

Minutes
Vision for Excellence in Education and Arkansas Accountability System
Steering Committee Meeting
Wednesday, August 31, 2016

The Vision for Excellence in Education and Arkansas Accountability System Steering Committee met Wednesday, August 31, 2016, in the Arkansas Department of Education Auditorium. Chair Johnny Key called the meeting to order at 9:29 a.m.

Members Present: Commissioner Johnny Key, Chair; Ms. Ouida Newton; Senator Jane English; Representative Bruce Cozart; Ms. Ima Etim; Ms. Michelle Hayward; Ms. Keli Gill; Dr. Harold Jeffcoat; Ms. Joyce Flowers; Ms. Gloria Phillips; Ms. Melissa Bratton; Mr. Anthony Bennett.

Members Absent: none.

Audience: ADE staff, general public, and press.

The meeting was live streamed and the recording was posted on the ADE website at <http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/public-school-accountability/every-student-succeeds-act-essa/stay-informed-archive>.

Introduction of Steering Committee

Commissioner Key welcomed the committee. He said we have an opportunity to transform education in Arkansas. He said now is the time to move our state from adequacy to excellence.

Commissioner Key introduced the steering committee members: Ms. Ouida Newton, Senator Jane English, Representative Bruce Cozart, Ms. Ima Etim, Ms. Michelle Hayward, Ms. Keli Gill, Dr. Harold Jeffcoat, Ms. Joyce Flowers, Ms. Gloria Phillips, Ms. Melissa Bratton, and Mr. Anthony Bennett.

A brief introduction to the Vision for Excellence in Education and Arkansas Accountability System Steering Committee members are available on the ADE website at http://www.arkansased.gov/public/userfiles/ESEA/ESSA_Steering_Committee_Members.pdf

Role of the Steering Committee

Commissioner Key shared the role of the steering committee. He said the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) was required by ESSA to develop and submit a state

accountability plan to the U.S. Department of Education. He said in order to ensure that Arkansas' plan reflects the priorities and needs of educators, students, parents, communities and all stakeholders, a stakeholder engagement process would be utilized. One component of the process is the Vision for Excellence in Education and Arkansas Accountability System Steering Committee. Members of this committee were appointed by the Commissioner and approved by the State Board of Education on August 12, 2016. He said the steering committee would be presented feedback and suggestions from the community listening forums, surveys and all other avenues of stakeholder input. Steering committee members will use all information presented to them to fulfill their purpose of advising and making recommendations to the ADE on a new Arkansas Accountability System that aligns to the Arkansas Vision for Excellence in Education.

Commissioner Key said the steering committee would meet on the last Wednesday of each month at 9:30am in the ADE auditorium. The meetings will be open to the public, live streamed, and recorded. Agendas will be posted on the ADE website at <https://v3.boardbook.org/Public/PublicHome.aspx?ak=1001636>

Meeting Dates

Director of Policy and Special Projects Ms. Tina Smith said the steering committee meetings are scheduled for August 31, 2016; September 28, 2016; October 26, 2016; November 30, 2016; December 28, 2016; January 25, 2017; February 22, 2017; March 29, 2017; April 26, 2017; May 31, 2017; and June 28, 2017. She said additional dates would be scheduled at a later date.

The meeting dates are posted on the ADE website at http://www.arkansased.gov/public/userfiles/ESEA/ESSA_Steering_Committee_Calendar.pdf

Vision for Excellence in Education

Commissioner Key provided an overview of the Vision for Excellence in Education. The vision is available on the ADE website at <http://www.arkansased.gov/about-ade/vision-for-excellence-in-education>. Commissioner Key said the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) collaborated with stakeholders to define the role of the agency and develop a vision for moving forward. He said the ADE vision is to transform Arkansas to lead the nation in student-focused education. He said this vision moves beyond the classroom to the community. He said we needed to be about the business of solving student problems.

Commissioner Key said the feedback from stakeholders across the state has been very positive in their support of the vision, mission, values, goals, and strategies. He said the

mission of the ADE is to provide leadership, support, and service to schools, districts, and communities so every student graduates prepared for college, career, and community engagement. Commissioner Key said one specific topic of discussion at the agency has been on how we move from compliance of family and community engagement plans to more innovative methods that truly address the needs of families and students. He said the value statements highlighted the need to consider the whole child, risk-taking, transparency, and moving beyond a single test score. He said the goals focused on college, career, and community engagement. He said time is the constant and learning is the variable in the current education system and we want to reverse that model so that learning is the constant. He said we needed to ensure that the K-12 education system is actually preparing students to be engaged community members.

Commissioner Key said the agency started the vision process in June 2015. He said the work was a perfect fit for moving forward with opportunities available from the Every Student Succeeds Act.

History of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

Director of Policy and Special Projects Ms. Tina Smith provided a history of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

Assistant Commissioner of Public School Accountability Ms. Annette Barnes said the ESEA has been a driving force in public education. She said the ESEA was signed into law in 1965. She said the major changes were incorporated in the 1994 reauthorization of the Improving America's School Act. In 2002, the ESEA was reauthorized as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. She said the NCLB act required 100% students be proficient by 2014. She said in 2011 states were granted flexibility waivers to do away with several components of the NCLB law. She said ESEA was reauthorized as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in 2015.

Ms. Barnes said Arkansas was strategically poised to move to a more innovative accountability system. She said we need all stakeholders to collaborate on a system that moves the state from adequacy to excellence.

Summary of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Director of Policy and Special Projects Ms. Tina Smith provided a summary of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). She said ESSA provides more state and local control. She said the accountability system would include standards, assessments, school improvement, and teacher/leader quality. She said Arkansas has an opportunity to create a new accountability system that would be fair, reliable, meaningful and easier to understand.

Assistant Commissioner of Public School Accountability Ms. Annette Barnes said ESSA requires a great emphasis on equity. She said the accountability system should seek to ensure that all subgroups of students are progressing and their needs are addressed. She said all students deserve equitable access to effective educators. She said all of these lenses would be required as we develop the state accountability system. She said this work brings a great responsibility to all to meet the needs of all students.

Listening Tours and Public Feedback

Director of Policy and Special Projects Ms. Tina Smith provided the committee with the community listening forum dates, locations, and hosts. The complete list of locations are available on the ADE website at http://www.arkansased.gov/public/userfiles/ESEA/Listening_Forum_Dates_Locations_Hosts_rv.pdf

Commissioner Key said the ten (10) locations were identified by the community listening forum hosts: education service cooperatives, university STEM centers, and education renewal zones (ERZ). He said the ADE would provide a brief overview of ESSA and ask the communities to provide feedback. He said that feedback information would be shared with the steering committee. He encouraged steering committee members attend and possibly host additional community listening forums in their communities.

The steering committee requested to have a transparent method for communicating about additional community listening forums (location, time, hosts).

Current Data Available from Surveys and Meetings

Director of Policy and Special Projects Ms. Tina Smith said surveys were available on the ESSA webpage <http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/public-school-accountability/every-student-succeeds-act-essa>.

Ms. Smith said data from the educator survey recommended value-added school growth measures and personal competency measures be considered for inclusion in the accountability system. She said the public survey indicated that more family and community engagement and input should be considered in the accountability system.

Ms. Smith said new surveys would be posted to the ADE website soon. She also shared feedback from recent meetings and conferences. She summarized the findings but also provided the raw data.

Dr. Denise Airola, Director of the Office of Innovation in Education, said growth could be measured in a variety of ways. She said growth measures the progress in mastery of learning. She said growth could be measured in the classroom with pre- and post-tests, portfolio, and/or anecdotal observations. She said growth could also be considered statistically by examining the progress on state summative assessments to inform school level accountability. She said Arkansas has been using a value-added growth model, a model that identifies a student's expected growth and then reports how the student is progressing on that trajectory. That total student data is compiled to indicate the progress a school is making in meeting the needs of the students.

Feedback from the Steering Committee

Steering committee members expressed their interest in supporting community forums and bringing a variety of voices to the work.

Next Steps

The next steering committee meeting is scheduled for September 28, 2016, at 9:30 am in the ADE auditorium. Commissioner Key encouraged stakeholders to let their voices be heard and asked for individuals to share what they know with parents, students, teachers, administrators, community leaders and all other stakeholders.

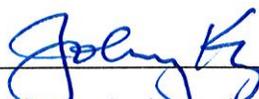
Public Comments

Public Comment Ms. Brenda Robinson, President of the Arkansas Educator Association (AEA), said she applauded Commissioner Key and the Department of Education for convening a diverse group to lead this work. She encouraged all stakeholders to engage in the process. She said AEA would support and communicate the opportunities.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Minutes recorded by Deborah Coffman



Commissioner Key, Chair