

**Minutes  
State Board Meeting  
January 12, 2023**

Present: Ouida Newton, Chair; Dr. Sarah Moore, Vice-Chair Adrienne Woods; Randy Henderson, Kathy McFetridge; Steve Sutton; Jeff Wood, Lisa Hunter; Dr. Fitz Hill; Jessica Saum, 2022 Arkansas Teacher of the Year, Dr. Ivy Pfeffer, Ex-Officio Secretary.

The Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) met Thursday, January 12, 2023. Ms. Ouida Newton called the meeting to order at 9:04 AM, followed by a moment of silence.

**Recognition**

On behalf of the State Board, Ms. Ouida Newton recognized and welcomed elect-Secretary of Education, Mr. Jacob Oliva.

**III.1. Celebrating Educators Rising Regional Coordinators**

Item III.1. was presented by Ms. Edie Stewart, Division of Elementary Education and Secondary Education (DESE) Director of Educator Preparation.

Regional events were held from October-December 6, 2022, with total attendance at over 700 high school Educators Rising students. These events are a collaboration between high school Educators Rising chapters, educator preparation providers, and collegiate Educators Rising chapters. Listed below are the regional coordinators and respective conference locations.

Region 1: Dr. Theresa Cullen, Department Head and Professor Curriculum and Instruction  
- Arkansas Tech University

Region 2: Dr. Nykela Jackson, Associate Professor, Teaching and Learning  
- University of Central Arkansas

Region 3: Jennifer Snyder, CTE Coordinator, Crowley's Ridge Educational Service Cooperative  
- Arkansas State University

Region 4: Dr. Kimberely Davis, Dean, School of Education, UAPB  
- University of Arkansas Pine Bluff

Region 5: Dr. Lisa Odem, Associate Professor of Education, SAU  
- Southern Arkansas University

Region 6: LaDonna Oates, Assistant Principal Carver Magnet LRSD  
- University of Arkansas Little Rock

Also recognized were the Educator Rising Educators Cutter Morning Star students Kaylen Covey, Ruby DeSedrio, Kyler Case, Kalie Cash and superintendent/teacher, Dr. Nancy Anderson.

## **Changes to the Agenda**

### **Agenda Re-organization**

IV. Consideration of Jacob Oliva as Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Due to legislative session in progress, Item IV. was moved to the end of the agenda.

### **Removed**

VII.2. Arkansas Academic Mathematic Standards

## **Consent Agenda**

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

1. Minutes 12-08-22
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 21-057 - David B. Miller
5. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 23-004 - Corey Stanley
6. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 23-039 - Colton C. Looper

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

## **Action Agenda**

### **VII.1. Consideration of Standards for Accreditation Waiver Requests**

#### **VII.1.a. Consideration of Cabot School District Standards for Accreditation Waiver**

Item VII.1. a. was presented by Dr. Matthew Sutherlin, Coordinator, DESE Standards and Systems Support/Charter. Also present was Mr. Aaron Randolph, Assistant Superintendent, Cabot School District.

Cabot School District is requesting a waiver of Standard 1-A.5 Class Size for the 2022-2023 school year for its grade 5 and grade 6 Art and Music classes. The district would exceed the maximum number allowed by Standard in Cabot Middle School by five (5) students. The district is compensating teachers for the overage.

A motion to approve the Standards for Accreditation Waiver request for Cabot School District for Cabot Middle School was made by Ms. Kathy McFetridge, seconded by Mr. Randy Henderson. The motion unanimously passed.

**VII.1.b. Consideration of South Conway County School District Standards for Accreditation Waiver**

Item VII.1.b. was presented by Dr. Matthew Sutherlin, Coordinator, DESE Standards and Systems Support/Charter. Also present via ZOOM was Ms. Lora Hendrix, Associate Superintendent, South Conway County School District.

South Conway County School District is requesting a waiver of 1-A.5 Class Size. The district is over the maximum number of students allowed by Standard (28) by one (1) student in two (2) grade 5 classrooms - art and music. The district is compensating teachers for the overage.

A motion to approve the Standards for Accreditation Waiver request for South Conway County School District was made by Ms. Kathy McFetridge, seconded by Dr. Sarah Moore. The motion unanimously passed.

**VII.3. Consideration of Charter Authorizing Panel Open Enrollment Charter Renewal Decisions**

Item VII.3. was presented by Ms. Dorie Summons, Director, DESE Office of Public Charter School.

The Charter Authorizing Panel met on December 13 and 14, 2022, to consider renewals for the following Open Enrollment Charter Schools:

### **VII.3.a. KIPP Delta Public Schools Open Enrollment Renewal Application**

Item VII.3. was presented by Ms. Dorie Summons, Director, DESE Office of Public Charter School. Present via ZOOM was Ms. Megan Stitzinger, Interim Executive Director, KIPP Delta Public Schools. Questions and clarification were provided to the State Board by Ms. Stacy Smith, DESE Deputy Commissioner, Ms. Deborah Coffman, DESE Assistant Commissioner of Public School Accountability, Ms. Shastady Wagner, DESE Attorney Specialist, and Ms. Lori Freno, DESE General Counsel.

The district is requesting:

- Renewal of the charter for a five (5) year period.
- The campuses serve Grades PK-12.
- The current enrollment cap is 2,600 students.
- The charter will follow a college prep educational model.

A motion to review the decision of the Charter Authorizing Panel decision was made by Mr. Jeff Wood, seconded by Mr. Steve Sutton. The motion passed with a vote of 8 yes - 2 opposed (Dr. Sarah Moore, Dr. Fitz Hill).

After discussion, a motion to rescind the motion to review of the Charter Authorizing Panel decision was made by Mr. Jeff Wood, seconded by Mr. Randy Henderson. The vote unanimously passed.

Mr. Wood expressed that he is discontented regarding 'D' and 'F' schools and equally discontented regarding charter 'D' and 'F' schools as he is about traditional public schools. Furthermore, Mr. Wood stated that he is "concerned and wants to hear what our leaders across the State are doing to improve the education in those schools."

A motion to not review the decision of the Charter Authorizing Panel decision was made by Mr. Jeff Wood, seconded by Mr. Randy Henderson. The vote unanimously passed.

### **VII.3.b. Premier High Schools of Arkansas Open Enrollment Renewal Application**

Item VII.3. was presented by Ms. Dorie Summons, Director, DESE Office of Public Charter School. Present via ZOOM was Ms. Laura Hendricks, Premier High Schools.

The district is requesting:

- Renewal for a five (5) year period.
- The campuses serve Grades 9-12.
- The current enrollment cap is 600.
- The charter will follow a blend of an alternative learning environment and a credit recovery educational model.

A motion to not review the decision of the Charter Authorizing Panel decision was made by Mr. Steve Sutton, seconded by Dr. Fitz Hill. The vote unanimously passed.

### **VII.3.c. Scholarmade Achievement Place of Arkansas Open Enrollment Renewal Application**

Item VII.3.c. was presented by Ms. Dorie Summons, Director, DESE Office of Public Charter School. Also present via ZOOM was Dr. Phillis Anderson, CEO/Founder, Scholarmade Achievement Place.

The district is requesting:

- Renewal of the charter for a seven (7) year period.
- The campus serves Grades K-9.
- The current enrollment cap is 520 students.
- The charter will follow a hybrid educational model.
- Amendment request to drop Grade 9.

A motion to not review the decision of the Charter Authorizing Panel decision was made by Ms. Kathy McFetridge, seconded by Mr. Steve Sutton. The vote unanimously passed.

### **VII.3.d. eStem Public Charter School Open Enrollment Renewal Application**

Item VII.3.d. was presented by Ms. Dorie Summons, Director, DESE Office of Public Charter School. Present via ZOOM was Mr. Mark Milhollen, Interim Superintendent and Ms. Johnecia Howard, Chief Operating Officer, eSTEM Public Charter Schools.

The district is requesting:

- Renewal of the charter for ten (10) years with a report to the Panel in three (3) years.
- Digital Learning Plan and waivers approved for three (3) years.
- The campuses serve Grades K-12.
- The current enrollment cap is 3,844 students.
- The charter will follow a traditional educational model.

A motion to not review the decision of the Charter Authorizing Panel decision was made by Mr. Randy Henderson, seconded by Mr. Steve Sutton. The vote unanimously passed.

### **VII.3.e. Friendship Aspire Academies of Arkansas Open Enrollment Renewal Application**

Item VII.3.e. was presented by Ms. Dorie Summons, Director, DESE Office of Public Charter School. Present via ZOOM was Dr. Phong Tran, Southern Region Superintendent and Ms. Virginia Perry, Director of Development, Friendship Aspire Academies of Arkansas.

The district is requesting:

- Renewal for a ten (10) year period.
- The campuses serve Grades K-12.
- The current enrollment cap is 2,285 students.
- The charter will follow a college prep educational model.

A motion to not review the decision of the Charter Authorizing Panel decision was made by Ms. Kathy McFetridge, seconded by Ms. Lisa Hunter. The vote unanimously passed.

#### **VII.4. Considerations of Charter Authorizing Panel District Conversion Charter Renewals**

Item VII.4. was presented by Mr. Thomas Coy, Public School Program Advisor, DESE Office of Public Charter School.

The Charter Authorizing Panel met on December 13 and 14, 2022, to consider renewals for the following District Conversion Charter Schools:

##### **VII.4.a. Bauxite Miner Academy District Conversion Renewal Application**

Item VII.4.a. was presented by Mr. Thomas Coy, Public School Program Advisor, DESE Office of Public Charter School. Present via ZOOM was Ms. Ann Webb, Principal, Bauxite Miner Academy

The district is requesting:

- Renewal of the charter for five (5) years.
- The campus serves Grades K-6 Virtual Only (Dawson Ed. Co-Op), Grades 7-12 Virtual, 6-12 Onsite.
- The current enrollment cap is 200 students.
- The charter will blend an alternative learning environment, a traditional, virtual only, and credit recovery educational model.
- Amendment request to remove K-6 Virtual students from the charter.

A motion to not review the decision of the Charter Authorizing Panel decision was made by Mr. Steve Sutton, seconded by Dr. Fitz Hill. The vote unanimously passed.

##### **VII.4.b. Polk County Virtual Academy (Mena) District Conversion Renewal Application**

Item VII.4.b. was presented by Mr. Thomas Coy, Public School Program Advisor, DESE Office of Public Charter School. Present via ZOOM was Ms. Bridget Buckley, Assistant Superintendent, Mena School District.

The district is requesting:

- Renewal of the charter for five (5) years.
- The campus serves Grades K-12.
- The current enrollment cap is 200 students.
- The charter will follow the virtual only educational model.

A motion to not review the decision of the Charter Authorizing Panel decision was made by Mr. Jeff Wood, seconded by Mr. Randy Henderson. The vote unanimously passed.

## **VII.5. Educational Service Cooperative Evaluations**

Item VII.5. was presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner. Also present via ZOOM were Ms. Pamela Castor, Director, Crowley's Ridge Educational Service Cooperative (ESC); Ms. Willie Murdock, Great Rivers ESC; and Mr. Daryl Blaxton, Director, Northeast ESC.

A motion was made by Ms. Adrienne Woods, seconded by Ms. Lisa Hunter to accept the evaluation reports for Crowley's Ridge ESC, Great Rivers ESC, Northeast ESC, and Southeast ESC. The vote unanimously passed.

The State Board heard the Professional Learning Community Report, presented by Dr. Missy Walley, DESE Director of Special Projects. Present were Ms. Tracy Streecher, Superintendent, Hamburg School District and team; Mr. James Hartshorn, Hamburg School Board; and Dr. Tony Prothro, Executive Director, Arkansas School Board Association.

Upon completion of the Professional Learning Community Report, a motion to adjourn to executive session was made by Mr. Steve Sutton, seconded by Mr. Jeff Wood. The motion unanimously passed.

Mr. Wood expressed that he was very thankful for former Secretary Johnny Key for former Secretary Key's last eight years of service to the Division of Elementary & Secondary Education (Department) stating that former Secretary Key laid the foundation for moving the Department in the right direction and should be given tremendous credit for the Science of Reading and

## **IV. Consideration of Jacob Oliva as Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education**

Item IV was presented by Ms. Ouida Newton, Chair, State Board.

In accordance with Ark. Code Ann. 6-11-102(a)(1), the State Board will consider employing Mr. Jacob Oliva as Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, subject to confirmation by the Governor.

Upon confirmation by the Governor, a motion was made to hire Mr. Jacob Oliva as the Commissioner of Education for the State of Arkansas was made by Mr. Jeff Wood, seconded by Ms. Adrienne Woods. The motion unanimously passed.

## **New Business**

None



## Public Comments

A motion to hear public comments was made by Ms. Kathy McFetridge, seconded by Mr. Steve Sutton. The motion unanimously passed.

The State Board heard public comments from:

Ms. Rosalind Mouser, Pine Bluff Volunteer

Ms. Trammel Howell, Parent Teacher Student Organization Pine Bluff School District

Ms. Charlene Wright

Mr. Julius Wright

Ms. Newton presented a map on long-term substitute teachers and teachers on an Additional Licensure Plan, known as an ALP, per her request of Ms. Karli Saracini, DESE Assistant Commissioner of Educator Effectiveness and Licensure. The purpose was for State Board members to consider the direction to be taken in the future with 1240 Waivers.

A request was made by Mr. Jeff Wood for a State Board work session regarding the State Board role in support and accountability regarding data showing the number of Arkansas school districts with half or more of their schools in the 'D' or 'F' category. Understanding that while the legislature, Office of the Governor, and Division of Elementary & Secondary Education each have a role, the State Board also has a distinct role in helping and redirecting those outcomes. The purpose of the work session is to determine what tools are available to the State Board to support and hold school districts accountable that are not meeting the standards. Ms. Newton requested Ms. Gina Lockwood, ADE Chief Operating Officer to organize and schedule the State Board work session in February or March 2023. The work session will include the in identifying the State Board's role in 'D' and 'F' school districts, the teacher pipeline, and as well as the any other topic that should be included by the State Board members for consideration that they wish to have more information on or need to study further. She directed the State Board members to e-mail their learning interests to Ms. Gina Lockwood to push out to the State Board members and to not directly e-mail Ms. Newton.

## Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the State Board meeting was made by Mr. Steve Sutton, seconded by Mr. Randy Henderson. The motion unanimously passed. Chair Ouida Newton adjourned the State Board meeting at 2:58 PM.

*Minutes recorded by Angela Scaife.*

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**Dr. Ivy Pfeffer, Ex-Officio Secretary**  
**Arkansas Department of Education**

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