

**Minutes  
Special State Board Meeting  
June 1, 2023**

Present: Ouida Newton, Chair; Lisa Hunter; Randy Henderson; Steve Sutton;  
Jessica Saum, 2022 Arkansas Teacher of the Year, Jacob Olivia, ADE Secretary.

Attended via ZOOM: Dr. Sarah Moore, Vice-Chair

Absent: Dr. Fitz Hill; Ms. Kathy Rollins; Jeff Wood; Adrienne Woods

The Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) met Thursday, June 1, 2023. Ms. Ouida Newton called the meeting to order at 10:30 AM. Ms. Tish Knowles, Superintendent introduced Grade 3 students Ms. Areil Felton and Ms. Aliehs Jarrett, who led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence. Earle School District alumni, 2019 graduate, Mr. Dewayne Price, Jr. sang the National Anthem.

**Action Agenda**

**III.1. Consideration of the Recommendation to Remove Earle School District from Fiscal Distress Status and Assume Authority of the District Classified in Need of Level 5 Intensive Support**

Item III.1. was presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, ADE Deputy Commissioner.

On October 12, 2017, the State Board of Education classified the Earle School District (District) in Fiscal Distress under the Arkansas Fiscal Assessment and Accountability Program, Ark. Code Ann. 6-20-1901 et seq. On November 6, 2017, the State Board assumed authority of the District pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. 6-20-1909. The State Board classified the District as in need of Level 5 Intensive Support on May 9, 2019.

A motion to remove the Earle School District from fiscal distress status, pursuant to the Arkansas Fiscal Assessment and Accountability Program, was made by Mr. Steve Sutton, seconded by Mr. Randy Henderson. Ms. Ouida Newton, Chair, confirmed that a quorum was present. The motion unanimously passed.

A motion to hear public comments was made by Ms. Lisa Hunter, seconded by Mr. Steve Sutton. The motion unanimously passed.

The State Board heard public comments from the following:

Ms. Latrice McClinton	Ms. Tina Wallace
Ms. Chelsea Henderson	Pastor Otis Davis
Ms. Lasonya Rogers	Ms. Bernice Parker
Mr. Jaylen Smith, Mayor, City of Earle	

A motion was made that the State Board assume authority over the Earle School District, which currently is classified in need of Level 5 – Intensive Support, pursuant to its authority under the Arkansas Educational Support and Accountability Act; that it appoint the current members of the suspended Earle School District Board of Directors to the limited authority board; that following initial training organized by the Office of Coordinated Support Services, the limited authority board shall consider all matters that would be considered by an elected local board of directors, except for selecting the superintendent, and make recommendations to the Commissioner of Education for final determination; the selection of a superintendent shall remain the sole authority of the Commissioner of Education; and that the Commissioner of Education be directed to appoint members to any vacant position on the limited authority board through an application process. The motion was made by Ms. Lisa Hunter, seconded by Mr. Steve Sutton. The motion unanimously passed.

### III.2. Educational Service Cooperative Evaluations

Item III.2. was presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, ADE Deputy Commissioner.

Educational service cooperative (ESC) evaluations occur at least once within a five-year period. The evaluation and self-study report are attached for the following ESCs:

- Southwest ESC
- South Central ESC
- DeQueen-Mena ESC

A motion to approve the evaluations was made by Mr. Steve Sutton, seconded by Mr. Randy Henderson. The motion unanimously passed.

### Public Comments

No further public comments.

### Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the State Board meeting was made by Mr. Steve Sutton, seconded by Mr. Randy Henderson. The motion unanimously passed. Chair Ouida Newton adjourned the State Board meeting at 11:17 AM.

*Minutes recorded by Angela Scaife.*

  
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Jacob Oliva, Secretary  
Arkansas Department of Education

  
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Sarah Moore, Chair  
State Board of Education