

Arkansas Commission on Closing the Academic Achievement Gap

The Commission on Closing the Academic Achievement Gap was established by the Arkansas State Legislature, under Act 33 during the Second Extraordinary Session of 2003.

Minutes
April 17, 2014

Members in Attendance: Dr. Dawn Simpson, Rev. Charles Killion, Ms. Kathy Powers, Dr. Luis Restrepo (call in), Ms. Lillian Williams, Senator Jack Crumbly
Absent: Dr. Jon Fulkerson, Dr. Vera Lang-Brown, Dr. Jesse Hargrove

Meeting location: Board Room (201-A), Arkansas Department of Education, Four State Capitol Mall, Little Rock, Arkansas

Welcome/ Call to Order:

Dr. Dawn Simpson, chair, opened the meeting at 1:20pm

Minutes of March 20, 2014:

Kathy Powers made a motion to accept the minutes with changes in the list of last month's attendees (Dr. Lang-Brown was added to the list of absent Commissioners), and Charles Killion seconded the motion.

Symposium Updates:

Dr. Restrepo discussed the plans and outline for the June Symposium. The flyer had been created with the new date of the third Commission symposium as Thursday, June 12th at the Jones Center in Springdale, AR. He is estimating 200+ people in attendance. The registration page still needs to be set up, but should be done in less than a week. He asked that the Commission members promote the event as much as possible. Attendees can register by check or online. There will also be a limited number of fee waivers for community members to attend. He still needs to determine details regarding lodging and vendors. Funding: Department of Health Sciences will contribute funds. Plans are being solidified for two keynote speakers, nine panels, and breakout sessions. He is still in talks with primary keynote speaker Keith Jackson. Dr. Robinson will introduce everyone and introduce the Commissioners. Dr. Restrepo also mentioned that he will be teaching in Columbia for a stint starting in May.

Update on Upcoming Presentations:

Senator Crumbly has set the date, May 13th for the Commission to present their report to the Education Joint Legislative Commission at 10 a.m. in room 171. Arrive by 9:30. Basically, there will be a room full of legislators and press. Chair Dr. Dawn Simpson will open the session and introduce commission members. State purpose of our request for a meeting: we believe that it is essential that the Gap Commission has funding to amplify the work of the committee. We are a serious board with a wide ethnic, geographic mix. Now what we need is for the ADE and the AR Legislature to give us the logistical support to implement the interventions that we think will support underperforming school districts. Commission should be prepared for a 15 minute introduction and then time for questions. Possible questions include:

- Name some instances that something has been done that is relevant to closing the achievement gap in the schools. How do you feel you are moving forward as a Commission?
- What are past goals the commission has accomplished?

- What are your future plans?
- What is your plan for data collection to measure effectiveness?
- What resources would we need and how much will that cost?
- In the next two or three years, what can this commission do to help prevent takeover of high poverty districts?

Future Meeting Dates:

May 13, 2014: Gap Commission meeting will follow the Commission presentation to the Education Joint Legislative Commission.

Meeting adjourned at 3:07 pm.

Recorded by Kathy Powers