

Minutes
State Board of Education
Thursday, October 23, 2003

The State Board of Education met via telephone conference call on Thursday, October 23, 2003. The call originated from the Director's Conference Room, Room 303A, in the State Education Building and began at 4:30 p.m.

Dr. Charles Watson was asked to sound the roll. The following Board members reported present: JoNell Caldwell, Chairman; Shelby Hillman, Vice-Chairman; Luke Gordy; Dr. Calvin King; Randy Lawson; MaryJane Rebick; Dianne Tatum and Dr. Jeanna Westmoreland.

No members were absent.

Ms. Caldwell stated that the purpose of the conference call was to discuss the position of interim director for the Department of Education. Ms. Tatum moved that the Board go into executive session to discuss personnel issues pursuant to the naming of an interim director. Mr. Lawson seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

Following the Executive session, Ms. Caldwell asked Mr. Gordy to report the discussion from the executive session.

Mr. Gordy stated that the Board has determined that the best thing that can happen is that a permanent director should be identified immediately. The Board wants to have a top-notch candidate and wishes to have that individual available as soon as possible.

However, to maintain continuity with the Department, the Board felt obligated to name an interim director. Mr. Gordy noted that the Board intends that the interim director begin immediately, this person would not be considered as permanent director, and that the interim director should understand that the Board's position is to name the permanent director as soon as possible. The objective was to hire a person who is familiar with the educational reform efforts, one who understands the legislative process, and one who knows and is respected by the individual players in these processes. Mr. Tom Courtway, former legislator, attorney and general counsel for the University of Central Arkansas is suggested as interim director of the Department of Education.

Mr. Lawson moved hiring Mr. Courtway at the same salary and fringes as the previous director. Employment is to be effective immediately on Mr. Simon's departure. Ms. Hillman seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

Mr. Lawson moved adjournment. Ms. Tatum seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

The Minutes were recorded and reported by Dr. Charles D. Watson.

Tom Courtway, Interim Director

JoNell Caldwell, Chair