

**Minutes  
State Board Meeting  
March 14, 2024**

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

Absent: Kathy Rollins, Vice-Chair; Randy Henderson

The Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) met Thursday, March 14, 2024. Dr. Sarah Moore called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM, followed by a moment of silence.

**Recognition**

**III.1. Lily Williams, Member of WorldSkills USA Team**

Item III.1. was presented by Mr. Ross White, Director of Career and Technical Education.

A 2023 graduate of Northeast Arkansas Career and Technical Center in Jonesboro, Ms. Lily Williams won a national gold medal in the 2023 automotive refinishing SkillsUSA competition. In September 2024, Ms. Williams will represent the United States in the international WorldSkills competition to be held in Lyon, France.

**III.2. United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) Delegates**

Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner, introduced Item III.2. and Ms. Amber Pirnique, Disciplinary Literacy Program Administrator. Item III.2. was presented by Ms. Amber Pirnique, who also recognized Ms. Ronda Smith for coordination of the Arkansas United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP).

"The United States Senate Youth Program was created by Senate resolution 324 in 1962 in order to increase young Americans' understanding of the interrelationships of the three branches of government, learn the caliber and responsibilities of federally elected and appointed officials, and emphasize the vital importance of democratic decision making not only for America but for people around the world." *Arkansas Students Selected for United States Senate Youth Program. United States Senate Youth Program, 2024. [USSYP Press Release](#)*

The two delegates, Mr. Joshua Ofodile and Mr. Bannon Sansom Price, joined Senator John Boozman and Senator Tom Cotton in representing Arkansas during the 62nd annual USSYP Washington Week, held March 2-9, 2024. They were selected from among the state's top student leaders to be part of the national student delegation. Each delegate will also receive a \$10,000 college scholarship for undergraduate study.

### **III.3. Celebrating March as Arkansas School Breakfast Month**

Item III.3. was presented by Dr. Eric Saunders, Associate Deputy Commissioner.

Recognizing the importance of the School Breakfast Program, Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders proclaimed March as School Breakfast Month on Tuesday, February 20, 2024. The purpose of this month-long celebration is to honor child nutrition teams and school personnel, as well as encourage school districts to increase school breakfast participation.

### **Changes to Agenda**

#### **Pulled**

#### **Action Agenda**

V.1. Legal Transfer Appeal – Lowe Family

V.4.f. DESE Rules Governing School Transformation Contracts

#### **Action Agenda**

#### **V.2. District Waiver Requests for Alternate School Calendar**

Item V.2. was presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner. School districts attended via Zoom.

Due to inclement weather in the state, 12 school districts are requesting the State Board to waive Ark. Code Ann. § 6-10-106(g) to allow a mid-year change from a traditional school calendar of 178 days to an alternative calendar of 1,068 hours.

A motion to grant a waiver of Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-10-106(g)(3) for the five (5) school districts that have submitted a full waiver petition, as it pertains to the July 1 deadline to notify the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) and the August 1 deadline to post the alternate school calendar on their district website. The motion was made by Ms. Leigh Keener, seconded by Ms. Adrienne Woods. The motion unanimously passed.

A motion to grant a waiver of Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-10-106(g)(3), pending local school board approval, as it pertains to the July 1 deadline to notify the ADE and the August 1 deadline to post the alternate school calendar on their district website, for the seven school districts that have yet to submit their local school board resolution. The motion was made by Mr. Ken Bragg, seconded by Ms. Ms. Lisa Hunter. The motion unanimously passed.

### **V.3. District Waiver Requests for 2024-2025 School Start Date**

Item V.2. was presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner and Mr. Andres Rhodes, ADE Chief Legal Counsel. School districts attended via Zoom.

There are 35 school districts requesting a waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-10-106 (a)(1)(A) which requires school districts to begin school on or after the Monday of the week in which August 19 falls and no earlier than August 14 or later than August 26.

A motion was made to grant for one year a waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-10-106(a), the school start date, for 33 school districts that have submitted a full waiver petition. The motion was made by Ms. Leigh Keener, seconded by Mr. Ken Bragg. The motion unanimously passed.

A motion was made to grant for one year a waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-10-106(a), the school start date, for Calico Rock School District and Concord School District pending submission of their local board resolution. The motion was made by Ms. Leigh Keener, seconded by Mr. Ken Bragg. The motion unanimously passed.

For the upcoming Fall, before legislative session, Dr. Moore requested Ms. Smith to submit to the State Board a list of school district start dates; reflecting whether the school district will be using an alternative calendar; and if using the alternative calendar with hours, the number of days are they going.

### **V.4. DESE Rules for Release for Public Comment**

Items V.4.a. – V.4.e. and V.4.g. – V.4.h. were presented by Ms. Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner and Mr. Andres Rhodes, ADE Chief Legal Counsel.

#### **V.4.a. DESE Rules Governing the Right to Read Act**

DESE Rules Governing Right to Read were presented for approval to release for public comment.

#### **V.4.b. DESE Rules Governing Educator Performance**

DESE Rules Governing Educator Performance were presented for approval to release for public comment.

#### **V.4.c. DESE Rules Governing Community Service and Diploma**

DESE Rules Governing Community Service and Diploma Requirements were presented for approval to release for public comment.

**V.4.d. DESE Rules Governing Public School Choice**

DESE Rules Governing Public School Choice were presented for approval to release for public comment.

**V.4.e. DESE Rules Governing Petitions for Student Transfers**

DESE Rules Governing Petitions for Student Transfers were presented for approval to release for public comment.

**V.4.g. DESE Rules Governing Public School Policies Relating to Overnight Travel and Use of Public School Lavatories**

DESE Rules Governing Public School Policies Relating to Overnight Travel and Use of Public School Lavatories were presented for release for public comment.

**V.4.h. DESE Rules Governing the Arkansas Student Protection Act**

DESE Rules Governing the Arkansas Student Protection Act were presented for approval to release for public comment.

A motion to approve Items V.4.a. – V.4.e.; and V.4.g. – V.4.h. was made by Mr. Ken Bragg, seconded by Ms. Lisa Hunter. The motion unanimously passed.

**New Business**

None

## Consent Agenda

1. Minutes
2. Report on Waivers to School Districts for Teachers Teaching Out of Area for Longer than Thirty (30) Days, Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-309
3. Review of Loan and Bond Applications
4. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-085 Amanda Snider
5. Consideration of the Recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board for Case 24-088 Michele Blakely
6. Bentonville School for Advanced Studies Charter Amendment Requests
7. Pulaski County Special School District Charter Rescission Letter for Driven Virtual Academy
8. Batesville High Charter School Amendment Request
9. LEARNS Office of Early Childhood (OEC) Update March 2024

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Ms. Leigh Keener, seconded by Mr. Ken Bragg. The motion unanimously passed.

## Public Comments

The State Board heard public comments from:

Mr. Julius Wright  
Ms. Charline Wright

## Adjournment

Dr. Sarah Moore, Chair, adjourned the State Board meeting at 11:01 AM.

*Minutes recorded by Angela Scaife.*

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**Jacob Oliva, Secretary**  
Arkansas Department of Education

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**Dr. Sarah Moore, Chair**  
State Board of Education