

ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Board Meeting Minutes:
March 12, 2001

The State Board of Education met on Monday, March 12, 2001, in the Brewer-Hegeman Conference Center on the campus of the University of Central Arkansas, Conway, Arkansas. Luke Gordy, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m.

The following members were present: Luke Gordy, Chairman; Richard Smith, Vice-Chairman; Jo Nell Caldwell; William Fisher; Robert Hackler; Shelby Hillman; Betty Pickett; Lewis Thompson, Jr.; and Anita Yates.

The following members were absent: Claiborne Deming.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Hackler moved approval of the Consent Agenda. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

Minutes from February 12, 2001

Newly Employed, Promotions and Separations

Personnel Recommendations

ACTION AGENDA

Mr. Smith moved the addition of an item to the Action Agenda to consider transitioning students into new teacher licensure programs. Ms. Caldwell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Hackler moved the addition of an item to the Action Agenda to consider waiver of days missed for inclement weather. Ms. Yates seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Fisher moved the addition of an item to the Action Agenda to consider Rules and Regulations for Intervention Grants. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Transitioning Students into Licensure Programs

Ms. Yates commended actions of colleges and universities that led to full implementation of licensure plans within the timeline originally adopted. She stated that she would support the staff recommendations and conditions that were outlined in the Work Session because it was her opinion that the problem

with transition in those institutions under consideration should not affect students who were seeking to become teachers in Arkansas. Mr. Smith moved adoption of staff recommendation that would extend the transition period for full implementation of the new licensure requirements for one year with signed assurances as outlined. Ms. Yates seconded the motion. Mr. Gordy outlined the following assurances that must be applied to each of the programs under consideration.

Obtain assurances that would preclude re-occurrence of the situation.

Provide affected students access to additional preparation at no expense to student.

Monitor affected institution by student name and SSN.

Extend the transition time no longer than twelve months (December 21, 2002).

Require a written report to the State Board of Education at the end of the extension deadline.

The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion of Waiver of Days Missed for Inclement Weather

During the Work Session Mr. Simon distributed to the Board a list of school districts showing the number of days missed due to inclement weather in December and January of this school year. He explained that this was an unsolicited list and was not inclusive of all districts in the state that missed days. He reported to the Board that administrators from those districts were seeking approval from the Board to waive the Standards requirement for a minimum number of instructional days in the school year.

Ms. Pickett moved that the Board not grant a general waiver of days missed due to inclement weather. Ms. Yates seconded the motion. Mr. Fisher suggested that this matter should be examined on a district by district basis considering the total days missed and any effort made to make up missed days. The motion passed on a 6-2 vote. (Fisher and Smith voted no.)

Mr. Fisher stated that the motion addresses a general waiver of days missed, but believes the Board should be open to individual districts making requests. He

noted that in previous years waivers have been granted when extra-ordinary events have caused a district to be closed. Mr. Smith agreed and supported the notion of the Board giving consideration to appeals from individual school districts. Ms. Yates expressed a strong opinion that would require districts to make up days missed.

Mr. Simon indicated that the Department would prepare a Director's Memo indicating the Board's action, but providing an opportunity for individual districts to appeal to the Board. Any request for waiver days that would be considered for approval must be accompanied by a plan for reducing the number of days lost by requiring student attendance on days previously designated as holidays, Saturdays, or extending the school year. The Board concurred that it would consider such requests submitted through the Department at the April meeting.

Rules and Regulations for Intervention Grants

Mr. Fisher moved that the Rules and Regulations for Intervention Grants discussed during the Work Session be approved for public comment. Mr. Hackler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commitment to Principles of Desegregation Settlement Agreement: Report on the Execution of the Implementation Plan.

Dr. Charity Smith was recognized for this report. Dr. Smith indicated that personnel from each of the three districts have been meeting regularly with the regional service cooperative directors and teacher center coordinators in lieu of a cooperative that would serve Pulaski County. She indicated that district representatives have found those sessions productive and informative in providing professional development for other district employees.

Dr. C. Smith asked staff attorney, Scott Smith, to report on progress of agreements related to settlement of the case with these districts. Mr. S. Smith reported that discussions are progressing that bring all of the discrete issues together under one agreement and at this time there is no closure. Ms. Pickett asked if some of the individual issues were not passed the time set for resolve – such as agreement on measures of student performance and narrowing the gap between white and minority students. Mr. Smith agreed that the time for such an agreement had lapsed, but those issues were still part of the broader conversation.

Mr. Fisher moved acceptance of the report. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Caldwell moved adjournment. Ms. Hillman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

At 10:00 a.m. the Board convened with the Coordinating Board for Higher Education and the State Board for Workforce Education and Career Education for the annual joint meeting of those Boards as required by statute.

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

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