

Minutes
State Board of Education Meeting
Thursday, April 13, 2017

The State Board of Education met Thursday, April 13, 2017, in the Arkansas Department of Education Auditorium. Chair Mireya Reith called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Present: Mireya Reith, Chair; Dr. Jay Barth, Vice-Chair; Dr. Fitz Hill; Joe Black; Diane Zook; Ouida Newton; Charisse Dean; Meghan Ables, 2016 Teacher of the Year; Johnny Key, Commissioner.

Absent: Susan Chambers and Brett Williamson.

Recognition

2017 Designated Master Principals

Arkansas Leadership Academy Director Mr. David Cook said the principals honored today are professional and transformational.

Master Principal Leader Dr. Diana Peer recognized 2017 Designated Master Principal Mrs. Kelli Martin from Greenbrier Middle School. Ms. Martin holds a bachelor's degree from UCA, and a master's and Educational Specialist's degree from Harding. In addition to the Master Principal Program, Kellie is a graduate of Arkansas Leadership Academy's Teacher Institute. She is a National Board Certified Teacher and an Arkansas Leadership Quest Lead Principal. She has volunteered her leadership and service to the educators and students of Arkansas and the country as well as in her community through numerous roles. An Arkansas Diamond Schools to Watch, Greenbrier Middle School has also been recognized by the ADE and the Office of Educational Policy as one of the highest-achieving middle schools in Arkansas.

Ms. Martin said the Master Principal program was life changing.

Dr. Peer recognized 2017 Designated Master Mr. Jeff Wasem from Old High Middle School in Bentonville. Mr. Wasem received his bachelor's degree from John Brown University, a master's from the University of Arkansas, and subsequent graduate work from Harding. In addition to the Master Principal Program, Jeff is a graduate of Arkansas Leadership Academy's Assistant Principal Institute. Beyond his school and district, he also serves the ADE and numerous professional associations committed to increasing student and adult learning. Old High Middle School was recognized as a top 20 middle school in Arkansas based on overall ACT Aspire Achievement. Through Jeff's leadership and focus on growth, the school emphasizes strong relationships between teachers, students and families. Old High Middle School also focuses on

literacy integration designed to increase comprehension in all content areas, and providing relevant, real-world engaging learning experiences.

Mr. Wasem said the Arkansas Leadership Academy is a great source for professional learning.

Dr. Peer announced that she would be retiring June 2017. She expressed her strong belief in the work of the Arkansas Leadership Academy. She thanked ADE and the legislators for their support.

Commissioner Key said Arkansas Leadership Academy was a strong partner. He recognized the work of Mr. Cook and Dr. Peer.

Consent Agenda

Dr. Barth moved, seconded by Dr. Hill, to approve the consent agenda, minus consent item #3 Consideration of Report on Waivers to School Districts for Teachers Teaching Out of Area for Longer than Thirty (30) Days, Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-309. The motion carried unanimously.

Items included in the Consent Agenda:

- Minutes – March 9, 2017
- Minutes – March 10, 2017
- Newly Employed, Promotions and Separations
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #16-141 – Michelle Burnett (Clark)
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #16-171 – Julie Aultman
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #17-042 – Tonia Hurley
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #17-056/#17-057 – Lee Sadler
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #17-067 – Corrie Langford
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #17-138 – Ryan Siebenmorgan
- Review of Loan and Bond Applications

Report

Military Kids in the Classroom

Western Region Program Manager Ms. Erica Wand and State Family Programs Director Lt. Col. Richard Garringer, representing the Arkansas National Guard, provided

the Board with a basic understanding of military organization and structures and how military operations affect the children of service men and women.

Lt. Col. Garringer said the National Guard is federally funded but organized and controlled by the state – Governor Hutchinson and Major General Mark Berry.

Ms. Wand said students may know a different alphabet (Alpha, Bravo, Charlie), time (16:00), lifestyle (deployment, living with a guardian), and schedule (moving multiple times a year, changing schools). She said the adults are engaged in the deployment cycle but the students may not fully understand the changes. Educators may need to be responsive to changing student behaviors such as fear, aggression, clinging, withdrawal, sadness, ideas of the parent's grandeur, regression, excitement, or nervousness. She said military life fosters maturity, growth, independence, flexibility, coping skills, and strong family bonds. She said educators should listen but remain neutral, listen to the fears and concerns of the child, foster communication between parent and child, get excited with them when things go well, and be a pivot point for resources if it gets too far out of their scope of work.

Ms. Meghan Ables shared that she has posted a blog on ways to recognize Military Families. The blog is available on the ADE website at <http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/legal/military-families>.

Recognition

Military Families

Security and Loss Prevention Manager Mr. John Kaminar recognized military families chosen to represent the service and sacrifice of Arkansas military families both in active and reserve status.

Omero Garcia is an 11th Grader at Cabot High School. He was joined by his parents: Sergeant First Class James Howard, who serves in the Arkansas Army National Guard 233rd Regional Training Institute, and Naomi Howard, Executive Assistant to the director of the joint staff of the Arkansas National Guard. Omero also has three siblings.

Jeremiah McGill, Jr., and Emberlee McGill are 3rd and 1st graders at Crystal Hill Elementary School and were escorted by their parents: Petty Officer First Class Jeremiah McGill, an electrician's mate at the Navy Operational Support Center, Little Rock, and Crystal McGill, a data manager for Hewlett Packard Enterprise.

Maddyson Leuhsler and Zachary J. Leuhsler, Jr., 3rd and 1st graders at Cabot Southside Elementary School, and two year old sister Emmalyn, were accompanied by their parents: Staff Sergeant Zachary J. Leuhsler, a C-130 airframe mechanic in the United States Marine Corps, and Sara Leuhsler, a homemaker.

Carson, Emma, and Drew Burns are home school students. They were recognized with their father, Major Erin Burns, who commands Arkansas Air National Guard's 189th Air Wing Comptroller Flight, and their mother, Stacey Burns, a homemaker.

Action Agenda

Consent Item #3: Consideration of Report on Waivers to School Districts for Teachers Teaching Out of Area for Longer than Thirty (30) Days, Ark. Code Ann.§ 6-17-309

Assistant Commissioner for Educator Effectiveness and Licensure Dr. Ivy Pepper said duplicate information was included on the attachment. She presented a corrected report.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Mr. Black, to approve the report on Waivers to School Districts for Teachers Teaching Out of Area for Longer than Thirty (30) Days, Ark. Code Ann.§ 6-17-309. The motion carried unanimously.

A-1 Resolution – Month of the Military Child

Mr. John Kaminar read the resolution for Month of the Military Child.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Ms. Dean, to approve the resolution recognizing April as Month of the Military Child. The motion carried unanimously.

A-2 Consideration of ADE Recommendation of Probationary Status for Lee County High School and Lee County School District

Public School Program Manager Mr. Willie Morris said accreditation issues remain unresolved.

Ms. Dean moved, seconded by Mr. Black, to hear public comment. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment: Mr. Wayne Williams, President of the Lee County School Board of Directors, said the board had issues with the superintendent and did not hire a counselor first semester.

Public Comment: Mr. Patrick Walton, school board member, said the district tried to hire a counselor but the board would not hire the applicant. He said the issue could have been resolved. He said the issue is communication between the board and the superintendent. He said by moving the English teacher to the counseling role, the English class is now being taught by Virtual Arkansas. He said the school board is

trying to govern, but not be involved in the day-to-day operation of the district. He said the superintendent's contract would not be renewed. He said the school board instructed the superintendent to fill the counselor position with another employee in the district. He requested the State Board not place the district and school on probation. He requested that the State Board review the audit. He said the school board is accountable to the students of the district. He said the school board tried to correct a previous issue regarding a stipend for a coach.

Public School Accountability Coordinator Mr. Elbert Harvey requested the district be placed on probation because the district failed to employ a counselor to meet the 1 to 450 teacher-student ratio. He requested the high school be placed on probation because the school failed to offer/teach the 38 required courses. Mr. Harvey said no corrections were submitted during the window of time for corrective action.

General Counsel Ms. Lori Freno said the district did not appeal the probationary status.

Assistant Commissioner for Public School Accountability Ms. Annette Barnes said the ADE would be monitoring the school and district for correction of probationary issues.

Commissioner Key said the district is in fiscal distress, therefore, all financial requests must be submitted to the ADE Office for Fiscal Support for approval before the school board may take final actions that include expenditures.

Lee County School District Superintendent Ms. Willie Murdock said community members presented to the State Board last month. She said she made several personnel recommendations to the local school board but the board denied the recommendations. She said the district was removed from academic distress in one year and was ready to be removed from fiscal distress in two years until the recent issues between the board and superintendent.

Dr. Barth moved, seconded by Ms. Dean, to uphold the probationary status of Lee County High School and Lee County School District. The motion carried unanimously.

Special Report

Professor at the University of Arkansas Dr. Betsy Orr said she brought some student teachers to participate in the State Board meeting. She said the students would be graduating in May 2017.

A-3 District Request for Waivers Granted to Open-Enrollment Charter: Farmington School District

Farmington Career Academy Assistant Principal Mr. Clayton Williams requested an Act 1240 waiver for a media specialist for five (5) years. He requested utilization of a full-

time assistant under the oversight of the high school media specialist during the building transition.

Farmington School District Superintendent Mr. Bryan Law said the district is rapidly growing and involved in a long-range building project. He said the community is very supportive of the district conversion charter for the academies.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Mr. Black, to approve the request for waivers granted to Open-Enrollment Charter for Farmington School District for media specialist for five (5) years. The motion carried unanimously.

A-4 District Request for Waivers Granted to Open-Enrollment Charter: Riverview School District

Riverview School District Superintendent Mr. David Rutledge said the high school is a New Tech school focused on project and problem based learning. He said the requested waivers are the next step toward true personalized learning for all students. He requested waivers from planned instructional time, class size, teaching load, teacher licensure, and library media services. The waivers will permit the district to implement a flex/mod schedule. He said this would also allow the district to improve the intervention response for students in grades 7-12. He said the waivers would be used for CTE and SLT classes.

Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Dr. Barth, to approve the request for waivers granted to Open-Enrollment Charter for Riverview School District for class size and teaching load for five (5) years. The motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Barth moved, seconded by Ms. Zook, to approve the request for waivers granted to Open-Enrollment Charter for Riverview School District for teacher licensure for five (5) years. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Dean moved, seconded by Dr. Hill, to approve the request for waivers granted to Open-Enrollment Charter for Riverview School District for library media services for five (5) years. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Dr. Barth, to approve the request for waivers granted to Open-Enrollment Charter for Riverview School District for planned instructional time for five (5) years. The motion carried unanimously.

A-5 District Extension Request for Waivers Granted to Open-Enrollment Charters: Southeast Education Service Cooperative – McGehee School District

Southeast Education Service Cooperative Director Ms. Karen Eoff shared data reflective of the previous waivers granted to districts in the Southeast Education Service Cooperative.

McGehee School District Superintendent Mr. Thomas Gathen said six (6) educators took advantage of the waivers. He said four (4) of the six (6) teachers have met requirements for licensure.

Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Dr. Hill, to approve the request for waivers granted to Open-Enrollment Charter for Southeast Education Service Cooperative –McGehee School District for teacher licensure for five (5) years. The motion carried unanimously.

A-6 Consideration of the Charter Authorizing Panel's Decision of Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Amendment Request: Arkansas Connections Academy

On March 9, 2017, representatives of Arkansas Connections Academy requested that the Charter Authorizing Panel approve an amendment to the charter. Charter Authorizing Panel approved the request by unanimous vote.

Dr. Barth moved, seconded by Ms. Dean, to not review the Charter Authorizing Panel's decision concerning the open-enrollment public charter school amendment request for Arkansas Connections Academy. The motion carried unanimously.

A-7 Consideration of the Charter Authorizing Panel's Decision of Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Amendment Request: SIATech

On March 9, 2017, representatives of SIATech appeared before the Charter Authorizing Panel requesting an amendment to the charter. By unanimous vote, Charter Authorizing Panel approved the request.

Ms. Dean moved, seconded by Ms. Zook, to not review the Charter Authorizing Panel's decision concerning the open-enrollment public charter school amendment request for SIATech. The motion carried unanimously.

A-8 End-of-Semester Reviews of Open-Enrollment Public Charter Schools in the Initial Year of Operation: Arkansas Connections Academy and Future School of Fort Smith

Public School Program Advisor Ms. Kelly McLaughlin said Ark. Code Ann. § 6-23-406 requires reports from charters in their initial year of operation.

Future School Fort Smith Superintendent Ms. Trish Flanagan said the financial report reflected a point in time. Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Dr. Barth, to approve the end-of-semester reviews of open-enrollment public charter schools in the initial year of operation for Arkansas Connections Academy and Future School of Fort Smith. The motion carried unanimously.

A-9 Consideration of Arkansas Better Chance 2017-2018 Renewal Grants

Ms. Mary McKinney, representing Arkansas Better Chance, said pursuant to the authority granted to the State Board of Education, the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education respectfully requests approval of the Arkansas Better Chance renewal grants for the 2017-2018 school year.

Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Dr. Barth, to approve the Arkansas Better Chance 2017-2018 renewal grants for a total of \$101,328,010. The motion carried unanimously.

A-10 Recommendation of the Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards, Birth through 60 Months

Ms. Mary McKinney said many stakeholders participated in the development of the standards. She said public meetings were held across the state. She said the domains of the standards were also vetted by experts in the field. She said the standards would be translated into Spanish. She said professional development would be provided.

Commissioner Key said this work is an example of how the agencies are working together to ensure there are no gaps in learning for students.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Dr. Hill, to approve the Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards, Birth through 60 Months. The motion carried unanimously.

A-11 Consideration of Waiver Request for Teaching License – Ms. Gale Richmond

Ms. Bilenda Harris-Ritter said Ms. Richmond is a licensed educator who applied for renewal of her license. On February 24, 2017, the Department notified Ms. Richmond that she is disqualified from holding a teaching license under Ark. Code Ann. §6-17-410. Ms. Richmond is a teacher in the Forrest City School District and has requested a waiver of the disqualification from the State Board. Ms. Harris-Ritter recommended that the waiver request be granted.

The State Board's review the evidence presented.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Ms. Dean, to approve the teaching license waiver request for Ms. Gale Richmond. The motion carried unanimously.

A-12 Consideration of Action Regarding the Little Rock School District

During the March 9, 2017, State Board Meeting, State Board Vice-Chair Dr. Jay Barth announced that he would submit an action agenda item for consideration on the April State Board agenda. As per the State Board Operating Guidelines, Dr. Barth submitted a request to place an item on the agenda. Requests to place items on the agenda shall be received by the liaison in writing at least twenty (20) days before the regular Board meeting. State Board Liaison Ms. Deborah Coffman received the request by email on Friday, March 24, 2017.

By majority vote on January 28, 2015, the State Board removed the local school board. In the absence of the board of directors, the State Board directed the Commissioner to assume all authority of the board of directors as may be necessary for the day-to-day governance of the school district.

Dr. Jay Barth said the division within the community has continued. He said he hoped the division could begin to heal. He said the upcoming millage vote is very important to the district. He said the new accountability system will immediately convert the LRSD to Level 5 Intensive Support. He said consensus was not achieved for an immediate return to local control. He said he wanted to leave the item on the agenda for a State Board conversation. He said the community needs clarity for the future of the district.

Commissioner Key said the Department is committed to returning LRSD to local control. He said Act 930 will provide tools for returning the district to local control. He shared a timeline for Act 930 and said the law would go into effect at the beginning of August 2017. He said the Department will work with LRSD to develop a transition plan. He said LRSD and Dollarway (currently under state authority) will transition to Level 5 Intensive Support. He said Act 930 removes academic distress and implements a comprehensive support system. Commissioner Key committed that LRSD will implement the requested building projects as outlined in the LRSD millage before the patrons in May 2017.

Public Comment Senator Joyce Elliott said the Board is an impediment to LRSD progress. She said school closures and millage decisions are being made without an elected school board. She said the State Board has a powerful authority to determine when the district will have local control. She said 94% of the schools are not in academic distress. The reason the State Board assumed authority was academic distress.

Public Comment Representative Clarke Tucker said democracy is very important. He said it was important for an elected official to represent the people. He said people expected to have input and accountability. He asked for a sense of urgency to return the district to local control. He asked the State Board to set a timeline for returning the district to local control.

Public Comment Dr. Ginny Blankenship said she is a parent of a kindergarten student in LRSD. She said the state takeover has served as a wake-up call. She said she has joined many boards and groups dedicated to supporting the district. She said the initiatives for reading are working to improve reading in the state. She said she is committed to supporting the Department of Education in efforts to move learning forward. She said the continued takeover is causing issues in the community. She asked the State Board to take action today.

Little Rock School District Superintendent Mr. Mike Poore said he has taken extraordinary measures to create relationships with the community in lieu of a local board. He said he has tried to put decisions out for public input before decisions are made. He said he has been implementing ideas that have been discussed in the district for over a decade. He said it is his responsibility to regain local control as soon as possible. He said the improvements are a result of the work of students, teachers, parents, and community members. He said his focus is on students.

Board members made statements, read prepared statements, and discussed options.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to request that ADE and Mr. Poore communicate with the public about the requirements for returning LRSD to local control and that the State Board conduct work sessions to discuss next steps for LRSD and Dollarway. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports

Report-1 Chair's Report

Ms. Zook shared that businesses are adopting schools. She said a business has adopted Dollarway and are contributing to their needs for playground equipment.

Ms. Zook said the State Chamber of Commerce is making "Be Pro, Be Proud" available to schools. She also thanked Ms. Newton and Ms. Ables for their great presentation at the State Chamber of Commerce.

Report-2 State Board Standing Committees, Special Committees, Liaisons, and Appointments Report

ForwARd Arkansas Liaison Dr. Barth said ForwARd was successful in increasing funding to Pre-K. He said ForwARd would be meeting next week.

Deeper Learning Grant Manager and Appointment Ms. Reith said she is finalizing the first year report to NASBE and determining year two (2) goals. She said the work session tomorrow will address the ESSA application. She said the May work session

would address the Department Vision for Excellence. She said the June work session would invite the original team to come back together to discuss progress toward deeper learning. She said she would consider the recommended work session to discuss next steps for LRSD and Dollarway.

ESSA Steering Committee Liaison Ms. Newton said parts of a draft plan will be available on the ADE website in the coming weeks.

Standing Committee on Academic Distress Chair Ms. Zook asked members to review the planned schedule for reporting and requested to move the scheduled May reports (LRSD and Dollarway) to June.

Little Rock Area Public Education Stakeholder Group Liaison Dr. Barth said the next meeting when the group will work on a draft report is April 24, 2017.

National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) Liaison Ms. Reith said Arkansas is leading the way in several conversations including ESSA. Deputy Commissioner Dr. Mark Gotcher shared that he met with Congressman Womack and heard a presentation from Education Secretary Ms. Betsy DeVos while attending the CCSSO meeting. Dr. Barth said he met with Senator Cotton and Senator Boozman. Dr. Barth said the NASBE new member institute will be held in June.

Dr. Hill said the Student Discipline Committee met today and the committee is working on a communication plan for the legislative changes. He said the committee is discussing how discipline should be handled and the effect of suspension and expulsion on student learning. Commissioner Key said several partners are contributing to the planning. Dr. Hill said he discussed the trauma of violence on all of the students in the community and ways to support the students.

Special Education Liaison Ms. Zook said the committee is reviewing dispute resolution.

Report-3 Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Key announced Dr. Ivy Pfeffer will be the Deputy Commissioner, replacing Dr. Gotcher. He provided a list of Department of Education sponsored acts. Commissioner Key said it is the Department's goal to post the first draft of the ESSA plan on April 24, 2017 for public comment.

Commissioner Key said the Department received over 500 requests for information from the Teach Again campaign. He said 212 teachers renewed their licenses and 160 educators are in the process of license renewal.

Commissioner Key said Arkansas meets 10 of 10 indicators for computer science as noted in <http://www.edc.org/state-states-landscape-report-state-level-policies->

supporting-equitable-k-12-computer-science. He shared a promotional video for computer science that played in local theaters.

Commissioner Key announced that Meghan Ables will join the Department's communication unit July 2017. He said she will be writing best practices and educational interest stories.

Report-4 2016 Arkansas Teacher of the Year Report

2016 Arkansas Teacher of the Year Ms. Meghan Ables shared information from her attendance at the SREB Conference, Southside (Batesville) Teacher Cadet forum, ETS meeting, and the Arkansas State Chamber meeting.

Adjournment

Mr. Black moved, seconded by Dr. Jill, to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 4:53 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Deborah Coffman



Johnny Key, Commissioner



Mireya Reith, Chair