

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
SUNDAY, July 13, 1997

The State Board of Education met Sunday, July 13, 1997, in the Stitt Room of the Holiday Inn West in Little Rock. The meeting of General Education was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Mr. Bill Fisher, Chairman of the Board.

✓ Members Present: Edwin Alderson, Jo Nell Caldwell, Martha Dixon, Bill Fisher, Luke Gordy, Anita Yates, Lewis Thompson, Jim McClarty, Sherry Walker, Betty Pickett, Richard Smith, Carl Baggett, Gene Wilhoit, Ex Officio Secretary.

Mr. Fisher introduced newly appointed Board member, Mr. Lewis Thompson of Texarkana. Mr. Thompson introduced himself to the board as a former public school coach, teacher and administrator in both Arkansas and Texas. Mr. Thompson currently works as a juvenile probation officer in Texarkana. Mr. Fisher also introduced Mr. Thompson's wife and mother who accompanied him to the meeting.

Ms. Brenda Matthews, Assistant to the Director for Legal Services, presented a draft copy of the Rules and Regulations Governing GPA Policy on Student Education and Participation in Interscholastic Activities (See Attachment #1).

Mr. Jim Boardman, Assistant Director for Information Technology, reported to the Board regarding reporting procedures to be used in monitoring the procedures and for longitudinal studies (See Attachment #2).

The Board did not take action on the draft rules and regulations.

Dr. Diane Sydoriak made a presentation to the Board regarding changes in Federal Laws Related to Special Education. Dr. Sydoriak gave a copy of the new revised federal regulations and pointed out sections of the law that will have the greatest impact on Special Education programs in Arkansas. Due to the length of the material, Dr. Sydoriak was asked to complete her presentation on Monday at the regular Board meeting (See attachment #3).

Mr. Edwin Alderson, Chairman of the Search Committee to Select a Director, made a report to the board regarding procedures to be used in the selection process and presented a list of proposed applicants (See Attachment #4).

Motion was made by Chairman Alderson that the Board accept the report of the committee, seconded by Mr. Gordy, motion carried.

The Board then moved to Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. The Board reconvened in open session. Mr. Fisher reported that the name of Ms. Marsha Horton, Associate State Director for Instruction for the State of Delaware, had been added to the list of applicants. No action was taken as a result of the Executive Session.

Mr. Smith moved to adjourn, Ms. Walker seconded, motion carried.

The Board stood in recess until 8:30 a.m. Monday, July 14, 1997, in the ADE Auditorium.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
MONDAY, JULY 14, 1997

MINUTES

The State Board of Education met for their regular monthly meeting on Monday, July 14, 1997, in the Auditorium of the Arch Ford Education building. The meeting was called to order by Bill Fisher, Chairman of the Board, at 8:32 a.m.

Members present: Bill Fisher, Chairman, Luke Gordy, Vice-chairman, Edwin Alderson, Carl Baggett, JoNell Caldwell, Martha Dixon, James McLarty, Betty Pickett, Richard Smith, Lewis Thompson, Jr., Sherry Walker, Anita Yates, Gene Wilhoit, Ex Officio Secretary

Chairman Fisher removed Item II, Certification Waiver for Medical Profession Education Teacher for Springdale High School-Youth Apprenticeship ACT 546 of 1991, from the consent agenda because it needs Board action. Items 1 - 10 were approved by a motion by Mr. Gordy. Mr. Smith seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

ACTION AGENDA ITEMS

CHAIR'S REPORT

The following items were brought to the members' attention during the Chair's report:

1. Mr. Gordy was appointed chair of the Legislative Committee and Ms. Yates and Mr. Alderson were appointed to that committee.
2. Members were made aware of the memo to staff from the Director and Chairman of the Board concerning reorganization. This serves to reinforce the ongoing of the reorganization and a reminder that the 99's, deputy director, and staff attorney positions are being placed on hold until the new Director comes on board.
3. Ms. Yates was appointed to replace Ms. Scott on the advisory committee of the Leadership Academy.
4. Jan Spann is liaison on the Workforce Development Committee and will report to the Board.
5. Any matters relating to the Board should be directed to Janinne Riggs. The minutes of a Board meeting will be distributed within a week after the Board meeting.

6. Mr. Smith will serve in the vacant position on NASBE Healthy Schools Network. Ms. Pickett was named as voting delegate to the next meeting with Ms. Walker as alternate.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. Mr. Wilhoit introduced one of the two Presidential Scholars chosen from Arkansas. The Presidential Scholar program was begun in 1964 to recognize outstanding high school graduates on their academic achievement. One hundred forty-one outstanding scholars, from across the nation, were recognized in Washington. Lewis (Jett) McAllister gave an overview of his week in Washington where he was presented with a medallion by Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley. He plans to attend Rice University and major in English and chemistry. Melanie Boris of Benton, also a Presidential Scholar, was not able to attend the Board meeting.

Mr. Fisher introduced newly appointed Board member, Mr. Lewis Thompson, Jr., from Texarkana, who was appointed by Governor Huckabee to replace Ms. Scott.

2. Mr. Wilhoit distributed materials showing how Arkansas ranks among the states regarding school access to technology. All districts in Arkansas are currently connected and all schools will be connected by July 1998. We are waiting on further developments from the FCC regarding the new "Education Rate" before the Board or schools can make additional plans.

3. A number of letters have been received regarding middle level school education's being downgraded. The Department has not moved away from its support on this issue and the change from two staff members to one does not lessen the importance within the Department. The responsibilities for supporting middle level education will be shared among field service specialists and consultants.

4. Funding of transportation relief aid at partial or full level will come from Category B monies. Any decision on the part of the Board will be delayed until Category B funds are released by Finance and Administration.

Governor Huckabee was recognized. He in turn recognized Mr. Wilhoit as having made great strides in education while serving as Director of the Department. He noted his amiable relationship with Mr. Wilhoit and how he was disappointed at his leaving the state. He read a letter from him to Mr. Wilhoit commending him on his accomplishments; the Governor then presented Mr. Wilhoit with the letter and a framed certificate.

Mr. Fisher thanked the Governor for coming to the meeting and pledged his commitment to working with him as Chair of the Board.

Mr. Fisher excused himself as the Governor left and turned the meeting over to Mr. Gordy.

Mr. Wilhoit continued the Director's report.

5. A chart listing unit heads and coordinators was handed out and the effort that was expended in pulling together unit program responsibilities and individual job descriptions was noted. This should provide a well-defined structure and organization for the new director.

6. A meeting of the Higher Education Foundation held in Washington has put forth a K-16 initiative which should involve higher education, vocational education along with general education. Johnnie Roebuck is higher education's liaison. A meeting will be held in Reno July 28 - 31, if any Board member can attend. JoNell Caldwell will represent the Board and Department.

7. Mr. Wilhoit reported that it was a sad day for the Department because of the death of Carol Verboon. She was a faithful, conscientious and dedicated employee. The funeral would be held at 1:00 on July 14.

DISCUSSION ON STATE BOARD PRIORITIES

The tables in the Board book were intended to help the Board monitor progress toward their priorities. Director Wilhoit indicated that staff will put together a summary document to be mailed to the Board prior to the retreat. At the retreat these may be looked at again and unresolved issues having to do with policy and program areas realigned.

Ms. Walker announced the retreat will be held at Fairfield Bay on August 9 - 10 with the Board meeting at the conference center on August 11.

REPORT OF THE ARKANSAS SCHOLARS PROGRAM, AS SPONSORED BY THE ARKANSAS BUSINESS AND EDUCATION ALLIANCE, INC.

Mr. Lee Gordon showed the ABETA slide presentation presented to 8th grade students. Chambers of Commerce and businesses are made aware of the two goals of the Alliance -- A reason for students to stay in school and work hard and to build business and school relationships in the community. Four school districts and communities have adopted this program: Forrest City, Osceola, Blytheville, and Clinton. Five communities are considering the program. Mr. Wilhoit serves on this Board and the new director would fill his position.

The Board stated that it would be to the students' advantage if this effort were linked to the Challenge Scholarship.

REQUEST FOR WAIVER ON DENIAL OF APPLICATION FOR A TEACHING
CERTIFICATE

Ms. Pickett made a motion seconded by Mr. McLarty to pull this item from the agenda because the members had not had an opportunity to look at background materials.

Ms. Walker made a substitute motion to table the item until after lunch to give the members time to look at the materials. Mr. Smith seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

INITIAL POLICY DISCUSSION FOR DRAFTING RULES AND
REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE REFUNDING SAVINGS BUILDING FUND

Dr. Bobbie Davis presented Act 1158 of 1997 which provides that school districts shall not lose additional base funding as a result of refunding outstanding bonds at lower rates of interest. When school districts refund outstanding bond issues, this could lower their debt payment, which could result in lowering their additional base funding. These rules and regulations will be written to ensure this is carried out as intended.

Mr. Smith made the motion to accept the recommendation to draft proposed rules and regulations and Ms. Yates seconded the motion. It carried unanimously.

INITIAL POLICY DISCUSSION FOR DRAFTING RULES AND
REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE REPORTING OF VIOLENT CRIMES BY LOCAL
SCHOOL OFFICIALS

Ms. Theresa Dixon presented Act 1243 of 1997 as it provides guidelines for local school officials to report violent crimes involving students and occurring on school property.

Mr. Alderson made the motion to table this item until next month so that Board could see the draft of the rules and regulations. Ms. Pickett seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

INITIAL POLICY DISCUSSION REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
BRAILLE AND LARGE PRINT TEXTBOOK APPROPRIATION AT THE ARKANSAS
SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Dr. Diane Sydoriak presented as an initial policy discussion the process used to purchase braille

and large print textbooks for students with visual impairments. Because of the increase in prices of texts, money may need to be added for this expenditure during the next biennium.

INITIAL POLICY DISCUSSION CONCERNING RULES AND REGULATIONS RELATED TO FOUR-DAY SCHOOL WEEKS

Mr. Kunkel led the discussion by saying there would be no problem in calculating school aid. Board members were concerned that economics not education seemed to be the reason for one school district's asking for permission to move to a four-day week. The Board expresses concern that documentation of a public hearing and community support and ultimately documentation of educational progress of students would have to be a criteria for this decision.

The Board recessed at 10:15 until 10:35.

INITIAL POLICY DISCUSSION FOR DRAFTING RULES AND REGULATIONS REVISIONS GOVERNING THE SCHOOL FINANCE SYSTEM

Mr. Kunkel presented discussions concerning General Facilities funding, Growth Facilities funding, and Student Growth funding. In each case, the law and existing rules and regulations were included in the Board book. Existing rules and regulations must be made to comply with the law.

Dr. Sydoriak presented the funding for local school districts having to do with special education expenditure requirements. The law and rules and regulations with strike outs and under linings to make new rules and regulations consistent with state and federal statutes were included in the Board book.

INITIAL POLICY DISCUSSION CONCERNING RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDING TO ISOLATED SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Rules and regulations regarding Acts 917 and 1194 of 1995 expired on June 30, 1997. Mr. Kunkel presented information relating to Acts 1307 and 1318 of 1997. New rules and regulations must be written to allow districts to access legislation which most benefits their district.

APPROVE FOR PUBLIC COMMENT PROPOSED RULES AND REGULATIONS
GOVERNING DISTRIBUTION OF SELECTIVE SERVICE REGISTRATION FORMS AND
OBTAINING REASONS FOR STUDENTS DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL

Mr. Anthony presented the proposed rules and regulations pertaining to selective service and dropping out of school. The comment from the Board had to do with the timing of the distribution of the form to students. Their feeling was that this could happen one time during the year instead of on a monthly basis.

Mr. McLarty made the motion to approve for public comment. Mr. Baggett seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

APPROVE FOR PUBLIC COMMENT PROPOSED RULES AND REGULATIONS TO
PROVIDE FINANCIAL INCENTIVES FOR NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFICATION OF
TEACHERS

Mr. Anthony presented this item for approval for public hearing later in July.
Ms. Walker made the motion to approve and Mr. McLarty seconded the motion. It carried unanimously.

APPROVE FOR PUBLIC COMMENT PROPOSED RULES AND REGULATIONS
GOVERNING ARKANSAS SCHOOL COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT

Mr. Anthony presented these rules and regulations for approval for public comment. Mr. Smith made the motion to approve and Mr. Gordy seconded the motion. It carried unanimously.

APPROVE FOR CONTINUING PUBLIC COMMENT REVISION OF PROPOSED RULES
AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE ARKANSAS COMPREHENSIVE TESTING AND
ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS

Dr. Gayle Potter listed concerns which were addressed at the public hearing. These were: IEP and LEP students, being assessed in the home language, end of level test, School Improvement Plan, reporting methods, testing dates, not to have required training for teachers, and the costliness of alternate assessments. The committee will meet again to incorporate these ideas. Dr. Potter will prepare a document listing these comments and detailing how the ADE proposes that the Board address them. The document will be mailed prior to the next Board Meeting.

DISCUSSION OF THE PRIORITIES FOR CATEGORY B FUNDING

This item was removed from the agenda.

DISCUSSION OF DRAFT RULES AND REGULATIONS AND APPROVAL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT GOVERNING GRADE POINT AVERAGE POLICY ON STUDENT EDUCATION AND PARTICIPATION IN INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES

Ms. Brenda Matthews presented the draft of these rules and regulations. The Board was concerned that remediation was not more strictly addressed. It was decided that the present 2.0 GPA would stay in place the fall semester and rules and regulations could be written for the spring semester of 1998. Board comments would be due to Ms. Matthews by August 22 with proposed rules and regulations coming to the Board in September. Ms. Matthews is to mail a Director's Memo detailing the Board's decisions.

Mr. Alderson made the motion to table until September and follow the policy currently in force. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. It carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION REGARDING THE CONTRIBUTION RATE FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE FOR 1997-98 SCHOOL YEAR

Dr. Bobbie Davis presented this item. Even though there is no line item for paying health insurance for teachers, the State Board determines the rate paid by the districts.

After discussion by the Board and input by Mr. Rich Nagel, Arkansas Education Association (AEA) and Mr. Ed Love, Arkansas of Educational Administrators (AAEA), the Board voted to increase the rate from \$105 to \$114 per month per eligible participant. Mr. McLarty made the motion to increase and it was seconded by Mr. Smith. It carried by a majority vote, with Mr. Baggett, Ms. Caldwell, Mr. Gordy and Ms. Yates voting against.

The Board recessed for lunch at 12:15 and reconvened at 1:15.

REQUEST FOR WAIVER ON DENIAL OF APPLICATION FOR A TEACHING CERTIFICATE

Item 5 which was delayed until after lunch was presented by Ms. Dixon. She had distributed a resume and two letters of recommendation from current employers and a letter from the Director

Note: Typographical correction made to original minutes. See attachment.

of the Arkansas River Cooperative pertaining to Mr. James Everett Hall. Mr. Hall had pled guilty to possession of a controlled substance when he was 19 but later had received a full pardon by the Governor of Louisiana. Mr. Hall spoke in his behalf.

Mr. Alderson and Mr. McLarty questioned him as to his having any arrests or using drugs since that time. Mr. Hall indicated he had one license violation and no use of drugs.

Mr. McLarty made the motion to grant the waiver and Ms. Yates seconded the motion. The motion carried with Ms. Walker voting against.

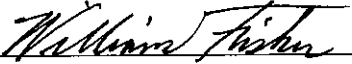
Dr. Sydoriak continued her discussion of federal changes relating to special education.

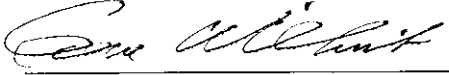
Item II from the Consent Agenda (Certification Waiver for Medical profession Education Teacher for Springdale High School - Youth Apprenticeship Act 546 of 1991) was moved to the August meeting.

Mr. McLarty made the motion to adjourn and Ms. Pickett seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:02 p.m.

Recorded by Mary Rankin


William Fisher, Chairman


Gene Wilhoit, Ex Officio Secretary