

Arkansas Department of Education  
Professional Licensure Standards Board (PLSB)  
Friday, June 5, 2015  
8:00 a.m.

**A meeting of the Professional Licensure Standards Board was held in the PLSB board room at #1 Capitol Mall, Little Rock, AR, on April 3, 2015. Members of the Board present were Ms. Kathy Howell, Chair; voting members: Dr. Shelly Albritton, Dr. Suzanne Bailey, Dr. Brad Baine, Ms. Lisa Baker, Dr. Judy Harrison, Ms. Lillian Hemphill, Ms. Debbie Miller, Dr. Zaidy MohdZain, Mr. Michael Poore, Ms. Jo Vines; non-voting members Ms. Karli Saracini. Members absent: Ms. Brenda Brown, Ms. Cindy Romeo, Ms. Ivy Pfeffer and Ms. Tonya Williams. ADE staff members in attendance were Cheryl Reinhart, Eric James, and Joan Luneau.**

**The board consisted of eleven (11) voting members and two (2) non-voting members, representing a quorum.**

**1. Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order by Ms. Howell, Chair.

**2. Action Items** –

**A. Approval of Minutes, September 5, 2014** – A motion was made to accept the minutes as written, and it was seconded; motion passed 12/0.

Dr. Baine made the motion to accept the minutes as amended. Second by Suzanne Bailey. Motion carried.

**B. Code of Ethics proposed rule changes.** The subcommittee has looked at these extensively and made some recommendations for changes that have been applied. The full committee can look at that and give us some suggestions as well. Cheryl Reinhart mentioned the fees and fines have been changed. We can't go over \$100 so there is nothing we can do about that right now. We've had feedback from people in school districts that these fines are too low. We may want to increase it in legislation in the next legislative session. Fees are recommended for increase due to the level of work associated with reviewing the applications. If multiple applications are submitted at one time, we will not compound fees, but will take the highest fee only.

Dr. MohdZain recommended that "bullying" include "cyberbullying", or include all social media platforms.

Discussion ensued about the statement that an educator should abide by school district policies on bullying – whether that would mean different standards around the state. A change was recommended that it be changed to "abide by state law". The board also discussed the proposed language that includes sexual orientation and sexual identify, and expressed concern that the language would be controversial. The board discussed revising the language. Ms. Hemphill made a motion to accept that change; the motion died for lack of

a second. It was suggested that the board take more time to review all of the changes and wait until later to file the proposed rules with the State Board of Education. Ms. Reinhart added that staff would like to integrate the new Model Code of Ethics into our rules so a later time frame would be good.

The board asked that Ms. Reinhart draft proposed legislation to change the law and increase the \$100 cap on fines that will deter. Ms. Reinhart will draft that legislation and bring information to the board at its next meeting on what other states are doing.

Dr. Harrison made motion to table the discussion and approval of the Code of Ethics until the September meeting. The motion was seconded and the board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

**C. Training for new members.** A motion was made and seconded, and the board voted unanimously to provide training for new board members. Ms. Miller suggested that essential topics might be what this board is about, who serves, where all the links are to minutes and reports, process, etc. Ms. Hemphill also asked to sit in on the training. Dr. Baine suggested the training be held in conjunction with a board meeting. Mr. Poore made a suggestion that Kathy Howell and Brad Baine be the two members who assist with the training.

### **3. Report Items –**

**A. Review New ISLLC Standards** - Karli Saracini reported that the new ISLLC standards have been out for public comment and may be found at [http://ccsso.org/News\\_and\\_Events/Press\\_Releases/Public\\_Comment\\_Sought\\_on\\_Revised\\_Draft\\_Standards\\_for\\_Education\\_Leaders\\_.html](http://ccsso.org/News_and_Events/Press_Releases/Public_Comment_Sought_on_Revised_Draft_Standards_for_Education_Leaders_.html). There are now 7 standards instead of 11. Sandra Hurst from the ADE had input on the revisions to the standards. Our LEADS system is built from these standards. The board discussed concern about alignment with LEADS and how the standards will be implemented, and the effect on competencies and higher education curriculum. Dr. Albritton added that they are heavy on transformational leadership, social justice. There is a big debate about the eight dispositions. The standards may be ready for the next academic year. Ms. Saracini suggested that the ADE's Heather Newsam bring together a group to review the competencies in light of the new standards. Dr. Albritton recommended that the ADE contact Michele Young with UCEA about the timeline.

Dr. Baker asked that the board look at BloomBoard and see if it is really meeting the needs of administrators.

The board asked Ms. Reinhart to explain the new rules process. She explained that an emergency rule must be approved by Governor before it is sent to the State Board. A proposed rule goes to the State Board for public comment and to the Governor for approval; after public comment, they go back to State Board as a final rule and then to legislative committee for approval. The rules process is now a minimum of six months.

## **B. Educator Preparation Provider Reports (EPPR)**

Karli Saracini stated that a Commissioner's Memo was published. Dr. Harrison commented that higher education does not receive those; Joan Luneau advised that she includes them in her newsletter. Ms. Saracini demonstrated how to find Commissioner's Memos on the ADE website, as well as the EPPR report. She reviewed the report's contents with the board, particularly the disparity between the demographics (diversity) of education preparation program students and our public school students. She emphasized the need for discussing how we change that, citing the Teacher Cade Program as a "grow your own" option. Dr. Harrison and Dr. MohdZain discussed how the profession of teaching is not particularly appealing right now to college students. Ms. Hemphill shared her experience in the Thurgood Marshall TQRP (Teacher Quality and Retention Program) that is designed to increase diversity among teachers.

Dr. Baine believes that school boards and even the PLSB should send out messages of appreciation to teachers. He also encouraged the board to communicate with the State Board about the trend in low enrollments in teacher preparation programs. Ms. Saracini pointed out that our Equitable Access to Excellent Educators report clearly shows that the enrollments are down and that high minority or high poverty schools have difficulty in recruiting and retaining teachers.

Dr. MohdZain commented that we as preparation programs and teachers need to increase our advocacy for the profession.

Ms. Reinhart added that the Division is focused on transforming the work force, and that this board can participate in that by the following initiatives to raise the profession: A professionalism blog written by teachers, communications on professionalism. Dr. MohdZain suggested a teacher of the month on our website.

The board also suggested that we need to look at why teachers leave the state, including assignments of new teachers in difficult classes.

Mr. Poore suggested that we solicit videos that school districts already have made, and reach out to AAEA. Ms. Hemphill cautioned that we don't overlook teachers in rural and Delta areas. We should work with the media and control our media exposure.

We need to change our language about "we're in the trenches; boots on the ground" war metaphors.

Ms. Saracini added that the ADE will be looking at data for administrator programs for EPPR next year. As demonstrated in the Equitable Access report, we are focusing on providing excellent educators – both teachers and administrators.

## **C. Educator Preparation Program approvals**

Joan Luneau advised the board that the program approvals are posted on the ADE website. For the June matrix there are 582 programs listed (old and new). K-12 has 453, but that is accounting for changes in licensure options. There are 55 programs in process, which should

be completed in the next six weeks. New program areas: dyslexia therapy, early childhood special education birth-K, age 3-4 endorsement to K-6, physics (no chemistry proposals submitted). Computer science has no proposals yet, but we are not yet ready for that because the licensure process has not been finalized. Dyslexia therapist can only be added to an existing teaching license through a program of study and will not be available as a first-time license. There is no test, so there is not an option for testing out.

Dr. MohdZain asked about out-of-state programs. Ms. Luneau and Ms. Saracini explained that we only approve in-state programs, and have Memoranda of Understanding with Texas Tech, Missouri State, and Stephen F. Austin University for programs that are not offered anywhere in Arkansas for visual and hearing impairment. Those graduates are first licensed in the respective states and then come to Arkansas through reciprocity. We don't approve out-of-state programs because they must be accredited by a regional accrediting agency.

Dr. Harrison requested that the ADE communicate clearly what the licensure options are for dyslexia therapy and what school districts can do. Ms. Saracini advised that a Commissioner's Memo has been published.

#### **D. ABCTE Memorandum of Understanding**

Ms. Reinhart explained that the legislature enacted law to allow the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence, an online post graduate program for teacher preparation, as an accelerated program. The program has limited licensure areas (no special education) and no student teaching. The ADE has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with ABCTE as follows:

- Three-year provisional license
- At least two years of mentoring; third year at discretion of superintendent
- By third year must be proficient or distinguished
- Certain licensure areas will require Praxis exams
- Candidate will need the superintendent's recommendation for licensure

Missouri advised us that after 10-15 years, they've had only 300 licenses issued. Districts will not know if the teacher is a graduate of ABCTE, but can ask the candidate for information on where they were trained. The board expressed concern that there is no student teaching. This compares to TFA and Arkansas Teacher Corps. Ms. Miller expressed concern about how much additional work this will put on administrators to support teachers who have not even had student teaching.

#### **E. PLSB Task Force on Educator Preparation Program Audits**

Ms. Reinhart advised that the task force met and discussed surveys. Novice teacher and beginning administrator surveys went out and we will have data later. The rest of our surveys will be built on those surveys. We expect the task force to be working for about another year.

#### **F. Equitable Access to Excellent Educators Update**

Karli Saracini advised the board that the EAEE report has been filed with the federal government and we are now waiting for it to be approved. The board commended Ms. Saracini for her leadership and excellent work in preparing that report.

### **G. Rules Update**

Ms. Reinhart advised that Educator Licensure rules are out for public comment and will go before the legislative committee next week. Special education options were the subject of a lot of comment, and it is anticipated that the rules will be sent to the House and Senate Education Committees for review.

### **H. PLSB Director's Update**

- ***Budget for FY2016 (travel discussion)*** – Budget is \$10,000 for conferences, approximately \$2,000 per attendee. The conferences are the NASDTEC Annual Conference (broad in scope) and Professional Practices Institute (ethics). Dr. Harrison would like the board to raise that part of the budget to provide enough for staff and a board member to attend. PLSB usually sends two to the PPI, but none to the annual conference. Ms. Jo Vines moved that the budget be increased to \$25,000 to accommodate two (2) PLSB staff members and one (1) board member to attend the annual conference and six (6) PLSB staff members and one (1) ethics subcommittee member to attend the PPI because it is important for staff to be kept up-to-date on national issues and educator ethics issues. The motion was seconded and the board voted unanimously in favor of the motion. Ms. Reinhart will review this recommendation with Assistant Commissioner Ivy Pfeffer.
- ***Code of Ethics Training*** – Ms. Reinhart discussed how the PLSB staff are refocusing on professionalism, and on the PLSB staff providing better training to school districts. Eric James demonstrated a newly-developed Prezi presentation. Following the demonstration, the board discussed the issues surrounding educator misuse of social media – particularly the problem of mixing personal and education-related use of social networking sites.

Ms. Reinhart also advised the board of a planned July 15 Educator Ethics Workshop designed for educator preparation programs. Dr. Troy Hutchings will be the speaker and ETS will demonstrate the ProEthica product. The ProEthica product is more training than assessment and can be customized for use in Arkansas. It is really viewed as curriculum and can be used by institutions of higher education in the educator preparation programs. The cost of \$50 per assessment can be added to the cost of tuition and can be included in financial aid. After the conference, there will be a discussion of how this can be used in the state. Ms. Reinhart will send out information on the location when that is determined. All PLSB members will be invited. Dr. Baine recommended that Ms. Reinhart bring this to the attention of the Deans Council.

The board discussed the cost of ProEthica and whether the Praxis Core could be removed to offset that cost. The board felt that the reason for using Praxis Core

was to provide an equal baseline for entering students across all educator preparation programs.

- ***Chief Investigator's Report*** – Ms. Reinhart presented Mr. Ruthven's documentation of allegation investigations and training. Ms. Howell pointed out that the ethics subcommittee has determined there are less than one percent of all licensed educators in Arkansas who have committed violations in this fiscal year. She encouraged the board to publish that low number.

#### **4. Other Business**

**A. Recognition of board members** – Mr. Poore read the article Arkansas Times about Head Start written by board member Tonya Williams and the board commended her for her good work with Head Start.

The board recognized that the following board members' terms are ending and thanked them for their service on the board:

Mr. Michael Poore  
Ms. Debbie Miller Bunting  
Ms. Jo Vines

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

**Next meeting date: Friday, September 4, 2015; time 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**