

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

Monday, August 22, 2016
1:30 P.M.
Room 171, State Capitol
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 Blake Johnson; and Senator Eddie Joe Williams.

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE: Representative Bruce Cozart, Chair; Representative Charles L. Armstrong; Representative Scott Baltz; Representative Nate Bell; Representative Gary Deffenbaugh; Representative Charlotte Vining Douglas; Representative Jon Eubanks; Representative Jeremy Gillam; Representative Bill Gossage; Representative Michael John Gray; Representative Grant Hodges; Representative Greg Leding; Representative Mark Lowery; Representative Mark McElroy; Representative Reginald Murdock; Representative James Ratliff; and Representative John W. Walker.

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ATTENDANCE: Senator Joyce Elliott; Representative Charles Blake; Representative David L. Branscum; Representative Jim Dotson; Representative Justin Gonzales; Representative Mary P. "Prissy" Hickerson; Representative Douglas House; Representative Joe Jett; Representative Fredrick J. Love; Representative James Sturch; and Representative Dwight Tosh.

The Honorable Bruce Cozart, State Representative, District 24, and Chair of the House Interim Committee on Education, was recognized. Representative Cozart stated this would be the first meeting without the presence of Representative Sheilla Lampkin, Vice Chair, House Interim Committee on Education. He requested members, and others present, to take a moment of silence to remember Representative Lampkin, her husband, and her family.

Minutes:

Without objection, the minutes of July 18, 2016 and July 19, 2016, were approved as written.

Exhibits:

Exhibit C1 – 07/18/16 Minutes
Exhibit C2 – 07/19/16 Minutes

Remarks by the Chairs

Representative Cozart said the first Adequacy work session, held that morning, was a success. He stated members met as a group for about thirty minutes before breaking out into smaller groups for discussion. He announced the next work session would be held on September 12, 2016, at 9:00 a.m. in Room 138 of the State Capitol. He noted the Education Caucus would not meet again until next year.

Update on the Activities of Economics Arkansas

Presenter:

Ms. Sue Owens, Executive Director, Economics Arkansas, was recognized. Ms. Owens explained Economics Arkansas is a private, non-profit, educational organization started in 1962 by Dr. Arch Ford, the former commissioner of the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE). She said Dr. Bessie B. Moore was the first executive director. Ms. Owens said the mission of Economics Arkansas is to increase the economic and financial literacy of Arkansas students in grades pre-K through 12 by providing training and programs for Arkansas teachers so they can integrate real-life concepts into classrooms and across the curriculum. She said Ms. Marsha Masters, Associate Director, leads the programs and training. Ms. Owens discussed the organizational structure of Economics Arkansas. She said its budget is close to \$1 million annually, and that it has a diverse revenue stream, including a \$400,000 state appropriation through the ADE. She stated it serves as a resource to the ADE, is certified to provide professional development training for teachers, provides in-service training to school districts, and works with educational cooperatives.

Presenter:

Ms. Marsha Masters, Associate Director, Economics Arkansas, was recognized, and provided highlights of training programs. She said Economics Arkansas has worked directly with teachers in almost every county of the state. Her discussion included *Connecting Educators to Industry* events, REAL (Relevant, Engaging, Activity-based Learning) annual conferences, the Stock Market Game™ program, and *Choices* workshops.

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- ability of a teacher to participate in training even if the school district is not a formal partner with Economics Arkansas,
- providing objective evidence that Economics Arkansas makes a difference in the education of children,
- how programs of Economics Arkansas fit in with concerns about Adequacy, and
- importance of going beyond Adequacy.

Handouts:

Economics Arkansas, 2015 Annual Report
Economics Arkansas, Connecting Educators to Industry
Economics Arkansas, Features of Stock Market Game™
Economics Arkansas, Program Highlights and Upcoming Opportunities
Economics Arkansas, Teacher Trainings

Representative Cozart announced the addition of an item to the agenda.

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

The Honorable Bill Gossage, State Representative, District 82, was recognized. Representative Gossage discussed Professional Learning Communities (PLC), a concept he and several other legislators explored at a PLC Conference held last February. He said there is a need for a unified legislative vision of what needs to be accomplished in school districts, because legislative decisions affect local communities. He said he returned from the conference with a consideration for the Committees and other legislators to review. Representative Gossage announced that Dr. Robert Eaker, professor emeritus at Middle Tennessee State University, and an expert on issues related to PLC, would make a presentation on educational excellence to the Committees at the Monday, September 12, 2016, meeting. Representative Gossage elaborated on the PLC concept, explaining that its idea is to establish a professional, collaborative culture within schools in which instructional staff has the time to focus on student learning. He said their work consists of answering four questions:

*What do we want students to know and be able to do?
How are we going to know whether they know it or not?
What are we going to do about it if they don't learn it?
What are we going to do if they do know it?*

He stated the point is to not stop when proficiency is reached, but to be prepared to take students to higher learning. He requested members to invite their colleagues to hear Dr. Eaker speak at the meeting in September.

The Honorable Reginald Murdock, State Representative, District 48, was recognized, and agreed with Representative Gossage that the PLC concept is worthy of consideration. Mr. Murdock said the idea of a culture of collaboration, whereby all are brought to the table to have input for a positive output, is a good one. He said ensuring that communities with unique circumstances and in unique situations are attended to and are made a part of the equation of fixing things is necessary in Arkansas. He commented that this was a very diverse conference in which several communities inside of this concept were addressed. Representative Murdock said he looked forward to the September meeting.

The Honorable Jeremy Gillam, Speaker of the House, and State Representative, District 45, was recognized. Representative Gillam said he hoped members would find the subject of PLC engaging and include it in the conversation about what can be done for students and schools throughout the state. He said it is a concept that has merit. He commented on his excitement at having Dr. Eaker as part of the meeting next month.

Representative Cozart remarked that he had attended a PLC conference last year which was very good and enlightening.

Introduction of **Dr. Maria Markham**, the New Director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education

Senator English introduced Dr. Maria Markham, the new director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE). Senator English said Dr. Markham comes from Cossatot Community College where she was the Vice Chancellor for Academic Services; she has a PhD in business; she spent fourteen (14) years in higher education; and she is a native of southwest Arkansas.

Dr. Maria Markham was recognized, and said she appreciated the opportunity to work with this group with the common agenda of moving the state of education in Arkansas ahead.

Update on Arkansas's Teacher Supply

Presenter:

Ms. Ivy Pfeffer, Assistant Commissioner, Division of Educator Effectiveness and Licensure, Arkansas Department of Education, was recognized. Ms. Pfeffer stated that over the past year and a half the agency has been focused on programmatic efforts to enhance teacher and administrator/leader quality and availability. She said the agency has held group meetings locally and around the state. She said this work has increased awareness about challenges facing schools in recruiting and retaining educators to meet their varied needs, and to ensure that all students are surrounded by teams of excellent educators who are skilled in content, experienced, qualified, committed, and motivating. She shared some things learned from stakeholders so far:

- the right questions have to be asked; no one data point provides all of the answers
- the types of shortages vary by region across the state; shortages vary by subject area statewide; shortages are more prevalent in districts that have difficulty competing for salaries
- better opportunities for jobs outside education for some majors can be an impediment in making decisions to enter education
- a perceived lack of public respect and support for teachers

- reluctance of young people to consider education as a career

Ms. Pfeffer walked members through data in a PowerPoint presentation, discussing Arkansas's Equitable Access to Excellent Educators Data; 3-yr Average Equity Data; Our Challenges; Ed Prep Enrollment Reported in HEA Title II data; Ed Prep Completers Reported in HEA Title II data; Ed Prep Enrollment, Completers, and 1st year Teacher Comparison; Traditional Programs-Intern Placement; Age and Attrition; Age vs. Years Experience; Beginning Teacher Attrition; Attrition: Traditional vs. Nontraditional; Recent Teacher Attrition Rates by District; Program Completers Working in AR Public Schools; Racial and ethnic makeup of Arkansas public school (APS) students, Arkansas EPP Enrollees, APS Teachers and APS Administrators during 2014-2015; and Addressing the Gaps. Ms. Pfeffer continued with an update on other efforts, including the *Coming Back* campaign; expanding partnerships; the paraprofessional route to licensure; and recruitment of bi-lingual teachers.

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- qualitative answers to why the attrition rate for 1st year teachers is higher than average, and
- exit survey for teachers who do not sign a contract.

PowerPoint Presentation:

Arkansas's Educator Workforce Data Trends and Impacts

Handout:

Arkansas's Educator Workforce Data Trends and Impacts

Overview of Activities Associated with *Take Your Legislator to School Month*

Senator English remarked that the House Communications Office has prepared materials and visuals to assist legislators on personal visits to schools. She said **The Honorable Charlotte Vining Douglas**, State Representative, District 75, and **The Honorable Alan Clark**, State Senator, District 13, sponsored the project.

Presenters:

Ms. Cecillea Pond-Mayo, Communications Officer, Arkansas House of Representatives, was recognized. Ms. Pond-Mayo stated the goal of the materials is to help students understand what happens at the Capitol impacts their everyday lives, and will lead to a better understanding of the legislative process. She said all of the information is available for use in the classroom.

Ms. Lilea Hernandez, Production Assistant, Arkansas House of Representatives, was recognized. Ms. Hernandez discussed handouts in packets furnished to members and described other information available on the website, www.arkansashouse.org in the Kids in the House section.

Issue Included in the Discussion:

- options available for legislators in scheduling visits to school districts.

Handouts:

90th General Assembly, House of Representatives

Arkansas General Assembly

Arkansas General Assembly, Glossary

HCR 1008

Links to Take Your Legislator to School Month Videos and Materials

Take Your Legislator to School Month Event Ideas

Take Your Legislator to School Month Goals

Take Your Legislator to School Month Memo

Take Your Legislator to School Month School District Visits

TFK Extra Magazine Supplement 1

TFK Extra Magazine Supplement 2

Next Scheduled Meetings:

Monday, September 12, 2016, at 9:00 a.m. in Room 138 of the State Capitol, Little Rock (*Work Session*)

Monday, September 12, 2016, at 1:30 p.m. in Room 171 of the State Capitol, Little Rock

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

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Approved: 09/12/16