

**Minutes
State Board Meeting
December 9, 2021**

Present: Ouida Newton, Chair, Dr. Sarah Moore, Vice-Chair; Charisse Dean; Randy Henderson; Dr. Fitz Hill; Kathy McFetridge (via ZOOM); Dr. Beth Anne Rankin; Steve Sutton; Adrienne Woods; Susanna Post, 2021 Arkansas Teacher of the Year; Johnny Key, Secretary.

The Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) met Wednesday, December 9, 2021, in the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) Auditorium. Chair Ouida Newton, called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM, led by a moment of silence.

Proclamation

Presented by Mr. Dan Jordan, Director, Arkansas School Board Association of Governmental Relations, the State Board recognizes and salutes the members of the local boards of education by proclaiming and recognizing the month of January 2022, as Arkansas School Board Member Recognition Month.

A motion to proclaim the month of January 2022 as Arkansas School Board Member Recognition Month was made by Mr. Steve Sutton, seconded by Mr. Randy Henderson. The motion passed unanimously.

Recognitions

2022 Arkansas Superintendent of the Year Award

Represented by Dr. Mike Hernandez, Executive Director, Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators (AAEA), the AAEA, along with former Superintendents of the Year, surprised Mr. John “Skipper” Ward, Superintendent, Magnolia School District on September 13 at the Magnolia School District board meeting, with the presentation of the 2022 Arkansas Superintendent of the Year Award.

Arkansas's National Blue Ribbon Schools

Ms. Chante'le Williams, Public School Program Coordinator, Division of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE), Office of Public School Accountability, presented plaques to Arkansas's National Blue Ribbon Schools. The National Blue Ribbon Schools award affirms the hard work of educators, families, and communities in creating safe and welcoming schools, where students master challenging and engaging content. The U.S. Department of Education (USDoE) invites National Blue Ribbon School nominations from the top education officials in all states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and the Bureau of Indian Education; private schools are nominated by the Council for American Private Education. Currently in its 39th year, the USDoE recognizes all schools in one of two performance categories, based on all student scores, student subgroup scores, and graduation rates:

- *Exemplary High Performing Schools* - schools that are among the state's highest performing schools, as measured by state assessments or nationally-normed tests; and,
- *Exemplary Achievement Gap Closing Schools* – schools among their state's highest performing in closing achievement gaps between a school's student groups and all students.

Up to 420 schools may be nominated each year. This year, the U.S. Secretary of Education recognized 325 schools on academic progress or closing the achievement gap, four of which were schools in Arkansas.

Exemplary High Performing Schools

Park Magnet Elementary School, Hot Springs School District

Dr. Stephanie Nehus, Superintendent
Dr. Sarah Oatsvall, Principal
Ms. Kristal Brandon, Assistant Principal

Carolyn Lewis Elementary School, Conway School District

Mr. Jeff Collum, Superintendent
Dr. KK Bradshaw, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Stacy Defoor, Principal
Ms. Carise Echols, Assistant Principal
Ms. Heather Kendrick, Communications Specialist

Exemplary Achievement Gap Closing Schools

Hugh Goodwin Elementary School, El Dorado School District

Jim Tucker, Superintendent

Jessica Collins, Principal

Portland Elementary School, Hamburg School District

Tracy Streeter, Superintendent

Cristy West, Principal

Ms. Michelle Dunbar, Special Programs Coordinator

Marsha Dalton, Teacher-Grade 2

Changes to Agenda

Removed

Action Item VI.2. Consideration of Request for Waiver of Standards for Accreditation – Helena West-Helena School District

Consent Agenda

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

1. Minutes – November 10, 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. Community Service Learning Partner Site Applications
 - a. Central Arkansas Development Council – Harmony Grove SD (Benton)
 - b. Rector High School (RHS) Helping Hands Foundation – Rector School District
 - c. Rector Community Museum – Rector School District
 - d. Clay County Arts Council – Rector School District
 - e. Rector Food Pantry – Rector School District
 - f. Neighbor 2 Neighbor – Rector School District
 - g. Rector Downtown Central – Rector School District
 - h. Rector Labor Day Picnic – Rector School District
 - i. Oak Bend Etna Volunteer Fire Department – County Line School District
 - j. City of Siloam Springs School District – Siloam Springs School District
 - k. The Van (The One) – Academics Plus Charter Schools
 - l. The Summit Church – Academics Plus Charter Schools
 - m. TAG Church – Academics Plus Charter Schools
 - n. Rotary Club of Conway – Academics Plus Charter Schools
 - o. International Order of the Rainbow for Girls – Academics Plus Charter Schools
 - p. International Order of the Rainbow for Girls – Brady Assembly #104 – Academics Plus Charter Schools

- q. Illuminating Engineer Society of North America – Little Rock Chapter – Academics Plus Charter Schools
 - r. Hazen First United Methodist Church – Food Pantry – Academics Plus Charter Schools
 - s. Grace Baptist Church – Academics Plus Charter Schools
 - t. Christ Church of Central Arkansas – Academics Plus Charter Schools
 - u. Children’s Advocacy Centers of Arkansas – Academics Plus Charter Schools
 - v. Cabot Animal Support Services – Academics Plus Charter Schools
 - w. Arkansas NICA (Arkansas Interscholastic Cycling League)
 - x. American Red Cross Serving Greater Arkansas – Central Arkansas Red Cross Club – North Little Rock School District
 - y. STEP, Inc. – North Little Rock School District
 - z. Our Savior Lutheran Church – North Little Rock School District
 - aa. North Little Rock Mayor’s Youth Council – North Little Rock School District
 - bb. Amboy Community Food Pantry – North Little Rock School District
 - cc. New Life Church Conway – Conway School District
5. Review of Loan and Bond Applications
 6. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #22-025 Sarah Islom
 7. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #22-028 Matthew Williams
 8. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case #22-034 Timothy Moore

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Mr. Steve Sutton, seconded by Dr. Sarah Moore. The motion passed unanimously.

Action Agenda 10:00 AM

VI.1. 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.1.a. Fayetteville School District Act 1240 Waiver Request

The Fayetteville School District requests an Act 1240 waiver for three years of teaching load, for grades 5-12, for several of the Fayetteville School District's schools to implement a teacher intern program. Ms. Mary Claire Hyatt, General Counsel, Fayetteville School District, presented on behalf of Fayetteville School District stating the mentor teacher program is voluntary for any teacher who wants to participate, is deemed ready by their teacher prep program, and vetted by the school district. Ms. Hyatt advised that the teacher load only applies for teacher interns. Questions were presented by the Board and answered by Ms. Hyatt.

A motion to approve the Act 1240 Waiver request for Fayetteville School District was made by Ms. Charisse Dean, seconded by Dr. Beth Anne Rankin. The motion passed unanimously.

VI.1.b. Act 1240 Waiver Requests of School Districts within the Southeast Education Service Cooperative

Dr. Ivy Pfeffer, DESE Deputy Commissioner and Ms. Lori Freno, DESE General Council presented Item VI.1.b. The 15 school districts, contained within the Southeast Arkansas Educational Service Cooperative (SE ESC) region, request Act 1240 waivers for teacher licensure for five years and for library media specialist licensure for three years. DESE supports the Act 1240 waiver for teacher licensure for a period of three years. Ms. Karen Eoff, Executive Director, SE ESC, in attendance via ZOOM, presented. School district superintendents from the SE ESC region, present or attended via ZOOM, provided presentations of support for the Act 1240 waiver request for five years for teacher licensure and answered questions from the State Board.

As there will be a monitoring process for plans, after review, Dr. Pfeffer will provide the State Board with an update report on the SE ESC region schools' progress.

A motion was made by Dr. Fitz Hill and seconded by Dr. Beth Anne Rankin to approve the Act 1240 waiver requests for five years for both teacher licensure and library media specialist licensure for school districts contained within the Southeast Education Service Cooperative region. The motion passed unanimously.

Action Agenda 1:00 PM

Ms. Ouida Newton, Chair called the meeting back to order at 1:15 PM.

Ms. Newton moved public comments to the top of the afternoon agenda as visitors were currently present for this agenda item.

Public Comments:

The following concerned stakeholders presented public comments to the State Board against the annexation of and for the consolidation of Pine Bluff School District and Dollarway School District: Mr. Isadore Daniels, Ms. Dorothy Singleton, Mr. Julius Wright, and Ms. Charlene Wright.

New Business

Lori Freno invited the State Board to submit suggestions/comments on the State Board Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that she presented to the State Board on November 9, State Board meeting. Then the DESE Office of Legal can draft up a new set of State Board SOPs, incorporating suggestion and comments, for the State Board to review, discussion, and vote on the SOPs at the State Board meeting scheduled in January 2022; a majority vote is required to change the SOPs.

Meeting moved on to the Reports section of the agenda at 1:35 PM.

Minutes recorded by Angela Scaife

Johnny Key, Secretary
Arkansas Department of Education

Ouida Newton, Chair
State Board of Education