

**MINUTES**  
**JOINT MEETING**  
**OF THE**  
**HOUSE AND SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEES ON EDUCATION**

**Thursday, December 17, 2009**  
**10:00 A.M.**  
**Room 171, State Capitol**  
**Little Rock, Arkansas**

Senator Jimmy Jeffress, the Chair of the Senate Interim Committee on Education, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**MEMBERS OF THE SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE:** Senator Jimmy Jeffress, Chair; Senator Steve Bryles, Vice-Chair; Senator Shane Broadway; Senator Joyce Elliott; Senator Kim Hendren; Senator Gene Jeffress; and Senator Mary Anne Salmon.

**MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE:** Representative Bill Abernathy, Chair; Representative Nancy Blount, Vice-Chair; Representative Monty Betts; Representative Toni Bradford; Representative Steve Breedlove; Representative Jerry Brown; Representative Les Carnine; Representative Eddie Cheatham; Representative Robert Dale; Representative Jody Dickinson; Representative Donna Hutchinson; Representative Mark Martin; Representative David Rainey; Representative Tim Summers; and Representative Charolette Wagner.

**NON-VOTING MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE:** Representative Fred Allen; Representative Tommy Lee Baker; Representative Debra Hobbs; Representative Karen Hopper; Representative Uvalde Lindsey; Representative Johnnie Roebuck; and Representative Tiffany Rogers.

**OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ATTENDANCE:** Senator Steve Faris; Senator Randy Laverty; Senator Sue Madison; Senator David Wyatt; Representative Duncan Baird; Representative John Burris; Representative Richard Carroll; Representative Eddie Cooper; Representative Monty Davenport; Representative Otis Davis; Representative David Dunn; Representative Curren Everett; Representative Nathan George; Representative Buddy Lovell; Representative Barbara Nix; Representative George Overbey; and Representative Michael Patterson.

*Without objection, the minutes of October 28, 2009, were approved as written.*

Senator Jeffress announced that the Committees would deviate from the published agenda and discuss the interim study proposal (ISP) that comprised Agenda Item F.

Senator Hendren was recognized to discuss the ISP. He requested permission to first introduce a special guest, former Oklahoma State Representative Lance Cargill, who had served as the Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives. Senator Jeffress welcomed former Representative Cargill and told him the Committees were honored to have him at the meeting.

Senator Hendren went on to discuss the rationale behind Interim Study Proposal 2009-203, REQUESTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION CONDUCT A STUDY OF THE PUBLIC MEETING FACILITIES PROVIDED FOR THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS.

*Without objection, Interim Study Proposal 2009-203 by Senator Hendren, was adopted as written.*

Senator Jeffress announced that a new item would be added to the published agenda. A three-page memorial resolution, A MEMORIAL RESOLUTION HONORING JOSEPH KIRBY MAHONY, II, (1939-2009) FOR HIS EXTRAORDINARY SERVICE TO THE PEOPLE OF ARKANSAS, was distributed to the Committees. Senator Jeffress requested that the Committees adopt the resolution, which would be presented later in the meeting to Mr. Michael Mahony of New York, the son of the late Representative Mahony.

*Without objection, the motion to adopt the Memorial Resolution was carried.*

Senator Jeffress announced that the Committees would now take up Agenda Item C, Update on Implementation of the Education Plan of the Division of Youth Services, Arkansas Department of Human Services.

Senator Jeffress advised the Committees that this item was a follow-up on Representative Roebuck's legislation, Act 972 of 2009, An Act to Establish a System of Education Within the Division of Youth Services. He said that questions regarding funding remained unresolved.

Representative Roebuck was recognized. She noted the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) and the Division of Youth Services (DYS) have had a successful collaboration. She thanked the Chair for this opportunity and looked forward to hearing the presentation.

**Mr. Ron Angel**, Director, Division of Youth Services, Arkansas Department of Human Services, was recognized. After introducing the DYS education staff; he discussed the establishment of an educational system within the DYS, utilizing a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Angel discussed how implementation of the system can deliver opportunities such as:

- facilitating stakeholder ownership,
- providing a stronger system of education,
- improving teacher recruitment and retention, and,
- bridging the education gap for families in need.

Mr. Angel said that improved communications between the ADE and the DYS information technology systems would greatly improve the DYS ability:

- to transfer required reports,
- to build a better internal reporting system, and
- to enhance student records.

**Mr. Brett Smith**, Director of Education, Division of Youth Services, Arkansas Department of Human Services, was recognized. Mr. Smith gave a briefing on general education opportunities in the centers, outlining the school calendar which adheres to state guidelines. He also reported on the access students have to communication with families, and to vocational training.

**Ms. Cindy Connell**, Director of Curriculum Supervision and Instruction, Division of Youth Services, Arkansas Department of Human Services, was recognized. Ms. Connell talked about using the ADE-approved curriculum and textbooks in the education centers, and teaching the four core subjects, English, math, science and history, as well as other subjects. She spoke of utilizing summer programs for enrichment, credit recovery, and remediation, and talked about licensing of teachers in the system.

**Ms. Mary Steel**, Special Education Director, Division of Youth Services, Arkansas Department of Human Services, was recognized. Ms. Steel discussed:

- the continuum of services for students who receive special education services within the system.

- using ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) Plan funds to furnish special education classrooms under construction with technology equipment.
- developing due process training for special education teachers as it relates to state and federal rules and regulations.
- providing more planning time for teachers.

An extensive discussion of the various issues associated with the DYS system of education ensued, with the representatives of the DYS in attendance responding to various questions on:

- Availability of training programs for girls, creative programs, and college preparatory programs
- Opportunities for special education
- Adequacy and relevancy of textbooks
- Funding for improvements, library books and facilities, and updated technology
- Issuance and recognition of education center diplomas
- Teacher pay, insurance, and retirement benefits
- Transfer of responsibility for education center teachers to the state
- Cooperation of local school districts
- Counting an education center in the associated school district's funding report
- Tracking the effectiveness of the program
- Findings in the ADE study of the different centers in the system
- Improvement in classroom disruptions by students with behavioral problems
- Interface with alternative learning centers

**Mr. Jerry Walsh**, Executive Director, South Arkansas Youth Services, Inc. was recognized. Using a handout, Mr. Walsh summarized the number of students in the five facilities who are preparing to take the GED or preparing for college or for the military. Mr. Walsh was proud of one female juvenile from the Mansfield Center, now in college in Little Rock, who was awarded the Arkansas Coalition for Juvenile Justice Spirit Award, and was also awarded several small scholarships. He also spoke highly of the residential construction class at the Lewisville Center that worked with licensed contractors to help build a vocational classroom, and also erected a greenhouse on-site this past summer and fall.

Discussions followed on questions raised by the Committees about:

- Special support or scholarships for students because they have gone through a center
- Federal Pell Grant Program
- State of Arkansas support
- Identification of higher education colleges that have accepted students from the centers
- Student selection of a college based on geographical area
- Feedback from the colleges on student preparedness

Senator Jeffress thanked Mr. Angel and Mr. Walsh for their presentation.

Senator Jeffress announced that the Committees would return to the memorial resolution for Jodie Mahony and introduced **Mr. Michael Mahony**. At the request of Senator Jeffress, staff read the memorial resolution into the record. The resolution was presented to Mr. Mahony, who expressed his thanks and that of his family. Staff also presented Mr. Mahony the blue blazer always worn by his father. Senator Broadway was recognized and summed up that there will never be another Jodie Mahony, and that he meant a lot to all of the legislators and staff.

Update on Expenditure of Federal Funds for Education Purposes under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and other Federal Programs

**Mr. Chris Masingill**, Arkansas Recovery Implementation Officer, Office of the Governor, was recognized. Mr. Masingill, using a PowerPoint presentation, provided the Committees with an overview of ARRA funding and discussed the importance of these funds in mitigating the impact of the current economic downturn and investing in the future economic development of the state.

**Ms. Heather Gage**, Special Advisor to the Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education, was recognized. Ms. Gage, using a PowerPoint presentation, discussed the ARRA as it relates to K-12 education in Arkansas and spoke about three different areas:

- ARRA Formula Funds,
- ARRA Grant Opportunities, and
- Race to the Top.

Ms. Gage said that the United States Department of Education (USDOE) is focused on state success factors and wants to make sure that funding is being given to states that have the capacity to implement programs that enhance the effectiveness of their public education system. The USDOE wants to know that foundational education reforms have been enacted.

Senator Jeffress thanked Mr. Masingill and Ms. Gage for their presentations.

#### Update on the Arkansas Partnership for Teacher Quality (Ar-PTQ) Research Project

**Mr. Richard Hutchinson**, Government Relations/Instructional Issues Director, Arkansas Education Association (AEA), was recognized. Mr. Hutchinson presented an update on the collaborative partnership between the AEA, the National Education Association, and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, which is looking at ways to strengthen teacher preparation in the state.

In order to give Committee members an idea of the breadth and depth of participation in the project, Mr. Hutchinson invited the national partners to introduce themselves:

**Dr. Adriane Dorrington**, National Education Association, Teacher Quality

**Ms. Richelle Patterson**, National Education Association, Teacher Quality

**Kimberly T. Riley**, Manager for State Programs and Policies, American Association of  
Colleges for Teacher Education

**Carlene Anderson**, Administrator, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

Then, he asked the Arkansas partners from teacher preparation institutions to introduce themselves:

**Dr. Calvin Johnson**, Dean, School of Education, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, and  
former Chair of the House Education Committee

**Dr. Judy Harrison**, Dean of Education, Teachers College, Henderson State University

**Ms. Merribeth D. Bruning**, Dean, Michael D. Huckabee School of Education and Director of  
Teacher Education, Ouachita Baptist University

**Dr. Amanda Nolen**, Assistant Professor, Department of Teacher Education, Teacher  
Education/Educational Foundations, University of Arkansas at Little Rock

Mr. Hutchinson concluded by saying that, following the initial study of identifying the data available in Arkansas, the next phase of the project is data review.

**Dr. Angela Sewall**, Dean, College of Education, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, was recognized. Dr. Sewall discussed the civic and economic impact of good teachers and good teacher preparation programs. She spoke of Arkansas's commitment to preparing high quality, fully-prepared teachers who can increase student achievement and school performance. Dr. Sewall said that Arkansas teacher preparation programs have to meet national standards; and increasing the number of college graduates is absolutely essential in this state. Dr. Sewall went on to describe the research process associated with this collaborative effort. She noted this research is indicative of the willingness of the state's teacher preparation programs to engage in meaningful self-examination, commitment to make bold improvements, and dedication to work with their K-12 partners to enhance Arkansas's educational and economic well-being.

Senator Jeffress thanked Mr. Hutchinson and Dr. Sewell for the update.

Senator Jeffress announced that the next meeting will be for the Joint Adequacy Evaluation Oversight Subcommittee on Tuesday, January 5, 2010, in Room 171 of the State Capitol.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:21 p.m.