

**Professional Licensure Standards Board
Friday, December 6, 2024
PLSB Full Board Minutes**

The Professional Licensure Standards Board held its quarterly meeting via Zoom and in person for those who could attend on **December 6, 2024**. Members of the Board present were: Chair Dr. Donny Lee, Hosea Born, Brenda Brown, Dr. Victoria Groves-Scott, Kathy Howell, Dr. Harold Jeffcoat, John D Keeling, Dr. Karen Lasker, Dr. Luke Lovins, Wendy Peer, Melissa Speers, Kamicka Thompson, Dr. Phong Tran, Dudley Webb, III, Tonya Williams, Dr. Matthew Sutherlin, and Karli Saracini.

ADE staff members present: Whitney James, Laura Shelton, Sarah Banker, Stephanie Copeland, Maria Lockhart, and Sydney Austin.

Members not present: Dr. Tiffany Bone, Dr. Kimberley Davis, and Dr. Alicia Shaw.

1. Call to Order – Dr. Donny Lee – Chair

Dr. Lee called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

Kathy Howell made a motion to approve September 6, 2024 PLSB Full Board minutes; seconded by Melissa Speers. None opposed. Motion passed.

3. Welcome to new board member, Dr. Alicia Shaw, new education investigator, Stephanie Copeland, and new administrative analyst, Sydney Austin.

Presenter: Whitney James, PLSB Managing Attorney

Whitney James welcomed Dr. Alicia Shaw, Interim Chair of the Department of Educational Leadership for Arkansas State University, as the PLSB's newest board member.

James also welcomed Stephanie Copeland as the PLSB's newest investigator and Sydney Austin as the PLSB's new administrative analyst, both of whom were in attendance in-person.

4. Why the Career Continuum?

Presenter: Karli Saracini, Assistant Commissioner for Educator Effectiveness and Licensure

Karli Saracini opened her presentation with a breakdown of the Master and Lead Professional designation for experienced mentors and explained the requirements for educators wanting to participate as mentors in the year-long residency for the 2026-2027 school year. Those wishing to serve as an experienced mentor to residents will need at least 3 years of experience, an effective or higher rating on a current Summative Rating in EES, and complete the DESE recognized training. Educators who obtain the Master/Lead designation on their license will also obtain eligibility for the Merit Incentive. The Master/Lead designation is important to those wanting to participate as a

Journeyworker for the Traditional K-12 Registered Apprenticeship program, which could potentially allot another \$2,500 per semester for up to 4 years to approved candidates. Educators with the Master/Lead designation are also critical to those looking to obtain an Aspiring Teacher Permit, who need designated mentors assigned to them by the district. Finally, Master/Lead designated educators are needed for student placement in Math Intervention and ELA plans.

Saracini then highlighted a few of the DESE recognized Coaching Training modules available to Arkansas educators for free through Arkansas IDEAS, as well as additional training opportunities eligible for reimbursement to those seeking out the Master/Lead designation on their license. The designation for educators who've completed the Master/Lead requirements will appear on the printed license as well on their profiles in LEA Insights.

Saracini also took the time to break down the definition of a teacher according to the state statute, which defines a “classroom teacher” as someone with a teaching license who spends 70% of their time in a classroom with students. This is a distinction that identifies who exactly is eligible to participate in merit pay incentives available to educators with the Master/Lead designation on their license.

5. Update: Science of Reading Audits and State Review

Presenter: Dr. Matthew Sutherlin, Director of Educator Preparation and Licensure

Dr. Matthew Sutherlin opened his presentation with an overview of the data collected from this year’s Science of Reading (SoR) audits and state reviews, which included 13 state reviews and 12 SoR audits. Of the 13 state reviews, results show 60% of educator preparation programs (EPP) were marked with “Approaching” metrics, 33.3% with “Meets” metrics, and 6.7% with “Below” metrics. The SoR council met to determine the corrective actions for universities with “Approaching” scores, and identified targeted actions to provide to programs that did not meet their performance metrics, which required EPPs to submit annual plans on October 1st, 2024, outlining their strategies to meet their performance metrics using the corrective actions identified by the SoR council. These plans will be reviewed again in October 2025 to monitor the programs’ progress and identify additional corrective actions if needed.

6. Action Items — Proposed Master/Lead Professional Designation Pathways

Presenter: Karli Saracini, Assistant Commissioner for Educator Effectiveness and Licensure

Karli Saracini asked the board to approve the following proposed Master/Lead designation pathways:

- i. Kids First Education;**
- ii. Modern Classroom Project (MCP);**
- iii. MathTrack Institute;**
- iv. Harding University Master Professional Educator Certificate of Study;**
- v. Southern Arkansas University Lead Professional Certificate of Study.**

Wendy Peer made a motion for the board to vote to approve each pathway separately; Dr. Victoria Groves-Scott seconded the motion. Motion passed. Six approved, five opposed.

Hosea Born made a motion to approve Kids First Education as a Master/Lead designation pathway; Dr. Karen Lasker seconded the motion. Motion passed. Twelve in favor, one opposed.

Hosea Born made a motion to approve MCP as a Master/Lead designation pathway; Dr. Karen Lasker seconded the motion. Motion passed. None opposed.

Dr. Karen Lasker made a motion to approve MathTrack Institute as a Master/Lead designation pathway; Kathy Howell seconded the motion. Motion passed. Twelve in favor, one opposed.

Dr. Phong Tran made a motion to approve Harding University Master Professional Educator Certificate of Study as a Master/Lead designation pathway; Wendy Peer seconded the motion. Motion passed. None opposed.

Hosea Born made a motion to approve Southern Arkansas University Lead Professional Certificate of Study as a Master/Lead designation pathway; Dr. Karen Lasker seconded the motion. Motion passed. None opposed.

7. Action Items -- Ethics Hearing Subcommittee – New Member Dr. Annette Hux

Presenter: Whitney James, PLSB Managing Attorney

Whitney James asked the board to approve Dr. Annette Hux to serve as a member of the Ethics Hearing Subcommittee. Kathy Howell made a motion to approve Dr. Annette Hux to serve on the Ethics Hearings Subcommittee; Dr. Luke Lovins seconded the motion. Motion passed. None opposed.

8. Action Items -- 2025 Full Board Meeting Dates

Presenter: Whitney James, PLSB Managing Attorney

Whitney James asked the board to approve the following 2025 Full Board meeting dates:

- i. March 7, 2025**
- ii. June 6, 2025**
- iii. September 5, 2025**
- iv. December 5, 2025**

Dr. Luke Lovins made a motion to approve the 2025 Full Board meeting dates; Kathy Howell seconded the motion. Motion passed. None opposed.

The meeting was adjourned. The next PLSB Full Board meeting will be on Friday, March 7, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.