

MEETING SUMMARY
JOINT MEETING
OF THE
HOUSE AND SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEES ON EDUCATION

ADEQUACY

Wednesday, June 22, 2016
10:00 A.M.
Room 171, State Capitol
Little Rock, Arkansas

Representative Bruce Cozart, the Chair of the House Interim Committee on Education, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

MEMBERS OF THE SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE: Senator Jane English, Chair; Senator Uvalde Lindsey, Vice Chair; Senator Alan Clark; Senator Blake Johnson; and Senator Bobby J. Pierce.

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE: Representative Bruce Cozart, Chair; Representative Scott Baltz; Representative Nate Bell; Representative Gary Deffenbaugh; Representative Charlotte Vining Douglas; Representative Bill Gossage; Representative Michael John Gray; Representative Mark Lowery; Representative Mark McElroy; Representative Reginald Murdock; Representative James Ratliff; Representative Warwick Sabin; and Representative John Walker.

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ATTENDANCE: Senator Ronald Caldwell; Senator Joyce Elliott; Senator Scott Flippo; Senator Bart Hester; Senator Jon Woods; Representative Charles Blake; Representative Kenneth B. Ferguson; Representative Charlene Fite; Representative Vivian Flowers; Representative Joe Jett; Representative Fredrick J. Love; Representative David Meeks; Representative Stephen Meeks; Representative Micah S. Neal; Representative Betty Overbey; Representative Sue Scott; Representative Nelda Speaks; Representative Dan Sullivan; and Representative Marshall Wright.

Minutes:

Without objection, the minutes of May 31, 2016 were approved as written.

Exhibit:

Exhibit C – 05/31/16 Minutes

The Honorable Mark Lowery, State Representative, District 39, was recognized. Representative Lowery announced that the Legislative Task Force to Study the Realignment of Higher Education would not be meeting on June 29 or in July. He stated Task Force meetings would resume in mid- to late August and continue through October in order for members to finish up work and prepare recommendations to present to the legislature and the Governor by November.

Continued Discussion of Issues Related to Teacher Salaries

Presenter:

Mr. Richard Wilson, Assistant Director, Research Services, Bureau of Legislative Research, was recognized. Mr. Wilson said now that data from the National Education Association (NEA) had been incorporated into the

Teacher Salary Report, questions 1, 2, and 3 in Part A of the Report could be addressed; questions 4, 5, and 6 in Part B of the Report were addressed in the meeting on Tuesday, April 12, 2016. Utilizing tables and graphs, Mr. Wilson discussed Teacher Salary Comparison among Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) and Surrounding States; Changes in Average Teacher Salaries among SREB and Surrounding States; and how the cost of living in Arkansas, its surrounding states, and the SREB states affects the value of Arkansas teacher salaries. Mr. Wilson presented responses to follow-up questions pertinent to Part B to Senator Alan Clark, Senator Joyce Elliott, and Representative Charlotte Douglas.

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- source of NEA data,
- Arkansas's rank in average income among SREB states, and
- Arkansas's rank in gross state product (GSP) among SREB states.

Handouts:

2014-2015 School District Avg. Teacher Salary and Avg. Proficiency Percentage
Teacher Salary Report, Part A, BLR Research Report

Discussion of Issues Related to the Teacher Excellence and Support System (TESS)

Presenter:

Dr. Ginny Blankenship, Legislative Analyst, Policy Analysis and Research Section, Bureau of Legislative Research, was recognized. Dr. Blankenship stated this Bureau of Legislative Research (BLR) Report focuses on both teacher and school leader evaluations. She said the Report summarizes the evaluation systems currently required under state statute: the Teacher Evaluation and Support System (TESS) and the Leader Excellence and Development System (LEADS). She said the Report also presents relevant findings from the BLR's survey of all school superintendents, as well as from site visits with school principals and teacher surveys in a randomly-selected sample of 73 schools chosen to participate in this year's Adequacy Study. Dr. Blankenship walked members through the Report. She explained that TESS is a statewide system largely based on national teacher evaluation expert Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching*, in which teachers' effectiveness is classified in four domains. She went on to describe rules and requirements of performance evaluations, and provided a flow chart showing how the TESS evaluation process works. She said the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) developed a similar evaluation system for school administrators, known as LEADS. She said a state task force designed LEADS to align with six (6) of the Interstate School Leaders' Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards adopted by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA), which are used as the framework for leadership development in Arkansas. She noted that much of the same evaluation process applies to LEADS as applies to TESS. She referred members to the ADE's comprehensive handbook on the TESS and LEADS systems for additional information. Dr. Blankenship concluded with a discussion of the BLR Survey of Superintendents, Principals, and Teachers, responses to questions asked in the surveys, and input from findings of the SREB.

Contributors to the Discussion:

Mr. Johnny Key, Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education

Ms. Ivy Pfeffer, Assistant Commissioner for Human Resources, Educator Effectiveness and Licensure, Arkansas Department of Education

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- difference in sample sizes in the surveys,
- data collected to measure the successfulness of evaluation systems,
- starting evaluations with the top leadership in schools,
- validity of a superintendent survey response that the Charlotte Danielson instructional model was never intended as an evaluation tool,
- possibility of other states moving to a better evaluation tool,

- new federal statute, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), eliminating the requirement that states have a teacher/leader evaluation system,
- direction other countries are taking with regard to teacher evaluations,
- ADE taking an aggressive stance in redefining how teacher evaluations are done in order to have a more positive outcome for teachers,
- a peer-based system of evaluation,
- impact of federal requirements on the direction taken by teacher evaluations,
- TESS is not only an evaluation tool; it is also, among other things, an excellence and support system: components of TESS help to meet other requirements and commitments,
- Arkansas Leadership Quest, statewide initiative for principals,
- providing a remedy for the length of time required for evaluations,
- standards for determining the excellence of a teacher,
- value of evaluations such as TESS if teacher turnover continues,
- strengthening the support component of TESS,
- request for document, *2014-15 School District Avg. Teacher Salary and Avg. Proficiency Percentage, Sorted by Avg. Proficiency Percentage*, be sent to the full Committees and the ADE, and
- working with new paperwork requirements as well as with old school methods.

Handout:

Teacher and School Leader Evaluations, BLR Research Report

Discussion of Issues Related to School District Resource Allocation

Presenter:

Ms. Nell Smith, Administrator, Policy Analysis and Research Section, Bureau of Legislative Research, was recognized. Ms. Smith stated that in the meeting on May 31, 2016, a discussion started on the *Resource Allocation Report*. She said the *Report* looks at Matrix funding, the per student amount that school districts receive and the Matrix components of that amount, and compares it with how districts actually spend that money. She provided the Committees with an Executive Summary of the *Report*. She said while foundation funding is a major source of funding for school districts, it makes up only 57% of districts' total funding. She noted that the large *Report*, in its discussion of foundation funding, includes the context of other funding sources; however, this Summary is exclusive to foundation funding. Ms. Smith reviewed the Summary which included charts comparing the way districts of different sizes, poverty levels, and achievement levels use foundation funding to address the needs of their students.

Contributor to the Discussion:

Mr. Johnny Key, Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- analyzing the data of each school district to determine if money has been wisely spent,
- finding common themes to determine areas where money is needed,
- notable variance in a school district's adherence to the Matrix when taken over by the state, and
- dealing with academic distress the same way as with economies of scale, *i.e.*, getting more benefit when consolidated than when separate.

Handouts:

Adequacy Study Statutory Responsibilities
FY15-FY17 Matrix
Resource Allocation Executive Summary

Other Handouts:

2014-15 School District Avg. Teacher Salary and Avg. Proficiency Percentage, Sorted by Avg. Prof. Percentage
2014-15 School District Avg. Teacher Salary and Avg. Proficiency Percentage, Sorted by Avg. Teacher Salary

Next Scheduled Meetings:

Monday, July 18, 2016 at 1:30 p.m. in Room 171, State Capitol, Little Rock
Tuesday, July 19, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. at the offices of the Arkansas Association of Counties

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Approved: 07/18/16