

Minutes
State Board of Education Meeting
Friday, February 15, 2019

The Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) met Friday, February 15, 2019, in the Arkansas Department of Education (Department) Auditorium. Chair Dr. Jay Barth called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

Present: Dr. Jay Barth, Chair; Charisse Dean, Vice-Chair; Diane Zook; Ouida Newton; Brett Williamson; Susan Chambers; Dr. Fitz Hill; Dr. Sarah Moore; Kathy McFetridge; Randi House, 2018 Arkansas Teacher of the Year; and Johnny Key, Commissioner.

Absent: None

Reports

2018 Arkansas Teacher of the Year Report

2018 Arkansas Teacher of the Year Ms. Randi House discussed her tour of Cedar Ridge Elementary. She said that her tour was led by the Cedar Ridge Elementary School Student Lighthouse Team, which was a group of fourth graders. She said that the elementary school has a full time STEM classroom, an activity class for all students throughout the school. She also discussed the positive messages on the walls and the decorations hung by the school custodian.

Ms. House then introduced Mr. David Ward, a teacher at Cedar Ridge Elementary, with a Diversified Educational Needs (DEN) classroom. She said that she was very impressed with the students who presented the favorite things they had learned during the year.

Mr. Ward said that his students are highly mobile, often abused, and have social emotional problems. He has strict guidelines and after the students are assessed, they create a plan. He said that he wants the kids to come in and know that if they had an idea, they can grow on it. He discussed a variety subjects that he studies with his students and told stories about how he connects with his students. Mr. Ward said that his classroom is a top scoring alternative learning environment classroom.

Ms. Zook asked if the school has a gifted and talented program and Mr. Ward said that they do and they are receiving recognition for being one of the top gifted and talented programs in the state.

Ms. Newton said that she was amazed and wishes that there were a million Mr. Wards around the nation.

Ms. Chambers asked what made Mr. Ward become an ALE teacher. Mr. Ward said that he had planned to become a teacher since he was a child, but after his school district was consolidated into Cedar Ridge, the superintendent invited him back into the education field and a position in ALE. He said that throughout his teaching career he had always felt drawn to the students who did not fit the mold, as he says that he was in school.

Ms. Chambers said that she thinks that he should be teaching teachers in a mentoring role. Public Information Manager Ms. Meghan Ables said that they are working on a plan to make videos, hold zoom meeting, and other options to share his expertise with other teachers and principals.

Ms. House gave Mr. Ward a bag of books to take to the students in his classroom.

Chair's Report

Dr. Barth asked the State Board members to respond to Chief of Staff Ms. Gina Windle's email regarding the logistics for the March meeting in Northwest Arkansas.

Dr. Barth asked Director of Charter Schools Mr. Reginald Ballard to send an email reminder to the State Board to respond with the information that they require for the Haas Hall report by Monday at noon.

Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Key reminded everyone of the No Limits Campaign and played the related *Take the ACT* music video from last year's campaign. He said that February 20, 2019, is the date when all Arkansas Juniors will be taking the ACT under the statewide plan.

Commissioner Key said that Ms. Windle was going to be emailing the State Board members about the Arkansas Activities Association's *Why I Participate* study, regarding the performance of students who are involved in school activities. He said that the results of the study have been released and all the State Board members will have access to those results.

Commissioner Key provided an updated on legislation, saying that House Bill 1145, which would increase teachers' salaries over the next four years, is on the way to Governor Asa Hutchinson for his signature. He also said that Senate Bill 199, dealing with revising the school counseling program was on its way to be voted on by the full House of Representatives.

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

Ms. Dean said that she was excited to have the family engagement frameworks and thanked everyone involved for their assistance in the creation of them. She said that on February 21, 2019, the Coalition, the Department of Human Services Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, and the Teacher Leader Advisory Group will meet to provide toolkit resources. She also said that the feedback loops regarding report cards will be used during the spring of 2019. Ms. Dean said that the current focus of the Office of Family and Community Engagement is to finalize all portions of the framework and toolkit for future distribution and utilization. She said that the framework was created to assist with engaging families, schools, and communities in two-way communication, provides organizational structure for the toolkit, and was designed to encourage conversation and increase support for families, schools, and community members to be actively engaged in children's development and education. She said that the framework was created in partnership with the Arkansas Department of Education, Arkansas State Board of Education, Arkansas Family and Community Engagement Coalition, Department of Human Services Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, and Arkansas stakeholders. She said that the framework and toolkit are not intended as a regulatory requirement or

official Department guidance. Ms. Dean said that districts should follow local school board approved policies for final decision making. She also said that next steps involve development of training regarding the framework and toolkit.

Ms. Zook said that, regarding ForwARd Arkansas, that an email she received said that they were continuing to have success stories. She said that they are working on an EAST program in Lee County. One of ForwARd's goals is to complete development of plans for how they can work in more communities across the state, through the lens of the ForwARd Learning Network. Later this spring they will be wrapping up their second Clinton School Practical Project in the Little Rock School District, which is assisting the district implement project-based learning in the middle schools. They are also looking at expanding their reach in the Arkansas Delta. She said that on the policy front, they are continuing their work of implement best practices for data collection and use from around the country. ForwARd says that stronger data systems in Arkansas are needed in order to ensure that informed policy decisions are being made.

Ms. Newton said that the Vision for Excellence in Education and Arkansas Accountability (ESSA) Steering Committee met January 30, 2019, during which they were given an update on the peer review for the alignment study between standards and assessment. They gathered information from stakeholder groups of teachers looking at each of the different test bands and subject areas. She said that information will go to the TAC group in March and then ACS will compile a report for later in the year. Ms. Newton said that they also got an update on the Perkins V Grant, saying that they are working on a four year plan. She said that 2019-20 will be a transition year for the Perkins V Grant. She said that they heard that the amendment request has been submitted to the US Department of Education; however, no is no timeline available regarding a response. Ms. Newton said that the final business rules for calculating the 2019 ESSA School Index scores has been posted, stakeholders provided feedback, and that went out in a Commissioner's Memo. The districts have been identified for the 1003 grants and the schools and districts are now completing applications. She said that she heard from the advisory groups and they are considering adding a Special Education advisory group. The Department will be conducting focus groups later in the spring to gather feedback on the reports cards, once they come out. The next meeting was proposed to be March 27, 2019, to discuss a communication plan for the report cards and hopefully an update on the amendment request.

Ms. Zook said that Public School Accountability is working hard and she think that has been very helpful to have real time data available.

Ms. Chambers said that she had no update for the Department's Human Resources.

Ms. Newton said that National Association of State Boards of Education the Government Affairs Committee met February 11, 2019, and gave an update on what is happening in Congress. She said that the House and Senate Education Committees had their first hearings which focused on the Rebuild America's Schools Act of 2019 and a major focus on the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. The Committee will be moving from a monthly meeting to a bimonthly meeting and the next meeting will be in April. The deadline for early registration to the Legislative Conference is February 16, 2019.

Ms. Zook said that Special Education has been working with different groups to determine the best ways to assist English Learners with disabilities. Also, Lt. Governor Tim Griffin

asked Ms. Zook to mention that the op-ed piece he wrote was seen by Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos and she retweeted it and recognized Arkansas as being a leader as well as parent and student focused.

New Business

There was no new business.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Adjournment

Ms. McFetridge moved, seconded by Ms. Dean, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:02 a.m.



Johnny Key, Commissioner



Dr. Jay Barth, Chair