

**MEETING SUMMARY**  
**JOINT MEETING**  
**OF THE**  
**HOUSE AND SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEES ON EDUCATION**  
**AND THE**  
**ACADEMIC FACILITIES OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

**ADEQUACY**

**Monday, September 24, 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 Blake Johnson.

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

**MEMBERS OF THE ACADEMIC FACILITIES OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE IN ATTENDANCE:** *Senators:* Jane English, Co-Chair; Linda Chesterfield; Jim Hendren; Blake Johnson; and Larry Teague. *Representatives:* Bruce Cozart, Co-Chair; Jana Della Rosa; Charlotte V. Douglas, Grant Hodges; Mark D. McElroy; and Dan Sullivan.

**OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ATTENDANCE:** *Senators:* Breanne Davis; and Lance Eads. *Representatives:* Scott Baltz; Carol Dalby; Jim Dotson; Les Eaves; Michael John Gray; Steve Hollowell; Reginald Murdock; Marcus E. Richmond; Johnny Rye; and Les Warren.

**Minutes:**

Without objection, the minutes of the August 20, 2018 and August 21, 2018 meetings of the House and Senate Interim Committees on Education, and the August 21, 2018 meeting of the Academic Facilities Oversight Committee, were approved as written.

**Exhibits:**

Exhibit C1 – 08/20/2018  
Exhibit C2 – 08/21/2018  
Exhibit C3 – 08/21/2018

Remarks by the Chairs, Reports from Members Who Attended Recent Meetings Concerning Public or Higher Education, and Remarks by Commissioner Key Regarding \$9 million Grant to Develop and Support School-based Mental Health Programs in the State

Representative Bruce Cozart, the Chair of the House Interim Committee on Education, briefly discussed his attendance at the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) chairs' retreat. He said the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan was discussed in depth.

**Ms. Leslie Fisk**, Senior Education, Arkansas Governor's Office, was recognized. Ms. Fisk introduced **Dr. Allison Roberts**, who has joined the Governor's staff and will work as a team with Ms. Fisk on education issues.

**Mr. Johnny Key**, Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education, was recognized, and introduced additions to his staff: **Mr. Arijit Sarker**, Chief Information Officer and Director of Information Systems; **Mr. Don Benton**, Assistant Commissioner for Research and Technology; and **Mr. Eric Flowers**, Assistant to Director, Central Administration.

**Dr. Charisse Childers**, Director, Department of Career Education, was recognized, and introduced **Dr. Angela Kremers**, Deputy Director for Career and Technical Education, Department of Career Education.

**Mr. Johnny Key**, Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education, was recognized. Commissioner Key announced that the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) will be receiving a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) which will bring \$9 million into the state over the next five years. **Ms. Jerri Clark**, Director, School Health Services, Arkansas Department of Education, was recognized. Ms. Clark stated the ADE is excited to have the opportunity to implement the Arkansas AWARE (Advancing Wellness and Resilience Education) program; and briefly described what ADE will be doing with grant funds. She said the Arkansas AWARE program focuses on mental health and safe and supportive climates in a school setting; its goals are to develop model comprehensive school-based mental health programming in three sites across Arkansas. Ms. Clark noted the sites chosen for focus of the comprehensive mental health service portion of the grant are Marvell-Elaine School District, Texarkana School District, and the OUR (Ozarks Unlimited Regional) Educational Service Cooperative in Boone County.

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- thinking deeply about school safety in terms of mental health,
- promoting use of the SHAPE assessment tool,
- helping to identify and meet needs of young people in rural areas who, data shows, have increased suicide rates, and
- the best way to bring this program into the classroom setting.

Review and Discussion of the Final Report of the Advisory Committee on Public School Academic Facilities and Discussion of Statutorily Required Facilities Reports

Presenter:

**Mr. Brad Montgomery**, Secretary, Advisory Committee on Public School Academic Facilities, and Director, Division of Public School Academic Facilities and Transportation, was recognized. Mr. Montgomery referred to the statutorily required report, *Statewide State of Condition of Academic Facilities*, due October 1 of each year. He noted that new to this report this year is the inclusion of information on underutilized public school facilities. Mr. Montgomery discussed highlights from the report: 2,485 projects have been approved at a total qualified cost of \$3.3 billion; the Division has inspected 1,833 facilities; conducted 28 follow-up inspections in 2017 and 2018; and conducted seven on-going construction inspections and five special investigations. He noted three attachments to the report: Legally Required Inspections for Public School Facilities; Legally Required Inspections for Charter School Facilities; and Unused and Underutilized List in Accordance with Act 542 of 2017 as of February 28, 2018. Mr. Montgomery next reviewed the statutorily required report, *Academic Facilities Master Plan Program – State Plan*, also due October 1 of each even-numbered year. Mr. Montgomery stated the state has 120 Partnership Program projects currently committed with a total state financial participation amount of \$316,997,944. He said 1,503 Partnership Program projects have been completed with total state partnership of \$926,145,866. He said the remainder of the report includes two attachments: a listing of all the committed projects that the state has on file for districts' master plans and partnership projects; and a four-year rolling forecast of all projects submitted by school districts in their master plans. Mr. Montgomery next discussed the

report, *Act 962 of 2015 High-Growth School District*.

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- ⇒ year the Partnership Program started,
- ⇒ projects approved but not funded and categories of those projects; and total of spend needed to complete those projects,
- ⇒ school districts spending funds on safety enhancements,
- ⇒ limits to the number of projects a school district can have,
- ⇒ Little Rock projects,
- ⇒ historical data for high-growth programs, and
- ⇒ demographics for high-growth school districts.

Mr. Montgomery resumed his discussion with the report of the Advisory Committee on Public School Academic Facilities (Advisory Committee). He stated the Advisory Committee did a comprehensive review of academic facilities to “ensure that the most efficient and effective programs are in place.” He said the Advisory Committee advanced 14 recommendations, grouped into four different areas: processes, funding, wealth index, and miscellaneous. Mr. Montgomery presented a brief overview of each of the 14 recommendations.

Contributor to the Discussion:

**Mr. Johnny Key**, Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- ✓ net effect of having no recommendation to restrict state’s share of funding based on school district building fund balances,
- ✓ Advisory Committee’s response to Governor’s concerns over funding sample model of wealth index reducing state’s cost,
- ✓ review of proposed changes to the wealth index,
- ✓ sustainability of GIF funds supplementing the Partnership Program,
- ✓ inclusion of safety recommendations in the Advisory Committee’s report,
- ✓ shifting facilities funds that go to teachers’ insurance back to facilities,
- ✓ utilizing \$68-\$70 million of desegregation funds for facilities,
- ✓ issue of school district building fund balance, and
- ✓ effect of new model on school districts’ planning.

Representative Cozart stated that since the Academic Facilities Oversight Committee is meeting with the House and Senate Interim Committees on Education today, a recommendation is needed regarding the amount of facilities funding for inclusion in the 2018 Adequacy Report. Representative Cozart called for a vote by members of the Academic Facilities Oversight Committee.

Relevant Action:

**Senator Linda Chesterfield** was recognized, and made a motion that the Academic Facilities Oversight Committee recommend a sum of \$90 million for funding facilities programs to the House and Senate Education Committees for inclusion in the 2018 Adequacy Report. The motion was seconded by Representative Charlotte V. Douglas.

Following a brief discussion on funding for facilities, the motion was carried by voice vote of the Academic Facilities Oversight Committee.

Exhibits:

EX D – Report of the Advisory Committee on Public School Academic Facilities  
EX D1 – Safe School Commission Preliminary Report

Handouts:

Handout #1 – Academic Facilities Master Plan Program – State Plan  
Handout #2 – Statewide State of Condition of Academic Facilities  
Handout #3 – Act 962 of 2015, High-Growth School District

Senator English announced that Item E, Continued Discussion of Adequacy Issues and Potential Recommendations for the 2018 Adequacy Report, would be taken up in the meeting on September 25, 2018.

Next Scheduled Meetings:

Tuesday, September 25, 2018, at 9:00 a.m. in Room 151 of the State Capitol, Little Rock  
Wednesday, September 26, 2018, at 9:00 a.m. at the Association of Arkansas Counties Building, 1415 West 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Little Rock (*Legislative Task Force on Workforce Education Excellence*)

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

*Approved: 10/08/2018*