

ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
February 8, 1999

Arkansas Department of Education
Auditorium
11:00 a.m.

Chair's Report---Ms. Betty Pickett

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Minutes (January , 1998)
2. Newly Employed, Promotions, and Separations----Ms. Clemetta Hood
.....C2
3. Review of Loan and Bond Applications --- Kent DouglasC3
4. Special Education Licensure Level Recommendation ---
Ms. Donna Elliott.....C4
5. Recommendation of Rules and Regulations for Arkansas Comprehensive
Testing and Assessment Program-----Dr. Kevin Penix.....C5

Director's Report----Mr. Ray Simon

ACTION AGENDA

1. Arkansas Better Chance Grant Funding Levels – 1999-2000 ---
Kathy Stegall.....A1
2. Administrator Licensure Pilot Recommendation ---Ms. Donna Elliott
.....A2
3. Litigation Summary -----Ms. Theresa Wallent.....A3

4. Committee to Principles of Desegregation Settlement Agreement: Report on the Execution of the Implementation Plan --- Dr. Charity Smith.....A4
5. Revocation of Steve Garmrath's Probationary Teaching Certificate--- Ms. Theresa Wallent.....A5

State Board of Education

Minutes

February 8, 1999

The State Board of Education met on Monday, February 8, 1999, in the Auditorium of the State Education Building. The meeting was called to order at 11:15 a.m. by Betty Pickett, Chair.

Members present: Betty Pickett, Chair; Edwin Alderson; Carl Baggett; Martha Dixon; Bill Fisher; Luke Gordy; Robert Hackler; James McLarty; Richard Smith; and Anita Yates.

Members absent: JoNell Caldwell and Lewis Thompson, Jr.

Ms. Pickett announced that the March Board Meeting would be held on Sunday, March 7, 1999, in Texarkana, AR. The Board will visit schools in the area on Monday.

The Chair appointed a Nominating Committee composed of James McLarty, chair; Richard Smith; and Bill Fisher. They are charged with bringing a slate of nominations for Board officers to the May meeting.

Mr. McLarty moved that an item be added to the Action Agenda that would consider proposed legislation affecting the process of review and approval of refunding bonds issued by local school districts. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Fisher moved that an item be added to the Action Agenda to discuss issues related to isolated schools funding. Mr. McLarty seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Pickett stated Consent Agenda item #3, Review of Loan and Bond Applications, was being moved to the Action Agenda.

Consent Agenda

Mr. McLarty moved the adoption of the Consent Agenda after removing item #3, Review of Loan and Bond Applications, to the Action Agenda. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- ✓ Minutes (January, 1999)
- ✓ Newly Employed, Promotions, and Separations
- ✓ Special Education Licensure Level Recommendations
- ✓ Recommendation of Rules and Regulations for Arkansas Comprehensive Testing and Assessment program

Director's Report

Mr. Simon recognized Patricia Martin for a report on damage to school buildings from the recent storms. Ms. Martin noted there was damage to facilities in 11 counties declared as

disaster areas. There were 14 buildings and one regional service cooperative that sustained some damage. The School buildings in Beebe were considered a complete loss. She reported that Drs. Davis and Cummins are working with administrators in the impacted areas. If necessary, the school will bring a report and recommendation to the Board at the March meeting. Of the buildings sustaining damage, eight were covered by insurance through the state program. She stated that the staff was doing everything possible to assist those schools.

Action Agenda

Arkansas Better Change Grant Funding Levels – 1999-2000: Janie Fletcher, Director of the program was recognized to report to the Board. She reported that in the short time she has been in the position, she has experienced excellent cooperation among the agencies, which collectively have responsibility for this program. She commended the Board for its focus on early learning through the Smart Start Program. One of ABC's activities is to redesign the Early Childhood Framework to match the ADE Curriculum Frameworks. She stated that the program expects an increase in funding of \$5 million by next year.

Kathy Stegall was recognized to present specific information about the next funding cycle of ABC grants. Stegall reported an anticipation of continued funding for current grantees beginning July 1, 1999. She noted that areas of the state having the greatest need would be targeted for increased funding. A complete list of proposed projects and the funding levels will be proposed for action by the Board at the April meeting.

No action was taken on this report.

Administrator Licensure Pilot Recommendation – Donna Elliott was recognized to make this report. Ms. Elliott reminded the Board that this item was discussed extensively in the Working Session of the January Meeting. She introduced Dr. Mary Gunter who chaired the committee, which prepared the recommendations. Ms. Elliott stressed that these recommendations cover only principal, assistant principal or those referred to as building administrators and that the structure paralleled the recommendations adopted for licensure of teachers. Ms. Picket asked why these recommendations did not include superintendent and other district-level administrators. Ms. Elliott indicated that the evaluation instrument proposed for use in this area of licensure did not include district-level administrators. Dr. Gunter indicated that the committee sees the need for additional work before making recommendations for licensure of superintendents and other district-level administrators. Mr. Fisher moved the adoption of the recommendation as a pilot program. Mr. Gordy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Litigation Summary - Theresa Wallent was recognized to make this report. Ms. Wallent indicated the summary of litigation issues was included in the Board materials as requested by Mr. McLarty. Mr. McLarty moved that counsel, in conjunction with the Attorney General's Office, prepare a quarterly report and e-mail it to the Board. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commitment to Principles of Desegregation Settlement Agreement: Report on the Execution of the Implementation Plan - Dr. Charity Smith was recognized to make this report. Dr. Smith reported that the state did receive the anticipated reprieve from the February 1 monitoring report and that all conditions of the reprieve had been met. As

requested, the Joshua Intervenors have been notified and have agreed to participate in future meetings. The March report will include details of progress made during the past year.

Mr. McLarty asked Dr. Smith to review the status of the loan forgiveness. Dr. Smith indicated that no final decision had to be made before December 31, 2000. Little Rock District has at least two more testing cycles before a final decision.

Revocation of Steve Garmrath's Probationary Teaching Certificate – Theresa Wallent made this report. She reported that the Department had received information from Craighead County Municipal Court indicating arrest of Mr. Garmrath and a charge of possession of a controlled substance. She referred to the full explanation as provided in the Board materials. She noted that this conviction violates the condition of the probationary certificate issued last summer. Mr. Garmrath was notified by certified letter that his probationary license was being reconsidered by the Board. Mr. Garmrath was not present at the meeting.

Mr. Gordy moved revocation of the license. Ms. Yates seconded the motion. Mr. McLarty reported that he personally had contacted Mr. Garmrath's counsel, but he had not heard from him. The motion to revoke the licensure passed unanimously.

Legislation Affecting the Process of Review and Approval of Refunding Bonds Issued by Local School Districts – Mr. Gordy moved the approval of proposed legislation drafted by Stephens Inc. as reviewed earlier at the Work Session. Mr. Alderson proposed amending the motion to support the concept of revising legislation that would expedite the process of refunding existing bond issues but not necessarily those drafts as submitted. The amendment to the motion requires that the Department staff review any proposed legislation. Gordy agreed. Mr. Alderson seconded the amended motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Legislative Actions Impacting Isolated (Small) Schools – Mr. Fisher moved the adoption of the following three recommendations concerning the funding of isolated schools for this biennium.

- (1) Recommend full funding of Category 1 and Category 2 funds for a total of \$5.5 million this year.
- (2) No changes in the conditions of the Act impacting isolated and small schools this biennium.
- (3) Ask the Department to commission an outside study of isolated (small) schools during the next two years.

Mr. Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Review of Loan and Bond Applications – Mr. McLarty stated it was his request to move this item to the Action Agenda. He observed that in reviewing the background information of the schools requesting loans and bonds, a number of those schools seemed to have a large number of teachers in positions for which they were not qualified. He stated the Board does not get this information in any other place, and is not sure that the Board has an opportunity to really know the conditions that exist in many districts. He noted that in the districts of DeQueen, Lake Hamilton, and Greenwood there were 30 certification violations among those

schools. He believes the Board should be more active in seeing that all classrooms are staffed with fully licensed teachers.

Mr. Simon suggested that licensure of staff was one of the indicators proposed in the Accountability Proposal.

Ms. Pickett asked if the Department has a limit as to the number of licensure violations beyond which loan and bond applications could not be approved. Staff responded no. Mr. McLarty moved that the Department review this issue and bring a recommendation at a later Board meeting. Mr. Gordy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.


Mr. McLarty moved approval of the loan and bond recommendations as presented in the Board materials. Mr. Gordy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

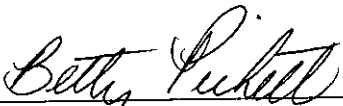
Ms. Yates asked about the progress of Saratoga school toward implementing the four-day school week. Staff indicated it would prepare a report for the March meeting.

Mr. McLarty moved Adjournment. Mr. Gordy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Recorded and reported by Dr. Charles D. Watson


Raymond Simon, Director


Betty Pickett, Chair

ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
February 8, 1999

WORKING SESSION
8:00 am
Room 201A

1. Proposed Revisions Arkansas Comprehensive Testing and Accountability Program (ACTAP) ...Mr. Raymond Simon
2. ADE Funding Recommendations: Professional Development Report ...Mr. Ray Simon
3. Professional Development Days...Mr. Ray Simon
4. Legislative Agenda.....Ms. Betty Pickett

State Board of Education
Worksession, Monday, February 08, 1999

The following members attended: Carl Baggett, James McLarty, Anita Yates, Richard Smith, JoNell Caldwell, Martha Dixon, Luke Gordy, Edwin Alderson, Bill Fisher, Betty Pickett, Hackler

The following members were absent:

The meeting was called to order at 8:10 a.m. by Betty Pickett, chair.

Announcements: Education update from Board – sent out monitoring process as we go.
Things to go in the publication

Members attending meetings in last month.

Anita Yates – conference on Character Ed and Positive classroom discipline – wonderful. Very practical. Each school got a bag full of tapes and information. Lots of enthusiasm from teachers and administrators. Ed McKinney excited about accountability piece. Wants to start with him and move through his system.

Richard Smith – healthy school network. Attended in October. In conjunction with NASBE annual conference. A healthy child is critical to the learning potential of the child. Smith requested agenda item to discuss this issue. Have human services and o smith. Formed the AR team. Attended session on Charter Schools at NASBE meeting. What are componets that a good charter school law should include. Riley: provided some research.

Dixon: Govert affairs meeting NASBE – rep usde senate lablor and resources committee. Discussed block grants , charter schools. Informative.

Carl Barger: Improving Americas school act – charter schools discussion. Interesting discussion, hear discouraging conversation. Speaker talked on subject, convinced me that every school can learn. Teachers environment, parents, etc. Need to get belif out thre, need support for the idea that all children can learn.

Nasbe legislative conference in march – McLarty.

Work sessions don't take votes. Notes. Does board want this information. (McLarty wants information)

JoNell's father lives on Main street in Beebe. Supt. Called off basketball game. Otherwise would have been lots more loss of life.

E-mail recommendations from Theresa Wallent – Memo mailed that will address issue. Boardman, e-mail that you use will be on a permanent server and be available upon

request. This will be stored for future reference. Pickett: What is the need for having this done. ADE has had request for the information. Find out about how senators and other officials communications are monitored. Alderson: each individual should be required to keep his/her own back issues. McLarty: definition of official communications. Each individual keep own records.

ACTAP Recommendations: Simon – everyone has copy – released in mid January. On Web site – draft, looking for questions - Simon met upon request for anyone who is interested. At least three meetings - Convene 16 pilot COE sites. Read as a blue print as to what we intend to hold schools accountable for. Evaluated on three areas.

Gordy: Generally high marks from adm in his area. Specific concerns about scoring format. Not sure any of their schools could become rewards school. Not too high expectations. Have we run baseline data to see where they are. Limited data available. Only given one time. Absolute performance on 4th grade level looks promising.

Gordy: Argue bill – school report card. Worked together to make systems consistent.

Baggett: purpose of narrative description – give school an opportunity to describe what happened in your school. Gordy: Think this is a good idea. Yates; must be in parent understandable standards.

McLarty: Page four change priority to responsibility. Also has concern about narrative. Simon: all computations will be done by ADE. Done by us on objective data.

McLarty – Page 8. Awarding points for as little as 40 percent of students in this area. Need to focus on scores on academic tests.

Pickett: if you use the point system it is more difficult for public to get information about schools. Does the point system inform the public.

Hackler: public interested in where school ranks, points necessary for ranking. Simon – points may not be public.

Simon: currently schools judged by a single score in the newspaper. Much better picture of the local school than what is currently the case.

Pickett: How do you measure school safety indicator. Make report each year on number of incidents.

Pickett: Page 9, schools that do not have a state test. How do you put that into the mix – something not statewide. Simon – we will have a menu.

McLarty: How long will it take this system to achieve the result that you want.

Pickdtt: Anything that will require legislative. Simon: yes, working with legislators to craft that. System of rewards, sanctions and criterion.

Prof Development

Pickett: Problem on waivers for staff development. Department giving waivers for staff development over and above five days. Some documentation from Department on this issue. What is preference of board for continuing this practice. May need to back up this action. Bring all waivers before the board for action.

Simon: No formal board action by the Board that would allow staff to award waivers for staff development. Contacted staff, Bass – asst director then - . Practice over the years. Ways to conduct prof development beyond the five days: early release or full day.. Would not exceed 30 hours over the year. We need to do two things. Encourage schools utilize staff development the way they were intended. Allow schools to seek additional days when supt is convinced they are necessary for quality.

Hackler: Talk about this and professional development days at the same time. Think in theory it great, but has major concern for those days. Some schools make meaningful use of the five days. Unfortunately, schools use them to do things that do not effect student larning. Has concern about requiring five additional days. Does not see legislature increasing funds – Find some way to make those five days meaningful. Do additional staff development by release time, not additional days.

McLarty: agrees with Hackler. When we were looking at revision of standards in 93, Looked at the issue – we cannot afford adding additional days. It appears that we are allowing schools to reduce the number of student contact days below 175, not 178 etc... Now would be the time to push for a full 180 days of student interaction. We should not keep taking away student interaction days by allowing schools to have professional days. Should not allow this to continue. Or come to the board for approval.

Yates: if a child's education depends on 2 days in school, we're in trouble. Two more days in the classroom in not going to make or break a student's education. The issue is quality staff development..

Baggett: whose fault is it that we have poor staff development – Yates district. Disageement – McLarty believes it is the state's fault.

Pickett: What are they doing with the day, that they have to have more time.

Caldwell: Little Rock a good example. They are going to middle school, they need more time to develop this concept.

Smith: We should hold school accountable for what they are doing with those days. We need some indication that they are planning for effective use of those days.

Gordy: Sounds like any school who wants a waiver, requests then gets the waiver. Susan Grier reviewed the process of approval.

Simon: Do we have any information about what they are doing with those additional days. Not specific. Do not have any information about how schools actually use the required five days. Grier: They're guidelines, not monitored.

Simon: We can develop communication to schools as to how to use those days.

Pickett: Determine why they cannot get those days needed in the five days before they ask for a waiver. Yates: indicate the

Simon: Does not require request for early release.

Pickett: Can we get information as to who is doing early release.

Simon: Refind what five days are to be used for: Continue waiver, don't grant waiver for early release, describe early release and use of five days; Alderson: do we need to do anything. Simon, no, we just need to enforce what is being done.

Pickett: Board needs to have criteria for waiver or approval of request – not arbitrarily.

Fisher: Come back with recommendation at next meeting (ade). We do not need to review 140 requests for waiver. Simon: Districts setting calendar. Simon: get dir memo out giving guidance for what those five days are to do. Simon will do that and will bring rec at the next month.

Recognized Rich Nagel to speak on issue. Does not believe it is good to sacrifice student contact days to provide for additional professional development. Look at the practice of providing pd at the expense of student instruction. Setting aside the whole issue of the number of days. There are recommendations beyond the number of days. The recommendations are an attempt to help structure the framework for professional development. Pledge to work with Simon to see that work is incorporated in practice.

Simon: Good time to incorporate recommendations from PD. Define how we expect those days are used.

Pickett: asked Simon to make recommendation on PD that would require any legislation. Not recommend that additional five days not be funded.

McLarty: Two separate issues intertwined – wait until next month to see what is proposed by the Department.

Legislative Agenda

School Bus liability: Working proposal – statewide policy requiring additional coverage - \$250,000 being used as benchmark for funding proposal. People who need to be interested want loss data, cannot be determined. School Boards Assn has the best data and it has not been released. McLarty has been promised a firm bid today, from an insurer. (See McLarty for notes on legislation.) Gordy says legislative support seems to be favorable. More information maybe later today.

Gordy: Mahoney and Beebe supportive in concept to change mechanism of liability coverage. They agree we are in a conflict of interest situation the way it is structured currently. Establish a third party entity that would be adjudicators, and thus take out the Board. P. Martin. Talked with Mahoney: directly address concerns of ADE with those legislators.

Fisher: Isolated Schools. Express appreciation of staff in collecting information on isolated school situation. Background – 1307 defines isolated district that meets several criteria. 31 districts that meet that definition. Board study and make that recommendation. 1318 passed in 97, less than 350 student and merged the two bills. Fund small school districts and use 350 as number. Category 1 funding for those schools. In category 11 funding, density factor. 9 districts qualify for category 2 funding that met - less than 1.2 density per square mile. All in mt except AR city. 49 under 350 enrollment. Doing as much as possible for these districts as we can within the current structure of the laws.

Introduced Mr. Griggs, OARK, rural schools advocate. Need to look at facilities funding area. Are these supplements going to the right places. If you have a large debt, you have good facilities, can get support. Funding goes to growth, but on schools that have needs to repair old facilities. Salaries are also an issue in these small schools. Came to board to be sure that these districts get full funding.

Rec: Fisher: \$5.5 million fully fund allocation for small school districts\
No change in acts for funding this session.

As a board address and identify before next session what isolated schools and small districts are and how we might support those schools with facilities and staff. Start on study by department and move forward.

Yates. St Pau. Why not isolated? Not meet 1.2 density rating or fewer than 350 students.

Pickett: In moving forward with Fisher's recommendations, more to consider than just funding. Is this something that the Board and the Department can address, or do we need to commit some money to get a complete study done. Simon: facilities needs a study...

Cummins: Take advantage of private funds, awards, Possibility to work on additional funds. Delta schools and facilities. Should we pursue seeking private funding. Pickett, prepare recommendation, come back and see what we need to do.. Do not pay a lot of administrative costs. Generally move forward. Do not lose any funds.

Gordy: Fisher contacted late last week. Approached by administrators – time for school to have bonds refunded to save money. Look for recommendations as to what can be done to improve timing. David Smith VP Stephens. Draft legislation to speed up the process. Remove state Board from the process in approval of refunding. Use rules and regs rather than coming to State Board. Second: reduces number of publications from three to two notifications on refunding issues. Refunding bonds to take advantage of lower interest rate. Save 5% or \$100,000 in the trigger.

Board meeting Tex in March. Sunday.