

**Minutes  
State Board Meeting  
December 12, 2024**

Present: Dr. Sarah Moore, Chair; Kathy Rollins, Vice-Chair; Dr. Gary Arnold; Ken Bragg; Randy Henderson; Lisa Hunter; Leigh Keener; Jeff Wood; Beau McCastlain, 2024 Arkansas Teacher of the Year; Jacob Oliva, ADE Secretary.

Present via Zoom: Adrienne Woods

The Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) met Thursday, December 12, 2024. Dr. Sarah Moore called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM, followed by a moment of silence.

**Recognition**

**III.1. Arkansas School Board Member Recognition Month - January 2025**

Item III.1. was presented by Mr. Travis Warren, Arkansas School Board Association Board of Directors, Region 1, Farmington.

A resolution, recognizing and saluting members of local boards of education by proclaiming the month of January 2025 as Arkansas School Board Member Recognition Month was presented for review by the State Board of Education.

**III.2. Provisional Professional Administrator License**

Item III.2. was presented by Ms. Karli Saracini, Assistant Commissioner – Office of Educator Effectiveness and Licensure. Present to receive recognition was Dr. Phong Tran.

Dr. Phong Tran, Southern Region Superintendent for Friendship Education Foundation and Superintendent for the Marvell-Elaine School District is the first educator to complete the Provisional Professional Administrator License through an alternative route.

**Changes to Agenda**

None

## **Action Agenda**

### **V.1. Mountainburg Waiver Request for Standard 1-A.5 (Class Size)**

Item V.1. was presented by Hope Worsham, Assistant Commissioner – Office of Public School Accountability. Also present was Ms. Debbie Atwell, Superintendent, Mountainburg School District.

Mountainburg School District for Mountainburg Elementary School sought State Board approval to waive Standard 1-A.5 which states, "Each public school district shall comply with the laws of the State of Arkansas and the rules of the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education regarding class size and teaching load."

A motion to approve the Mountainburg School District one-year waiver for Mountainburg Elementary School was made by Ms. Lisa Hunter and seconded by Dr. Gary Arnold. The motion unanimously passed.

### **V.2. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-166 - Abigail Jones**

Item V.2. was presented by Ms. Whitney James, Managing Attorney. Also present was Ms. Karli Saracini, Assistant Commissioner – Office of Educator Effectiveness and Licensure.

At its regularly-scheduled meeting on November 7, 2024, the State Board Education requested the Professional Licensure Standards Board (PLSB) recommendation for Case 24-166, Abigail Jones, be moved from the Consent Agenda to the next available Action Agenda. The hearing was scheduled for December 12, 2024, and Abigail Jones' attorney was notified of the hearing date.

A motion to find that Ms. Abigail Jones, educator, violated Standard 1 and Standard 2 of the Code of Ethics was made by Ms. Leigh Keener, seconded by Ms. Lisa Hunter. The motion unanimously passed.

A motion to modify the sanctions of the Ethics Subcommittee to Level 4 public notification was made by Ms. Leigh Keener, seconded by Ms. Kathy Rollins. The motion unanimously passed.

A motion was made to replace the rationale of the Ethics Subcommittee, based on PLSB sanctioning guidelines, with the rationale that there was confirmation of communication regarding sexual relationships, sexual pictures, and planning of a sexual relationship after the student graduated. The motion was made by Ms. Leigh Keener, seconded by Mr. Randy Henderson. The motion unanimously passed.

### **V.3. 2025 State Board of Education Meeting Dates**

Item V.3. was presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner.

Arkansas State Board of Education Operating Procedures state, "Before the end of the calendar year, the Board will adopt meeting dates for the following calendar year." The dates labeled 2025 Possible Meeting Dates for State Board of Education continue the 2024 pattern of meeting on the second Thursday of every month and were included as an agenda attachment to assist the State Board in its discussion and determination of the 2025 calendar.

#### **2025 POSSIBLE MEETING DATES FOR STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION Second Thursday of Each Month:**

- January 9
- February 13
- March 13
- April 10
- May 8
- June 12
- July 10
- August 14
- September 11
- October 9
- November 13
- December 11

A motion to approve the list of 2025 Possible Meeting Dates for the State Board of Education was made by Mr. Ken Bragg, seconded by Ms. Lisa Hunter. The motion unanimously passed.

#### **New Business**

None

### **Consent Agenda**

1. Minutes – Draft 11-07-24
2. Report on Waivers to School Districts for Teachers Teaching Out of Area for Longer than Sixty (60) Days, Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-309
3. 2023-24 Annual Statistical Report
4. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 25-022 Kimberly Stanley
5. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-237 Casey Bice
6. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-229 Elizabeth Jackson
7. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-081 Shirley Pfleger
8. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 25-009 Ayla Smartt
9. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-304 Jason Self
10. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-307 Ricky Lawson

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Ms. Kathy Rollins, seconded by Dr. Gary Arnold. The motion unanimously passed.

### **Public Comments**


Mr. Phillip Ryan  
Ms. Ashley Harding

### **Adjournment**

Dr. Sarah Moore, Chair, adjourned the State Board meeting at 11:05 AM.

*Minutes recorded by Angela Scaife.*

  
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Jacob Oliva, Secretary  
Arkansas Department of Education

  
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Dr. Sarah Moore, Chair  
State Board of Education