

**Minutes
State Board Meeting
August 1, 2025**

Present: Adrienne Woods, Chair; Lisa Hunter, Vice-Chair; Gary Arnold; Ken Bragg; Randy Henderson; Jeff Wood; Jacob Oliva, ADE Secretary.

Present via Zoom: Leigh Keener

Absent: Jeanie Wilcoxon, 2025 Arkansas Teacher of the Year

Call to Order

The Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) met Friday, August 1, 2025. Adrienne Woods called the meeting to order at 9:01, followed by a moment of silence.

Recognition

III.1. Senior Citizens Earn High School Diplomas at the Excel Center

Item III.1. was presented by Dr. Darrell Smith, Assistant Commissioner, Office of School Choice and Parent Empowerment. Also present was Edie Stewart, Goodwill Industries of Arkansas, as well as three Excel Center graduates.

The Excel Center, an adult education public charter school sponsored by Goodwill Arkansas Education Initiatives, Inc. (Excel), serves adults of all ages. At age 72, Audrey Palmer is the oldest June 2025 Excel Center graduate. Additionally, senior citizens Pat Nesby, 68 and Robin Turner, 71 graduated from Excel in June 2024.

III.2. Master Principal Program Designation Candidates 2024-2025 Presentation

Item III.2. was presented by Courtney Salas-Ford, Chief of Staff. Also present was Bradley Webber, Director, Arkansas Leadership Academy and Master Principals Steven Helmick and Carol Skiba.

Following site visits in Spring 2025, the Arkansas Leadership Academy recognized each of the following two principals with the designation of Master Principal:

- Steven Helmick, Roberts Elementary School, Little Rock School District, and
- Carol Skiba, Stagecoach Elementary School, Cabot School District.

Changes to Agenda

None

Action Agenda

V.1. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 25-094 - Thomas Michael Stacks

Item V.1. was presented by Whitney James, Managing Attorney; Daniel Shults, Chief Legal Counsel advised of procedures. Also present were Khayyam Eddings, Education and Labor & Employment Partner, Friday Law Firm; and Thomas Michael Stacks, Superintendent, Quitman School District.

At its regularly-scheduled meeting on July 10, 2025, the State Board of Education requested the Professional Licensure Standards Board's recommendation for Case 25-094 - Thomas Michael Stacks be moved from the Consent Agenda to the next available Action Agenda. The August 1 hearing was scheduled, and Thomas Michael Stacks' attorney was notified of the hearing date.

A motion to find that Thomas Stacks, Superintendent, violated Standard 2a and 2b of the Code of Ethics was made by Leigh Keener, seconded by Jeff Wood. The motion unanimously passed. Roll Call was taken.

Roll Call – Violation of Code of Ethics Standards 2a and 2b

Gary Arnold	Yes
Ken Bragg	Yes
Randy Henderson	Yes
Lisa Hunter	Yes
Leigh Keener	Yes
Jeff Wood	Yes

A motion was made by Jeff Wood to find that Thomas Stacks violated Standard 1. The motion failed without a second.

A motion to modify the sanction of the Ethics Subcommittee to one-year suspension, followed by a two-year probation, all recommended training and coursework, and no fine was made by Leigh Keener, seconded by Jeff Wood. The motion failed after roll call of 3 Yes to 4 No.

Roll Call – Sanctions

Gary Arnold	No
Ken Bragg	No
Randy Henderson	Yes
Lisa Hunter	No
Leigh Keener	Yes
Jeff Wood	Yes
Adrienne Woods	No

A motion to accept the sanction of the Ethics Subcommittee of a two-year probation, all recommended training and coursework, and fine of \$250 was made by Lisa Hunter, seconded by Dr. Gary Arnold. The motion passed after roll call of 4 Yes to 2 No.

Roll Call – Sanction

Gary Arnold	Yes
Ken Bragg	No
Randy Henderson	No
Lisa Hunter	Yes
Leigh Keener	Yes
Jeff Wood	Yes

A motion to modify the rationale of the Ethics Hearing Subcommittee to strike the language that there was no evidence the educator was aware of any misbehavior until May 10th was made by Lisa Hunter, seconded by Randy Henderson. After roll call, the motion passed with a vote of 5 Yes to 1 No.

Roll Call – Rationale

Gary Arnold	Yes
Ken Bragg	Yes
Randy Henderson	Yes
Lisa Hunter	Yes
Leigh Keener	Yes
Jeff Wood	No

Consent Agenda

1. Minutes
2. 2025-2026 Embedded Courses
3. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 25-006 & 25-028 Crystal Parnell
4. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 25-145 Hannah Bryant-Stevens
5. Charter Amendment Requests
 - a. Relocation of Jacksonville Lighthouse Flightline
 - b. Relocation of eStem Campuses
 - c. IOTA Community Schools to Defer Opening
 - d. Pinecrest Academy Fayetteville to Defer Opening
 - e. Somerset Academy Bentonville High School to Defer Opening
 - f. Somerset Academy Bentonville Middle School to Defer Opening
 - g. Somerset Academy Bentonville Elementary to Defer Opening
 - h. Somerset Academy Little Rock High School to Defer Opening
 - i. Somerset Academy Little Rock Middle School to Defer Opening
 - j. Somerset Academy Little Rock Elementary to Defer Opening
 - k. Rivercrest School District to Reconfigure the Grade Levels of Its Charter Schools

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

Public Comments

- Amanda Parker
- Stephanie White
- Angie Edwards
- Victoria Davidson
- Jason Woods
- Dr. Sedrick Charles Rice

New Business

None

Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn the State Board meeting was made by Jeff Wood, seconded by Lisa Hunter. Adrienne Woods, Chair, adjourned the State Board meeting at 11:59 AM.

Minutes recorded by Angela Scaife.

Jacob Oliva, Secretary
Arkansas Department of Education

Adrienne Woods, Chair
State Board of Education