

**Minutes
State Board of Education
Thursday, August 8, 2019**

The Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) met Thursday, August 8, 2019, in the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (Division) Auditorium. Chair Ms. Diane Zook called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Ms. Zook led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Ms. Diane Zook, Chair; Dr. Sarah Moore; Mr. Brett Williamson; Ms. Kathy McFetridge; Ms. Susan Chambers; Dr. Fitz Hill; Ms. Ouida Newton; Mr. Chad Pekron; Ms. Stacey McAdoo, 2019 Arkansas Teacher of the Year; and Mr. Johnny Key, Secretary

Absent: Ms. Charisse Dean, Vice-Chair

Changes to Agenda

Ms. Zook said that action item A-1 Consideration of Revocation of Teaching License – Licensure Action Case No. 19-11 has been pulled from the agenda.

Consent Agenda

Ms. Newton said she wanted to discuss consent agenda item 4. Mr. Pekron said he wanted to discuss item 5. Ms. McFetridge said she wanted to discuss item 12.

Ms. Newton said she noticed KIPP had 11 long-term substitutes. She asked if the same supports were available to charter schools as there are in the traditional schools. Public School Program Manager Ms. Melissa Jacks said that charter schools get the same supports.

Mr. Pekron said he would like item 5 to be moved to the action agenda. PLSB Chief Investigator Mr. Eric James reviewed the procedure to move the item. It was decided to move item 5 to the next meeting.

Ms. McFetridge said, on item 12, she had a concern regarding the service project for the Jackson County Sheriff's Department. She said the school board president did not sign off on it for this year on the application and is concerned that students would be around drugs. Public School Program Manager Mr. Thomas Coy said after the last State Board meeting he reached out to the school district to let them know of the concerns. Public School Program Advisor Ms. Melissa Starkey said the reason the school board president had not signed the application was because it was just an updated version of what the board had already approved. She also noted that the students are trained to know what to expect. Ms. Newton noted that she is familiar with a similar program and that program was a great learning opportunity for students. Mr. Key said he could reach out the superintendent of the school district to make him aware of the State Board's concerns. It was suggested that the Jackson County Sheriff's Department item be pulled for further information.

Items included for consideration in the Consent Agenda are as follows.

1. Minutes
2. Newly Employed, Promotions and Separations
3. Review of Loan and Bond Applications
4. 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
5. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case # 18-060 Robert Edwards
6. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case # 19-077 Meyisha Haywood
7. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case # 19-079 Steve Thomas
8. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case # 19-091 George Livermore
9. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #19-105 Frankie Magallanes
10. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #19-119 Jennifer Lovelace
11. National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT) State Funding Application Cut-off Score Change Recommendation
12. Community Service Learning Applications
13. Hector School District Act 1240 Annual Progress Report
14. Helena West Helena School District Act 1240 Annual Progress Report

Ms. McFetridge moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to approve the consent agenda minus item 5 and the Jackson County Sheriff's Department portion of item 12. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Zook noted her concerns about the Helena-West Helena School District's report. She said several years ago the district was granted waivers; however, she has not seen any improvement in the district. Helena-West Helena Superintendent Ms. Linda English said they are working to restructure what they are doing. She said they are bringing in additional dyslexia support and they have a literacy interventionist in place. Ms. English said they are now a part of the Arkansas Leadership Academy and have been given a performance coach for support. She noted this is her first year as superintendent and acknowledged the current state of their scores. She said they will turn things around academically this year. Mr. Key told the State Board that the district has also requested level 4 support from the Division. State Superintendent Dr. Mike Hernandez reviewed the level 4 support process.

Action Agenda A

(Pulled from Agenda) A-1 Consideration of Revocation of Teaching License – Licensure Action Case No. 19-11

This item was pulled from the agenda.

A-2 Consideration of Revocation of Teaching License – Licensure Action Case No. 18-015

Staff Attorney Mr. Taylor Dugan said Mr. Joseph Byrn was not present for the meeting. He said Mr. Byrn is presently in a federal penitentiary in Texarkana. Mr. Dugan said that this case is dealing with Rapback. He said that Rapback shows when an educator has been arrested by the Arkansas State Police. Mr. Dugan said Mr. Byrn was convicted of Possession of Child Pornography on May 17, 2019. He said Mr. Byrn was notified of his right to request a waiver; however, he did not respond.

Ms. Zook asked if under the new law, if a license is permanently revoked, is it possible for that motion be undone. Mr. Dugan said in this case, since it was a sexual offense, it would be a permanent revocation.

Ms. McFetridge moved, seconded by Mr. Pekron, to revoke Mr. Joseph Byrn's license. The motion passed unanimously.

A-3 Consideration of Waiver of Disqualifying Offense – Licensure Action Case No. 19-12

Staff Attorney Mr. Taylor Dugan said Ms. Jerrjean Danielson is appearing before the State Board for a waiver of a disqualifying offense.

Ms. Danielson said in 2017, while her and her children were at the entrance booth at Silver Dollar City in Missouri, she placed her hand on the side of her child's face while explaining that all the children needed to stay with the adults in the group to avoid getting lost. She said a park employee saw this and called the police claiming that Ms. Danielson had pulled her child's hair. Ms. Danielson said that she was not arrested or read her rights and she was not aware she was being prosecuted until she received a letter in the mail a month and a half later. She said her attorney advised her to enter an Alford plea; however, she also noted the video evidence disappeared. Ms. Danielson said her attorney advised that by entering an Alford plea there would be a suspended sentence and after a year with no other trouble, the offense should no longer be on her record. However, she said when she went to reapply for her license, the offense was still on her record.

Mr. Dugan reviewed the exhibits for this case. He said the background check found she had a Domestic Assault Fourth Degree from Missouri, which matches an Assault First Degree in Arkansas, a Class "A" misdemeanor. He said Ms. Danielson's attorney said that they are in the process of getting the charge expunged from Ms. Danielson's record; however, Arkansas law states that even an expunged conviction, for violent offenses, can still be taken into consideration and is still a disqualifying offense.

Mr. Pekron asked if there were any questions if Ms. Danielson properly completed her probation. Mr. Dugan said that there was no mention of any violations on the docket sheet.

Ms. Newton asked if the Division had a recommendation. Mr. Dugan said in the past the Division has granted waivers for similar offenses. He noted that Ms. Danielson has been very easy to work with and he would have no objections if the State Board were to grant the waiver.

Ms. Danielson confirmed that the State Board members had access to her provided documents. She noted that she received bad advice from her attorney and had followed that advice.

Ms. Chambers asked if Ms. Danielson had been teaching since 2017. Ms. Danielson said she was teaching at Forrest City until February 2019, when she resigned. She said she currently has a job at the Wynne School District, pending the results of this meeting. Ms. Danielson said she teaches in a self-contained environment and half of her students are nonverbal.

Ms. McFetridge noted Ms. Danielson's documents included good letters of support.

Mr. Williamson moved, seconded by Dr. Hill, to grant the waiver. The motion passed unanimously.

A-4 Mulerider Learning Educators Advanced Practicum (LEAP)

Magnolia School District Superintendent Mr. John Ward said they have 36 new employees this year, which is a large turnover in their district. He said he reached out to Southern Arkansas University (SAU) for assistance when it became evident that Magnolia was having difficulty filling the open positions. The idea was to use existing student teachers who were already assigned to the district to fill the classroom openings.

SAU Department of Teacher Education Chair Ms. Neelie Dobbins said SAU spoke with several school districts who were having a similar problem filling their positions. She said SAU created guidelines for their student teachers who were very prepared, had high rigor, high GPAs, had no dispositional concerns, and met all other requirements. Then, she said, SAU worked closely with the new Mulerider LEAD program to insure that the Magnolia School District felt comfortable with those filling the classroom openings.

Dr. Moore said one concern would be having a college student coming in to teach and possibly being assigned a different classroom halfway through the year. She said she wants to avoid the Magnolia School District students having two different teachers in one year. Ms. Dobbins said at semester, when the student teachers graduate, they will be offered a contract with Magnolia School District. The students will not transition to another teacher at semester, because the student teacher will be hired as a certified teacher at that point. Dr. Moore asked what supports the student teachers will have from their mentors. Mr. Ward said the mentors have common planning periods with the student teachers and they will also have math and literacy facilitators/coaches on campus at their disposal and in their classrooms weekly. Dr. Moore asked how much time in classrooms the student teachers will have acquired prior to this program. Ms. Dobbins said it would equal around 80-100 hours in the classroom over three semesters.

Ms. Newton asked what grade levels are being covered. Mr. Ward said one is in second grade and one is in fourth grade math. Ms. Newton asked for an explanation of the common planning time with the mentors. Mr. Ward said, as an example, there are ten second grade teachers, and five teachers share a common planning time. The entire group of second grade teachers may also meet after school. The available coaches and facilitators may cover a mentor's classroom to allow the mentor to visit the student teacher's classroom. She said the coaches and facilitators, as well as SAU representatives will also visit the student teacher's classroom. Ms. Newton asked if the student teacher would be able to visit other classrooms and Mr. Ward confirmed. Ms. Newton encouraged Ms. Dobbins to reach out to other colleges and universities who have had this type of program before and seek additional advice.

Ms. Chambers asked if this would be an ongoing program. Ms. Dobbins said their hope is it would be ongoing as needed.

Mr. Key said in the agreement, the elementary requirements include successfully completing all previous coursework with a B or higher, but middle school and secondary is a C or higher. He asked Ms. Dobbins to explain their reasoning for this requirement. She said the upper level math and science courses are beyond rigorous and sometimes their students struggle in those courses. She said they did not want to leave out any student who may have made a C in course content, but still had a 3.0 GPA. She said existing teachers provided feedback to this decision.

Dr. Moore asked about salaries. Mr. Ward said Magnolia School District has a separate salary schedule for a long-term sub, and it is based on the state minimum. He said when the student teacher graduates from the program they will move up to the district salary schedule.

Ms. Zook asked if the student teachers would be given R.I.S.E. training. Ms. Dobbins said at SAU their students are on a pathway to proficiency what has been approved by the Arkansas Department of Education. Ms. Zook asked where the Magnolia School District is on R.I.S.E. training. Mr. Ward said they are on day two of grades 3-6 training and the K-2 training has already been completed.

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

A-5 Embedded Course Approvals

Public School Program Manager Mr. Thomas Coy said Act 421 of 2013 allows curriculum frameworks from two (2) separate courses to be taught in a single course, known as a combined or embedded course. He said several school districts made application for approval of the combined or embedded course and assured in writing that the curriculum frameworks for both courses will be fully taught in the combined or embedded course. He noted the change in legislation which allows for personal finance to count in ninth grade for economics.

Ms. McAdoo asked if there is a plan to make sure everything is covered when courses are embedded, specifically English and oral communications. Mr. Coy said yes and that each school district has to submit a complete course outline for the Division to make certain all standards are present.

Dr. Moore said it is exciting to see the CTE course in Animal Science and Biology. She asked how more classes like this can be obtained. Mr. Coy said they have worked with Career Education to approve several of their courses for general math or science credits.

Ms. McFetridge asked if the school districts listed would be the only districts allowed to embed courses. Mr. Coy said the listed districts are the ones that submitted this year; however, other districts have already been approved in previous years.

Ms. McAdoo asked about the intent behind embedding the courses. Mr. Coy said embedding allows content that fits together to provide a cross-curricular idea in high school. He said they are also trying to offer more opportunities for students in terms of electives. Ms. McAdoo noted that she thinks that oral communications is a standalone class.

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

A-6 End-of-Year Reviews of Open-Enrollment Public Charter Schools in the Initial Year of Operation: Friendship Aspire Academy in Little Rock and Pine Bluff, ScholarMade Achievement Place, and Southeast Arkansas Preparatory High School.

Public School Program Advisor Ms. Kelly McLaughlin said the data provided for this item is to meet the requirement of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-23-406 that requires the Department of Education to conduct an end-of-year review of each open-enrollment public charter school in its initial school year of operation and report to the State Board of Education on the charter school's overall financial condition and condition of student enrollment.

Dr. Moore asked if there were any financial concerns from the Division. Assistant Commissioner Mr. Greg Rogers said there is no immediate need; however, the Division will continue to monitor them to make sure they are operating fiscally sound. He said there is a team member in Fiscal Services who is dedicated just to charters.

Mr. Pekron moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to accept the report. The motion passed unanimously.

A-7 Consideration of Third Round for Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) 2019-2020 Grants

Arkansas Better Chance's Ms. Susan Underwood said approval is requested for Calico Rock School District to continue high-quality preschool services for children and families formerly served by the White River Preschool. She said they would be awarded 20 slots and the amount of \$99,320, which would include a retroactive payment of \$9,932. Ms. Underwood said an additional five slots to be awarded to the Eureka Springs School District that will include retroactive pay in the amount of \$2,483. The total amount for 35 slots at Eureka Springs School District is \$173,810.

Ms. McFetridge moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to approve the proposal. The motion passed unanimously.

A-8 Consideration for the Provision of Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) 2019-2020 Funding Targeting Foster Care and Homeless

Arkansas Better Chance's Ms. Susan Underwood said this item is a request to approve the use of ABC funding to serve children in foster care as they are placed in various communities throughout the year and children in families who are in homeless circumstances according to the McKinney-Vento guidance. When the ABC programs exceeds the initially state approved funding amount, these funds will support the services of children in foster care and homeless circumstances. The Arkansas Better Chance continues to work closely with the Division of Children and Family Services and the LEA Homeless Liaisons to ensure the children in foster care and homeless situations have immediate access to quality services in the ABC programs.

Ms. Chambers asked how the funds would be allocated. Ms. Underwood said last year there were only about 15 children who were paid extra. She said the programs work diligently to make sure these children are part of the program. Once there is an opening, they automatically move into an ABC slot. She noted that there is not usually any additional funds but sometimes additional funding is needed. When additional funding is needed, ABC would try to work with their collaborative partners in those communities to make sure they are served.

Dr. Moore asked what ages are covered. Ms. Underwood said it covers birth through five. Dr. Moore asked if a child is adopted out of the foster care system, if they would be covered. Ms. Underwood said they would be covered because a lot of times those children who are experiencing trauma and those families need support as well. She said there are approximately 300 foster children in their system.

Ms. Chambers moved, seconded by Ms. McFetridge, to approve the ABC funding to serve children in foster care, as well as, children and families who experience homelessness.

Action Agenda B

B-1 Request for Transfer of Succeed Scholarship: Vick

Staff Attorney Ms. Mary Claire Hyatt said the Vick family is wishing to change the enrollment from St. Joseph in Conway to Immaculate Conception in North Little Rock. She said the change is requested due to an employment change which required the family to change locations.

Ms. McFetridge moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to approve the transfer. The motion passed unanimously.

B-2 Request for Transfer of Succeed Scholarship: Williams

Staff Attorney Ms. Mary Claire Hyatt said the Williams family is asking to transfer from Prism Education Center in Fayetteville to Mount St. Mary's Academy in Little Rock. She said the change is requested due to an employment change which required the family to change locations.

Mr. Pekron moved, seconded by Ms. McFetridge, to approve the transfer. The motion passed unanimously.

B-3 The Division of Career and Technical Education respectfully requests the Arkansas State Board of Directors ratify the Arkansas Perkins V State Transition Plan as adopted and approved.

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Ivy Pfeffer introduced the item, saying this is a transition plan to take effect for the 2019-2020 school year and would get us to the point of Perkins V reauthorization.

Dr. Moore asked how the Perkins grants are determined. Division of Career and Technical Education's Dr. Cheryl Wiedmaier said all school districts are eligible. She said the money for particular schools is housed at the education service cooperative, and it is distributed from there. The school district will write proposals on how they want to spend the money. She said the Division of Career and Technical Education staff reviews the proposals and approve them at that level.

Dr. Moore moved, seconded by Ms. McFetridge, to approve. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

There was no new business.

Public Comments

Ms. Chambers moved, seconded by Dr. Hill, to hear public comment. The motion passed unanimously. Public comment was heard and there was lengthy discussion on the topic.

Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously. Ms. Zook noted the State Board would return after a lunch break to hear reports.

Reports

Chair's Report

Ms. Zook said she received a note from the principal in Mountain Home to whom the State Board provided a waiver to be the Kindergarten administrator. This principal previously only had an administrative license for grades 5-12; however, she now has full credentials.

Ms. Zook received a note from Gerald Cooper, who is the head of the Northcentral Education Service Cooperative saying they now have a recruitment and retention center.

Ms. Zook said the Ignite Center in Bentonville opened yesterday. She said they will serve 330 students in grades 11 and 12. The topics of student courses include technology, construction management, medicine, culinary arts, global business, education, and video & digital design.

Commissioner's Report

Mr. Key said there are a few notable personnel changes. Ms. Jennifer Link is the new attorney for PLSB. Dr. Kiffany Pride is the new director of assessment and curriculum. Ms. Rachel Horn is Public School Coordinator for Assessment.

Mr. Key said this was the first year for the Arkansas Governor's School to be held at Arkansas Tech University. He said there were 400 rising seniors invited to attend and 366 students from 94 high schools attended. Students chose their preferred areas: cybersecurity (19), English language arts (52), math (49), natural science (82), social science (91), choral music (19), drama (20), instrumental music (16), and visual arts (17). Mr. Key said there were a few hiccups along the way, but less than expected. Ms. Zook asked if the attendance numbers were comparable to previous years and Assistant Commissioner Ms. Stacy Smith confirmed. Ms. Smith commended her team for being so hands-on and proactive.

Mr. Key discussed the government transformation. He said there has been a lot of excitement and apprehension throughout this process. However, he said that everyone's work will continue and the vision and mission remain the same. Due to the transformation additional resources are now even more accessible when needed. He showed a brief video about transformation and reviewed the organization charts.

State Board Standing Committees, Special Committees, Liaisons, and Appointments Report

Ms. Zook said for future meetings State Board members will be given the opportunity to provide updates or provide report on whatever they have done instead to solely reporting about their liaison positions.

State Director for Family and Community Engagement Ms. Kim Wright said on August 19 they are planning to launch a statewide initiative about the Family and Community framework and toolkit being ready for implementation in schools and districts. She said schools are encouraged to use the framework and toolkit for their parental engagement plans, which she hopes would then align with their school improvement plans. Ms. Wright also mentioned the book drive in support of Our House being held throughout the Division. She said there is a goal of collecting at least 500 books.

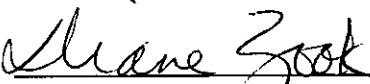
Ms. Zook said Dr. Moore will serve as the pre-K liaison. She also said that liaisons are needed for Career Education and Higher Education.

Ms. McFetridge attended a training in Springdale about trauma. She suggested having someone present to the State Board about trauma and how it affects students in the classroom.

Ms. McAdoo talked about the success of the 2020 Arkansas Teacher of the Year Regional and State Semi-Finalist ceremony which was recently held at the Governor's Mansion. She also mentioned the upcoming Teacher Night at the Travs event coming up on August 24. She also provided the State Board with a picture presentation of her pre-ATOY life in the Little Rock School District and community.

Adjournment

Mr. Williamson moved, seconded by Mr. Pekron, to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1:26 p.m.


Mrs. Diane Zook, SBE Chair


Mr. Johnny Key, Commissioner