

Minutes
State Board of Education Meeting
Monday, November 4, 2013

The State Board of Education met Monday, November 4, 2013, in the auditorium of the Department of Education building. Chair Brenda Gullett called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.

Present: Brenda Gullett, Chair; Sam Ledbetter, Vice-Chairman; Alice Mahony; Dr. Jay Barth; Vicki Saviers; Toyce Newton; Diane Zook; Joe Black; Alexia Weimer, Teacher of the Year; and Dr. Tom Kimbrell, Commissioner

Present by Phone: Mireya Reith

Reports

Chair's Report

Ms. Gullett recently attended the opening of the Lakeside Junior High School in Springdale.

Ms. Mahony traveled to Monticello and Camden to meet with counselors and share information regarding the military compact.

Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Kimbrell reported the recent Special Session allocated resources for public school employee health insurance. Facilities and professional development funds were utilized. Rules for professional development will need to be revised for 2014-2015. A task force was identified to study public school employee health insurance. Commissioner Kimbrell recognized Mr. Tony Wood, Deputy Commissioner, for his work during the Special Session.

Commissioner Kimbrell recognized Mr. Andrew Tolbert, State Superintendent of the Office of Intensive Support. Mr. Tolbert introduced Jeff Martello, Director of Fiscal Services, and Janice Streeter, Director of Learning Services. Mr. Tolbert outlined the goals of the Office of Intensive Support. The team will be working with schools in distress and state takeover. The Office of Intensive Support is funded from an ADE grant but will become self-sustaining in the future.

Update on Common Core State Standards, PARCC and School Improvement

Dr. Megan Witonski, Assistant Commissioner for the Division of Learning Services, reported a team is working on a communication plan. In partnership

with Arkansas IDEAS, a new STEM website is available to show videos of STEM classrooms. The division continues to work on content standards and next generation assessments. Staff will be attending a conference on Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

Recognition of the 2014 Arkansas Superintendent of the Year - Dr. Kim Wilbanks

Dr. Kimbrell recognized Dr. Richard Abernathy, Executive Director of AAEA. Dr. Abernathy reported the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) National Superintendent of the Year program, sponsored by ARAMARK Education, ING and AASA, pays tribute to the talent and vision of the men and women who lead the nation's public schools. Candidates are judged on the following criteria: leadership for learning, communication, professionalism, and community involvement. Each state association of school administrators selects a State Superintendent of the Year. These superintendents are then in the running for National Superintendent of the Year and will be recognized and honored at the AASA National Conference on Education.

Dr. Kimbrell recognized Dr. Kim Wilbanks, 2014 Arkansas Superintendent of the Year and outlined the many contributions Dr. Wilbanks has made to education. Dr. Wilbanks thanked the State Board members for their continued support of educators.

Representative Harold Copenhaver, D-58, presented a plaque to Dr. Wilbanks.

PCSSD Fiscal Distress and Facilities Plan Report

Ms. Mahony stated that PCSSD did a fabulous job recently with the bus incident and caring for the students and staff. The cameras did a great job of recording the incident. Dr. Guess recognized the bus driver for her role in keeping students safe.

Dr. Guess reported the district is working hard to become unitary. The district is concerned about facilities in its efforts to become unitary. PCSSD supports Jacksonville becoming its own district. Many updates have been made to facilities including roofing, paving parking lots, renovation of bathrooms, and updated heating and cooling systems. Dr. Guess outlined a proposed facilities plan for PCSSD.

Priority Schools Report

Mr. John Hoy, Assistant Commissioner for the Division of Public School Accountability, presented a list of the schools identified as priority schools. Mr. Elbert Harvey, School Improvement Coordinator, reported each priority school was assigned a school improvement specialist (SIS) that was on-site at least one

day per week. The SIS worked with building leadership to understand the ESEA Flexibility document and to design the priority improvement plan (PIP). The SIS worked with the leadership team and external providers to identify root causes of issues and design an improvement plan for success.

Dr. Kimbrell reported the ADE would have updated information regarding ESEA Flexibility in December.

Consent Agenda

Progress Report on Status of Districts Classified in Fiscal Distress

Mr. Mike Hernandez, Assistant Commissioner for Fiscal and Administrative Services, and Ms. Hazel Burnett, Director of Fiscal Distress, reported currently nine districts are classified as being in Fiscal Distress. Department staff conducts on-site visits, reviews district financial improvement plans and financial reports, and works with Fiscal Distress districts on issues specific to the individual districts. The nine districts in Fiscal Distress are Alpena, Brinkley, Hartford, Helena-West Helena, Hermitage, Hughes, Mineral Springs, Pulaski County Special, and Western Yell County.

Minutes – October 14, 2013 Amendment

Ms. Zook requested the Minutes for October 14, 2013 be amended referencing action item #4, **Consideration for Final Approval: Proposed Rules Governing Background Checks and Licensure Revocation**, to include substitutes in the statement: **Ms. Zook encouraged superintendents to require contracted food workers, substitutes and bus drivers to meet background checks.**

Dr. Barth moved, seconded by Ms. Mahony, to approve the consent agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

Items included in the Consent Agenda:

- Minutes - October 14, 2013
- Commitment to Principles of Desegregation Settlement Agreement: Report on the Execution of the Implementation Plan
- 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
- Progress Report on Status of Districts Classified in Fiscal Distress
- Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #13-141—Michelle Dawn Harper
- Consideration of Voluntary Surrender of Arkansas Educator's License—Case #12-061—Brittany Lynn Burns

Action Agenda

Proposed School Board Resolution

The Arkansas School Boards Association requested the Board acknowledge local school boards with a resolution. Horace Smith reported January is School Board month recognizing the contributions of school board members.

Ms. Saviers moved, seconded by Ms. Zook, to approve a Board resolution recognizing Arkansas School Board members. The motion carried unanimously.

The Board considered A-2 and A-3 together.

A-2 Consideration of New Rule for Public Comment: Proposed Rules Governing the Leader Excellence and Development System

The Department recommended the promulgation of a new rule to be known as the Rules Governing the Leader Excellence and Development System (LEADS) to implement an administrator evaluation system for school districts to evaluate administrators that weights an administrator evaluation on student performance and growth to the same extent as provided for teachers under the Teacher Excellence and Support System, pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2809 and Act 709 of 2013.

A-3 Consideration for Public Comment: Rules Governing Ethical Guidelines and Prohibitions for Educational Administrators, Employees, Board Members, and Other Parties

Act 608 of 2013 amended Ark. Code Ann. § 6-24-101 et seq. relating to ethical prohibitions for administrators, board members, and employees. Revisions to these rules include the necessary changes based on Act 608 of 2013. The State Board approved these revisions for public comment on September 9, 2013. Public comments were received and additional revisions were made to the rules as a result of the comments. Department staff requested the State Board approve the proposed rules for a second public comment period.

Ms. Mahony moved, seconded by Mr. Ledbetter, to approve for public comment the Proposed Rules Governing the Leader Excellence and Development System and the Rules Governing Ethical Guidelines and Prohibitions for Educational Administrators, Employees, Board Members, and Other Parties. The motion carried unanimously.

Consideration for Final Approval: Rules Governing the School District Educational Excellence Trust Funds

Acts 1138 and 1278 of 2013 amended Arkansas law related to Educational Excellence Trust Funds. Additionally, the current version of the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing School District Educational Excellence Trust Funds has not been revised since 1996. The State Board approved these revisions for a second public comment period on September 9, 2013. No public comments were received. Department staff requested the State Board give final approval to these rules.

Ms. Saviers moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to approve the Rules Governing the School District Educational Excellence Trust Funds. The motion carried unanimously.

Hearing on Waiver Request for Teaching License – Melvin T. Ewart

Melvin T. Ewart holds a lifetime teaching license. The Department notified Mr. Ewart that a background check conducted for the purpose of his employment at an Arkansas school district revealed a disqualifying offense under Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-410(c). On October 15, 2013, Mr. Ewart requested a hearing before the State Board to seek a waiver of the offense. Mr. Ewart represented himself. Professional Licensure Standards Board (PLSB) Attorney Cheryl Reinhart said the Department had insufficient information to make a recommendation.

Mr. Ledbetter asked Ms. Reinhart to work with Mr. Ewart to gather the requested official records regarding the disqualifying offense. Mr. Ewart said he would comply with the Board request. The action item will be placed on the agenda for a future board meeting.

Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Ms. Saviers, to take no action on the Waiver Request for Teaching License – Melvin T. Ewart. The motion carried unanimously.

Request to Speak – Public Comment

Dr. Barth moved, seconded by Ms. Saviers, to allow five minutes for the Campaign to End Aids spokesperson, Kari Coffman, to speak to the Board. The motion carried unanimously.

Kari Coffman, spokesperson for Campaign to End Aids, read a letter about the September event at Pea Ridge School District when three students were denied attendance.

Request to Speak – Public Comment

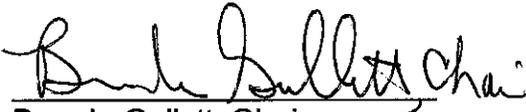
Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Ms. Mahony, to deny Kevin Baer a request to

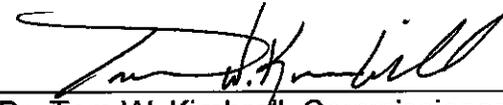
Speak before the Board. The motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:38 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Deborah Coffman.


Brenda Gullett, Chair


Dr. Tom W. Kimbrell, Commissioner