



## **AGENDA**

### **STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

February 12, 2016

Arkansas Department of Education  
Academic Distress Subcommittee - ADE Auditorium

1:00 PM

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### **Reports**

#### **Report-1 Chair's Report**

*Presenter: Vicki Saviers*

### **Consent Agenda**

#### **C-1 Minutes - September 11, 2015**

*Presenter: Deborah Coffman*

### **Action Agenda**

#### **A-1 Progress Report on Pine Bluff School District schools Classified as Academic Distress and/or Priority**

*The Sub-Committee will consider progress related to the Pine Bluff School District's efforts to support schools in academic distress and priority status. The progress of student achievement at each school will be highlighted. For committee consideration, the Pine Bluff School District Superintendent and School Board President will provide a general update of the progress.*

*Presenter: Elbert Harvey and Dr. Richard Wilde*

### **Reports**

#### **Report-1 School Improvement Technical Assistance Report**

*Members of the School Improvement Unit will highlight general progress of schools classified in ESEA Priority and/or State Academic Distress status. The committee will consider changes in the reporting format.*

*Presenter: Dr. Richard Wilde*

**Minutes**  
**State Board of Education Special Committee on Academic Distress Meeting**  
**Friday, September 11, 2015**

The State Board of Education Special Committee on Academic Distress met Friday, September 11, 2015, in the Arkansas Department of Education Auditorium. Chair Vicki Saviers called the meeting to order at 10:33 a.m.

Present: Vicki Saviers, Chair; Diane Zook; Brett Williamson; and Ouida Newton.

Additional State Board members present: Charisse Dean; Joe Black; and Susan Chambers

Absent: Toyce Newton

**Reports**

**Report-1 Chair's Report**

No report.

**Consent Agenda**

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Ms. Chamber, to approve the consent agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

Item included in the Consent Agenda:

- **Minutes - August 14, 2015**

**Action Agenda**

**A-1 Progress Report from Blytheville High School - A New Tech School and Blytheville Middle School, Blytheville School District**

Mr. Elbert Harvey said the Blytheville High School - A New Tech School and Blytheville Middle School, Blytheville School District were classified as Academic Distressed on February 12, 2015.

Blytheville School District Superintendent Mr. Richard Atwill said the district has embraced the academic distress classification. He said the district was employing a strategic process for improvement.

District Curriculum Director Ms. Sally Cooke said the district was utilizing data to identify the root causes and target the needed changes. She said partnerships have been formed among staff between the primary, elementary, middle school, and high school.

New Tech Director Ms. Teryn Spears said instruction and culture are critical to the change needed at the Blytheville School District. She said the culture included student empowerment for their own learning, enabling students to learn through 1-1 technology, and engagement of students in problem-based learning. Ms. Spears said the student surveys indicated reductions in absenteeism and out of school suspensions. She said the students are taking ownership for their learning.

Mr. Atwill said the culture was changing. He said the district had declining enrollment but the community stakeholders are participating in the changes at the schools. He said the students have a voice in the changes. He said teaching and learning are the focus and technology is one of the many tools being used.

Ms. Cooke said the district has streamlined the approach to using data to inform all school improvement decisions and efforts. She said leaders were observing in classrooms and providing feedback to teachers. She said all educators are serving as interventionists and have received training. She said intervention time was built into the schedule for the middle school and high school. Ms. Cooke said there was vertical alignment of instruction and intervention in the district.

Ms. Spears said the students were initially resistant to the change but now the students are embracing the changes and holding each other accountable for their learning. She said the community was volunteering as support for the schools.

Ms. Spears said the students are matched with an advisor who assists the students with their career planning. She said the district is also partnering with the local technical college to provide opportunities for students to learn specialized skills.

The team discussed how the district was addressing the four improvement recommendations.

ADE School Improvement Specialist Dr. Robert Toney said the district offers no excuses. He the staff has a culture of candor to ask the tough questions in order to find the best solutions.

Mr. Atwill said the school board has been very supportive and involved in the school improvement.

The State Board commended the district on their progress and encouraged the team to continue to reach out to other regional communities for support.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 12:09 p.m.

*Minutes recorded by Deborah Coffman.*



**PINE BLUFF SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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Pine Bluff School District has been working diligently to improve student achievement by focusing and going deeper on the following items.

**1. A list of activities/ steps that have been completed/ taken to assist the needs of improvement schools.**

- Hiring of School Improvement Specialist for each of the academic distress schools, priority and focus schools
- Monthly leadership meetings with Central office staff
- Board work study meeting held at each school starting with improvement schools ( Principal gives an overview of school needs)
- Each month a school presents at the board meeting
- Teacher and support staff of the month is acknowledged by the superintendent and board Members
- Superintendent and team went to each school and met with entire staff to discuss needs and them complied them and had teams work on meeting the needs

**2. Agenda and Minutes of School Board meeting are in the packet**

**3. A list of external providers supporting school improvement and the evaluation of the effectiveness of these services within your school district.**

- University of Virginia Turn Around Program and the Keith Sanders group evaluations are in the process of being completed on each group.
- We had a site visit from UVA and they were very impressed with growth and provided areas for growth that we began to work on immediately. UVA reviews and collects data on four areas leadership, support and accountability, instructional infrastructure and talent management.

- Keith Sanders group in providing professional development on unpacking standards, rigor, and lesson planning
- UVA retreat with staff members from the academic distress, priority schools and Central office staff.

#### **4. A list of actions specific schools are taking to meet the ADE's recommendation**

- They are listed Academic Distress/ Priority School recommendations in your packet.

#### **5. District next steps for supporting schools in meeting ADE's recommendations**

- Conversations are in progress to extend the UVA contract for another year
- In order to build capacity the Principals (February 15) instructional coaches and assistant principals are in training with Arkansas Rivers Co-Op with Jim Knight model of coaching and culture and climate
- All Special Education Teachers will be trained on writing IEP's by the Department of Education

The office of Curriculum and Instruction has focused on the research of McTighe and Wiggins and is currently developing the framework using understanding by Design. Curriculum development work began in October and is scheduled to continue through the month June. Common assessments along with specific resources are being developed and identified to correlate with each lesson.

Professional development is being provided to all teachers according to walk through data, formal observations, drop in visits etc. Teachers are being trained on analyzing assessment data for next steps and RTI processes in each school. Technology department and office of professional development has teamed and launched a district wide technology plan focusing on ways to better support and train novice and veteran teachers on effective ways to use technology in the classroom.

Next Steps:

1. Roll out the curriculum to all teachers in August and provide professional development through the school year to ensure district wide congruence.
2. Train all teachers on the Teaching and Learning Cycle focusing on how to maximize all 9 high yield strategies.
3. Go deeper with professional training and support for all schools on Renaissance Learning and Compass.



## **Pine Bluff School District Academic Distress**

Belair Middle School

### **Recommendation 1:**

District and school leadership, with guidance from the internal school improvement specialist assigned to the school, should plan and provide ongoing, job-embedded professional development to support teachers' effective implementation of research-based instructional strategies to meet the individual learning needs of all students

### **School District Support**

Based on CWT and Focus walk Data the following job embedded PD was provided

- Unpacking standards
- Increase Instructional time to 55 minutes
- Literacy Framework within a 55 minute classroom
- Math Framework within a 55 minute classroom
- Teaching Literacy skills within the Science and Social Studies content
- Hands on activities for mathematics
- Writing effective lesson plans and teacher plans
- Kagan Cooperative learning
- Content based PD(trained based on what standards are being taught)

### **Recommendation 3:**

Grade-level teams should collaboratively develop pre- and post-unit assessments within instructional units. These units should include strategies that differentiate instruction so all student's educational needs are met.

### **School District Support**

- PD on instructional strategies and unpacking standards by Keith Sanders Group
- PD on data driven decision by UVA
- Data Dives after each interim assessments

- PD for assistant principals instructional coaches monthly on assessment, coaching, instructional strategies, data, lesson planning, teacher feedback, and best practices provided by the Arkansas Three Rivers Co-op
- Weekly Professional Learning Communities weekly by content facilitated by principal, assistant principal and instructional coaches

**Recommendation 4:**

School leadership should include time in the master schedule for grade-level teams to meet and regularly analyze various student achievement data sets (state-mandated, interim, and classroom assessments) for tracking student progress and promoting differentiated instruction. These ongoing data analyses enable teachers to determine students' individual learning needs and provide interventions in a timely manner throughout the school year.

**School District Support**

- Weekly professional learning communities horizontal
- Weekly monitoring of instructional Strategies thru CWT and Focus Walks
- Provide data dives with school improvement specialist every 4-6 weeks based on TLI data
- Create bi weekly common assessment assessments
- Create Unit assessments by content
- Master Schedule allowed common planning time for Math and Literacy teams
- Support for SIO to create intervention, enrichment, afterschool and Saturday tutoring

## **Pine Bluff School District**

### Academic Distress Recommendations

Pine Bluff High School

#### **Recommendation 1:**

**School leadership should facilitate the assessment of all students' reading levels with a standard reading assessment to accurately determine reading levels.**

#### **School District Support:**

- Provided materials from Renaissance Learning
- Provided Training for all teachers on Renaissance Learning
- Provide up to date computers for assessments
- PD on X-Books by scholastic for students reading below grade level
- Provides Books of students interest and grade level
- Chief School Reform Officer, School Improvement Specialist and Literacy Coach reviewed data every four- six weeks and it is shared with the District Cabinet Meetings

#### **Recommendation 2:**

**School leadership should facilitate the development of a school-wide literacy initiative aligned to Arkansas frameworks and inclusive of research-based instructional strategies.**

#### **School District Support**

- School Improvement Officer and Literacy Coach provided training for all Literacy teachers on Arkansas framework
- Literacy and Math Framework created based on the 52 minute classrooms
- PD from scholastic on X-Books and ID'S for students reading below grade level and ID's CWT with SIO weekly to provide feedback and materials needed
- Weekly Professional Learning Communities
- Modeling by Literacy Coach and School Improvement Specialist

### **Recommendation 3:**

School leadership, in collaboration with the internal school improvement specialist, should develop a plan to monitor and assess the effectiveness of the literacy initiative.

#### **School District Support**

- Provide fulltime school improvement specialist who attends weekly meetings
- Provided common meeting time to meet with literacy teachers
- Provide feedback and support based on the data for each class
- Monitored the plan biweekly to check effectiveness by growth of the students

### **Recommendation 4:**

District leadership should support technological resources so teachers can effectively integrate technology into classroom instruction, and students can access programs for enrichment and remediation.

#### **School District Support**

- The Cabinet has restructured the technology department to ensure that all schools are being met with technology

### **Recommendation 5:**

District leadership should develop a plan to ensure consistent availability of instructional technology.

#### **School District Support**

- The district will create a technology committee that will meet bi weekly to create and monitor the instructional needs of each school.

### **Recommendation 6:**

Building leadership should identify materials and supplies that are needed for students and teachers and then plan methods for securing necessary materials and equipment.

#### School District Support

- The Chief School Reform Officer and the Schools Improvement Specialist meet week to ensure that all materials and needs are met

### **Recommendation 7:**

School leadership should develop a process for regularly examining student data to set interim goals with instructional teams or all faculty as appropriate. The process could include the following: (1) spend more time working with teachers and improving student achievement through PLC participation and classroom observations (2) work with the leadership team to establish PLC expectations for teachers.

#### School District Support

- School Improvement Specialist will attend weekly PLCS
- Master Schedule will allow common planning time
- Minutes and Agendas will be established and maintained
- One Faculty meeting a month will be a data dive and create school wide initiatives.



# Pine Bluff School District Priority School

Jack Robey

## School District Support

Based on CWT and Focus walk Data the following job embedded PD was provided

- Unpacking standards
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- Literacy Framework within a 52 minute classroom
- Math Framework within a 52 minute classroom
- Teaching Literacy skills within the Science and Social Studies content
- Hands on activities for mathematics
- Writing effective lesson plans and teacher plans
- Kagan Cooperative learning
- Content based PD(trained based on what standards are being taught)

## School District Support

- PD on instructional strategies and unpacking standards by Keith Sanders Group
- PD on data driven decision by UVA
- Data Dives after each interim assessments
- PD for assistant principals instructional coaches monthly on assessment, coaching, instructional strategies, data, lesson planning, teacher feedback, and best practices provided by the Arkansas Three Rivers Co-op
- Weekly Professional Learning Communities weekly by content facilitated by principal, assistant principal and instructional coaches

## School District Support

- Weekly professional learning communities horizontal

- Weekly monitoring of instructional Strategies thru CWT and Focus Walks
- Provide data dives with school improvement specialist every 4-6 weeks based on TLI data
- Create bi weekly common assessment assessments
- Create Unit assessments by content
- Master Schedule allowed common planning time for Math and Literacy teams
- Support for SIO to create intervention, enrichment, afterschool and Saturday tutoring