

Minutes
State Board Meeting
January 8, 2026

Present: Adrienne Woods, Chair; Lisa Hunter, Vice-Chair; Dr. Aaron Abbott; Dr. Gary Arnold; Ken Bragg; Randy Henderson; David Peacock; Leigh Keener; Jeff Wood; Jacob Oliva, ADE Secretary; Jeanie Wilcoxon, 2025 Arkansas Teacher of the Year.

The Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) met on Thursday, January 8, 2026. Adrienne Woods, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM, followed by a moment of silence, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the National Anthem, which was sung by a 9th-grade home-schooled student, Maggie Kennedy. The National Anthem was also signed by Annabell Flores, a senior, of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind.

Recognition

V.1. 2025 Arkansas History Teacher of the Year-Elizabeth Prewett

Item V. 1. was presented by Dr. Kiffany Pride, Assistant Commissioner - Office of Learning Services.

Elizabeth Prewett, a secondary social studies teacher at Mills University High School, has been named 2025 Arkansas History Teacher of the Year.

Ms. Prewett will receive a \$1,000.00 honorarium and a collection of books and educational materials from the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History.

Elizabeth is one of 53 finalists for the 2025 National History Teacher of the Year Award.

Changes to Agenda

VI. None

Representative Alyssa Brown, District #41, spoke on the character of and to advocate for her constituent, Mandy Goodwin, as well as on behalf of the Concord School District and community.

Action Agenda

VII.1. Request for Final Approval of the DCTE Rules Governing the Arkansas Adult Diploma Program

Item VII.1. was presented by Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner.

The Division of Career and Technical Education (DCTE) Rules Governing the Arkansas Adult Diploma Program were approved to be released for public comment by the State Board on November 13, 2025. The public comment period began on November 15, 2025, and ended on December 16, 2025. Public comment was received, but no substantive changes were made. The Division requested the State Board's final approval of the rules as amended.

A motion for final approval was made by Lisa Hunter and seconded by Dr. Aaron Abbott. The motion unanimously passed.

VII.2. Authorization of Payment Stipends and Expense Reimbursement for Board Members

Item VII.2. was presented by Courtney Salas-Ford, Chief of Staff.

Arkansas Code § 25-46-902 states that every state board may, by a majority vote of the total membership of the board cast during its first regularly scheduled meeting of each calendar year, authorize expense reimbursement of each board member for performing official board duties. The expense reimbursement shall not exceed the rate established for state employees by state travel regulations.

A motion to approve the authorization of payment of stipends and expense reimbursement for State Board Members was made by Lisa Hunter and seconded by Randy Henderson. The motion unanimously passed.

VII.3. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case No. 25-223 – Mandy Goodwin

Item VII.3 was presented by Whitney James, Managing Attorney, and Daniel Shults, Chief Legal Counsel, who advised on procedures. Also present were Attorney Cody Kees of Bequette, Billingsley, and Kees Law Firm and Mandy Goodwin, Educator.

The educator objected to the Ethics Hearing Subcommittee's evidentiary hearing findings and recommendation of September 10, 2025, and requested a review by the State Board.

A motion was made by Leigh Keener that Mandy Goodwin violated Standard 2a and 2b. There was no 2nd to the motion, and it failed.

A motion was made by Leigh Keener that Mandy Goodwin violated Code of Ethics Standard 2b. The motion was seconded by David Peacock and failed after a roll call vote of 6 No to 2 Yes.

Roll Call – Violation of Code of Ethics Standard 2b

Lisa Hunter	No
Dr. Gary Arnold	No
Randy Henderson	No
Jeff Wood	No
Ken Bragg	No
Leigh Keener	Yes
Dr. Aaron Abbott	No
David Peacock	Yes

A motion was made by Jeff Wood that Mandy Goodwin had not violated any Code of Ethics Standards, and Dr. Aaron Abbott seconded the motion. The motion passed with a roll call vote of 7 Yes to 1 No.

Roll Call – No Violation of Code of Ethics Standards

Lisa Hunter	Yes
Dr. Gary Arnold	Yes
Randy Henderson	Yes
Jeff Wood	Yes
Ken Bragg	Yes
Leigh Keener	No
Dr. Aaron Abbott	Yes
David Peacock	Yes

New Business

None

Consent Agenda

1. Minutes
2. Review of Loan and Bond Applications
3. District Conversion Charter Application-DRIVEN School of Opportunity (Pulaski County Special School District)

A motion was made by Jeff Wood to approve the consent agenda, and was seconded by Randy Henderson. The motion unanimously passed.

Public Comments

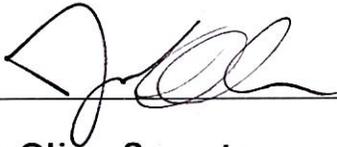
The State Board heard public comments from:

- Audie Alumbaugh
- Melanie Fox
- Maria Hegwood
- Julius Wright
- Charline Wright

Adjournment

Adrienne Woods, Chair, adjourned the State Board meeting at 12:34 PM.

Minutes recorded by Melody Pettit.



**Jacob Oliva, Secretary
Department of Education**



**Adrienne Woods, Chair Arkansas
State Board of Education**