

**Professional Licensure Standards Board
Tuesday, March 5, 2021
PLSB Full Board Minutes**

A meeting of the Professional Licensure Standards Board was held via Zoom on **March 5, 2021, due to Covid-19 restrictions**. Voting members of the Board present were Dr. Greg Murry, Chair, Dr. Donny Lee, Vice-Chair, Kathy Howell, Luanne Baroni, Doretta Griffin, Lynne Gronseth, John D. Keeling, Dr. Andrea Martin, Hosea Born, Dr. Sheena Williamson, Dudley Webb, III, Brenda Brown, Vicki Groves-Scott, Dr. Nita Bohannon, and Dr. Joe Fisher. Non-voting member present was Karli Saracini. ADE staff members present were Amy Douglas, Sarah Banker, Cheri Rolett, Brittany Felix, Maria Lockhart, Jaclyn Williams, Shannon Rostad-Hall, Vikki Jennings, Joi Crawford, Brittany Scribner, Jennifer Link, Joan Luneau, and Andy Sullivan.

Voting members not present: Dr. Mary Jane Bradley and Cindy Nations

Non-voting member not present: Tonya Williams

1. Call to Order – Dr. Greg Murry, Chair

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

2. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Dr. Joe Fisher to approve the December 4, 2020, PLSB Full Board minutes with revisions to add Brenda Brown and Vicki Groves-Scott as present; seconded by Dudley Webb. Motion passed; none opposed.

3. Action Items:

- **Board Meeting Dates 2021:** September 10th is State Board Meeting date – need new date

The Board agreed to keep the date as September 10, 2021, starting at 8:00 a.m. instead of 9:00 a.m. This will allow the Board time to meet before the State Board meeting starts at 10:00 a.m.

4. Discussion and Reports:

- **Welcome new member Dr. Nita Bohannon** – Replaced Ellen Treadway
Dr. Bohannon was nominated to replace Dr. Ellen Treadway. Ms. Bohannon represents ARPEA – Educational Leadership. She is also a member of the PLSB Ethics Subcommittee. On June 10, 2021, the Arkansas Department of Education State Board will consider the recommendation for Dr. Bohannon to become a member of the Professional Licensure Standards Board Full Board, at which time her three-year term will begin and will be up for reinstatement on June 10, 2024.

- **Office of Educator Effectiveness & Licensure Updates** – Karli Saracini, Asst. Commissioner OEE&L

Ms. Saracini discussed the two bills that were pulled by the Legislature. The two bills were the background check and the PLSB bills shown below.

- Proposals:
 - 1) Background Checks –
 - a) A Non-violent or non-sexual offense that is ten years or older would not disqualify an applicant from reinstating their license to return to the classroom or to be hired by a school district.
 - 2) Added a provision that a district may, but is not required, to pay for the employees child maltreatment central registry check in addition to the district's current authorization to pay for a criminal records check. This would allow districts the flexibility to do this for their employees if they choose to do so making sure that it is a noted allowable expenditure of funds.
 - 3) Added a provision that a district must conduct criminal background checks and child maltreatment checks once every five years, which would be in conjunction with the licensed employees background check requirement. This provision would also make it allowable, but not required for the district to pay for the criminal background check and child maltreatment registry check for non-licensed employees. Currently, the language states that it is required. This provision would make it permissible and would make it the local districts decision and/or flexibility, as to whether they choose to do this or not.
 - 4) Added a provision to clarify that each PLSB member would serve a one four year term. Currently, the law states a member can serve three years. Currently, members can serve more than one term.
 - 5) Added a provision to shorten the timeframe that an Educator has to respond to an evidentiary hearing to 14 calendar days. Currently, it is 30 days from receipt of notice of the initial determination. This would help the PLSB Staff to effectively meet the 180 day timeline.

The Legislature limited the local board as to what it can approve. Licensed educators are approved by the State Board for Licensure. ADE is currently working with DHS to make some changes to accommodate the background check process.

Dr. Frank Servedio, in EPPQR, will be retiring in June 2021. Sharlee Crowson will be stepping in to replace him. Amy Douglas will be leading this venture with Sharlee Crowson's input on data.

Pro Ethica will be in AELS with a five year contract.

Licensure/PLSB Budget –

PLSB's budget is down some due to the \$75 licensing fee being waived until April 1, 2021. This is for first time licensing only, not for renewals. Dr. Scott asked if there was a report showing data on how many educators go into teaching? Ms. Saracini responded that there wasn't at this time. It's possible that a survey link to graduating classes could be used to see how many educators would be pursuing a career in education.

- **Career Continuum** – Andy Sullivan, Director of Licensure

Mr. Sullivan discussed the pass rates on licensure exams with mathematics being the lowest scoring subject.

- **Members with terms expiring June 2021:**

- ❖ Dr. Greg Murry [AAEA, Public School Superintendent]
- ❖ Brenda Brown [AEA – Birth-Kindergarten Teachers]
- ❖ Dr. Nita Bohannon [ARPEA – Educational Leadership – nominated for new term beginning 2021]
- ❖ Dr. Mary Jane Bradley [Ark. Council of Education Deans – Public IHE]
- ❖ Dr. Sheena Williamson [AASCD liaison to AACIA]

- **State Board Alignment Meeting** – March 5, 2021 at 1 p.m.

PLSB Senior Investigators, Sarah Banker and Jaclyn Williams, as well as, Managing Attorney, Amy Douglas, will be holding an alignment meeting today at 1 p.m. for the State Board. This meeting will provide an overview of what happens with a PLSB case before it goes to the State Board. This overview is to provide a better understanding on how the PLSB process works.

- **Ethics Investigation Update** – Amy Douglas

As of March 5, 2021, 71 allegations have been received. This is significantly lower than in prior years, due to the pandemic and online classes. A total of 32 cases have been authorized, 18 completed, 2 pending criminal charges and 3 cases will be heard today by the Ethics Subcommittee. The timeline is at 99 days before a case goes before the State Board. The next evidentiary hearing will be in April.

A motion was made by Mr. Webb to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Dr. Williamson. Motion passed; none opposed.

The next PLSB Full Board meeting will be on Friday, June 4, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.