

Report of the Advisory Committee to the Arkansas State Board of Education

August 2002



Introduction

Act 1386 of 2001 directed the Arkansas State Board of Education to appoint an Advisory Committee to recommend changes necessary to provide students adequate preparation for college, other postsecondary education, or the job market.

The Education Advisory Committee includes members of the Arkansas General Assembly, school administrators and teachers, local school board members, citizens, non-certified personnel from local schools, and students.

Recommendations in this report are based on information provided by its three subcommittees – Student Performance, Governance Structure, and Certified Staff (pages 20-59) – and information from state agencies, education service cooperatives, the Southern Region Education Board, the Education Commission of the States, and committee members.

In addition to commissioning reports and presentations from agencies and organizations for assistance in drafting recommendations, the subcommittees also opened the process to any individual who wanted to voice concerns and propose ideas for change.

The Advisory Committee also studied the work of the Arkansas Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Education, which met over the same time period and addressed similar issues. Although the two groups worked independently, members of both the committee and the commission frequently attended meetings of both groups and worked to support each other in gathering information and conducting research. Readers of the recommendations put forth by both the Blue Ribbon Commission July 18 and those presented in this report will find many similarities.

Advisory Committee Members

The Honorable Dave Bisbee
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The Advisory Committee acknowledges Michelle Griffin, Assistant to the Director, Legislative Services, Department of Education; Fredrick Hodge, Administrative Assistant, Legislative Services, Department of Education; Marie Bruno, Communications Manager, Department of Workforce Education; and Sandy Hubbard and Emily Roberts of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services for providing staff support to the committee in the compilation, preparation, and printing of this report.

Overview

All Advisory Committee recommendations are important for economic development and a better quality of life. Advisory Committee members identified four recommendations as decisively important:

- *Raise the average Arkansas teacher's salary to the Southern Regional Education Board states' average by increasing the Arkansas minimum teachers' salary schedule and setting a minimum district average teacher's salary. Add 10 days to the minimum annual teacher's contract (total 195) and add two days to the minimum student-teacher contact days (total 180). Increase required professional development to 60 clock hours per year. Provide monetary incentives to teach in hard-to-staff schools and in subject areas identified as "critical shortage" areas by the State Board of Education.*
- *Ensure that all three- and four-old children have access to high quality early childhood education programs delivered by any willing provider selected by parents; establish a sliding fee scale for those parents with ability to pay for pre-school services based on family income.*
- *Hold school districts accountable for academic and fiscal success; develop a plan for the state to intervene if a school district fails academically and/or fiscally.*
- *Require each school to have in place a reading program including placement assessments for students.*

The growing teacher shortage in Arkansas and the nation contributed to the priority placed on raising teachers' salaries. Arkansas' annual demand for teachers exceeds the supply of qualified teachers by about 600 (2,300 versus 1,700). Demographics of the current teaching force and children indicate the shortfall will grow unless effective policy changes are enacted. The annual rate of education graduates from Arkansas' universities satisfies approximately one-

third the demand. Only 1,400 of 21,700 Arkansas high school seniors who took the ACT in 2001 marked education as their planned college major. Of that 1,400, only 15 planned to major in math, 12 in science, 7 in foreign language and 30 in special education. Arkansas mirrors a critical teacher shortage in the nation. Arkansas' average teacher salary is approximately \$4,000 below the Southern Regional Education Board states' average.

Committee members' awareness of the effect of preschool experiences on school success and citizenship contributed to the priority placed on early childhood education. Many children are well prepared for school success through a stimulating, nurturing home, extended family and community environment. Others are well prepared for school success through Head Start, Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) and other programs that help parents prepare children for school. Unfortunately, many Arkansas children do not have these benefits. The research is clear. School readiness is critical to school success and citizenship. One study comparing children from similar economic backgrounds reported an increased high school completion rate of 29 percent, a 33 percent lower rate of juvenile arrest, a 42 percent reduction in arrests for violent offenses, a 41 percent reduction in special education placement, a 40 percent reduction in the rate of grade retention, and a 51 percent reduction in child maltreatment. The committee did not recommend mandatory participation or naming public schools as the only service provider.

The accountability recommendation identified as decisively important ties together several related accountability recommendations. All are grounded in the idea that the state must set high student learning standards and that student learning standards, instruction, staff development, and assessment must be aligned. Further, committee members determined that accountability measures must be meaningful for individuals – from students to school district leaders.

Committee members' awareness that reading skills are a critical foundation for all learning (school-based and other) and awareness of the poor reading skills exhibited by many high school graduates contributed to the priority placed on requiring reading programs in all schools, including high schools. Reading must be taught at all grade levels in all subject areas. The International Center for Leadership in Education found that readability levels of workplace documents, forms, and text sources are higher than many people would imagine; higher, in fact, than much of the reading material that students use in school and college curriculums. The International Center also determined that many of the most difficult reading tasks were required across jobs, including entry-level positions. Forty-seven percent (10,208) of Arkansas high school seniors taking the ACT in 2001 scored at a level indicating they did not have the skills to perform following tasks:

- Draw simple conclusions using details that support the main points of more challenging passages
- Locate important details in uncomplicated passages
- Order simple sequences of events in uncomplicated literary narratives
- Identify comparative relationships between ideas and people in uncomplicated passages
- Identify context clues to define some words and interpret some figurative language in uncomplicated passages
- Make more specific generalizations about people and ideas in uncomplicated passages
- Make generalizations about the author's or narrator's attitude toward his or her subject in uncomplicated passages
- Understand the overall approach taken by an author or narrator, including point of view, in uncomplicated informational passages.

Recommendations presented in this report are divided into two groups.

The first group is for referral to the Governor and the legislature. The second group is for referral to state agencies. The monetary symbols in the "Cost" column indicates the committees projections of

\$\$\$ High Cost \$\$ Moderate Cost \$ Little or No Cost

for each recommendation.

Committee recommendations will require either new or changes to existing statutory and regulatory initiatives critical to improving economic development and the quality of life for the people of Arkansas.

Within each group, the recommendations are categorized by what the committee believes are five critical issues:

- A. *Highly Qualified Teachers for All Students*
- B. *Rigorous Curriculum for All Students*
- C. *Facilities, Equipment, and Materials to Support Delivery of a Rigorous Curriculum for All Students*
- D. *An Accountability System that Reflects High Expectations for All Students and Key Staff*
- E. *Cross-Cutting Issues*

The Advisory Committee's priorities are indicated as:

Decisively Important

Very Important

Important

Other recommendations proposed and considered by the full Advisory Committee are included in pages 20 through 71.

Advisory Committee Recommendations for Governor and Legislature

A. Highly Qualified Teachers for All Students

Decisively Important

- Raise the average Arkansas teacher's salary to the Southern Regional Education Board states' average by increasing the Arkansas minimum teachers' salary schedule and setting a minimum district average teacher's salary. Add 10 days to the minimum annual teacher's contract (total 195) and add two days to the minimum student-teacher contact days (total 180.) Increase required professional development to 60 clock hours per year. Provide monetary incentives to teach in hard-to-staff schools and in subject areas identified as "critical shortage" areas by the State Board of Education. (pages 46-48, 60-62)

Cost: \$\$\$

Very Important

- Assure that schools provide high quality support and mentoring programs for new teachers that also provide career advancement opportunities for veteran teachers. (page 49)

Cost: \$

- Fund professional development for any teacher willing to retrain in the high-need areas of mathematics, science, foreign language/English as a Second Language, and special education and count all earned college hours in high-need areas – except for those mandated by the school district for their personnel – as meeting professional development requirements. (pages 45-46)

Cost: \$\$

- Provide scholarships to paraprofessionals seeking teacher licensure in Arkansas. (page 49)

Cost: \$\$

- Extend the Emergency Secondary Education Loan Program to other current emergency shortage areas, adding middle level certification and increasing the loan from the current \$2,500 per year to \$5,000. (page 49)

Cost: \$\$

- Support National Board Certification. (page 45)
Cost: \$

Important

- Enable state agencies and institutions of higher education to compete with school districts for personnel to staff positions in jobs providing pre-service and in-service training for teachers and administrators. (pages 48, 51-52, 62, 67)
Cost: \$
- Establish a State Professional Standards and Practices Board to review applications for licensure renewal. (page 46)
Cost: \$
- Create specialized teacher academies to provide professional development opportunities. (page 46)
Cost: \$\$
- Extend the Freshman/Sophomore Minority Grant Program into the junior and senior years. (pages 49, 67)
Cost: \$\$

B. Rigorous Curriculum for All Students

Decisively Important

- Ensure that all three- and four-year-old children have access to high quality early childhood education programs delivered by any willing provider selected by parents; establish a sliding fee scale for those parents with the ability to pay for pre-school services based on the family income. (Note: State policy appropriate for implementing this recommendation will be provided at a later date.) (pages 21-22)
Cost: \$\$\$

Very Important

- Establish three types of districts – elementary, secondary, and unified. Elementary districts would operate schools serving students below a certain grade level, not to exceed grade eight. Two or more elementary districts operating within the same grade span could merge their secondary

programs into a consolidated secondary district, serving all students above the highest grade level offered in the elementary schools. Unified districts would be those operating a full kindergarten through grade 12 program. (page 37)

Cost: \$

- Provide greater access to secondary area vocational centers and develop or expand other avenues to career and technical education programs. (page 31)

Cost: \$\$

C. Facilities, Equipment, and Materials to Support Delivery of a Rigorous Curriculum for All Students

Very Important

- Fund the minimum equipment necessary for workforce education career and technical education instruction on a seven-year replacement cycle. (page 32)
Cost: \$\$
- Develop a plan for the State to assume responsibility for existing debt and administer a state school facilities program. (page 36)
Cost: \$

D. An Accountability System that Reflects High Expectations for All Students and Key Staff

Decisively Important

- Hold local school districts accountable for academic and fiscal success; develop a plan for the state to intervene if a school district fails academically and/or fiscally. (page 35)
Cost: \$

Very Important

- Establish an office of accountability separate from the State Department of Education. (page 36)
Cost: \$
- Establish a method to gather, analyze, and report management information to the Governor, the legislature, the three state education agencies, the

Employment Security Department, the Department of Economic Development, and the public to guide state and institutional policy development for education and economic development. (page 36)

Cost: \$

- Strengthen the oversight role of Education Service Cooperatives for the State Board of Education/Department of Education by requiring state board confirmation/approval for employment, contract renewal/extension or termination of cooperative directors. (pages 36-37)
Cost: \$
- Support high and improved performing schools with monetary incentive awards to the school and then distributed to certified/non-certified personnel by vote of all personnel. (page 48)
Cost: \$
- Appropriate sufficient funds to supplement “No Child Left Behind” funds to develop and administer criterion-referenced end-of-course/grade test (K-12) in core curriculum areas within five years. (pages 26-29, 62)
Cost: \$\$

E. Cross-Cutting Recommendations

Very Important

- Study the feasibility of adopting a unit funding model for distributing state aid to schools to achieve more efficient use of school funds. (64, 67-70)
Cost: \$
- Make sure that new revenue streams to support P-16 education are an increase – compared to the historic portion – in the percentage of state revenues funded to support public education. (60-61)
Cost: \$
- Provide greater equalization of property tax revenue per mill among school districts and greater equalization of property tax rates among taxpayers. (61-62)
Cost: \$

Advisory Committee Recommendations for State Agencies

ADE	– Arkansas Department of Education
ADWE	– Arkansas Department of Workforce Education
ADHE	– Arkansas Department of Higher Education
ADED	– Arkansas Department of Economic Development
DHS	– Department of Human Services
IHE	– Institutions of Higher Education

A. Highly Qualified Teachers for All Students

Very Important

- Raise GPA admission requirement for non-traditional teacher licensure program entry from 2.0 to the Arkansas State Board requirement of 2.5 for admission to traditional teacher training programs. (pages 40-41)
Cost: \$ Agency: ADE
- Request the Education Testing Service (ETS) to provide analysis of PRAXIS I and II test results to institutions that prepare teachers. (pages 41-42)
Cost: \$ Agency: ADE
- Allow institutions to waive the successful completion of PRAXIS I as a requirement for teacher candidates to enroll in postsecondary teacher education and training programs. However, the institution must submit a plan to the Department of Education for approval that states how the institution will implement the PRAXIS I requirement before the candidate completes the program. (pages 41-42)
Cost: \$ Agency: ADE
- Review the Middle Level licensure examination to assure adequate content coverage in the areas of language arts, social studies, science, and mathematics. (page 42)
Cost: \$ Agency: ADE
- Increase amount of credit from college courses counted toward meeting staff development requirements to 15 clock hours. (page 45)
Cost: \$ Agency: ADE

- For all teacher education degree candidates, require institutions of higher education to include coursework and/or experiences in the teaching of reading at all levels of the P-12 curriculum that address the reading process; strategies for diagnosing and remediating reading difficulties, and reading across the curriculum. (page 44)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADHE, IHE
- Support site-based professional development to increase its impact on practice by linking it to school initiatives. (page 46)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE, ADHE
- Review both short- and long-range plans to address teacher shortages in both geographic areas and critical subject areas through the Additional Licensure Program. (page 48)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE, ADHE
- Ensure that professional development initiatives take place over an extended period of time, rather than a single “shotgun” approach with little, if any, follow-up. (page 45)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE, IHE
- Ensure that high-quality professional development opportunities are accessible to teachers of the most vulnerable students and those who teach in schools with documented needs. (page 45)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE, IHE
- Implement a system of accountability that assesses the effectiveness of professional development activities and the funds expended for professional development. (page 46)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE, IHE

Important

- Review and disaggregate data from the School Leaders Licensure Assessment by gender, ethnicity, and other relevant demographics following the first year of administration to determine success rates of those planning to enter administrative positions. (page 42)
Cost: \$ Agency: ADE
- Explore the feasibility of establishing a licensure level for paraprofessionals and others with two-year degrees who meet other Arkansas Board of Education criteria for licensure. (page 44)
Cost: \$ Agency: ADE

- Determine avenues for higher education involvement with the ADE non-traditional teaching candidates. (page 41)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADHE
- Clarify higher education's role in determining the competencies and standards for additional licensure programs. (page 43)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADHE
- Encourage the adoption of year-round calendars to target professional development in instruction and student learning, particularly in literacy and mathematics. (page 45)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE, ADHE

B. Rigorous Curriculum for All Students

Decisively Important

- Require each school to have in place a reading program including placement assessments for students. (pages 23-24)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE, IHE

Very Important

- End social promotion by providing districts a menu of acceptable assessment instruments for off-grade testing in addition to those required by law – requiring that they be used and that a plan is in place to get each child to grade level, especially in grades K-4. (page 23-24)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE, IHE
- Increase the math graduation requirement from three to four units. (page 28)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE
- Require for graduation four credits in language arts that are college-preparation/honors courses with significant reading and writing assignments; monitor classrooms to assure compliance. (page 28)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE
- Require for graduation three credits in science courses with labs, including at least two in college-prep biology, chemistry, physics, and anatomy/physiology. (page 28)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE

- Require school districts to teach all high school course units required for accreditation each school year. (page 28)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE
- Determine those alternative learning environments and interventions most likely to preserve school and classroom teaching and learning and to lead to positive educational outcomes for students who otherwise interfere with teaching and learning. (page 66)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE
- Align research-based early care curriculum models emphasizing pre-reading and language and social and emotional development with the K-4 benchmarks and ensure continuity between preschool learning strategies and the K-4 education system. (page 22)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, DHS
- Include ACT standards for transition in all applicable core curricular frameworks and assessments. (page 29)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE, ADHE
- Expand opportunities for high school students to take college-level courses (page 28)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE, ADHE
- Adopt standards for dual or concurrent enrollment programs to ensure that postsecondary programs must meet dual or concurrent enrollment requirements. (page 28)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE, ADHE
- Support development of effective distance-learning and web-based instruction. (page 32)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE, ADHE
- Include workplace readiness skills, such as problem solving, leadership, and teamwork, in curriculum frameworks for all career and technical education programs and career and technical student organization activities. (page 32)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE, ADED
- Require adoption of and adherence to existing industry standards and certifications in each workforce education program. (pages 31-32)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADWE, ADED, ADHE

- Require articulated credit with postsecondary institutions as a component of all approved career focuses/programs of study. (page 32)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADWE, ADHE
- Encourage all students to take the pre-ACT assessments as a part of career planning. (page 31)
Cost: \$\$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE, ADHE

Important

- Require at least two years of one foreign language for high school graduation. (71)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE
- Include education about careers, through career awareness, exploration, and preparation, in all K-16 curriculum frameworks, content standards, and assessments. (page 30)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE
- Require each district to implement an approved career focus program in which all students develop four-year high school career plans. (page 31)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE
- Monitor annually middle and high school curriculum requirements in the *Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools* as identified in the *Program Policies and Procedures for Secondary Programs, Adult Skill Training Classes and Secondary Area Vocational Centers*. (page 31)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE
- Enforce compliance with annual monitoring of the state standards requirement that all school districts provide a minimum of three units within a career focus/program of study from three of career and technical education's five occupational areas. (page 32)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE
- Provide students with options for service and work-based learning opportunities for credit. (page 28)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE, ADHE

- Support industry certification, development of qualified teachers, and continuous improvement as integral components of the state's total education mission. (page 33)
 Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE, ADHE, ADED
- Require business and industry partnerships for all and state career and technical education programs to evaluate and direct those programs, determine their relevance to the workplace, and eliminate instruction or courses irrelevant to the worksite. (page 31)
 Cost: \$ Agencies: ADWE, ADED, ADHE

C. Facilities, Equipment, and Materials to Support Rigorous Curriculum for All Students

No recommendations for state agencies.

D. An Accountability System that Reflects High Expectations for All Students and Key Staff

Very Important

- Require 2.00 GPA in courses required by the State Board of Education for high school graduation or satisfactory achievement of Individual Education Plan objectives for Special Education students. (pages 25-27, 62)
 Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE
- Require end-of-course examinations across all core curricular areas and mandate incorporation of exam results into students' grades. Explore/examine other areas to ensure students take them seriously. (pages 25-28)
 Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE
- Require skill improvement measured by end-of-course assessment (based on industry-reviewed course standards) of all schools and secondary area vocational centers. (pages 31-32)
 Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE, ADED

Important

- Include both the rate of completion and graduation with identified career focus/program of study as conditions of program approval. (page 32)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADWE
- Monitor and report annually technical and academic skills by occupational program area by district. (page 32)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADWE
- Require seniors to have an accumulated portfolio of their high school work, including a senior project demonstrating research, creative thinking, rigorous analysis, and clear written and oral communication. (pages 28-29)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE
- Include academic improvement of career and technical students measured by skill-proficiency assessments as one condition of program approval. (page 32)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADWE

E. Cross-Cutting Recommendations

Very Important

- Continue coordination among all local and state collaborative partners to ensure the greatest return of state investment in childcare, early childhood education, and education. (page 22)
Cost: \$ Agencies: ADE, ADWE, DHS

**Advance Report of
the Student Performance,
Certified Staff, and Governance
Structure Subcommittees**

of the

**Advisory Committee
to the Arkansas State
Board of Education**

May 2002

Student Performance Subcommittee

Members of the subcommittee on Student Performance are Dr. Kenneth James, John Davidson, Representative LeRoy Dangeau, J.M. Edington III, and Dr. Naccaman Williams.

Early Childhood Education

Points for Discussion/Recommendations:

- Ensure that all three- and four-year-old children have access to high- quality early childhood education programs
- Any early childhood program (both classroom/center-based and home-based) receiving state funds should meet the research-based core quality components of the Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) program standards of care:
 - Low student-to-teacher ratio
 - Qualified, well-compensated teachers/professional development
 - Strong health, safety, and developmental screening standards
 - Meaningful parent and community engagement activities
 - Proven curricula and learning processes
- Early care and education for children ages three and four who meet the ABC “at risk” criteria should be readily accessible, receive stable funding, and be provided by “any willing licensed early care and education provider” meeting the ABC standards of care. Programs for children “at risk” of future school success should operate at a minimum of 178 days and at least seven-and-a-half hours each day.
- Ensure parental choice of programs, as parents are the decision- makers for their own child. Options for part-time and home-based programs should be available to address the parent’s choice, their values, and preferences

regarding their child's learning styles and developmental needs. A parental choice option takes into consideration the needs of working parents for high quality early care and education for their children, thus enhancing the parents' productivity and stability in the workforce.

- Because provision of early care and education is not a constitutional mandate, the establishment of a sliding fee scale for those parents with the ability to pay for these services based on the family income would ensure all parents the opportunity to access high quality early care and education for their children.
- Research-based early care curriculum models (classroom/center-based and home-based) should directly align with the K-4 benchmarks and ensure continuity between the preschool learning strategies and the K-4 education system.
- In addition to social and emotional development of children, a priority must be placed on pre-reading and language development and must be included in all curriculums.
- Continue coordination with all local and state collaborative partners to ensure the greatest return of our state investment in early care and education. Partnerships would extend the early care programs to full-year, full-day programs to ensure services are made available for working parents.
- The Department of Human Services will have the responsibility of monitoring and supervising all Early Childhood Education programs.
- Postsecondary education programs should include field experience in state agencies working with childcare.

Elementary Schools in Arkansas

An ideal K-16 system of education will prepare every student to be a productive citizen and ready to successfully enter postsecondary education and/or the world of work. Standards for K-8 are essential as the foundation on which higher standards for grades nine through 16 can be built.

What should the new elementary school experience look like in Arkansas?

The establishment of a more unified system of education from preschool to postsecondary education is clearly needed. Students, teachers, and parents must all be aware, at each level, what the student must know and be able to do to advance to the next level. We must improve alignment, provide rigorous alternatives, and raise student achievement.

Points For Discussion/Recommendations:

- Schools should review each curriculum area on an annual basis. Schools must know their curriculum is aligned with state standards (frameworks) annually, not once every five years.
- The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) needs to provide a menu of acceptable assessment instruments beyond those required by law. These assessment instruments should be used to identify any child not on grade level. Schools should provide point-in-time, appropriate interventions (remediation) and work to remove any stigma or negative connotations associated with interventions. Early intervention, rather than social promotion, is essential to raising student performance. Social promotion should be eliminated in Arkansas schools.
- Each school should have in place a reading program, which contains

placement assessments for students. The ADE should provide a menu of research-based programs.

- Professional development needs to be expanded along with plans for continuous in-service.
- Related Topics
 - Length of School Year
 - Year-Round Calendars

Secondary Schools in Arkansas

The drive to raise academic standards in public schools has enjoyed broad political backing at the national, state, and local levels. Bipartisan leaders have endorsed the concept, and all 50 states employ testing to some degree to determine what students are learning. According to a recent study, the standards movement continues to attract widespread support among teachers and parents.

Despite the efforts and emphasis on higher academic standards, employers and college professors continue to voice considerable dissatisfaction with high school graduates' basic skills.

Current Secondary Requirements in Arkansas

The ADE requires that courses shall be offered by an accredited high school.

The ADE also permits some courses within the strands to be offered every other year.

To graduate from high school, all students must have earned at least 21 units in grades nine through 12.

Of the 21 units, 15 core units in the following strands are required:

English	4 units
Social Studies	3 units
Mathematics	3 units
Science	3 units
Oral Communications	1/2 unit
Physical Education	1/2 unit
Health and Safety Education	1/2 unit
Fine Arts	1/2 unit

The additional six units may be in academic and/or career and technical areas and other elective areas. Local school districts may require additional units for graduation beyond the required 21 units.

Analysis of Current Practice

Even as standards are being raised in Arkansas and nationwide, many students say they could work harder in school, and many feel classmates often get diplomas without having learned what was expected. It appears that “getting by” with as little effort as possible is still the operational style in public schools.

In a recent national report, over half (56 percent) of students indicate that they “could try a little harder” in school. Forty-five percent say they are already trying their best to do well in school.

Other findings suggest that large holes exist in the standards net. Not only do many students admit that they and their classmates could work harder, many also say that it is still possible to get a high school diploma without having strong academic skills.

While there is broad agreement that schools are moving in the right direction on standards, there is a strong need to continue to raise the level of expectation as students exit their secondary school experience. The majority of standards initiatives enacted so far set guidelines for what students should know and be able to do, test youngsters to see if they have made progress, and revamp promotion and graduation policies to coincide with these changes.

The missing component of the current assessment program is a systemic approach to student accountability. Currently, there is very little, if any, student accountability in the statewide assessment program.

An examination of education statistics in the United States shows that high schools are not meeting the needs of a growing percentage of the population. The graduation rate is even more troubling when comparing the rates among white students (91 percent), black students (82 percent), and Hispanic students (67 percent).

What Should the New Secondary School Experience Look Like in Arkansas?

- There is no argument that our schools need to raise our sights to prepare more students for college and an increasingly complex world of work, and that we need to enroll more students in rigorous academic programs.
- It is also clear that we need to establish a more unified system of education, stretching from preschool to postsecondary education, in which students at each level will know exactly what must be done to advance to the next level.
- In this newly aligned system, standards, curriculum, and assessment efforts will be integrated with closer linkages between postsecondary and K-16 education. We must improve alignment, raise achievement, and provide more rigorous alternatives for students.

- As we examine “what is,” we need to embrace more and rigorous alternatives during the senior year, which has traditionally prolonged the “seat time” of the typical student. As we take a hard look at what the senior year has become, we must clearly acknowledge that for most seniors, the last year of high school has become a wasted year. By the time most students arrive at the senior year, they have completed most of the credits needed for their high school diplomas. The typical high school senior has one or two requirements remaining after the completion of their junior year. In essence, the high school experience has now evolved to a three-year program.

How Should We Address this Issue?

A great number of high school students currently “load up” on required courses during their sophomore and junior years so they can “coast” during the senior year. This practice has been allowed to manifest over time but it must change if we want a significant impact upon the last year of high school.

We need to be clear about the purposes of the senior year. This final year should serve as the culmination of what already has been accomplished and a launching pad for what lies ahead. The development of senior projects, meaningful internships, and opportunities to take college-level courses should be expanded.

The priority of high schools must be to graduate students who are ready to learn more, capable of thinking critically, and comfortable with the problem solving process. All graduates must possess high levels of literacy, numeracy, and logic and the capacity to think critically – skills that were once thought to be needed by only a select few.

Points for Discussion/Recommendations:

As we examine the current graduation requirements, the system should strongly consider:

- Increasing the graduation requirement in math from three units to four units. An additional four units or their equivalent in an academic concentration in either mathematics/science or the humanities above the academic core should be strongly considered.
- Ensuring that the four credits in Language Arts are in the college-prep/ honors courses in which students are engaged in significant reading and writing assignments.
- Ensuring that the three credits in science are lab courses, including at least two in high-level courses such as college-prep Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Anatomy/Physiology.
- Ensuring that all required course units are taught each school year.
- Ensuring that students in their senior year spend at least half their time enrolled in higher level academic courses, including mathematics and science.
- Expanding the opportunity for high school students to experience the challenges of college-level work. Increasing opportunities for dual enrollment will permit students to meet admission requirements in the junior or senior year.
- Adopt standards for dual enrollment programs to ensure postsecondary programs are appropriate in meeting dual enrollment requirements.
- Providing options for service and work-based learning opportunities for credit. High-quality career programs that integrate academic standards with challenging technical content serve many students well.
- Requiring all seniors to showcase an accumulated portfolio of their work throughout high school, including a senior project demonstrating their

capabilities for research, creative thinking, rigorous analysis, and clear written and oral communication.

- Requiring end-of-course examinations across all core curricular areas and mandating that the exams are incorporated into the student's grade.
- Ensuring that all core curricular areas are closely aligned with the ACT standards.

Career and Technical Education

The career and technical education programs offered through the Department of Workforce Education (DWE) are essential to Arkansas' educational system and are critical to the state's ability to compete in a global economy.

Career and technical education is provided at a variety of settings and levels and benefits students by providing

- a relevant, contextual learning environment for development of higher-level academic and technical skills and knowledge and specific industry certification in an occupational field necessary to succeed in occupations and careers;
- cross-functional or workplace basics necessary for success in any occupation or career (such as problem solving, teamwork, and the ability to find and use information) as well as skills for balancing family and work responsibilities; and
- the context in which traditional academic skills can be enhanced.

The high school-level career preparation is provided through the state standards requirement that all school districts provide a minimum of three units within a career focus/program of study from three of career and technical education's five occupational areas – Agriculture Science and Technology,

Business/Marketing Technology Education, Family and Consumer Sciences Education, Technical and Professional Education, and Medical Professions Education. During the 2001-2002 school year:

- 43 career focuses/programs of study and 221 courses provided the core and optional electives in the five occupational areas
- 37 school districts offered five or more units to their students on campus
- 110 school districts offered five or more units through a secondary area vocational center
- 150 schools offered three to four units on campus
- Eight school districts did not meet the standards requirement

Also in 2001-2002, 133,874 students in grades 7-12 were enrolled in career and technical education programs.

Points for Discussion/Recommendations:

The three agencies that oversee education initiatives in Arkansas must act in concert to accomplish a seamless system. Initiatives that are fragmented or developed in isolation will not be successful.

Communication must not only be constant but decisions effecting policy and funding must submit to the test of supporting common and agreed-upon goals.

The following recommendations are student-centered and should be a framework for assessing programs of adequate scope and sequence and to assure equity in standards and accountability throughout our public education system:

- All K-16 curriculum frameworks, content standards, and assessments should include education about careers through career awareness, exploration, and preparation.

- Efforts should be made to encourage all students to take the pre-ACT assessments as a part of career planning, this should include EXPLORE, PLAN, and the ACT. The state shall provide funding for PLAN and EXPLORE in all school districts. Students not on grade level should be supported with personal education plans. Career and technical instructors should be provided inservice training to support these student needs and programs developed to assist students in reaching grade level skills.
- The development of four-year career plans should be required of all schools. These plans should be reviewed annually and should involve parents.
- Joint career focus/program of study development should be completed through efforts of local schools, the ADE and the DWE.
- State agencies should annually monitor middle school curriculum requirements and high school curriculum requirements in the *Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools* as identified in the *Program Policies and Procedures for Secondary Programs, Adult Skill Training Classes and Secondary Area Vocational Centers*.
- Efforts must be made to provide all students access to Secondary Area Vocational Centers and develop or expand other avenues allowing students access to career and technical education programs – such as internship, youth apprenticeship, distance learning, and web based instruction.
- Business and industry partnerships should be required for all local and state career and technical education programs for the purpose of program evaluation, direction, and its relevance to the workplace; eliminating instruction or courses not relevant to the worksite as shown by accountability data. Validation of this process should be required for program approval, which is granted/renewed on a five-year cycle.
- Skill improvement measured by end-of-course assessment must be required

of all schools and secondary area vocational centers based on industry-reviewed course standards.

- Academic improvement of career and technical students measured through focused assessments related to skill proficiency should be monitored as a factor of program approval.
- Workplace readiness skills, such as problem solving, leadership, and working in teams must be an integral part of the curriculum frameworks for all occupational programs and delivered through career and technical student organizations.
- Successful completion and graduation with an identified career focus/program of study should be monitored as a factor of program approval.
- Articulated credit with postsecondary institutions should be a component of all approved career focus/programs of study.
- The minimum equipment necessary for instruction must be funded by the state and provided on a seven-year replacement level.
- Programs must be required to conform to and adopt existing industry standards and certifications.
- Compliance with and annual monitoring of the state standards requirement that all school districts provide a minimum of three units within a career focus/program of study from three of career and technical education's five occupational areas.
- Technical and academic skills should be monitored annually and reported by occupational program area and by district.
- More distance-learning and web-based instruction should be considered.
- Schools should consider providing all seventh grade students with personal living skills currently taught through the Family and Consumer Sciences' Family Work Connections semester course.

- As an integral component of the state's total education mission, it must be committed to continuous improvement, attention to industry certification, and development of highly qualified teachers. If industry standards and certifications exist programs should be required to conform to these standards for approval.

Governance and Structure Subcommittee

Members of the Subcommittee on Governance and Structure included Senator Dave Bisbee, Chairman; Abraham Carpenter, Dana Newberg, Representative Olin Cook, Winston Simpson, and Senator Jodie Mahony.

Overview

The Lake View lawsuit and Judge Kilgore's final order (finding in favor of the Lake View School District) shine a bright light on two things that are seemingly mutually exclusive: First, the Arkansas Constitution charges *the State shall ever maintain a general, suitable, and efficient system of free public schools and shall adopt all suitable means to secure to the people the advantages and opportunities of education* – State responsibility. Second, the people of local school districts have traditionally made decisions concerning the welfare and education of their children, owned and maintained buildings, and in almost every aspect controlled their children's education – local control. For any education reform to be successful, how we structure the governing of public schools must address both State responsibility and local control in a positive manner.

Section One of this report does not intend to address how a particular governance structure is put in place (i.e., appointed or elected) or even what that governance structure should be. It will address what a successful governance structure for public education must accomplish.

Section Two will address particular issues the legislature may consider.

Section One

In the Alma vs. Dupree lawsuit and every lawsuit since, including Lake View, the courts have confirmed that the State (and more specifically, the Arkansas General Assembly) is responsible for assuring the implementation of the language of the Constitution concerning education. In the most recent case (Lake View), Judge Kilgore states that the State must see that every child has an opportunity to receive an adequate education. This includes construction and maintenance of facilities, teacher salaries, and special circumstances. In short, the State, and ultimately its legislature, is responsible.

On the subject of local control, parents want to feel that they have control of their children's education. The citizens of the State tend to trust their local school board, superintendent, principals, and teachers more than they trust the State to deliver an equitable and adequate education to their children. Historically, as representatives of the public, Arkansas legislators have favored the concept of local control, that government closest to the people works best. Except for education experts, virtually no one believes that better decisions come from Little Rock than from local districts.

This does not mean that state responsibility and local control must be in conflict, but for public school governance to be structured correctly, the following principles must be recognized:

- A. The State is responsible for virtually everything that deals with public education (reference Federal and State Constitutions and Lake View lawsuit)
- B. The State can delegate authority to local school districts (same reference)
- C. The State can never delegate responsibility (See principle A)
- D. If the State is to delegate authority (and it must) to local school districts, the State must hold local school districts accountable and have a plan for the State to intervene if a school district fails academically or fiscally.

Section Two

The following recommendations may be addressed by the legislature:

1. Establish an “office of accountability” as a separate entity from the State Department of Education. Look to Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee, South Carolina, West Virginia, and Oklahoma for lessons learned. (*Rationale: Current Department responsibilities of program development, implementation, and evaluation provide inadequate segregation of duties setting up potential conflicts of interest.*)
2. Establish a method to gather, analyze, and report management information to the Governor, General Assembly, the State Education Agencies, Employment Security Division, Arkansas Department of Economic Development, etc. for the purpose of guiding state and institutional policy development for education and economic development. (*Rationale: Each independent entity named above gathers, analyzes, and reports management information to their respective governing institutions, the Governor, and the General Assembly. Cross-agency sharing and analysis of information and collaborative planning accompanied by joint reporting to policy-makers or at least reporting based on knowledge of other agency plans would be helpful to policy-makers and state agency staff members. The result would be more efficient and effective utilization of state resources in policy development.*)
3. Determine how the State will assume responsibility for existing debt and administer a state school facilities program. Use existing funding sources (property tax and debt service supplement) as a primary source of funding. (*Rationale: The last three lawsuits order this.*)
4. Provide a greater co-op oversight role for State Board of Education/ADE with regard to state responsibilities for student performance, curriculum, instruction, assessment, staff development, and co-op management functions, perhaps by giving the State Board of Education responsibility for accepting or

rejecting an employment recommendation for Director of a co-op from a co-op Board of Directors and the authority to remove a co-op director. (Rationale: *Since Co-ops are intermediate service units established by the State Board of Education, Co-op staff members should be an integral part of the staff that the State Board of Education oversees in development and implementation of programs designed to deliver education services mandated by the Arkansas Constitution. The current governance structure, at times, places Co-op staff members in a blocking of foot-dragging role as school district staff members resist State Board initiatives.*)

5. Provide enabling legislation to allow a third type of school district – high school. (Rationale: *The opportunity to create high school districts would allow some districts to continue operating elementary districts while being an integral part of the local governance structure of a high school. Current law provides for elementary and P/K-12 districts. The current law provides no participation in governance of the P/K-12 districts for citizens of elementary districts to which they send their high school students.*)
6. Provide local school boards the authority to set teachers' and administrators' salaries based on market forces and performance. The state should maintain a minimum salary law. (Rationale: *As school boards attempt to employ highly qualified staff members to deliver educational services required by the state or desired by citizens of the district, they should be granted the discretion to meet the demands of the marketplace and to reward meritorious performance. A state law would ensure that there is an acceptable minimum salary for certified personnel no matter what the local circumstances.*)

Conclusion

The State, by way of the legislative process, must put in place a governing structure for public education, recognizing that, in the end, the State is always

responsible. That governing system should, to the fullest extent possible, give control of education to the local school districts. Loss of local control must be a quick and certain result if a local school district fails to educate its children. The State Department of Education is an enforcing agency in addition to a service agency. In meeting its responsibility, the legislature should provide language to enable appropriate execution through law and rules and regulations to determine the following:

- A. The State's responsibility for what should be taught and when;
- B. The school's responsibility for who should teach at its schools and how;
- C. Appropriate use of testing to determine whether children are learning;
- D. The appropriate amount of control given to local school districts and accountability expected from those districts. Authority should be given in proportion to a local school district's meeting of standards;
- E. Whether a local school district has the opportunity to be successful;
- F. A plan to educate children if a local school district cannot meet the standards.

Ultimately, the question is simple: Are the children learning? The answer is far more complex. The Arkansas Constitution declares the State responsible for the education of its children, but the State cannot meet its responsibility without the support of its people.

Respectfully submitted,

Senator Dave Bisbee

Certified Staff Subcommittee

Members of the Certified Staff Subcommittee included Dr. Rhonda Richards, Dr. Lilia Compadre, Dr. Steve Floyd, Dr. Calvin Johnson, and Ms. Mary McCutchen, teacher.

Introduction



The Certified Staff Subcommittee reviewed research and conducted studies to develop recommendations for consideration in areas related to: 1) teacher and administrator licensure; 2) professional development for P-12 educators and administrators; 3) teacher salaries P-16, and 4) teacher recruitment and retention.

A partial list of reference materials used as background information is included in the Appendix along with surveys and other materials developed by committee members.

Teacher and Administrator Licensure



1. Improve Communication Regarding Licensure Issues

Background:

In Arkansas universities, the turnover in the deans of the schools/colleges of education has been remarkable during the past 5-8 years. Many of these deans are new to Arkansas and have not fully understood the changes in teacher and administrator licensure that have been made by the State Board of Education and the Department of Education. Others that are more familiar with the changes—Arkansas Department of Education staff, other deans, and

members of the TLAC—may have assumed that the deans were brought up to speed on these various issues. As a result, there has been an inconsistency in the awareness and understanding of numerous decisions that have been made in teacher licensure.

Recommendations:

- Communication among schools of education and the Arkansas Department of Education needs to be improved.
 - Develop an orientation plan for new deans;
 - Utilize the dean's listserve to provide minutes of ADE meetings that impact teacher education and licensure, such as minutes and deliberations of the Teacher Licensure Advisory Committee (TLAC).

2. Review Arkansas Non-Traditional Licensure Program

Background:

The Arkansas Department of Education sponsors the Non-Traditional Licensure Program. The purpose of the Non-Traditional Licensure Program (NTLP) at the Arkansas Department of Education is to give talented and highly motivated men and women who have college degrees in fields other than education an opportunity to obtain the proper credentials, and become a teacher in an Arkansas public school.

The requirement for entrance into any of the eighteen teacher education programs in higher education institutions as mandated by the Arkansas State Board of Education is a cumulative GPA of 2.5. The GPA requirement for entrance into the NTLP is 2.00. No clear reason for a lower NTLP GPA standard than required for entrance into university teacher education programs was provided the subcommittee.

Recommendations:

- Determine avenues for higher education involvement with the Arkansas Department of Education non-traditional teaching candidates;
- Change GPA admission requirement for non-traditional licensure program entry (2.0) to align with Arkansas State Board requirement for admission to traditional licensure programs (2.5).

3. Monitor State Licensure Examinations

Background:

Arkansas educators are accustomed to receiving extensive data analysis from testing companies. For example, all sectors of education, K-16, are familiar with the depth of material and information provided by ACT. This information enables schools to analyze the results of the ACT exams and know how this data can be used for program improvement. Similar analysis of data is not available to teacher preparation institutions that wish to use PRAXIS scores from ETS for formative program improvement. It is difficult to understand why this type of data analysis cannot be provided by ETS.

Another issue of concern is the use of PRAXIS I. There are students who have clearly demonstrated their competency in the skills that are assessed on the PRAXIS I exam that make taking the PRAXIS I a redundant exercise. Four Southern Regional Education Board states—Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, and West Virginia¹—for example, allow students who have scored at least a 21 on the ACT to enter the teacher preparation program. On the other hand, there are students who come to college poorly prepared for college-level work. For them, having to pass the PRAXIS I exam to gain entry to the teacher education program is intimidating and frustrating. Many of these are often minority students who give up on their desire to teach. At a time when the state is earnestly

¹ Standards for Teachers in the SREB States, 2001.

seeking minority teachers, it seems to be wise public policy to consider circumstances under which a student still must pass the PRAXIS I in order to be able to do the internship, but not to enter the program. This would allow more time for the student to develop the basic skills that are required to be an effective teacher. Thus, it is recommended that: (1) criteria be set to determine what level of performance on the ACT (composite score) should be allowed to satisfy the requirement of passing the PRAXIS I exam for admission into teacher education programs; and (2) the specific circumstances under which a student could enter into the teacher education program without having successfully taken the PRAXIS I exam, but still meet that standard at a later point in time.

Examinations that are currently adopted and in use in Arkansas need continuous scrutiny and study. For example, the currently adopted PRAXIS II Middle Grades examination is a generalist test. Is this test sufficient to test content knowledge? Also, how are principal candidates performing on the newly adopted SLLA examination?

Recommendations:

- Discuss with Education Testing Service (ETS) the data analysis provided and needed for institutions that prepare teachers;
- Examine the current use of PRAXIS I as a requirement for entry into teacher education programs in Arkansas;
- Review the Middle Level licensure examination in terms of adequate content coverage in the areas of language arts, social studies, science, and mathematics;
- Review and disaggregate data from the School Leaders Licensure Assessment (SLLA) by gender, ethnicity, and other relevant demographics following the first year of administration to determine success rates of persons who plan to enter administrative positions.

4. Clarify Process for the Additional Licensure Program (ALP)

Background:

Arkansas recently adopted a system for allowing educators to add additional areas of licensure or endorsement to a current teaching license. With this process, called Additional Licensure Program (ALP), teachers/administrators may add additional areas of licensure by completing requirements as defined on the new additional licensure plans.

Recommendation:

- Clarify role of higher education in determining the competencies and standards for additional licensure programs.

5. Further Licensing Issues and Considerations

Background:

As the context for education continues to change and as reforms sweep the horizon, it is necessary to project what licensure adjustments or additions are needed for the future.

The new reauthorization of TITLE I requires that all teachers hired in 2002 must be highly qualified, and that within three years all paraprofessionals hired with TITLE I funds must have completed at least two years of college, obtained an associate's degree or higher, or met a rigorous quality standard established at the local level.² In Arkansas, assistant teachers working in state-funded pre-kindergarten programs for four-year olds must have an associate's degree or Child Development Associate (CDA) training. Licensure requirements for these professionals, however, do not exist in Arkansas.³ Currently SREB is conducting

² "An ESEA Primer" in Education Week, January 9, 2002

³ AFT Study of Paraprofessional Certification, 2001

a study, due for release in July 2002 that determines what the SREB states are doing to license paraprofessionals and how these paraprofessionals are being encouraged to pursue four-year degrees.

Additionally, pre-service teacher candidates need to be prepared to teach reading and literacy skills regardless of their intended level of licensure. A recent study conducted in Arkansas higher education institutions that prepare teachers⁴ it was discovered that few teacher preparation programs include courses in teaching reading at the middle or secondary levels. With the current drop in reading scores as reflected on the 8th grade Arkansas Benchmark examination it is important to ensure that future teachers receive strategies for improving reading instruction at all levels.

Recommendations:

- Examine the feasibility of establishing a licensure level for paraprofessionals and others who have two-year degree and who meet other criteria for licensure as established by the Arkansas Board of Education.
- For all teacher education degree candidates, require institutions of higher education to include coursework and/or experiences in the teaching of reading at all levels of the P-12 curriculum that address the reading process; strategies for diagnosing and remediating reading difficulties, and reading across the curriculum.

6. Professional Development of P-12 Educators Issues and Recommendations

Background:

Among the activities authorized by 6-15-403 (1) (b) is that the Arkansas State Board of Education has the authority to “establish professional

⁴ Study of Arkansas Teacher Programs, October 2001

development.”⁵ The primary purpose of the regulations for professional development is to improve teaching and learning so that all students demonstrate proficiency on the state academic standards and to provide direction for school districts in planning and in implementing professional development.⁶

Recommendations:

- Add ten additional days of professional development to each teacher’s contract (over a multi-year period if sufficient funds are not available for a one-year implementation) and examine the feasibility of extending teacher contracts to accommodate additional professional development from 30 hours to 60 hours without removing teachers from the classroom during student contact days.
- Increase amount of credit from college courses toward meeting the 60 hours requirement to 15 clock hours.
- Encourage the adoption of year-round calendars that target professional development focused on instruction and student learning, particularly in literacy and mathematics.
- Implement professional development initiatives that take place over an extended period of time, rather than a single “shotgun” approach with little, if any, follow-up.
- Support and encourage National Board Certification, which is increasingly being recognized as both a symbol of professional teaching excellence and a forceful professional development experience.
- Ensure that high-quality professional development opportunities are accessible to teachers who serve the most vulnerable students or for those who teach in schools with documented needs.

⁵ Act 999 of 1999, Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and Arkansas Code Ann. 6-15-1001 through 6-15-1006.

⁶ Arkansas Department of Education Rules and Regulations Governing Professional Development, June 2000.

- Fund professional development for any teacher willing to retrain in the high need areas of mathematics, science, foreign language/ESL, and special education and count all earned college hours in high need areas, except for those mandated by the school district for their personnel, as meeting professional development requirements.
- Develop a State Professional Standards and Practices Board for the purpose of reviewing applications for licensure renewal. This recommendation supports the work of the Teacher Licensure Advisory Committee.
- Create specialized teacher academies similar to the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching (N.C.C.A.T.) to provide professional development opportunities.
- Implement a system of accountability for professional development that assesses the value and effectiveness of professional development activities and the use of funds expended for professional development.
- Stimulate and support site-based initiatives so that professional development is more likely to have a greater impact on practice because it is closely linked to school initiatives to improve practice.

7. Improving Teacher Salaries

Background:

According to the SREB report, *Teacher Salaries: An Update on Average Salaries and Recent Legislative Actions in the SREB States, June, 2001*, changes in salary averages are influenced by a number of factors beyond annual pay raises--retirement of veteran teachers, employment of new teachers, and the addition of new teaching positions. This considered, however, Arkansas ranked 13th out of 16 SREB states in 1999-2000 in average teacher salaries with an

annual average salary of \$33,386. Even when adjusted for the cost of living, Arkansas average teacher salaries are only 90% of the national average.⁷

Although an increase in teachers' salaries will more than likely depend on a new revenue source, it is vital that the issue of salaries is addressed to ensure that Arkansas is able to place a highly qualified teacher in every classroom and that the best and brightest are recruited (and retained) to teach in Arkansas.

It is further recognized that some areas of Arkansas have been hard to staff in teaching positions for a variety of reasons. After criteria are established for identifying what variables constitute hard-to-staff schools, it is important to offer incentives to attract teachers to these regions.

Additionally, many schools in Arkansas are performing at levels that exceed expectations. A system to reward these schools should be pursued, particularly as related to the Measuring Performance Honors (M.P.H.) program recently adopted by the Arkansas Board of Education. Thirteen of the 16 SREB states have school incentive programs with monetary awards in place and with awards being made to schools in 2001-2002.⁸ The rewards, although going to the schools, should be distributed to teachers.

Salary issues are pervasive at all levels of education, from preschool education to post-secondary education. For example, the average beginning salary for an Arkansas public school teacher is \$24,295, while the average beginning salary of a preschool teacher is \$14,560. The average Arkansas teachers' salary is \$34,729. Most Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) staff members providing staff development and technical assistance to teachers and administrators is \$34,685 when pro-rated to 185 days to parallel teachers' contracts. Average salaries reported for assistant professors teaching in education departments at many of the state public institutions range from

⁷ *Average teacher salaries in the SREB states as a percentage of the U.S. average and adjusted for the cost of living in each state, 2000.*

⁸ SREB Report: Quality Teachers--Can Incentive Policies Make A Difference, 2002.

\$37,000 to \$41,000. A comprehensive review of education salaries should be undertaken in Arkansas and recommendations for salary increases developed for the full continuum of teaching P-16.

Recommendations:

- Increase minimum salary for beginning teachers (Bachelor's degree, no experience) to \$26,000 immediately;
- Support high and improved performing schools with monetary incentive awards made to the school and then distributed to teachers;
- Develop salary recommendations for the full continuum of teaching from P-16 (preschool through college).

8. Teacher Recruitment and Retention

Background:

Many states have implemented teacher mentoring programs to assist in retaining teachers. Mentors for these programs are selected based on experience or some level of achievement, and many receive additional pay ranging from \$300 to \$1000. In this manner, a mentoring program serves the needs of the novice teacher and the veteran teacher, perhaps retaining both longer in the profession.⁹

Incentives, such as loans and grants, should also be available to recruit students into the profession, particularly in critical needs areas. Furthermore, programs should be developed to entice place-bound teaching paraprofessionals to complete a four-year teacher preparation degree program.

Recommendations:

- Review the short-range and long range plans to address teacher shortages in geographic and subject critical needs areas through the Additional Licensure Program.

⁹ SREB Report: Quality Teachers--Can Incentive Policies Make A Difference, 2002.

- Provide scholarship programs to paraprofessionals who are seeking teacher licensure in Arkansas.
- Continue to provide high quality coaching and mentoring programs for new teachers that also provide career advancement opportunities for veteran teachers.
- Extend the Freshman/Sophomore Minority Grant Program (\$1,000 per year) into the junior and senior years. [Note: Legislation (ACA 6-81-801-810) was enacted in 1989 for this purpose, but was not funded.]
- Extend the Emergency Secondary Education Loan Program to other current emergency shortage areas, to include middle level certification. This amount should be increased from the current \$2,500 per year to \$5,000.

Certified Staff Subcommittee Report

Appendix

Faculty Salaries by 4-Year Institute and Unit (Fall 2001)
Compiled: August 19, 2002

University	Education -CIP-13-	Liberal Arts & Sciences, General Studies and Humanities -CIP-24-*	Biological Sciences & Life Sciences -CIP-26-	Social Sciences & History -CIP-45-
Arkansas State University -Jonesboro • Instructor • Assistant Professor	• 34,573 • 41,998	• 27,770 • 39,214	• 27,737 • 38,000	• 29,857 • 37,950
Arkansas Tech. University • Instructor • Assistant Professor	• NONE • 41,333	• 29,866 • 38,017	• NONE • 39,447	• 31,000 • 38,105
Henderson State University • Instructor • Assistant Professor	• 34,913 • 37,493	• 31,012 • 36,537	• 31,001 • 36,414	• NONE • 39,612
Southern Arkansas University – Magnolia • Instructor • Assistant Professor	• 35,709 • 43,380	• 34,309 • 33,464	• 30,852 • NONE	• NONE • 43,910
University of Arkansas -Fayetteville • Instructor • Assistant Professor	• NONE • 42,122	• NONE • 45,363	• NONE • 44,289	• 35,239 • 44,902
University of Arkansas -Little Rock • Instructor • Assistant Professor	• NONE • NONE	• 41,685 • NONE	• 28,500 • NONE	• 28,000 • NONE
University of Arkansas -Monticello • Instructor • Assistant Professor	• 31,396 • 39,573	• 29,778 • 35,690	• 22,735 • NONE	• NONE • 34,305

University of Arkansas -Pine Bluff				
• Instructor	• 40,965	• 30,802	• NONE	• 31,671
• Assistant Professor	• 40,095	• 37,500	• 42,000	• 39,247

University of Central Arkansas				
• Instructor	• 34,225	• 33,957	• NONE	• 28,500
• Assistant Professor	• 40,533	• 41,635	• 43,500	• 43,112

SOURCE: ADHE Higher Education Faculty Salaries Database.

*If Liberal Arts & Sciences was not indicated, English Language and Literature (23) was used for salary comparison.

Arkansas Public School Teacher Income 2000-2001

	BA 0	BA +15	MA 0	Average Salary
K-12 Educators	\$24,295	\$31,536	\$27,038	\$34,729

SOURCE: ADE FY 01-02 Salary Schedule Data

Arkansas Child Care Income Information 1999-2000

	Full-Time Teacher		Part-Time Teacher		Full-Time Aides		Part-Time Aides		Full-Time Directors		Part-Time Directors	
	Start	Max	Start	Max	Start	Max	Start	Max	Start	Max	Start	Max
Average Hourly Income	7.00	8.37	5.92	7.04	5.71	6.72	5.50	6.67	9.31	11.71	8.14	9.94
Annual Income**	14,560	17,410	6,157	7,322	11,877	13,978	5,720	6,937	19,365	24,357	8,466	10,388

**Based on a 2,080 hour full-time year, 1,040 hour part-time year.

SOURCE: Executive Summary of the 1999-2000 Statewide Licensed Child Care Facility Survey. Arkansas Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, Arkansas Department of Human Services

Arkansas Department of Education Employees Income Information 2000-2001 (Salary Grade 21)

*Average Grade 21 ADE salary is \$44,247.34 with a 236 workday year to prorate that salary to a 185-day teacher contract. The resulting comparable salary is \$34,685.41.

Public School Program Advisor	Education Program Analyst	Public School Admin. Advisor	Senior Programmer Analyst	Accounting Supervisor II	Applications and Systems Analyst	Education Program Admin.
43,916.42	44,116.95	45,579.28	38,011.17	43,169.15	38,219.24	48,211.30

SOURCE: Arkansas State Employee Salary Database.

**Paraprofessional Certification
American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
(revised 11/28/01)**

**Status of state paraprofessional standards
and certification regulations**

ALABAMA	LETTER OF APPROVAL Required. 30 hours of formal training; permanent
ALASKA	NONE
ARIZONA	NONE
ARKANSAS	NONE
CALIFORNIA	NONE
COLORADO	NONE
CONNECTICUT	NONE
DELAWARE	STATE PERMIT Requirements are not specified. Must have "evaluated experience and training" and "skills relevant to the position"; permanent.
FLORIDA	Legislation outlining career ladder with LEA option (not mandatory) passed in 1998. Current regulations specify standards and procedures that apply to teacher aides including health, age, knowledge of policies & instructional practices.
GEORGIA	STATE LICENSE Two years of college or 50 hours is required; renewable every 3 years, requires additional 50 hours instruction or inservice.
HAWAII	NONE
IDAHO	Special education--state standards for knowledge and performance. Recommendations for orientation and training in first year of employment.
ILLINOIS	STATE CERTIFICATE Completion of a teacher aide training program approved by the superintendent or 30 semester hours required; permanent. Legislation pending for revision and creation of task force to study issue.

INDIANA	Special education--appropriately trained paraprofessionals may work under the direction of a teacher or related services personnel. Public agencies must provide preservice and inservice training.
IOWA	New hires must complete inservice in first year of employment. LEAs must have staff development plan that includes paraeducators. Special education--preservice and inservice requirements. Certificate--granted to those who complete a recognized paraeducator preparation program with 90 clock hours of training.
KANSAS	STATE PERMIT Special education only Effective May 2000--no longer in state regulations but districts must follow these standards in order to receive state reimbursement of approximately \$8,000 per special education paraprofessional. Level 1--20 hours, renewable every year. Level 2--30 semester hours & 450 hours inservice & 2 years experience at level 1; renew every 3 years. Level 3--60 semester hours or AA degree & 900 hours inservice & 3 years at Level 2; renew every 3 years.
KENTUCKY	NONE
LOUISIANA	NONE
MAINE	STATE CERTIFICATE Education technician/level I--high school diploma, orientation, ongoing inservice. Education technician/level II--2 years college & inservice. Education technician/level III--3 years college & inservice. All are renewed yearly.
MARYLAND	State task force report recommending licensure standards presented to state Legislature in 1998; no LEA mandate. (2001 - development of state regulations in progress).
MASSACHUSETTS	NONE
MICHIGAN	NONE
MINNESOTA	NONE
MISSISSIPPI	Assistant teacher: complete the reading, language arts & math portions of a current nationally normed eighth grade standardized achievement test (exempt if holding a teaching certificate); HS diploma or GED; participate in annual training provided by the district.

MISSOURI	STATE REQUIREMENT Instructional aides only, 60 hours college required, renewed yearly
MONTANA	NONE
NEBRASKA	NONE
NEVADA	NONE
NEW HAMPSHIRE	STATE CERTIFICATE HS diploma, 1 year experience; complete a 2-week orientation session on special education. Certified paraprofessionals must complete 50 hours in areas determined by the professional development master plan for their district.
NEW JERSEY	Paraprofessional positions are approved by the county superintendent of schools who must develop job descriptions and standards for appointment.
NEW MEXICO	STATE REQUIREMENT A paraprofessional must complete a training program designed by the local school district to meet competencies defined by the state. Training varies according to district and how it uses paraprofessionals.
NEW YORK	STATE CERTIFIED Teacher aide: must fulfill civil service requirements; responsibilities are non-teaching. Teaching assistant--temporary license: HS diploma; responsibilities are instructional in nature. Teaching assistant--continuing certificate: 6 hours of collegiate study; one year of experience; responsibilities are instructional in nature. Teaching assistant--level I: HS diploma; satisfactory level of performance on the New York State Teacher Certification Examination Test. Teaching assistant--level II: all requirements of level I plus 6 hours of collegiate study. Teaching assistant--level III: all requirements of level II plus 18 hours of collegiate study. Teaching assistant--preprofessional certificate: all requirements of level III plus must be matriculated in a program registered as leading to teacher certification.
NORTH CAROLINA	NONE
NORTH DAKOTA	NONE

OHIO	STATE PERMIT Education aide--"Skills sufficient to do the job," 1-year permit. Education assistant--HS diploma and participation in unspecified inservice training under a 1-year permit; renewed every 4 years.
OKLAHOMA	Legislation passed 1999/in process at state Department of Education.
OREGON	Under discussion at state Department of Education.
PENNSYLVANIA	STATE CERTIFIED Private schools only.
RHODE ISLAND	STATE REQUIREMENT High school diploma; training at discretion of district (Rhode Island Federation of Teachers is working to revise)
SOUTH CAROLINA	HS diploma, participation in preservice and inservice training programs for aides.
SOUTH DAKOTA	NONE
TENNESSEE	NONE
TEXAS	STATE CERTIFIED Education aide--HS diploma and experience working with children. Education aide II--15 hours of college or "demonstrated proficiency." Education aide III--30 hours of college & 3 years as aide I or II. Legislation introduced for revision, 1999.
UTAH	IN PROCESS
VERMONT	STATE CERTIFIED Level I--6 hours college, renewed yearly. Level II--30 hours college & 1 year experience, renewed every 2 years. Level III--60 hours college & 2 years experience, renewed every 3 years. Level IV--90 hours college, renew every 4 years. Personnel standards for paraprofessionals will be included in special education rules in 2002.
VIRGINIA	NONE
WASHINGTON	Current system defined but not mandatory.

WEST VIRGINIA	NONE
WISCONSIN	STATE LICENSE (Special education only) 3 years college or 3 years supervising youth activities or some combination that can include 2 years at voc-tech school specializing in child care, renewed every 5 years.
WYOMING	NONE

American Federation of Teachers, AFL•CIO
555 New Jersey Avenue, NW - Washington, DC 20001

**Result of the Advisory Committee Survey on
Teacher Preparation Programs in Arkansas
Fall 2001**

The following survey was conducted to obtain information from teacher preparation programs in Arkansas to support the work of the Advisory Committee convened by Act 1386 of 2001, House Bill 2169.

Question 1. How are Smart Start and Smart Step initiatives incorporated into your teacher preparation curriculum? Check all that apply.

Question	ATU	HSU	Williams	ASU	UALR	SAU	UCA	Ouachita	UAM	John Brown	UAPB	Univ of Ozarks	Harding	Lyon
1. Guest speakers present information on Smart Start/Smart Step.		X	X	X		X	X		X		X	X	X	X
2. Teacher candidates participate in Smart Start/Smart Step conferences.						X							X	
3. Strategies from Smart Start/Smart Step are incorporated into the reading curriculum.	X		X		X	X	X	X	X			X	X	
4. Strategies from Smart Start/Smart Step are incorporated into the math curriculum.						X	X	X						
5. Teacher candidates are provided with materials from Smart Start/ Smart Step					X		X		X				X	X
6. Teacher education faculty attend meetings, conferences on Smart Start/Smart Step.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
7. Teacher education faculty provide training, etc. on Smart Start/Smart Step.	X												X	
COMMENT:	Information about Smart Start/Smart Step conferences need to be sent to Higher Education institutions on a regular basis.													

Question 2. Estimate the number of clock hours (by year) teacher candidates spend in both field and internship placements prior to graduation.

Response	ATU	HSU	Williams	ASU	UALR	SAU	UCA	Ouachita	UAM	John Brown	UAPB	Univ of Ozarks	Harding	Lyon
Freshman	30	*-	-	0	-	-	0	20	6	2	15	8	16	-
Sophomore	30	30	20	30	-	20	24	30	40	24	15	45	31	-
Junior	30	30	**310	45-192	60-120	74	20	70	80	90-120	75	180	65	40
Senior	490	480	620	560	450-630	420	700	450	690	640	360	640	600	480
Fifth Year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Graduate	-	-	-	-	580	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

* Indicates that a response was not provided. These are not included in the averages.

** Indicates an outlier that is not factored into average.

Question 3. How many credit hours in teaching reading do teacher candidates complete as part of the approved programs in the following areas?

Response	ATU	HSU	Williams	ASU	UALR	SAU	UCA	Ouachita	UAM	John Brown	UAPB	Univ of Ozarks	Harding	Lyon
P-4 Early Childhood	10	6	6	6	9	8	9	9	6	6	6	6	6	6
Middle Level 4-8	8	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	3	3	6	6	6
7-12 Secondary	2	0	3	0	3	*-	3	-	3	3	0	0	-	3
P-12 Programs	2	0	-	-	-	9	0	-	3	3	9	0	-	-

- Indicates that a response was not provided. These are not included in averages.

Question 4. How many college level math credits (content and methods) do teacher candidates complete in the following programs?

Response	ATU	HSU	Williams	ASU	UALR	SAU	UCA	Ouachita	UAM	John Brown	UAPB	Univ of Ozarks	Harding	Lyon
P-4 Early Childhood	9	11	9	12	-	9	12	9	6	9	12	12	8	6
Middle Level Math/Sci	15	21	21	23	21	24	26	21	32	23	24	20	14	41
Middle Level/Lang Arts/Soc St	6	11	9	9	12	8	6	9	6	9	6	12	8	6
7-12 Secondary Math	36	34	-	42	33	49	67	35	42	36	24	44	38	41
7-12 Secondary (not Math)	3	3	-	3	3	3	3	-	3	3	3	3	8	6
P-12 Programs	3	2	3	-	-	9	3	-	3	3	6	3	3	-
OTHER													Sped Ed 8	

Question 5. How are the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) propositions incorporated into your teacher education curriculum? Please check all that apply.

Response	ATU	HSU	Williams	ASU	UALR	SAU	UCA	Ouachita	UAM	John Brown	UAPB	Univ of Ozarks	Harding	Lyon
1. NBPTS is not addressed.		X									X			
2. NBPTS infused into master's coursework.	X				X		X		X				X	
3. NBPTS is covered in a specific course.				X					X					
4. NBPTS is infused in undergrad curriculum.			X	X	X			X		SOON			X	X
5. Faculty trained as facilitators.	X			X					X				X	
6. OTHER		1								2			3	

1. Hot Topics Day during Internship through trained faculty facilitators.

2. Faculty attend NBPTS conferences.

3. NBPTS support

To: State Board of Education Advisory Committee (SBAC)
From: Winston F. Simpson
Subject: Subcommittee Reports – Comments Additional Issues
Date: June 3, 2002 (**Revised July 12, 2002**)

The purposes of this memo are to convey ideas I think the SBAC should discuss and, more importantly, to encourage each SBAC member to offer up any state policy idea that might improve the quality of Arkansas education. Each SBAC member has rich experience and education base from which to offer ideas for improvement. The opportunity to offer your voice through the forum of SBAC is coming to a close. Please do not let the opportunity pass without placing promising ideas on the table for discussion. Join the committee discussion as we finalize a set of recommendations for the General Assembly and other state policymakers.

1. Governance Structure Subcommittee Report

Recommendation #4: Recommend requiring State Board of Education confirmation/approval for employment, contract renewal/extension or termination of Co-op Directors.

Recommendation #5: Modify the recommendation to specify that all territory within the state shall be in one and only one school district operating a high school and that the state required property tax (Uniform Tax Rate – now 25 mills) be prorated between elementary districts and high school districts in such a manner that the total state required property tax (elementary district plus high school district) does not exceed the state required tax rate on property located in P-12 districts.

2. Certified Staff Subcommittee Report

Teachers' Salary Recommendation: Recommend increasing the beginning salary on the Minimum Teachers' Salary Schedule to \$28,000 with proportional increases for all other steps in the schedule and a minimum district-average teachers' salary of \$38,500 for implementation in the first school year following the legislative session in which the General Assembly responds to *Lakeview*. Add 10 days to the minimum length of teachers contract for a total of 185 and add 2 days to the number of instructional days for a total of 180. Discontinue the practice of granting waivers of instructional days for use as professional development days. Add an incentive (perhaps \$3,000 per year) to each step of the Minimum Teachers' Salary Schedule for districts or schools identified by the State Board of Education as "hard to staff" and for teachers fully certified in and assigned to teach in areas identified as shortage areas by the State Board. It is unlikely that current state and local revenue sources are sufficient to fund changes recommended by SBAC and necessary to respond to *Lakeview*. Any salary increase supported with new revenue sources should be implemented as soon as the new revenue is available. Allow 2 to 4 years for districts to comply. Follow the current fiscal distress statutes and regulations in addressing failure to comply. And, require the General Assembly to consider increasing the Minimum Teachers' Salary Schedule and minimum average teachers' salary during each regular session.

Average Teacher Salaries in the SREB States

	Average Salary 2000-2001	Percent Change		
		1999-2000 to 2000- 2001	1995-1996 to 2000-2001	1990-1991 to 2000-2001
United States	\$43,335	3.8	14.9	30.8
SREB States	38,614	3.4	19.3	33.4
SREB states as a percentage of nation	89.1			
Alabama	\$37,956 *	3.5	21.2	41.2
Arkansas	34,641	3.8	17.3	46.7
Delaware	47,047	5.9	16.1	33.5
Florida	38,230	4.1	14.7	25.1
Georgia	42,216	2.9	24.2	44.7
Kentucky	36,589	0.6	10.6	25.7
Louisiana	33,615	1.5	25.4	28.1
Maryland	45,963	4.3	11.7	18.7
Mississippi	31,954	0.3	15.4	31.1
North Carolina	41,151	4.4	35.3	40.6
Oklahoma	34,499	10.2	21.5	41.1
South Carolina	37,938 *	5.1	20.0	34.1
Tennessee	37,431	3.0	13.0	32.5
Texas	38,361	2.1	19.9	35.5
Virginia	40,197	3.8	15.5	24.7
West Virginia	35,888	2.5	11.6	38.2

*Estimated by the National Education Association.

Sources: National Education Association, *Rankings of the States and Estimates of School Statistics*, various years.

prepared by Gail Gaines
June 2002

Selected Scheduled Salaries in University Towns

University	School District	Masters & 10 Years	Most Advanced Lane & 10 Years
ASU	Jonesboro	\$31,895	\$34,745
ATU	Russellville	\$32,590	\$35,240
HSU	Arkadelphia	\$32,760	\$34,268
SAU	Magnolia	\$35,900	\$37,400
UAF	Fayetteville	\$38,480	\$41,355
UALR	Little Rock	\$37,639	\$40,343
UAM	Monticello	\$31,230	\$32,230
UAPB	Pine Bluff	\$34,442	\$36,282
UCA	Conway	\$39,696	\$44,202
Averages		\$34,959	\$37,341

3. Student Performance Subcommittee Report

Student Assessment Continuum P-16:

The Student Performance Subcommittee recommended, among other things, ending social promotion, point-in-time remediation, ADE guidance in selection of assessments in addition to the current state criterion-referenced and norm-referenced tests, end-of-course examinations in all core curricular areas, and alignment of high school core curriculum expectations with postsecondary placement criteria and an accountability system that includes students. **The SBAC should recommend an appropriation to supplement “No Child Left Behind” test development funds sufficient to develop and administer criterion-referenced “end-of-course/grade” test (K-12) aligned with state curriculum frameworks.** Such a system of expectations and assessments would provide the (1) information necessary for educators to align content and pedagogy with student performance expectations and (2) the information to drive an accountability system for students and adults.

High School Graduation Criteria:

SBAC should consider recommending a 2.00 GPA on the courses required by the State Board of Education for high school graduation or satisfactory achievement of Individual Education Plan objectives for Special Education students. Arkansas’ system of academic standards and performance assessment reflect a standards-based instructional system – a system in which “grading on the curve” is inappropriate. In such a system a “C” is not “average.” A “C” indicates that a student has demonstrated learning at least 70% of the teacher’s expectations. Current high school graduation requirements allow graduation based on 21 “Ds.” More should be expected.

4. Additional Issues

a. Improving Efficiency of Elementary and Secondary Education

Act 1386, among other things, charges SBAC with the responsibility of identifying ways and means of improving the efficiency of Elementary and Secondary Education. The work of SBAC subcommittees to-date addresses part, but not all of that charge.

Two primary questions must be answered to determine the efficiency of a system. First, “Does the system accomplish the purposes for which it was created (technical efficiency)?” Second, “Does the system accomplish the purposes for which it was created with the least consumption of resources (economic efficiency or efficient use of resources)?” Each SBAC subcommittee has recommended or is in the process developing recommendations to achieve technical efficiency. Two subcommittees, Student Performance and Governance Structure, indirectly address economic efficiency. SBAC has yet to directly address economic efficiency. The purposes of this item are to suggest to the SBAC (1) a conceptual basis for discussing economic efficiency and (2) policy alternatives that more directly address economic efficiency.

Data studied by SBAC demonstrate a positive correlation between pupil:teacher ratios and each of the following: (1) greater breadth of curriculum, (2) higher average teachers’ salaries, (3) higher ACT scores, and (4) higher 10th grade SAT-9 scores – each of which is a desired education system outcome or purpose reflected in the Arkansas Constitution, legislation, or State Board of Education rules and regulations. The data demonstrate a negative correlation between pupil:teacher ratios and out-of-field teacher cites as a percent of certified teachers – an undesired outcome. And the data demonstrate a negative correlation between pupil:teacher ratios and expenditure per student. In other words, the data show that low pupil:teacher ratios do not result in any of four desired outcomes listed above but do result in an undesired outcome and greater consumption of resources per student. Therefore the data show that low pupil:teacher ratios found in Arkansas school districts are indicators of economic inefficiency because the low pupil:teacher ratios increase the consumption of resources while decreasing the likelihood of achieving system purposes.

Low pupil:teacher ratios in Arkansas school districts are primarily, though not exclusively, the result of operating small high schools. The primary policy tools considered by SBAC to-date for dealing with the economic inefficiency of small high schools are requiring all high schools to teach all 38 units each year and requiring school districts to substantially increase the minimum teachers’ salary while leaving the state aid formula basically unchanged. The Blue Ribbon Commission is taking essentially the same approach. This approach directly addresses the technical efficiency question but not the economic efficiency question. It is possible that the state could put in place a system that enables each high school to teach all 38 units each year with highly qualified teachers and meet increased minimum salary requirements but with an inordinate consumption of resources by school districts operating small high schools.

Neither committee seems inclined to recommend financial support for small high schools sufficient to support a substantial increase in minimum salaries and teaching all 38 units each year with highly qualified teachers. From a holistic view, this amounts to “starve ‘em out” policy

that Arkansas has employed occasionally in the past. Stated more positively, the policy concept is “set the standards and if they can meet the standards they’re okay in they cannot, reorganize them.” Current academic and fiscal distress statutes and regulations will likely lead to reorganization of some districts operating small high schools.

The SBAC should offer the General Assembly an alternative that more directly addresses economic efficiency – unit funding. Some of the 11 states included in the study ECS did for the SBAC include a “unit funding” feature in their state aid program. Tennessee has the most pure form of unit funding among the states included in the ECS study. The basic idea is that the state determines the number of students that constitute a “unit” for various cost factors (certified and non-certified personnel, materials and supplies, capital outlay, etc.), attaches a dollar value to it, computes a district’s entitlement then calculate state and local shares. Through such a system, the state attaches a cost to necessary services and provides funding to districts on that basis. Through such a funding plan the General Assembly has an opportunity to define economic efficiency in a much more specific manner than Arkansas’ current state aid formula allows. A brief description of Tennessee’s unit funding program is attached.

A unit funding system similar to Tennessee’s coupled with a substantial increase in Arkansas’ minimum teachers’ salary schedule could be categorized as a “starve ‘em out policy” because unit funding would not directly force reorganization of small high schools but the General Assembly would have provided a much more specific definition of economic efficiency in terms of appropriate costs for specific services.

With a unit funding system similar to Tennessee’s, a state facilities funding program borrowing features from West Virginia’s and the opportunity to form high school districts the General Assembly could take a substantial steps forward in defining, requiring, and facilitating more economic efficiency in Arkansas schools. West Virginia’s state funded school facilities program includes a minimum enrollment as one qualifier for school construction. The Governance Structure Subcommittee has recommended (1) developing a system through which the state assumes responsibility for existing debt and providing facilities and (2) allowing formation of high school districts.

Other approaches to overcoming the economic inefficiency of small high schools discussed would likely be viewed as “consolidation by numbers” which is hard to argue and probably politically unattainable. The down side of the “starve ‘em out” policy is that while the district “starves out” (1) some students are served by more out-of-field teachers and select courses from a limited curriculum, (2) some teachers and other school employees are less well compensated, (3) some citizens pay a substantially greater property tax rate for schools and (4) economic inefficiency is enabled by state policy. The up side of the “starve ‘em out” policy is that districts are not forced to reorganize without an opportunity to show they can meet state requirements of technical efficiency within the limits of state aid and resources provided by residents of the district.

b. Dedicated Revenue for Education P-16:

It is unlikely that current state and local revenue sources are sufficient to fund changes recommended by SBAC and necessary to respond to *Lakeview*. **SBAC should recommend increasing the dedicated tax to support education.** The General Assembly has provided a dedicated tax to support education 20 of the 66 years since first enacting a sales tax in 1935 –

before and after the Revenue Stabilization Act (Act 311 of 1945). Act 233 of 1935 dedicated 65% of the then 2% sales tax to the Common School Fund. Act 154 of 1937 (still 2%) dedicated 50% to the Common School Fund and 7% to Textbook Fund – small additional amounts could accrue to the Common School Fund. Act 386 of 1941 (still 2%) dedicated 50% to the Common School Fund and 7% to Textbook Fund – small additional amounts could accrue to the Common School Fund. Acts 10 of 1991, 171 of 1997 and 1315 of 1999 created and now dedicate 14.14% of net general revenues to the Education Excellence Fund. Act 19 of 1957 increased the sales tax to 3% and listed “the Public School System” as one of four state functions specifically named as a justification for increasing the sales tax. Act 63 of the first Extraordinary Session of 1983 increased the sales tax to 4% and listed “public elementary and secondary education” as one of two state functions specifically named as a justification for increasing the sales tax. Act 3 of 1991 increased the sales tax to 4 % and named “lack of adequate funds to provide for the education of its (Arkansas’) citizens” as the only state service specifically listed as justification for the increase. Equal educational opportunity for students in rural communities is one of two reasons listed in the introduction to and one of four reasons for enactment listed in the emergency clause of the first Arkansas income tax law (1929). Education (elementary and secondary and higher education) has often been a key reason given for increasing state taxes. As demands on state revenues and priorities of officeholders change, the priority placed on education at the time of a tax increase tends to be downgraded.

c. Power Equalization of Local Tax Effort:

The basic “equalization” feature of Arkansas’ current formula for state aid to school districts authorizes a M & O revenue gap of \$30,000 per classroom of 25 students between the 95th percentile district and districts with the least M & O resources per student. That is not a sufficient level of financial equity. Other features exacerbate that inequity further. Power equalization of property tax effort among school districts is one tool available to address this financial inequity. The current formula for state aid to school districts equalizes the yield on property taxes among school districts on 25 mills for M & O revenue. The “equalized” millage rate should be raised – perhaps to 30 mills using a combination of increased “equalization aid” and a short (2 to 4 years) phase-in period to avoid reducing M & O funds to Arkansas’ better funded districts. **SBAC should ask ADE to estimate (for SBAC review in July) the effect and cost alternatives of such a policy change.**

The SBAC Governance Structure Subcommittee has recommended that the state find a way to assume responsibility for existing debt and funding school facilities using existing revenue sources (property tax and debt service supplement funding). If the General Assembly implemented the Governance Structure Subcommittee recommendation, the yield on an additional 5 to 7 mills would likely be equalized bring the total equalized mills to 31 (36 if M & O mills were equalized at 30).

Another, but less equalizing, approach to power equalization of property tax yield for facilities is guaranteeing each district a minimum (perhaps the state average) yield per mill for each debt service mill approved by district voters. Although such a policy would be a move in the right direction from current policy, significant equity (and likely adequacy) problems would continue. First, a child’s access to adequate facilities would be contingent on voters approving tax levies to fund facilities. Second, a current state aid formula feature exacerbating the M & O equity problem would continue – current debt service supplement aid does not pay debt (bonded debt cannot be incurred unless a local property tax has been voted to pay the debt) but increases M

& O funds. Lastly, although greatly diminished, a significant difference would remain among districts in the tax effort necessary to fund adequate facilities.

These actions (any or all) would affect a step forward in the effort to provide adequate and equitable school facilities and curriculum, equitable distribution of education resources, and tax burden equity.

d. Climate for Teaching and Learning & Alternative Learning Environments:

SBAC should offer a recommendation specifically addressing preservation of a school and classroom environment conducive to teaching and learning. A starting point may be development of a definition of Alternative Learning Environments (ALE) sufficient to guide development of interventions likely to lead to positive educational outcomes for students that otherwise interfere with teaching and other students opportunity to learn in traditional school settings.

Several factors indicate a continuing need to address this issue. As recently as 1999 the General Assembly enacted a provision allowing a teacher to remove a disruptive student from his/her classroom. The 1991 General Assembly required every school district to establish an ALE. In 1999 the Arkansas Department of Education commissioned a study of the state of ALEs in Arkansas schools. The author of the study reported that less than one-half the districts in Arkansas operate long-term positive alternative learning environment programs. The author reported most districts operate short-term or long-term punitive programs. Such programs serve the purpose of removing the disruptive student from the regular classroom for a few days or several days but offer limited help for the disruptive student. Further, the author reported that ALE programs observed are full and administrators in charge say they could double the size of their program and still be full. That assessment indicates that disruptive students remain in regular classroom environments or are out of school through suspension or expulsion. Two members of the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board (AHECB) have verbalized a need to address the issue. During the February meeting of the AHECB, Dr. Rhonda Richards reported development of a certificate program for Educating At-Risk Youth in Alternative Programs – a 12-hour program representing the disciplines of criminal justice, psychology, social work and education.

TENNESSEE
BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAM
BEP

2001-2002



State Board of Education
9th Floor, Andrew Johnson Tower
710 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243-1050

July 25, 2001

This booklet lists the Basic Education Program (BEP) components and the cost specifications for each component. The components include both operating and capital outlay costs.

The BEP components serve as the basis for calculating the level of funding for each school system. These components represent the level of support necessary for our schools to succeed. The components serve as the basis for calculating the level of BEP funding for each school system; the BEP does not prescribe specific levels of expenditures for individual components. Actual costs of the essential components are monitored and updated from year to year. Total costs are calculated by applying cost specifications to schools' census data.

Equity adjustments (cost of operations adjustment and fiscal capacity adjustment) equalize responsibility among the local school systems based on variations in the cost of delivering services to students and in relative fiscal capacity.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

- Mr. Hubert McCaughy, Chairman
- Mr. Avron Fogelhorn
- Mr. Charles Frazier
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- Dr. Richard Rhoads, THEC, (ex officio)
- Dr. Douglas E. Wood, Executive Director

SALARIES USED IN BEP CALCULATIONS
Teachers and Other Licensed Personnel
The BEP allocation for salaries for each school system is based on:
The number of each type of position generated by the cost components
The current average salary for licensed personnel in that school system, based on the state salary schedule (including Training and Experience factor).
Average annual superintendent salary = \$82,200 per county
Other Personnel
Average annual library/instructional assistant salary = \$14,400
Average annual custodian salary = \$15,400
Average annual school secretary salary = \$21,500
Average annual system secretary salary = \$26,100

FOOTNOTES

- * If a system within a county having more than one system does not have enough people to qualify for a position, the relevant county totals are used and each system receives a pro rata share based on its proportion of total relevant enrollment. If county totals are not sufficient to generate a position, the county is allocated one position and each system is allocated a pro rata share of the position based on its proportion of the relevant enrollment.
- **Elementary schools < 100 are not allocated a principal.
- ***One superintendent is allocated for each county. If there is more than one school system in a county, each system receives a pro rata share based on its proportion of total county ADM.
- ****For purposes of calculating benefits and insurance: for maintenance add 60% of eq. ft. cost to salary allocation; for pupil transportation add 45% of amount to salary allocation. Apply calculated rate (ins, FICA, TCRS) for classified personnel as specified to 50% or 45% of allocation, respectively.

CLASSROOM COMPONENTS
(STATE SHARE = 75%)

COMPONENT	FUNDING LEVEL
SPECIAL EDUCATION ASSISTANTS	1 per 60 special education I & S in Options 5,7,8
PRINCIPALS	.5 per school < 225* 1 per school > 225
ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS ELEMENTARY	.5 per school 660-679 1 per school 680-1,099 1.5 per school 1,100-1,319 2 per school > 1,320
ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS SECONDARY	.5 per school 300-449 1 per school 450-499 1.5 per school 1,000-1,249 2 per school > 1,250 (* 1 per add'l 250)
SYSTEM-WIDE INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISORS	1 per < 500 total ADM 2 per 500-999 total ADM 3 per 1,000-1,999 total ADM 3 per > 2,000 total ADM (+ 1 per add'l 1,000)
SPECIAL EDUCATION SUPERVISORS	1 per 750 special education I & S
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SUPERVISORS	1 per 1,000 vocational education FTEADM
SPECIAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT PERSONNEL	1 per 600 special education I & S
SOCIAL WORKERS	1 per 2,000 total ADM*
PSYCHOLOGISTS	1 per 2,500 total ADM* 1 per 3,000 total ADM (min. + 1 per system)
NURSES	\$ 2.55per total ADM K-12 plus system
ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS	\$21.44 per ADM 7-12 (including voc est)

CLASSROOM COMPONENTS
(STATE SHARE = 75%)

COMPONENT	FUNDING LEVEL
K-3 AT-RISK CLASS SIZE REDUCTION	Systems are allocated additional teachers to reduce pupil-teacher ratio to 15:1 for 1/3 of students on free and reduced lunch
DUTY-FREE LUNCH	\$7.81 per total ADM
SPECIAL EDUCATION EARLY INTERVENTION	Early intervention services for 3-year-old children with disabilities. Now allocated through count of special education I & S
STAFF BENEFITS AND INSURANCE	\$2,142.54 per BEP position for insurance plus 7.65% of BEP salary for FICA. Add 3.72% of BEP salary per licensed position OR 4.71% of BEP salary per classified position for TCRS
TEXTBOOKS	\$62.00 per total ADM
CLASSROOM MATERIALS & SUPPLIES (includes fee waiver)	\$ 54.00 per regular ADM \$112.00 per vocational education FTEADM \$ 20.00 per special education I & S \$ 2400 per Academic exit exam (12 th grade) \$ 15.00 per Technical exit exam (114 WEC #0)
INSTRUCTIONAL EQUIPMENT	\$57.00 per regular ADM \$68.00 per vocational education FTEADM \$13.00 per special education I & S
CLASSROOM RELATED TRAVEL	\$ 3.00 per regular ADM \$16.00 per vocational education FTEADM \$ 10.00 per special education I & S
VOCATIONAL CENTER TRANSPORTATION	For participating systems to transport students to vocational center attended part of the day
TECHNOLOGY	\$22.25 per total ADM \$20 M distributed on ADM basis

**NON-CLASSROOM COMPONENTS
(STATE SHARE = 50%)**

COMPONENT	FUNDING LEVEL
SUPERINTENDENT	1 per county***
SYSTEM SECRETARIAL SUPPORT	1 per system < 500 2 per system 500-1,250 3 per system 1,251-1,999
TECHNOLOGY COORDINATORS	1 per system with one additional for each 5,400 ADM
SCHOOL SECRETARIES	.5 per school < 225 1 per school 226-374 1 per 375 per school > 375
MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS	100 square feet per total K-4 ADM 110 square feet per total 5-8 ADM 130 square feet per total 9-12 ADM Total sq ft x \$2.34/sq ft**** 1 calculation per 22,522 calculated sq ft
NON-INSTRUCTIONAL EQUIPMENT	\$16.00 per total ADM
STUDENT TRANSPORTATION	Allocated to systems that provide transportation. Formula established by Commissioner of Education. Based on number of pupils transported, miles transported, and density of pupils per route mile.
STAFF BENEFITS AND INSURANCE	\$2,162.54 per BEP position for insurance; plus 7.85% of BEP salary for FICA. Add 3.72% of BEP salary per Superintendent and technology coordinator. Add 4.71% of BEP salary per classified position for TCERS.
CAPITAL OUTLAY	100 sq ft per total K-4 ADM x \$69/sq ft 110 sq ft per total 5-8 ADM x \$78/sq ft 130 sq ft per total 9-12 ADM x \$74/sq ft Add equipment (10% of sq ft cost) Add architect's fee (5% of sq ft cost) Add cable service (20 yrs @ 6.00%) Divide total by 40 yrs = annual amount

**CLASSROOM COMPONENTS
(STATE SHARE = 75%)**

COMPONENT	FUNDING LEVEL
REGULAR EDUCATION	1 per 20 ADM K-3 1 per 25 ADM 4-6 1 per 30 ADM 7-9 1 per 35 ADM 10-12
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SPECIAL EDUCATION (number of students served = 1 & 5)	1 per 30 vocational education FTEADM (Caseload Allocations): Option 1 91 Option 2 73 Option 3 46 Option 4 25 Option 5 15 Option 6 2 Option 7 10 Option 8 6 Option 9 0 Option 10 10
ELEMENTARY GUIDANCE	1 per 500 ADM K-6*
SECONDARY GUIDANCE	1 per 350 ADM 7-12 (including voc ed)*
ELEMENTARY ART	1 per 525 ADM K-6
ELEMENTARY MUSIC	1 per 525 ADM K-6
ELEMENTARY PHYSICAL EDUCATION	1 per 350 ADM K-4 1 per 285 ADM 5-6 5 per school < 265
ELEMENTARY LIBRARIANS (K-6)	1 per school 285-439 1 per school 440-639 (1+.5 assistant) 1 per school > 640 (1 assistant)
SECONDARY LIBRARIANS (9-12)	.5 per school < 300 1 per school 300-509 2 per school 1,000-1,499 2 per school > 1,500 (1.1 per school 750)
SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS	\$36.00 per total ADM
INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANTS	1 per 75 ADM K-6
ELL INSTRUCTORS	1 per 50 ELL Students K-5
ELL TRANSLATORS	1 per 500 ELL Students K-5

COMMENTS BY M. OLIN COOK

Draft Reports of Education Advisory Committee Subcommittee Reports

In review of the subcommittee reports, I would like to offer a few comments for consideration at the next meeting.

I hope the final report will list priorities rather than making all recommendations to appear to be the same in importance.

We should separate recommendations that require extra funding from those which can be accomplished with present funding level.

I do not see a requirement for Foreign Languages in the material. I feel that there should be at least 2 years of one Foreign Language required in high school. I realize the need for teachers is a problem, but maybe we should do more to see that these people are given special scholarships.

We need to add a special scholarship loan/scholarship program for highly qualified students who would go into teaching. They would be required to teach a number of years to have the loan forgiven. Also, we could give special emphasis to teaching in schools in distress, schools located in problem areas of the State, etc.

We listed special topics of length of school year and year-round calendars. This recommendation needs more focus. For example, we might require a study on each of the areas as to how student performance is impacted by the change suggested.

I would support a recommendation that would remove the professional staff of the Department of Education from the State Pay Plan. They should be able to pay salaries to recruit persons from the public schools.

M. Olin Cook