

**Minutes  
State Board Meeting  
October 13, 2023**

Present: Dr. Sarah Moore, Chair; Kathy Rollins, Vice-Chair; Ken Bragg, Lisa Hunter; Steve Sutton; Jeff Wood, Capri Salaam, 2023 Arkansas Teacher of the Year, Jacob Olivia, ADE Secretary.

Present via ZOOM: Leigh Keener; Adrienne Woods

Absent: Randy Henderson

The Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) met Friday, October 13, 2023. Dr. Sarah Moore, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:04 AM, followed by a moment of silence.

**Recognition**

**III.1. 2023 Designated Master Principal**

Item III.1. was presented by Mr. Bradley Webber, Director, Master Principal Program - Arkansas Leadership Academy.

Act 44 of the Second Extraordinary Session of 2003 established the Master Principal Program for the purpose of developing, supporting, and designating Master Principals in the State of Arkansas. Based on the criteria, three principals have qualified for designation during the 2022-2023 school year.

Recognized Master Principals:

Ms. Amy Simpson - Elm Tree Elementary, Bentonville School District  
(Posthumous award accepted by husband, Mr. Stan Simpson)

Mr. Eric Hipp - Ruth Hale Barker Middle School, Bentonville School District

Ms. Michelle Doshier - Hunt Elementary School, Springdale School District

**III.2. 2023 Arkansas Association of Elementary School Principals (AAESP) Principal of the Year**

Item III.2. was presented by Ms. Karli Saracini, Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) Assistant Commissioner, Educator Effectiveness & Licensure.

Mr. Steven Helmick, Principal, Don Roberts Elementary School - Little Rock School District was named 2023 Arkansas Principal of the Year by the Arkansas Association of Elementary School Principals.

### **III.3. 2024 Arkansas Teacher of the Year**

Item III.3. was presented by, Ms. Caprice Salaam, 2023 Arkansas Teacher of the Year. Present were Mr. Jason Sanders, Superintendent, Ms. Audrey Chandler, Principal - DeQueen High School, and Mrs. Diedre McCastlin, Spouse.

Ms. Capri Salaam, 2023 Arkansas Teacher of the Year, introduced the 2024 Arkansas Teacher of the Year, Mr. Bo McCastlin.

### **III.4. School Safety Week Proclamation**

Item III.4. presented by Mr. Scott Spainhour, Superintendent, Greenbrier School District, and Mr. Keith Graham, Arkansas Center for School Safety.

Reading the Safe School Week Proclamation, the State Board recognizes the week of October 15- 21, 2023, as Arkansas Safe School Week.

### **Changes to Agenda**

None

### **Action Items**

#### **V.I. Consideration of Requests for Act 1240 Waivers**

Item V.1. was presented by Mr. Andres Rhodes, ADE Chief Legal Counsel.

#### **V.1.a. Jackson County School District**

Item V.1.a. was presented by Mr. Stephen Reynolds, Attorney Specialist. Also present was Mr. Chester Shannon, Superintendent.

The Jackson County School District is seeking an extension of its Act 1240 waivers for five years. The school district rescinds the licensure waiver as it relates to the ALP portion – rescinding the extension of number of semesters from 6 to 8 required to complete the ALPs. The current request is to rollover the same licensure waivers in the first ALP, plus, to raise the number from 300 to 500 for a full-time librarian.

A motion to approve the Act 1240 Waiver for Jackson County School District for five years was made by Mr. Steve Sutton, seconded by Mr. Ken Bragg. The motion unanimously passed.

### **V.1.b. Nettleton School District**

Item V.1.b. was presented by Mr. Stephen Reynolds, Attorney Specialist and Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner. Also present via ZOOM was Nettleton School District: Dr. Karen Curtner, Superintendent; Dr. Lacy Baker, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Assessment; Mr. Keith Thomas, Director, Nettleton Virtual Academy; and Ms. Madison Putterman, Instructional Facilitator, Nettleton Virtual Academy.

The Nettleton School District is seeking to continue its digital learning program. These waivers are being requested for one year. The school district rescinds the attendance portion of their Act 1240 Waiver request.

A motion to approve the Act 1240 Waiver for Nettleton School District for one year was made by Ms. Kathy Rollins, seconded by Ms. Lisa Hunter. The motion unanimously passed.

### **V.1.c. North Little Rock School District**

Item V.1.c. was presented by Mr. Stephen Reynolds, Attorney Specialist. Present via ZOOM was Dr. Brouke Reynolds, Coordinator of Innovative Virtual Learning Programs.

The North Little Rock School District is seeking waivers to continue its digital learning program. These waivers are being requested for one year. The school district rescinds the attendance portion of their Act 1240 Waiver request.

A motion to approve the Act 1240 Waiver request for North Little Rock School District for one year was made by Mr. Steve Sutton, seconded by Mr. Ken Bragg. The motion unanimously passed.

### **V.1.d. Sloan-Hendrix School District**

Item V.1.d. was presented by Mr. Stephen Reynolds, Attorney Specialist. Present via ZOOM was Mr. Clifford Rorex, Superintendent and Ms. Melanie Spence, Assistant Principal K-12 / Curriculum Coordinator.

The Sloan-Hendrix School District is seeking waivers to continue its digital learning program. These waivers are being requested for one year. The school district rescinds the attendance portion of their Act 1240 Waiver request.

A motion to approve the Act 1240 Waiver request for Sloan-Hendrix School District for one year was made by Mr. Steve Sutton, seconded by Ms. Kathy Rollins. The motion unanimously passed.

### **V.1.e. Westside Consolidated School District**

Item V.1.e. was presented by Mr. Stephen Reynolds, Attorney Specialist. Also present were Mr. Scott Gauntt, Superintendent and Mr. Chris George, Principal - Westside Consolidated High School.

The Westside Consolidated School District is seeking waivers to implement its innovative block schedule. These waivers are being requested for one year.

A motion to approve the Act 1240 Waiver request for Westside Consolidated School District for one year was made by Ms. Lisa Hunter, seconded by Mr. Steve Sutton. The motion unanimously passed.

### **V.2. Consideration of Recommendation for Accredited-Probation Status for the Watson Chapel School District**

Item V.2 was presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner. Present was Watson Chapel School District: Mr. Tom Wilson, Superintendent and Ms. Dee Davis, Assistant Superintendent.

The Office of Public School Accountability Standards and Systems Support Unit has found Watson Chapel School District to be in violation of the following Probationary Standards for Accreditation:

Standard 2-B.2 Each public school district shall maintain accurate student attendance records in a format prescribed by the Division (D/P)

Standard 1-C.2 Each public school district shall adopt graduation requirements in accordance with the laws of the State of Arkansas and the rules of the Division and include the graduation requirements in the student handbook (D/P)

Standard 1-C.2.1 Each public school district shall maintain accurate student records including graduation requirements (D/P)

A deeper analysis from the ADE to be reported to the State Board in December 2023.

A motion to approve the recommendation of accredited-probationary status for Standards of Accreditation for Watson Chapel School District (District) with instruction for the District to return monthly, until determined otherwise, to report to the State Board on the progress was made by Mr. Jeff Wood, seconded by Ms. Lisa Hunter. The motion unanimously passed.

### **V.3. Consideration of Request for Approval of the Alt ELPA Cut Scores**

Item V.3 was presented by Ms. Hope Worsham, Assistant Commissioner – Public School Accountability.

The Office of Assessment requests State Board approval so that the cut scores may be applied to the Operational Year 1 Alt ELPA.

A motion to approve the Alt ELPA cut scores was made by Ms. Kathy Rollins, seconded by Mr. Steve Sutton. The motion unanimously passed.

### **V.4. Consideration of Request for Approval of Emergency Rules Governing Educational Freedom Accounts Payment Processing**

Item V.4. was presented by Mr. Andres Rhodes, ADE Chief Legal Counsel.

The Department of Education is requesting State Board approval of the DESE Rules Governing Educational Freedom Accounts Payment Processing. These rules are being promulgated under the emergency rule provisions of the Arkansas Administrative Procedures Act.

A motion to approve the Emergency Rules Governing Educational Freedom Accounts Payment Processing was made by Mr. Steve Sutton, seconded by Mr. Ken Bragg. The motion unanimously passed.

### **V.5. Consideration of Request for Final approval of Rules Governing School Safety**

Item V.5. was presented by Mr. Andres Rhodes; Mr. Stephen Reynolds, Attorney Specialist; and Mr. Jason Weatherly, Safe Schools Coordinator, Office of School Safety.

The Department of Education is requesting State Board final approval of the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Rules Governing School Safety. A public comment hearing was conducted on September 28, 2023. The rules were revised but no substantive changes were made.

A motion to approve the Final Rules Governing School Safety was made by Mr. Steve Sutton, seconded by Mr. Ken Bragg. The motion unanimously passed.

## **Public Comments**

The State Board heard public comments from:

Dr. Andranette Anderson-Gragg

Ms. Charlene Wright

Mr. Julius Wright

## **Consent Agenda**

1. Minutes
2. Report on Waivers to School districts for Teachers Teaching Out of Area for Longer than Thirty (30) Days, Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-309
3. Review of Loan and Bond Applications
4. Consent for the Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) Reallocation of FY24 Slots
5. Consent to Increase Funding for the FY24 ABC Professional Service Grant
6. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 23-101 Justin Cobb
7. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 23-126 Ashley Ponder
8. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 23-159 Darryl Wade Brown
9. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 23-052 Leah Queen
10. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 23-114 Taylor House
11. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-023 James Summers
12. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 22-093 Dustin Corley
13. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 21-055 Michael Dean
14. Consideration of the Decision of the Charter Authorizing Panel for Responsive Ed Arkansas Premier High School North Little Rock and Premier High School Springdale Public School Charter School
15. Consideration of the Decision of the Charter Authorizing Panel for Pinecrest Preparatory Academy Fayetteville New Open Enrollment Charter School Application Request
16. Consideration of the Decision of the Charter Authorizing Panel for CIVICA Career and Collegiate Academy Bentonville New Open Enrollment Charter School Application Request

A motion was made to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Mr. Steve Sutton, seconded by Mr. Ken Bragg. The motion unanimously passed.

**New Business**

None

**Adjournment**

Dr. Sarah Moore, Chair, adjourned the State Board meeting at 1:07 PM.

*Minutes recorded by Angela Scaife.*



Jacob Oliva, Secretary  
Arkansas Department of Education



Dr. Sarah Moore, Chair  
State Board of Education