

Minutes
State Board of Education
Sunday, September 12, 2004

The State Board of Education met on Sunday, September 12, 2004, in the Ballroom of the Radisson Hotel in Fayetteville, Arkansas. JoNell Caldwell, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

The following members were present: JoNell Caldwell, Chairman; Dr. Jeanna Westmoreland, Vice Chairman; Sherry Burrow; Shelby Hillman; Dr. Calvin King; Randy Lawson; MaryJane Rebick; Dianne Tatum; and Dr. Naccaman Williams.

No members were absent.

Chair's Report

Ms. Caldwell reported accompanying representatives from the U.S. Department of Education to three school districts – Helena-West Helena, Camden-Fairview, and Stuttgart to announce awards of discretionary grants for school libraries.

Ms. Hillman reported attending the dedication of the new facility for the KIPP Academy, which is located in downtown Helena. She noted that three years ago the Academy was approved to begin as an open-enrollment Charter School and since that time has become a very positive opportunity for impoverished children in the Helena-West Helena area. She stressed that this school takes the “poorest of the poor and the children with the lowest grades” and is demonstrating what can be accomplished with hard work, discipline and parent and community support. She reported recent test scores reveal that students who were scoring at 17th percentile on a national-norm referenced test are now performing at the 79th percentile. She encouraged other Board members to visit this school and to see the new facility.

Director's Report

Dr. James reported that schools were notified of the 2004-2005 preliminary status for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) on Thursday of the previous week and that scores were reported statewide on Friday. He summarized the status by saying that two-thirds of the schools met standards and that one-third of the schools are at some level of school improvement. He noted that of that one-third, 68 made improvement, but will remain “on the list” because it

takes two years of meeting the standard for a school to be removed from a designation of school improvement. Dr. James observed that the work of computing the AYP status is tedious and very labor intense. He commended Janinne Riggs and Dr. Charles Watson for their work in overseeing the AYP process. Dr. James also stated that schools identified for school improvement have 30 days to appeal the designation after which time final determinations will be made.

Consent Agenda

Ms. Hillman moved approval of the Consent Agenda. Dr. Westmoreland seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

- Approval of Minutes for August 9, 2004
- Commitment to Principles of Desegregation Settlement Agreement: Report on the Execution of the Implementation Plan
- Newly Employed, Promotions and Separations
- Adopt Recommendations of Standards Assurance Unit and Academic Standards and Assessment Unit for English Language Arts Area Textbooks and Instructional Materials

Action Agenda

Arkansas Better Chance for School Success Program Recommendations 2004-2005

Dr. James stated that this item recommended additional sites for pre-school programs in keeping with previous actions of the Board. He noted that Tonya Russell was available by phone should the need arise, but she was not requested to attend since the meeting is being held in Fayetteville. Dr. James reviewed revisions to the materials provided in the distributed packet. Those revisions show that only approximately \$10,000 of the budgeted amount remains unobligated.

Ms. Tatum asked about the deadline for program startup in the local schools – October 1. Dr. James responded that it was his understanding that some areas have enrollments that are under projections, but those sites are working to fill the open slots. He noted that part of the reason for these positions being unfilled is competition from other providers in these communities and the late start for advertisement. Also, some schools, he continued, submitted proposals very late and submitted proposals that needed revision. Dr. James did confirm that the first reporting period is at the end of September. At that time it will be known if any sites lack expected

enrollments: if so a determination will be made as to a course of action for that site.

Ms. Tatum also explored the options for technical assistance through the regional service cooperatives as far as advertising of slots. Dr. James responded that in some areas advertisement and public participation has been a problem area for the startup of these programs. He confirmed his belief that the business/professional community is helping to get the word out about availability of services for young children.

Dr. King observed that in some communities the need for services to pre-school children was being met by agencies such as Head Start and that there was a waiting list for positions in Head Start programs. Ms. Tatum asked how or if such information could be made available to help determine the level of need for young children who are currently not being served. Dr. James expressed the opinion that the next session of the General Assembly would be addressing the needs of pre-school programs.

Ms. Rebick asked what other funds might be available to support programs where greater need is documented, but funds are currently not available. Dr. James noted that there will be a reporting period at the end of September and another at the end of December. Any residual funds could be reallocated.

Ms. Tatum moved adoption of program recommendations as submitted and amended by staff. Mr. Lawson seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

Request for Approval for Public Comment of Proposed Rules Governing the Requirements and Procedures for Renewing a Standard Arkansas Teaching License

Dr. Charity Smith was recognized to present this item. Dr. Smith observed this Rule is part of many Rules required to manage licensure of professional staff in the schools. She stressed that after public comment, a final version of the Rule would be re-submitted for final consideration.

Ms. Tatum moved approval of the Rule for public comment. Ms. Hillman seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

Consideration of Performance Level Descriptors and Cut Scores for the Following Assessments

Dr. Gayle Potter was recognized to present these items.

a. Grade 9 Alternate Mathematics Portfolio for Students with Disabilities

Ms. Rebick inquired about the rigor of the portfolio assessment as compared to other assessments. Dr. Potter responded that the portfolios are based on the Content Standards and Learning Expectations as adopted by the Board. However, these assessments are linked to the student's individual learning plans and handicapping condition. Ms. Burrow asked if all of these portfolio assessments for learning disabilities have to fall within the allowed 1% of students. Dr. Potter responded yes and elaborated that at this point the state does not come close to 1% of the population being assessed with portfolio assessments.

Dr. Westmoreland moved adoption of the recommended cut score. Ms Burrow seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

b. Algebra 1 Alternative Portfolio for Limited Proficient Students

Ms. Hillman moved adoption of the recommended cut score. Dr. Williams seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

c. Grade 11 Literacy Alternate Portfolio for Limited English Proficient Students

Ms. Tatum moved adoption of the recommended cut score. Dr. Williams seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

Report of Waivers to School Districts for Teachers Teaching Out-of-Field for Longer than Thirty (30) Consecutive Days, Act 1623 of 2001

Dr. Charity Smith was recognized to present this item. Dr. Smith reported that this is the first of what will most likely be a monthly request during this school year. Ms. Caldwell inquired if the teachers listed on this request have, in fact, been in a position for 30 days. Dr. Smith responded yes and that most likely, these teachers will be in the position for the entire school year. She explained that most of the teachers on these requests are ones that are working toward full licensure under a deficiency removal plan. Ms. Caldwell inquired how long it takes to complete the plan. Dr. Smith responded that it ranges from one to three years depending on the number of credit hours needed to meet licensure standards.

Ms. Hillman asked what requirements are placed on a district to employ a fully licensed teacher – if one is available – rather than requesting a waiver for a teacher that does not meet licensure requirements. Dr. Smith

responded that the district must demonstrate that they have attempted to find a fully licensed teacher before they request a waiver. She noted that she is not aware of any of these that have passed over a licensed teacher to employ one who lacks a certificate.

Ms. Rebick asked about the criteria for licensure in drama. Dr. Smith responded that drama is an endorsement and is based on licensure in English with additional hours in drama.

Dr. Westmoreland moved approval of the list of waivers as submitted. Dr. King seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

Request for Open Enrollment Charter Amendment KIPP: Delta College Preparatory School

Dave Floyd was recognized to present this item. Mr. Floyd began by noting this item should have been considered at an earlier meeting, but due to his travel itinerary, he was not able to do a site visit to the new facility until recently. Mr. Floyd reported that the KIPP Academy's new facility meets or exceeds all facilities requirements for public schools. He stated that the new facility has large instruction space for every class and meets code for handicapped students. He further stated that this facility is the first permanent building for an open enrollment charter school.

Dr. Williams stated that he visited the KIPP Academy site recently and affirmed the adequacy of the new facility.

Dr. King inquired as to how other areas of the state might begin to plan for adopting the KIPP model for implementation. Dr. Williams responded that KIPP is linked to a nationally developed structure that requires very specific training and conditions that must be met before a new site can begin. Scott Smith noted that open-enrollment charters are limited by the Arkansas law and that amendments to that law will have to be made before many additional sites can be considered.

Dr. James confirmed that KIPP is a very definite process and a site just does not open without much planning and endorsement from the national office.

Dr. Williams asked about the process for amending the legislation and who would carry such a bill. Dr. James responded that it could be a number of entities, the Department could seek a sponsor, the Board, and it could come from legislators.

Ms Hillman moved approval of the facility revision as proposed. Mr. Lawson seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

Matter of Reconsideration of Conditional Approval of the Administrative Consolidation of the Crawfordsville School District and the Marion School District

Scott Smith was recognized to present this item. Mr. Smith summarized actions that occurred since the Board gave conditional approval to this consolidation action. Specifically, he noted the opinion submitted by Judge Eislee which stated that the proposed consolidation would not hamper desegregation efforts. Mr. Lawson moved final approval of the proposed administrative consolidation of Crawfordsville School District with the Marion School District. Dr. Westmoreland seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

Mr. Smith also reported that work continues on the only remaining conditional consolidation approval – Sparkman and Harmony Grove School Districts.

Consideration for Final Approval of Rules Governing Non-Traditional Teacher Licensure

Dr. Frank Servideo was recognized to present this item. Dr. Servideo noted that this item was previously approved for public comment and that a public hearing was conducted with no one speaking to the issue. He did report that minor revisions were made in response to internal review.

Ms. Burrow asked how many teachers are currently participating in this program. Dr. Servideo reported that there are 300 in their first year of work and an additional 250 completing a second year of training. Ms. Rebick asked if there was a trend in the areas of licensure for these teachers. Dr. Servideo responded that it was pretty diverse and most fields have at least one candidate. She further asked about math and science teachers. Dr. Servideo stated that there were some, but not a large number.

Dr. Westmoreland inquired if any teachers were being licensed under the exceptionally well qualified. Dr. Servideo responded none at this time. He did note that a few had assessment waivers, but none were enrolled who had instruction waived.

Dr. Williams asked how this program compared with a program for prospective teachers who would reenroll in college or university classes. Dr. Servideo responded that there was no comparison. These teachers are

working every day: they attend two weeks in the summer and one weekend a month. They are not taking coursework, he continued, and, they are working with a provisional license until their program is complete.

Dr. Williams inquired if these teachers seem to be clustered in any area of the state. Dr. Servideo answered no; they are spread across the state. He also asked how many were teaching in high-needs districts. Dr. Servideo responded that 93 teachers in the program are teaching in what would be defined as high-needs districts.

Ms. Burrow asked about work done before entering the classroom. Dr. Servideo responded that teachers in the program must attend a two-week training prior to their first job assignment. Then they attend monthly sessions throughout the school year.

Dr. Westmoreland moved approval of the Rule as presented. Mr. Lawson seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

Dr. Westmoreland moved adjournment. Ms Hillman seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Dr. Ken James, Director

JoNell Caldwell, Chair