

**Minutes
State Board of Education Meeting
Thursday, March 12, 2015**

The State Board of Education met Thursday, March 12, 2015, in the Auditorium of the Department of Education Building. Chairman Sam Ledbetter called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Present: Sam Ledbetter, Chairman; Toyce Newton, Vice-Chair; Alice Mahony; Dr. Jay Barth; Diane Zook; Joe Black; Vicki Saviers; Kim Davis; Jonathan Crossley, Teacher of the Year; and Tony Wood, Commissioner.

Present via phone: Mireya Reith (morning)

Absent: Mireya Reith (afternoon)

Report

Recognition of Arkansas Teachers from The People's Republic of China Who Are Teaching Mandarin Chinese Language and Culture to Arkansas Students

Special Projects Administrator Dr. Frank Servedio said in conjunction with the University of Central Arkansas Confucius Institute (UCA CI), the Department was assisting Chinese teachers with the teacher licensure process through the Arkansas Professional Pathway to Educator Licensure. He said this two-year program began in the summer of 2008. He said each teacher is from the People's Republic of China and has a master's degree in Teaching Chinese as a Second Language. He said a Memorandum of Understanding with the Chinese Language Council International agreed to explore the possibility of a joint, yearly collaboration to select, license, and place qualified teachers of Chinese language in Arkansas schools. He said currently there were twelve (12) from China teaching in Arkansas schools and three teaching at the UCA CI.

Director of the Confucius Institute at the University of Central Arkansas Dr. Guo-ou Zhuang introduced the following teachers: Ms. Jing An, Hot Springs School District; Ms. Lu Chen, Bentonville School District; Ms. Zixi Hu, North Little Rock School District; Ms. Ci Li, Lighthouse Academy, Jacksonville; Ms. Na Li, Rogers School District; Ms. Yuanyuan Liu, Conway School District; Ms. Tingting Tian, ASMSA, Hot Springs; Ms. Shu Weng, North Little Rock School District; Ms. Yan Yang, Wynne School District; Ms. Lu Ye, Cross County School District; Ms. Qianying Zhang, Cabot/Beebe School District; Ms. Qian Zhang, Little Rock School District; Ms. Dongmei Qin, UCA; Ms. Lingyi Wang, UCA; and Dr. Xiaohong Lu, UCA.

Consent Agenda

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

Items included in the Consent Agenda:

- Minutes - February 12, 2015
- Minutes - February 13, 2015
- Newly Employed, Promotions and Separations
- 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 #14-065 – LaKenya Takako Riley
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #14-086 – Carolyn Laverne Harshaw
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #14-087 – Billy Eugene Carter
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #14-117 – Evelyn Lemard Thrower
- Consideration of Waiver Request for Teaching License – Romunda Hamilton
- Consideration of Waiver Request for Teaching License – Sharon Powell
- Consideration of Waiver Request for Teaching License – James Prine

Action Agenda

Consideration of Waiver for School Board Member Training – Greenland School District

Department General Counsel Mr. Jeremy Lasiter said ADE Rules Governing Required Training for School Board Members require six hours of training annually by each board member. Failure to comply with these rules results in a violation of Section 24.18 of the Standards for Accreditation. He said Greenland School Board Member Mr. James Miller has been a board member of good standing since 1995. Mr. Miller was unable to acquire the six hours of training in 2014 due to work commitments and family health issues. He said currently, he has completed three hours and has another three hours planned that will meet the requirements for 2015. He said the Greenland School District requested the Board grant a waiver of Standard 24.18 pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-201 (b) (2) (A) for the purposes of waiving the board-training requirement for Mr. Miller for 2014.

Ms. Saviers moved, seconded by Mr. Davis, to approve the waiver for school

board member training for Mr. James Miller, school board member from the Greenland School District. The motion carried unanimously.

Consideration of the Administrative Consolidation of the Hughes School District into One (1) or More School Districts

Department General Counsel Mr. Jeremy Lasiter said pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-13-1601 et seq., the State Board of Education shall administratively consolidate the Hughes School District with or into one (1) or more school districts by May 1, 2015 to be effective July 1, 2015. The Hughes School District's average daily membership fell below three hundred fifty (350) students for the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years. He said the Hughes School District did submit a voluntary petition for administrative consolidation or annexation. Mr. Lasiter said the ADE received notice on March 9, 2015, from Forrest City School District to withdraw their petition. Mr. Lasiter said the state had to receive a proposal by March 1 to consider administrative consolidation.

The Board took no action.

Consideration for Removal of the Lee County School District from State Authority

Assistant Commissioner of Fiscal and Administrative Services Dr. Eric Saunders said the Lee County School District was classified by the State Board of Education as being in Academic Distress on April 8, 2013. The State Board of Education exercised its authority to place the Lee County School District under state authority and remove the local school board on April 10, 2014. The Lee County School District was classified by the State Board of Education as being in Fiscal Distress on May 8, 2014. The Lee County School District was classified by the State Board of Education as being on Year Two Probation for Accreditation on June 12, 2014. The State Board of Education removed the Lee County School District from Academic Distress on February 12, 2015. Dr. Saunders said the Lee County School District remains under fiscal distress and will continue to be monitored by the ADE Fiscal Distress Unit.

ADE Coordinator of Fiscal Distress Ms. Hazel Burnett said through the support of consultants, the district has improved accounting procedures and is expected to have an \$800,000 fund balance at the end of the school year. She said the next fiscal distress report to the Board would be May 2015.

Public School Accountability Coordinator Mr. Elbert Harvey said the 3rd quarter report would include the latest data. He said the Lee County Schools continue to be identified as priority schools and will continue to receive support from the

school improvement unit.

Lee County School District Superintendent Ms. Willie Murdock said the facilities bond is making progress to the buildings. She said she plans to reconfigure the district into K-6 and 7-12 schools. Ms. Murdock said the district has made large gains in technology with the goal of 1-1 for students. She said the district is utilizing paper/pencil PARCC tests this year based on a waiver from the ADE. Ms. Murdock said she is hosting meetings with the community to encourage and inform community persons about running for school board positions.

Dr. Barth moved, seconded by Ms. Zook, to approve the removal of the Lee County School District from state authority upon the election and training of school board members. The motion carried unanimously.

Continuation of Fiscal Distress Classification under authority of the state for the Pulaski County Special School District; and allowing the community advisory board to remain in place for one (1) additional year

Assistant Commissioner of Fiscal and Administrative Services Dr. Eric Saunders said pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-1905, on March 30, 2011, the Arkansas Department of Education identified the Pulaski County Special School District as a school district in fiscal distress. The Arkansas Department of Education made this identification because the Pulaski County Special School District met the following fiscal distress indicator(s) as set forth in Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-1904: material state or federal audit exceptions or violations. The Pulaski County Special School District appealed the fiscal distress identification. On May 16, 2011, following a public hearing, the State Board of Education classified the Pulaski County Special School District as a school district in fiscal distress, pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-1906. On June 20, 2011, the Arkansas Department of Education exercised its authority under Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-1909 to assume authority over the Pulaski County Special School District. The Arkansas Department of Education removed the Pulaski County Special superintendent and school board, and appointed an individual to administratively operate the Pulaski County Special School District under the supervision and approval of the Commissioner of Education. Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-1905, on January 19, 2012, the Pulaski County Special School District was identified by the Arkansas Department of Education as a district in fiscal distress based upon the following additional indicator: A declining balance determined to jeopardize the fiscal integrity of a school district. The Pulaski County Special School District did not appeal the fiscal distress identification. On February 13, 2012, following a public hearing, the State Board of Education classified the Pulaski County Special School District as a school district in fiscal distress, with the additional indicator, pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-1906. On May 13, 2013, the State Board of Education approved the continuation of Fiscal Distress Classification under authority of the state for the Pulaski County Special School

District; and approval for the Commissioner of Education to appoint a community advisory board pursuant to Act 600 of 2013. On September 9, 2013, the State Board of Education approved the appointment of a community advisory board for the Pulaski County Special School District. Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6- 20-1910, by April 1 of each year following the appointment of a community advisory board, the State Board of Education shall determine the extent of a fiscally distressed school district's progress toward correcting all issues that caused the classification of fiscal distress and shall:

- (1) Allow the community advisory board to remain in place for one (1) additional year;
- (2) Return the school district to local control by calling for the election of a newly elected board of directors if: (a) The Arkansas Department of Education certifies, in writing, to the State Board of Education and to the school district that the school district has corrected all criteria for being placed into fiscal distress; and (b) The State Board of Education determines the school district has corrected all criteria for being placed into fiscal distress; or (3) Annex, consolidate, or reconstitute the school district pursuant to Title 6 of the Arkansas Code.

Dr. Saunders said the Arkansas Department of Education continues to review the status of the Pulaski County Special School District's compliance with its Fiscal Distress Improvement Plan and its efforts to remove itself from fiscal distress. That review is ongoing. Because that ongoing review will extend past the date of this meeting, and because this meeting is the last meeting prior to April 1, the Department recommended that the Community Advisory Board remain in place at this time. However, should the Department's review indicate that PCSSD is no longer in fiscal distress and has met all of the goals in its Fiscal Distress Improvement Plan, the Department would return to the Board with a recommendation that the district be removed from fiscal distress classification and from state authority.

Pulaski County Special School District Superintendent Dr. Jerry Guess said the community advisory board process has been a good method for transitioning the district back to local control.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to approve the continuation of Fiscal Distress Classification under authority of the state for the Pulaski County Special School District; and allowing the community advisory board to remain in place for one (1) additional year. The motion carried unanimously.

Continuation of Fiscal Distress Classification under authority of the state for the Helena-West Helena School District; and allowing the community advisory board to remain in place for one (1) additional year

Assistant Commissioner of Fiscal and Administrative Services Dr. Eric Saunders said pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-1905, on July 20, 2010, the Arkansas

Department of Education identified the Helena-West Helena School District as a school district in fiscal distress. The Arkansas Department of Education made this identification because the Helena-West Helena School District met the following fiscal distress indicator(s) as set forth in Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-1904: (1) A declining balance determined to jeopardize the fiscal integrity of the school district. (2) Material state or federal audit exceptions or violations. The Helena-West Helena School District did not appeal the fiscal distress identification. On September 30, 2010, following a public hearing, the State Board of Education classified the Helena-West Helena School District as a school district in fiscal distress, pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-1906. On June 20, 2011, the Arkansas Department of Education exercised its authority under Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-1909 to assume authority over the Helena-West Helena School District. The Arkansas Department of Education removed the Helena-West Helena superintendent and school board, and appointed an individual to administratively operate the Helena-West Helena School District under the supervision and approval of the Commissioner of Education. On May 13, 2013, the State Board of Education approved the continuation of Fiscal Distress Classification under authority of the state for the Helena-West Helena School District; and approval for the Commissioner of Education to appoint a community advisory board pursuant to Act 600 of 2013. On September 9, 2013, the State Board of Education approved the appointment of a community advisory board for the Helena-West Helena School District. Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-1910, by April 1 of each year following the appointment of a community advisory board, the State Board of Education shall determine the extent of a fiscally distressed school district's progress toward correcting all issues that caused the classification of fiscal distress and shall:

- (1) Allow the community advisory board to remain in place for one (1) additional year;
- (2) Return the school district to local control by calling for the election of a newly elected board of directors if: (a) The Arkansas Department of Education certifies in writing to the State Board of Education and to the school district that the school district has corrected all criteria for being placed into fiscal distress; and (b) The State Board of Education determines the school district has corrected all criteria for being placed into fiscal distress; or (3) Annex, consolidate, or reconstitute the school district pursuant to Title 6 of the Arkansas Code.

Dr. Saunders said based upon the information presented, the Arkansas Department of Education recommended that the Board allow the community advisory board to remain in place for one (1) additional year.

Helena-West Helena School District Superintendent Mr. John Hoy said currently the Helena-West Helena Community Advisory Board has four members. He said the district is working on improved procedures for accounting and inventory.

Commissioner Wood said he would contact local legislators to follow the process of recommending members to fill the vacant positions on the Helena-West

Helena Community Advisory Board. He said if lay leaders are not available with the zones, at-large positions might be used to fill the vacancies.

Helena-West Helena Community Advisory Board President Mr. Andrew Bagley asked the Board to return the district to local control. Mr. Bagley said he was not speaking on behalf of the Helena-West Helena Community Advisory Board.

Helena-West Helena School District parent Mr. James Valley said the district has been under state authority for seven of the last ten years. He asked the Board to return the district to local control.

Mr. Lasiter said the Department would need to certify that a district has met all requirements for removal from fiscal distress. He said at this time, Helena-West Helena School District has not met the requirements and has not received certification from the Department.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Ms. Saviers, to approve the continuation of Fiscal Distress Classification under authority of the state for the Helena-West Helena School District; and allowing the community advisory board to remain in place for one (1) additional year. The motion carried unanimously.

Charter Authorizing Panel Action on Consideration of Fountain Lake Charter School High School-Requirement to Report on Progress

Office of Educational Options Director Ms. Cindy Hogue said on November 20, 2014, the Charter Authorizing Panel approved the application for the Fountain Lake Charter High School with the requirement that representatives from Fountain Lake return in the spring to report on the progress of the charter. On January 8, 2015, the State Board of Education reviewed the decision of the Charter Authorizing Panel and voted to affirm the decision of the Charter Authorizing Panel. On February 18, 2015, by a unanimous vote, the Charter Authorizing Panel removed the requirement for Fountain Lake High School to return in the spring to report on the progress of the charter.

The Board took no action.

Charter Authorizing Panel Action on Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Amendment: Haas Hall Academy, Fayetteville

Office of Educational Options Director Ms. Cindy Hogue said the State Board of Education approved the application for Haas Hall Academy in April 2004. The charter is approved to serve students in grades 8-12 with a maximum enrollment of 320. Representatives of Haas Hall Academy appeared before the Charter Authorizing Panel on February 18, 2015 to request an amendment to the current

charter. By a unanimous vote, the panel approved the amendment for Haas Hall Academy, Fayetteville.

Mr. Davis recused himself from this action item.

Manager of Paradigm Building, LLC Mr. Tracy Hoskins asked his attorney to speak on his behalf. Attorney Mr. Max Deitchler said Paradigm Building, LLC is in support of the charter school. Mr. Deitchler asked the Board to review the decision made by the panel based on the lease agreements. He said his client did not have an opportunity to submit his concerns to the Charter Authorizing Panel in February 2015 because the Haas Hall Academy submitted a letter to his client after the panel meeting.

Attorney for Haas Hall Academy Mr. Mark Henry said he would work with Mr. Deitchler to resolve any lease issues. He said the lease was not a known risk at the time of the Charter Authorizing Panel meeting.

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Mike Hernandez said the Finance and Administration Unit reviews charter funds monthly.

Ms. Saviers moved, seconded by Ms. Zook, to not review the Charter Authorizing Panel action on the Open-Enrollment Public Charter School amendment for Haas Hall Academy, Fayetteville. The motion carried unanimously.

Charter Authorizing Panel Action on Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Amendment: KIPP Delta Public Schools, Forrest City

Office of Educational Options Director Ms. Cindy Hogue said the State Board of Education approved the application for KIPP Delta Public Schools Forrest City Campus in October 2014. The charter was approved to serve students in grades 5-8 with a maximum enrollment of 400. Representatives of KIPP Delta Public Schools appeared before the Charter Authorizing Panel on February 18, 2015 to request an amendment to the current charter. By a unanimous vote, the panel approved the amendment for KIPP Delta Public Schools, Forrest City.

Dr. Barth moved, seconded by Mr. Black, to not review the Charter Authorizing Panel action on the Open-Enrollment Public Charter School amendment for KIPP Delta Public Schools, Forrest City. The motion carried unanimously.

Charter Authorizing Panel Action on Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Amendment: Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy

Office of Educational Options Director Ms. Cindy Hogue said the State Board of Education approved the application for Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy

in November 2012. The charter is approved to serve students in grades K-12 with a maximum enrollment of 685. Representatives of Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy appeared before the Charter Authorizing Panel on February 18, 2015, to request an amendment to the current charter. By a unanimous vote, the panel approved the amendment for Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy.

Ms. Mahony moved, seconded by Ms. Saviers, to not review the Charter Authorizing Panel action on the Open-Enrollment Public Charter School amendment for the Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy. The motion carried unanimously.

Charter Authorizing Panel Action on Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Amendment: Ozark Montessori Academy

Office of Educational Options Director Ms. Cindy Hogue said the State Board of Education approved the application for Ozark Montessori Academy in October 2014. The charter was approved to serve students in grades K-8 with a maximum enrollment of 280. Representatives of Ozark Montessori Academy appeared before the Charter Authorizing Panel on February 18, 2015 to request an amendment to the current charter. By a unanimous vote, the panel approved the amendment for Ozark Montessori Academy.

Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Mr. Black, to not review the Charter Authorizing Panel action on the Open-Enrollment Public Charter School amendment for the Ozark Montessori Academy. The motion carried unanimously.

Pulaski County Special School District Request for Review of Charter Authorizing Panel Action on Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Renewal: Academics Plus Charter School

Office of Educational Options Director Ms. Cindy Hogue said the State Board of Education approved the application for Academics Plus Charter School in May 2001. The charter was approved to serve students in grades K-12 with a maximum enrollment of 850. Representatives of the Academics Plus Charter School appeared before the Charter Authorizing Panel on February 18, 2015 to request a 20-year renewal for the charter. By a 4-1 vote, the panel approved the renewal application for Academics Plus Charter School for a period of 5 years. Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-23-701 et seq., the Pulaski County Special School District requested the State Board of Education conduct a hearing at its next meeting to review the decision made by the Charter Authorizing Panel.

Pulaski County Special School District Attorney Mr. Sam Jones asked the Board to review the goals of the Academic Plus Charter School. He said the charter

school has failed to meet the expectations set by the school. He asked the Board to review the charter renewal.

PCSSD Director of Accountability Dr. Robert Clowers said Academics Plus Charter School has declined in test scores. He said the school's subgroups are too small to measure to see if the achievement gap is closing. He said the majority of students taking Algebra are not meeting the ACT expectation to take College Algebra without remediation.

Academics Plus Charter School Executive Director Mr. Rob McGill said the charter school is meeting all goals with the exception of the goals related to NWEA. He said the charter school has improved test scores and is performing above PCSSD. He said 100% of ninth grade students take the ACT and the district average is higher than PCSSD.

Academics Plus Charter High School Principal Ms. Kimberly Willis said the students provided feedback on their needs and this information was utilized to change instructional methods and mathematics curriculum.

Academics Plus Charter Elementary School Principal Ms. Diane Gross said the school has flexibility to hire/fire as needed to ensure the right educator is in the classroom.

Academics Plus Charter Federal Programs Coordinator Ms. Kelly Turney said the school has started the PARCC exam online.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to not review the Charter Authorizing Panel action on the Open-Enrollment Public Charter School renewal of the Academics Plus Charter School. Dr. Barth and Ms. Mahony voted no. The final vote was 6-2. The motion carried.

Charter Authorizing Panel Action on Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Renewal: Arkansas Arts Academy

Office of Educational Options Director Ms. Cindy Hogue said the State Board of Education approved the application for the Arkansas Arts Academy (formerly Benton County School of the Arts) in February 2001. The charter was approved to serve students in grades K-12 with a maximum enrollment of 825.

Representatives of the Arkansas Arts Academy appeared before the Charter Authorizing Panel on February 18, 2015 to request a 20-year renewal for the charter. By a unanimous vote, the panel approved the renewal application for Arkansas Arts Academy for a period of 3 years.

Ms. Saviers moved, seconded by Mr. Davis, to not review the Charter Authorizing Panel action on the Open-Enrollment Public Charter

School renewal for the Arkansas Arts Academy. The motion carried unanimously.

Charter Authorizing Panel Action on Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Renewal: Arkansas Virtual Academy

Office of Educational Options Director Ms. Cindy Hogue said the State Board of Education approved the application for Arkansas Virtual Academy in September 2003. The charter was approved to serve students in grades K-12 with a maximum enrollment of 500. Representatives of the Arkansas Virtual Academy appeared before the Charter Authorizing Panel on February 18, 2015 to request a 5-year renewal for the charter. By a unanimous vote, the panel approved the renewal application for Arkansas Virtual Academy for a period of 5 years.

Arkansas Public School Resource Center Attorney Mr. Tripp Walter said the Arkansas Virtual Academy would work with ADE for course approval in relation to the music waiver requested.

Commissioner Wood said the Charter Authorizing Panel approved an enrollment cap of 2000 students.

Ms. Mahony moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to review the Charter Authorizing Panel action on Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Renewal for the Arkansas Virtual Academy. Dr. Barth voted no. The final vote was 6-1. The motion carried.

Charter Authorizing Panel Action on District Conversion Public Charter School Renewal: Mountain Home High School Career Academy

Office of Educational Options Director Ms. Cindy Hogue said the State Board of Education approved the application for the Mountain Home High School Career Academy in March 2003. The charter was approved to serve students in grades 9-12 with a maximum enrollment of 1600. Representatives of the Mountain Home High School Career Academy appeared before the Charter Authorizing Panel on February 18, 2015 to request a 5-year renewal for the charter. By a unanimous vote, the panel approved the renewal application for the Mountain Home High School Career Academy for a 5-year period.

Dr. Barth moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to not review the Charter Authorizing Panel action on the District Conversion Public Charter School renewal for the Mountain Home High School Career Academy. Mr. Davis and Ms. Mahony voted no. The final vote was 5-2. The motion carried.

Consideration for Approval of ABCTE as an Accelerated Teaching Program and Approval for ABCTE Content and Pedagogy Assessments

Assistant Commissioner for Human Resources, Licensure and Educator Effectiveness Ms. Ivy Pfeffer said under Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-409, the ADE has approved Teach for America (TFA) and Arkansas Teacher Corps (ATC) as Accelerated Teacher Programs. The statute also allows the ADE to approve other accelerated teaching programs. Additional accelerated teacher programs in Arkansas include the Arkansas Pathway for Professional Teaching License (APPEL) and the Provisional Professional Teaching License (PPTL). She said the American Board for Certification of Teachers of Excellence (ABCTE) is a non-profit organization established by the U. S. Department of Education dedicated to building strong communities through preparing, certifying, and supporting teachers. ABCTE has asked Arkansas to license teachers with ABCTE certification. Ms. Pfeffer said the Department recommended that ABCTE be approved by the Board as an accelerated teaching program. Candidates would initially receive a provisional license, and the ADE would develop an MOU with ABCTE to outline the process to ensure Arkansas' licensing requirements are met and also a plan of support that candidates would receive for a period of up to 3 years, with the possibility of completion and issuance of a standard license after 2 years pending requirements are met. Approval of ABCTE's program would require that Arkansas accept ABCTE candidates' scores on ABCTE's required assessments (content and pedagogy), which differ from the PRAXIS assessments. She said the MOU would ensure that all assessments that Arkansas currently required are taken but allowed the substitution of the ABCTE assessment in place of the Praxis Content and Pedagogy assessments.

President and CEO of the American Board for the Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE) Mr. Shawn McCollough said ABCTE offered special education and elementary certification. He said that ABCTE teachers are retained at 85%.

Ms. Mahony moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to table consideration of ABCTE as an Accelerated Teaching Program and approval for ABCTE Content and Pedagogy Assessments. Ms. Zook voted no. The final vote was 6-1. The motion carried.

Declaration of Critical Academic Shortage Areas of Licensure for 2015-2016

Assistant Commissioner for Human Resources, Licensure and Educator Effectiveness Ms. Ivy Pfeffer said pursuant to Ark. Code. Ann. § 6-15-403 and § 6-81-609 it is required that the State Board of Education declare licensure areas as the Critical Academic Shortage Areas. The Critical Shortage areas as approved by US Department of Education for 2015-2016 are as follows: Gifted

and Talented, Foreign Language, Library Media, Mathematics, Special Education, Drama/Speech, Family and Consumer Sciences, and Art.

Ms. Pfeffer said the licensure unit was working with the South Central Comprehensive Center and the Missouri State Department of Education to develop a critical shortage model that considered geography in addition to data considered in the current report.

Dr. Barth moved, seconded by Mr. Davis, to approve the Critical Academic Shortage Areas of Licensure for 2015-2016. The motion carried unanimously.

Hearing on Waiver Request for Teaching License – Eric Marquis Williams

Professional Licensure Standards Board (PLSB) Attorney Cheryl Reinhart said on January 13, 2015, the Department advised Mr. Eric Marquis Williams that a background check revealed an offense that disqualified him for a teaching license under Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-410(c) as well as employment in an Arkansas public school. Mr. Williams has requested a waiver of the grounds for denial of his standard teaching license.

Mr. Williams said he took a plea deal that included a felony. He said he is currently teaching for a university.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to approve a waiver request for a teaching license for Eric Marquis Williams with one-year probation with the conditions that Mr. Williams clear another background check and receive no additional ethics complaints. The motion carried unanimously.

A-18 Consideration of Revocation of Teaching License – Nicole Francis

Item A-18 was pulled from the agenda.

A-19 State Board Review of PLSB Evidentiary Hearing Findings and Recommendations – PLSB Case No. 13-047; Beverly Garner-Harris

Item A-19 was pulled from the agenda.

A-20 State Board Review of PLSB Evidentiary Hearing Findings and Recommendations –PLSB Case No. 14-066; Jason Vaughn Marshall

Professional Licensure Standards Board (PLSB) Attorney Jennifer Liwo said Mr. Jason Vaughn Marshall was in violation of Standard 1: An educator maintains a

professional relationship with each student, both in and outside the classroom. She said following an evidentiary hearing on October 24, 2014, the Professional Licensure Standards Board Ethics Subcommittee recommended that the State Board suspend Mr. Marshall's license for twenty-four (24) months, assess a \$100.00 fine, and require Mr. Marshall to obtain a written statement from a licensed mental health professional stating that Mr. Marshall does not pose a threat to students by the end of the suspension period.

Mr. Marshall's attorney, Mr. John Kennedy said Mr. Marshall resigned from his teaching position. He said the PLSB was supposed to use a preponderance of the evidence. He said two students made a complaint that an inappropriate video was shown to students. He said the State Police and Department of Human Services (DHS) investigated the complaint.

Ms. Liwo said a PLSB investigator was appointed to this case. She said the evidence hearing required a preponderance of the evidence. She said the evidence met the criteria of unethical conduct by an educator.

Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Ms. Saviers, to uphold the suspension of Mr. Marshall's license for twenty-four (24) months, assess a \$100.00 fine, and require Mr. Marshall to obtain a written statement from a licensed mental health professional stating that Mr. Marshall does not pose a threat to students by the end of the suspension period.

Dr. Barth made a substitute motion, seconded by Ms. Zook, to impose a suspension of Mr. Marshall's license for twelve (12) months, assess a \$100.00 fine, and require Mr. Marshall to obtain a written statement from a licensed mental health professional stating that Mr. Marshall does not pose a threat to students by the end of the suspension period. Ms. Newton and Ms. Saviers voted no. The final vote was 5-2. The motion carried.

Consideration for Final Approval: Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing the Public School Rating System on Annual School Report Cards

Department Deputy General Counsel Mrs. Lori Freno said Act 696 of 2013 (codified in Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-15-2105 and 6-15-2106) required that each public school receive a letter grade score of "A" through "F" effective with the 2014-2015 school year, and empowered the State Board of Education to approve a method for assigning letter grades. She said following public comment, this Board approved a calculation formula, but changed how students attending an Alternative Learning Environment (ALE) with its own LEA number would be included in the calculation. On December 1, 2014, this Board released for public comment the rules with revised sections 4.03 and 4.04 (which sections addressed ALEs). The proposed rules have gone through a second and third

public comment period, and no changes were made to the rules as a result of the comments received.

Dr. Barth moved, seconded by Mr. Davis, to approve the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing the Public School Rating System on Annual School Report Cards. Ms. Mahony voted no. The final vote was 6-1. The motion carried.

Consideration of the Little Rock School District Progress Update

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Hernandez said the State Board of Education directed the Little Rock School District (LRSD) to form a civic advisory committee to review the progress of the LRSD in meeting established goals to be removed from state authority. The application process closed February 20, 2015. Due to inclement weather, a meeting of state legislators to review the applications and select zone representatives has been rescheduled for Monday, March 16, 2015 at 3:30 pm. The legislators will select seven (7) regional representatives, and one (1) philanthropic organization representative. Principals from the six schools in academic distress will select two (2) students and two (2) teachers to complete the committee. The LRSD Civic Advisory Committee will meet monthly on the third Tuesday of each month from 5:00-6:00 pm in the Little Rock School District Administration Building, 810 W. Markham.

Dr. Hernandez said Commissioner Wood appointed Mr. Baker Kurrus to assist LRSD in a review of its finances and to develop a plan to achieve long-term stability. On Friday, February 27, 2015, Mr. Kurrus and LRSD Superintendent Dr. Suggs announced the following committee members: Roger Ball, Bruce Moore, Peggy Nabors, Bobby Roberts, Verna Simmons and Steve Strickland. The committee will make recommendations to the LRSD Superintendent and Commissioner (acting in the role of the school board).

Dr. Hernandez said the LRSD would submit a letter to the Arkansas Division of Legislative Audit for a state audit of FY15. LRSD has previously utilized a private accounting firm but will utilize the legislative audit for future reviews.

Dr. Hernandez said the LRSD would transition to APSCN, e-finance, and e-school. The transition will include staffing, professional development and support. The tentative timeline is July 2017.

Dr. Hernandez said Dr. Suggs submitted the February 26 board agenda, including a proposal for revising the general education graduation requirements, changing from an A/B Block Schedule to a 7-period day for all middle schools and three high schools, and continuation of the Hall High School reconfiguration plan. These items are under consideration by the Commissioner.

Commissioner Wood said the Department needed an accurate analysis of the financial stability of the district in order to make the best academic decisions.

Ms. Zook clarified that there are school level plans in place for academic improvement. She said once the Department has the needed financial information then a district level academic plan would be finalized.

Dr. Suggs said he was working on tentative plans for organizational structure and leadership for the six academic schools to present to the Commissioner. He said he is working for a sustainable change in these specific schools and in the district.

The Board took no action.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:26 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Deborah Coffman.


Sam Ledbetter, Chair


Johnny Key, Commissioner