

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

ADEQUACY

Monday, October 8, 2018

1:30 P.M.

Room 151, 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: *Senators:* Jane English, Chair; Joyce Elliott, Vice Chair; Linda Chesterfield; Alan Clark; Jim Hendren; and Uvalde Lindsey.

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE: *Representatives:* Bruce Cozart, Chair; Charlotte V. Douglas, Vice Chair; Rick Beck; Jana Della Rosa; Jon S. Eubanks; Grant Hodges; Mark Lowery; Mark D. McElroy; Stephen Meeks; Nelda Speaks; Dan Sullivan; DeAnn Vaught; and John W. Walker.

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ATTENDANCE: *Senators:* Linda Collins-Smith; and Trent Garner. *Representatives:* Fred Allen; Carol Dalby; Jim Dotson; Trevor Drown; Kenneth B. Ferguson; Vivian Flowers; Michael John Gray; Fredrick J. Love; Reginald Murdock; Johnny Rye; James Sorvillo; Dwight Tosh; and Les Warren.

Minutes:

Without objection, the minutes of September 24 and 25, 2018 were approved as written.

Exhibits:

Exhibit C1 – 09/24/2018

Exhibit C2 – 09/25/2018

Discussion of the Little Rock Air Force Base Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Fest (<https://www.thunderovertherock.com/stem/>)

Presenter:

Major Kyle Sanders, 19th Operations Group, 19th Airlift Wing, Little Rock Air Force Base, was recognized. Major Sanders stated the Air Force recognizes the critical need for STEM talent for future technology and innovation efforts within the workforce, and tries to incorporate STEM into all Department of Defense (DOD) air shows and public events. He discussed the Thunder Over the Rock Air and Space Show which will take place on October 27 and 28, 2018, and the STEM Fest field trip for K-12 students on October 26. He said the Air Force Base partnered with the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) and the Arkansas Department of Career Education (ADCE) to develop an entire day of programming for students at the science festival, including direct engagement with science professionals from education, school districts, industry, and governmental organizations and agencies. He commented that applications to participate in the event had been received from more than 15,000 students from 250 schools in Arkansas and neighboring states.

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- efforts of the Air Force Base in advancing aviation and aerospace careers, and
- types of aircraft that will appear in the Air Show.

Continued Discussion of Adequacy Issues and Potential Recommendations for the 2018 Adequacy Report

Presenters:

Ms. Nell Smith, Administrator, Policy Analysis and Research Section, Bureau of Legislative Research, was recognized. Ms. Smith referred members to the Digital Learning Provider Survey (Handout #1), and the Adequacy Study Public Comments, Part Two (Handout #2). She provided a background for how digital learning functions in Arkansas schools; and discussed digital learning courses, digital learning providers, and the Digital Learning Provider Survey. Ms. Smith noted the Digital Learning Provider Survey was distributed to 39 of the 41 approved digital learning providers listed in the ADE's Statewide Information System (SIS) Handbook. She said 37 approved digital learning providers responded to the survey. She said the survey requested information from each digital learning provider on total amount paid to the organization by each Arkansas public school district/open enrollment charter school; on total students enrolled each semester in credit bearing courses in which the organization's staff serves as the teacher of record; and on total students enrolled each semester in credit-bearing courses in which the school district's staff serves as the teacher of record.

Ms. Lori Bowen, Senior Legislative Analyst, Bureau of Legislative Research, was recognized, and continued the presentation of the Digital Learning Provider Survey with a discussion of survey responses. Utilizing charts, Ms. Bowen discussed Digital Learning Providers - 2016-17 Revenues and Enrollment; 2016-17 Revenues Per Enrollee; Digital Learning Providers - 2017-18 Revenues and Enrollment; and 2017-18 Revenues Per Enrollee.

Contributor to the Discussion:

Mr. Johnny Key, Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- ensuring that providers are meeting standards and that teachers are certified,
- disparity in cost per enrollee,
- qualifications of digital learning teachers vs. those of Arkansas school teachers,
- standard review of providers,
- costs for classes online, and
- nonsectarian requirement to become an approved digital learning provider.

Handouts:

Handout #1 – Digital Learning Provider Survey, Bureau Brief

Handout #2 – Adequacy Study Public Comments, Part Two, Bureau Brief

Representative Cozart, the Chair of the House Interim Committee on Education, announced that **Mr. Boyce Watkins**, Director of Advocacy, Arkansas School Boards Association (ASBA) is retiring, and that **Mr. Dan Jordan**, Director, Government Relations, ASBA, will be his replacement.

AGATE and AAGEA Position on the Inclusion of GT in the 2018 Adequacy Report

Presenter:

Mr. Davis Hendricks, Legislative Liaison/GT Advocate, Arkansans for Gifted and Talented Education (AGATE), was recognized, and briefly discussed reintroducing Gifted and Talented (GT) Education into the Matrix. He stated if a school district is offering adequate services to students, it has to include a review of how well it is serving the identified gifted GT population and whether that population is receiving needed services at the appropriate level of funding.

Contributor to the Discussion:

Mr. Johnny Key, Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- effect on funding if GT is placed in the Matrix,
- including a review of placing GT in the Matrix during the next Adequacy Study,
- studying possible models that add GT to the Matrix,
- endeavoring to include language for GT in the appropriate place,
- language dropped from the original Matrix, and
- getting GT back into the review process.

Handout:

Handout #3 - AGATE & AAGEA Position on the Inclusion of GT in the 2018 Adequacy Report

Review of the Adequacy Worksheet

Representative Cozart outlined the process that the Committees would follow in completing their work on the 2018 Adequacy report. He said by working down the items on the 2018 Adequacy Worksheet (Handout #5), which would take up most of today's meeting, Committee members could think about the discussion overnight, review the options, and vote at the October 9, 2018, meeting.

A comprehensive discussion by members of the Committees ensued, starting with the definition of adequacy.

Contributors to the Discussion:

Dr. Richard Abernathy, Executive Director, Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators

Dr. Charisse Childers, Director, Arkansas Department of Career Education

Mr. Johnny Key, Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- adding reading proficiency to the definition,
- adequate provision for *career readiness skills* in the definition, and
- concern about putting too much language into the definition.

Representative Cozart stated that since he did not see a motion to keep or change the definition, the Committees would move on.

Relevant Action:

Representative John W. Walker was recognized, and made a motion to remove the reference to career readiness skills in the definition; the motion was seconded by **Representative Mark Lowery**.

Following a brief discussion on removal of the reference to career readiness skills, and pursuant to the motion by Representative Walker, the motion failed by voice vote.

The Committees resumed discussion of line items on the 2018 Adequacy Worksheet.

When reaching the line item for Special Education, **Senator Uvalde Lindsey** was recognized, and made a motion to increase funding for Special Education by \$4 million in each year of the biennium; the motion was seconded by **Senator Joyce Elliott**. Following a brief discussion, Representative Cozart requested that Senator Lindsey withdraw the motion. He reminded the Committees of the plan for today to hear suggestions and rationales, and that voting would take place at the October 9th meeting.

Representative Cozart called for a 5-minute break at 4:15 p.m.

At 4:20 p.m., the Committees resumed discussion of line items including Teacher Salaries, Partnership Program, National School Lunch (NSL) Funding, Professional Development (PD) Funding, English Language Learner (ELL) Funding, Alternative Learning Environment (ALE) Funding, and Operations and Maintenance (O&M).

Handouts:

Handout #4 – Questions to Ask

Handout #5 – 2018 Adequacy Worksheet

Handout #6 – Matrix History, 2005 to 2021

Handout #7 – DRAFT Final Report on the Legislative Hearings for the 2018 Educational Adequacy Study

Next Scheduled Meetings:

Tuesday, October 9, 2018, at 9:00 a.m. in Room 151 of the State Capitol, Little Rock (*Adequacy*)

Wednesday, October 10, 2018, at 9:00 a.m. in Room 138 of the State Capitol, Little Rock (*Legislative Task Force on Workforce Education Excellence*)

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.