

MINUTES
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Meeting Jointly
Wednesday, September 3, 2025
10:00 AM
Pine Bluff Public Library, 600 South Main Street
Pine Bluff, Arkansas

Committee members present: Senators Jane English, Chair; Dan Sullivan, Vice Chair; Joshua Bryant, and Stephanie Flowers; Representatives Keith Brooks, Chair; Brit McKenzie, Vice Chair; Lincoln Barnett, Rick Beck, Karilyn Brown, Hope Duke, Denise Garner, Julie Mayberry, Jessie McGruder, and Stephen Meeks

Other members present: Senator Fredrick J. Love; Representatives Glenn Barnes, Jack Ladyman, David Ray, Jay Richardson, Joy Springer, and Tracy Steele

Senator English called the meeting to order.

Opening Remarks and Overview of Friendship Aspire STEM Academies

Phong Tran, Superintendent, Friendship Aspire Arkansas gave opening remarks and introduced Friendship Aspire Academy leadership, including Ashley Williams, Principal, Friendship Aspire Academy Public Charter Schools. Ms. Williams gave an overview of a typical day for Friendship Aspire Academy students.

Overview of Charter School Quality and Application Process

Darrell Smith, Assistant Commissioner, Office of School Choice and Parent Empowerment, Arkansas Department of Education gave information regarding the application process of charter schools in Arkansas.

Tour of Friendship Aspire Academy Public Charter School

Phong Tran, Superintendent, Friendship Aspire Arkansas, and Ashley Williams, Principal, Friendship Aspire Academy Public Charter Schools, gave a tour of Friendship Aspire Academy Public Charter School at 700 South Main Street, Pine Bluff, Arkansas.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.