

**MINUTES**  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**  
**House Committee on Education**  
**Meeting Jointly**  
**Monday, November 6, 2023**  
**1:30 PM**  
**Room A, MAC**  
**Little Rock, Arkansas**

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Committee members present: Senators Jane English, Chair; Linda Chesterfield, Vice Chair; Breanne Davis, Jim Dotson, Kim Hammer, and Matt Stone; Representatives Brian S. Evans, Chair; Keith Brooks, Vice Chair; Bruce Cozart, Hope Duke, Vivian Flowers, Denise Garner, Wayne Long, John Maddox, Brit McKenzie, Ron McNair, Stephen Meeks, Stetson Painter, DeAnn Vaught, Steven Walker, and Carlton Wing

Other members present: Senators Steve Crowell, Scott Flippo, Ben Gilmore, Fredrick Love, and Dan Sullivan; Representatives Wade Andrews, Howard Beaty, Stan Berry, Frances Cavanaugh, Cameron Cooper, Carol Dalby, Denise Ennett, Kenneth Ferguson, Jack Fortner, DeAnna Hodges, Steve Hollowell, Ashley Hudson, Lane Jean, Jack Ladyman, Roger Lynch, Tippi McCullough, Aaron Pilkington, Chad Puryear, David Ray, Jay Richardson, R. Scott Richardson, Marcus Richmond, Ryan Rose, Johnny Rye, Jamie Scott, Dwight Tosh, and Jeremy Wooldridge

Senator English called the meeting to order.

**Consideration to Approve the October 2, 2023, and October 3, 2023, Meeting Minutes [Exhibits B1-B2]**  
Without objection, the minutes were approved.

**Discussion of School Safety in Arkansas**

Dr. Cheryl May, Director, Arkansas Criminal Justice Institute; Jerry Keefer, Director, Safe Schools Unit, Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), Arkansas Department of Education (ADE); and Dr. Mike Hernandez, Director, Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators, discussed methods for schools to increase the security of students and of school buildings. It is suggested that all schools have a school safety coordinator, utilize school resource officers, and conduct lock down drills on a regular basis.

**Discussion of Early Childhood Education in Arkansas [Exhibit D]**

Tonya Williams, Assistant Commissioner, Office of Early Childhood, DESE, ADE, presented information regarding literacy in early childhood education and the impact that the Arkansas Better Chance program has had on proficiency in literacy. She discussed how the Literacy, Empowerment, Accountability, Readiness, Networking, and Safety (LEARNS) Act creates the Office of Early Childhood which will utilize a common application and data system of billing and payments for federal child care assistance and allow for one background check for employees instead of two.

**Discussion of Career and Technical Education in Arkansas [Exhibits E1-E3]**

Ross White, Director, Career and Technical Education, DESE, ADE, and Dr. Ken Warden, Commissioner, Arkansas Division of Higher Education, ADE, gave a presentation on Arkansas's Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. They discussed CTE pathways, courses, and industry recognized credentials.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.