

MINUTES
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
House Committee on Education
Meeting Jointly
Tuesday, February 6, 2024
9:00 AM
Room A, MAC
Little Rock, Arkansas

Committee members present: Senators Joshua Bryant, Breanne Davis, Jim Dotson, Kim Hammer, and Greg Leding; Representatives Brian S. Evans, Chair; Keith Brooks, Vice Chair; Rick Beck, Bruce Cozart, Hope Duke, Charlene Fite, Lanny Fite, Denise Garner, Wayne Long, Brit McKenzie, Ron McNair, DeAnn Vaught, Steven Walker, and Carlton Wing

Other members present: Senators Alan Clark, Ben Gilmore, Bart Hester, Fredrick Love, and Reginald Murdock; Representatives Howard Beaty, Les Eaves, Denise Ennett, Kenneth Ferguson, Steve Hollowell, Roger Lynch, Rick McClure, Tippi McCullough, Aaron Pilkington, Chad Puryear, David Ray, Jay Richardson, Johnny Rye, Jamie Scott, Joy Springer, and Jeff Wardlaw

Representative Evans called the meeting to order.

Overview of Recent Legislative Action Related to the State and Public School Employees Life and Health Insurance Program

Jill Thayer, Chief Legal Counsel, Bureau of Legislative Research (BLR), provided a background on recent changes to public school employee (PSE) funding.

Discussion of Health Insurance Funding for the 2024-2025 School Year [Exhibit C]

Grant Wallace, Director, Employee Benefits Division, Arkansas Department of Transformation and Shared Services and Patrick Klein, Vice President and Consulting Actuary, The Segal Group, gave a presentation on PSE health insurance financial funding projections.

Consideration of a Motion to Approve or Amend the 2022 Adequacy Study Recommendations for the 2024-2025 School Year [Exhibit D]

Representative Evans made a motion, pursuant to Arkansas code, § 10-3-2104(d)(3)(B), to amend the adequacy recommendations by submitting in writing to the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House documentation of the information presented to the Education Committees and a statement that the committees will continue to study the issue of revision to the matrix funding amounts for health insurance for all public school employees. The motion was seconded by Senator Bryant, and the motion passed.

2024 Adequacy Study: Overview of Arkansas Funding Model for K-12 Education [Exhibits E1-E2]

Julie Holt, Administrator, Policy Analysis and Research Section, BLR, gave an overview of funding K-12 education. The presentation included information on Arkansas's approach of foundation funding, categorical funding, and supplemental funding model. She also discussed information on a separate source of funding through the Literacy, Empowerment, Accountability, Readiness, Networking, and Safety (LEARNS) act for the 2024-2025 school years.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

DRAFT