

**Minutes  
State Board of Education  
Monday, June 29, 2020**

The Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) met Monday, June 29, 2020, via Zoom video conferencing. Chair Ms. Diane Zook called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. Ms. Zook led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Ms. Diane Zook, Chair; Ms. Charisse Dean, Vice-Chair; Dr. Sarah Moore; Ms. Kathy McFetridge; Ms. Ouida Newton; Ms. Susan Chambers; Ms. Adrienne Woods; Ms. Stacey McAdoo, 2019 Arkansas Teacher of the Year; and Mr. Johnny Key, Secretary

Absent: Mr. Brett Williamson and Dr. Fitz Hill

**Action Agenda**

**A-1 Consideration of Requests for Act 1240 Waivers, and Charter Waivers, For LEAs to Implement the Arkansas Ready for Learning Model**

Ms. Zook made note of the public comments which were emailed to the State Board members for review prior to the meeting.

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Ivy Pfeffer provided State Board members with an overview of the Arkansas Ready for Learning model, including the Back-to-School Playbook, summer re-entry guidance, planning for re-engagement document, and additional background information regarding the requested approvals. She said that every school district is expected to establish a Ready for Learning committee, which includes educators, support staff, parents, community members, and students. Dr. Pfeffer noted the school district expectations are as follows.

- A system of Blended Learning that allows the student to continue learning grade level or content standards through an educational plan that leverages both technology-based and face-to-face instructional approaches.
- Flexibility to implement onsite or remote teaching and learning and to pivot as necessary.
- Support for districts, teachers, parents, and students to innovate and adapt to new learning opportunities.

Dr. Pfeffer said that school districts are expected to continue using the Plan, Do, Check school improvement planning process, which was established through the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). She reviewed the options available to assist in providing school districts with the flexibility needed at this time, as well as the required district assurances and supports.

Assistant Commissioner Deborah Coffman said 260 school districts and charter schools submitted an application. There were three locations that did not apply; however, these locations do not require the waivers but can implement Arkansas Ready for Learning.

Deputy General Counsel Ms. Courtney Salas-Ford provided an overview of the waiver process and procedures. She said these waivers would be in place from July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021.

Mr. Key also noted that the State Board also has the option to vote to rescind waivers if a school district is using those waivers inappropriately.

State Board members asked a number of clarifying questions, provided feedback, and expressed their concerns regarding this action item. Discussion included such topics as training for teachers about blended learning, the Blended Learning Needs Assessment survey, requirements for the waiver applications, learning management system use, the application approval process, Ready for Learning committees, public comments, the groups who provided feedback during the planning process, school district accountability procedures, the role of the State Board, teach contracts, communication processes, and various other topics.

Ms. Dean moved, seconded by Ms. Chambers, to approve the waivers. There was a roll call vote. Ms. Woods voted no. The final vote was 5-1, with two absent. The motion passed.

### **New Business**

There were no new business items.

### **Public Comment**

There were no public comments. The public comments which were emailed into the State Board members prior to the meeting will be made available via meeting records.

### **Adjournment**

Ms. Dean moved, seconded by Ms. Woods, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

*Meeting minutes recorded by Tiffany Donovan.*