

**Minutes
State Board of Education
Thursday, February 14, 2019**

The Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) met Thursday, February 14, 2019, in the Arkansas Department of Education (Department) Auditorium. Chair Dr. Jay Barth called the meeting to order at 10 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

Change to the Agenda

Dr. Barth said that several people have signed up for public comment on the action agenda item A-2 regarding Haas Hall prior to the meeting date and those public comments will be heard immediately following the presentations.

Dr. Barth said that there was someone who signed up for public comment on a non-agenda item. Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Ms. McFetridge to hear the public comment before the State Board breaks for lunch. The motion passed unanimously.

Recognitions

Recognition of the Milken Educator Award Winner

Public Information Manager Ms. Meghan Ables introduced Ms. Tasha Wilson, 2nd grade teacher at Kingsland Elementary in the Cleveland County School District. Ms. Wilson was the recipient of the Milken Educator Award. She was given a \$25,000 prize from the Milken Family Foundation. Ms. Ables said that Ms. Wilson has been invited to New Orleans to attend the Milken Educator Forum in March. Ms. Wilson will be mentored by previous Milken recipients and will be a part of the Exemplary Educator Network.

Dr. Barth thanked Ms. Wilson for all that she has done for the district and presented her with an obelisk.

Resolutions

National School Counseling Week

Public School Program Coordinator Ms. Suzanne Knowles said that National School Counseling Week, sponsored by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), was celebrated February 4-8, 2019, to focus public attention on the unique contribution of professional school counselors within U.S. school systems and their impact on students. National School Counseling Week highlights the tremendous impact school counselors can have in helping students achieve school success and become college and career ready.

She said that Governor Hutchinson has signed a proclamation designating February 4-8, 2019, as National School Counseling Week in Arkansas. This special week honoring school counselors provides recognition for their role in implementing comprehensive school counseling programs, which are a vital part of the education process for all students. Ms. Knowles read the Governor's proclamation to the State Board.

Consent Agenda

Ms. Newton state that she had comments on three consent agenda items. On item 4, Ms. Newton thanked Ms. Melissa Jacks and her team for adding percentages to the report. On item 6 and item 7, Ms. Newton said that it was hard for her to judge what the appropriate consequences should be. Dr. Barth encouraged Ms. Newton to reach out to the Professional Licensure Standards Board and let them know want additional information that she would like to see on any future items.

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

Items included in the consent agenda:

- Minutes
- Review of Loan and Bond applications
- Newly Employed, Promotions and Separations
- 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
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case # 18-134 Staci Nichols
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case # 18-148 Damita Tolerson
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case # 18-151 Cody Reid
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case # 19-010 Josh Fleming
- Mulberry Pleasant View School District Act 1240 Annual Progress Report
- Mountain Home School District Act 1240 Annual Progress Report
- 2019 Open-Enrollment Charter School Application
- 2019 District Conversion Charter School Application
- National Board Professional Teaching Standards Reimbursement Approval

Action Agenda A

A-1 Consideration of Petition for Minimum School District Size Waiver -- Kirby School District

General Counsel Ms. Lori Freno said that the Kirby School District had fewer than 350 students in the two years immediately preceding the current school year. Consequently, Ark. Code Ann. § 6-13-1603 requires the District to be consolidated with or annexed to another school district unless the State Board grants the District's petition for a minimum school district size waiver pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-13-1613. The State Board shall grant the petition for waiver if the several factors set forth in § 6-13-1613

are met. She said that Kirby School District has not been classified as in need of intensive support, being in fiscal distress, nor facilities distress. The district is also not in probationary status for violating any standards of accreditation and the school district facilities are in adequate condition. The school district's Board of Directors has submitted a resolution in support of this waiver.

Ms. Zook asked for confirmation that the school district is currently at 361 students and Superintendent Mr. Pike Palmer said that they are currently at 358; however, they average between 357 and 362.

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

A-2 Requested Annual Reporting from Haas Hall Academy

Director of Public Charter Schools Mr. Reginald Ballard said on January 12, 2004, the State Board of Education approved the application for Haas Hall Academy. On October 15, 2014, the Charter Authorizing Panel approved the application for Haas Hall Academy Bentonville. Both charters are approved to serve students in grades 7 - 12 with a total maximum enrollment of 2,000. Representatives of Haas Hall Academy are appearing before the State Board of Education to report on the results of its diversity outreach efforts and student enrollment demographics, as requested.

Haas Hall Academy Rogers Campus Headmaster Mr. Larry Henry provided the presentation for Haas Hall Academy with an overview of the options provided to Haas Hall students. Mr. Henry, Haas Hall Academy Bentonville Campus Headmaster Dr. Rod Wittenburg, and Haas Hall Academy Springdale Campus Headmaster Ms. Jamie Bendure reviewed the demographics of their campuses in comparison to the public school district. Haas Hall Academy Director of Admission Kelly Barnett discussed the Fayetteville campus as well as the admissions program.

Ms. McFetridge asked if they had a comparison from year to year on diversity, she did not see this represented in the packet. Ms. Barnett read the past year's numbers. Ms. McFetridge also asked for free/reduced lunch information. The presenters did not have the numbers readily available; however, they will provide the numbers for the State Board.

Ms. Newton asked how they have attempted to increase diversity. Ms. Bendure said that they have advertised on television and in the newspapers in both English and Spanish. Ms. Newton asked what they are doing differently than in the past. Ms. Bendure said that they are getting out into the community more with more one-on-one times.

Dr. Hill commended their academic achievements; however, he said he would like to see the demographics of the staff and faculty. He suggested that they have an inclusion officer.

Ms. Chambers said that they need to develop faculty faster and suggested the need to grow their own.

Dr. Barth said that he had questions on the community outreach piece. He said that there was an interest in hiring an inclusion officer and asked if that person was hired. An inclusion officer had not been hired.

Dr. Hill said he feels like it is currently a spot outreach and requested information about the faculty diversity as soon as possible.

Mr. Mark Henry said that Ms. Carolyn Proctor was hired as an inclusion officer; however, she is no longer with the Haas Hall.

Dr. Barth said that he would like to see more information about their free and reduced lunch numbers as well as special education information.

Ms. Zook suggested having the students provide input and asked for clarification on how the lottery system works.

Dr. Moore asked if they provide transportation. Mr. Henry said that they do not have buses, but they help with carpooling. Some students use public transit buses.

Public Comment was heard on this item.

Dr. Barth asked about an audit of practices and asked for confirmation that Legislative Audit would only be for finance information and policies. Mr. Key confirmed and said that other audit information would come from Public School Accountability.

Ms. Newton said that the State Board members did not receive all information required for the Haas Hall report.

Ms. Zook said that she would like to ensure that Haas Hall is doing the correct screening for dyslexia markers.

Ms. McFetridge would like to know if the Department could oversee the Haas Hall lottery. Mr. Ballard said that the Department will be physically present for the lottery.

Ms. Chambers said that she is impressed with Haas Hall's performance; however, the report is missing information. She suggested to not accept report and to request additional information.

Ms. Chambers moved, seconded by Ms. McFetridge to reject Haas Hall's report and have them return with new report by the April 2019, State Board meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Ballard asked that the State Board members send their lists of items they would like to see included in the new report to him by noon on the following Monday.

Dr. Barth asked to move action item A-5a before action item A-3. Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers to hear action item A-5a before action item A-3. The motion passed unanimously.

A-3 District Request for Waivers Granted to Open-Enrollment Charters

a. District Request for Waivers Granted to Open-Enrollment Charters: Dierks School District

Public School Program Advisor Ms. Kelly McLaughlin said Act 1240 of 2015 allows a school district to petition the State Board of Education for all or some of the waivers granted to Open-Enrollment Public Charter Schools that serve students who reside in the school district. Representatives of the Dierks School District are appearing before the Board with a petition of waivers. The district is requesting flexible schedule early start date. Ms. McLaughlin said that their 90 days expires on April 14, 2019, and they are requesting for three years, ending on April 14, 2022. She passed out a handout, containing the district's main reasons for requesting the waiver, to the State Board from the district.

Dierks School District Elementary Principal Ms. Lori Finley provided the district's presentation.

Dr. Barth asked about what would happen if a piece of legislation were passed that took away the need for a particular waiver. Commissioner Key said that is currently part of an ongoing conversation and he does not presently have a good answer for that question.

Dr. Moore asked if they have a Thanksgiving break. Ms. Finley said there would be a five day break during Thanksgiving and an additional day in the fall was also agreed upon.

Ms. McFetridge moved, seconded by Ms. Dean to accept the waiver request. The motion passed unanimously.

b. *(Pulled from agenda)* District Request for Waivers Granted to Open-Enrollment Charters: Flippin School District

This item was pulled from the agenda.

c. District Request for Waivers Granted to Open-Enrollment Charters: Junction City School District

Public School Program Advisor Ms. Kelly McLaughlin said Act 1240 of 2015 allows a school district to petition the State Board of Education for all or some of the waivers granted to Open-Enrollment Public Charter Schools that serve students who reside in the school district. Representatives of the Junction City School District are appearing before the Board with a petition of waivers. The district is requesting flexible schedule early start date. Ms. McLaughlin said that their 90 days expires on April 14, 2019, and they are requesting for three years, ending on June 30.

Junction City School District Superintendent Mr. William Lowe provided the presentation for the district.

Ms. Zook asked if this waiver would conflict with the rules governing them from Louisiana. Mr. Lowe said that it will not.

Dr. Moore asked if they had a week-long Thanksgiving break. Mr. Lowe said yes. Dr. Moore asked if there was community support for the waiver. Mr. Lower said yes.

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

d. District Request for Waivers Granted to Open-Enrollment Charters: Parkers Chapel School District

Public School Program Advisor Ms. Kelly McLaughlin said Act 1240 of 2015 allows a school district to petition the State Board of Education for all or some of the waivers granted to Open-Enrollment Public Charter Schools that serve students who reside in the school district. Representatives of the Parkers Chapel School District are appearing before the Board with a petition of waivers. The district is requesting flexible schedule early start date. Ms. McLaughlin said that their 90 days expires on April 14, 2019, and they are requesting for five years, ending on June 30.

Parkers Chapel School District Superintendent Mr. Michael White provided the presentation for the district.

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

A-4 Hearing on Open-Enrollment Charter School Renewal: Pine Bluff Lighthouse Academy

Director of Public Charter Schools Mr. Reginald Ballard said on December 18, 2018, representatives of Pine Bluff Lighthouse Academy appeared before the Charter Authorizing Panel requesting a renewal of their charter. By a 3-2 vote, the Panel denied the application request. On January 10, 2019, the State Board of Education voted to review the decision made by the Panel.

Attorney Ms. Mary Claire Hyatt provided an overview of the hearing procedures.

Representative Flowers spoke in support the renewal. She said that she spent a few hours touring the school and she thinks that they are doing a great job. She said that she can see the commitment of the teacher and parents at the school. Representative Flowers said that they are doing better regarding attendance. She said that they are doing very well in terms of behavior and literacy. She said that the displacement which would occur should the charter not be renewed would be counterproductive.

Mayor Shirley Washington spoke in support of the renewal with a rigorous improvement plan. She said that she believes that Pine Bluff Lighthouse Academy is an important part of the educational landscape in Pine Bluff because it provides choice for Pine Bluff families.

Executive Director of Lighthouse Charter School Ms. Lenisha Roberts provided an overview of the their mission, who they are, their community, social and emotional programs, academic outcomes and programs, family and community engagement, and their plans for improvement. She said they have gone from 88 out of school suspensions during the 2014-2015 school year to 1 during the 2017-2018 school year through the use of restorative practices. She shared the results of the annual Lighthouse Family Survey, which showed an 89 percent overall family satisfaction rating.

Lighthouse Charter School Principal Renea Smith said the all curriculum used at the school is both research based and aligned to Arkansas State Standards. She provided a brief overview regarding the math and English language arts academic programs.

Lighthouse Charter School Principal Quawana Bryant discussed the intervention instruction for Lighthouse Charter School. She that there are small group daily intervention that meet for 60 minutes, targeted support at the instructional level, and push in and pull out instruction from the Title I Interventionist. Regarding math, there is a diagnostic assessment for fluency, number sense, and gaps in grade level skills. Regarding reading, there is universal screening for dyslexia and decoding skills as well as targeted support for decoding, fluency, and comprehension.

Lighthouse Charter School Regional Academic Director Ms. Amanda Crowder provided growth and performance information for the past three year charter period. She reviewed the value added growth scores for ACT Aspire in comparison with Pine Bluff School District. She said they received the 2017 Statewide High ELA Growth and the 2016 Central "Beating the Odds" in math. She also went over their ESSA scores in comparison with the local school district.

Lighthouse Charter School Math Curriculum Specialist Mr. John Osbourne reviewed the growth in math scores for the ACT Aspire. He said that the average scholars have seen a 2.8 scale score increase for ACT Aspire. He also said that that was a 12 percent increase in the number of students reading on grade level. Mr. Osbourne said that their students are currently exceeding expected Lexile growth by 148 percent. He also discussed that family and community engagement is important to them and they are looking at enhancing their family and community engagement.

Lighthouse Charter School Chief Academic Officer Ms. Sarah Gallagher went over their academic improvement plan for a three year timeline. The plan includes a focus on attendance and instructional design as well as teacher capacity and retention.

There was no one present in opposition.

Ms. Newton asked how they are addressing the chronic absenteeism. Ms. Smith said that they sit down and meet with family about possible needs, such as transportation, before the student is considered in the danger zone. Regarding staff attendance, they have been working on using incentives for attendance; however, the numbers still fluctuate.

Ms. Dean stated that it seems that they have a healthy parental involvement and thanked them for their information.

Dr. Barth asked Office of Innovation for Education Dr. Denise Airola for her professional opinion of the Pine Bluff Lighthouse's portrayal of their data. Dr. Airola said that she was seeing slightly different numbers than what they represented; however, she believes that difference may be from how they constructed their cohorts. She said that only 44 percent of the students who started there in 2016 were still there in 2018 in grades 3-8 to use for data. She reviewed her findings on the data.

Ms. Zook asked if they have and are actively screening for dyslexia. Pine Bluff Lighthouse Academy Special Education Director Ms. Phillips said yes and provided and provided an overview of their process. Ms. Zook asked if curriculum having to be modified for Science of Reading? Ms. Phillips said that it is modified based on student need; however, it is still aligned with state standard expectations.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Ms. Dean, to hear public comment. The motion passed unanimously. Public comment was heard on this action item.

Attorney Ms. Mary Claire Hyatt went over the State Board's options moving forward.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Dr. Hill, to renew Pine Bluff Lighthouse Academy for a period of three years. There was some discussion. Ms. Chambers moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to amend the motion to include annual reporting to the State Board. There was a roll call vote. The motion to amend passed unanimously. There was a roll call vote on the amended motion. The motion passed unanimously.

A-5 Consideration of Charter Authorizing Panel Decisions-Summary Information

a. Consideration of Charter Authorizing Panel Action on Open-Enrollment Charter School Renewal: Covenant Keepers Charter School

Director of Public Charter Schools Mr. Reginald Ballard said on January 15, 2019, the Charter Authorizing Panel met and accepted Covenant Keepers Charter School's voluntary non-renewal.

Mr. Key said that the Department now has concern regarding fiscal integrity issues and asks the State Board to review.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Mr. Williamson, to review the Charter Authorizing Panel's decision on Covenant Keepers Charter School. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Key said there will need to be a special meeting Friday afternoon. There is a special Charter Authorizing Panel meeting happening at the same time as this State Board meeting and expedited action would be needed if the charter is revoked.

Dr. Barth said that the special State Board meeting would happen upon adjournment of the work session.

Attorney Ms. Mary Claire Hyatt said that for special State Board meeting that members need to have a 24 hour notice of the meeting, since this is not the case the State Board would need to vote to waive the 24 hour notice requirement.

Mr. Williamson moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to waive the 24 hour special meeting notice requirement for State Board members and meet for a special meeting upon the completion of the work session. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Ballard discussed the next steps.

**b. Consideration of Charter Authorizing Panel Decision on Open Enrollment Charter School
Amendment: eStem Public Charter Schools**

Director of Public Charter Schools Mr. Reginald Ballard said on January 15, 2019, representatives of eStem Public Charter Schools appeared before the Charter Authorizing Panel requesting an amendment to their charter. By a unanimous vote, the Panel approved the request. No request for the State Board of Education to review the decision made by the Panel was submitted. The State Board may exercise a right of review and conduct a hearing on the Charter Authorizing Panel's determination at the State Board's next meeting.

Ms. Zook express her concern that their growth was below ready. She asked how they would account for the waiver being helpful to their students since it does not appear to be increasing achievement or growth.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Ms. Dean, to not review the Charter Authorizing Panel's Decision. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Consideration of Charter Authorizing Panel Decision on Review of Capital City Lighthouse Academy

Director of Public Charter Schools Mr. Reginald Ballard said on January 15, 2019, representatives of Capital City Lighthouse Academy appeared before the Panel to report on the charter's academic performance. By a unanimous vote, the Panel voted to accept the report. No request for the State Board of Education to review the decision made by the Panel was submitted. The State Board may exercise a right of review and conduct a hearing on the Charter Authorizing Panel's determination at the State Board's next meeting.

Ms. Dean moved, seconded by Ms. Zook, to not review the Charter Authorizing Panel's decision on Capital City Lighthouse Academy. The motion passed unanimously.

d. Consideration of Charter Authorizing Panel Decision on Review of Blytheville New Tech High School

Director of Public Charter Schools Mr. Reginald Ballard said on January 15, 2019, representatives of Blytheville New Tech High School appeared before the Panel to report on the charter's academic performance. By a unanimous vote, the Panel voted to accept the report. No request for the State Board of Education to review the decision made by the Panel was submitted. The State Board may exercise a right of review and conduct a hearing on the Charter Authorizing Panel's determination at the State Board's next meeting.

Ms. Zook said that she noticed that they are schedule to return to the Charter Authorizing Panel in December to provide a status report.

Ms. Newton said that this not the level of performance that she would expect from a conversion charter.

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

Action Agenda B

B-1 Fordyce School District request to transfer educational cooperatives

General Counsel Ms. Lori Freno said the Fordyce School District would like to switch their educational cooperative membership from South Central Education Service Cooperative in Camden to the Southeast Arkansas Educational Service Cooperative in Monticello. The reasoning for the switch was included in the agenda packet and neither education service cooperative had any objections to the requested change.

Ms. Newton asked if they had discussed this change with their staff. Fordyce School District Superintendent Ms. Judy Hubbell said that yes they did and most staff are in agreement with the switch.

Ms. Chambers moved, seconded by Ms. Dean, to approve Fordyce School District's request. The motion passed unanimously.

B-2 Enhancements for Arkansas Better Chance Program

Arkansas Better Chance Program Evaluator Ms. Susan Underwood said during the 2017 Legislative Session, Governor Hutchinson committed to an additional \$3 million a year to improve the quality in the Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) program. There were specific items that are targeted for this funding to include improving and rewarding teacher quality and encourage and enhance innovation. A request for approval is being submitted for consideration as indicated on the chart that delineates the funding per program as follows:

- \$2,704,323.18 or 90.2% of the funding to reward the ABC programs for continuous quality
- \$295,456 or 9.8% of the funding to assist programs to continue the implementation of the competitive Innovation Grants awarded in the areas of Social/Emotional; STEM-Science, Technology, Engineering and Math; Outdoor Eco-friendly Learning Environment (Natural Playground); and/ or Literacy Support.
- \$8,748 Payment Differential

Dr. Moore asked how the grants were determined. Ms. Underwood said that it was a competitive grant and those applying wrote on the areas that would help to enhance their programs and align their request with Early Childhood standards. Dr. Moore asked how many applications were received. Ms. Underwood said they received over 75 applications.

Ms. Zook expressed her concern that the grants are being given based on how well someone can write a grant. In future, she would like to see objective data for why decisions were made the way that they were.

Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to approve the enhancements. Ms. Zook voted no. The final vote was 7-1. The motion passed.

B-3 Praxis® Fundamental Subjects: Content Knowledge (5511) for Alternative Learning K-12 Endorsement

Public School Program Coordinator Ms. Joan Luneau said Arkansas has added an optional endorsement area for Alternative Learning K-12. For the new licensure endorsement, the Department recommends using the Praxis® Fundamental Subjects: Content Knowledge (5511) as the content assessment. The 5511 is currently the licensure test for the Adult Education (PS) license and is an optional assessment for licensed K-12 special education teachers and K-12 alternative learning educators to demonstrate content knowledge and be qualified under Arkansas Qualified Teachers to teach multiple core subjects.

Dr. Moore asked if this is a requirement. Ms. Luneau said that this is not a state requirement; however, a district could decide to require this.

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

B-4 Licensure Assessment for Online Teaching K-12 Endorsement

Public School Program Coordinator Ms. Joan Luneau said Arkansas has added an optional endorsement area for Online Teaching K-12. There is currently not a content assessment available for online teaching. The Department recommends using one of its licensure pedagogy assessments: Praxis® Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT), Praxis® World Language Pedagogy (5841), or edTPA for the endorsement area.

Ms. Newton asked if there are teachers who have already taken this, could they get this endorsement if they applied. Ms. Luneau said that they could, once they get the coursework.

Dr. Moore asked if there was any professional development offered by the Department for online teachers. Mr. Key said no, the Department does not offer that kind of professional development; however Team Digital does.

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

B-5 2018 Student Services Report

Public School Program Coordinator Ms. Suzanne Knowles said Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-1007 requires the Department of Education to report annually on the status of public school student guidance and counseling services to the Governor, the State Board of Education, the Senate Committee on Education,

and the House Committee on Education. The State Board has a copy of the 2018 report. She said that there is a bill in legislature right now which would remove the need of this.

Ms. Newton asked if a district is not meeting the 75 percent direct counseling requirement are there any measures or consequences of this. Ms. Knowles said that if the counselor is not meeting the requirement a letter is sent to the superintendent and the Standards unit. She said that the Department offers counselors and districts a lot of technical support.

Dr. Barth asked if the ratio is the one place with an explicit standard. Ms. Knowles said that 451 students per counselor in the district is explicit.

Ms. Zook asked if Ms. Knowles shares their reports with the Standards for Accreditation. Ms. Knowles acknowledged that they do share the reports.

Ms. McFetridge moved, seconded by Mr. Williamson, to accept the report. The motion passed unanimously.

B-6 Consideration of the 2017-2018 Annual Statistical Report

Finance Program Coordinator Ms. Alisa Moore said in compliance with the provisions of A.C.A. §§ 6-20-2201 et.seq., the Annual Statistical Report of the Public Schools of Arkansas, Public Charter Schools, and Education Service Cooperatives, 2017-2018 Actual and 2018-2019 Budgeted, (ASR) is hereby submitted. The Ranking of Selected Items of the Public Schools of Arkansas, 2017-2018 Actual, (Rankings) are also included. She said that the report has to be issued by approximately February 15. Ms. Moore explained some of how the calculations are done in the report.

Dr. Moore noted that this is very important information.

Mr. Williamson moved, seconded by Ms. Dean, to approve the report. The motion passed unanimously.

B-7 High School Courses and Graduation Requirements

Assistant Commissioner for Learning Services Ms. Stacy Smith said the Arkansas Department of Education presents the following high school course requirements to the State Board of Education for approval: Arkansas Graduation Requirements; Thirty-eight Required Courses; Alternate Pathway to Graduation

Ms. Zook asked if there were any adjustments and Ms. Smith said that this was just cleanup.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Ms. Dean, to accept the report for 2019-2020 school year. The motion passed unanimously.

B-8 Consideration for Endorsement of Engagement Framework

Director for Family and Community Engagement Ms. Kim Wright said the Arkansas Family and Community Engagement Framework has been created to assist with engaging families, schools and communities in two-way communication. The Framework provides an organizational structure for the toolkit (coming soon). These documents (framework and toolkit) will offer helpful resources for anyone interested in enhancing engagement within their local communities and school districts/schools. The Arkansas Department of Education requests the State Board of Education endorse the Engagement

Framework. Ms. Wright said that they are asking for the essentials to be a part of the framework. She also noted that the toolkit is under development.

Ms. Newton asked if there was a toolkit timeframe. Ms. Wright said that it would be ready soon.

Ms. Dean moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers to approve the endorsement. The motion passed unanimously.

B-9 Consideration of Waiver for Standards for Accreditation - Scranton Public Schools

Public School Program Advisor Mr. Timothy Barnes said that Mr. Toby Cook, Superintendent of Scranton Public Schools, is requesting a waiver for 2018-2019 for Standards for Accreditation 1-A.6 Class Size for Grade 6. This is a one year waiver for class size in grade 6. He noted that there was a letter from the superintendent which explains the need for the waiver.

Ms. McFetridge said that she noted that the reason to request the waiver would be rectified by the 2019-2020 school year and wanted to know why they needed to ask for the waiver. Mr. Barnes said that the waiver would help to ensure the school district was in compliance for the rest of the 2018-2019 school year.

Ms. Newton asked if there were any other grade levels that are close to having the same issue. Mr. Barnes said that they are keeping an eye on grades 4-5.

Ms. Zook asked if the teacher has to agree to the new class size. Mr. Barnes said no, they did not.

Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to approve the waiver request.

B-10 Consideration for Release for Public Comment: ADE Special Education and Related Services, Sec. 24.00 Special Education Catastrophic Occurrences

Deputy General Counsel Ms. Courtney Salas-Ford said Ark. Code Ann. 6-20-2303(21) defines "special education catastrophic occurrences" as "individual cases in which special education and related services required by the individualized education program of a particular student with disabilities are unduly expensive, extraordinary, or beyond the routine and normal costs associated with special education and related services provided by a school district", and specifies that funding shall be pursuant to rules promulgated by the State Board. ADE is proposing changes to the funding formula contained in these rules to promote the equitable distribution of resources for students with the most unduly expensive and extraordinary costs associated with the services they need, regardless of the district they attend. ADE staff respectfully requests that the State Board approve these rules to be released for public comment.

Mr. Key said that this is an equity issue of funds.

Ms. Salas-Ford said that this does not affect the services provided, but the amount of reimbursement available.

Ms. McFetridge asked how to make the process easier. Ms. Smith said that currently have to have a detailed report up to the first \$15,000; however, they would like to get to the point that they are looking at the students who are most in need and the high cost items.

Dr. Barth encouraged his fellow State Board members to, if approved for release, to provide public comment on the rules.

Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Ms. Dean, to release for public comment. The motion passed unanimously.

B-11 Consideration for Final Approval: ADE Special Education and Related Services Rules, Sections 2.00 (Definitions) and 5.00 (Free Appropriate Public Education)

Deputy General Counsel Ms. Courtney Salas-Ford said on August 9, 2018, the State Board of Education released the proposed rules for public comment. The Arkansas Department of Education held a public hearing on the proposed rules on July 27, 2018. The public comment period expired on August 15, 2018. Substantive changes were made after the first public comment period, and the rules were released for a second public comment period. The second public comment hearing was held on November 20, 2018, and the second public comment period expired on December 11, 2018. The Arkansas Department of Education received public comments on the proposed rules and made non-substantive changes. The State Board have approved given final approval in January 2019; however, the Department noticed an error in one of the definitions for a child with disability which was required to be changed.

Mr. Williamson moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers to rescind the January vote for final approval from January 2019. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Williamson moved, seconded by Ms. Dean, to give final approval as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

B-12 Appointment of Little Rock School District Community Advisory Board Member

General Counsel Ms. Lori Freno said Ms. Jocelyn Craig has applied to be a member of the LRSD Community Advisory Board to fill a position that is currently vacant. ADE recommends that the State Board appoint Ms. Craig to the LRSD Community Advisory Board.

Ms. Zook asked about training and Mr. Key said that he would be asking LRSD Superintendent Mr. Michael Poore and State Superintendent Dr. Mike Hernandez to ensure proper training.

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

B-13 Report on LRSD Special Education programs

Assistant Commissioner for Learning Services Ms. Stacy Smith said the Special Education unit conducted onsite monitoring of the Little Rock School District January 28- 31, 2019. Monitoring activities included a review of student files; district-submitted data related to teacher caseloads and per-period student numbers; and overall district procedures related to child find, confidentiality, student transfers, and contracted employees. In addition, teacher survey links were provided to the district for distribution among general education teachers and special education professionals. The results of those surveys were considered along with observations of special education classrooms.

The concerns listed were that some schools did have accessibility concerns in specific areas such as access to the stage or playground as well as staff has had limited training in child find and referral processes.

The overall recommendations were as follows.

- Revise written procedures for child find, specifically outlining the referral process when the district has knowledge or reason to suspect a student has a disability and is in need of special education services.
- Implement district-wide training for all teachers and administrators on child find procedures, including student indicators that could trigger the district's child find duty.
- Conduct training for special education professional staff in the following areas:
 - Evaluation timelines
 - IEP timelines
 - Post-Secondary Transition
 - Graduation Summary of Performance
 - Manifestation Determination Review requirements
- Provide spaces for students to receive Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy in non-public parts of the building to protect student confidentiality.

Ms. Smith said that this monitoring was more in-depth than the standard monitoring.

Ms. Zook asked if the team reviewed if the student folders at the central office and the building level matched. Director of Special Education Mr. Matt Sewell said that, as far as they are aware, there was not two set of files. The files were brought to the team from the building to where they were working in the central office building. Ms. Zook asked if anyone on the monitoring team who were trained psychological examiners. Mr. Sewell said that they did not. Ms. Zook asked how they were able to confirm that referrals were legitimate referrals and that the correct tests were given. On the monitoring team's checklist, there is a list of items which outlined the correct measures to be taken, they also reviewed regulations. Ms. Zook asked why the December 2017 child find information was used instead of 2018. This was because the 2018 information had not been publically released. Ms. Zook noticed that there were several reading programs listed. She asked why the district does not have only one program. Mr. Sewell said that question was not part of the monitoring. Ms. Smith said that LRSD said they are working on strengthening their reading programs. Ms. Zook said that multiple programs may be detrimental to students.

Dr. Moore asked if there were specific notes left for teachers. Ms. Smith said that there were no notes left for teachers, the Department will send a breakdown of the observations in a detailed report to the district of areas of concerns.

Ms. Smith said that this is not the comprehensive report for the district. As of the State Board meeting date, the team has not gone into all of the details. The district has not had time to respond to any finding as of yet. Ms. Smith said that the district was very accommodating and the Special Education unit worked very hard to complete this monitoring. The district has 90 days to respond to the monitoring report, upon their receipt of the report. Ms. Smith noted that every district has findings in their initial monitoring and 90 days to review the monitoring.

LRSD Director of Special Education Ms. Cassandra Steele, responding to Ms. Zook's concerns about a comment from Mr. Poore about cleaning up files, there was no clean-up of information for this monitoring, Mr. Poore was referring to organizing and tabbing the needed information.

Mr. Williamson moved, seconded by Ms. Dean, to accept the report. The motion passed unanimously.

B-14 Report on LRSD Dyslexia programs

Assistant Commissioner for Learning Services Ms. Stacy Smith reviewed the Little Rock School District Dyslexia Audit for the State Board. She said that ADE Dyslexia Specialist Ms. Vicki King and a team of 13 Department and educational service cooperative specialists conducted the audit. All high schools were visited on January 29 and 30, 2019; however, they were only able to visit one classroom where students were receiving services. No evidence was provided to indicate LRSD screens high school students that are not referred by a parent or provided an outside evaluation

Cloverdale Middle School, Mabelvale Middle School, Mann Middle School, Pinnacle View Middle School, Pulaski Heights Middle School, and Forest Heights Stem were visited on January 29 and 30, 2019. All schools visited could articulate the screening process, but interviews indicated each school needs additional support for screening and interpretation of data.

All elementary schools were visited except Fulbright and Jefferson. The schools visited could articulate the screening components for Initial and Level I Dyslexia Screening, but there was some confusion about how to interpret the data, when to conduct a Level I Dyslexia Screening, and how to decide which students are exhibiting characteristics of dyslexia and in need of dyslexia intervention services.

The concerns found during the audit were as follows.

- Elementary schools are in triage mode and serve only the most needy.
- Elementary schools do not seem to understand RTI and how to use screening data to determine risk.
- Elementary schools are collecting screening data, but put more emphasis on Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) and summative data.
- Middle school does not have an effective dyslexia program or plan to serve identified students.
- High school dyslexia services are virtually non-existent.
- Schools are not actively screening students for placement in dyslexia intervention.
- When students are identified, there is no indication of how far behind the student is and a sense of urgency for remediation was not observed.
- Many faculty are trained in IMSE, but few actually have time allocated in the daily schedule to provide interventions.
- There is a lack of communication about students transitioning from elementary school to middle school and from middle school to high school.
- There is a lack of coaching support for implementing the dyslexia intervention.

The recommendations following the audit were as follows.

- Develop written procedures for the Dyslexia referral process for all buildings.
- Provide professional development dyslexia awareness focusing on indicators of dyslexia for middle school and high school staff members.
- Provide professional development in RTI, purpose of Initial Screening (prediction of risk), Level I Screening (diagnostic), scoring and interpretation of screening tools, and instructional implications.

- Provide professional development in School-Based Identification of Dyslexia (Level II Screening) for the staff members of the decision making teams and screening personnel in each building.
- Screen students experiencing difficulty at each grade level in accordance with the law.
- Include screening results and required resources when contacting parents
- Adopt a comprehensive dyslexia program that is systematic and explicit.
- Dyslexia interventionists need designated time in the daily master schedule to see dyslexia intervention groups.
- Make website reporting more easily identifiable by adding dyslexia to the file link name.
- List all programs used for dyslexia interventions.
- Include students identified, but not receiving intervention in the third item: Total Number of Students Identified as Exhibiting the Characteristics of Dyslexia.
- Create a district system for tracking students receiving dyslexia intervention from building to building.

Ms. Zook said that she appreciated that Ms. Smith told it like it was. She noted her frustration with the situation.

Ms. House asked if the administrators were also being training in R.I.S.E. The district confirmed that it is so.

Mr. Key said that any proposed curriculum must be approved by Ms. Smith or he won't sign.

Ms. Smith said that no one indicated that they did not want help and they admitted that they didn't have the answer to somethings.

Dr. Barth asked Ms. King would portion of districts around the state have similar challenges related to dyslexia. Ms. King indicated that many may have similarities; however, not as severe. Some schools are doing better than other due to their size and are able to follow the students over years.

Mr. Key said that there are a lot of districts with problems with reading and dyslexia and reminded everyone that R.I.S.E. is still a new program.

Ms. Newton said that she was angry and upset on behalf of the students and parents.

Ms. Zook requested to hear explanations from LRSD representatives. Deputy Superintendent Ms. Sadie Mitchell said that she appreciates the Department staff and assistance that is being provided on-site. She said that hiring a dyslexia specialist for the district had been discussed the previous spring; however, they did not realize that that had an on-site expert. LRSD is working to update their information, policies, and other information. She said that they thought they were screening well and thought it was good to wait to screen. Ms. Zook asked LRSD Deputy Superintendent Mr. Marvin Burton if he was aware that they weren't screening secondary students. Mr. Burton said that he was not fully aware that they were not. He said that they are still working to process the needed trainings. He said he is extremely excited to get a program to service grades K-12.

LRSD Chief Academic Officer Ms. Veronica Perkins said that open and willing to any assistance provided by the Department. She said that they have realized that there was no checks and balances system in place.

Public comment was heard regarding special education in Little Rock School District.

The next steps will be picking an appropriate program for the Little Rock School District to use.

Ms. McFetridge moved, seconded by Mr. Williamson, to accept to the report. The motion passed unanimously.

B-15 Nominating Committee for State Board of Education Chair and Vice-Chair

Dr. Barth will appoint three members to serve on the nominating committee. Ms. Chambers will serve as the chair for the committee and Mr. Williamson and Ms. Newton will also serve on the committee. There will be additional nominations at the April meeting and they will vote during the May meeting.

Public Comment

Public comment was heard on a non-agenda item on the subject of giving medication to students in schools.

Adjournment

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Ms. Dean, to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 5:13 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Tiffany Donovan



Johnny Key, Commissioner



Dr. Jay Barth, Chair