Minutes
State Board of Education Meeting
Friday, February 12, 2016

The State Board of Education met Friday, February 12, 2016, in the Arkansas Department of Education Auditorium. Chair Toyce Newton called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

Present: Toyce Newton, Chair; Mireya Reith, Vice-Chair; Joe Black; Diane Zook; Dr. Jay Barth; Vicki Saviers; Susan Chambers; Charisse Dean; Brett Williamson; Ouida Newton, Teacher of the Year; and Johnny Key, Commissioner.

Absent: none

Reports

Report-1 Recognition of AP Scholars

Commissioner Key said two high school students in Arkansas qualified for the College Board's State Advanced Placement (AP) Scholar Award. The State AP Scholar Award is an academic distinction-acknowledging students who have earned the most scores of 3 or higher statewide and the highest average score (at least 3.5) on all AP Exams taken. He said the award is presented annually to one male student and one female student from each state. He said today the Board would recognize Mr. Chuang Tang, graduate of the Little Rock Central High School in Little Rock, and Ms. Sherry Gao, graduate of Little Rock Central High School in Little Rock.

Mr. Chuang Tang's parents, Mr. L.E. Tang and Ms. Puteri Sillenneon, accepted the certificate on his behalf. Mr. Tang named many of the educators who had an impact on his son's education. He said Mr. Chuang Tang was attending Yale.

Ms. Sherry Gao's mother, Ms. Li Tong, accepted the certificate on her duaghter's behalf. Ms. Tong thanked the Board. She said Ms. Gao was attending Harvard.

The Board extended congratulations to both students.

Report-2 Recognition of President Scholars

Commissioner Key said the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars selected the 2015 U.S. Presidential Scholars from among a pool of extremely qualified candidates. One young man and one young woman were chosen from each state. The United States Presidential Scholars Program was established in 1964 by Executive Order of the President, to recognize and honor some of the most distinguished graduates. He said today the Board would recognize Mr. Alan B. May, graduate of the Episcopal Collegiate School in Little Rock, and Ms. Erin McShane, graduate of Conway High School West in Conway. Mr. May and Ms. McShane demonstrated accomplishments in the arts, sciences, humanities, and other fields of interest

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Commissioner Key said Mr. Alan May was unable to attend but sent a nice card expressing his appreciation.

Ms. Erin McShane and her mother Ms. Amelia McShane accepted the certificate. Ms. McShane thanked the Board and said it was an honor to represent Arkansas. She is attending the U.S. Naval Academy.

The Board extended congratulations to both students.

Report-3 ForwARd Arkansas Report

Executive Vice President of the Rockefeller Foundation Mr. Cory Anderson said ForwARd Arkansas is a strategic partnership of the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, Walton Family Foundation and Arkansas State Board of Education that aims to prepare all Arkansas students for success in college and the workplace. To accomplish its vision, ForwARd has created a holistic guide for P-16 education in Arkansas, with specific recommendations for academically distressed schools and school districts. The recommendations are available at http://www.forwardarkansas.org.

Mr. Anderson said the Implementation Working Group (IWG) was focused on four subgroups: business community, policy, communications, and ForwARd Communities. He said the business community subgroup was planning to convene a workforce development summit in June 2016. He said the policy subgroup was identifying preliminary legislative priorities for the 2017 session. The communications subgroup was planning for a statewide community listening tour. The ForwARd Community subgroup was having conversations with at least eight communities, with a goal of four to five communities identified by the end of 2018. He said a ForwARd Community would include the school district but also community partners.

Mr. Anderson said the ForwARd team was meeting with focus groups to share information about the changes in professional development requirements. The team has been working with ADE to identify code and rules aligned to the recommendations in the Forward Vision. He said the team was working with the Arkansas School Boards Association to identify high performing school boards. He said the team was working with partners to communicate more information about the Community Eligibility Program.

Report-4 Closing the Achievement Gap Commission Report

Commission on Closing the Achievement Gap Interim Chair Dr. Luis Fernando Restrepo said the commission was established pursuant to A.C.A § 6-15-1601 and has eleven appointed members. He said the commission was tasked with developing an annual report for the state. He proposed the development of a strategic plan with achievable goals by 2023.

Report-5 Priority Schools 2nd quarter Progress Reports

School Improvement Specialist Ms. Tiah Frazier reviewed the acronyms commonly used in discussions related to school improvement. She said the School Improvement unit focused on vision development, team structure,

School improvement unit focused on vision development, team structure, database decision-making, researching best practice, and connecting innovations.

School Improvement Specialist Ms. Misty Pittman said the 45-day reports highlight the current reality related to team structure, instructional team activity, school climate, and community engagement. She said the tasks or activities are related to moving the current reality closer to implementation of a school improvement indicator as supported by data.

School Improvement Specialist Dr. Robert Toney said the pyramid of support has been inverted to support the classroom teacher in his/her efforts to impact student achievement. He said there should be two-way communication among teachers, professional learning communities (PLC), school leadership team, and district leadership team. The teams are required to have functioning team structures in order to manage the data and inform decisions about students' needs in a timely manner.

School Improvement Specialist Ms. Janie Hickman said the Indistar tool assisted schools in assessing the needs of the school, creating and revising objectives, and monitoring progress. She said priority schools were directed to consider 18 indicators within four areas. She said schools were provided information about each indicator and a description of full implementation of the indicator.

Director of School Improvement Dr. Richard Wilde said a common challenge at the building level was a compliance mentality toward the school improvement process. He said the district level may be providing only minimal coaching comments to the buildings. Dr. Wilde explained that interim measurable objectives are monitored toward meeting the annual measurable objectives. The annual measurable objectives are the measurements toward the vision of school improvement.

Ms. Frazier said the school improvement unit has focused on assisting schools with the 45-day reports. She said the report addressed the four component areas: change in teacher and leader practice, student achievement data, school safety, and family and community engagement. The quarterly report also includes a report from the building principal.

Dr. Wilde said a school leadership team report was included in the quarterly report. The report examined the progress of students, discipline referrals, and student attendance. The district leadership team report examined teacher attendance and student interventions.

Ms. Pittman said the pre- and post-test data should be guiding core instruction and intervention for students.

Commissioner Key said the agency was working to change the compliance mentality to a data-informed problem solving approach.

Dr. Wilde said the third quarter report would include a more comprehensive review of the district and schools' progress.

Report-6 Quarterly Report on Helena-West Helena School District

Fiscal Services and Support Director Ms. Cindy Smith said the Helena-West Helena School District was classified by the State Board of Education as being in Fiscal Distress on September 30, 2010, and the State assumed authority on

Fiscal Distress on September 30, 2010, and the State assumed authority on June 20, 2011. She said pursuant to Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-13-112, the quarterly status report for the Helena-West Helena School District was submitted for review.

Report-7 Yearly Review of Superintendent - Helena-West Helena School District

Commissioner Key said pursuant to A.C.A. § 6-13-112 (d) a review of the state-appointed superintendent for the Helena-West Helena School District was provided.

Report-8 Quarterly Report on Pulaski County Special School District

Fiscal Services and Support Director Ms. Cindy Smith said the Pulaski County Special School District (PCSSD) was classified by the State Board of Education as being in Fiscal Distress on May 16, 2011, and the State assumed authority on June 20, 2011. She said pursuant to Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-13-112 the quarterly status report for PCSSD was submitted for review.

Report-9 Yearly Review of Superintendent - Pulaski County Special School District

Commissioner Key said pursuant to A.C.A. § 6-13-112 (d) a review of the state-appointed superintendent for the Pulaski County Special School District was provided.

Report-10 Quarterly Report on Little Rock School District

School Improvement Director Dr. Richard Wilde said the State assumed authority of the Little Rock School District (LRSD) on January 28, 2015. He said pursuant to Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-13-112 the quarterly status report for LRSD was provided.

Adjournment

Mr. Black moved, seconded by Ms. Reith, to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Deborah Coffman.

Toyce Newton, Chair

Johnny Key, Commissioner of Education