

**Minutes  
State Board of Education Meeting  
Friday, September 11, 2015**

The State Board of Education met Friday, September 11, 2015, in the Arkansas Department of Education Auditorium. Vice-Chair Mireya Reith called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

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

Absent: Toyce Newton, Chair

**Reports**

**Report-1 Chair's Report**

Ms. Zook said she attended the dedication of the new stadium and Glenview Elementary at the North Little Rock School District.

Ms. Saviers said she spoke with Jonathan Crossley, new principal at Baseline Elementary, and he was seeking community partners. She urged all patrons to reach out to their local schools and volunteer to mentor and support students.

**Report-2 Commissioner's Report**

Commissioner Johnny Key said Digital Learning Day is February 17, 2016. In Arkansas, Digital Learning Day is everyday. Arkansas iTunesU <http://arkansasitunesu.com> is reaching out to schools and asking them to submit videos for a new collection, Digital Learning Everyday. Commissioner Key introduced a video from Clarendon School District educator Ms. Stacey Caldwell. Commissioner Key said schools may contact [Katrina.Craft@arkansas.gov](mailto:Katrina.Craft@arkansas.gov) or Donnie Lee at the O.U.R. Co-op to participate in this collection or others on Arkansas iTunesU.

**Report-3 Recognition of PAEMST – Brian Leonard and Amanda Jones**

Director of Computer Science Mr. Anthony Owen said on July 1, 2015, the White House announced the winners of the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. Ms. Amanda Jones, a science teacher at Poyen High School in Poyen, Arkansas, and Mr. Brian Leonard, a mathematics teacher at Lake Hamilton High School in Percy, Arkansas, were recipients of

the 2013 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. Mr. Owen said this presidential award is the nation's highest honor for mathematics and science teachers for grades K–12. Awardees serve as models for their colleagues, inspiration to their communities, and leaders in the improvement of mathematics and science education. He said a national committee of distinguished scientists, mathematicians and educators selected 108 teachers from the nation to receive the awards. In addition to a presidential citation, Ms. Jones and Mr. Leonard will each receive a \$10,000 award and a trip to Washington, DC, for professional development activities and an awards ceremony. They will also be recognized at the state level during the 2015 Arkansas Curriculum Conference. Additional information on the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching Awards can be found at: <https://www.paemst.org/>

ADE Science Coordinator Ms. Michele Snyder introduced Ms. Jones. Ms. Jones teaches high school science at Poyen High School. She said students in rural schools can excel. She said the rural schools are meeting the needs of the students. Ms. Jones' profile is available at [https://recognition.paemst.org/finalist\\_profile/32417](https://recognition.paemst.org/finalist_profile/32417).

Mr. Owen introduced Mr. Leonard. He said Mr. Leonard has served Arkansas as an exceptional teacher and member of ADE committees. Mr. Leonard is a high school mathematics teacher. Mr. Leonard said he is honored to work with students. Mr. Leonard's profile is available at [https://recognition.paemst.org/finalist\\_profile/32257](https://recognition.paemst.org/finalist_profile/32257).

The Board congratulated Mr. Leonard and Ms. Jones and thanked them for their dedicated service to Arkansas students.

#### **Report-4 Title I Distinguished Schools**

Public School Program Coordinator Ms. Otistene Smith said the National Title I Distinguished School program is an important element in the National Title I Association's efforts to share positive examples of Title I schools making a difference in the educational lives of their students. She said this program has a two-fold benefit: providing much needed attention to successful schools and also helping to remind those in Congress and elsewhere that federal funds designated for Title I are a wise and valuable use of taxpayer dollars. She said the school was chosen by the Arkansas State Department of Education based on outstanding performance in one of these two categories.

- Category 1: Schools that have exceeded adequate yearly progress - or alternative accountability criteria for those states with ED-approved ESEA Flexibility Requests - for two or more years. --Des Arc Elementary, Des Arc School District

- Category 2: Schools that significantly closed the achievement gap between subgroups of students. --Seventh Street Elementary, North Little Rock School District

Ms. Smith said only two (2) schools per state can be selected as a National Title I Distinguished School each year. This award is an especially prestigious honor for the school, staff and students.

Des Arc School District Superintendent Mr. Nick Hill introduced Ms. Dena Rooks, Elementary Principal; Ms. Judy Denton, Federal Programs; Ms. Jaime Eans, Math Specialist; Ms. Dianne Tipton, Teacher for Grade 4; and Ms. Courtney Skarda, Teacher for Grade 6. Mr. Hill accepted the plaque on behalf of the staff, students and parents of Des Arc Elementary School. More information is available at <http://www.titlei.org/ds/schools/des-arc-elementary>.

North Little Rock School District Superintendent Mr. Kelly Rodgers introduced Ms. Ruthie White, Seventh Street Elementary School Math Coach; Ms. Rebecca Reed, Seventh Street Elementary School Literacy Coach; Ms. Angie Colclasure, North Little Rock School District Literacy Specialist; Ms. Kristi Ratliff, North Little Rock School District Director of Federal Programs, Professional Development and School Improvement; and Ms. Pamela Wilcox, Seventh Street Elementary School Principal. Mr. Rodgers accepted the plaque on behalf of the staff, students and parents of Seventh Street Elementary School. More information is available at <http://www.titlei.org/ds/schools/seventh-street-elementary>.

### **Report-5 Stakeholders and Immigrant Parent Forum**

Dr. Bradley Scott, Director, IDRA South Central Collaborative for Equity – Equity Assistance Center (EAC) for federal Region VI, described the presentations the EAC will conduct in several communities in Arkansas to support parent leadership, engagement, and parent/school partnership building for immigrant parents to support their children's public school success in the context of a Quality Schools Action Framework. He said the series of stakeholders and immigrant parent forums will be conducted across Arkansas from September 11-17, 2015. Dr. Scott said the EAC was funded by USDÖE to provide technical assistance to schools. The center's role is to ensure civil rights are protected as students receive a quality education. Two meetings will be conducted in each community. More information is available at <http://arkansas-cradle.org/Home.html>

### **Report-6 Review the dates and format for quarterly progress reports from Priority and/or Academic Distress schools**

Director of School Improvement Dr. Richard Wilde reviewed the dates and format

for quarterly progress reports from Priority and/or Academic Distress schools.

The Board and Commissioner expressed appreciation to the School Improvement Unit for making the reporting forms more efficient and effective. The Board requested more specific information regarding how the districts are supporting the schools.

### **Report-11 Report from the Special Committee on Academic Distress**

Chair of the Special Committee Ms. Vicki Saviers said on Friday, June 12, 2015, the Special Committee on Academic Distress met with Belair Middle School and Pine Bluff High School in the Pine Bluff School District to hear a progress report. She said these schools are identified in Academic Distress. The Special Committee met with the school administrators on Friday, August 14, 2015, to consider the progress toward meeting three recommendations:

1. Members of the local school board and the district leadership team, including the new superintendent, could benefit from trainings to build leadership capacity and to learn strategies to better support schools in Academic Distress and/or Priority School Status. The training could be provided by the ADE School Improvement Unit (SIU) in consultation with the Arkansas School Boards Association.
2. The State Board should direct the School Improvement Unit, Division of Public School Accountability to collaboratively create a strategic plan for district-wide implementation in school year 2015-16.
3. The district leadership team with support from the School Improvement Unit will monitor site/school specific implementation of the plan and report to the State Board quarterly. The ADE School Improvement Unit would then report quarterly on the progress of the district.

The committee expressed concerns related to the Superintendent's provisional certificate status and the district's relationship and use of external providers. The committee requested the Pine Bluff School District prepare a full report of progress to be reviewed as an action item by the State Board in November.

### **Adjournment**

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

The meeting adjourned at 10:18 a.m.

*Minutes recorded by Deborah Coffman.*

  
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Toyce Newton, Chair

  
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Johnny Key, Commissioner of Education