

**Minutes
State Board Meeting
Blytheville High School Auditorium
May 29, 2025**

Present: Kathy Rollins, Acting Chair; Gary Arnold; Randy Henderson; Lisa Hunter; Leigh Keener; Adrienne Woods; Jacob Oliva, ADE Secretary.

Present via Zoom: Dr. Sarah Moore

Absent: Ken Bragg; Jeff Wood; Beau McCastlain, 2024 Arkansas Teacher of the Year

Call to Order

The Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) met Thursday, May 29, 2025, at Blytheville High School, Blytheville, AR. Ms. Kathy Rollins, Acting Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM, followed by a moment of silence.

Action Agenda

III.1. Blytheville School District Level 5 - Intensive Support Hearing

The Blytheville School District Level 5 - Intensive Support Hearing item was presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner. Also present was Mr. Daniel Shults, ADE Litigation Attorney. Present on behalf of Blytheville School District were Ms. Jennifer Blankenship, Interim Superintendent; Mr. Desmond Hammett, School Board President; Mr. Robert L. Coleman, Attorney, Reid, Burge, Prevaillet & Coleman; and Ms. Rhonda Suthern, Director, Finance.

The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education recommended that the State Board of Education classify the Blytheville School District as in need of Level 5 - Intensive Support in accordance with Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-2916. The Blytheville School District appealed this classification and requested a hearing.

A motion to classify Blytheville School District as in Level 5-Intensive Support was made by Dr. Gary Arnold, seconded by Ms. Adrienne Woods. The motion unanimously passed. Roll call was taken.

Roll Call – Classification of Level 5-Intensive Support

Dr. Gary Arnold	Yes
Mr. Randy Henderson	Yes
Ms. Lisa Hunter	Yes
Ms. Leigh Keener	Yes
Dr. Sarah Moore	Yes
Ms. Adrienne Woods	Yes

A motion to remove the authority of the local school board and authorize the Commissioner of Education to assume all authority of the local district board of directors; direct the Commissioner of Education to appoint a superintendent; and to pursue the possibility of a transformation contract was made by Ms. Lisa Hunter, seconded by Ms. Leigh Keener. The motion unanimously passed. Roll call was taken.

Roll Call – Removal of Local Board Authority; Commissioner assume All Authority; Commissioner Appoint Superintendent/Pursue Transformation Contract possibility

Dr. Gary Arnold	Yes
Mr. Randy Henderson	Yes
Ms. Lisa Hunter	Yes
Ms. Leigh Keener	Yes
Dr. Sarah Moore	Yes
Ms. Adrienne Woods	Yes

Public Comments

- Mr. Ross Thompson
- Ms. Nicole Eskin
- Robin Freeman-Barnes
- Vera James
- Teresa Miner
- James Tony Hollis
- Melody Webb
- Lasharia Smith
- Sonya Lucas Modica
- Myschealya Leachman
- Bradley Ballard
- Juanita Jackson
- Carlony Lewis

Adjournment

Ms. Kathy Rollins, Acting Chair, adjourned the State Board meeting at 11:27 AM.

Minutes recorded by Angela Scaife.



Jacob Oliva, Secretary
Arkansas Department of Education



Kathy Rollins, Acting-Chair
State Board of Education