

**Minutes  
State Board of Education  
Monday, March 12, 2007**

The State Board of Education met on Monday, March 12, 2007, in the auditorium of the State Education Building. Diane Tatum, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

The following Board members were present: Diane Tatum, Chair; Randy Lawson, Vice-Chair; Sherry Burrow; Jim Cooper; Dr. Calvin King; Dr. Tim Knight; Dr. Ben Mays; MaryJane Rebick; and Dr. Naccaman Williams.

No Board members were absent.

**Chair's Report**

Ms. Tatum, Chair, reported that she joined other Pine Bluff business leaders in presenting the Arkansas Scholars program to the 8th grade students at Pine Bluff Jack Robey Jr. High School on March 1. The Arkansas Scholars program mirrors the Smart Core curriculum which promotes rigor in the classroom. This better prepares the students for college or the workplace.

Ms. Rebick reported on attendance at Education Committee meetings, which were held in conjunction with the current legislative session. She noted the effective contributions of Senator Argue and Dr. James. She reported that she would be attending a Governmental Affairs Committee (NASBE) in Washington DC later in the week.

**Commissioner's Report**

Dr. James summarized the progress of the legislative session and noted that funding for public schools will be coming to the floor during this week. He noted that March 30 has been targeted as closing of the session at which point the Department's major work will begin to implement items passed during the session.

**Special Order**

Ms. Tatum recognized Dr. James who introduced four principals who completed the Master Principal's Program through the Arkansas Leadership Academy. Dr. Beverly Elliott was also recognized as Director of the Academy. Those receiving awards were Diane Barksdale, Carver Magnet Elementary School, Little Rock; Debbie Davis, Bayyari Elementary School, Springdale; Blaine G. Alexander, Magness Creek Elementary School, Cabot; and Diana Peer, Parkview Elementary School, Van Buren.

## **Consent Agenda**

Ms. Tatum noted that there was one change to the February Minutes as originally distributed: Mr. Lawson suggested a revision on Page 5. Revised copies were distributed prior to the meeting.

Mr. Lawson moved approval of the Consent Agenda as amended. Dr. Williams seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

- Minutes, February 12, 2007 (as amended)
- Commitment to Principles of Desegregation Settlement Agreement; Report on the Execution of the Implementation Plan
- Report of Waivers to School Districts for Teachers Teaching Out-of-Area for Longer than Thirty (30) Consecutive Days, Act 1623 of 2001
- New Employed, Promotions and Separations

## **Action Agenda**

*(Complete transcripts of deliberation for Charter School and licensure items were recorded by a court reporter. Those transcripts are available from the State Board Office of the Department of Education.)*

### **Continuation of the Hearing of Open Enrollment Charter School Application: Dreamland Academy of Performing and Communication Arts – Little Rock School District**

Dee Cox was recognized to present this item. Ms. Cox stated that documents requested at the previous Board meeting were included in materials distributed. Representatives from Dreamland Academy and Rev. Fred Harvey from Greater Second Baptist Church were present to respond to questions.

Mr. Cooper moved acceptance of the documents as presented and removal of the condition attached to approval of Dreamland Open Enrollment Charter School. Mr. Lawson seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

### **Hearing of Conversion Charter School Application and ADE Review: Badger Academy Conversion Charter School – Beebe School District**

Dee Cox recognized Dr. Belinda Shook, superintendent, Beebe School District to present an overview of this proposal and to respond to questions. Scott Embry, assistant superintendent, provided additional information.

Ms. Burrow moved approval of the Badger Academy Conversion Charter School. Dr. Williams seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

**Hearing of Conversion Charter School Application and ADE Review:  
Mount Grove Preparatory Academy – Texarkana Arkansas School  
District**

Dee Cox recognized Dr. Paul Human, superintendent of Texarkana School District, to present an overview of this proposal and to respond to questions. Dr. Human stressed that this proposal was developed cooperatively with a group of interested parents and is viewed by the Texarkana District as a model partnership.

Mr. Lawson moved conditional approval of the Mount Grove Preparatory Academy subject to finalizing fiscal issues and any other legal questions between the Texarkana School District and Mount Grove Baptist Church. The motion requested that these documents be presented at the April Board meeting. Dr. Williams seconded the motion. The motion was adopted on a vote 6 yes, 2 no (Mays and Rebick voted no).

Mays' no vote was based on incomplete facility plans and the impression that creating this school would contribute to the establishment of a segregated school within the community.

Rebick's no vote was based on concerns about the completeness of facility plans and housing K-4 children in a facility that is not appropriate for a school. Also, she expressed the opinion that this plan was premature in that many details are yet to be worked out.

**Hearing of Conversion Charter School Application and ADE Review:  
Vilonia Academy of Service and Technology – Vilonia School District**

Dee Cox recognized Dr. Frank Mitchell and Dr. Deborah McAfee to present this proposal and respond to questions from the Board.

Dr. Knight moved approval of Vilonia Academy of Service and Technology as presented. Ms. Burrow seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

**Consideration for Public Comment of Proposed Revisions to Arkansas  
Department of Education Rules for Arkansas Better Chance Program**

Paul Lazenby was recognized to present this item. Mr. Lazenby reviewed proposed revisions in the Rule and provided rationale for making the proposed changes.

Dr. Williams asked about proposed increased qualification of teachers as compared to budget requests. Mr. Lazenby responded that sponsoring agencies would increase budget requests to accommodate increased academic qualifications for teachers once they document program completion. He also indicated that the program has incentives to encourage current employees to seek full licensure status.

Dr. Williams moved approval for public comment. Dr. Mays seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

**Request for Approval of Stipulated Agreement of Waiver Request for Non-Certified Employment with the Texarkana School District – Donna Magee**

Dr. Williams moved approval of the stipulated agreement. Dr. Knight seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

**Request for Approval of Stipulated Agreement of Waiver Request for Non-Certified Employment with the Ashdown School District – Cathey Vaughn**

Ms. Rebick moved to deny the stipulated agreement as presented. Dr. Knight seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

**Request for Approval of Stipulated Agreement of Waiver Request for Non-Certified Employment with the Texarkana School District – Larry Jordan**

Ms. Rebick moved approval of the stipulated agreement as presented. Mr. Lawson seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

**Request for Approval of Stipulated Agreement of Waiver Request for Non-Certified Employment with the Texarkana School District – Queen Dillard**

Ms. Burrow moved approval of the stipulated agreement as presented. Mr. Lawson seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

**Hearing on Waiver Request for Non-Certified Employment with the South Central Service Cooperative – Tami Wayne**

Courtney Ford was recognized to present this item. Tami Wayne was present and was recognized to present her case to the Board. Ms. Wayne presented a letter from the Huttig School District regarding employment status; however, Ms. Ford stated that the employer of record is the Southcentral Educational Service Cooperative in Camden, which has not provided any documentation.

Mr. Cooper moved that this item be tabled until the April Board meeting to allow Ms. Wayne time to secure appropriate recommendations. Dr. Mays seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

### **Hearing on Waiver Request for Non-Certified Employment with the West Memphis School District – Gary Harris**

Courtney Ford was recognized to present this item. Mike Kessinger, director of transportation for the West Memphis School District stated that the District was withdrawing support for the waiver. Mr. Cooper moved to deny the waiver request. Mr. Lawson seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

### **Hearing on Waiver Request for Non-Certified Employment with the West Memphis School District – Leary Ford**

Courtney Ford was recognized to present this item. Mr. Ford was present and recognized to address the Board.

Ms. Rebick moved approval of the waiver. Dr. Mays seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

### **Committee Report – NASBE Membership**

Dr. Williams was recognized to present the committee report. Dr. Williams stated that committee members met via telephone conference call and reviewed issues related to the Board's proposed membership with NASBE. He noted services provided such as professional development for the Board, support for policy development, and annual cost of membership. Ms. Rebick stated that she participates in NASBE activities and thinks it is productive to hear about work from other states. She noted that Arkansas is currently one of ten states that do not belong to the NASBE organization.

Mr. Lawson reported on a conversation he had with Luke Gordy, former member of the Board, pursuant to the issue of affiliation. Mr. Lawson stated that previously members of the Board voted to discontinue membership with NASBE because it was felt that benefits received were not worth the cost of membership

at that time and that there were issues related to the amount of travel and related costs to participate in NASBE events.

Dr. Mays suggested that more discussion was needed to determine how the Board would benefit from membership and how individual Board members would utilize services provided through NASBE.

No action was taken. The Chair asked the committee to continue to study the issue and to bring additional information to the April Board meeting.

Mr. Lawson moved adjournment. Dr. Williams seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

The Minutes were recorded and reported by Dr. Charles D. Watson.