

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

ADEQUACY

Tuesday, December 15, 2015

9:00 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 9:00 a.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; and Senator Blake Johnson.

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 Gary Deffenbaugh; Representative Charlotte Vining Douglas; Representative Jon S. Eubanks; Representative Bill Gossage; Representative Michael John Gray; Representative Greg Leding; Representative Mark Lowery; Representative Mark McElroy; Representative James Ratliff; and Representative John W. Walker.

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ATTENDANCE: Representative Brandt Smith; and Representative Richard Womack.

Discussion of Issues Related to Student Transportation

Presenter:

Mr. Richard Wilson, Assistant Director, Research Services, Bureau of Legislative Research, was recognized. Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, *K-12 Funding Analysis*, Mr. Wilson discussed the history of public school transportation funding in Arkansas, the Odden and Picus 2006 recommendation for transportation in *The Arkansas Recalibration Report*, Act 624 of 2007 which provided that the Bureau of Legislative Research (BLR) be given direct read and report only access to the Arkansas Public School Computer Network (APSCN), transportation variables, and use of various statistical methodologies to find a model from which transportation costs could be determined. He discussed the modeling results by using line graphs, one based on district ADM and the other on bus route miles. He reviewed the language in Act 1248 of 2015 concerning the distribution of supplemental transportation funding and the impact on eligible school districts. Mr. Wilson stated he wanted to review the transportation fund balance of the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) to facilitate deliberations in the next Fiscal Session.

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- timeline for distribution of \$3 million supplemental transportation fund balance,
- transportation as a line item in the Matrix or as a categorical program,
- quality data and quality results; but, inefficient, inadequate, and unfair transportation funding distribution,
- court-required transportation in Pulaski County,
- planning for efficient transportation in all districts,
- effect of Little Rock and North Little Rock school districts having been declared unitary on transportation funding,

- consideration of adequacy and economies of scale in transportation funding,
- sources from which school districts fund transportation,
- taking care of “have-not” school districts,
- request for three (3) plans for transportation funding for the Committees to review,
- statutory requirements for student ridership,
- transportation policy in West Memphis School District, and
- utilizing public bus transportation system in combination with public school transportation system.

PowerPoint Presentation:

K-12 Funding Analysis

Exhibits:

Exhibit C1 – Act 1248 of 2015

Exhibit C2 – 2015-2016 Revenue Stabilization Law Allocations

Handouts:

Adequacy Study Statutory Responsibilities

K-12 Funding Analysis

Discussion of Issues Related to Curriculum Frameworks

Presenter:

Dr. Ginny Blankenship, Legislative Analyst, Policy Analysis and Research Section, Bureau of Legislative Research, was recognized. Dr. Blankenship presented an overview of the report, *Curriculum Frameworks*, particularly focusing on new legislative and policy developments since the last Adequacy Report. Dr. Blankenship said the Arkansas statute on curriculum frameworks has served as the foundation of the state school accountability system for many years, and these academic content standards describe what students must know and be able to do in each academic subject area at each grade level as specified by the State Board of Education. She said, in general, under the statute, all public schools in Arkansas must offer specific courses in order to maintain their accreditation, whether or not any student chooses to enroll in those courses; and, there are specific courses that all public school students must take in order to graduate. Dr. Blankenship discussed Curriculum Frameworks, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), School Accreditation Standards, Computer Science, Advanced Placement (AP) Classes, Graduation Requirements, and other recent legislation.

Contributors to the Discussion:

Mr. Thomas Coy, Public School Program Coordinator, Arkansas Department of Education

Dr. Debbie Jones, Assistant Commissioner of Learning Services, Arkansas Department of Education

Ms. Michele Snyder, Science Supervisor, Learning Services, Arkansas Department of Education

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- ◆ disconnect between classroom teachers and administrators regarding the effectiveness of CCSS,
- ◆ adopting standards before final standards are written and before seeing the test,
- ◆ comments and input of parents,
- ◆ writing more specific career courses and speaking to the need of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) preparation,
- ◆ requirements for the Academic Challenge Scholarship,
- ◆ encouraging school districts to employ different strategies regarding standards,
- ◆ accountability for the selection of principals, and
- ◆ system for delivering education in Arkansas.

Handout:

Curriculum Frameworks, Research Report

Next Scheduled Meetings:

Monday, January 11, 2016, at 1:30 p.m. in Committee Room A, MAC Building, Little Rock

Tuesday, January 12, 2016, at 9:00 a.m. in Room 171, State Capitol, Little Rock

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:06 a.m.

Approved: 01/11/2016