

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

Monday, September 14, 2015
1:30 P.M.
Committee Room A, MAC Building
Little Rock, Arkansas

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

MEMBERS OF THE SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE: Senator Jane English, Chair; Senator Uvalde Lindsey, Vice Chair; Senator Eddie Cheatham; Senator Alan Clark; Senator Bobby Pierce; and Senator Eddie Joe Williams.

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE: Representative Bruce Cozart, Chair; Representative Sheilla Lampkin, Vice Chair; Representative Charles L. Armstrong; Representative Scott Baltz; Representative Charlotte Vining Douglas; Representative Jon Eubanks; Representative Bill Gossage; Representative Michael John Gray; Representative Grant Hodges; Representative Greg Leding; Representative Mark Lowery; Representative James Ratliff; Representative Warwick Sabin; and Representative John Walker.

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ATTENDANCE: Senator Joyce Elliott; Senator Gary Stubblefield; Representative R. Trevor Drown; Representative David Fielding; Representative Vivian Flowers; Representative Monte Hodges; Representative Betty Overbey; Representative Sue Scott; Representative Nelda Speaks; Representative James Sturch; Representative DeAnn Vaught; and Representative Marshall Wright.

Minutes:

Without objection, the minutes of August 10, 2015, August 11, 2015, August 24, 2015, August 25, 2015 (A.M.), and August 25, 2015 (P.M.), were approved as written.

Exhibits:

Exhibit C1 – 08/10/2015 Minutes
Exhibit C2 – 08/11/2015 Minutes
Exhibit C3 – 08/24/2015 Minutes
Exhibit C4 – 08/25/2015, 09:00 a.m. Minutes
Exhibit C5 – 08/25/2015, 01:00 p.m. Minutes

Consideration of Motion: “To Authorize Committee Co-Chairs to Approve Special Expenses Incurred by the Committee”

The Honorable Uvalde Lindsey, State Senator, District 4, was recognized, and made a motion for the Committees to authorize the Co-Chairs to approve special expenses incurred by the Committees. The motion was seconded by **The Honorable Sheilla Lampkin**, State Representative, District 9.

Pursuant to the motion by Senator Lindsey, and without objection, the motion was carried.

Exhibit:

Exhibit E – Motion to Authorize Special Expenses

Update on the University of Arkansas Systems' *eVersity*

Presenters:

Dr. Donald R. Bobbitt, President, University of Arkansas System, was recognized. Dr. Bobbitt updated actions taken to organize and implement the *eVersity* model. He reminded Committee members that the rationale behind this endeavor was a challenge, first from Governor Mike Beebe, then from Governor Asa Hutchinson, for higher education to produce more credentialed Arkansans. He stated those with a college degree, or some college credits, engage in less risky behavior, are healthier, and are less of a burden on society. He also mentioned the economic value that accrues to someone with a college degree or a credential. Dr. Bobbitt discussed the *Drive to 55* challenge, getting 55 percent of Tennesseans equipped with a college degree or certificate by the year 2025, made by Governor Bill Haslam of Tennessee to that state. Dr. Bobbitt referenced Governor Hutchinson's address to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) Board, in which the Governor saw a better educated workforce as critical to the economic future of the state. Dr. Bobbitt said the Governor's goals and initiatives represent the core values of *eVersity*. Dr. Bobbitt commented that the best approach for students ranging in age from the late teens to the early twenties, who have the financial and intellectual resources, is to attend a residential college, both for intellectual and social maturation. However, he suggested, life has provided a lot of social maturation for those ranging in age from 36-39, so it is time for them to get on with education. He discussed this cohort of non-traditional students with some college but no college credential, and the necessity to rethink every aspect of higher education in planning to reach them. Dr. Bobbitt presented an overview of design considerations for the *eVersity* model.

Dr. Michael Moore, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, University of Arkansas System, was recognized. Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Dr. Moore, stated that building a university from the ground up has given the University of Arkansas System an opportunity to rethink every aspect of the educational process including admissions, communications, providing resources, and delivering education. He stressed the importance of removing barriers and making education more accessible. He showed a YouTube video, *How to eVersity*, describing the *eVersity* experience. He reviewed points made in the video about applications, transcripts, educational materials, and transition of college credits. He discussed measuring skill sets that graduates need to be successful and that make credentials applicable to employers. Dr. Moore said knowledge for every class is being mapped, with the assistance of the faculty member, to eight (8) career competencies: Problem Solving, Effective Communication, Ethical Decision Making, Teamwork, Leadership, Appreciation of Diversity, Quantitative Literacy, and Creativity. He stated credentials will show what students have learned, as well as what they have to offer. He followed with a brief discussion of remedial education and the benefit of using co-remediation for the adult population *eVersity* serves. Dr. Moore said he is pleased with the results in *eVersity*'s first week:

- 81 completed applications received
 - average age of applicants is 37
 - 75% of applicants are between the ages of 25 and 45
 - 62% of applicants are female
 - 1/3 of applicants are minority
- 94 requests received from around the state for additional information

Dr. Moore concluded with a discussion of the personalized admissions process.

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- admission requirements for *eVersity*,
- tying remediation to credit-bearing courses,
- relationship of *eVersity* to the University of Arkansas,
- breakdown of applicants included in the 1/3 minority,

- cost per credit hour and other costs,
- utilizing resources that exist in the University of Arkansas System to avoid duplicitous services,
- marketing *eVersity* in other states,
- clarification of a degree in “university studies,”
- students paying on a loan and effect on enrollment,
- “remediation” vs. “acceleration,”
- tuition and those over the age of 60,
- online vs. traditional brick and mortar universities,
- availability of live email/phone contact for *eVersity* students,
- useful computer options and WiFi connections,
- regulations on transfer of credits from outside the state,
- credit for prior learning (CPL),
- certificate of proficiency and technical certificate,
- pathways to certificates and degrees,
- employer payments or reimbursements, and
- potential effect of *eVersity* on improving Arkansas’s ranking in the college-going rate.

Links to Information on the University of Arkansas System’s *eVersity* Program:

eVersity Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=3&v=v9p7J0jb4mQ>

eVersity Website: <http://eversity.uasys.edu/>

Discussion of Interim Study Proposal 2015-005 by Representative James Sturch, REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DIRECT THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION TO CONDUCT A STUDY OF THE NEED FOR AND BENEFIT OF HAVING A SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY SPECIALIST EMPLOYED IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

Presenters:

The Honorable James Sturch, State Representative, District 63, was recognized. Representative Sturch introduced a discussion about school psychology specialists (SPSs) in Arkansas. He stated a problem exists with more and more requirements for school counselors and special education teachers to identify “at risk” students and students with disabilities, and for them to fulfill state and federal requirements for testing. He said school psychology specialists may provide a solution. Representative Sturch stated that school psychologists have not been well represented in Arkansas. While certain ratios are required for speech pathologists, school counselors, and school nurses, he said there is no mandated ratio for school psychologists, who are the main ones doing learning disability testing, “at risk” behavior testing, evaluations, and so forth. He noted that data from the Bureau of Legislative Research (BLR) so far indicates that across Arkansas the ratio of school psychologists to students varies from 1:400 to 1:7,000; and that this lack of consistency presents a potential problem. He continued by saying there are only two programs in the state that train school psychologists, one at Arkansas State University (ASU) and one at the University of Central Arkansas (UCA). He emphasized that with a growing need for school psychologists, a better job of training needs to be done. Representative Sturch turned the floor over to experts in the field to discuss the work of school psychologists.

Dr. Joan Simon, Associate Professor and Faculty Member, School Psychology Program, University of Central Arkansas; Past President, Arkansas School Psychology Association (ASPA); and Current Board Member, ASPA, and **Ms. Kyla Warnick**, School Psychology Specialist, Russellville School District, and President, ASPA, were recognized. Dr. Simon, utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, presented an overview of school psychology specialists, including qualifications, current roles, future roles, and reasons why school districts have an urgent need for SPSs.

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- ◆ receiving support or pushback from school district administrators,
- ◆ education program to demonstrate the need for SPSs to administrators,
- ◆ existence of any regression analysis showing relative value of school psychologists for educating “at risk” children,
- ◆ universal screenings and addressing needs of students identified “at risk,”
- ◆ consideration for a part of the study to look at the workforce for diversity and at recruitment in an affirmative way, and
- ◆ school psychology specialists in cooperatives.

Exhibit:

Exhibit G – Interim Study Proposal 2015-005

PowerPoint Presentation:

Arkansas School Psychology Association (ASPA), School Psychology Specialists: Working to make a difference for Arkansas children!

Handouts:

Arkansas School Psychology Association (ASPA), School Psychology Specialists: Working to make a difference for Arkansas children!

Arkansas State University (ASU), College of Education & Behavioral Science, Brochure

National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), Brochure

National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), White Paper

University of Central Arkansas (UCA), School Psychology Program, Brochure

Update on the Process to be Used by the Arkansas Department of Education to Review the Standards for Mathematics and English/Language Arts

Presenters:

Mr. Johnny Key, Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education, was recognized. Commissioner Key introduced a discussion of the process for the review and revision of the current standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics. He noted the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) is making sure the process is open and transparent and has multiple feedback avenues, not just for educators, but for parents and community members. He said the discussion will be about the timeline, types of professionals, and levels of expertise of participants in this process, and the multiple feedback avenues available through social media and on a dedicated page in the ADE website, <http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/learning-services/curriculum-and-instruction/state-standards-review-for-mathematics-and-english-language-arts>

Dr. Deborah Jones, Assistant Commissioner, Division of Learning Services, Arkansas Department of Education, and **Ms. Stacy Smith**, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Division of Learning Services, Arkansas Department of Education, were recognized. Dr. Jones and Ms. Smith detailed the review process and walked members through the timeline.

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- ≈ process following review completion,
- ≈ choosing individual teachers in five (5) regions of the state,
- ≈ setting qualifications for teachers in this review process,
- ≈ expectations for college and career-ready standards,
- ≈ verifying that Arkansas standards are college and career-ready,
- ≈ thinking in an aspirational manner in this effort,
- ≈ determining that the teachers selected have broad-based acceptance by fellow educators,
- ≈ method of getting groups together for talks,

- ≈ involvement of preschool and higher education feedback in the process, and
- ≈ criteria used for appointing experts.

Handout:

Arkansas Standards Review, Revision Timeline

Other Handouts:

A New Vision for Arkansas Education, ForwARd Arkansas

Opportunities and Options: Making Career Preparation Work for Students, Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)

Next Scheduled Meeting:

Tuesday, September 15, 2015, at 9:00 a.m. in Committee Room A, MAC Building, Little Rock

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Approved: 10/05/2015