

Minutes
State Board of Education Meeting
Friday, February 9, 2018

The State Board of Education (State Board) met Friday, February 9, 2018, in the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality Auditorium. Chair Dr. Jay Barth called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

Present: Dr. Jay Barth, Chair; Joe Black, Vice-Chair; Diane Zook; Ouida Newton; Susan Chambers; Dr. Fitz Hill; Charisse Dean; Mireya Reith; Courtney Cochran, 2017 Arkansas Teacher of the Year; and Johnny Key, Commissioner.

Absent: Brett Williamson

Reports

Report 1- The Reform Alliance Succeed Scholarship Report

The Reform Alliance Executive Director Ms. Valerie Pruitt said The Reform Alliance is a 501(c)(3) organization that administers the Succeed Scholarship Program (SSP). Ms. Pruitt said 173 students were currently utilizing the scholarship. She said administrative costs are covered by private funds. She said students are not eligible for a scholarship until they are accepted into a private school. Ms. Pruitt said the students' service plans must be reviewed periodically. Ms. Pruitt said the SSP had a positive overall satisfaction rating from families.

Ms. Pruitt said representatives from the University of Arkansas, Easter Seals, and Prism Education were present to answer questions. Ms. Pruitt said students participating in the SSP were students who would require substantial support in the public school system. She said the program provided options to financially-challenged parents.

Representative Carl Wing said he was appreciative of the opportunity to work with the Succeed Scholarship Program. Representative Wing said the SSP had given families opportunities that were not previously available for students with individualized education plans (IEP).

Report 2- Ozarks Unlimited Resource Education Service Cooperative Evaluation Report

State Superintendent Dr. Mike Hernandez said there were five more cooperative reports to complete for this round of evaluations.

Report 3- 2017 Arkansas Teacher of the Year Report

2017 Arkansas Teacher of the Year Ms. Courtney Cochran said that highly effective teachers were professionals that provided intentional, targeted education. Ms. Cochran said her personal goal was to increase the number of teacher cadet program participants.

Ms. Cochran said she was on a few committees for the national #LoveTeaching Week campaign. She said this campaign was an opportunity for teachers to rekindle and share their love for teaching.

Report 4- Chair's Report

Dr. Barth said there would be a ForwARd report in March. He said the schedule was set for the next few months for the group. He said he and Commissioner Key were continuing to work on actions items stemming from the Little Rock Area Public Education Stakeholder Report.

Report 5- Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Key recognized National School Counselor Week and read the proclamation signed by Governor Asa Hutchinson. The proclamation declared February 5- 9, 2018, as National School Counseling Week in Arkansas. Commissioner Key acknowledged the role that school counselors play in Arkansas schools.

Guidance and School Counseling Program Coordinator Ms. Suzanne Knowles thanked Commissioner Key for reading the proclamation. She said school counselors make a big impact in the lives of students.

Commissioner Key acknowledged the success of the Impacting Tomorrow Summit at the University of Central Arkansas.

Report 6- State Board Standing Committees, Special Committees, Liaisons, and Appointments Report

Task Force on Family Engagement in Learning and Deeper Learning Grant Co-Chair Ms. Reith said the purpose of the February 7, 2018, meeting was to create a broader coalition for family and community engagement in the state. She said there were 89 participants in the meeting. She said it was important to engage stakeholders in the meeting. She said a consensus was made in the meeting that the coalition would need to be a smaller group of stakeholders who would work on creating family and community engagement standards for the state.

Ms. Reith said the next step in the process for the task force and the internal Department team was to synthesize notes from the February 7, 2018, small group conversations. Ms. Reith said the task force would ensure that the coalition members represented a diversity of thought. Ms. Reith said the task force would define the criteria for coalition member participation in the February 9, 2018, meeting. She said the task force would also consider next steps. Ms. Reith said the Council of Chief State School Officers had an ambitious timeframe for creating family and community engagement standards.

Public Information Manager Ms. Meghan Ables said the February 7, 2018, stakeholder meeting was full of invested people. She said the goal for the task force is not only to bring community members into the schools, but also to engage communities outside of schools.

Task Force on Family Engagement in Learning and Deeper Learning Grant Co-Chair Ms. Dean said she believed Arkansas would be a trailblazer in family and community engagement in education. She said change starts with the family.

Task Force on Student Discipline member Dr. Hill said Commissioner Key moderated the most recent meeting and would lead the report. Commissioner Key said members of the group agreed that the zero-tolerance policy and statute for the state restricted the remedies that schools had for dealing with behavior issues. Commissioner Key said Staff Attorney Ms. Mary Claire Hyatt would examine statute versus policy as it relates to student discipline. Commissioner Key said the group would bring back a report to the State Board.

Task Force on Student Discipline member Dr. Hill said a student who is expelled from the school is still within the community. Dr. Hill said there is a need for more flexibility. He said it is important to be sensitive to the environmental factors that contribute to behavioral issues by not automatically sending students back to the environment that contributes to their behavior. Dr. Hill said stakeholders must think differently about the issues. He said the behavior management approach from the past does not work in the present day.

Commissioner Key said the discussion is not to take discipline out of the class, but to examine how the state can be more flexible in its response to discipline issues.

Liaison to ESSA Steering Committee Ms. Ouida Newton said she attended the family and community engagement meeting on February 7, 2018. Ms. Newton said she believed Arkansas was reaching a tipping point where there was a lot of good work happening in education. She said the state is moving in the right direction. Ms. Newton asked the Department to look into the Leadership Academy and its potential role with the State Board moving forward.

Commissioner Key said the Department could do a report on the Leadership Academy particularly with the pending leadership change. Commissioner Key said the State

Board would consider inviting Mr. David Cook and acknowledge him for his service to the state.

Ms. Newton said the Department was working hard on the implementation of A-F scores. She said the Department was aligning the federal and state guidelines. Ms. Newton said the webinars on ESSA by the state were helpful. She encouraged fellow State Board members to view the archived webinar videos.

Commissioner Key said the Department would call a special meeting for the State Board in order to accelerate the release of A-F cut scores. He said ESSA communication and implementation meetings were currently ongoing within the Department.

Ms. Zook iterated the importance of understanding that A-F scores for schools is legislated by the state.

Liaison to Public School Accountability Ms. Zook said she attended an A-F scores discussion held by the division. She said the division hosted two ESSA webinars. She said the Public School Accountability division hosted the family and community engagement meeting for stakeholders across the state. She said report cards would be available for schools in April. She said a team from the division as well as the representatives from Gillett Elementary School and DeQueen Elementary School were attending a Title 1 conference in Philadelphia. She said both elementary schools were selected for recognition in the National Title 1 Distinguished Schools program.

Liaison to ADE Human Resources Ms. Chambers said there were no updates.

Liaison to Special Education Ms. Zook said Arkansas is the number one state in the nation for graduating special education students.

Liaison to ForwARd Arkansas Dr. Barth said ForwARd was evaluating itself. He said the ForwARd communities were completing community strategic plans. He said ForwARd would highlight those plans along with lessons learned at a spring 2018 event. He said ForwARd would host a data conference and policy summit in fall 2018. He said ForwARd would invite people who use data in their work to the data conference. Dr. Barth said the policy summit would bring stakeholders together ahead of the 2019 legislative session.

Ms. Reith said the data conference organizers would want to consider presenting data from an asset model and not a deficit model.

Liaison to National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) Ms. Reith said the Task Force on Family and Community Engagement in Learning and Deeper Learning Grant would consider how to utilize the remaining Deeper Learning Grant funds. She said the Legislative Conference for NASBE would be March 4-6, 2018.

Adjournment

Mr. Black moved, seconded by Ms. Newton to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:32 a.m.

Minutes recorded by Kelicia Hollis



Johnny Key, Commissioner



Dr. Jay Barth, Chair

