

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

Monday, February 8, 2016
1:30 P.M.
Committee Room A, MAC Building
Little Rock, Arkansas

Representative Bruce Cozart, the Chair of the House 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 J. 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 Gary Deffenbaugh; Representative Charlotte Vining Douglas; Representative Jon Eubanks; Representative Jeremy Gillam; Representative Bill Gossage; Representative Michael John Gray; Representative Greg Leding; Representative Mark Lowery; Representative Mark McElroy; Representative Reginald Murdock; Representative James Ratliff; Representative Warwick Sabin; and Representative John W. Walker.

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ATTENDANCE: Senator Cecile Bledsoe; Senator Joyce Elliott; Senator Scott Flippo; Senator Stephanie Flowers; Representative Bob Ballinger; Representative Charles Blake; Representative David Fielding; Representative Michelle Gray; Representative Kim Hammer; Representative Fredrick J. Love; Representative David Meeks; Representative Betty Overbey; Representative Mathew Pitsch; Representative Sue Scott; Representative James Sorvillo; and Representative Brent Talley.

Minutes:

Without objection, the minutes of January 11, 2016, and January 12, 2016, were approved as written.

Exhibits:

Exhibit C1 – 01/11/16 Minutes

Exhibit C2 – 01/12/16 Minutes

Reports from Members Who Attended Recent Meetings Concerning Public or Higher Education

The Honorable Mark Lowery, State Representative, District 39, was recognized. Representative Lowery reported that Dr. Brett Powell, Director, Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE), made an excellent presentation at the January meeting of the Legislative Task Force to Study the Realignment of Higher Education. He announced that Dr. Donald R. Bobbitt, President, University of Arkansas (UofA) System, and Dr. Charles Welch, President, Arkansas State University (ASU) System will discuss incentives that could be offered to independent universities and colleges to become part of their Systems at the February 24 meeting.

The Honorable Jane English, State Senator, District 34, and Chair, Senate Interim Committee on Education, announced there would be a deviation from the agenda, and the Committees would next take up Item F.

Discussion of the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith (UAFS)'s Adopt-a-Professor Program

Ms. Cindy Hogue, Director, Office of Educational Options, Arkansas Department of Education, was recognized. Ms. Hogue briefly discussed conceptual and operational characteristics of Arkansas Education Renewal Zones (ERZs), and introduced a presentation of the Adopt-a-Professor Program.

Presenter:

Ms. Jennifer Jennings Davis, Director, Western Arkansas Education Renewal Zone, University of Arkansas-Fort Smith, was recognized. Ms. Jennings Davis stated the Western Arkansas ERZ at UAFS works with eleven (11) districts and thirty-five (35) schools within those districts. She stated the main purpose of the Adopt-a-Professor Program is to strengthen learning outcomes for K-12 students. She said the program pairs volunteer K-12 teachers with volunteer professors from UAFS for collaboration and the planning of three (3) learning engagements over the course of a semester. She provided statistics showing program growth over the two semesters the program has been in place, including data relating to people, time, and money. She then discussed the good publicity the program has received. Ms. Jennings Davis next reviewed the *Fall 2015 Summary of Program Participant Survey Results*, containing data from a survey in which fifty-five (55) people participated, and which had an overall response rate of 81.8%. She discussed the methodology and highlights of the survey, and went on to share quotes and comments concerning the survey.

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- effect of partnership between K-12 teachers and faculty/staff on rigor of the teacher in the classroom,
- use of the program as a recruiting tool,
- concern for diversity of teachers and students in the program, and
- concern for diversity in ERZ areas as shown on map.

PowerPoint Presentation:

Adopt-a-Professor Program, Program History, Western Arkansas ERZ at UAFS

Adopt-a-Professor Program, Fall 2015 Summary of Program Participant Survey Results, Western Arkansas ERZ at UAFS

Education Renewal Zones, Overview, ADE

Handouts:

Adopt-a-Professor Program, Program History, Western Arkansas ERZ at UAFS

Adopt-a-Professor Program, Fall 2015 Summary of Program Participant Survey Results, Western Arkansas ERZ at UAFS

Education Renewal Zones, Overview, ADE

Senator English announced the Committees would return to Item E on the agenda.

Update on Interim Study Proposal 2015-003 by Representative Charles Armstrong, REQUESTING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION TO CONDUCT A STUDY OF THE BEST PRACTICES FROM PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS IN THE STATE AND IN THE NATION THAT MAY BE IMPLEMENTED IN ARKANSAS SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO IMPROVE THE EFFICIENCY OF THE STATE'S SYSTEM OF PUBLIC EDUCATION AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS.

Presenter:

Dr. Gary W. Ritter, Faculty Director, Office for Education Policy, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, was recognized. Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Dr. Ritter discussed the draft of a Best Practices study that considers best practices of traditional public schools that improve student achievement growth. The current study is an expansion of the Arkansas Charter School Evaluation and Best Practices study completed for a 2013 ISP. Following a discussion about "imperfect" methodology in the study of Best Practices, Dr. Ritter stated that, in an attempt to put more scientific rigor to the study, the study looked at school-level achievement growth for all the

schools across the state; it looked at growth, not just levels; interviews were conducted at high-achieving growth schools; and literature was consulted to build a survey to send to all school leaders across the state. Dr. Ritter said the research questions centered on four areas: 1) school leadership, 2) school culture, 3) instructional improvement, and 4) college and career readiness. He said the survey had a low response rate; however, responses were from schools across the achievement spectrum and allowed for patterns to be seen. Dr. Ritter discussed the conclusions that could be drawn from the results of the current study.

Contributor to the Discussion:

Dr. Sarah C. McKenzie, Executive Director, Office for Education Policy, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- concern that goal of the report has not been achieved,
- relationship between student discipline and student learning,
- dealing with the quality of facilities in best practices,
- comparison of charter schools doing better than non-charter schools not the focus of the report,
- clarifying the model of co-leaders, shared leadership, and collaborative decision-making,
- quality of and access to professional development in low-growth schools compared to that of high-growth schools,
- value of a highly-qualified teacher in the classroom,
- delivery systems to share innovation in best practices in other states,
- quality of leadership and collaborating on what matters,
- teachers taking their own value systems into the classroom,
- dealing with discipline from different cultural standards,
- responsibility for and consequences of a teacher's understanding of cultural differences,
- data from the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) on racial makeup of the teaching force might enlighten understanding of issues related to discipline, and
- blaming school districts for problems created by the state.

Senator English recommended that a copy of the December, 2014 Office for Education Policy report be sent to Committee members to help in understanding the issue.

PowerPoint Presentation:

ISP 2015-002: Best Practices from Arkansas Schools (*Preliminary Findings*)

Exhibit:

Exhibit E – ISP 2015-003

Handouts:

ISP 2015-002: Best Practices from Arkansas Schools (*Preliminary Findings*)

ISP 2015-002: Best Practices from Traditional Public Schools and Public Charter Schools

Discussion of Proposed Revisions to the Arkansas Department of Education's National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Rules

Senator English announced there would be a change in the agenda, and Item F would not be presented as scheduled. She stated Mr. Johnny Key would make comments about the content of the presentation.

Mr. Johnny Key, Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education, was recognized. Commissioner Key stated that he had been in conversation with Governor Hutchinson about the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (National Board) Rules, and the Governor has requested that the ADE pull those Rules at this time. He said the Rules are in the public comment phase and have not reached the point of going to the Administrative Rules and Regulations Subcommittee of the Arkansas Legislative Council (ALC). He said additional changes are

expected from the National Board. He noted that this item will be taken up at a later meeting, and that information contained in members' packets and handouts will assist in understanding the issues.

Relevant Action:

The Honorable Uvalde Lindsey, State Senator, District 4, and Senate Vice Chair of the House and Senate Interim Committees on Education, was recognized. Senator Lindsey said that National Board certification is a good program that needs to be thoroughly vetted. He made a motion to refer this issue to the Adequacy Subcommittee; and requested that the ADE pull together those stakeholders that could be helpful in developing an open discussion of the pros and cons of the program itself and what is necessary to sustain that program going forward in terms of additional appropriations. He requested that this be done in a timely fashion, possibly before the Fiscal Session in April 2016. The motion was seconded by Senator Bobby J. Pierce.

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

Commissioner Key said input from Committee members would be welcome.

Senator English stated that names of members of the Adequacy Subcommittee would be announced.

PowerPoint Presentation:

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

Exhibits:

Exhibit G1 – Proposed Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Eligibility and Financial Incentives for National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Candidacy and Certification Program, Summary
Exhibit G2 – Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Eligibility and Financial Incentives for National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Candidacy and Certification Program

Handouts:

Arkansas Teachers for National Board Certification, Letter
ASTA SBE TFA NBTC Testimony Final
National Board Teachers
NBCT in Other States

Discussion of Proposed Arkansas Department of Education Rule, *Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Schools of Innovation*

Presenter:

Mr. Cory Biggs, Attorney, Arkansas Department of Education, was recognized. Mr. Biggs stated that these revised rules were approved by the State Board of Education for public comment on October 8, 2015. He said some comment was received; but no substantive changes were made. He said they have been approved by the Governor's Office; and were granted final approval by the State Board of Education on December 10, 2015. He said they were then submitted to the Rules and Regulations Subcommittee of the ALC who referred them to the House and Senate Interim Committees on Education. He noted just one change was made, which was in response to Act 1136 of 2015, and which added one line--that an approved school of innovation shall comply with state law and rule regarding the education of gifted and talented students.

Issue Included in the Discussion:

- explanation of the addition of the one line regarding gifted and talented students.

Relevant Action:

The Honorable Bobby J. Pierce, State Senator, District 27, was recognized, and made a motion to review and approve the Rule. The motion was seconded by Representative Mark D. McElroy.

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

Exhibit:

Exhibit H - Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Schools of Innovation

Next Scheduled Meeting:

Tuesday, February 9, 2016, at 9:00 a.m. in Committee Room A, MAC Building, Little Rock

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Approved: 03/14/16