

**Minutes
State Board Meeting
May 9, 2024**

Present: Dr. Sarah Moore, Chair; Ken Bragg; Randy Henderson; Lisa Hunter; Leigh Keener; Jeff Wood; Capri Salaam, 2023 Arkansas Teacher of the Year; Jacob Olivia, ADE Secretary

Zoom: Kathy Rollins, Vice Chair; Adrienne Woods

The Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) met Thursday, May 9, 2024. Dr. Sarah Moore called the meeting to order at 9:03 AM, followed by a moment of silence.

Recognitions

III.1. 2023 Arkansas Milken Award Winners

Item III.1. was presented by Ms. Karli Saracini, Assistant Commissioner of Educator Effectiveness & Licensure.

The following Milken Award winners were recognized:

Andrew Harrison, Mayflower School District,
Ashley Anderson Post, Greenbrier School District, and
Michael Tapee, Springdale School District.

III.2. Batesville School District Named Recipient of U.S. Department of Education District Sustainability Award

Item III.2. was presented by Mr. Tim Cain, Director, Arkansas Division of Public School Academic Facilities & Transportation. Also present via Zoom was Dr. Kenneth James, Superintendent, Batesville School District.

In April, the U.S. Department of Education honored Batesville School District as a Green Ribbon School District Sustainability Awardee. Batesville was one of 10 school districts across the country to be honored for efforts to reduce environmental impact, improve health and wellness, and offer effective sustainability education.

Changes to Agenda

None

Action Agenda

V.1. School Start Date Waiver Requests

Item V.1. was presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner.

Three school districts requested a waiver of Arkansas Code § 6-10-106 pertaining to the uniform school start date.

V.1.a. Little Rock School District

V.1.b. Mountain Pine School District

V.1.c. Western Yell County School District

A motion to approve one-year waivers of Arkansas Code § 6-10-106, pertaining to the uniform school start date, for Little Rock School District; Mountain Pine School District; and Western Yell County School District was made by Ms. Lisa Hunter, seconded by Ms. Leigh Keener. The motion unanimously passed.

V.2. Inclement Weather Calendar Waiver Requests

Item V.2. was presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner.

Due to inclement weather in the state, two school districts requested waivers of Arkansas Code § 6-106(g)(3) pertaining to school calendars.

V.2.a. Hillcrest School District

V.2.b. Shirley School District

A motion to approve waivers of Arkansas Code § 6-106(g)(3) pertaining to 2023-2024 school calendars for Hillcrest School District and Shirley School District was made by Mr. Ken Bragg, seconded by Ms. Lisa Hunter. The motion unanimously passed.

V.3. One-year Standards for Accreditation Waiver Requests

Item V.3. was presented by Ms. Hope Worsham, Assistant Commissioner. Also present via Zoom was Ms. Kaela Hawkins, Principal.

The Huntsville Public School District's one-year waiver request of Standards for Accreditation Waiver 1.A-5 Class Size was tabled until the State Board meeting scheduled for June 13, 2024.

Mr. Randy Henderson joined the State Board.

V.4. Consideration of the Recommendation to Remove the Lee County School District from Fiscal Distress Status

Item V.4. was presented by Dr. Eric Saunders, Associate Deputy Commissioner; also present were Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner and Dr. Michael Stone, Superintendent, Lee County School District.

On March 25, 2019, Lee County School District (District) was classified in Fiscal Distress by the Arkansas State Board of Education. Since the District has met the requirements of the fiscal distress plan, the Arkansas Department of Education recommended that Lee County School District be released from Fiscal Distress. If released from Fiscal Distress, Lee County School District will be monitored and provided support by staff in the Fiscal Services and Support Unit for three years.

A motion to release Lee County School District from Fiscal Distress was made by Mr. Jeff Wood, seconded by Ms. Lisa Hunter. The motion unanimously passed.

V.5. Consideration of Administrative Rules for Final Approval

Items V.5.a. – V.5.d. were presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner.

V.5.a. DESE Rule Governing the Student Protection Act

The Division of Elementary Education & Secondary Education (DESE) Rule Governing the Student Protection Act was approved on March 14, 2024, by the State Board for release for public comment. The public comment period began on March 22, 2024, and ended on April 24, 2024. Public comments were received, and no substantive changes were made. DESE requested the State Board's final approval of the rule.

V.5.b. DESE Rule Governing Student Transfers

The DESE Rule Governing Student Transfers was approved on March 14, 2024, by the State Board of Education, for release for public comment. The public comment period began on March 22, 2024, and ended on April 24, 2024. No public comments were received. DESE requested the State Board's final approval of the rule.

V.5.c. DESE Rule Governing Educator Performance

The DESE Rule Governing Educator Performance was approved on March 14, 2024, by the State Board for release for public comment. The public comment period began on March 22, 2024, and ended on April 24, 2024. Public comments were received, and no substantive changes were made. The Division requested the State Board's final approval of the subject rules.

V.5.d. DESE Rule Governing the Right to Read Act

The DESE Rule Governing the Right to Read Act was approved for release for public comment by the State Board of Education on March 14, 2024. The public comment period began on March 22, 2024, and ended on April 24, 2024. Public comments were received, and no substantive changes were made. The Division requested the State Board's final approval of the rule.

A motion for final approval of the DESE Rule Governing the Student Protection Act; the DESE Rule Governing Student Transfers; the DESE Rule Governing Educator Performance; and the DESE Rule Governing the Right to Read Act was made by Mr. Ken Bragg, seconded by Mr. Randy Henderson. The motion unanimously passed.

V.6. Consideration of Request to Release Administrative Rules for Public Comment

Items V.6.a. – V.6.k. were presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner.

Pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act, Arkansas Code 25-15-201 et. seq, the following rules were presented to the State Board for approval to be released for public comment.

V.6.a. DESE Rule Governing Arkansas Governor's School

V.6.b. DESE Rule Governing Background Checks

V.6.c. DESE Rule Governing the Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators

A motion to release for public comment the DESE Rule Governing Arkansas Governor's School; the DESE Rule Governing Background Checks; and the DESE Rule Governing the Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators was made by Ms. Leigh Keener, seconded by Mr. Ken Bragg. The motion unanimously passed.

V.6.d. DESE Rule Governing Better Beginnings

V.6.e. DESE Rule Governing the Requirements and Procedures for Obtaining an Arkansas Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential.

V.6.f. DESE Rule Governing Dyslexia Screenings and Interventions

A motion to release for public comment the DESE Rule Governing Better Beginnings; the DESE Rule Governing the Requirements and Procedures for Obtaining an Arkansas Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential; and the DESE Rule Governing Dyslexia Screenings and Interventions was made by Mr. Randy Henderson, seconded by Mr. Ken Bragg. The motion unanimously passed.

V.6.g. DESE Rule Governing Educator Licensure

V.6.h. DESE Rule Governing Emergency Response Equipment and Training in Arkansas Public Schools

V.6.i. DESE Rule Governing the Fiscal Assessment and Accountability Program

A motion to release for public comment the DESE Rule Governing Educator Licensure; the DESE Rule Governing Emergency Response Equipment and Training in Arkansas Public Schools; and the DESE Rule Governing the Fiscal Assessment and Accountability Program was made by Mr. Ken Bragg, seconded by Ms. Adrienne Woods. The motion unanimously passed.

V.6.j. DESE Rule Governing the Maternity Leave Cost Sharing Program

V.6.k. DESE Rule Governing Water Safety Information Provided by Public Schools

A motion to release for public comment the DESE Rule Governing the Maternity Leave Cost Sharing Program and the DESE Rule Governing Water Safety Information Provided by Public Schools was made by Ms. Leigh Keener, seconded by Mr. Ken Bragg. The motion unanimously passed.

V.7. Consideration of Request to Repeal Administrative Rules and Release for Public Comment

Items V.7.a. – V.7.h. were presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner and Mr. Andres Rhodes, Chief Legal Counsel. Pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act, Arkansas Code 25-15-201 et. seq, the following rules were presented to the State Board for repeal and release for public comment.

V.7.a. DESE Rule Governing the Educator Compensation Reform Program

V.7.b. DESE Rule Governing Eligibility of Participating School Districts in the Traveling Teacher Program

V.7.c. DESE Rule Governing Incentives for Teacher Recruitment and Retention in High-Priority Districts

V.7.d. DESE Rule Governing Reimbursement by School Districts for Election Expenses

V.7.e. DESE Rule Governing School Board Zones and Rezoning

V.7.f. DESE Rule Governing School District Duty to Report Student Criminal Acts

V.7.g. DESE Rule Governing the Succeed Scholarship Program

V.7.h. DCTE Rule Governing Methods of Administration of Career and Technical Education Programs

A motion to approve the repeal and release for public comment the DESE Rule Governing the Educator Compensation Reform Program; the DESE Rule Governing Eligibility of Participating School Districts in the Traveling Teacher Program; the DESE Rule Governing Incentives for Teacher Recruitment and Retention in High-Priority Districts; the DESE Rule Governing Reimbursement by School Districts for Election Expenses; the DESE Rule Governing School Board Zones and Rezoning; the DESE Rule Governing School District Duty to Report Student Criminal Acts; the DESE Rule Governing the Succeed Scholarship Program; and the DCTE Rule Governing Methods of Administration of Career and Technical Education Programs was made by Mr. Randy Henderson, seconded by Mr. Ken Bragg. The motion unanimously passed.

V.8. Consideration of Request for Approval of Nominated Member for the Professional Licensure Standards Board to Replace Member Whose Term is Vacant or Expiring June 30, 2024 - Dr. Kimberley Davis

Item V.8. was presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner and Ms. Karli Saracini, Assistant Commissioner of Educator Effectiveness & Licensure.

Per Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-422, members of the Professional Licensure Standards Board (PLSB) serve rotating terms and are appointed by the State Board following nominations made by professional education associations. The Arkansas Association of Colleges for Teacher Education nominated Dr. Kimberley Davis, Dean of the School of Education, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, to fill the position being vacated by Dr. Mary Jane Bradley, whose term expires on June 30, 2024. Dr. Davis' term will begin June 30, 2024, and end on June 30, 2027.

A motion to approve the nomination of Dr. Kimberley Davis to serve on the PLSB from June 30, 2024, through June 30, 2027, was made by Ms. Lisa Hunter, seconded by Ms. Leigh Keener. The motion unanimously passed.

V.9. Consideration of Request for Approval of Nominated Member for the Professional Licensure Standards Board to Replace Member whose Term is Vacant or Expiring June 30, 2024 - Dr. Harold Jeffcoat

Item V.9. was presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner.

Per Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-422, members of the PLSB serve rotating terms and are appointed by the State Board following nominations made by professional education associations. The Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators (AAEA) has nominated Dr. Harold Jeffcoat, Superintendent of the Van Buren School District, to continue his service on the PLSB Board. His term will begin June 30, 2024, and end on June 30, 2027.

A motion to approve the nomination of Dr. Harold Jeffcoat's continued role and service on the PLSB from June 30, 2024, through June 30, 2027, was made by Mr. Jeff Woods, seconded by Mr. Randy Henderson. The motion unanimously passed.

New Business

None

Consent Agenda

1. Minutes – State Board Meeting 04-11-2024
2. Report on Waivers to School Districts for Teachers Teaching Out of Area for Longer than Sixty (60) Days, Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-309
3. Review of Loan and Bond Applications
4. Consideration of the Arkansas Better Chance Program Renewal Grants FY25 Board
5. Consideration of the Arkansas Better Chance Professional Service Grants FY25
6. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 21-075 - Steven Shook
7. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-123 - Dustin Moffitt
8. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-106 - Rebecca Weliver
9. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-113 - Kathryn Drake
10. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-116 - Stephanie Davis
11. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-183 - Jordan Duff
12. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-157 - Linda Maples
13. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-126 - Mary Oltmann
14. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-160 - William Livingston
15. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for

- Case 24-068 - Xavier Diamond
16. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-117 - Michelle Stanfield
 17. Consideration of the Charter Authorizing Panel's Decision for the School for Advanced Studies-Northwest Arkansas
 18. Consideration of the Charter Authorizing Panel's Decision for Arkansas Lighthouse Charter Schools
 19. Consideration of the Charter Authorizing Panel's Decision for Founders Classical Academies of Arkansas
 20. Premier High Schools of Arkansas and Premier High School of North Little Rock
 21. Consideration of Charter Authorizing Panel's Decision for LISA Academy

Mr. Andres Rhodes, Chief Legal Counsel, will contact the Department of Human Services (DHS) to invite DHS to conduct a presentation before the State Board on the overall procedures used by DHS to determine maltreatment cases.

A motion to pull Consent Agenda Items VII.4., VII.5., and VII.6. and move them to the June 13, 2024, Action Agenda was made by Ms. Lisa Hunter, seconded by Ms. Leigh Keener. The motion unanimously passed.

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda, except Items VII.4. – VII.6., was made by Ms. Leigh Keener, seconded by Mr. Ken Bragg. The motion unanimously passed.

Public Comments

None

Adjournment

Dr. Sarah Moore, Chair, adjourned the State Board meeting at 2:41 PM.

Minutes recorded by Angela Scaife.

Jacob Oliva, Secretary
Arkansas Department of Education

Dr. Sarah Moore, Chair
State Board of Education