

Minutes
State Board of Education Meeting
Friday, February 13, 2015

The State Board of Education met Friday, February 13, 2015, in the Auditorium of the Department of Education Building. Chairman Sam Ledbetter called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

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

Absent: Toyce Newton, Vice-Chair

Reports

Chair's Report

Ms. Reith said she attended the grand opening of the EAST Initiative national headquarters.

Ms. Mahony said National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) Government Affairs Committee met in January 2015 and worked on Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) recommendations and other education issues.

Ms. Zook said there are many opportunities for students who want to help other students and the community.

Dr. Barth said he would be traveling with the science team to work on the Next Generation Science Standards.

Mr. Crossley said he would speak at the Clinton School on February 18, 2015. He said he was working with the ADE Communications Team to create a series called, *Profiles in Teacher Leadership*.

Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Wood had no report.

Special Committee on Parent Communication

Special Committee on Parent Communication Chair Ms. Alice Mahony said on Thursday, April 10, 2014, State Board of Education Chair Ms. Brenda Gullett appointed her to serve as chair of this special committee. She said Ms. Gullett also appointed Ms. Mireya Reith and Mr. Joe Black to serve on the Special Committee on Parent Communication. The committee members were directed to work with the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) staff to increase parent and teacher communication that focused on ensuring students are college and career ready. Stakeholders were encouraged to join the committee. She said the committee submitted a final report and requested that State Board Chairman Ledbetter consider the committee work completed.

Chairman Ledbetter thanked the committee members and accepted the final report from the Special Committee on Parent Communication.

Update on Content Standards and Assessment

Assistant Commissioner of Learning Services Dr. Debbie Jones said in compliance with Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-2012, the Curriculum and Instruction Unit has established college and career readiness assessments and transition courses available for school districts. She said in the 2015-2016 school year, high schools must offer students a college and career readiness assessment, and high schools must offer a college transition course for students who fail to meet cut scores established by the Department of Higher Education.

Dr. Jones said the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention provided funding for 19 states to build the capacity of districts and schools to deliver exemplary sexual health education, increase adolescent access to health services, and establish safe and supportive environments for students and staff.

School Based Health Services Director Ms. Jerri Clark said fourteen (14) school districts have signed on to participate in the five-year program implementation.

Dr. Jones said PARCC was running assessment trials designed to correct errors and make testing as smooth as possible. She said PARCC was providing support through weekly webinars. She said the ADE Assessment Unit called each test coordinator to make sure issues are addressed quickly. Dr. Jones recognized the excellent work of Ms. Hope Allen and the Assessment Unit. Dr. Jones said Arkansas would administer the PARCC Assessment 2015.

Licensure/Office of Educator Effectiveness Update

Assistant Commissioner for Human Resources, Educator Effectiveness and

Licensure Ms. Ivy Pfeffer said two new licensure areas were being added. She said eight universities would offer a course of study for dyslexia therapists. She said the licensure unit was also working on licensure for computer science.

Ms. Pfeffer said her office received approximately 5000 public comments regarding the Proposed Rules for Educator Preparation Programs.

Ms. Pfeffer said her office is working on the Equitable Access Initiative by gathering data, considering metrics to be used, conducting root-cause analysis of findings and planning for stakeholder engagement. She said that Jones Elementary (Springdale School District) Principal Ms. Melissa Fink is an example of how all of the data should guide and serve the needs of students. Ms. Pfeffer said the culture and leadership in the building are in direct relation to the success of the work.

Ms. Fink said the school based health center has helped the school provide services to the whole child. She said the Master Principal program from the Arkansas Leadership Academy has been the best professional development and has helped her meet the needs of her current work. She said the professional learning communities in her school have evolved over time. She said through building the capacity of the teachers, everyone is taking a leadership role. She recommended partnerships for schools in academic distress. She said 80% of students met proficiency; however, her school is still labeled a needs improvement school. She supported accountability but the timelines are not always realistic for each child – especially ELL students who are new to the language. Ms. Fink recommended more conversation about growth at an appropriate rate instead of only test scores.

Progress Report on Schools Classified in Academic Distress

Public School Accountability Coordinator Mr. Elbert Harvey said this report highlighted progress during the second quarter of the 2014-15 school year regarding the assistance and reviews provided by ADE School Improvement Specialists in schools that were classified in Academic Distress, July 10, 2014.

Pine Bluff School Superintendent Dr. Linda Watson said the support from the external provider was a benefit to the district and schools. She said the schools are examining data. Dr. Watson said ADE School improvement specialist Dr. Mitzi Smith was in the schools weekly.

ADE School Improvement Specialist Dr. Mitzi Smith said the report submitted was based on her observation and evidence collected during her onsite visits.

Mr. Harvey said the two key areas of concern for low performing schools are quality leadership and teacher recruitment.

City Year Little Rock

Vice President and Executive Director City Year Little Rock Ms. Sarah Roberson said City Year is a national program focused on solving the dropout issue. She said City Year Little Rock served Grades 3-9 in Mabelvale Elementary School, Baseline Elementary School, Mabelvale Middle School, Cloverdale Middle School, J.A. Fair High School and McClellan High School. She said members worked with students on academics, attendance and behavior through goal setting. She said members work along side of teachers to help students. She said City Year also provides professional development to all members. Ms. Roberson said members are working to bridge English and Spanish.

Mr. Madhav Shroff, City Year Corps Member AT&T Team serving at J. A. Fair High School, said his job is to help improve students' confidence in their ability to master the academics. He shared a story of tutoring a student in math.

Ms. Davne McCleary, City Year Corps Member serving at Mabelvale Middle School, said it was important to build a great relationship with the students. She said members work before and after school. She said she was able to individualize tutoring for the students.

Commissioner Wood said he was very supportive of continuing the City Year Little Rock work in the Little Rock School District.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

Minutes recorded by Deborah Coffman.



Sam Ledbetter, Chair



Tony Wood, Commissioner of Education