

**Minutes**  
**State Board of Education Meeting**  
**Friday, July 11, 2014**

The State Board of Education met Friday, July 11, 2014, in the Auditorium of the Department of Education Building. Chairman Sam Ledbetter called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

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

Absent: none

Mr. Ledbetter recognized Representative Charlotte Douglas and Representative Mark Biviano.

**Reports**

**Chair's Report**

Ms. Mahony and Dr. Barth recently participated in a science meeting in Kentucky.

Dr. Barth said Arkansas received a \$4000 grant from the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) to bring in a public speaker and conduct a work session for the Board regarding Science Standards.

**Commissioner's Report**

Commissioner Wood said Jacksonville is proceeding with bringing forth a September vote to become a district. He said the Board has two next steps. If the community votes in favor of the Jacksonville district, then the Board will be asked to issue an order to create the new district. He said the Board would also be asked to appoint a seven member interim board for Jacksonville. Mr. Wood recommended that patrons of the Jacksonville District have the opportunity to submit applications for the interim board. He committed to bringing a list of names to serve on a review committee that could later recommend a list of seven names for the interim board. He said the interim board would not consist of zoned membership. The interim board would oversee the zoning of the district. Chairman Ledbetter asked Board members to contact Commissioner Wood if they have any questions or concerns.

## **Special Committee on Parent Communication**

Special Committee Chair Alice Mahony said the committee met June 13, 2014, and that many people attended. Ms. Mahony said the committee found that communication is not flowing to all parts of the state.

Ms. Saviers said it is important to find ways to better communicate with parents and assist with locating school data and other information.

Ms. Newton said parents and communities struggle with education terminology and acronyms. She said we need communication to increase involvement. She said it is the responsibility of the Board to ensure communication is reaching the parents.

Ms. Reith said there is a need to use multiple methods to share communication. She said localized strategies to communicate with parents and community would be very important. She said the community organizations are willing and eager to assist with relaying communication.

## **A Philanthropic Partnership to Enhance Educational Achievement in Arkansas**

Dr. Sherece Y. West-Scantlebury, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, and Kathy Smith, Senior Program Officer of the Walton Family Foundation, proposed to use resources to work with the Board to develop a comprehensive plan to improve P-12 education in Arkansas. Dr. West-Scantlebury said the comprehensive plan would contain specific recommendations for academically distressed districts and would be supported by data, best practices and models such as the Delaware Vision 2015 Plan led by the Rodel Foundation. Ms. Smith said the foundations have been working together to support Race to the Top applications, implement the Common Core State Standards, support the Arkansas Campaign for Grade Level Reading, and enhance high-quality teacher and leader pipelines. Dr. West-Scantlebury asked the Board to partner with the foundations to support focused work in academic distress schools, long-term planning, and connecting early care, P-12 and Higher Education.

Board members expressed gratitude for the opportunity to partner with the foundations. Members said this project would bring laser focus to needed actions and evaluation. Members were also interested in how the best practices would be replicated across the state.

Ms. Smith said the collaboration would identify the options and support systems needed in schools. A written plan, leveraged resources, and targeted interventions are included in the project.

Dr. West-Scantlebury said the project would begin with a *State of Education in Arkansas Report* due Fall 2014. She said based on the data in the report, the next step would be to identify focus areas. Dr. West-Scantlebury said the RFP process would be used to identify an expert(s) to assist with the work. She said by December the project would plan to have a set of white papers of findings, and by late February or March a plan of action would be drafted.

Chairman Ledbetter requested the foundations work with the Department to make this an action item on the August Board agenda.

### **Student Discipline Report**

Director of the Office for Education Policy Dr. Gary Ritter said Act 1329 of 2013 requires the ADE to evaluate the impact of school discipline on student achievement and report findings to the State Board of Education and school districts. He said this report was produced by the Office of Education Policy using data from the ADE Data Center and that the data were self-reported by districts. He said districts could have varying discipline policies and levels of implementation by personnel. Dr. Ritter said this report is a good first step. He cautioned against drawing conclusions based on this data. He said there are many future questions that need to be asked.

Assistant Commissioner of Research and Technology Cody Decker said the state collects 19 infraction codes, and additional codes are being added for school year 2014-2015. He said districts are able to view data in a secure format on the Student GPS Dashboard. He said communication to districts regarding requirements and updates would be reported through a commissioner's memo. He also said no student identifiable data was shared in the development of this report.

### **Update on Common Core State Standards, PARCC and School Improvement**

Assistant Commissioner for Learning Services Dr. Debbie Jones said the Department is engaged in a framework revision cycle. She said the teacher committees are working on Fine Arts, Social Studies and Science.

Dr. Jones said thirty-five (35) schools and two charter schools are engaged in an ACSIP pilot.

State National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Coordinator Dr. Pamela Byrd said Arkansas participated in the Grade 12 NAEP pilot. Arkansas

was one of two states that scored significantly higher in Math and Reading on the state grade 12 results from 2009 to 2013.

Student Assessment Director Melody Morgan said a collaborative team has conducted digital readiness for online assessment on-site visits. She said 191 districts have had on-site visits. She said the goal is to complete the remaining district visits this month. She said 146 of the 191 districts have also completed a survey of bandwidth and devices, and only 11% of completed surveys indicated a gap in relation to online testing minimum requirements.

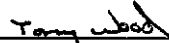
### Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:43 a.m.

*Minutes recorded by Deborah Coffman.*



Mr. Sam Ledbetter, Chair



Mr. Tony Wood, Commissioner