

**Minutes
State Board Meeting
November 10, 2021**

Present: Ouida Newton, Chair, Dr. Sarah Moore, Vice-Chair; Charisse Dean; Randy Henderson; Dr. Fitz Hill; Kathy McFetridge; Dr. Beth Anne Rankin; Steve Sutton; Adrienne Woods; Susanna Post, 2021 Arkansas Teacher of the Year; and Dr. Ivy Pfeffer, Ex-Officio Secretary.

The Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) met Wednesday, November 10, 2021, in the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) Auditorium. Chair Ouida Newton, called the meeting to order at 10:01 AM, led by a moment of silence.

Recognitions

Ms. Venus Torrence, Coordinator of the Arkansas Teacher of the Year Program, Division of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE), Office of Educator Effectiveness & Licensure provided information regarding the Arkansas Teacher of the Year Program. Ms. Torrence was followed by the current 2021 Teacher of the Year, Ms. Susanna Post, who introduced the 2022 Arkansas Teacher of the Year, Ms. Jessica Saum, Special Education, Cabot High School. Ms. Saum was accompanied by Dr. Tony Thurman, Superintendent, Cabot School District.

DESE Office of Learning Services Ms. Amber Pirnique, Disciplinary Literacy Program Manager, Curriculum & Assessment–Disciplinary Literacy, introduced Ms. Kristy Brasfield, U.S. History and English IV teacher, Joe T. Robinson High School. Out of 8,510 nationwide-nominee's, Ms. Kristy Brasfield was named the 2021 Arkansas History Teacher of the Year. Ms. Brasfield received the 2021 Gilder Lehrman History Teacher of the Year award.

Mr. Anthony Owen, State Director of Computer Science, ADE Office of Computer Science presented to the State Board a recognition, resolution, and report.

Mr. Owen recognized last year's competition winners, who were unable to be recognized last year, due to COVID-19. Currently, Mr. Owen recognized Mr. Jamie Walker, teacher/advisor of the following student winners of the Spring 2021 Great Arkansas History Video Game Coding Competition from Springdale School District, Hellstern Middle School: Casey Elliott, Chris Arrue-Martinez, Elijah Reed, Eurel Roman, Reece Stephens, and Will Gladden. For the following school year competition cycle, the theme is, "My Favorite Arkansas Town." The application window is February 21, 2022 through March 4, 2022.

Next, Mr. Owen read the annual Computer Science Education Week resolution. Mr. Owen stated that December 6-12, 2021, is nationally dedicated as Computer Science Education Week. In honor of both Dr. Raye Montague, an Arkansas native, who was a national pioneer for women and women of color in engineering and computer sciences, and Dr. Grace Murray Hopper, one of the first females in the field of computer science and whose birthday is December 9, the State Board recognized the week of December 6-12, 2021, as Arkansas Computer Science Week.

Mr. Owen further advised the State Board that daily announcements will be posted on the Announcement page of CSEdWeek by the Office of Computer Science during Computer Science Education Week to further the Arkansas Computer Science Initiative. Additionally, the National CSEdWeek Kick-off event is scheduled on December 3, 2021, in Little Rock, Arkansas hosted by Governor Asa Hutchinson at the Governor's Mansion. There will be a press event at 1:00 PM where Mr. Jake Baskin, Executive Director of the Computer Science Teachers Association will kick off the national event; State Board members should have received an invitation to the event.

Mr. Owen provided the High School Computer Science and Computing Enrollment Report, found at <https://csforar.info/ARCSEnrollment2021>, where he presented enrollment data and answered questions on the 2021-2022 enrollment numbers. He also addressed concerns on Act 414 (Computer Science Education Advancement Act of 2021) by providing information and data on the computer science certified educators.

Mr. Owen mentioned the National Governors Association (NGA) Chairman's Initiative, where Governor Asa Hutchinson is the NGA Chair through July 2022. Mr. Owen stated that Governor Hutchinson named computer science as his national focus (chairman's initiative), naming five goals, found at [2021-2022 Chairman's Initiative Page - National Governors Association \(nga.org\)](https://www.nga.org/2021-2022-Chairman's-Initiative-Page).

Changes to Agenda

Removed

Consent Agenda - Item V.4. Commercial Bond Applications – 1 Second Lien

Added

Action Agenda A. 10:00 AM
VI.5. School Choice
VI.6. Student Protection Act

A motion to add two items to the end of the Action Agenda (10 AM), School Choice and Student Protection Act was made by Dr. Sarah Moore, seconded by Dr. Beth Anne Rankin. The motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda

Items included for consideration in the Consent Agenda were as follows:

1. Minutes - October 14, 2021 Draft
2. Newly Employed, Promotions and Separations
3. Consideration of Report on Waivers to School Districts for Teachers Teaching Out of Area for Longer than Thirty (30) Days, Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-309
4. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #21-120 Benjamin Fox
5. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #22-017 Carie Harris
6. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #22-024 Alaina Hernandez

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Ms. Kathy McFetridge, seconded by Mr. Steve Sutton. The motion passed unanimously.

Action Agenda 10:00 AM

VI.1. State Board Hearing – Request for Reinstatement – LA-22-004 Christopher Parker

Ms. Lori Freno, DESE General Counsel advised the State Board that Mr. Christopher Parker is seeking reinstatement of his teaching license, which was surrendered September 2011 when a Code of Ethics complaint was filed against him in 2011. She further stated that according to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-402, Mr. Parker can seek reinstatement of his teaching license.

Ms. Karli Saracini, ADE Assistant Commissioner of Educator Effectiveness & Licensure, DESE, advised the State Board that the State Board's decision today, November 10, 2021, would set precedence, as this is the first case of license reinstatement. She further stated that as this is the first case for licensure reinstatement, there will not be a recommendation by neither Licensure nor the Professional Licensure Standards Board.

A motion was made by Ms. Charisse Dean to reinstate a standard teaching license to Mr. Christopher Parker upon the completion of 36 hours of professional development, with three (3) years of probation upon employment of a teaching position with a school district - proof required, with three (3) years of mentoring upon employment in a teaching position, was seconded by Mr. Steve Sutton. The motion passed unanimously with a roll call vote of 7 YES to 0 NO.

VI.2. Consideration of Requests for Act 1240 Waivers

Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-103 (Act 1240 of 2015), a traditional public school may petition the State Board for waivers granted to an open-enrollment public charter school. Ms. Lori Freno, DESE General Counsel, presented two Act 1240 Waivers to the State Board for consideration.

VI.2.a. McGehee School District Act 1240 Waiver Request

McGehee School District, represented by Ms. Linda Tullos, Superintendent and Ms. Amanda Bittle, Assistant Superintendent, sought an Act 1240 waiver of Class Size and Teaching Load for the purpose of a teacher internship program at McGehee Elementary School for five (5) years.

A motion to approve the waiver was made by Ms. Beth Anne Rankin, seconded by Ms. Kathy McFetridge. The motion passed unanimously.

VI.3. Consideration for Public Comment Release: Division of Elementary & Secondary Education Governing Act 1240 Waivers

Ms. Lori Freno, DESE General Counsel presented the request to the State Board to release for public comment, pending Governor's Office approval, the Division of Elementary & Secondary Education Rules Governing Act 1240 Waivers, which incorporates Act 678 and Act 688 of 2021.

A motion to release the Division of Elementary & Secondary Education Rules Governing Act 1240 Waivers for public comment, pending Governor's Office approval, was made by Dr. Sarah Moore, seconded by Ms. Charisse Dean. The motion passed unanimously.

VI.4. Request for Consideration to Release for Public Comment: DESE Rules Governing Student Special Needs Funding

Ms. Courtney Salas-Ford, DESE Chief Legal Counsel presented the request to the State Board to release for public comment, pending Governor's Office review, the Division of Elementary & Secondary Education Rules Governing Student Special Needs Funding, with amendments specifically to sections dealing with enhanced student achievement funding and alternative education (ALE) funding.

A motion to release the DESE Rules Governing Student Special Needs Funding (Enhanced Student achievement and ALE funding) for public comment, pending Governor's Office approval, was made by Dr. Sarah Moore, seconded by Mr. Randy Henderson. The motion passed unanimously.

Rules Added to Consent Agenda

V1.5. School Choice

Ms. Lori Freno, DESE General Counsel presented the request to the State Board to release for public comment, pending Governor's Office approval, the Division of Elementary & Secondary Education Rules Governing Public School Choice Act, which incorporates the provisions of Act 490 of 2021.

A motion to release the Division of Elementary & Secondary Education Rules Governing School Choice Act, Act 490 for public comment, pending Governor's Office approval, was made by Ms. Charisse Dean, seconded by Mr. Steve Sutton. The motion passed unanimously.

VI.6. Student Protection Act

Ms. Lori Freno, DESE General Counsel presented the request to the State Board to release for public comment, pending Governor's Office approval, the Division of Elementary & Secondary Education Rules Governing the Student Protection Act, which incorporates the provisions of Act 820 of 2021.

A motion to release the Division of Elementary & Secondary Education Rules Governing Student Protection Act for public comment, pending Governor's Office approval, was made by Ms. Kathy McFetridge, seconded by Ms. Charisse Dean. The motion passed unanimously.

Action Agenda 1:00 PM

VII.1. Act 1240 Digital Learning Applications

VII.1.a. Consideration of Act 1240 District Waiver request for a Digital Learning Plan – Jacksonville School District Addendum

Ms. Tally Harp, Public School Program Advisor, DESE Office of Public School Accountability, presented Item VII.1.a. to the State Board for approval of the Jacksonville School District request to add Pearson digital curriculum to their State Board approved digital learning plan.

A motion to approve the amendment of the Jacksonville School District 1240 Digital Learning Plan was made by Ms. Kathy McFetridge, seconded by Mr. Steve Sutton. The motion passed unanimously.

VII.2. Consideration of Charter Amendments for Digital Learning Programs

Mr. Tim Johnston, Director, DESE Office of Charter Schools, presented Items VII.2.a. through VII.2.e. to the State Board to determine to review or not review the approval decision of the Charter School Authorizing Panel.

VII.2.a. Arkansas Lighthouse Academies, whose charter expires June 2022, submitted a Digital Learning Program application for the following locations as a group:

Jacksonville Lighthouse High School Academy, Grades 7-12
Jacksonville Lighthouse Elementary Academy, Grades K-6
Jacksonville Lighthouse Flightline Academy, Grades 5-8
Capital City Lighthouse Elementary Academy, Grades K-5
Pine Bluff Lighthouse Elementary Academy, Grades K-6
Pine Bluff Lighthouse Middle School Academy, Grades 7-8

All locations will offer digital content through asynchronous and synchronous methods of instruction in both virtual and blended models. Approved Learning Management System (LMS) and Course Management System (CMS) platforms will be utilized to deliver content.

The digital learning plan application was approved by the Charter Authorization panel, as a group, for one (1) year, until the charter is renewed.

VII.2.b. Future School of Fort Smith, whose charter expires June 2026, submitted a Digital Learning Program application for grades 9-12. Instruction will follow asynchronous and synchronous formats through blended delivery. Approved LMS and CMS platforms will be utilized. The Charter Authorizing Panel approved the Digital Learning Plan for three (3) years.

VII.2.c. Haas Hall Academy, whose charter expires June 2022, submitted a Digital Learning Program application for the following locations:

Haas Hall Academy, Grades 7-12
Haas Hall Academy at The Jones Center, Grades 7-12
Haas Hall Academy at The Lane, Grades 7-12
Haas Hall Academy Bentonville, Grades 7-12

Instruction will be delivered virtually in a synchronous format utilizing an approved LMS.

The digital learning plan application was approved by the Charter Authorization panel, as a group, for remainder of this (school) year.

VII.2.d. Hope Academy of Northwest Arkansas, whose charter expires June 2025, submitted a Digital Learning Program application for grades K-5. Instructions will be virtual, utilizing asynchronous and synchronous formats through an approved LMS. The Charter Authorizing Panel approved the digital learning plan application for three (3) years.

VII.2.e. Westwind School for Performing Arts, whose charter expires June 2026, submitted a Digital Learning Program application for grades 6-8, requesting a three-year period. Instruction will be asynchronous and synchronous formats delivered through virtual and blended models. The school will utilize state-approved LMS and CMS platforms. The Charter Authorizing Panel approved the digital learning plan application for three (3) years.

A motion to not review the Charter Authorizing Panel's decision of approval of digital learning plans for Arkansas Lighthouse Academies; Future School of Fort Smith; Haas Hall Academy; Hope Academy of Northwest Arkansas; and Westwind School for Performing Arts was made by Ms. Adrienne Wood, seconded by Ms. Charisse Dean. The motion passed unanimously.

VII.3. Consideration of District Conversion Charter Application

Mr. Tim Johnston, Director, DESE Office of Charter Schools, presented Items VII.3.a. through VII.3.b. to the State Board for consideration of district conversion charter applications. All applications were reviewed by the Charter Authorization Panel.

VII.3.a. Mountain Home School District submitted a public conversion charter application for Guy Berry College and Career Academy, with an enrollment cap of 200 students, serving grades 6-12. The school will follow an alternative education model with an industry focus. While Mountain Home School District was not represented, Ms. Ouida Newton stated that the application reflected a very good model and great presentation. Ms. Newton instructed that the State Board would vote to review or not review the decision of the Charter Authorization Panel, unless the State Board had questions for Mountain Home School District; the State Board did not have any questions.

A motion to not review the Charter Authorization Panel's decision of approval of the Mountain Home School District conversion application for Guy Berry College and Career Academy was made by Dr. Beth Anne Rankin, seconded by Mr. Steve Sutton. The motion passed unanimously.

VII.3.b. Batesville School District, represented via ZOOM by Dr. Michael Hester, Superintendent and Ms. Jennifer Douglas, Assistant Superintendent, submitted an application to convert Batesville Junior High School to a public conversion charter school, with an enrollment cap of 1,000, serving grades 6-8. The school will follow a traditional education model with a blended approach to meet the needs of students enrolled in the Pioneer Virtual Academy.

A motion to not review the Charter Authorization Panel's decision of approval of the Batesville School District application to convert Batesville Junior High School to a public conversion charter school, Batesville Junior High Charter School, was made by Mr. Steve Sutton, seconded by Mr. Randy Henderson. The motion passed unanimously.

VII.2.c. Fort Smith School District, represented via ZOOM by Dr. Gary Udouj, Director, Career Tech Center and Ms. Samantha Hall, Assistant Director of Innovation, submitted a public conversion charter application for Fort Smith Virtual Academy, with an enrollment cap of 500, one hundred percent virtually serving grades K-8.

A motion to not review the Charter Authorization Panel's decision of approval of the Fort Smith School District application for Fort Smith Virtual Academy as a district conversion public charter school, was made by Ms. Kathy McFetridge, seconded by Dr. Sarah Moore. The motion passed unanimously.

VII.2.d. Caddo Hills School District, represented by Mr. Deric Owens, Superintendent and Mr. Justin Neel, Business and Technology Education, submitted an application to convert Caddo Hills High School to Caddo Academy, which will utilize a career academy model and continue to serve students in grades 7-12.

A motion to not review the Charter Authorization Panel's decision of approval of the Caddo Hills School District conversion application for Caddo Academy was made by Ms. Kathy McFetridge, seconded by Ms. Adrienne Woods. The motion passed unanimously.

VII.3.a. Consideration of Charter Amendment – LISA Academy

Mr. Tim Johnston, Director, DESE Office of Charter Schools, presented Item VII.3.a. to the State Board for consideration of charter amendment for Lisa Academy Public Charter School (Lisa Academy), represented by Dr. Fatih Bogrek, CEO/Superintendent, Ms. Luanne Baroni, Assistant Superintendent, and Dr. Hasan Sazci, Principal, Lisa Academy Springdale School.

Lisa Academy submitted an amendment that would add an additional campus to their existing charter, a K-12 campus in Fayetteville, beginning Fall 2023, with flexible grading (tiered) configuration, and requested that all waivers for Lisa Academy North Middle School and Lisa Academy North High School be granted to the Fayetteville campus.

Additionally, Lisa Academy requested an increase in the current enrollment cap by 1,168, from 5,632 to 6,800. The Charter Authorizing Panel discussed this request and approved the open enrollment charter amendment with a three-phase implementation as follows:

- Grades K-5 beginning 2023-2024, enrollment cap of 435 students
- Grades K-8 beginning 2024-2025, enrollment cap of 755 students
- Grades K-12 beginning 2026-2027, total enrollment cap of 1,168 students

A motion to not review Charter Authorization Panel's decision of approval of the amendment request for Lisa Academy Public Charter School was made by Ms. Kathy McFetridge, seconded by Ms. Charisse Dean. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comments

There were no public comments given in person at the State Board meeting; however, there was one public comment submitted via e-mail by Ms. Charlene Wright, which was received by the State Board members.

The State Board took a break until 1:30 PM and upon return, resumed the meeting with Reports, Item VIII.4. Office of Skills Development (OSD).

Minutes recorded by Angela Scaife

**Dr. Ivy Pfeffer, Deputy Commissioner
Ex-Officio Secretary**

**Ouida Newton, Chair
State Board of Education**

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