

## MEETING SUMMARY

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

Monday, September 9, 2019  
1:30 P.M.  
Room B, MAC  
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; Eddie Cheatham; Linda Chesterfield; Lance Eads; Jim Hendren; and Mark Johnson.

**MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE:** *Representatives:* Fred Allen; Rick Beck; LeAnne Burch; Frances Cavenaugh; Jana Della Rosa; Jim Dotson; Brian Evans; Denise Garner; Mark Lowery; Stephen Meeks; Nelda Speaks; Dan Sullivan; and DeAnn Vaught.

**OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ATTENDANCE:** *Senator:* Alan Clark.  
*Representatives:* Stan Berry; Harlan Breaux; Roger Lynch; Tippi McCollough; and James Sorvillo.

Minutes:

Without objection, the minutes of the August 19, and August 20, 2019 meetings were approved.

Exhibits:

Exhibit C1 – 08/19/2019 Minutes

Exhibit C2- 08/20/2019 Minutes

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

**Representative Denise Garner** and **Senator Mark Johnson** were recognized, and briefly reported on NCSL (National Conference of State Legislatures) and The Hunt Institute conferences.

**Mr. Johnny Key**, Secretary, Arkansas Department of Education, was recognized. Secretary Key introduced **Mr. Tim Cain**, new director of the Arkansas Division of Public School Academic Facilities and Transportation (APSAFT).

Presentation Concerning Arkansas STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) Coalition

Presenters:

**Dr. Suzanne Mitchell**, Executive Director, Arkansas STEM Coalition, was recognized. Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Dr. Mitchell shared highlights of the Coalition's statewide partnership mission, its vision, and a grant that jump-started development of STEM Centers. She discussed 12 STEM Centers, Girls

Leadership Conferences, Health Sciences Career Tech Days, the Laptop Loan Program, Science Equipment Grants, Other STEM Center Activities, and upcoming STEM events and initiatives.

**Ms. Kristin Koenigsfest**, Development and Program Specialist, Arkansas STEM Coalition, was recognized. Ms. Koenigsfest discussed the Arkansas STEM Learning Ecosystem Initiative.

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- improvements that can be made to raise national rankings of Arkansas in math and science,
- availability of resources for schools to make a shift in the paradigm,
- reasons for downward shift in math between 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades,
- effect of the expansion of Broadband in rural areas of the state on STEM education, and
- working in concert with Broadband providers.

PowerPoint Presentation:

Arkansas STEM Coalition

Handouts:

Handout E1 –Arkansas STEM Coalition

Handout E2 – Arkansas STEM Coalition Initiatives

Handout E3 – Arkansas Network of STEM Centers

Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) Presentation - STEM: A Collaborative Model

Presenters:

**Ms. Stacy Smith**, Assistant Commissioner, Learning Services, Division of Elementary and Secondary Education

**Dr. Tina Moore**, Math Program Manager, Division of Elementary and Secondary Education

**Ms. Michele Snyder**, Science Program Manager, Division of Elementary and Secondary Education

**Dr. Angela Kremers**, Director, Division of Career and Technical Education

**Ms. Jami Eubanks**, Program Advisor, Office of STEM, Division of Career and Technical Education

After being recognized and introducing themselves, the panel continued with a PowerPoint presentation and discussion. The presentation included: STEM Foundation for All Kids; STEM CTE Programs of Study; Current Program Numbers; Industry-Recognized Certifications; CTE Courses – Math and Science Credit; Leadership Opportunities; Math Specialists Supporting Arkansas; AR Math QuEST Professional Development; Supporting Content Specific Math Professional Development; STEM Unit Science Program State Structure; Science Specialists Supporting Arkansas; Science Graduation Requirements; Science Standards & Courses; Science Professional Development – FY20 GPS System Products; Benefits of Participation in GPS Follow-up Support; GPS Statewide Goals; STEM Programs to Support Students; and Student Involvement in STEM.

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- clarifying the duties of a *STEM Integration Specialist*,
- making early connections in the classroom to enhance students' skills and understanding,
- availability of concurrent credit courses,
- finding qualified candidates to teach math,
- restructuring the ADE STEM Unit, and
- ACT Aspire test, standards, changing goals, and impact on student success.

PowerPoint Presentation:

STEM – A Collaborative Model

Exhibit:

Exhibit F – STEM A Collaborative Model

Review of Rule Regarding Special Education Catastrophic Occurrences Fund, Arkansas Department of Education (referred by the Administrative Rules Subcommittee August 21, 2019)

Presenter:

**Ms. Courtney Salas-Ford**, Deputy General Counsel, Arkansas Department of Education, was recognized. Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Ms. Salas-Ford discussed proposed changes to the current Rule. In her review, she presented an historical outline (2003 – 2019) pertinent to the Fund; then discussed the following topics: *Funded Appropriation Amounts, Pro Rata Share Received, What is the intent of Special Education High-Cost Funding? Funding sources for students with disabilities, Current Rule; Is this Catastrophic? Why are changes to the Special Education High-Cost Occurrence Fund Rule being proposed? What parts of the existing rule would change? How would an actual claim be affected when applying the proposed rule changes? How does that compare to the current rule? Which is more Catastrophic to a district? How many students are we talking about? Catastrophic Summary Based on 2016-17 Submissions, What is the impact to smaller districts or districts with fewer resources? What would the fiscal impact to districts be? What about the burden to districts associated with each claim submitted? How could this rule change reduce the burden to districts? and, How would the rule revision impact funding for students with the highest-cost needs?*

Contributors to the Discussion:

**Ms. Stacy Smith**, Assistant Commissioner, Learning Services, Arkansas Department of Education  
**Ms. Lisa Tyler**, Special Advisor, Learning Services, Arkansas Department of Education

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- request that school districts affected by proposed changes be represented on a map,
- proposed changes reducing school district decisions based on financial incentives,
- whether function of proposed changes is a response to budget or to the needs of kids in a way that equitability does not end up being more burdensome than it should be on the schools,
- impact of IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act),
- funding high-needs students adequately according to *Lake View*,
- definition of a *catastrophic occurrence*,
- school districts getting federal funds for special education and putting those funds in reserve, instead of into catastrophic funding,
- source of \$15,000 threshold in Rule,
- triggers which prompted a review of the Rule,
- reasons some school districts do not apply for reimbursement, and
- makeup of advisory committee(s).

Relevant Action:

**Representative Mark Lowery** was recognized, and made a motion to review and approve the Rule. The motion was seconded by Representative Stephen Meeks.

Pursuant to the motion by Representative Lowery, the motion was carried on a voice vote.

PowerPoint Presentation:

ADE-DESE Proposed Changes to Catastrophic Occurrence Fund Rule

Exhibit:

Exhibit G – ADE Special Education Catastrophic Occurrences Fund DRAFT

Handout:

Handout G1 – Special Education School District Financials

Discussion and Consideration for Adoption of Interim Study Proposals (ISPs)

Relevant Action:

**Representative Stephen Meeks** was recognized, and made a motion to adopt the 12 Interim Study Proposals. The motion was seconded by Representative Jana Della Rosa.

Pursuant to the motion by Representative Meeks, the motion was carried on a voice vote.

Exhibits:

Exhibit H1 - ISP 2019-007  
Exhibit H2 - ISP 2019-012  
Exhibit H3 - ISP 2019-013  
Exhibit H4 - ISP 2019-024  
Exhibit H5 - ISP 2019-032  
Exhibit H6 - ISP 2019-036  
Exhibit H7 - ISP 2019-048  
Exhibit H8 - ISP 2019-051  
Exhibit H9 - ISP 2019-059  
Exhibit H10 - ISP 2019-067  
Exhibit H11 - ISP 2019-068  
Exhibit H12 - ISP 2019-070

Next Scheduled Meeting:

Tuesday, September 10, 2019, at 9:00 a.m. in MAC, Room A, Little Rock (*Joint Education/Adequacy*)

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.