2026,
- February 12, 2026,
- March 12, 2026,
- April 9, 2026,
- May 14, 2026,
- June 11, 2026,
- July 8, 2026,
- August 13, 2026,
- September 9, 2026,
- October 8, 2026,
- November 12, 2026, and
- December 9, 2026.

A motion to approve the State Board meeting dates was made by Randy Henderson, seconded by Dr. Aaron Abbott. The motion unanimously passed.

Consent Agenda

1. Minutes
2. Review of Loan and Bond Application
3. Application for Charter Arkansas Executive Prep Academy-Harrison

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Lisa Hunter, seconded by Ken Bragg. The motion unanimously passed.

New Business

None

Public Comments

The State Board heard public comments from:

- Charline Wright

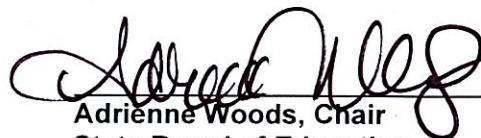
Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the State Board meeting was made by Jeff Wood, seconded by Lisa Hunter. Adrienne Woods, Chair, adjourned the State Board meeting at 10:58 AM.

Minutes recorded by Angela Scaife.



**Stacy Smith, Ex-Officio Secretary
Arkansas Department of Education**



**Adrienne Woods, Chair
State Board of Education**