

## MINUTES

## JOINT PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

July 11, 2017

The Joint Performance Review Committee met Tuesday, July 11, 2017 at 7:15 a.m. at the Washington Magnet Elementary School, 2700 Main Street, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Committee members present: Senator Missy Irvin, Senate Chair, and Trent Garner. Representatives Mark Lowery, House Chair, Jack Fortner, Brandt Smith, Clarke Tucker, and Richard Womack.

**Call to Order** Senator Irvin called the meeting to order.

**Opening Remarks by Committee Chairs** Senator Irvin welcomed legislators. She introduced Keesa Smith, Deputy Director, Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS) and Michael Poore, Superintendent, Little Rock School District. Ms. Smith gave an update on the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Summer Feeding Program.

**Discussion of the Federally-Funded USDA Summer Food Service Program—Arkansas Special Nutrition Program** Ms. Smith thanked the legislators for coming to the elementary school to see firsthand how the Summer Feeding Program is helping the community. She introduced Thomas Sheppard, Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, DHS and Mitzi Langley, Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, DHS.

Mr. Sheppard gave a more detailed overview of the program:

- The program began in 1968
- To date, the program has served 429,545 meals to children
- DHS has 110 different sponsors throughout the state
- There are 529 feeding sites across the state
- Program sites include churches, non-profit organizations, government organizations, and city sponsored camps
- Programs are 100% federally funded through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- The number of children at each site varies by the community's population, from as few as 15 up to 150 children per site

Ms. Langley thanked the legislators for their interest in the program. As a nutritionist, she works to ensure the meals are balanced and nutritional. The meals fall under USDA nutrition guidelines. She told legislators that children do not have to be enrolled in the program to be allowed to eat a meal. A number of children from within the community are dropped off by parents and understand that they can eat breakfast or lunch and leave when they choose to do so.

Katherine Snyder, Principal, Washington Magnet Elementary School gave highlights of the program and answered legislators' questions:

- The majority of the children who participate in the Summer Feeding Program also participate in the City of Little Rock's Summer Playground Program, which has five to six sites around the city
- The City of Little Rock hires the program's staff, which includes two on-site supervisors. The city also hires high school students as assistants. One of the activities the program provides is a field trip to "Wild River Country".
- Ms. Snyder coordinates transportation through the city for the children who live in the community.
  - The program operates for five to six weeks and is funded by the city through grants
  - The program has structured activities, cooperative play, and character building activities
  - Hours of operation for the program are 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- 120 children participated in a Gifted and Talented Summer Program, which ended Monday, July 10, 2017. Program hours were 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
  - Families sign up their children to attend the program. The children who participate must already be eligible for Gifted and Talented Programs in their school district. The children who participate are typically in the third, fourth or fifth grade classes.
- A Summer Mental Health program is a daytime program with program hours from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. This program also allows children to eat lunch before leaving at 2:30 p.m.
  - The majority of schools in the Little Rock School District have a mental health provider on-site. There are approximately 15 to 16 mental health providers in central Arkansas who contract with schools districts to offer on-site services. The mental health providers contract with a school district and their services are billable under contracts with the districts.

Ms. Snyder described the Mental Health Services Program offered at the Washington Elementary School. The Centers for Youth and Families provides the school with an on-site therapist for a full day, five days a week. The therapist can pick up and transport students to the school. Other mental health providers can also provide on-site services if they have children who they serve outside of the Little Rock School District.

Legislators then participated for an hour serving meals to the children. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.