

**Minutes**  
**Vision for Excellence in Education and Arkansas Accountability System Steering**  
**Committee Meeting**  
**Wednesday, March 29, 2017**

The Vision for Excellence in Education and Arkansas Accountability System Steering Committee met Wednesday, March 29, 2017, in the Arkansas Department of Education Auditorium. Chair Johnny Key called the meeting to order at 9:12 a.m.

Members Present: Commissioner Johnny Key, Chair; Ouida Newton; Ima Etim; Keli Gill; Harold Jeffcoat; Joyce Flowers; Gloria Phillips; Melissa Bratton; and Anthony Bennett.

Members Absent: Senator Jane English; Representative Bruce Cozart; and Michelle Hayward.

Audience: ADE staff, general public, and press.

Due to technical difficulties the morning session was not live streamed or recorded. The final reports were live streamed and the recording was posted on the ADE website at <http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/public-school-accountability/every-student-succeeds-act-essa/stay-informed-archive>.

**Consideration of Approval for Minutes – February 22, 2017**

Ms. Gill moved, seconded by Ms. Flowers, to approve the February 22, 2017, minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

**Report from Advisory Teams**

Commissioner Key said the Council for Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and Battelle for Kids helped ADE to summarize the work of the stakeholders. He said the journey from adequacy, labels and achievement has prepared us to focus on student success and excellence for all schools. He said the work of the steering committee is a step in the process of meaningful stakeholder engagement. He said the public needs to understand why we are reinforcing our efforts for student success and school quality. He said the theory of action of change is:

*If the ADE implements a comprehensive support and accountability system that measures many facets of student success and school quality that inform and sustain student learning...*

*Then the agency and districts will engage in continuous cycles of inquiry and improvement by combining state and local information to identify and address the needs within their respective systems. These local cycles of inquiry will inform districts in their strategic provision of support and resources (human and fiscal) to their schools...*

*And this will spark student learning, increase students' readiness for college, career, and community engagement and close achievement gaps within and across schools.*

Commissioner Key said through meaningful consultation with stakeholders, additional statements were added to the theory of action.

*If indicators of student success and school quality are meaningful to educators, understandable to stakeholders, and based on metrics that reflect school impacts (not external factors), then the accountability system will meaningfully differentiate among schools and inform stakeholders about progress on continuous improvement efforts.*

*If we use a limited and robust set of indicators in the accountability system, and we support and encourage districts to use a local cycle of inquiry with indicators that are close to the work of student learning, then student outcomes will improve as long-term continuous improvement cycles have the intended impact.*

*If the indicators included in the state accountability system are connected to purposeful processes that support meaningful student learning outcomes, such as student growth, then educators and stakeholders will attend to them and students will achieve the Vision for Excellence.*

*If the support and accountability system includes an explicit measure of achievement gap closure, then equity becomes an important goal on which schools can focus their efforts for improved student learning.*

*If the state accountability system values Career and Technical Education/Industry certification equally with AP, IB, and concurrent enrollment then schools will be encouraged to provide pathways for all students.*

*If schools get credit for extended-year cohort graduation rates, then schools will be incentivized to recover students who have dropped out of school and ensure these students complete their diplomas.*

*If performance goals are set based on relative comparison groups (e.g., schools/districts of similar size, demographics, poverty, etc.), then a more reasonable interim progress measure may be established and schools/districts "beating the odds" are more likely to be recognized for their achievement.*

The purpose of the stakeholder input is to gather concrete, actionable input and guidance from stakeholders to help inform ESSA planning specific to the Arkansas Department of Education's response to state and federal accountability requirements. Commissioner Key asked the steering committee to reimagine how we support students to advance equity, access, and opportunity for all, particularly those considered historically underserved.

The advisory committees provided reports of the stakeholder engagement.

**a. Accountability**

Office of Innovation in Education Director Dr. Denise Airola said accountability helps us to know if we are accomplishing our goals. The accountability system should help districts empower their schools to improve. She said we need to reimagine indicators of success to gain a more complete picture of student learning. She said the committee used equity, efficiency, practicality, and alignment as lenses in the input seeking and vetting process. She said stakeholders wanted multiple measures in a combination system that might include an index as well as reporting key indicators and a parent friendly report card.

**b. Assessment**

Director of Assessment Ms. Hope Allen said stakeholders identified pros and cons for using ACT Grade 11 and career assessments for accountability.

**c. English Learners**

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Program Director Ms. Tricia Kerr said the N-size is important for including as many schools as possible with English Learners in the accountability system. The stakeholders recommended N-size of five (5) for the ELP Proficiency Indicator. The committee also recommended a common Home Language Survey for entry and the use of ELPA 21 results plus one additional statewide standardized data point (ELA assessment preferred at this time) for exit.

**d. Educator Equity and Effectiveness**

Educator Licensure Director Ms. Cheryl Reinhart said the committee considered how equitable access gaps could be included in the accountability system. She said the calculation would be dependent upon clear definitions of effective leader, effective teacher and ineffective teacher.

Educator Effectiveness Director Ms. Sandra Hurst said stakeholders reinforced the use of definitions and understanding from TESS and LEADS.

**e. Comprehensive School Support and Improvement**

Public School Program Manager Dr. Richard Wilde said ESSA requires the agency to provide support and service to an identified group of schools for comprehensive improvements.

School Improvement and Professional Development Coordinator for the Jonesboro School District Dr. Kim Anderson said the committee consensus was to not withhold the 3% additional funds and no consensus for N-size was determined. She said entrance criteria and exit criteria for support and service should be the same criteria. The committee recommended 1003a funding be distributed by formula. She said rigorous, evidence-based interventions would be needed for schools to show progress. The committee recommended a year for schools and districts to develop plans including conducting a needs assessment and alignment of resources to address areas of greatest need.

### **Work Session**

Special Projects Director Ms. Tina Smith divided the Steering Committee members into small teams to meet with each advisory team. Team members discussed their questions with each advisory expert.

Then members conducted a gallery walk and rotated through each topic to clarify questions, ideas, and opportunities.

Finally, the Steering Committee members developed a summary of their ideas, questions and opportunities.

### **Report and Sharing of the Steering Committee Work Session**

Steering Committee members shared the results of the work session.

a. **Accountability**

Ms. Newton said Dr. Airola's office will be using the 2016 data to model the various N-size effect to help inform the decision. She said we may not be ready to include all indicators but the fifth indicator can be adjusted at the next revision cycle so that we have a continuous improvement plan. She also said the data modeling would assist with making decisions regarding weighting of indicators. She said the team discussed component rating and overall rating to better assist schools and districts in improvement. She said the team discussed weighting the ELPA21 scores based on the size of the school. She said other weighting for subgroups was also discussed.

b. **Comprehensive School Support and Improvement**

Ms. Etim said the conversation focused on the capacity of districts to support schools. She said some may need capacity building. She said the team discussed how the state would differentiate for districts that have schools with various needs.

Dr. Jeffcoat said the exit criteria and timeline were yet to be determined.

c. Educator Equity and Effectiveness

Mr. Bennett said we can move from a compliance system to an improvement system. He said the work would focus on teacher growth and collaboration.

d. Assessment

Ms. Gill said the team discussed testing in high school including ACT Aspire (Grade 9), Pre-ACT (Grade 10), and ACT (Grade 11). She said the team also discussed separate assessments for career. She said the rigor would be similar. She said peer review of assessment would be determined by accountability decisions.

e. English Learners

Ms. Phillips said there is an opportunity for an electronic home language survey. She said the team recommended N-size of 5 to include more schools. She said former EL student data could be included in the accountability system for up to four (4) years. She said the team discussed ongoing support for English Learners.

Ms. Tina Smith said the advisory teams will use the information gathered today to begin writing the draft accountability plan.

Dr. Airola said the data modeling will be presented to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for recommendations. She said the feedback from TAC may require additional modeling.

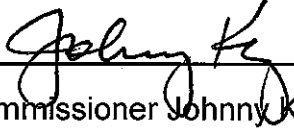
Ms. Smith thanked the advisory team and leaders for their work.

Ms. Meghan Ables announced a Twitter Town Hall tonight at 8:00 p.m.  
#ESSAinArkansas.

### **Adjournment**

Dr. Jeffcoat moved, seconded by Ms. Gill, to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 12:41 p.m.

*Minutes recorded by Deborah Coffman*

  
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Commissioner Johnny Key, Chair