

Minutes
State Board of Education
Thursday, September 10, 2020

The Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) met Thursday, September 10, 2020, in the ADE Auditorium with limited capacity in keeping with the Governor's directive and the guidance from the Arkansas Department of Health. Chair Ms. Charisse Dean called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Ms. Dean led a moment of silence.

Present: Ms. Charisse Dean, Chair; Mr. Brett Williamson, Vice-Chair; Dr. Sarah Moore; Dr. Fitz Hill; Ms. Kathy McFetridge; Ms. Ouida Newton; Mr. Steve Sutton; Ms. Susan Chambers; Ms. Adrienne Woods; Mr. Joel Lookadoo, 2020 Arkansas Teacher of the Year; and Mr. Johnny Key, Secretary

Absent: None

Changes to Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

Consent Agenda

Mr. Williamson moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously. Items included in the consent agenda are as follows.

1. Minutes
2. Newly Employed, Promotions and Separations
3. Consideration of Report on Waivers to School Districts for Teachers Teaching Out of Area for Longer than Thirty (30) Days, Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-309
4. Consideration of the Voluntary Consent to Surrender License for Case # 19-115 Karen James
5. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case# 19-173 Ella Sergeant
6. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case # 20-036 Alex Joseph
7. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case # 20-122 Brandi Collier
8. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case # 20-123 Molly Broyles
9. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #20-126 Jennifer Conner
10. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #20-131 George (Nick) Eubanks
11. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #20-134 Donna Turner

Action Agenda A

A-1 Embedded Course Approvals

Assistant Commissioner Dr. Kiffany Pride requested approval of the embedded courses

Mr. Sutton moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to approve the embedded courses. The motion passed unanimously.

A-2 Consideration of the Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) FY21 - Round 2 Professional Service Grant

ADE Special Advisor Ms. Lisa Tyler requested approval of the ABC Professional Service Grant to the Southeast Educational Service Cooperative in the amount of \$248,187.50, to support the continuation of the AmeriCorps program.

Ms. Chambers moved, seconded by Dr. Moore, to approve the request. The motion passed unanimously.

A-3 Consideration of the Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) FY21 - Round 3 Agency Grant Award

ADE Special Advisor Ms. Lisa Tyler requested approval of the ABC Renewal Grant Round 3 for 2021 in the amount of \$253,500, to support the South Arkansas Developmental Center for Children and Families in El Dorado and 50 ABC slots.

Dr. Moore asked clarifying questions.

Ms. McFetridge moved, seconded by Mr. Williamson, to approve the request. The motion passed unanimously.

A-4 State Board Review of PLSB 20-026 Ethics Hearing Committee Recommendation - Charles Perry Parliment

General Counsel Ms. Lori Freno introduced the item and procedures.

Attorney Mr. Greg Alagood said that he had no more remarks than what was in his brief. However, his client, Mr. Charles Perry Parliment made a few remarks regarding the event in question, stating that he was not in his normal classroom and had been volunteering to relieve the coach.

Managing Attorney Ms. Amy Douglas said that based on evidence, the Hearing Subcommittee had lowered his recommended sanction from a three-year probation to a written reprimand. She said the subcommittee determined that the education had violated Standard 2 of the Code of Ethics.

State Board members asked clarifying questions.

See video for training list.

Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Mr. Williamson, there was a finding of fact that the educator allowed inappropriate behaviors by students. There was some discussion. There was a roll call vote. Mr. Sutton, Ms. McFetridge, Ms. Woods, and Dr. Hill voted no. Dr. Moore, Ms. Newton, Ms. Chambers, Mr. Williamson, and Ms. Dean voted yes. The final vote was 5-4. The motion passed.

Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Mr. Williamson, that there was a violation of Standard 2. There was a roll call vote. Mr. Sutton, Ms. Woods, and Ms. McFetridge voted no. The final vote was 5-3. The motion passed.

Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, that the educator be given a letter of caution, as well 90 days to complete the PLSB recommended training and written reflection. There was a roll call vote. Mr. Sutton voted no. The final vote was 7-1. The motion passed.

A-5 Consideration of Request for Approval of Nominated Members for the Professional Licensure Standards Board to Replace Members Whose Terms are Vacant or Expiring June 30, 2020.

Assistant Commissioner Ms. Karli Saracini said Dr. Joe Fisher, Superintendent of the Guy-Perkins School District has been nominated by the Arkansas Rural Education Association to represent the association and rural school districts. The term of this member is to begin immediately upon appointment and end on June 30, 2023.

Ms. Chambers moved, seconded by Ms. Woods, to approve the nomination. The motion passed unanimously.

Action Agenda B

B-1 Petition for Minimum School District Size Waivers -- Ark. Code Ann. § 6-13-1613

Staff Attorney Ms. Jennifer Dedman said that there are four school districts seeking Minimum School District Size waivers

a) Consideration of Petition for Minimum School District Size Waiver -- Dermott School District

State Board members asked clarifying questions.

Ms. McFetridge moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to approve the waiver request for the Dermott School District. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Consideration of Petition for Minimum School District Size Waiver -- Guy-Perkins School District

Mr. Sutton moved, seconded by Ms. Woods, to approve the waiver request for Guy-Perkins School District. The motion passed unanimously.

c) Consideration of Petition for Minimum School District Size Waiver -- Strong-Huttig School District

Dr. Moore asked clarifying questions of Superintendent Kimberly Thomas.

Mr. Williamson moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to approve the waiver request. The motion passed unanimously.

d) Consideration of Petition for Minimum School District Size Waiver -- Western Yell School District

Superintendent Herschel Cleveland discussed the COVID-19 numbers in his area, enrollment numbers, and their Ready for Learning plans.

State Board members asked clarifying questions.

Ms. Chambers moved, seconded by Ms. McFetridge, to approve the waiver request for Western Yell County School District. The motion passed unanimously.

B-2 Consideration of One-Year Standards for Accreditation Waiver Requests

a) Elkins School District One-Year Standards for Accreditation Waiver Request

Coordinator of Monitoring and Systems Support Ms. Tracy Webb said that the Elkins Elementary and Middle Schools experienced some unexpected growth this school year. She explained that the schools previously shared a single library media specialist, and they now require a library media specialist ratio waiver.

State Board members asked clarifying questions.

Ms. Woods moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to approve the waiver request. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Fayetteville School District One-Year Standards for Accreditation Waiver Request

Coordinator of Monitoring and Systems Support Ms. Tracy Webb said the library media specialist at Washington Elementary School took a virtual teaching position this school year. She said there is another part-time library media specialist in the district, but they would still require the waiver of the library media specialist ratio for this school year.

State Board members asked clarifying questions.

Ms. Chambers moved, seconded by Mr. Sutton, to approve the waiver request. The motion passed unanimously.

B-3 Consideration of Charter Authorizing Panel Decisions

a) Consideration of Charter Authorizing Panel Decision to Approve the Amendment Request for River Valley Virtual Academy in the Van Buren School District

Coordinator of Monitoring and Systems Support Ms. Tracy Webb said on August 19, 2020, the Charter Authorizing Panel unanimously approved the amendment request from River Valley Virtual Academy to increase the enrollment cap from 275 to 1000.

State Board members asked clarifying questions.

Ms. McFetridge moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to not review the Charter Authorizing Panel's decision. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Consideration of Charter Authorizing Panel Decision to Approve the Open-Enrollment Charter School Application for Premier High School of Springdale

Coordinator of Monitoring and Systems Support Ms. Tracy Webb said in August, the Charter Authorizing Panel approved open-enrollment charter application for Premier High School in Springdale. The proposed school will serve 300 students in grades 9-12.

State Board members asked clarifying questions.

Dr. Moore moved, seconded by Dr. Hill, to not review. The motion passed unanimously.

c) Consideration of Charter Authorizing Panel Decision to Approve the Open-Enrollment Charter School Application for Westwind School for Performing Arts

Coordinator of Monitoring and Systems Support Ms. Tracy Webb said in August, the Charter Authorizing Panel approved open-enrollment charter application for Westwind School for Performing Arts in North Little Rock. The proposed school will serve 225 students in grades 6-8.

State Board members asked clarifying questions.

Dr. Hill moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to not review. The motion passed unanimously.

d) Consideration of Charter Authorizing Panel Decision to Deny the Open-Enrollment Charter School Application for Diamond Cut Performing Arts Academy

Coordinator of Monitoring and Systems Support Ms. Tracy Webb said in August, the Charter Authorizing Panel denied the open-enrollment charter application for Diamond Cut Performing Arts Academy.

Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to not review. The motion passed unanimously.

B-4 Arkansas Leadership Academy

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Ivy Pfeffer provided background information and said the Division is seeking approval for a Request for Proposal (RFP) to be issued. She said the goal of the RFP process is to select the location and operator of the Arkansas Leadership Academy for the next 5 years of operation with an annual report of performance to the State Board of Education.

State Board members asked clarifying questions.

Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to approve. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Dean suggest small committee to work on this RFP with Dr. Pfeffer. She appointed Ms. Newton, Dr. Moore, and Ms. Chambers to form the committee.

Reports

Board Member Liaison Reports

Ms. Dean said that she and Dr. Hill had an opportunity to work with the Graduation Alliance in the Little Rock School District calling students regarding their graduation concerns. She also discussed her opportunity to tour the CityServe organization.

Arkansas Teacher of the Year Report

Mr. Lookadoo discussed his passion and the importance of creating a culture that connects in the classrooms. He also announced that he is launching a podcast titled, "The Well-Rounded Educator" on August 31, 2020. He talked about how it is vital to keep teacher voice in the decision making processes throughout the year.

Commissioner's Report

Mr. Key thanked the various ADE team members who have gone above and beyond to assist other divisions outside of their own. Some were asked to help process scholarship applications and others having been working with the Health Department call center. He said the leadership members have been assigned to different education service cooperatives to provide support. The IT team developed system to collect data for school district use and have been working with various broadband and Wi-Fi providers to get access to hotspots. He also thanked Chief of Staff Gina Windle and Deputy Commissioner Dr. Ivy Pfeffer for their work supporting school districts.

He said he visited three schools during the first week of school. Mr. Key said he saw preparation, teachers that were happy to be back, and students being students. He said that after three weeks of school being in session, some teachers have said that virtual instruction alongside in-person instruction is not a sustainable workload. He said that the Ready for Learning plans are working as expected, the school districts are listening to concerns, and are making adjustments as necessary to accommodate their teachers' workload needs.

Legislative Reports

Mr. Key said that the Division is working with WestEd, who is conducting an independent review of the Dollarway School District. This information will help inform the State Board members' upcoming decision on the school district in December.

Director of Office of Coordinated Support and Service Ms. Stacy Smith said that the WestEd review will help ensure that the Dollarway community has the opportunity to share their thought and opinions on the state of the school district and what is important to them locally. She noted that this review is not being paid for by the state, and is a fully independent deep dive into the district's information. The goal of the review is for WestEd to analyze the data and present the positives/negatives to each of the possible options for the Dollarway School District to the Division.

Ms. Smith said the Pine Bluff School District report was pretty similar to the Dollarway School District. However, she said it is important to remember that they are two different districts. She said that the superintendent, Ms. Barbara Warren, is still new to the district, but is doing a good job at facilitating between the Pine Bluff and Dollarway districts. For Pine Bluff, she said that the district said that there are still 70 students whom they have not connected with this school year, and will be following up.

Ms. Smith said the Earle School District was one of the first school districts in the state to have their Ready for Learning plan completed. She noted that the district is very good at planning in general, but just needs to refine their follow through with their intentionality and outcomes. Currently fiscal is still the biggest concern for Earle School District.

Ms. Smith said the biggest concern for Lee County has been staffing. There have been a few late hires, but they are still working to fill positions and ensuring proper ratios.

Ms. Smith noted that on many of the goals for Little Rock School District, it says, "fully met independently." She said this means that the ADE did not support the district to achieve the goal. She said they are working hard to make improvement across the district.

State Board members asked clarifying questions.

New Business

Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Mr. Williamson, to add the consideration of the new Little Rock School District CAB member to new business. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Key said Sandrekkia Morning is an unopposed candidate who lives in the zone with a vacancy (zone 6).

Mr. Sutton moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to accept the new CAB member. The motion passed unanimously.

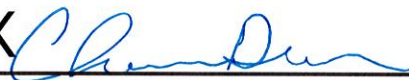
Public Comments

There were no in-person public comments.

Adjournment

Mr. Williamson moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 2:51 p.m.

Meeting minutes recorded by Tiffany Donovan.

X 

Ms. Charisse Dean
Chair

X 

Mr. Johnny Key
Secretary