

**In The Matter Of:**  
*ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION*  
*Special Meeting re: Marvell-Elaine School District*

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*July 7, 2023*

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*Sharon K. Hill, CCR*  
*(501) 680-0888*

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ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

JULY 7, 2023  
 1:00 p.m.

A P P E A R A N C E S

BOARD MEMBERS:

DR. SARAH MOORE, Chairman  
 MS. KATHY ROLLINS, Vice Chairman  
 MS. ADRIENNE WOODS  
 MR. STEVE SUTTON  
 MR. RANDY HENDERSON  
 MS. LISA HUNTER  
 MR. JEFF WOOD

NON-VOTING PARTICIPANTS:

MR. JACOB OLIVA, Secretary of Education

DESE LEGAL:

MS. COURTNEY SALAS-FORD

LOCATION:

ARKANSAS DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION  
 - Auditorium  
 #4 Capitol Mall  
 Little Rock, AR 72201

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P R O C E E D I N G S

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2 1) CONSIDERATION OF ACTION REGARDING THE MARVELL-ELAINE SCHOOL

3 DISTRICT

4 CHAIRMAN MOORE: We'll begin with our action

5 agenda, the consideration regarding Marvell-Elaine

6 School District. Stacy.

7 MS. SMITH: Good afternoon, everyone.

8 Chauncy, will you bring up the presentation,

9 please?

10 MR. CHAUNCEY WILLIAMS-WESLEY: Yes, ma'am.

11 MS. SMITH: Okay. We are resuming today the

12 Marvell-Elaine School District, the action taken by

13 this board back in April and considering some recent

14 rulings from our court system. And so we're just

15 going to kind of walk through. There are several

16 options for the board today under legislation that

17 you could take with the district. And so today we're

18 just going to kind of outline that for you and then

19 figure out where we need to go.

20 MR. DAN DAVIS: One second, it's reactivating.

21 MS. SMITH: Okay.

22 MR. CHAUNCEY WILLIAMS-WESLEY: It's good now.

23 MS. SMITH: All right. You have seen this slide

24 before. A lot of the slides in this presentation are

25 ones that you have seen before. Again, this kind of

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Marvell-Elaine School District . . . . .	3
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1 gives you a broad overview of the number of years

2 we've been working with the district and where we

3 currently are in the 22-23 school year, taking us

4 more specific into this school year and the actions

5 that were taken according to the district.

6 In November, the district was classified In Need

7 of Level 5 support. The State Board at that time

8 directed the Department to do a deep-dive analysis of

9 the district, which we did. And the district was

10 also placed on the under-350 list.

11 In December, DESE performed an analysis which

12 was presented to the State Board. After that

13 presentation, the State Board determined not to grant

14 the waiver for under-350 and the district was

15 required to consolidate.

16 From December to March, it fell to the district

17 to see if they could find a consolidation partner.

18 They met with surrounding districts; however, they

19 did not bring forth a proposal that all parties

20 agreed to. So then it fell to the Department to find

21 a consolidation plan for the district. During that

22 time the Arkansas LEARNS legislation passed.

23 And so in April of this school year, this is

24 when we had the State Board meeting in Marvell, at

25 the community, at the school. During that meeting we

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1 did the assumption of authority over the district  
 2 under Level 5. We made the local board in an  
 3 advisory capacity, and we directed -- the State Board  
 4 directed the Department to pursue a transformation  
 5 contract.  
 6 So in April and May of that month we conducted  
 7 interviews. Board members from Marvell community,  
 8 people from Marvell participated in that action. We  
 9 did interviews and we made then a recommendation to  
 10 the Board in May to enter into a transformation  
 11 contract with Friendship Education Foundation that  
 12 was approved.  
 13 In May, Friendship began transition work, did  
 14 interviews, getting ready for being able to be in  
 15 charge of the school for the new school year.  
 16 In May, there was a lawsuit regarding Arkansas  
 17 LEARNS and, specific, the emergency clause. The  
 18 Judge's decision that came out which -- recently was  
 19 that the emergency clause was not effective, and it  
 20 delayed the implementation of LEARNS until August 1.  
 21 So that's where we're at with Marvell. The  
 22 transformation contract that this board directed us  
 23 to pursue was under the Arkansas LEARNS legislation,  
 24 which is now not effective until August 1. So that  
 25 puts any work in terms of Friendship -- it has to

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1 stop. So getting ready for school to start,  
 2 professional development, setting calendars, policy,  
 3 staffing, all of that has stopped. So we are now  
 4 kind of in this place where we have to determine  
 5 what's next for the district and what are the options  
 6 before this board to move forward. Right now, if  
 7 this district remains open the expectation is school  
 8 starts in August, staff development starts in August.  
 9 So there is a lot of work to be done between now and  
 10 school starting.  
 11 So for State Board consideration, this is under  
 12 specific legislation of a district classified In Need  
 13 of Level 5 Intensive Support. We printed you a hard-  
 14 copy of that specific legislation so that you can  
 15 make notes on it, if you wanted to.  
 16 I'm going to highlight some of the options that  
 17 are in here for you as a board to consider.  
 18 One has to do with the board of directors. You  
 19 can permanently remove, suspend the board of  
 20 directors. What you have currently done is what I  
 21 highlighted in yellow there, is that we suspend -- we  
 22 put the board in an advisory capacity. Okay. Moving  
 23 forward, this was done in lieu of completely  
 24 dissolving them because state authority and  
 25 assumption happened in April and part of that

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1 recommendation was we still wanted that community to  
 2 be involved in graduations and the closing of school;  
 3 we wanted folks to still feel like they were moving  
 4 forward to close school out; so the board was not  
 5 completely dissolved. However, that is an option  
 6 that this board could do.  
 7 Superintendent -- under the authority the board,  
 8 under Level 5, could remove permanently, reassign, or  
 9 suspend the current superintendent. At this time,  
 10 Dr. Ray has been in place. It's kind of been a  
 11 start-and-stop with is Friendship in charge, are we  
 12 local in charge. So right now with a pause here, not  
 13 a pause here, you move forward here, it's been very  
 14 challenging for everyone on how we're moving forward  
 15 to get ready for a new school year. So a decision  
 16 regarding the superintendent's position is authority  
 17 that this state board has.  
 18 Also under Level 5 is the possibility for the  
 19 district to be annexed, consolidated, or  
 20 reconstituted. This has nothing to do with being  
 21 under 350. This has to do with the district being a  
 22 school district classified in Level 5.  
 23 Previous actions of the State Board in  
 24 comparison to other districts -- okay -- Pine Bluff  
 25 that is currently under state authority, this board

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1 removed permanently the board of directors and you  
 2 removed the superintendent. Just recently, you have  
 3 reinstated a limited-authority board and they're on  
 4 progress to being returned to the district. Helena-  
 5 West Helena, you actually limited the authority of  
 6 that board. Personnel decisions and finance go to  
 7 the Secretary, but they are still acting in some  
 8 capacity at a local level and are in place. However,  
 9 you did permanently remove the superintendent and the  
 10 State appointed one. Lee County, you removed  
 11 permanently the board of directors and the  
 12 superintendent. And the same thing was done in  
 13 Earle.  
 14 So that was very fast. On the legislation for  
 15 Level 5 there is actually a whole list of things that  
 16 can be done there, okay, everything from directing  
 17 curriculum to directing professional development.  
 18 However, when we assume authority, and the more  
 19 authority we have of dissolving the board or  
 20 replacing the superintendent, we're automatically  
 21 taking over those aspects.  
 22 Okay. So I'm going to pause there to see if you  
 23 have any specific questions or conversations on some  
 24 of the options that you have as a board.  
 25 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you, Stacy.

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1 We'll start here -- Ms. Hunter, do you have any  
2 questions?  
3 MS. HUNTER: Not right now.  
4 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Mr. Wood?  
5 MR. WOOD: No, not right now.  
6 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Let's go online. Kathy,  
7 do you have any questions?  
8 MS. ROLLINS: I do. Ms. Smith, do you feel like  
9 ADE is ready to assume --  
10 MS. SMITH: So I want to be very clear that this  
11 is a very difficult situation and getting ready and  
12 set-up for school to start in a month is a huge task.  
13 Do I think that the Department of Education could get  
14 in there and get done what we need to get done?  
15 Yeah, we'll do what we have to do. There are kids  
16 that need to come to school. I can tell you as far  
17 as the interest of the Marvell-Elaine community and  
18 Friendship that was in that transition phase, they've  
19 kind of re-enrolled or had 190-something students  
20 signed back up to go to Marvell-Elaine. So, right  
21 now, currently in the community there are 190-  
22 something students and their families that's  
23 expecting school to be open. So while this board has  
24 the option to annex, consolidate or reconstitute the  
25 district, that also would be very challenging, one,

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1 to the surrounding districts that that would be --  
2 here in a month-and-a-half get you ready to take on a  
3 whole new group of students. It would also be very  
4 challenging for the families in Marvell who have been  
5 anticipating that the school is going to open.  
6 So neither situation is ideal. But for  
7 continuity and for the families of the community that  
8 expect the school to be open I think that that's the  
9 direction we move forward with.  
10 You also still -- within the transformation  
11 contract, after August 1, that still is a viable  
12 option for the district. But we've got to get to  
13 August 1. We've got to get the school open. We've  
14 got to get staff hired. We have to set the calendar.  
15 There were actions and directions from Friendship  
16 during the transition time period, when it was not  
17 paused, where movement was being made towards a new  
18 school year. But since it was determined that that's  
19 not effective, we need to go back and re-establish  
20 those procedure. So there's a lot of work to be  
21 done. It can be done.  
22 MS. ROLLINS: Do they have a start-date yet, Ms.  
23 Smith?  
24 MS. SMITH: There was a calendar proposed. But,  
25 again, under this assumption of authority and kind of

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1 a restart we would need to re-set that.  
2 MS. ROLLINS: Okay. Thank you. That's all I  
3 have.  
4 MS. SMITH: Again, because the calendar that was  
5 submitted before was submitted by Friendship on how  
6 they were going to operate the next school year. Not  
7 saying that in the end if we sat down and looked at  
8 that calendar that that wouldn't be it, but we would  
9 have to make that decision.  
10 MR. SUTTON: What was that date, Stacy?  
11 MS. SMITH: I don't have it in front of me. I'm  
12 sorry. It would be that week of August 14th though.  
13 MS. WOODS: So just so I'm clear, are we  
14 actually making a decision today on what we need to  
15 do or is this more informational?  
16 MS. SMITH: We need to make a decision today. I  
17 mean -- I mean to wait -- we need to make a decision  
18 today.  
19 MS. WOODS: I just wanted to make sure.  
20 MR. SUTTON: Hey, would you go back over your  
21 recommendation as it stands now?  
22 MS. SMITH: So we would anticipate to have full  
23 assumption of authority over the district, including  
24 the superintendent and the board of directors; so for  
25 all that to be dissolved. We feel like that's the

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1 best way to move forward. Also, for the Department  
2 to still continue to look forward to a possible  
3 transformation contract after August 1.  
4 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Anymore questions? Mr.  
5 Henderson, do you have any questions?  
6 MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Sutton asked the question  
7 that I was going to ask.  
8 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Adrienne?  
9 MS. WOODS: I guess the only question I had --  
10 if we make decisions regarding whether or not to  
11 consolidate or annex, can we basically rewind that  
12 back after August 1st?  
13 MS. SMITH: If you make the decision today that  
14 the district needs to annex or consolidate, what I  
15 would say is we'd probably turnaround and very  
16 quickly have another board meeting with a specific  
17 plan. But you would be giving me direction today to  
18 go make this happen, and then that's what we would  
19 do.  
20 MS. WOODS: Okay.  
21 MS. SMITH: But either direction we go, we've  
22 got to know which way we're going; either the school  
23 is going to be open for the community or it's not. I  
24 do think the burden for the community and for  
25 students right now to reconstitute or annex or

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1 consolidate the district would be more of a hardship.  
2 I'm not saying that it is off the table next year to  
3 consider, determining what happens as we move forward  
4 with the year. But I think our best option is to get  
5 in there and put a plan in place and start moving  
6 forward towards that. Right now, it's just an  
7 inconsistent. We've had Friendship going, then  
8 they're not; we've had Friendship going, then they're  
9 not.  
10 SECRETARY OLIVA: And so --  
11 MS. HUNTER: I'm sorry. So, I mean, what I'm  
12 hearing you say -- I want you to confirm -- is that  
13 today we just need to declare someone in charge, I  
14 mean, because we've had such turmoil in the last few  
15 months. But if we take control, then that is a  
16 definite --  
17 MS. SMITH: Right.  
18 MS. HUNTER: -- at least until August 1st.  
19 SECRETARY OLIVA: Yeah, so --  
20 MS. WOODS: Basically, back where we were in  
21 April -- right -- before we ever entered in the  
22 transformation contract?  
23 MS. SMITH: Where we were in April was the  
24 district was going to consolidate and we were  
25 exploring who they were going to consolidate with.

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1 MS. WOODS: Got it.  
2 MS. SMITH: The transformation contract allowed  
3 us to operate in a manner in which we were bringing  
4 in an outside managing partner to assist us. As I  
5 said in April, the State running the school district  
6 as-is back in April was not ideal. There are so many  
7 needs that have to be addressed and they won't all be  
8 addressed before August 14th. But I think our best  
9 chance is to get in there and do the work that needs  
10 to be done.  
11 Secretary?  
12 SECRETARY OLIVA: So just to kind of recap to  
13 make sure everybody is clear on why we're at a  
14 decision point today, this board took action in  
15 November of '22 to say the school district is losing  
16 enrollment, it's a low-performing district, we need  
17 to come up with a plan to consolidate that district  
18 to a neighboring district; we were moving down that  
19 path. When the LEARNS bill came into law there's a  
20 transformational piece that was put in that  
21 legislation that gives our agency, the school  
22 district, and local outside entities the ability to  
23 engage in different types of partnership to look at  
24 ways of improving learning in that school. We took  
25 that flexibility to the State Board and said instead

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1 of closing this district -- we heard from the  
2 community, we walked every classroom; it was very  
3 evident that there is a strong desire to see that  
4 school remain intact and make sure they have the  
5 right conditions and supports put in place. Through  
6 a clear and transparent manner we sought out a  
7 partner to help us implement that transformation  
8 contract.  
9 Unfortunately, we've been playing red light-  
10 green light with LEARNS. And it's gotten us to a  
11 point where we're at a decision point today where we  
12 need to say we're not going to be able to implement  
13 the transformation contract because it's been  
14 delayed; it's been on, it's been off; we've been  
15 playing a back-and-forth on who's going to run the  
16 school district, who's not going to run the school  
17 district. The easy thing for us to do or recommend  
18 is just close the district. The challenging thing  
19 for us to do as an agency is to fight for what's  
20 right in this community and eliminate failure, and  
21 that's what we're coming to you today to do; to say  
22 we still think if we make the right decision as a  
23 board we can move forward with full implementation of  
24 a transformational contract to go into effect August  
25 1st. But we need authority as a state agency to

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1 start making decisions, to get that contract ready --  
2 because we've got to hire a staff, we've got to order  
3 textbooks, we've got to build out bus routes, we've  
4 got to build out a master schedule. There are things  
5 that we need to do. This recommendation, if we move  
6 forward to keep the transformation contract alive, to  
7 keep the community school open and running, would be  
8 to give us the authority so that we can go in there,  
9 make those day-to-day decisions, and execute a full  
10 transformation contract come August 1st.  
11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.  
12 Questions over here?  
13 MR. WOOD: Yeah, I do have a question. Does  
14 Friendship -- have they expressed interest in  
15 restarting the relationship starting August 1, when  
16 we can do that?  
17 MS. SMITH: Friendship has conveyed that they  
18 are in, that they want to be part of it. In fact, I  
19 think they're hosting a community event this weekend  
20 that, again, we're not paying them for. They're  
21 invested and they want to see it move forward.  
22 MR. WOOD: And, you know, after we do this,  
23 after whatever has been declared unconstitutional, I  
24 suspect they are not actually legally bound to do so  
25 on August 1.

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1 MS. SMITH: Correct.  
2 MR. WOOD: If they were to change their mind  
3 August 1 or 2 and decide not to engage in that  
4 relationship, would we be prepared to administer the  
5 schools for a year?  
6 MS. SMITH: So, again, the easiest thing to do  
7 is to close the school. Is it the right thing to do?  
8 No. If Friendship backs out in August and the State  
9 is left with the authority of the oversight of the  
10 district for the year, we do what we have to do. It  
11 is not an ideal situation.  
12 SECRETARY OLIVA: And I think the short answer  
13 is is we would still need to seek the help of an  
14 external partner. Whether that's through another  
15 external operator, whether it's through a charter  
16 management company, we would still move forward with  
17 a transformational contract. If it's not with  
18 Friendship, we will put out another bid and go  
19 through that process and see if we can get a high  
20 quality partner to give access to the high quality  
21 education that those students deserve. And those  
22 students deserve it and that community needs it.  
23 MS. SMITH: And the note -- and thank you for  
24 saying that because -- why didn't we have external  
25 partners with all these other districts? There is

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1 framework situations in some of the other districts  
2 that exist that are not in Marvell. There are  
3 organizational pieces that do not exist within the  
4 framework system in the Marvell-Elaine School  
5 District. The Department sending in a couple of  
6 coaches a week to assist and help is not enough.  
7 There has to be -- and, I mean, you even saw that  
8 this last year with Dr. Ray having to pull in  
9 consultants just to be the principals of the  
10 buildings and just -- I mean, they were having to  
11 bring external partners in to help run the school  
12 district. It just needs to be a much more organized  
13 management system.  
14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Are there more questions online  
15 from anyone?  
16 Stacy, may I ask what was the enrollment numbers  
17 last year?  
18 MS. SMITH: Dr. Ray is here. I want to say  
19 y'all got to about -- what was it, 320?  
20 SUPT. RAY: Yeah, 320.  
21 MS. SMITH: Like 329.  
22 CHAIRMAN MOORE: So it was under 350?  
23 MS. SMITH: Yes. It was under 350.  
24 CHAIRMAN MOORE: And we have waived the  
25 consolidation under 350. Correct?

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1 MS. SMITH: Correct. Correct. Yeah. So the  
2 conversation today on consolidation, annexation, or  
3 any of that has nothing to do with the 350. They are  
4 under 350. And as far as students right now signing  
5 up, when Friendship was out recruiting they're  
6 getting close to 200. Which I don't think is bad  
7 considering that no one really knows what's  
8 happening.  
9 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Right.  
10 MS. SMITH: You know, we want to give schools --  
11 the parents choice. They've had several who have  
12 choiced to other school districts surrounding them  
13 because there's an unknown.  
14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: After the -- whatever is  
15 decided today, is there going to be a plan for  
16 communicating directly with the families in the  
17 district, those that have already signed up and those  
18 that haven't yet signed up?  
19 MS. SMITH: Whatever decision is made today,  
20 there is going to be a full communication piece  
21 moving forward.  
22 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Thank you.  
23 Okay. More questions online, anyone?  
24 Questions here?  
25 MR. SUTTON: I don't see how we can do anything

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1 but move quickly to let the district have the  
2 authority to get this school ready to open. I think  
3 if we waste a day that's a shame, in my opinion.  
4 MS. SMITH: There is a lot of un-clarity; people  
5 don't know if they have jobs or not. You know, I was  
6 offered a job under Friendship, I was offered a job  
7 over here.  
8 MR. SUTTON: I know.  
9 MS. SMITH: Like no -- there's just -- it's  
10 unclear, "clear" is kind. What are our policies,  
11 what are our salary schedules, what is our calendar,  
12 who is the staff, what's the bus route, who's  
13 providing us our meals. Like those decisions today  
14 for this district are not decided, because what we  
15 were working towards is null and void. So if the  
16 State is to move forward we need the full authority  
17 to be able to make the decisions and go.  
18 CHAIRMAN MOORE: We do have two people who have  
19 signed up for public comment, and I think we should  
20 go ahead and do that before we take votes, if that's  
21 okay with the Board.  
22 Do we need a motion for public comment?  
23 MS. ROLLINS: I'll make the motion that we  
24 accept public comment.  
25 MS. WOODS: I'll second.

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1 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you. Motion to accept  
2 public comment. All in favor say "aye."  
3 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)  
4 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you. We'll do public  
5 comment. And our guidelines are three minutes, I  
6 believe. First signed up is Katina Ray -- or Mary  
7 Guinn, would you like to go first?  
8 MS. GUINN: Yes.  
9 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Great. Thank you.  
10 MS. GUINN: Good afternoon. And thank you for  
11 the opportunity to come before you to speak on behalf  
12 of the Marvell-Elaine School District children. I  
13 can certainly acknowledge some of the comments that  
14 were made regarding the confusion of staff, the  
15 confusion of the community, and the uncertainty of  
16 children. I've spent the last year in the Marvell-  
17 Elaine School District working very closely with  
18 staff and students, at the high school, in  
19 particular. And in fact I just left Marvell about  
20 three or four days ago; I think June 29th was my last  
21 day. I will say to you that there are still students  
22 that are uncertain of what is going to happen with  
23 their educational process for the next school year  
24 and they are counting on adults to make the right  
25 decision; not just those decisions that work

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1 according to policy and procedures, but the decisions  
2 that take into consideration that these young people  
3 have spent a year in uncertainty. They've spent a  
4 year trying to figure out who to trust and who not to  
5 trust, what to believe and what not to believe, and  
6 they're still in that position. Whatever decision  
7 you make today I hope you make it with the families  
8 and the children first because they are the ones that  
9 count. The children in Marvell-Elaine don't have a  
10 lot of trust for people; it takes a while for them to  
11 trust anyone. And there's a reason for that: there  
12 have been people coming in and out of the district  
13 for years, apparently, and every time a new person  
14 comes in and they connect with them they say are you  
15 coming back. I left on June 29th, with a group of  
16 children asking me are you coming back. They need  
17 someone they can trust, they need someone to be there  
18 with them. And just because we can do the work  
19 doesn't mean that we need to do the work. They  
20 deserve better than what they have had this school  
21 year. And I certainly hope that in whatever decision  
22 you make today that you find a way to think about  
23 what's best for these children -- no matter what or  
24 who, what's best for the kids. They deserve it.  
25 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you, Ms. Guinn.

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1 Katina Ray.  
2 SUPT. RAY: Good afternoon. I've stood in front  
3 of you on numerous occasions asking for assistance  
4 from this board and from the Arkansas Department of  
5 Education to come into the district that I have grown  
6 to fall in love with. On numerous occasions we've  
7 been told one thing and then it was changed. This  
8 is, I think, maybe the fourth or fifth time I've  
9 stood before you. We hosted you in our community and  
10 tried to do everything that we could to make you feel  
11 welcome. We've been told a lot of things that have  
12 not happened.  
13 So I'd just say today, you know, my interest is  
14 for these children. Would I like to remain in the  
15 district? Of course. I've done everything as the  
16 superintendent that I could do, and I want to say  
17 that publicly, to try to make this work. But it's  
18 been very difficult. That's why I called -- I called  
19 and asked for help.  
20 Like I said, I'd just say to you that -- put  
21 these children first and do the right thing. And I  
22 hate that I've been unable to be there because,  
23 again, in the beginning they asked, "Are you going to  
24 leave us, Dr. Ray?" And I said, "No, I'm not going  
25 anywhere; I'm going to be here for you. I'm going to

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1 be here until the end." And I was unable to do that  
2 and that breaks my heart that that happened. But,  
3 again, I say I'm here first for these children and I  
4 ask that you, again, please do the right thing by  
5 these children. Thank you.  
6 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.  
7 At this point the floor is open. Any more  
8 questions here, anyone? Any more questions online?  
9 Okay. The floor is open for a motion or further  
10 discussion.  
11 MR. WOOD: I'll make a motion.  
12 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay.  
13 MR. WOOD: I move that the public school  
14 district board of directors for Marvell-Elaine School  
15 District that is currently acting in an advisory  
16 capacity be permanently removed.  
17 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Is there a second to  
18 that motion?  
19 MS. HUNTER: Second.  
20 MS. ROLLINS: I'll second that.  
21 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. All in favor say "aye."  
22 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)  
23 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any opposed?  
24 The motion passes.  
25 So at this point we have now dissolved the

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1 school district and given authority to the State?  
2 MS. SMITH: Yes. So the school board has been  
3 completely dissolved. So you now want to determine  
4 superintendent, if she's to remain or not to remain.  
5 MS. ROLLINS: Ms. Smith, we can't hear you  
6 online.  
7 MS. SMITH: Can you hear me?  
8 MS. ROLLINS: No.  
9 MR. SUTTON: No.  
10 MS. SMITH: Thank you, Chauncey.  
11 So you need to determine the superintendent, if  
12 she will be permanently removed or remain.  
13 Recommendation would be to permanently remove.  
14 MS. ROLLINS: I'll make the motion that we  
15 permanently remove the superintendent, Ms. Ray.  
16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. There's a motion. Is  
17 there a second?  
18 MR. SUTTON: I'll second that.  
19 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Second.  
20 Was that Mr. Sutton?  
21 MR. SUTTON: Yes.  
22 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. All in favor say "aye."  
23 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)  
24 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any opposition?  
25 The motion passes.

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1 MS. SMITH: So at this point the district is  
2 under State authority and for the Secretary to  
3 appoint a superintendent. I don't know if you have  
4 to make a motion about that; you probably do.  
5 MS. HUNTER: I think we do.  
6 MS. SMITH: Courtney, do you want to come and  
7 talk?  
8 MS. SALAS-FORD: Courtney Salas-Ford for the  
9 Department.  
10 Yes. My recommendation would be that since you  
11 have removed the superintendent that you either  
12 authorize the Secretary to appoint someone to make  
13 those day-to-day decisions or that he would be the  
14 one that have to, as the board, which would not be a  
15 traditional type of operation. So --  
16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. And this is what is set  
17 out in law is for our board to decide?  
18 MS. SALAS-FORD: Yes.  
19 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. So that means we're open  
20 for another motion.  
21 MS. HUNTER: I move that we authorize the  
22 Secretary to appoint an individual in place of the  
23 superintendent to administer and administratively  
24 operate the district under the supervision of the  
25 Secretary.

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1 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. A motion by Ms. Hunter.  
2 Is there a second?  
3 MR. WOOD: I'll second that.  
4 CHAIRMAN MOORE: A second by Mr. Wood. All in  
5 favor say "aye."  
6 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)  
7 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any opposed?  
8 Okay. The motion passes.  
9 Is that -- is there anything else, a part of  
10 that --  
11 MS. SMITH: As far as what you want to direct  
12 the State to do -- I mean, do you want us to consider  
13 another transformation contract August 1st? Do you  
14 want us to just get school ready, come back and  
15 report to you next month on what we're doing?  
16 SECRETARY OLIVA: We're --  
17 MS. SMITH: Secretary.  
18 SECRETARY OLIVA: Our intention moving forward  
19 is to work in the school each and every single day  
20 for the next few weeks, while moving forward to  
21 execute the transformation contract with Friendship  
22 Academy to start August 1st to provide those  
23 educational services that we were originally  
24 intending on providing, that's been held in abeyance  
25 for a few months ago. So at this time there's no

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1 further action required of this board. We have the  
2 authority we need to do to keep the school district  
3 alive, make decisions for families so that they know  
4 the school will be open. And we're going to work  
5 onsite each and every single day to make sure when  
6 those students come back the second week of August  
7 that they come back to a high quality learning  
8 environment, where they'll be welcomed, and teachers  
9 will be in place, trained, and ready to go and hit  
10 the ground running on day-one. Thank you.  
11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.  
12 We have our regularly scheduled board meeting  
13 next Thursday.  
14 SECRETARY OLIVA: We can provide them for you.  
15 CHAIRMAN MOORE: So if there's any updates and  
16 information, I think that would be helpful for board  
17 members --  
18 SECRETARY OLIVA: Absolutely.  
19 CHAIRMAN MOORE: -- and community members to  
20 hear.  
21 With that, is there any other -- anything else,  
22 Board Members? Any discussion?  
23 Okay. With that, I'll look for a motion to  
24 adjourn.  
25 MS. HUNTER: Move to adjourn.

1 MR. WOOD: Second.  
2 CHAIRMAN MOORE: All in favor say "aye."  
3 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)  
4 SECRETARY OLIVA: Thank you.  
5 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you all. Thank you for  
6 joining online too.  
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10 (The meeting was adjourned at 1:41 p.m.)  
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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF ARKANSAS )  
 ) ss.  
COUNTY OF SALINE )

I, SHARON K. HILL, CCR, a Certified Stenomask Reporter and Notary Public before whom the foregoing proceedings was taken, do hereby certify that the same is a true and correct transcription before the Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, State Board of Education, in Little Rock, Arkansas, on July 7, 2023, that the said proceedings was reduced to typewritten form by me or under my direction and supervision; and that the foregoing pages constitute a true and correct transcription of all proceedings had in said matter.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this action.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I have no contract with any parties within this action that affects or has a substantial tendency to affect impartiality, that requires me to relinquish control of an original transcript or copies of the transcript before it is certified and delivered to the custodial agency, or that requires me to provide any service not made available to all parties to the action.

WITNESS, MY HAND AND SEAL, THIS DATE: July 13, 2023.

SHARON K. HILL, CCR  
Certified Court Reporter  
Certificate No. 670

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