

**Minutes
State Board Meeting
July 11, 2024**

Present: Dr. Sarah Moore, Chair; Kathy Rollins, Vice-Chair; Ken Bragg; Randy Henderson; Lisa Hunter; Leigh Keener; Jeff Wood; Adrienne Woods; Beau McCastlain, 2024 Arkansas Teacher of the Year; Jacob Oliva, ADE Secretary

ZOOM: Adrienne Woods

The Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) met Thursday, July 11, 2024. Dr. Sarah Moore called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM, followed by a moment of silence.

Recognitions

III.1. 2023 Teacher of the Year Capri Salaam and 2024 Teacher of the Year Beau McCastlain

Item III.1. was presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner; Ms. Karli Saracini, Assistant Commissioner, Educator Effectiveness and Licensure. Also present was Ms. Capri Salaam, 2023 Teacher of the Year.

On June 30, 2024, Capri Salaam completed her service as 2023 Arkansas Teacher of the Year, and on July 1, Beau McCastlain began his service as 2024 Arkansas Teacher of the Year.

Item III.2. Hot Springs District Prevention Recovery Program

Item III.2. was presented by Mr. Dudley Webb III, District 4 City Director for Hot Springs and Sponsor of the Hot Springs District Prevention Recovery Program; Dr. Stephanie Nehus, Superintendent, Hot Springs School District; Mr. Anthony Tidwell, Prevention Specialist; Mr. Kirk Lane, Director, Arkansas Opioid Recovery Partnership; Ms. Tanisha Barnes, Deputy Director. Also present was Mr. Jason Graves, Resource Officer.

Launched in January 2024, the Hot Springs Prevention Recovery Program is the first of its kind for Arkansas public schools and is the pilot program for the Arkansas Opioid Recovery Partnership. Program goals include opioid overdose prevention, substance abuse prevention, stigma reduction, and substance abuse awareness. Results during the first semester of the program are promising.

III.3. ADE Summit 2024

Item III.3. was presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Director.

Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Director, briefed the State Board on the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) Summit 2024, which took place on July 8-10, 2024, at the Hot Springs Convention Center. The ADE Summit included over 200 sessions attended by approximately 1,500 participants, where Mr. Jacob Oliva, ADE Secretary, was the keynote speaker to set the tone of the ADE Summit, and Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders also spoke. Special recognition was given to Ms. Carmen Jordan, Director of APSCN Student Support Services and Mr. Daniel Collier, DESE Operations Manager for coordinating the ADE Summit 2024.

Changes to Agenda

Pulled

Item V.4.c. DESE Rule Governing Better Beginnings was tabled until the August State Board meeting for the following changes:

- out-of-school requirements for a Level VI program, and
- adding a provisional Better Beginnings certification.

Action Agenda

V.1. Consideration of Request for Public School Waivers

Item V.1. was presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner; Mr. Andres Rhodes, ADE Chief Legal Counsel; and Mr. Chris George, Principal, Westside High School, Westside Consolidated School District.

Pursuant to Arkansas Code § 6-15-103, the Westside Consolidated School District requested waivers from legal requirements Standards for Accreditation 1-5.A and 1-6.A to implement its innovative block schedule.

A motion to grant the Westside Consolidated School District waiver request for one year was made by Ms. Leigh Keener, seconded by Ms. Lisa Hunter. The motion unanimously passed.

V.2. Consideration of Boundary Change Petition by the Prairie Grove School District

Item V.2. was presented by Mr. Andres Rhodes, ADE Chief Legal Counsel.

The Prairie Grove School District filed a petition to change its school district boundary pursuant to Arkansas Code § 6-13-1414. Lincoln School District, the other district affected, objected to the petition. The petition by the Prairie Grove School District, the response by the Lincoln School District, as well as maps detailing the affected area prepared by the Arkansas Geographic Information Systems Office were included with the agenda.

A motion to table Item V.2. until the August State Board meeting was made by Mr. Jeff Wood, seconded by Ms. Leigh Keener. The motion unanimously passed.

V.3. Request to Release Rule for Public Comment

Item V.3. was presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner. Also present were Dr. Chris Barnes, Office of Coordinated Support and Service State (OCSS) Leadership Development Coach, Office of OCSS; and Ms. Nicole Walsh, Superintendent, School for the Deaf.

The Division of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE) Rule Governing the Implementation of the Braille and Large Print Textbook Appropriation was presented for approval to be released for public comment.

A motion to approve the DESE Rule Governing the Implementation of Braille and Large Print Textbook Appropriation for release for public comment was made by Ms. Kathy Rollins, seconded by Mr. Randy Henderson. The motion unanimously passed.

V.4. Consideration of Request for Final Approval of Administrative Rules

Items V.4.a. and V.4.b. were presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner.

The following administrative rules were presented for final approval following a 30-day public comment period.

V.4.a. DESE Rule Governing the Educational Freedom Account Program

V.4.b. DESE Rule Governing Educator Licensure

The DESE Rule Governing Educator Licensure was approved to be released for public comment by the State Board of Education on May 9, 2024. The public comment period began on May 10, 2024, and ended on June 10, 2024. Public comments were received, and no substantive changes were made.

A motion for final approval of the DESE Rule Governing the Educational Freedom Account Program and the DESE Rule Governing Educator Licensure was made by Ms. Leigh Keener, seconded by Ms. Lisa Hunter. The motion unanimously passed.

V.5. School Choice Appeal under Arkansas Code 6-18-1901 et seq.

Item V.5. was presented by Mr. Andres Rhodes, ADE Chief Legal Counsel. Present were Ms. Casey Olvey, Parent; Harmony Grove School District: Ms. Sharon Hall, Special Programs Coordinator/Administrator, and Ms. Jennifer Cheatham, Special Education Director; and Mr. Matt Scrabrough, Superintendent, Hampton School District.

The Olvey family appealed the Harmony Grove School District denial of a school choice application for one of their children. The resident school district is the Hampton School District.

A motion to overturn the denial and approve the transfer of the student to Harmony Grove School District was made by Ms. Leigh Keener, seconded by Mr. Jeff Wood. The motion unanimously passed.

V.6. Request for Approval of Associations to Accredite Private Schools Participating in the Educational Freedom Account Program

Item V.6. was presented by Mr. Darrell Smith, Assistant Commissioner, Office of School Choice and Parent Empowerment.

To meet the requirements of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-2507(a)(1)(A) and 7.01.2.A in the DESE Rule Governing the Educational Freedom Account Program, a list of additional associations was presented to the State Board for consideration of approval to accredit private schools participating in the program.

A motion to approve the request of associations to accredit private schools participating in the Educational Freedom Account Program was made by Ms. Lisa Hunter, seconded by Mr. Ken Bragg. The motion unanimously passed.

New Business

None

Consent Agenda

1. Minutes
2. Report on Waivers to School Districts for Teachers Teaching Out of Area for Longer than Thirty (30) Days, Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-309
3. Review of Loan and Bond Applications
4. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-095 Stephanie Hackney
5. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-155 Martika Roberts
6. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-148 Connie Jean Cash
7. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-170 Amanda Snider
8. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-161 Caleb Carter
9. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-171 John Van Dyke
10. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-167 Joseph Drye
11. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-173 Candi Smith
12. Consideration of Fountain Lake Middle School Cobra Digital Prep Academy Charter School
13. Consideration of Fort Smith Virtual Academy Charter School
14. Consideration of Founders Classical Academies of Arkansas Charter School

A motion to approve the Consent agenda was made by Ms. Lisa Hunter, seconded by Mr. Randy Henderson. The motion unanimously passed.

Public Comments

The State Board heard public comments.

- Dr. Sederick Charles Rice
- Charlene Wright

Adjournment

Dr. Sarah Moore, Chair, adjourned the State Board meeting at 12:24 PM.

Minutes recorded by Angela Scaife.

Jacob Oliva, Secretary
Arkansas Department of Education

Dr. Sarah Moore, Chair
State Board of Education