

MEETING SUMMARY
JOINT MEETING
OF THE
HOUSE AND SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEES ON EDUCATION
ADEQUACY

Monday, February 10, 2020
1:30 P.M.
Room A, MAC
Little Rock, Arkansas

Representative Bruce Cozart, the Chair of the House 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; Eddie Cheatham, Linda Chesterfield, Lance Eads, Jim Hendren, Mark Johnson, and James Sturch

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE: *Representatives:* Bruce Cozart, Chair; Reginald Murdock, Vice Chair; Fred Allen, Rick Beck, LeAnne Burch, Frances Cavanaugh, Gary Deffenbaugh, Jana Della Rosa, Jim Dotson, Jon S. Eubanks, Brian Evans, Denise Garner, Grant Hodges, Mark Lowery, and DeAnn Vaught

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ATTENDANCE: *Senators:* Bob Ballinger, Breanne Davis, Jonathan Dismang, Trent Garner, Greg Leding, and Larry Teague. *Representatives:* Sonia Eubanks Barker, Stan Berry, Cindy Crawford, Andy Davis, Denise Ennett, Vivian Flowers, Monte Hodges, Lane Jean, Joe Jett, Tippi McCullough, Jamie Scott, Keith Slape, Brandt Smith, Stu Smith, James Sorvillo, and Les Warren

Minutes:

Without objection, the minutes of the January 6, 2020 and January 7, 2020, meetings were approved.

Exhibits:

Exhibit C1 – 01/06/2020 Minutes
Exhibit C2 – 01/07/2020 Minutes

Discussion of Activities/Timeline for Augenblick, Palaich and Associates' Study of Arkansas's Current Educational Adequacy Study Processes

Presenters:

Mr. Justin Silverstein, Co-CEO, APA Consulting | Augenblick, Palaich and Associates, was recognized. Mr. Silverstein stated the purpose of meeting is to update members on the study and to lay out the proposed presentation schedule for the next ten months. Mr. Silverstein said work with the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is just getting started. He noted data from DESE will come directly to Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA). He also discussed working with the Bureau of Legislative Research (BLR) to make sure there is no overlapping of reports. He requested members to select a set of state groups to be used for data comparisons in the study.

Ms. Amanda Brown, Senior Associate, APA Consulting | Augenblick, Palaich and Associates, was recognized. Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation (*Handout D1*), Ms. Brown discussed key research activities that will be implemented to address the 31 required study areas: Fiscal and Performance Data Analysis, Case Studies,

Literature/Data Reviews, Educator Panels/Stakeholder Engagement, District Survey, and Additional Quantitative and Qualitative Work. She detailed each of the 31 different study areas listed on a grid and the key research tasks that will be used to address that area. She said a draft report will be given in November 2020, with the final report presented in December 2020.

Mr. Silverstein continued with a proposed presentation schedule (*Handout D2*) for monthly meetings with the Committees, a discussion of areas of possible overlapping reports with BLR (*Handout D3*), and furnished a selection of comparison states (*Handout D4*).

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- definition and makeup of “educator panels,”
- whether data on employees in classified areas will be included in the study,
- inclusion of schools that are having sustained success,
- measures used for collecting data on student populations,
- ensuring a balanced response from the surveys, and
- whether any expiration of the impact of state board takeovers on student outcomes or district data will be in the evaluation of equity.

Mr. Silverstein followed up with additional comments and clarifications pertinent to members’ selection of comparison state groups.

Representative Cozart reiterated the process for a Committee member to ask any question or make any request of APA is to run it through **Ms. Jillian Thayer**, Counsel to the Director, Bureau of Legislative Research.

PowerPoint Presentation:

Review of Study Work Plan

Handouts:

Handout D1 – Review of Study Work Plan, PowerPoint

Handout D2 – Scope of Work by Month

Handout D3 – BLR and RFP Crosswalk 1.14.20

Handout D4 – Possible Comparison States

Discussion of Proposed Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Rules Governing Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts

Presenters:

Ms. Mary Claire Hyatt, Staff Attorney, Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, was recognized. Ms. Hyatt stated that Arkansas law and the Standards for Accreditation require that the Standards be brought before the Joint Education Committees every two years for feedback, to answer questions, and to review proposed changes. She referred members to the Standards for Accreditation 2020, PowerPoint (*Handout E1*), and noted that it follows the outline of the Rules (*Exhibit E*).

Ms. Deborah Coffman, Assistant Commissioner, Public School Accountability, Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, was recognized. Following a brief history of the change in organizational structure for the Standards for Accreditation made two years ago, Ms. Coffman walked members through the PowerPoint presentation, explaining what the Standards for Accreditation are and how they work.

Ms. Hyatt next walked members through a review of the proposed changes.

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- clarification of time frames pertinent to a public school or public school district's correction of a deficiency or violation of the Standards; or receipt by the Division of a plan for correcting same,
- activities proposed during recess,
- limitations to waiving a standard,
- requirements for a school district to have a website,
- difference between a "guidance counselor" and a "school counselor,"
- impact of recess law on teacher preparation time,
- use of summative ratings in reporting process, and
- difference between "an approved waiver" and a "licensure exception," and the impact on Act 1240 waivers.

PowerPoint Presentation:

Standards for Accreditation 2020

Exhibit:

Exhibit E – Markup of Rules Governing Standards

Handout:

Handout E1 – Standards for Accreditation 2020, PowerPoint

Presentation by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education

Presenters:

Mr. Johnny Key, Commissioner, Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, was recognized. Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Commissioner Key presented Committee members with a comprehensive update on the work of the DESE. He discussed Vision; Mission; From Adequacy to Excellence; Initiatives, including The Arkansas Declaration of Learning; CS for AR; R I S E Arkansas; and AR Math Quest. He focused on strengthening instructional practice in reading and achieving national recognition; and discussed English courses that meet the Standards but go a little more in depth, providing students with deeper learning and relevance.

Dr. Ivy Pfeffer, Deputy Commissioner, Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, was recognized. Dr. Pfeffer discussed Student Focused Education, including Student Success Plans, College and Career Readiness Tools, Diploma Pathways, Career and Technical Courses, Access and Equity, and Personal Success Skills.

Commissioner Key continued with G.U.I.D.E. for LIFE, Assessment System, and General Health and Well-being.

Dr. Pfeffer discussed Celebrating Teachers. She covered Goals of Teach Arkansas Campaign, Enrollment Increase in Educator Preparation Programs, High School Pre-Educator Program of Study, Teacher Attrition, Career Continuum, and Retaining Effective Teachers.

Commissioner Key concluded with updates on Professional Learning Communities (PLC), Arkansas's first P-12 Cyber Threat Response Team, and Cross-Division Projects.

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- curtailing issues of cyber security,
- top reasons teachers leave education, and
- Grow Your Own method of teacher retention.

PowerPoint Presentation:

Update to the Education Committee

Handout:

Handout F – Update to the Education Committee, PowerPoint

Discussion of Issues Related to the Educator Compensation Reform Program, Act 170 of 2019

Presenters:

Dr. Richard Abernathy, Executive Director, Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators, was recognized. Dr. Abernathy announced that **Dr. Mike Hernandez** will be his successor as executive director of the Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators (AAEA), and will start July 1, 2020. Dr. Abernathy updated members on ways found to raise teachers' salaries above minimum. He said, however, funding concerns still exist which will be discussed by visiting superintendents.

Dr. Beth Shumate, Superintendent, Magazine School District, **Dr. Wayne Fawcett**, Superintendent, Paris School District, and **Ms. Tracy Streeter**, Superintendent, Hamburg School District, were recognized. Utilizing PowerPoint presentations, Dr. Shumate, Dr. Fawcett, and Ms. Streeter discussed funding issues and changes school districts have made to accommodate the minimum wage increase and the minimum teacher compensation schedule as required by Act 170 of 2019.

Contributor to the Discussion:

Mr. John Spradlin, CFO, Hamburg School District

A discussion ensued pertinent to funding issues over multiple areas in school districts, why some schools are unable to meet the minimum teacher salary requirement, the state providing funding up to the Standards as required by statute, and making changes to the Matrix.

PowerPoint Presentations:

Educator Compensation Reform Act – Paragould School District
Educator Compensation Reform Presentation – Hamburg School District
Educator Compensation Reform Act – Paris and Magazine School Districts

Exhibits:

Exhibit G – Act 170 of 2019
Exhibit G1 – Educator Compensation Reform Act – Paragould School District, PowerPoint
Exhibit G2 – Educator Compensation Reform Presentation – Hamburg School District, PowerPoint
Exhibit G3 – Educator Compensation Reform Act – Paris and Magazine School Districts, PowerPoint

Next Scheduled Meeting:

Tuesday, February 11, 2020, at 9:00 a.m. in MAC, Room A, Little Rock (*Adequacy*)

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 4:56 p.m.