

**Minutes  
State Board of Education Meeting  
Friday, November 14, 2014**

The State Board of Education met Friday, November 14, 2014, in the Auditorium of the Department of Education Building. Chairman Sam Ledbetter called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

Present: Sam Ledbetter, Chairman; Toyce Newton, Vice-Chair; Alice Mahony; Vicki Saviers; Dr. Jay Barth; Diane Zook; Mireya Reith; Joe Black; Kim Davis; Jonathan Crossley, Teacher of the Year; and Tony Wood, Commissioner.

Absent: none

**Reports**

**Report-3 Recognition of the 2015 Arkansas Superintendent of the Year - Dr. Tony Thurman**

Commissioner Wood recognized the 2015 Arkansas Superintendent of the Year, Dr. Tony Thurman. Dr. Thurman is in his eighth year as the Superintendent of the Cabot School District.

Dr. Thurman said the award was in recognition of the team at Cabot School District. He said the Cabot Board of Directors has focused on working together to do what is best for children. He said everyone is focused on having the best programs for all students. He said the team works to communicate with the community to ensure the needs of students are met.

**Report-7 ForwARd Partnership for Arkansas Education – Quarterly Update**

Walton Family Foundation Senior Program Officer Ms. Kathy Smith and Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation Vice President Mr. Cory S. Anderson said the Walton Family Foundation and the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation provided an update on the ForwARd initiative, a partnership with the Arkansas Department of Education to develop a comprehensive plan to strengthen public education in Arkansas with targeted recommendations for academically distressed schools and districts. Mr. Jared Henderson will manage the forward initiative. Ms. Smith and Mr. Anderson said the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) has been hired to develop a State of Education in Arkansas report to establish a common fact base; identify and convene stakeholders as part of a strategic planning process; and produce a P-16 education strategic plan with specific recommendations for

distressed schools and districts. Mr. Anderson said a steering committee of Arkansas stakeholders would be convened to facilitate the process.

### **Update on A-F Rules**

Commissioner Wood said the A-F Rules have been reassigned to the Joint Education Committee. He outlined the recommendations he planned to make to the committee.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 10:23 p.m.

*Minutes recorded by Deborah Coffman.*

  
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Sam Ledbetter, Chair

  
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Tony Wood, Commissioner of Education