

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

Monday, October 1, 2012
10:00 A.M.
Room 171, State Capitol
Little Rock, Arkansas

Representative Eddie Cheatham, 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 Jimmy Jeffress, Chair; Senator Mary Anne Salmon, Vice Chair; Senator Gilbert Baker; Senator Kim Hendren; Senator Gene Jeffress; and Senator Johnny Key.

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE: Representative Eddie Cheatham, Chair; Representative Les Carnine; Representative Ann Clemmer; Representative Robert Dale; Representative Jody Dickinson; Representative Jane English; Representative Debra Hobbs; Representative Karen Hopper; Representative Bobby Pierce; Representative Randy Stewart; and Representative Tim Summers.

NON-VOTING MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE: Representative John Catlett; Representative Homer Lenderman; and Representative Garry Smith.

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ATTENDANCE: Senator Jonathan Dismang; Senator Eddie Joe Williams; Representative John Burriss; Representative Billy Gaskill; Representative Clark Hall; Representative Sheilla Lampkin; Representative Buddy Lovell; Representative Mike Patterson; Representative Nate Steel; Representative Charolette Wagner; and Representative Jeff Wardlaw.

Morning Session

Update on the Arkansas Advanced Initiative for Math and Science (AAIMS)

Mr. Jim Argue, Jr., the Chair of the AAIMS Board of Directors, the Executive Director of the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas, and a former Arkansas State Senator, was recognized. Mr. Argue discussed Ms. Tommie Sue Anthony's background in public education, her tenure as the president of AAIMS, and her commitment to excellence and student achievement. He said AAIMS is a proven strategy for preparing high school students for success in college.

Ms. Tommie Sue Anthony, President, Arkansas Advanced Initiative for Math and Science, Inc., was recognized. Ms. Anthony thanked the Committees for their leadership and for including funding for AAIMS in the General Improvement Fund (GIF) legislation two years ago. She spoke of historical challenges faced in Arkansas, and said AAIMS is one possible solution to giving the state an educated workforce that will attract higher-paying jobs. She discussed the report, "Rising Above the Gathering Storm," issued in 1996 by the National Academy of Sciences, National Academy of Engineering, and Institute of Medicine (*collectively known as the National Academies*), which warned that the United States is falling behind other countries in math and science and recommended several actions that every state should follow. She said the National Math and Science Initiative

(NMSI), funded by Exxon Mobil, had been created in 2007 to address the issue of implementing some of the recommended actions. NMSI made grants available to states that would replicate a model recommended in the report, and Arkansas applied for and received a six-year grant of \$13.2 million. Ms. Anthony described details of the grant, including student awards and incentives, teacher incentives and support, and administrator awards. She said the goal was to select schools representative of schools in Arkansas as grant recipients. Ms. Anthony delivered a PowerPoint presentation, *Arkansas Advanced Initiative for Math and Science, AP Training and Incentive Program*, in which she described increases in qualifying scores and in numbers of students taking MSE (Math, Science, and English) AP (Advanced Placement) exams in AAIMS Group schools. She also presented statistics on the increase in qualifying scores produced by all students in AAIMS schools in the state, and on those produced by African-American and Hispanic students in AAIMS schools. In the final slides, she detailed seven (7) years of qualifying scores. She said one of the things AAIMS had been charged with doing was to conduct research to track students' educational progress. She provided the Committees with a summary, *Advanced Placement and First Year College Outcomes*, compiled by the Arkansas Research Center (ARC). She also provided them with a pamphlet, *Building our Economy from the Students Up*. Ms. Anthony said that AAIMS has been successful and will be making a proposal to the General Assembly during the 2013 Regular Session for help with funding. She next presented a video, "Arkansas AIMS – Making Advancements in Arkansas." In conclusion, Ms. Anthony discussed Change The Equation (CTEq), a nonprofit, nonpartisan initiative, its vital signs for Arkansas, and its recommendations that the state 1) continues to encourage students to take Advanced Placement, 2) invests wisely in programs that work, and 3) continues with quality professional development to help teachers.

Following the presentation, a discussion ensued. Topics included:

- ∴ providing a definition for "qualifying scores,"
- ∴ charter schools that are a part of AAIMS,
- ∴ funding for the continuation of AAIMS,
- ∴ deciding on which of two models to use for the program going forward,
- ∴ this year's budget for the program,
- ∴ the need for operating funds and for securing additional sources of funding, and
- ∴ Common Core State Standards Initiative and AAIMS.

Representative Cheatham thanked Mr. Argue and Ms. Anthony for the update.

Discussion of Interim Study Proposal (ISP) 2011-222 by Senator J. Jeffress, REQUESTING THAT THE INTERIM SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION STUDY HOW STUDENT PLACEMENT IN NONRESIDENTIAL MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT PROGRAMS IMPACT A STUDENT'S ABILITY TO REMAIN ENROLLED AT HIS OR HER LOCAL SCHOOL AND RECEIVE CLASS CREDIT.

The Honorable Jimmy Jeffress, State Senator, District 24, was recognized. A handout in the form of a letter from the Mitchell, Blackstock law firm to Mr. Adam Baker, CEO, Perspectives Behavioral Health Management, LLC, was distributed to members. Senator Jeffress described the issue of students placed in mental health outpatient clinics not getting credit for what they're doing in school, resulting in an increase in the dropout rate.

Mr. Adam Baker, CEO, Perspectives Behavioral Health Management, LLC, was recognized, and gave testimony. Mr. Baker made a comparison of the day treatment program at Perspectives, in which students' grades cannot be counted, to one which had existed at Harbor View/Mercy Hospital, in which children remained enrolled in school and had their grades counted. He said the question he would like to have answered is how Perspectives' clients, school-age children who have been admitted for day treatment, can remain enrolled in local school districts and receive class credit while they are receiving outpatient day treatment services.

Dr. Tom Kimbrell, Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education, and **Ms. Kerri Tucker**, COO, Perspectives Behavioral Health Management, LLC, were recognized, and participated in the discussion that followed. Topics included:

- excessive absences due to day treatment resulting in denial of course credit,
- certification of teachers,
- Perspectives' lack of, and the requirement of, a residential component,
- the need for a legislative fix,
- how the students are assessed,
- status of Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) rule changes for JDCs (Juvenile Detention Centers)
- average stay of students in day treatment,
- source of curriculum development, and
- relationships between school districts and day treatment centers.

Senator Jeffress made closing remarks and said he was pleased that there were plans to correct this issue going forward.

Representative Cheatham called for a lunch recess from 11:34 a.m. until 1:30 p.m.

Afternoon Session

Senator Jimmy Jeffress, the Chair of the Senate Interim Committee on Education, called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Discussion of Interim Study Proposal (ISP) 2011-200 by Senator Eddie Joe Williams, REQUESTING THAT THE ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ASSIGN TO THE INTERIM SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION A STUDY OF THE INTERSTATE COMPACT ON EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR MILITARY CHILDREN.

The Honorable Eddie Joe Williams, State Senator, District 28, was recognized. Senator Williams explained the concern that members of the military have about the education of military dependents. He noted that mobility within the military presents the challenge of keeping children up to speed with their education and of enabling them to graduate on time. He said the interstate compact would help remove barriers to a successful educational process. He stated that the concern that Arkansas has not adopted the compact had been expressed to Governor Beebe, and, following the study, the Governor came on board. Senator Williams said meetings have taken place with all agencies involved and an agreement has been reached that the interstate compact is a good policy.

Colonel Brian S. Robinson, Commander, 19th Airlift Wing, Little Rock Air Force Base, was recognized. Colonel Robinson stated that, factoring in the guard and reserve components, approximately 11,000 school-age dependents would be affected by this compact. He said the number one question for mobile military personnel is the quality of education in a new location. He said education is an investment in future leadership talent, and is critically important for military personnel in terms of quality of life issues, sacrifices that the families make, and setting children on the right path to be successful members of society.

Major General William D. Wofford, The Adjutant General, Arkansas National Guard, was recognized. Major General Wofford made comments on the impact this initiative has on the state and on the children of the military. He said that in 2005, when the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) looked at facilities around the country that needed to be closed or consolidated, one of the things considered was quality of life,

which includes education for military dependents. He said the quality-of-life issue affects not only active components that move on a frequent basis, but also affects children of members of the Arkansas National Guard. Major General Wofford related that, since 9/11, over 13,000 Arkansas Army and Air National Guardsmen have been mobilized and deployed around the world. He related that while visiting with a commander and discussing things being done by Governor Beebe's Arkansas Yellow Ribbon Task Force and within the Department of Defense (DOD) to help returning veterans, the commander asked, "What are you doing for our children?" The commander explained that it's tough enough being a child growing up in this day and age, but a child's stress is exacerbated by concerns and worries about a deployed parent. Major General Wofford commented that it got us thinking about what can be done to support the children of deployed guardsmen. Major General Wofford said that throughout the next two to three years, in the Army alone, 80,000 soldiers are scheduled to be released from active duty. He said the Arkansas National Guard wants to fill vacancies by recruiting some of those soldiers. He said those soldiers can be enticed to make the move to Arkansas if they are assured of a quality education for their children. Major General Wofford concluded that from an Arkansas National Guard perspective, the interstate compact is good for Arkansas and for the Arkansas National Guard.

Mr. Larry Biernacke, President, Little Rock Air Force Base Community Council, was recognized. Mr. Biernacke, on behalf of the 200 members of the Council, expressed his thanks to the Committees for putting the ISP together. He also expressed his appreciation for the Committees' foresight and understanding of what's in the best interest of the State of Arkansas, and for protecting the integrity of the Air Force Base.

Mr. Dale Vande Hey, State Liaison, Department of Defense, South Central Region, was recognized. Mr. Vande Hey said that about six years ago, the DOD realized it was very important to work key quality-of-life issues with Governors and state legislators. He stated that right now forty-three (43) states have signed up with the compact. He commented that, after enactment by a state, the compact is orchestrated by an Interstate Compact Commission out of Lexington, Kentucky. Each state has a Commissioner who goes to a yearly meeting with the 43 states working together to make the compact a reality. There is also an Executive Director and a General Counsel, but the compact is really run by the states' Commissioners. Mr. Vande Hey noted the key point is that this is an agreement between states. He said that until Arkansas enacts the compact, it will not be recognized by the other states.

Senator Jeffress commented that this is an example of a good agreement between states and that he was pleased that Arkansas is poised to enter into the compact.

Senator Williams made closing remarks and thanked those involved for resolving all issues within this proposed legislation.

Senator Jeffress thanked Senator Williams, and the other presenters.

Discussion of Proposed Changes to the Rules Concerning Academic Facilities

Mr. Tony Wood, Deputy Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education, was recognized. Mr. Wood explained that he and Dr. Charles Stein were present to share general information with regard to a draft of the *Commission for Arkansas Public School Academic Facilities and Transportation Rules Governing the Academic Facilities Partnership Program*. He said the Commission's support of the draft is sought so it can move forward in the Administrative Rules and Regulations Subcommittee of the Arkansas Legislative Council in December. He stated that the primary change in the rule is that the prioritization of partnership projects will change under what is being presented from "warm, safe, and dry" to "space" projects. Mr. Wood discussed the timeframe for releasing lists of projects, carryforward money, and other funding sources.

Dr. Charles Stein, Director, Division of Public School Academic Facilities and Transportation, was recognized. Dr. Stein walked the Committees through a PowerPoint presentation, *Partnership Program Draft Rules, Education Service Cooperatives*.

A discussion ensued following the presentation. Topics included:

- initial impetus for “safe, warm, and dry,” and lack of vision for a “sunset” to the program,
- requirement that schools return funds not used for approved projects,
- suitability, building replacement, and growth related to space needs,
- “property poor” designation of school districts,
- clarification of “totals” of state money for committed projects, and
- public comment period for draft.

Mr. Shane Broadway, Interim Director, Arkansas Department of Higher Education, was recognized. Mr. Broadway, who, as a State Senator, chaired the Public Schools Facilities Task Force, discussed the original intents of “safe, warm, and dry” and concomitant funding issues.

Senator Jeffress commented on the importance of balancing the overall needs of the state.

Senator Jeffress announced that the next joint meeting of the Senate Interim Committee on Education and the House Interim Committee on Education would be at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, October 8, 2012, in Room 171 of the State Capitol in Little Rock.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:29 p.m.

Approved: 12/10/12