

Minutes
State Board of Education Meeting
Monday, June 13, 2011

The State Board of Education met Monday, June 13, 2011, in the auditorium of the Department of Education building. Dr. Naccaman Williams, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Present: Dr. Naccaman Williams, Chairman; Dr. Ben Mays, Vice-Chair; Sherry Burrow; Jim Cooper; Brenda Gullett; Sam Ledbetter; Alice Mahony; Vicki Saviers; Toyce Newton; Dr. Tom Kimbrell, Commissioner; and Vandy Nash, Arkansas Teacher of the Year

Absent: None

Reports

Chair's Report:

Chairman Williams expressed appreciation to fellow Board members and Department staff for the support and assistance provided during his term of service. He acknowledged the service of fellow Board member Sherry Burrow and Teacher of the Year Vandy Nash as their terms on the Board were also ending.

Commissioner's Report:

Commissioner Kimbrell honored outgoing Board members Naccaman Williams and Sherry Burrow for their service to education and the children of Arkansas. He presented them framed letters of appreciation from Governor Mike Beebe.

Dr. Kimbrell reported that an Arkansas team attended the PARCC Transition and Implementation Institute June 6-7 in Washington, DC. He said the meeting provided state and district leaders with a framework for assessing capacity and for planning next steps in order to implement the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and transition to the PARCC assessments.

Coordinated School Health: A Framework for Health in Arkansas 2009-2010

Laura McDowell, Coordinated School Health (CSH) Coordinator, and Michelle Justus gave an update of services provided by the Arkansas CSH program in 2009-2010. The services are intended to provide tools for schools to address health issues. An evaluation of programs in schools was conducted using the CSH eight components:

- Comprehensive K - 12 Health Education
- Comprehensive K - 12 Physical Education and Physical Activity programs

- Nutrition Services
- School Health Services
- Counseling, Psychological, and Social Services
- Healthy School Environment
- Staff Wellness and Promotion
- Family and Community Involvement

Evaluation results indicate schools with a coordinated school health program had better academic performance and fewer discipline problems.

Informational Update on Common Core State Standards and PARCC

In an update on Common Core State Standards, Dr. Laura Bednar, Assistant Commissioner of Learning Services, said the state was in a good position for the delivery of the new learning standards. She said the Arkansas team at the recent PARCC institute including four superintendents—Dr. Kay Johnson of Greenwood, Dr. Kim Wilbanks of Jonesboro, Dr. Randy Willison of Batesville and Andrew Tolbert of Warren—worked to develop a delivery chain using the educational service cooperatives.

Dr. Bednar outlined the six components of PARCC’s vision:

- Create high quality assessments that measure the full range of the CCSS
- Build a pathway to college and career readiness for all students
- Support educators in the classroom
- Better utilize technology
- Compare results across districts and states, and determine how students compare to their international peers
- Advance accountability

She said CCSS is a big undertaking and it is reasonable to feel apprehensive, but the key is sustained, thoughtful effort and frequent clear communication.

Consent Agenda

Ms. Mahony moved, seconded by Ms. Burrow, to pull Consent Agenda Item 6, PLSB Case #11-001—John Adair Dawson, and refer it back to the PLSB. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Cooper moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, approval of the Consent Agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

Items included in the Consent Agenda:

- Minutes of the May 16, 2011, Board Meeting
- Commitment to Principles of Desegregation Settlement Agreement: Report on the Execution of the Implementation Plan

- Newly Employed, Promotions and Separations
- Waivers to School Districts for Teachers Teaching Out of Area for Longer than 30 Days
- Revolving loans totaling \$293,449 (Hartford and Horatio); 11 second lien bonds for a total of \$11,620,000 (Clinton, Dover, Green Forest, Greenwood, Hampton, Lincoln, McCrory, Mineral Springs, Mountain Home, Pangburn, Wonderview); and 5 voted bonds totaling \$216,720,000 (Jasper, Nashville, Omaha, Springdale and Omaha)
- Sanctions for Teachers as Recommended by the Professional Licensure Standards Board
 - Dayton Lavon Kitchens
 - Joe Harold Morris
 - Chester Lucas
 - Nathan Andrew Page

Action Agenda

(Complete records of the hearings are available in the State Board office.)

Arkansas Better Chance 2010-11 Funding Recommendation

Jamie Morrison, ABC Program Administrator, presented funding recommendations reviewed by the ABC staff and found to meet established guidelines.

Ms. Gullett moved, seconded by Ms. Mahony, approval of the recommendations. The motion carried unanimously.

Two hundred and two proposals were approved totaling \$102,818,730.

Request for Open Enrollment Public Charter School Charter Amendment: Arkansas Virtual Academy

Dr. Mary Ann Duncan, Charter School Program Coordinator, presented a request from Arkansas Virtual Academy to amend its charter.

Mr. Scott Sides, director of the charter school, asked the Board to expand the school's enrollment cap from 500 to 1,500 students. He said the school's waiting list is usually around 1,000 students.

Board members criticized high administrative costs which take about 15 percent of the school's budget; test scores that are near the state average; and a waiver that allows the school's board to approve contracts with its curriculum provider without going through a public bidding process.

Commissioner Kimbrell said the Senate and House Education Committees have asked for a study to determine the school's effectiveness and how its techniques can be applied statewide in cooperation with other school districts.

Mr. Ledbetter moved, seconded by Ms. Gullett, to deny the request to expand the enrollment cap. The motion carried seven to one in a roll call vote.

Yeas—Mays, Burrow, Gullett, Ledbetter, Mahony, Newton, Cooper
Nays—Saviers

Hearing on PLAB Case #10-005A – Alice McConnell; Case #10-005B – Ruthann Nunnally and Case #T-10-001 – Ruthann Nunnally

This item was pulled from the agenda at the request of legal counsel for Ms. McConnell and Ms. Nunnally.

Consideration for Approval: Declaration of Critical Academic Shortage Areas as Required by Ark. Code Ann. § 6-81-601 et seq. and Ark. Code Ann. § 6-85-109

Beverly Williams, Assistant Commissioner of Human Resources, presented licensure areas considered critical academic shortage areas for 2011-2012. The areas are: secondary mathematics, secondary science, middle school mathematics, middle school science, middle school English language arts, middle school social studies and special education. The critical area endorsements include library media; counselor; gifted/talented; English as a second language; middle school English, math, social studies and science; and building level administrators.

Ms. Burrow moved, seconded by Mr. Cooper, approval. The motion carried unanimously.

Consideration for Approval: Nomination for the Professional Licensure Standards Board to Replace a Member Who is Retiring

Ms. Williams presented the nomination of Jo E. (Jody) Vines, principal of Washington Middle School in the El Dorado School District, to fulfill the remaining year of retiring member Carolyn Odom on the PLSB.

Mr. Ledbetter moved, seconded by Mr. Cooper, approval of the nomination. The motion carried unanimously.

Consideration for Approval: Accreditation Status Report for Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts 2010-2011

Dr. Charity Smith, Assistant Commissioner of Academic Accountability, presented the 2010-2011 accreditation status report citing 185 schools for standards violations.

Twenty-three were put on probation. Three of the schools on probation—Cutter Morning Star High School and Armorel’s elementary and high schools—could face potential sanctions by the board in July because they have remained on the list for two consecutive years.

Ms. Cooper moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to accept the report. The motion carried unanimously.

Consideration for Approval: Two Developmental Reading Courses

Dr. Laura Bednar requested Board approval of two developmental reading courses—one designed for middle school students and one designed for high school students. Dr. Bednar said the courses were needed to help students develop strategies for independent learning. She said the courses could also help students develop a higher degree of mastery. The courses would count as electives toward graduation requirements.

Dr. Mays moved, seconded by Ms. Mahony, approval of the courses. The motion carried unanimously.

Consideration for Emergency Approval: Open-Enrollment Public Charter School New Application and District Conversion or Limited Public Charter School New Application

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-23-201 & 301 require the State Board to adopt application forms for those wishing to apply for a charter to open an open-enrollment, district conversion, or limited public charter school. According to the schedule previously adopted by the State Board, applications for open-enrollment charter schools will be due August 31, and letters of intent are due June 30. Because of the short amount of time until the application due date, and because of changes in the applications required by Act 993 of 2011, the Board was asked to consider approval of these application forms on an emergency basis.

Mr. Cooper moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, approval of the new applications on an emergency basis. The motion carried unanimously.

Consideration for Approval for Public Comment: Proposed Open-Enrollment Public Charter School New Application and District Conversion or Limited Public Charter School New Application

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-23-201 & 301 require the State Board to adopt application forms for those wishing to apply for a charter to open an open-enrollment, district conversion, or limited public charter school. Board approval of these application forms for public comment was requested.

Ms. Mahony moved, seconded by Ms. Saviers, approval for public comment. The motion carried.

Consideration for Approval for Public Comment: Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Public Charter Schools

Acts 987, 989 and 993 of 2011 significantly amended the Arkansas Charter Schools Act. Those statutory amendments, combined with the recent recommendations made to the State Board by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers, make it necessary to revise the current public charter school rules. Currently, the Department maintains two separate public charter school rules. One rule addresses open-enrollment and conversion public charter schools and the other addresses limited public charter schools. The Department recommended the current rules be repealed and replaced with a new rule that addresses open-enrollment, conversion, and limited public charter schools and requests the proposed rules be approved for public comment.

Ms. Ledbetter moved, seconded by Ms. Mahony, approval for public comment. The motion carried unanimously.

Consideration for Approval for Public Comment: Repeal of Current Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Public Charter Schools

The current rule pertaining to public charter schools should be repealed so that it can be replaced with a new public charter school rule that includes open-enrollment, conversion, and limited public charter schools. The Department requested the proposed repeal of these rules be approved for public comment.

Mr. Ledbetter moved, seconded by Dr. Mays, approval for public comment. The motion carried unanimously.

Consideration for Approval for Public Comment: Repeal of Current Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Limited Public Charter Schools

The current rule pertaining to limited public charter schools should be repealed so that it can be replaced by a new public charter school rule that includes open-enrollment, conversion, and limited public charter schools. The Department requested the proposed repeal of these rules be approved for public comment.

Mr. Ledbetter moved, seconded by Mr. Cooper, approval for public comment. The motion carried unanimously.

Consideration for Approval for Public Comment: Amend the Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity Standards and Body Mass Index for Age Assessment Protocols in Arkansas Public Schools

The Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity Standards and Body Mass Index for Age Assessment Protocols in Arkansas Public Schools, last approved by the State Board in 2007, need to be updated to be in accordance with applicable federal and state law. The Department requested the proposed rules be approved for public comment.

The Department has consulted with the State Board of Health and will continue that consultation before final approval.

Mr. Burrow moved, seconded by Dr. Mays, approve for public comment. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment: Dr. Charles Hopson, Superintendent of the Pulaski County Special School District

Dr. Hopson expressed appreciation to the State Board and the Department for the assistance provided the Pulaski County Special School District as it works through the challenges of fiscal distress. He acknowledged the work of his school board as they work together to address inequity in facilities. Dr. Hopson said the school board had distractions but he believed they could become a functioning board.

Ms. Mahony asked that testing in grades 1-2 and discussion of the economics course be placed on the agenda for the July meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2 p.m.

These minutes were recorded by Phyllis Stewart.



Dr. Tom W. Kimbrell, Commissioner



Dr. Ben Mays, Chairman