

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

**ADEQUACY**

**Tuesday, September 10, 2013**

**9:00 A.M.**

**Room A, MAC Building**  
**Little Rock, Arkansas**

Representative Ann Clemmer, the Vice 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 Johnny Key, Chair; Senator Joyce Elliott, Vice Chair; Senator Eddie Cheatham; Senator Jim Hendren; and Senator Uvalde Lindsey.

**MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE:** Representative James McLean, Chair; Representative Ann Clemmer, Vice Chair; Representative Charles L. Armstrong; Representative Les Carnine; Representative Robert Dale; Representative Gary Deffenbaugh; Representative Jody Dickinson; Representative Charlotte Vining Douglas; Representative Jon Eubanks; Representative Debra Hobbs; Representative Karen Hopper; Representative Sheilla Lampkin; Representative Homer Lenderman; Representative James Ratliff; and Representative Brent Talley.

**NON-VOTING MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE:** Representative Randy Alexander; Representative Reginald Murdock; and Representative Stephen Meeks.

**OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ATTENDANCE:** Senator Cecile Bledsoe; Senator Linda Chesterfield; Senator Jonathan Dismang; Senator Jane English; Senator Stephanie Flowers; Senator Missy Irvin; Senator Larry Teague; Senator Eddie Joe Williams; Senator David Wyatt; Representative Scott Baltz; Representative Jeremy Gillam; Representative Bill Gossage; Representative David Hillman; Representative John Hutchison; Representative David Meeks; Representative Micah Neal; Representative Betty Overbey; Representative Sue Scott; Representative John Walker; and Representative Butch Wilkins.

**Minutes:**

Without objection, the minutes of August 19, 2013, and August 20, 2013, were approved as written.

**Exhibits:**

Exhibit C1 – 08/19/13 Minutes

Exhibit C2 – 08/20/13 Minutes

Discussion of Issues Related to the Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)/No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)

**Ms. Nell Smith**, Administrator, Policy Analysis and Research Section, Bureau of Legislative Research, was recognized. Ms. Smith referred to highlighted items on a handout of Adequacy Study responsibilities that would be covered in today's meeting. She reviewed Exhibit D, a Bureau Brief on Elementary & Secondary Education Act and the Arkansas Flexibility Plan.

Presenter & Synopsis:

**Mr. John Hoy**, Assistant Commissioner, Division of Academic Accountability, Arkansas Department of Education, was recognized. Mr. Hoy addressed questions prepared by the Bureau of Legislative Research (BLR) for the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE). With regard to No Child Left Behind, he discussed the following: 1) Alignment with previous school improvement system, 2) Use of school improvement consultants, 3) Rewarding exemplary schools, 4) Student growth measures in teacher evaluations, and 5) ESEA reauthorization proposals.

Contributor to the Discussion:

**Mr. Elbert Harvey**, Program Administrator, School Improvement Unit, Division of Learning Services, Arkansas Department of Education

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- the federal school choice option(s),
- guarantees provided to school districts to ensure students are immersed in necessary skills,
- safeguards provided to make sure of gains each year,
- interim measurable objectives for school improvement,
- addressing individual needs of students,
- funding used for hiring outside school improvement consultants,
- clarification of designation criteria,
- effect on school districts of the waiver to remove supplemental services,
- how contracts are given to external providers,
- assessing the impact of supplemental service providers,
- solutions to impact individual students, including those in priority schools and focus schools,
- issue of hiring new teachers every year in “labeled” school districts,
- what ADE is doing in the Helena-West Helena School District and what’s working,
- funding mechanisms and other resources for the implementation of needed programs to change outcomes for students in priority schools,
- correlation between academic distress and financial distress, and related issues,
- looking at areas of innovation and sharing ideas for building a collaborative resource bank,
- challenge of metrics when a label is attached,
- existence of indicators other than those tied to accountability,
- evaluating the performance of external providers before including them on the approved list,
- use of external providers reflected in a district’s Arkansas Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (ACSIP),
- using retired educators as a resource in a community with a school in school improvement,
- availability of written criteria to determine the success of collaborating with external providers,
- issue of school compliance *or* school improvement, and
- school districts worked in by Mr. Hoy and Mr. Harvey and their track record for turning around schools.

Exhibit:

Exhibit D – Elementary & Secondary Education Act and the Arkansas Flexibility Plan, Bureau Brief

Discussion of Issues Related to the Academic Distress Designation

Presenter & Synopsis:

**Dr. Megan Witonski**, Assistant Commissioner, Division of Learning Services, Arkansas Department of Education, was recognized. Dr. Witonski commented that questions to be addressed during the presentation on academic distress had been answered in the preceding presentation, and that she was available for additional questions.

Contributor to the Discussion:

**Dr. Tom Kimbrell**, Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- ≈ Annual Measureable Objectives (AMO),
- ≈ labeling and effect of labels on school districts,
- ≈ assessing what's going on in a community and considering all evidence leading to a label in order to inform what else needs to be done in a school district,
- ≈ annual accountability report from each school to determine if the school maintains a status of priority or a status of distress,
- ≈ unintended negative consequences of the academic distress label, and
- ≈ timeline for changes leading to a school district being designated in academic distress.

Exhibit:

Exhibit E – Academic Distress, Bureau Brief

Handouts:

Adequacy Study Statutory Responsibilities  
Additional Materials Regarding the Common Core State Standards Initiative  
Questions on the No Child Left Behind Act and Academic Distress, Bureau Brief

**Dr. Tom Kimbrell**, Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education, was recognized. Dr. Kimbrell discussed flexibility, academic distress, and other areas of education where possible changes may need to occur.

Next Scheduled Meeting:

Joint meeting with the Joint Committee on Advanced Communications and Information Technology on Thursday, September 26, 2013 at 9:45 a.m., in conjunction with the Connecting Arkansas Internet Conference, Arkansas Ballroom, Little Rock Marriott Hotel

Next Scheduled Regular Meetings:

October 14, 2013 and October 15, 2013

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 11:57 a.m.