

Minutes
State Board of Education Meeting
Thursday, January 14, 2016

The State Board of Education met Thursday, January 14, 2016, in the Arkansas Department of Education Auditorium. Vice-Chair Mireya Reith called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

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

Absent: Toyce Newton, Chair

Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Key recognized Ms. Dorothy Gillam who is retiring tomorrow after more than 50 years at the Department. Ms. Gillam thanked everyone for their support.

Special Projects Director Ms. Susan Harriman said Dr. Mike Hernandez has been appointed to the Universal Service Administrative Company Board of Directors. The USAC is a not-for-profit designated by the Federal Communications Commission that collects contributions from telecommunications carriers and administers funding to help communities across the country secure access to affordable telecommunications services. The 19-member Board oversees the E-Rate program and the Connect America Fund, Healthcare Connect Fund, Rural Utilities Service and LifeLine. In 2013, these funds totaled over \$130 Million for Arkansas and over \$8 Billion for the country.

Ms. Harriman said there is no better representative for our students. Dr. Hernandez's background as a school district superintendent and as Deputy Commissioner at the Department make him uniquely qualified. She said most especially, with Dr. Hernandez's experience in federal funding and state finance he truly understands the complexity of funding technology for our students.

Hot Springs School District Superintendent Dr. Mike Hernandez said he was thankful for the support from the Department and school superintendents that helped him receive the appointment. He said it was important to have a representative from rural schools in Arkansas.

Commissioner Key thanked the Department of Information Services, DIS Director Mr. Mark Myers, the superintendents from around the state, Ms. Harriman, Staff Attorney Mr. Cory Biggs, Senator David Pryor, Senator Mark Pryor, Senator John

Boozman, Senator Tom Cotton and many others for writing letters of support for Dr. Hernandez. He said the appointment is an affirmation of the qualifications of Dr. Hernandez.

Consent Agenda

Dr. Barth moved, seconded by Ms. Saviers, to approve the consent agenda. Ms. Zook voted no. The final vote was 6-1. The motion carried.

Items included in the Consent Agenda:

- Minutes - December 10, 2015
- Minutes - December 11, 2015
- Newly Employed, Promotions and Separations
- Report on Waivers to School Districts for Teachers Teaching Out of Area for Longer than Thirty (30) Days, Ark. Code Ann. §6-17-309
- Student Services Program Annual Report
- Consideration for Public Comment – Proposed Arkansas Department of Education Policies Governing Educator Preparation Program Approval
- Consideration for Public Comment: Department of Education Rules Governing Eligibility and Financial Incentives for National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Candidacy and Certification
- Consideration for Public Comment: Proposed Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Public Charter Schools
- Consideration for Public Comment: Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing the Monitoring of Arkansas Comprehensive School Improvement Plans (ACSIP)
- Consideration for Public Comment: Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Access to Public School Information on Arkansas Comprehensive School Improvement Plans (ACSIP)
- Consideration for Public Comment: ADE Rules Governing How to Meet the Needs of Children with Dyslexia
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #T15-005 – Debra Reynolds
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #15-133 – Shaybreian Charnelle Willis
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #15-149 – Anthony Clarence Bridgeforth
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #15-150 – Heather Ann Davenport
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #15-151 – Justin Cole Deaton
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #15-167 – Lola Faye Dulaney
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure

Standards Board for Case #15-182 – Lorna Gail King

- Consideration of PCSSD Community Advisory Board Membership

Action Agenda

A-1 Consideration of the Little Rock School District Report of Progress

Little Rock School District Civic Advisory Committee Co-Chairs Dr. Dionne Jackson and Mr. Greg Adams said the LRSD Civic Advisory Committee continued to meet monthly. Mr. Adams said the four subcommittees also continued to meet regularly. He said the community engagement committee was making great progress. He said the facilitator, Ms. Jennifer Henderson, was helpful in the development of a plan. He said the Arkansas Public Policy Panel and the Rockefeller Foundation provided support for this work. He said the parent involvement committee was planning three parent meetings across the district. He said the facilities committee continued to work on feedback to the district regarding the number of schools needed in the future.

Little Rock School District Associate Superintendent Dr. Dan Whitehorn said safety was a priority in LRSD. He said parental involvement was critical to student success. He said a positive culture was important so that the curriculum could be implemented.

Dr. Whitehorn said each middle school has a math facilitator and a literacy facilitator. He said collaboration among educators was increasing the rigor of instruction and providing for differentiated instruction based on the needs of the students.

Dr. Whitehorn said the interim assessment results indicated the schools in academic distress were showing improvement. He said there was more focus on the administrative team being in the schools and ensuring that schools are using pre-tests and post-tests to make decisions. He said the sense of urgency for student growth was evident across the district.

Little Rock School District Superintendent Mr. Baker Kurrus recognized Ms. Cathy Kohler, President of Little Rock Education Association. He said he was working with Ms. Kohler and staff to review the district hiring procedures.

Little Rock School District Director of Certified Personnel Ms. Renee Kovach said the district used an online application process.

Mr. Kurrus said the district was focusing on doing the right things for students and the schools. He said what is different is that all adults are doing the right things consistently. He thanked the teachers and Ms. Kohler for their efforts to do the hard work.

Mr. Kurrus overviewed the ESEA district report, SOAR modules 1 and 2 data, and internal analysis reports. He said these are examples of the data being used to make data-informed decisions in real time.

Mr. Kurrus said the district was pursuing two facilities plans. He said the previous board had taken the first steps in identifying the needs for a high school in southwest Little Rock and a middle school in west Little Rock. He said the schools would serve diverse populations.

Mr. Kurrus said the district faced tremendous challenges regarding alienation. Fighting and disrespectful behaviors are issues that need to be addressed within the community in partnership with the schools. He said the district organization structure was addressing these behavioral issues.

Mr. Kurrus said the district was analyzing attendance zones by examining where the students live, which school they attend, and the transportation costs to the district. He said he was also examining how special services can be provided more efficiently. He said he was also considering how vacated buildings could be used for special services that would meet the needs of students and families.

Mr. Kurrus said organizational transformation was the step to district improvement. He said broader support in the community was the second step that would move the needle on academic distress. He said it was important to sustain the district financially, especially with the loss of desegregation funds. He said the district would move forward in good faith and with good will. He said the district would move forward with a long-range financial model that sustains world-class facilities. He said a long-range plan to consider a millage increase may be considered in the future. He said the district needed a highly engaged, highly paid lean team of educators.

Ms. Saviers moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to accept the Little Rock School District report of progress. The motion carried unanimously.

A-2 Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #15-127 – Emory Lee Atkins

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Dr. Barth, to remove this item from the table. The motion carried unanimously.

Professional Licensure Standards Board (PLSB) Attorney Ms. Jennifer Liwo said this item was tabled from the Consent Agenda on December 10, 2015, and was being resubmitted. Ms. Liwo said Mr. Emory Lee Atkins was in violation of Standard 1: An educator maintains a professional relationship with each student, both in and outside the classroom. Violation of Standard 2: An educator

maintains competence regarding his or her professional practice inclusive of skills, knowledge, dispositions, and responsibilities relating to his or her organizational position. The Professional Licensure Standards Board Ethics Subcommittee affirmed its recommendation that the State Board order a written reprimand and assess a \$50.00 fine. Mr. Atkins was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's recommendation on August 11, 2015. Mr. Atkins did not respond within the required thirty-day period.

Mr. Williamson moved, seconded by Ms. Zook, to accept the PLSB recommendation of a written reprimand and a \$50.00 fine for Mr. Emory Lee Atkins. The motion carried unanimously.

A-3 District Request for Waivers Granted to Open-Enrollment Charter: Barton-Lexa School District

Division of Learning Services Coordinator Ms. Mary Perry said Act 1240 of 2015 allowed a school district to petition the State Board of Education for all or some of the waivers granted to an open-enrollment public charter school that draws students from the school district.

General Counsel Ms. Kendra Clay reviewed the hearing procedures.

Barton-Lexa School District Superintendent Mr. David Tollett said the district developed a vision and strategic plan to provide opportunities for students. He said the district has created four high school pathways for graduation. Mr. Tollett briefly explained each requested waiver and also requested an additional waiver from the Rules for Educator Licensure. He requested the waivers begin July 1, 2016, effective for five years. He said he would be willing to provide annual reports to the State Board.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to approve the waivers for school start dates. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Mr. Black, to approve the waivers for daily planning period. Dr. Barth and Ms. Saviers voted no. The final vote was 5-2. The motion carried.

Ms. Chambers moved, seconded by Ms. Zook, to approve the waivers for teacher licensure. Dr. Barth and Ms. Saviers voted no. The final vote was 5-2. The motion carried.

Ms. Dean moved, seconded by Mr. Black, to approve the waivers for library media specialist. The motion carried unanimously.

The Board requested the Department provide annual reports of the progress of Act 1240 of 2015 waivers. Commissioner Key said the Department would design

a draft report and request input from the State Board prior to report time. The Board also requested survey data regarding the perception of the parents and community.

A-4 Consideration of Waiver Request for Legal Transfers - Blytheville School District

Staff Attorney Ms. Jennifer Davis said pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-318, the Blytheville School District requested a waiver of the transfer prohibitions set out in A.C.A. § 6-18-317(a) which prevents a school districts board of directors from granting legal transfers when either the resident or receiving district is under or has ever been under a desegregation related court order and the transfer would negatively affect the racial balance of that district.

Blytheville School District Superintendent Mr. Richard Atwill said the request would ensure there are no issues in the future.

Blytheville School Board Member Mr. Tommy Bennett said the district welcomed school choice.

Ms. Saviers moved, seconded by Mr. Williamson, to approve the waiver request for legal transfers for the Blytheville School District. The motion carried unanimously.

A-5 Hearing on Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Application: Arkansas Connections Academy, Bentonville, Arkansas

Charter School Coordinator Ms. Alexandra Boyd said on November 17, 2015, the Charter Authorizing Panel continued the hearing from October 14, 2015, for the open-enrollment charter application for Arkansas Connections Academy. Representatives of Arkansas Connections Academy appeared before the Panel and requested to serve students across the state in grades K-12 with a maximum enrollment of 3,000 in a virtual environment. Ms. Boyd said by a 5-2 vote, the Panel approved the application. On December 10, 2015, the State Board of Education voted to review the decision of the Charter Authorizing Panel.

President of the Arkansas Connections Academy Board Mr. Dennis Beck said the application was for an online academy available to all students in Arkansas. He said the minimum number of 50 students would be required.

Executive Vice President of Curriculum and Instruction Ms. Pat Hoge said response to intervention was the foundation of the academy. She gave a brief explanation of the curriculum design.

Executive Director of State Relations Mr. Bryce Adams said disaggregated data by race and incomes are available.

Representative Jim Dotson spoke on behalf of the charter application. He said the state needed more online options for students.

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to affirm the Charter Authorizing Panel's recommendation to approve the Open-Enrollment Public Charter School application for the Arkansas Connections Academy, Bentonville, Arkansas. Dr. Barth and Mr. Black voted no. The final vote was 5-2. The motion carried.

A-6 American Sign Language Proficiency Interview (0634)

Program Advisor of Educator Preparation Mr. Michael Rowland said Educational Testing Service (ETS) has arranged for educators who wish to teach American Sign Language (ASL) to take the American Sign Language Proficiency Interview (ASLPI) delivered and evaluated by ASL Diagnostic and Evaluation Services of Gallaudet University (ASL-DES) in Washington, DC. The ASLPI has replaced the Praxis™ Assessment of Signed Communication – American Sign Language (0632). He said the 0632 are currently required for the American Sign Language (K-12) Arkansas Educator License. He said Act 328 of 2013 provided authority for Arkansas public schools to offer American Sign Language as a credit-bearing modern language or foreign language. He said ASLPI was a 20-25 minute interactive dialogue between the test taker and the interviewer. The interview is rated by a team of evaluators, and test takers are awarded an overall proficiency level on a 0-5 rating scale. The ASLPI passing score for provisional certification is 3+ on the ASLPI 5 point rating scale. ETS has a conversion table for ASLPI on the existing Praxis 100-200 point scale. According to ETS, a 3+ is equivalent to a 170 on the Praxis point system. On December 2, 2015, a representative from ETS conducted a test review of the ASLPI with Arkansas ASL practitioners. He said panel members agreed with the 170 cut score recommendation. Mr. Rowland recommended adopting the American Sign Language Proficiency Interview (0634) with a passing score of 170 effective immediately.

Dr. Barth moved, seconded by Mr. Black, to adopt the American Sign Language Proficiency Interview (0634) with a passing score of 170 effective immediately. The motion carried unanimously.

A-7 Consideration for Final Approval: Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Professional Development

General Counsel Ms. Kendra Clay said Acts 44 and 1090 of 2015 revised Arkansas laws pertaining to the educator professional development requirements. On August 13, 2015, the Board approved these rules for public

comment. She said a public comment hearing was held on September 2, 2015. Public comments were received which resulted in a second public comment period. A second public comment hearing was held on November 4, 2015. One public comment was received, but no substantive changes were made. The Governor's approval was first received on August 21, 2015. Ms. Clay requested the State Board of Education give final approval for these rules.

Ms. Dean moved, seconded by Mr. Williamson, to approve the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Professional Development. The motion carried unanimously.

A-8 Consideration for Approval for Computer Science Curriculum Frameworks

Computer Science Director Mr. Anthony Owen said the Arkansas K-8 Computer Science Standards are focused on the foundational computer science and computer literacy skills necessary for 21st century learners within the Arkansas K-8 educational system. He said the K-8 standards are composed of grade specific content standards to be embedded in all content areas, a 7th/8th grade coding block, and practices that should be habits of mind for computer science students, educators, and industry professionals. The committee was composed of K-8 classroom educators spanning multiple subject areas, business education teachers, secondary and post-secondary computer science educators, school administrators, an Arkansas Department of Career Education Specialist, ADE Curriculum and Instruction and Licensure Specialists, and computer science industry representatives. He said the standards were open for a 30-day public feedback survey, and the committee had a chance to respond to all survey responses. Mr. Owen recommended the Board adopt the standards.

Ms. Chambers moved, seconded by Dr. Barth, to adopt the K-8 Computer Science Curriculum Frameworks. The motion carried unanimously.

A-9 Consideration for Approval for Computer Science Praxis Cut Score

Computer Science Director Mr. Anthony Owen said the Arkansas Department of Education asked the Board for approval for a passing score range for the Computer Science Praxis assessment. He said the range would include up to -2 SEM, within the national standard setting recommendations of a "just qualified candidate." As defined by ETS, a "just qualified candidate" is a test taker who has met the minimum level of knowledge believed necessary to be a qualified teacher for the content or licensure area being tested. He said the reason for the request was that there has been insufficient time to conduct the state standard setting study for Computer Science Praxis, but the need for qualified teachers was immediate. He said it was important for the test to align with what Arkansas

required of these licensure candidates. Although some candidates may possess the content knowledge by virtue of their experience, content knowledge may not specifically align with teaching competencies and standards identified in Arkansas. Additionally, educator preparation programs for this licensure content area have not yet been implemented. Therefore, until the competencies, standards, and testing are fully aligned through a state standard setting study, and educator preparation programs are implemented, the Department recommended this -2 SEM range of 171 (current cut score) to 159. He said on October 30, 2015, the Professional Licensure Standards Board voted to approve this recommendation and seek approval from the Board.

Program Advisor of Educator Preparation Mr. Michael Rowland said the score would be in an acceptable range.

Assistant Commissioner Educator Effectiveness and Licensure Ms. Ivy Pfeffer said ETS would be developing a new assessment anticipated within two years.

Ms. Dean moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to approve the Computer Science Praxis Cut Score of 159. The motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

Ms. Zook moved, seconded by Ms. Saviers, to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

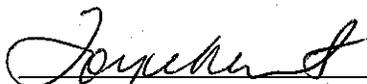
The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Deborah Coffman.

Work Session

Discussion regarding the Fiscal Distress status of the Pulaski County Special School District

The State Board convened at the Mills University Studies High School Auditorium, Pulaski County Special School District, 1205 E. Dixon Road, Little Rock, AR at 6:30 p.m. for a work session to discuss the district's current fiscal distress status. Public comment was accepted.



Toyce Newton, Chair



Johnny Key, Commissioner of Education