

Arkansas Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Education

Report and Recommendations



July 18, 2002

Acknowledgements

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- Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators
- Arkansas Education Association
- Arkansas Educational Television Network (AETN)
- Arkansas School Boards Association
- Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce
- Arkansas Department of Education
- Arkansas Department of Workforce Education and Career Opportunities
- Bureau of Legislative Research
- Cranford Johnson Robinson Woods
- KATV, Channel 7
- Ozark Film and Video Productions
- University of Arkansas System
- University of Arkansas at Little Rock Institute of Government

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July 18, 2002

Dear Citizens of the State of Arkansas:

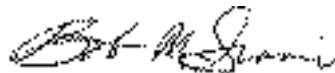
For the past year, it has been our privilege to serve as the co-chairs of the Arkansas Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Education. The members of the Blue Ribbon Commission have demonstrated their deep interest in and commitment to improving the state's system of public education. We have reviewed countless documents and heard presentations concerning many issues that confront public education in Arkansas. Both as a full Commission and in our subcommittee meetings, we have had full, vigorous, and frank discussions of the issues. In issuing our recommendations, we paraphrase Winston Churchill, that this is not the end or even the beginning of the end, but that it is the end of the beginning. We pledge to work for the passage of necessary legislation, the development and implementation of essential policies, and cooperation among all the appropriate entities to achieve our ultimate objective, the development of an adequate and equitable system of public education that will provide an enhanced quality of life for all the citizens of Arkansas.

We wish to thank the members of the Commission for their dedicated and selfless service. We also wish to thank all the individuals who participated in the process that led to the development of this document. It has been an enriching and rewarding experience for everyone involved.

With the presentation of this report, the Arkansas Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Education will have fulfilled its statutory obligations and cease to exist. It is our fervent hope that our work will positively influence the lives of future generations of Arkansans.

The Arkansas Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Education respectfully submits its report to members of the Arkansas Legislative Council, the members of the Senate Interim Committee on Education, the members of the House Interim Committee on Education, the members of the Senate Interim Committee on Revenue and Taxation, and the members of the House Interim Committee on Revenue and Taxation of the Arkansas General Assembly. The Commission also respectfully submits its report to the Governor of the State of Arkansas, the State Board of Education, the State Board of Workforce Education and Career Opportunities, and the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Sincerely,



Robert L. "Bob" McGinnis
Co-Chairman

Stacy Pittman
Co-Chairman

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MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

Appointed by Senator Mike Beebe, President Pro Tempore

Ms. Judith G. Donovan, Searcy
Dr. Benny L. Gooden, Fort Smith
Mr. Wayne Hartsfield, Searcy
Mr. Phil Jones, Sr., Jonesboro
Mr. Larry Ross, North Little Rock

Appointed by Representative Shane Broadway, Speaker of the House

Ms. Charlie Cole Chaffin, Benton
Ms. Shelby Hillman, Carlisle
Mr. Randy Hughes, Delight
Mr. David Matthews, Rogers
Mr. Ulicious Reed, Marvell

Appointed by Representative M. Olin Cook, Chair, House Education Committee

Mr. Frank Anthony, Pine Bluff
Dr. Charles Dunn, Arkadelphia
Mr. Kevin Moore, Russellville
Ms. Stacy Pittman, Little Rock, Co-Chair of the Commission
Mr. Keith Stokes, Dardanelle

Appointed by Senator David Malone, Chair, Senate Education Committee

Dr. Reed Greenwood, Fayetteville
Dr. Don Love, Springdale
Ms. Alisia Ramirez-Hartz, Fayetteville
Ms. Kathy McFetridge, Springdale
Dr. Martha McNair, Fayetteville

Appointed by Governor Mike Huckabee

Mr. Robert McGinnis, West Memphis, Co-Chair of the Commission
Mr. Gene Gregory, Arkansas City
Ms. Pat L. Harris, Bryant
Mr. Hugh McDonald, Little Rock
Ms. Johnettee W. Walker, Wilmot

Legislative Ex-Officio Members:

Senator Jim Hill, Nashville
Senator David Malone, Fayetteville
Senator John Riggs, Little Rock

Representative M. Olin Cook, Russellville
Representative George R. French, Monticello
Representative Larry R. Teague, Nashville

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Created by Act 1398 of 2001, the Arkansas Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Education began meeting in June 2001. Twenty-five citizens selected from across the state met over the course of a year to study the public education system and to make recommendations about achieving an adequate and equitable system of education.

The Commission members heard presentations from a broad cross-section of organizations and individuals interested in the welfare of the public education system of the state. Divided into four working subcommittees – Funding and Facilities; Teacher Salaries and Professional Development; Organizational Structure; and Curriculum/Early Childhood Education – plus a Communications Subcommittee, commissioners held a number of sessions during which the issues confronting the subcommittees were discussed. Following the information-gathering phase, the subcommittees determined significant findings and made recommendations that were subsequently presented to the full Commission for action. The full report contains the complete text of the findings and recommendations. In addition, statewide “Speak Up, Arkansas!” forums were held around the state to seek broad-based public input.

The 29 recommendations of the Commission by subcommittee were:

Curriculum/Early Childhood Subcommittee

1. A program of early childhood education shall be available for all four-year-old children in Arkansas utilizing a variety of service providers. Special emphasis shall be placed upon children in families whose income is at or below the poverty income guidelines established by state/federal agencies. Adequate state funding must be available for the success of the program.
2. A comprehensive curriculum shall be provided in each Arkansas school district to provide for the needs of its students in terms of academic, social, cultural and physical development.
3. The accountability of students for their educational performance is equally as important as that of teachers, schools or school districts. A system of individual student accountability for actively pursuing a rigorous and appropriate course of study and demonstrating adequate performance on assessment measures is essential.
4. The involvement of parents in the planning and implementation of their child’s educational experiences is a critical component in achieving the level of performance which is required.
5. Each student shall be provided experiences to ensure the acquisition of essential life skills to be successful in a global economy.
6. Students who cannot experience success within the regular curriculum shall be provided access to specially designed programs to address their unique needs.
7. Each school district shall provide access to up-to-date technology, facilities and other instructional equipment and materials to support the curriculum at every level.

Funding/Facilities Subcommittee

1. We recommend an immediate dramatic infusion of capital needs money to ensure adequate facilities in every school district (as finally configured), including the building of new regional high school facilities. (a) This will require a thorough, independent, objective facilities inventory of the entire state. (b) There must be specific standards for what "adequate facilities" means.
2. Once all facilities are raised to an adequate level, we recommend that future funding distribution formulas provide adequate monies to continue to maintain and provide adequate facilities for academic instructional purposes. In order for the distribution of funds to be equitable, we recommend that the formula be based upon a recognition that mills in one district may not raise as much money as the same number of mills in another district.
3. We recommend requiring local districts to maintain a level of local funding sufficient to maintain an adequate system, as defined by the state. If funding fails for a period of two consecutive years, the district shall be subject to reorganization by the state.
4. Every school district shall provide free workforce education programs with minimum uniform curriculum standards utilizing certified staff. (a) Every school district in Arkansas shall have reasonable access to an area career center.

Organizational Structure Subcommittee

1. Any school district that does not meet the required core curriculum or cannot meet the minimum teacher salaries by September 2003, shall be dissolved and reorganized with contiguous districts as determined by the Board of Trustees of the schools by July 2004. Consideration of the following shall provide justification for the decisions: (a) geography and community activity patterns and (b) amount of time a child spends on the bus
2. Incentive monies according to the current incentive formula shall be provided to schools that consolidate voluntarily by September 2003. In order to provide adequate funding for the incentive, the Subcommittee requests the Funding/Facilities Subcommittee consider a recommendation for a biennial appropriation of four (4) million dollars.
3. Amend Arkansas' Public School Choice statute to enhance the ability of students and parents to utilize it and create regional high schools dispersed throughout the state. These changes would: (a) offer student access to an expanded curriculum, (b) offer greater access to higher education, (c) offer greater access to vocational education, (d) address the problem of inefficiency (particularly at the high school level), (e) address the problem of teacher shortage (especially in some rural areas), (f) address to a greater degree the issue of teacher salaries, and (g) address the issue of facilities (elementary facilities are often better).
4. Separation of service and accountability/regulatory roles within the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) is recommended to more effectively monitor and implement the state's school accountability requirements. We also encourage the ADE to continue working on the reorganization of service and accountability/regulatory roles within ADE.
5. We strongly encourage relevant information on year-round schools be discussed at the annual School Board Training meetings, the Joint Conference on Teaching meetings, Administrators meetings, and PTA meetings.

Teacher Salaries/Professional Development Subcommittee

1. Ensure the continuation of the Annual Job Fair, currently conducted by the Arkansas Department of Education.
2. Establish an Arkansas Teacher Scholarship/Loan Program to assist students in the pursuit of studies leading to teacher licensure who are willing to pledge five years of teaching in Arkansas upon completion of the program.
3. Provide incentives for teachers willing to work in teacher shortage areas: subject areas, geographic areas, or low-performing schools/districts.
4. Establish a Teacher Recruitment Network with representation from each university teacher education program in the state.
5. Require building and district administrators to devote at least three hours per year of professional development work to matters pertaining to teacher retention.

6. Administrators apply strategies related to teacher retention as part of the Arkansas Consolidated School Improvement Plan (ACSIP).

7. Implement periodic, independent evaluations of the professional development programs for teachers in order to assure activities are well targeted and timely.

8. Extend the requirement for teacher professional development from 30 to 60 hours per year by the year 2008.

9. Encourage factors that assure quality and safety in classrooms and schools for teachers and students.

10. Align beginning salaries for Arkansas teachers, with a focus toward equitability and competitiveness. The recommended levels for the required minimum starting salary (Bachelor's degree, no experience) to be enacted by the 2003 legislative session are: \$26,000 (implemented by 2004-2005 School Year), \$28,000 (implemented by 2006-2007 School Year), and \$30,000 (implemented by 2008-2009 School Year). The overall goal should be to reach the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) average salary level by the 2006-07 academic year, estimated to be \$45,000.

11. Employee contributions made by teachers for health insurance and related benefits be the same amount as contributed by other state employees. The State of Arkansas shall provide additional state funding to cover the associated costs.

12. Establish multiple career paths for teachers.

13. Equate hiring practices throughout the state by accepting all of a teacher's previous experience in a school accredited by a regional accreditation agency (i.e., North Central Association).

To the extent possible, the Commission sought to obtain funding needs associated with each of the recommendations. In some instances, no additional costs would be involved. In others, cost estimates were derived. In the third case, it was determined that additional costs would be involved, but no estimate could be derived given the time and resources available to the Commission. The summary figures for the annual cost estimates that could be determined were for 2003 and 2004: \$381,480,000; 2005 and 2006: \$535,280,000; and for 2007 and 2008: \$689,480,000. Figures for each of the recommendations are provided in the report.

The full report of the Commission represents a blueprint for the future and a vision for public education that can be implemented over a multiyear period. The Commission firmly believes that its recommendations are all essential to providing an adequate and equitable education for the children of Arkansas. Adequacy cannot be prioritized. The Commissioners provided overwhelming support for the recommendations, realizing that the state and local school districts will face major challenges in addressing them. The recommendations call for significant change – change that in most instances will require additional funding. However, the Commission kept at the forefront of its deliberations the needs of the students in the public schools of Arkansas and how the state and the public school districts can provide an adequate and equitable system of public education. Such a system is critical to the overall economic development and quality of life for the citizens of Arkansas.

ARKANSAS BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION ON PUBLIC EDUCATION
 Biennial Cost Breakdown of Adopted Recommendations
 State Funding
 (Numbers Represent Each Year of the Biennial Period)

	Biennial Budget Period		
	<u>2003</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2007</u>
<u>Curriculum/Early Childhood Subcommittee</u>			
Early Childhood Education*	\$100M	\$100M	\$100M
Comprehensive Curriculum**	\$24M	\$24M	\$24M
Student Accountability System	TBD [#]	TBD	TBD
Parental Involvement	TBD	TBD	TBD
Student Skills Acquisition	TBD	TBD	TBD
Programs to Address Unique Student Needs***	\$14M	\$18M	\$22M
Up-to-Date Facilities, Technology, etc.	TBD	TBD	TBD

*Federal funding would cover some of the cost.

**Poverty Index Funding

***Limited English Proficiency and Alternative Learning Environment

#To Be Determined

Teacher Salary and Professional Development Subcommittee

Recruitment

Annual Job Fair	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
Teacher Loan/Scholarship Program	\$2M	\$2M	\$2M
Incentives for Work in Shortage Areas	\$5M	\$5M	\$5M
Teacher Recruitment Network	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000

Teacher Retention

Teacher Retention Professional Development	TBD	TBD	TBD
ACSIP Teacher Retention Strategies	TBD	TBD	TBD
Professional Development Independent Evaluations	\$200,000	\$0	\$200,000
60 Hours of Professional Development by 2008**	\$0	\$0	\$0
School Climate	TBD	TBD	TBD

Teacher Salary

Teacher Salary Increases	\$135M	\$270M	\$405M
Employee Benefits	\$30M	\$45M	\$60M
Multiple Career Paths	TBD	TBD	TBD
Prior Teaching Experience	TBD	TBD	TBD

**Cost is included in teachers salary increase.

Biennial Budget Period
2003 2005 2007

Organization Structure Subcommittee

Core Curriculum/Teacher Salary Requirements	TBD	TBD	TBD
Voluntary Consolidation Incentive Funding	\$4M	\$4M	\$4M
Public School Choice/Regional High Schools	TBD	TBD	TBD
ADE Service and Accountability/Regulatory roles	TBD	TBD	TBD
Year-Round Schools	TBD	TBD	TBD

Funding/Facilities Subcommittee

Facilities

Capital Needs Funds	TBD	TBD	TBD
Facilities Funding Distribution Formulas	\$23M	\$23M	\$23M
Local Funding Requirement	TBD	TBD	TBD

Workforce Education

Access to Uniform Program	\$44M	\$44M	\$44M
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Total **\$381,480,000** **\$535,280,000** **\$689,480,000**

Increase Over the Previous Biennium **\$153,800,000** **\$154,200,000**

CHARGE TO THE COMMISSION

The Arkansas Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Education was established pursuant to Arkansas Act 1398 of 2001. The General Assembly sought to address specific areas of Arkansas education, engaging the private sector as full and valued partners in the process. The Commission was explicitly charged with:

- defining the components of the constitutional mandate for “a general, suitable and efficient system of free public schools,”
- defining an equitable and adequate system of free public education,
- assessing current efforts to improve the state’s system of public education, and
- proposing and recommending legislation for the 2003 Regular Session of the General Assembly.

Additionally, the importance of the Commission was underscored by Judge Kilgore’s June 1, 2001 ruling in *Lake View v. Huckabee, et al.* Judge Kilgore ruled the public education system in Arkansas both inequitable and inadequate, with the State responsible for the education of its citizens, as defined by the state constitution. Responsibility was placed in the hands of the Arkansas Legislature, with Judge Kilgore emphasizing the magnitude and urgency of the problem.

Senator John A. Riggs, IV, author of Senate Bill 907 which produced Arkansas Act 1398 of 2001, underscored the importance of close and careful scrutiny of the funding and operation of Arkansas’ K-12 educational system by members of the Commission, as well as the ensuing recommendations, in a letter to Commission members. The findings and recommendations of the Commission would be crucial to solutions legislators would develop in response to the *Lake View* decision. Senator Riggs presaged Commission members of skeptical attitudes on the part of some citizens. He pointed out the realization that improving education in Arkansas could come at a high cost, indicating recommendations by the Commission tied to additional revenues might be linked to guarantees of a more efficient system of education.

The twenty-five members, appointed to the Commission on June 8, 2001, were to include twenty state residents knowledgeable in teaching, education professions, business, labor, industry, or economic development, and five parents of students currently enrolled in K-12 Arkansas public schools. Additionally, the Commission was to include the chairs of the House and Senate Interim Committees on Education, chairs of the House and Senate Interim Committees on Revenue and Taxation, and chairs of the Joint Budget Committee, all six serving ex-officio and as nonvoting members.

This report represents the fulfillment of the charge to submit the report and recommendations for proposed legislation to the bodies listed below:

The House Interim Committee on Education
The Senate Interim Committee on Education
The House Interim Committee on Revenue and Taxation
The Senate Interim Committee on Revenue and Taxation
Arkansas Legislative Council
The Governor of the State of Arkansas
The State Board of Education
The State Board of Workforce Education and Career Opportunities
The Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board

Subcommittees

Subcommittees were created based on findings indicated by Judge Kilgore in the Lake View ruling and included funding, facilities, teachers' salaries, curricular remediation, and organizational structure. The Commission made a decision to add the topic of teacher professional development, combining it with teachers' salaries. Members volunteered to serve on committees, indicating in writing their ranked preferences for membership on any of four subcommittees. At the fourth meeting of the Commission, September 26, 2001, Mr. Bob McGinnis announced the assignment of members to subcommittees.

The four subcommittees were:

Funding/Facilities
Teacher Salaries/Professional Development
Curriculum/Early Childhood Education
Organizational Structure

Communications Subcommittee

Committee co-chair Ms. Stacy Pittman recommended addressing communication as part of the Commission's work. The Commission members agreed on the need for a Communications Subcommittee so that the business of the Commission could become, as much as possible, a matter of statewide interest and dialogue. The Commission felt the need to communicate with, hear from, and be accountable to the people of Arkansas.

Members of this subcommittee included:

Mrs. Stacy Pittman, Chair
Dr. Reed Greenwood
Mr. Randy Hughes
Ms. Kathy McFetridge
Mr. David Matthews
Mr. Larry Ross
Mr. Keith Stokes

While much was done by the subcommittee to assure communication of the activities of the Commission, four events stand out as work of which Arkansans can be particularly proud.

First, all members of the Commission willingly and openly provided information to the media, for the express purpose of keeping the public informed of the Commission's work, on a regular basis. Commission members shared information with the media during breaks in the bimonthly meetings in Little Rock and members shared information with their local, home town media.

Second, the Commission held a televised press conference on March 6, 2002 to advise the public of plans to obtain input from the citizens of Arkansas.

Third, through the commitment and hard work of a multitude of volunteers, the Commission hosted *Speak Up, Arkansas!* on April 4, 2002. Open forums, for the purpose of obtaining input from Arkansas' citizens on educational issues, were held in 90 separate locations throughout the state. This event provided the opportunity for every citizen to address the question of what citizens wanted schools to do to educate our children. The results, a 500+ page document, were collected and published by the University of Arkansas at Little Rock's Institute of Government and formally presented to the Commission on April 17, 2002. Every comment written by citizens attending *Speak Up, Arkansas!* was included in the document.

Fourth, a web site, updated on a daily basis, was created providing public access to the history and mission of the Commission. Among the many resources provided were a list of Commission members, the details of the *Speak Up, Arkansas!* forum, related documents, Commission meeting dates and associated minutes, links to organizations which provided input to the Commission, and a video which described the purpose and workings of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Education.

Special thanks are due the following for their extensive support of the forums: Arkansas Educational Television Network, Channel 7, KATV, Little Rock, the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce, and the statewide Chamber of Commerce affiliates.

Curriculum/Early Childhood Education Subcommittee

MEMBERS

Dr. Benny L. Gooden, Chair
Ms. Patricia Harris
Ms. Shelby Hillman
Dr. Don Love
Ms. Kathy McFetridge

CHARGE

The Curriculum and Early Childhood Education Subcommittee of the Arkansas Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Education was appointed to focus on issues associated with these areas. The subcommittee was charged with evaluating the manner in which the school curriculum available to all Arkansas students addresses their diverse needs and prepares them to be competitive in a global society. The subcommittee was also charged with considering the needs of Arkansas children before they enter kindergarten and ways in which these needs may be addressed.

Background

Judge Collins Kilgore included more than sixty (60) findings of fact relative to curriculum and early childhood education in his lengthy ruling issued in *Lake View School District, et. al. v. Mike Huckabee, et. al.* These findings included specific references to:

- disparities in course availability between different school districts;
- assessment results on various parts of the ACTAAP;
- programs provided by the Arkansas Department of Education and various schools to address educational deficits;
- services provided to students prior to their entry into kindergarten;
- necessary services for children with special needs;
- state standards for academic distress;
- the college remediation rate of Arkansas high school graduates;
- needed remediation for students in order for them to succeed; and
- variations in available teaching materials, equipment and supplies in various schools.

In one of his strongest findings, Judge Kilgore noted that an adequate educational system would require the following elements:

1. A statement of clear expectations for student achievement;
2. An effective accountability system that holds schools accountable for results; and

3. Adequate funding to allow a program to be developed to produce expected outcomes.

He further noted that Arkansas has two of three in place: curriculum frameworks and an accountability system.

In his conclusions of law relative to curriculum, Judge Kilgore found in *Lake View* that:

“Variations in curriculum between Fort Smith, Holly Grove, Lake View and Lee County are so great as to provide a clear example of students being deprived of their rights of equal protection. School districts throughout the state must provide substantially equal educational opportunities for their children.”

“Three facts were uncontroverted at trial: 1) A substantial number of our children are entering kindergarten and first grade significantly behind their peers; 2) Those children that enter the first grades needing remediation will have a difficult time performing at grade level by the third grade, and 3) If a student cannot perform at grade level, especially in reading, by the third grade, then he is unlikely to ever do so. The only possible conclusion is that in order to provide our children with an adequate education as required by the Constitution and ACTAAP, the State must forthwith provide programs for those children of pre-school age that will allow them to compete academically with their peers.”

“An uneducated person has virtually no chance today to sample much more than a harsh subsistence. *Dupree* was decided eighteen years ago when the Supreme Court found the State’s funding system to be unconstitutional and that many of Arkansas’ students were receiving only the bare rudiments of an education. Not much has changed since then except that nineteen classes have graduated from our high schools; practically a generation.”

“This case was begun in 1992. Since then, nine classes have graduated from our high schools. One wants to believe that at least our better students are being well educated. However, the Rogers School District program to pay for college remediation for its top students reveals the sad reality of the quality of our education system today. If our best are not being prepared for the rigors and trials of an ever increasingly complex world, what is happening to the least advantaged to whom we owe an equal or greater duty?”

“Pursuant to Act 917 of 1995, and in order that an amount of funding for an education system based on need and not on the amount available but on the amount necessary to provide an adequate education system, the court concludes an adequacy study is necessary and must be conducted forthwith.”

KEY FINDINGS

Early Childhood Education

- As many as one-half of Arkansas children enter kindergarten significantly below expected developmental levels.
- Only 30% of Arkansas children receive formal preschool educational experiences.
- A research-based early childhood curriculum has been developed for use in approved preschool programs.
- Adequate pre-K programs are not accessible geographically to serve all children in need.
- Access to pre-K programs will require transportation.
- Current services are provided by a variety of agencies in a delivery system, which must be coordinated and expanded.
- Appropriate training for early childhood service providers is essential for program success.
- Many parents fail to distinguish between child care/babysitting and early childhood education for their children.
- Parent education is an essential component in successful early learning for children.
- A program of incentives is necessary to encourage participation by parents and children.

Curriculum

- The required 38 units of high school credit comply with the Rose Standards cited by Judge Collins Kilgore in *Lake View*.
- Every Arkansas high school is not required to offer all 38 units every year.
- Alternating year courses deprive some students of access to curriculum and the opportunities it represents. Courses most often lacking include chemistry, physics, algebra II, pre-calculus/trigonometry, journalism and selected fine arts offerings.
- Vocational-technical courses are not available to all students because of the lack of local course offerings or access to Area Technical Centers serving several schools. The nine (9) required vocational-technical courses are not available in every high school.
- Monitoring of individual school curricular offerings is often inconsistent or lacking.
- There is no apparent limit to the ability of local schools to satisfy curriculum requirements through available distance education formats.
- Curriculum content in courses that carry the same title varies widely from school-to-school and teacher-to-teacher.
- Curriculum needs of special populations are not adequately met in many communities.
 - These special populations include:
 - Limited English proficient (LEP) students
 - Alternative Learning Environments
 - Advanced Placement (AP) students/Gifted and Talented students

- Achievement by students in grades 4, 6 and 8 as measured by the Benchmark Exams demonstrates a lack of comprehensive literacy skills.
- Benchmark and End-of-Course Exams lack a system of individual student accountability.
- Multiple measures of achievement should be used to determine student, school or statewide academic performance.
- There is an insufficient supply of fully-licensed teachers to support the required curriculum.
- A significant number of students fail to pursue a rigorous curriculum during the senior year of high school.
- A consistent age-appropriate program to foster character and citizenship development is essential to maintain the strength of our free Democratic society.
- The life skills of parenting, consumer finance, career planning and other essential learning opportunities are often lacking in the school curriculum pursued by many students.
- Learning is enhanced when schools create an environment in which schools assist parents in obtaining the skills necessary to help their children.
- Helping students assume some control of and responsibility for developing their personal learning goals and monitoring progress toward their achievement will result in the acquisition of skills which are found desirable by future employers.
- Data-driven school improvement initiatives will provide the basis for establishing learning goals and priorities for each student, teacher, and school.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Early Childhood Education

1. A program of early childhood education shall be available for all four-year-old children in Arkansas utilizing a variety of service providers. Special emphasis shall be placed upon children in families whose income is at or below the poverty income guidelines established by state/federal agencies. Adequate state funding must be available for the success of the program.

The following shall be considered to address these needs:

Responsibility for Service Delivery. Service providers shall include public schools as well as other public and private agencies that might access state funding for the educational component of other services contingent upon compliance with curriculum, facility, and other requirements applicable to all eligible providers. The primary responsibility for educational services shall be assigned to the State Board of Education, but may be provided in cooperation with other agencies consistent with guidelines adopted by the responsible state agency. State responsibility shall be to ensure the availability of a planned educational component to complement any other childcare provided.

Program Content Standards. Curriculum shall be consistent with guidelines developed and adopted by the Early Childhood Commission. It is important that the curriculum content be articulated with curriculum frameworks for grades K - 6 in Arkansas schools. Extended hours of instruction and related services shall be provided for children identified as at-risk in accordance with criteria adopted by the Arkansas Better Chance Evaluation/Restructuring Task Force. Early childhood service providers shall be required to provide appropriate training to all employees. Compensation levels for employees shall be tied to training levels for staff. Transportation to facilitate participation may be provided by local schools, public agencies, or childcare providers but shall comply with applicable regulations for vehicle operations promulgated by the U.S. Department of Transportation. Facilities shall comply with standards adopted by the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, Child Care Licensing Unit of the Arkansas Department of Human Services. Community volunteers should be recruited to assist school staff with class activities.

Incentives for Participation. A program of incentives shall be developed to encourage participation by families. Incentives shall apply to both early childhood education and to parent education. Students enrolling in kindergarten who do not demonstrate attainment of age-related developmental skills shall be provided appropriate experiences to ensure success in kindergarten.

Curriculum

2. A comprehensive curriculum shall be provided in each Arkansas school district to provide for the needs of its students in terms of academic, social, cultural and physical development.

To accomplish this result, it is recommended that the State Board of Education shall periodically review and revise as appropriate the Curriculum Frameworks in all subject areas at all levels to ensure the curriculum content is consistent in schools throughout Arkansas. Each elementary school shall have a balanced literacy program which emphasizes reading and writing based on the needs of its students. Schools targeted for sanctions under ACTAAP guidelines shall implement corrective actions to address academic deficits in accordance with ADE regulations. Schools exhibiting consistently inferior academic performance as measured by Benchmark Exams, End-of-Course Exams, college remediation rates, or other measures shall be reviewed by Arkansas Department of Education staff, Educational Service Cooperative Specialists, and local curriculum specialists to ensure consistent curriculum alignment and content.

Regular High Schools. Each high school in Arkansas shall teach a minimum of 38.5 units each year as outlined. Core courses in the upper tier ensure that students have access to those courses currently required for high school graduation by the State Board of Education, to qualify for unconditional admission to public institutions of higher education in Arkansas or to qualify for the Academic Challenge Scholarship.

- 4 units English - emphasizing writing and literature
- 4 units mathematics - algebra I, algebra II*, geometry, advanced math*
- 4 units social studies - American history, government/civics, world history, world cultures/geography
- 4 units science - biology, physical science, chemistry**, physics**
- 2 units foreign language* - in the same language
- 1/2 unit oral communication
- 1/2 unit fine arts
- 1/2 unit health
- 1/2 unit physical education

Courses in the lower tier are designed to provide opportunities for students to develop their diverse skills and explore interests in a range of fields as well as pursuing subject fields in the core curriculum in greater depth.

- 1 1/2 units other language arts, i.e. drama, debate, journalism
- 2 1/2 units fine arts, visual arts, vocal and instrumental music
- 9 units vocational technical-courses - at least three courses in at least three program areas#
- 1 unit computer/technology applications
- 1 1/2 units physical education
- 3 units selected from math, science, English, social studies, or foreign language

Note: Recommended AP courses or concurrent college credit

* Courses within the upper tier approved for distance education

**Special approval from ADE shall be required to satisfy the laboratory requirement in these areas.

Requirement may be met through actual enrollment of students in a secondary vocational/ technical program.

Designated Regional High Schools. Designated Regional High Schools shall provide access to a rich curriculum that exceeds the minimum required of all high schools. These high schools shall provide the minimum courses listed previously and at least the following additions:

- 6 units Advanced Placement/Pre-AP selected from the College Board menu of courses
- 2 foreign languages - 3 units in at least one with a minimum of 2 units in each
- Workforce Education - 5 areas with 6 programs - Taught locally in the regional high school or at an area secondary center.

Expanded core curriculum

- 2 math units above algebra II
- 1 science unit

- journalism
- drama
- Visual and performing arts
 - visual art classes in a variety of media
 - sequential program of vocal and instrumental music
- Comprehensive program of student activities
 - athletic and non-athletic activities appropriate to meet the needs of male and female students

Compliance with Curriculum Requirements. The Arkansas Department of Education shall be charged with monitoring compliance with adopted curriculum requirements on at least an annual basis to ensure that courses listed as taught are consistent with standards. Course content shall be consistent with the course title and specified curriculum. Failure to comply with the minimum curriculum standards shall result in consequences which might include loss of accreditation, financial penalties or other action. Distance learning options may be provided to supplement regular classroom instruction or to enhance the school curriculum.

3. The accountability of students for their educational performance is equally as important as that of teachers, schools or school districts. A system of individual student accountability for actively pursuing a rigorous and appropriate course of study and demonstrating adequate performance on assessment measures is essential.

Systems of individual student accountability shall be developed at all levels to ensure performance which reflects desired skills to serve as prerequisites for subsequent educational experiences. When progress from level to level is in jeopardy, students shall have multiple opportunities to demonstrate adequate performance on assessments before being retained. Inadequate academic performance, as measured by mandated assessments, shall require specific remediation activities on areas of deficit. The senior year shall include a rigorous array of courses for every student. The school day for seniors should include a full day of instruction in classroom or in a specific work experience tied to a workforce classroom assignment. Early entrance into higher education programs should be encouraged if graduation requirements have been met. High school students shall be allowed to demonstrate proficient academic performance using multiple measures of achievement including, but not limited to the ACT Assessment, PSAT/NMSQT, End-of-Course Exams, SAT or other validated measures. By 2006, students who have not demonstrated proficient performance using one or more of the identified measures shall not be eligible for a regular high school diploma.

4. The involvement of parents in the planning and implementation of their child’s educational experiences is a critical component in achieving the level of performance which is required.

A well-defined parent involvement program shall be developed in every school. School-home communication shall focus on information as well as providing parents with tools to assist their children academically and to complement school programs and activities.

5. Each student shall be provided experiences to ensure the acquisition of essential life skills to be successful in a global economy.

Programs that promote student cooperation through a healthy school environment and which foster the valuation and respect for individuals and their diversity in society shall be present in each school. Each student shall acquire the skills to be effective parents, competent consumers, and to become economically self-sufficient through a career plan supported by appropriate classroom and workforce preparation. Each school shall plan and implement instructional programs and activities at all levels to ensure that students develop an understanding of and appreciation for the principles of democracy and the American way of life. Character development and citizenship activities shall be part of the total school experience provided to every student. Each school shall implement comprehensive and continuous activities to involve parents in planning and supporting their child’s educational program at all levels.

6. Students who cannot experience success within the regular curriculum shall be provided access to specially designed programs to address their unique needs.

These programs must include the provision of a) supplemental assistance to students whose home language is a language other than English to acquire essential English proficiency to allow them to be successful in other academic areas, and b) appropriate access to alternative learning environments for students who cannot be served within the regular school setting.

These programs may be locally provided services, cooperative services through agreements with other school districts, or utilize programs operated by other agencies – including Educational Service Cooperatives. Educational services shall be age appropriate and tailored to the instructional needs of identified students.

7. Each school district shall provide access to up-to-date technology, facilities and other instructional equipment and materials to support the curriculum at every level.

These instructional support components include, but are not limited to, modern science laboratories and apparatus, computer hardware and software with Internet access, age-appropriate interactive technology, distance learning capabilities as needed, and access to adequate print and non-print materials to supplement classroom instruction at all levels.

Funding/Facilities Subcommittee

MEMBERS

Mr. Larry Ross, Chair
Mr. Frank Anthony
Dr. Charles Dunn
Mr. Wayne Hartsfield
Mr. Phil Jones, Sr.
Mr. David Matthews
Ms. Alisia Ramirez-Hartz
Mr. Ulicious Reed

CHARGE

The Funding/Facilities Subcommittee was charged with recommending what would be adequate funding for an equitable education for the children of Arkansas. The Subcommittee identified their first Key Finding in the Final Order issued by Judge Kilgore in the Lake View lawsuit. Judge Kilgore ruled that the public schools of the State of Arkansas are not adequately funded; thus, the work of the Funding and Facilities Subcommittee is to recommend what would be adequate funding for an equitable education for the children of Arkansas.

KEY FINDINGS

Four-Year-Old Program

Review of programs for four-year-old children revealed a number of important topics for discussion. Topics included attendance requirements, uniform curriculum standards, the question of whether curriculum standards should be set by the Blue Ribbon Commission or the Arkansas Department of Education, state funding, and use of existing infrastructure.

- There should be a four-year-old program with minimum required standards.
- There should be uniform curriculum standards for all four-year-old programs.
- Adequate State funding must be provided for the success of the programs.

Uniform Workforce Education

Review of topics on Workforce Education produced discussion regarding adequate and equitable locations and minimum statewide curriculum standards.

- Adequate and equitable locations should be outlined.
- Minimum state-wide curriculum standards should be set.
- Workforce education should be uniformly available across the state.

Funding of Facilities

Discussion surrounding funding of facilities focused on defining issues related to funding of facilities such as 1) adequate facilities to support the necessary curriculum, 2) minimum facilities standards, and 3) facility needs: cleanness, safety, and economy. The committee observed the need to determine the relevance of the funding issue as it relates to the Supreme Court ruling and to determine the role of local community participation. Further discussion centered on the need to identify the extent of the State's financial responsibility for facilities; such as, the State is responsible for academic facilities and local resources are responsible for extra-curricular facilities. Additionally, discussion of the need to consider the impact on State funding and decide who is responsible for deciding changes to the funding formula was conducted, as well as determining the appropriate treatment of existing debt.

- Determine the appropriate treatment of existing debt.
- Decide which entity of state government is responsible for deciding changes to the funding formula.
- Define adequate facilities to support necessary curriculum.
- Identify the extent of the State's financial responsibility for facilities (Is the State responsible for academic facilities and local resources responsible for extra-curricular facilities?).
- Determine the role of local community participation.

Teachers' Salaries

Discussion of teachers' salaries addressed a wide range of topics. Among the areas of discussion included were that salaries should not be contingent on student performance alone. In order to meet minimum standards, the state should increase teacher salaries to the regional average, including consideration of special needs students. Teachers should receive technology training, the overall quality of teaching must be improved, and scholarships should be made available. Teachers' salaries should be made uniform across the state, an incentive or stipend should be paid for specialized curriculum, a stipend paid for certain geographical areas of the state, and a stipend paid to successful principals and administrators for relocating to a failing school. Further discussion centered on the need to require a certified teacher in every classroom, to require high quality/relevant staff development that meets district, school, and individual teacher needs, provide in depth in-service prior to the beginning of the school year, mandate smaller classes for student remediation, extend teacher contracts (more days and 8 hours per day) and increase salaries, and require a minimum and maximum student/teacher ratio that is appropriate to each grade level and discipline.

- Make teacher salaries uniform across the state.
- Pay an incentive or a stipend for specialized curriculum teacher.
- Pay a stipend for certain geographical areas of the state for teachers.

- Pay a stipend to successful principals and administrators for relocating to a failing school and/or district.
- Require a quality certified teacher in every classroom.
- Require high quality/relevant staff development that meets the district/school and individual teacher needs.
- Require a minimum and maximum student/teacher ratio that is appropriate to grade level and discipline.
- Extend teacher contracts (more days and 8 hours per day) with increased pay.

Other Items

- Additional resources need to be committed to remediation, transportation, and child nutrition.
- A responsibility component for students, teachers, and administrators should be determined.
- An accountability component for teachers and administrators should be determined.
- Responsible efficiencies should be attained in every district so that public education funds are effectively used.
- The Blue Ribbon Commission should identify an adequate and equitable education system that prepares students to intelligently choose and pursue life's work, regardless of where they live.
- A quality curriculum should be available to every child.
- A statewide minimum curriculum for every level should be determined.
- Additional resources should be committed to children who are not proficient, such as transportation, after-school nutrition programs, and tutoring.
- A system of P-8 and 9-12 districts should be considered.
- Additional ESL teachers are needed.
- Per-pupil expenditures should be at or above the regional or national average.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Facilities

1. We recommend an immediate dramatic infusion of capital needs money to ensure adequate facilities in every school district (as finally configured), including the building of new regional high school facilities.

a. This will require a thorough, independent, objective facilities inventory of the entire state.

b. There must be specific standards for what "adequate facilities" means.

2. Once all facilities are raised to an adequate level, we recommend that future funding distribution formulas provide adequate monies to continue to maintain and provide adequate facilities for academic instructional purposes. In order for the distribution of funds to be equitable, we recommend that the formula be based upon a recognition that mills in one district may not raise as much money as the same number of mills in another district.

3. We recommend requiring local districts to maintain a level of local funding sufficient to maintain an adequate system, as defined by the state. If funding fails for a period of two consecutive years, the district shall be subject to reorganization by the state.

Workforce Education

4. Every school district shall provide free workforce education programs with minimum uniform curriculum standards utilizing certified staff.

a. Every school district in Arkansas shall have reasonable access to an area career center.

Organizational Structure Subcommittee

MEMBERS

Ms. Charlie Cole Chaffin, Chair
Mr. Gene Gregory
Mr. Hugh McDonald
Mr. Kevin Moore
Mr. Keith Stokes

CHARGE

The Organizational Structure Subcommittee was charged with reviewing and recommending the most appropriate organizational structure with the goal of ensuring that educational opportunities for Arkansas' children are adequate, equitable, and delivered in the most efficient manner. The Subcommittee was also charged with reviewing and recommending additional measures to improve the efficiency of Arkansas' education system, including year-round schools and strengthening elements of the existing accountability process. The Subcommittee has been presented with, has discussed, and has analyzed various relevant information, points of view, and recommendations related to its mission.

KEY FINDINGS

Lakeview vs. State of Arkansas Findings of Fact

- As previously found by the court, the Arkansas Constitution, Article 14, §1 requires that the State provide a “general, suitable and efficient system of free public schools” and Article 2, §§2, 3, and 18 requires that the schools be equally available to all the people. Article 14, §1 also permits the State and the school districts to “spend public funds for the education of persons over twenty-one (21) years of age and under six (6) years of age...” (Finding of Fact 124, *Lakeview vs. Huckabee*).
- Making an accurate determination as to how much of the revenues distributed by the State actually reach the classroom is more difficult than measuring how much revenue the State provides the schools and school districts. However, under the Constitution, the State is solely responsible for the education of its citizens. Its duty does not end upon disbursement of revenues to the school districts. Moreover, the best measure of whether available funds are being efficiently applied to the education of the State's children is through an accurate accounting of expenditures (Finding of Fact 3, *Lakeview vs. Huckabee*).

- Facilities, materials, teachers and other resources affect a student’s opportunity and ability to learn. The State suggests that disparity in the way funds are spent accounts for the many alleged inequities at the local level; i.e., mismanagement and not inequitable distributions of funds is the cause of unconstitutional educational disparities. Further, even if it were, under the Constitution the State bears the ultimate burden of educating its children, no matter where the blame is cast (Finding of Fact 22, *Lakeview vs. Huckabee*).
- Present technology would suggest that the appropriate way for a state to exercise its responsibilities is not through detailed spending control but close observation of student performance. The Standards Assurance Unit of the Department of Education is available for that role. It currently has three responsibilities: accreditation of schools, standards review, and assistance to schools in Academic Distress (Finding of Fact 85, *Lakeview vs. Huckabee*).
- If a school district is found to be not in compliance with one or more of the standards of accreditation, the district can suffer various consequences. Consequences range from a citation, which is a minor violation, to probation, which if not corrected could lead to a loss of accreditation. If a school loses accreditation after going through probationary status for two consecutive years, it would be subject to a number of penalties including annexation, consolidation, and/or other remedies (Finding of Fact 87, *Lakeview vs. Huckabee*).

Governance Structures

There are four primary models of state-level K-12 education governance in place across the country.

- Model One: Within this model, the governor appoints the state board of education. Also, the state board of education appoints the chief state school officer. There are 12 Model One states: Alaska, Arkansas, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, and West Virginia.
- Model Two: Within this model, the state board of education is elected and appoints the chief state school officer. There are eight Model Two states: Alabama, Colorado, Hawaii, Kansas, Michigan, Nebraska, Nevada, and Utah.
- Model Three: Within this model, the governor appoints the state board of education. Also, the general public elects the chief state school officers. There are 11 Model Three states: Arizona, California, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Montana, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Wyoming.
- Model Four: Within this model, the governor appoints the state board of education and the chief state school officer. There are eight Model Four states: Delaware, Iowa, Maine, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Virginia.
- The remaining eleven states have governance structures that do not conform to any of the above four models.
- States are also taking a variety of approaches to alter their existing K-12 education governance structure. The Subcommittee believes there is no correlation between the type of governance structure and academic performance based on the report to the Advisory Committee from Todd Ziebar, Education Commission of the States. A table of General

Governance Statistics by State is provided in the Appendix on page 69 of this document.

Comparative Public Education Data

The following information demonstrates how Arkansas compares to the United States and states represented by the Southern Regional Education Board on a variety of educational indicators.

Arkansas Demographic Data

- Arkansas also has a significant portion of its children living in poverty. At 22%, Arkansas ranks higher than the US average of 21%. However, Arkansas' poverty ranking is lower than the SREB average of 24%.¹ Arkansas is also among the nation's leaders in the percentage of rural students in poverty (25.9%) and leads the nation in the percentage of students attending small rural schools (29.4%).²
- There is no clear agreement among researchers and educators about what constitutes a "small" school or a "large" school. Many researchers, however, indicate that an appropriate and effective size is 300 - 400 students for an elementary school and 400 - 800 students for a secondary school.³
- Research conducted on behalf of the State Board of Education Advisory Committee indicates a low correlation between district size and percent proficiency.⁴
- According to information compiled by the Education Commission of the States:

Arkansas has 310 districts. Georgia has 181 districts.
Arkansas has 15 cooperatives. Georgia has 13 cooperatives.
Georgia generally is around or below the national average in terms of proficiency on the NAEP.

Arkansas has 310 districts. Florida has 67 districts.
Florida generally is below the national average.

Arkansas has 310 districts. Kentucky has 176 districts.
Kentucky is generally below the national average and even dropped 12% and 8% between 1998 and 2000.

Arkansas has 310 districts. Wisconsin has 426 districts.
Wisconsin generally scores higher than the national average in proficiency in both reading and math.

Arkansas Student Academic Achievement

- Arkansas student academic achievement, on average, trailed the nation in National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and ACT scores. Eighth grade science NAEP scores for Arkansas were also below the average of the sixteen SREB states with only Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina consistently scoring lower. Fourth grade science and eighth grade writing NAEP scores for Arkansas were also below the SREB average and U.S. average. On the other hand, Arkansas ACT combined

scores of 20.3 were above SREB average of 20.1 and Arkansas SAT combined scores of 1117 were higher than both the SREB average (1002) and U.S. average (1019).⁵

Comparative School District Data

- When statistics on the average number of students per district are compared, Arkansas ranks 42nd out of 51 states. When compared with the 16 Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) states, one state, Oklahoma, has fewer students per district than Arkansas.⁶ The North Central Association accredits Arkansas and Oklahoma, while a different accrediting association accredits the remainder of the SREB states. Arkansas and Oklahoma are consistent in the comparison with other SREB states that are accredited by the North Central Association. Arkansas averages 391 students per elementary school (687 schools). Sixteen states have averages less than that of Arkansas. Of the 16 SREB states, only Oklahoma has a per elementary school student average less than that of Arkansas (341).⁷
- Arkansas averages 449 students per secondary schools (417 schools). Eight states have averages less than Arkansas. Of the 16 SREB states, again only Oklahoma has a per secondary school student average less than Arkansas (346).^{8,9}
- From an overall school density standpoint, Arkansas ranks 34th out of 51 states with 45 square miles per school. There are approximately 76 square miles per elementary school and 125 square miles per secondary school in Arkansas.
- Comprehensive statewide school district consolidation and reorganization should not be founded only on opportunities to reduce costs. Broad scale consolidation/ reorganization also has the potential to increase costs. For the smallest districts, and those where student populations are falling, cost per student will increase because of the high cost necessary to maintain standards and a standard curriculum, and to provide a quality educational program.
- In certain states and situations, K-8th grade districts remain intact and high schools are consolidated. This method has been an effective transitional structure in Missouri.

Efficiency Measures

- Efficiency and effectiveness measures must be defined, implemented, and monitored on an ongoing basis and must be used for effective management of the Arkansas State Department of Education, Cooperatives, and Districts.

Additional Findings

- The Year-Round School schedule has been linked with improved academic performance, improved student discipline, and increased student attendance. It also provides a better chance for more and better education to those in greatest need – the poorest among us – and brings a broadened and enriched curriculum.^{11, 12}
- Distance learning provides schools with the ability to provide core and advanced courses to ensure that State curriculum standards are met.
- Separation of service and accountability/regulatory roles within a state’s department of education has proven to be effective in certain states’ implementation of school accountability requirements.

- Concern exists about the singular board makeup of school superintendents for the fifteen Arkansas Education Cooperatives. An inconsistent level of policy guidance, operational autonomy, and cooperation between education cooperatives and the State Department of Education exists.
- Consideration should be given to the creation of a separate and independent Board to monitor and evaluate school districts. This Board should be given the authority to reorganize and consolidate schools and districts based on pre-established standards and performance measures.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Any school district that does not meet the required core curriculum or cannot meet the minimum teacher salaries by September 2003, shall be dissolved and reorganized with contiguous districts as determined by the Board of Trustees of the schools by July 2004.

Consideration of the following shall provide justification for the decisions:

- a. **geography and community activity patterns**
- b. **amount of time a child spends on the bus.**

2. Incentive monies according to the current incentive formula shall be provided to schools that consolidate voluntarily by September 2003. In order to provide adequate funding for the incentive, the Subcommittee requests the Funding/Facilities Subcommittee consider a recommendation for a biennial appropriation of four (4) million dollars.

3. Amend Arkansas' Public School Choice statute to enhance the ability of students and parents to utilize it and create regional high schools dispersed throughout the state. These changes would:

- a. **Offer student access to an expanded curriculum**
- b. **Offer greater access to higher education**
- c. **Offer greater access to vocational education**
- d. **Address the problem of inefficiency (particularly at the high school level)**
- e. **Address the problem of teacher shortage (especially in some rural areas)**
- f. **Address to a greater degree the issue of teacher salaries**
- g. **Address the issue of facilities (elementary facilities are often better)**

School Choice. Arkansas' Public School Choice law is codified at Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-206 (Supp. 2001) and states, in part, that by "giving more options to parents and students with

respect to where they attend[ed] public school would increase the responsiveness and effectiveness of the state's schools" because school districts would be motivated to compete to keep their students. A strong argument can be made that the stated goals and reasons behind the law can only be fully realized if the ability of school districts to "opt-out" is removed. There must be, however, reasonable restrictions to make certain that school districts are not overburdened with facility or personnel needs or that school choice does not create a racially segregated system of public schools in Arkansas. The *Arkansas Public School Choice Act of 1989*, as it is currently written and construed, provides those safeguards, and they should not be changed. Suggested revisions to the Act include:

- a. All public school districts in Arkansas must be required to participate in school choice subject to the terms and conditions set forth in Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-206. (This requires that subsection (b)(3) of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-206 be amended to delete any opt-out provision and require mandatory participation in school choice.)
- b. Non-resident school districts should be allowed, at the non-resident district's option, to run their buses into a resident school district to pick up and transport a school choice student to the non-resident school district. (This change requires amending language to subsection (c) of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-206.)
- c. Under an option two (2) school choice transfer, any time the resident and non-resident school district stay within their acceptable range of variance in racial demographics as provided for under Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-206, a student should be allowed to transfer to the non-resident school district even when the two school districts are not located in the same county, as long as the districts are contiguous. (This requires amending language in subsection (f)(2) of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-206.)

Regional High Schools. One way to efficiently provide a more rigorous high school curriculum would be under the auspices of regional high schools dispersed throughout the state. The following should be considered in developing these schools:

- a. These schools would provide an alternative to school district consolidation for Grades 9-12.
- b. Either existing high schools or newly created open-enrollment charter schools would be allowed to apply for the status of regional high school. In either case, the applicant would have to demonstrate that it would offer the extended curriculum described below.
 1. There would be at least one regional high school per "defined region," guaranteeing access to all Arkansas students.
 2. The defined regions and regional high schools would be established by the State based upon a number of factors such as: high school students available to attend, facilities, cost to implement, expected efficiency improvements, etc.

All would operate under a common name such as "Regional High School." The sponsoring entity would add its local name; for example, "Delta High School" would become "Delta Regional High School."

An extended curriculum, beyond the 38 units required for graduation, would be required to be offered annually, including, but not limited to:

- a. A variety of AP courses or the International Baccalaureate program,
- b. A variety of vocational courses,
- c. A rich foreign language, mathematics, and science curriculum,
- d. An increased opportunity for concurrent college credit and Associate Degree attainment as an option for students.

The schools would be funded with tuition paid by student's resident district from funds already sent through the state funding formula or the charter school funding mechanism.

Any high school that does not wish to become a regional school could continue to operate as long as all standards for accreditation, as set by the State Board of Education or by law, are met.

4. Separation of service and accountability/regulatory roles within the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) is recommended to more effectively monitor and implement the state's school accountability requirements. We also encourage the ADE to continue working on the reorganization of service and accountability/regulatory roles within ADE.

5. We strongly encourage relevant information on year-round schools be discussed at the annual School Board Training meetings, the Joint Conference on Teaching meetings, Administrators meetings, and PTA meetings.

Teacher Salaries/Professional Development Subcommittee

MEMBERS

Dr. Reed Greenwood, Chair
Ms. Judith G. Donovan
Mr. Randy Hughes
Dr. Martha McNair
Ms. Johnette Walker

CHARGE

The Teacher Salaries/Professional Development Subcommittee was charged with 1) evaluating the status of teacher salaries and teacher professional development in Arkansas, 2) obtaining information on salaries and professional development standards for teachers in other states, 3) reviewing methods which could lead to improvement in teacher salaries and professional development for Arkansas' teachers, and 4) making recommendations to the Commission. Presentations were made to the Committee by representative organizations and individuals in Arkansas, working with and interested in K – 12 education. Based on input from the various groups, as well as information obtained from educational resources and the Internet, literature-based findings were outlined. For ease of dealing with the issues, information was categorized into three areas: recruitment, retention, and remuneration.

The initial focus of the Teacher Salary and Professional Development Committee was to investigate and explore literature-based information which affects and defines recruitment, retention, and remuneration in Arkansas, with the goal of providing the highest possible quality education for all Arkansas' children.

KEY FINDINGS

The Teachers Salaries/Professional Development Subcommittee organized its charge into three areas: recruitment, retention, and remuneration. *Recruitment* refers to activities conducted by local, regional, and state entities for the purpose of encouraging certified, high-quality educators to seek employment in Arkansas' schools. Two areas of particular need evident in Arkansas are 1) recruiting educators to specific geographic areas and 2) recruiting educators to specific curricular areas. *Retention* refers to activities focused on maintaining Arkansas' educators in K - 12 positions. Areas of particular importance in Arkansas are activities geared toward 1) encouraging faculty to continue in education as a career throughout their working years and 2) providing professional development services that continuously expand the knowledge base of educators. Remuneration refers to compensation for the work conducted by educators. *Remuneration* is most frequently expressed in the form of teachers' salaries and

benefits. Arkansas' teachers are paid based on years of experience and level of education. Salaries vary from district to district. Benefits also vary, and typically include insurance (health, life), retirement funds, and professional, personal, and sick days.

Findings associated with the three areas of recruitment, retention, and remuneration overlap. For example, the level of remuneration may impact whether a teacher can be recruited to a particular area, teacher retention can be influenced by the degree of remuneration, and faculty may be recruited to a particular job with retention dependent upon a variety of factors.

Several important factors that affect the issues before the Committee were identified, including the following:

- Seven recent acts in Arkansas intended to impact teacher recruitment¹³
 - Act 1388 – reimbursement for interviewing and moving expenses
 - Act 1521 - identification of teacher shortage areas by ADE (Arkansas Department of Education)
 - Act 1523 – creation of Arkansas Delta Leadership Academy – professional development for teachers in the Delta
 - Act 1550 – program to attract qualified individuals to pursue masters and teach in areas where there are teacher shortages - \$2000/yr for 4 years
 - Act 1731 – scholarship to increase minority participation in teaching at UAPB (University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff) - \$1500/yr
 - Act 1398 of 2001 – created the Blue Ribbon Commission
 - Act 999 of 1999 - authorized the State Board of Education to “establish professional development.”¹⁴
- A demographic shift in the age of teachers has occurred in the United States. The percentage of full-time teachers 45 years old or older increased from about 26% in 1975 to 43% in 1993.¹⁵
- Students in high-poverty schools are more likely to be taught by unqualified teachers.¹⁶
- Recent research provides strong evidence that teacher quality is the single most important school factor affecting student achievement.¹⁷
- Three selected measures of teacher quality: degree in subject, performance on standardized exams, selectivity of college attended.¹⁷
- Recommendations from *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future* (1996):
 - 1 – Get serious about standards, for both students and teachers.
 - 2 – Reinvent teacher preparation and professional development.
 - 3 – Overhaul teacher recruitment and put qualified teachers in every classroom.
 - 4 – Encourage and reward teaching knowledge and skill.
 - 5 – Create schools that are organized for student and teacher success.¹⁸
- The principal criterion for evaluating the impact of professional development shall be the improvement of student achievement on state criterion-referenced examinations and other related indicators as defined by the Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment and Accountability Program.¹⁹

- Our message is very simple: If we are serious about leaving no child behind, then we must also be serious about leaving no teacher unqualified. Because ensuring a quality, qualified teacher in every classroom – especially in high-poverty, low-performing schools – is the linchpin of any credible agenda of school reform.²⁰
- The State Board of Education is in the process now of trying to advance a comprehensive strategy to attract, motivate and retain high caliber teachers to the teaching profession ... The challenge of finding ways of retaining quality teachers and attracting new teachers is going to take additional funding. The single most important factor necessary to ensure that the State’s system of education meets the *Rose* factors is the availability of well educated, well motivated, and well compensated teachers.²¹

Recruitment

Arkansas

- The U. S. Department of Education designated teacher shortage areas in Arkansas for the 1999-2000 school year. General areas include: secondary mathematics and sciences, K-12 handicapped, languages, and English-as-a-Second-Language.²²
- Arkansas has 42 counties, located in the Delta region, designated as geographic areas of shortage, where it is often difficult to attract new teachers.
- Judge Kilgore notes that Arkansas teachers are compensated far less than their counterparts in neighboring states. This fact makes it difficult for districts, particularly those on the border with other states, to attract and maintain qualified teachers.²³

Background

- Studies indicate that young people often enter teaching out a sense of calling and are much more motivated by idealism and the perceived lifestyle teaching offers than by salary.²⁴
- A number of other factors affect the ability of the teaching profession to attract candidates and the ability of schools and districts to attract teachers:
 1. potential candidates’ perceptions of teaching
 2. the school environment
 3. interaction with and support from colleagues and school leaders
 4. workload and career growth opportunities
 5. comparative starting salaries
 6. hiring practices
 7. teacher mobility²⁴
- A recent Public Agenda survey, *A Sense of Calling: Who Teaches and Why?*, showed that a majority of college graduates who do not enter teaching believe teachers do not feel adequately respected and appreciated.²⁵
- More than half (52%) of respondents to the most recent *Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public’s Attitudes Toward the Public Schools* said putting a qualified, competent teacher in every classroom offers the greatest promise of improving public schools. Only 4%, however, said difficulty in getting good teachers is the biggest problem facing their local schools.²⁶

- The 2001 *Recruiting New Teachers* poll ranked teaching as the profession of greatest benefit to society and the career that, next to medicine, people would most recommend to a family member.²⁷
- The Education Commission of the States says “hard-to-staff” schools are those “that have a particularly difficult time finding and retaining adequately trained teachers who are effective with their student populations.”²⁸
- “Hard-to-staff” schools frequently have the greatest need for the most capable professionals and are most likely to have ill-prepared principals and under-qualified, inexperienced teachers.
- Teacher recruitment strategies used by states include:
 1. Early recruitment strategies
 2. Scholarship and loan forgiveness programs
 3. Targeted recruitment strategies
 4. Financial incentives
 5. Career fairs

Retention/Professional Development

Arkansas

- There are 11 required focus areas for professional development in Arkansas: curriculum alignment, instructional strategies, assessment, advocacy/leadership, systemic change process, Arkansas content standards/frameworks, supervision, mentoring/coaching, instructional technology, principles of learning/developmental stages, building a collaborative learning community.¹⁹
- Arkansas requires 30 hours of professional development each year for all certified employees. A three-hour college credit course counts as 3 hours of professional development. Development activities must produce knowledge designed to improve students’ academic performance.¹⁹
- There is a need for policymakers to establish a clear vision of the professional development program for teachers.

Background

- Thirty percent of teachers and 50% of teachers in urban schools leave teaching within 5 years. Out of every 600 students entering four-year teaching programs, only 180 complete them, only 72 become teachers and only about 40 are still teaching several years later.²⁹
- Most professional development costs are born by the local districts. Expenditures include 1) staff costs associated with planning and delivering in-service programs, 2) opening schools 2-5 days per year for in-service, 3) sending staff to workshops, 4) supervising and evaluating personnel, 5) reimbursing tuition, and 6) paying the salary increments teachers earn when they attain graduate degrees, college credits or CEUs.³⁰
- Most districts do not know how much professional development is costing them.³⁰
- Teacher knowledge must be encouraged and rewarded.¹⁸
- If teachers are to teach for deep understanding, they must be intellectually engaged in their disciplines and work regularly with others in their field.³¹

- Most school districts invest little in ongoing professional development for experienced teachers and spend much of these limited resources on unproductive “hit-and-run” workshops.³²
- Staff development should be job-embedded, intensive, sustained over time, relevant to school improvement goals, linked to student performance, and strongly supported by the schools.³³
- A focused professional development experience led by qualified teachers, mentors, and colleagues is the indispensable foundation for competence and high-quality teaching.³⁴
- Despite the considerable resources that most schools devote to professional development (6-10 days per year), teachers and administrators alike generally have negative opinions of professional development.³⁵
- An effective professional development program is not merely an agenda for designated in-service days. Ideally, it is a continuous process of learning through experience and through external training and other supplemental activities.³⁵
- Teachers need time to prepare and equip themselves with the knowledge and skills necessary to maximize student learning. Professional development for teachers must become a seamless part of the daily and yearlong job. Teachers’ learning must be accommodated by changes in how time is used throughout the school year and beyond it.³²
- Eighty percent of the National Board Certified Teachers surveyed said the National Board Certification process was better than other professional development experiences, and 61 percent said the act of going through the process has had a greater impact on them than actually achieving the certificate itself.³⁶
- The teaching career does not encourage teachers to develop or use growing expertise.¹⁸
- Professional development is likely to have greater impact on practice if it is closely linked to school initiatives to improve practice.³¹
- Teachers need opportunities to explore, question and debate in order to integrate new ideas into their repertoires and their classroom practice.³¹
- Professional development should be viewed as an integral part of teachers' work.³¹
- Professional development programs should provide for sufficient time and follow-up support for teachers to master new content and strategies and to integrate them into their practice.³¹
- Policymakers should focus their deliberations on the central issues of professional development and set some clear goals for policy. These goals might include the following:
 1. Focusing professional development on core problems of teaching and learning.
 2. Balancing individual and organization interests in professional development, and restructuring incentives so that they are more closely aligned.
 3. Embedding more professional development in the workplace so it is more closely related to teachers' work experience.
 4. Ensuring that high-quality professional development opportunities are accessible to teachers who serve the most vulnerable students.
 5. Improving the productivity of professional development.³⁷

- Good professional development should encompass expectations educators hold for students, child-development theory, curriculum content and design, instructional and assessment strategies for instilling higher-order competencies, school culture and shared decision-making.
- Steps state policymakers might take to push professional development in the right direction:
 1. Increasing awareness among educational leaders
 2. Increasing public support and awareness
 3. Reviewing policies and practice
 4. Setting standards and priorities
 5. Providing more time
 6. Strengthening teacher roles
 7. Supporting local adoption or demonstrations of promising approaches
 8. Re-thinking incentives³⁷

Remuneration

Arkansas

- National average beginning teacher salary was \$27,989 in 1999-2000. Arkansas was \$22,599 – ranking 47th out of 51.³⁸
- National average teacher salary in 1999-2000 was \$41,820. Arkansas reporting \$33,691 – ranking 43rd out of 51.³
- Based on a report from the Southern Regional Education Board (November 2000), out of 13 states, Arkansas ranks 11th in starting teacher salary (Base=\$21,860), and tops out at 15 years ranking 8th for 1999 – 2000.⁴⁰
- A breakdown of salaries by District ADM demonstrates the smaller the district, the smaller the salary.⁴¹
- A review of Judge Kilgore’s ruling notes that “disparities in pay among Arkansas districts are also addressed. Typically, the districts with the greatest number of high-needs or at-risk students on a percentage basis are the districts that can pay teachers the least.” “[Remedies] First, because in the court’s view competent, motivated teachers are the most essential element of an adequate system, Judge Kilgore orders both higher and substantially equivalent salaries across the state.”²¹
- Judge Kilgore concluded that “disparities in teacher salaries within the State are unconstitutional.”²¹
- Judge Kilgore concluded that “teachers salaries are inadequate as compared to competing markets.”²¹
- While Arkansas’ teachers are provided benefits such as health insurance, their portion of the contribution to the program is a significant burden to many teachers in the state.

Background

- Financially, teaching is a less attractive profession than it was in 1980, based on a 19% adjusted teacher salary increase compared to the overall salary increase of 29%.¹⁷

- Shifting pay increments from years of experience and loosely related education units to more direct measures of professional skills and competencies, adding a mechanism that encourages on-going training and assessment of instructional strategies, and perhaps adding group-based performance bonuses, are compensation changes that could link how teachers are paid with the evolving strategic needs of new school organizations.⁴²
- While the existing data sources appear to show that benefits for teachers compare favorably to those in the private sector, it is not possible to directly compare how they have changed over time relative to the private sector. Thus, there is no indication of whether teaching has become a more or less attractive occupation given changes in benefits.¹⁷
- There is evidence suggesting that the rigid pay structure in teaching may adversely affect the number of high ability individuals entering or remaining in the teaching profession.¹⁷

RECOMMENDATIONS

Teacher Recruitment

1. Ensure the continuation of the Annual Job Fair, currently conducted by the Arkansas Department of Education.

Demand for teachers is exceeding the current supply, a trend that is expected to continue. About one in five teachers return to the classroom after leaving. Evidence suggests general success of job fairs, both regionally and nationally. Two consecutive years of the Arkansas Job Fair have demonstrated success, with funding coming from grant money that may not continue to be available. The job fair is an efficient way to link employers with potential employees, to address the need for new teachers, and to address the need for improving the percentage of teachers certified in their area of employment.

2. Establish an Arkansas Teacher Scholarship/Loan Program to assist students in the pursuit of studies leading to teacher licensure who are willing to pledge five years of teaching in Arkansas upon completion of the program.

A higher degree of interest in obtaining a teaching degree will be generated if substantial scholarship/loans are provided to qualified students. This represents an expansion of existing, successful programs, such as the Minority Teachers Scholarship and the Emergency Secondary Education Loan.

3. Provide incentives for teachers willing to work in teacher shortage areas: subject areas, geographic areas, or low-performing schools/districts.

Experience and studies have shown the difficulty of attracting teachers into particular subject (e.g., foreign language, math, science, special education, etc.) and geographic areas (e.g., Arkansas Delta). Similar circumstances, both regionally and nationally, have demonstrated the positive impact of incentives. Teachers in schools with high proportions of low-income students report lower quality teaching, lower quality school environment, have lower expectations for their students, are less satisfied with their school relationships and less satisfied with teaching. Therefore, highly skilled teachers must be introduced to these areas. Incentives include, but are not limited to, financial incentives (accelerated loan forgiveness, stipends or bonuses) and waiving restrictions that discourage retired teachers from returning to the classroom. Currently, 12 SREB states allow retired teachers to continue collecting retirement benefits while they return to full-time work.

4. Establish a Teacher Recruitment Network with representation from each university teacher education program in the state.

Teacher education programs currently deal with teacher recruitment and assist graduates in obtaining employment. Encouraging the expansion of existing university programs is viewed as a cost-effective way to provide resources and networking capability. Studies have demonstrated that teachers frequently prefer to teach near where they have lived or are currently living. Particular attention should be paid to areas of the state demonstrating the greatest need for certified teachers.

Teacher Retention

5. Require building and district administrators to devote at least three hours per year of professional development work to matters pertaining to teacher retention.

According to a study conducted by *Education Week*, one out of five novice teachers leaves the profession after three years, and new teachers who score well on high-stakes exams are twice as likely to leave. Incentives must be focused on the early years of teaching. Examinations of teacher supply and demand patterns should continuously be reexamined locally to provide consistent teacher supply. With the expectation of 2000 fewer teachers than needed, the ADE opened the door to nontraditional teachers last spring, waiving certification requirements (teachers' exams and required grade point averages) if candidates appeared "exceptionally well qualified." District administrators must be prepared to address these issues locally.

6. Administrators apply strategies related to teacher retention as part of the Arkansas Consolidated School Improvement Plan (ACSIP).

Most veteran teachers are not receiving sufficient support in their teaching content area to stay up-to-date on new and effective teaching strategies. Each school must have a school improvement plan and teacher retention should be an integral part of the plan. This will call attention to the need to work with new as well as established teachers in addressing issues that cause teachers to leave the profession. Intentional planning will require building administrators to examine the issues in their schools that may create problems for their teachers. They can then develop a proactive program to work on these issues and help their teachers to develop the professional knowledge and skills they need. Also, plans can be developed to address issues such as administrative support, discipline, parent relations and other factors that have an impact on teacher retention.

7. Implement periodic, independent evaluations of the professional development programs for teachers in order to assure activities are well targeted and timely.

For teachers remaining in the profession five years, ninety percent of this group remains in teaching. For this group, incentives need to focus on issues of quality and professional growth. High-quality professional development 1) balances individual priorities with school and district needs and advances the profession as a whole, 2) provides adequate time for inquiry, reflection, and mentoring and is an important part of the normal working day of all public school educators, 3) is rigorous, sustained, and adequate to the long-term change of practice, 4) has the goal of improving student learning at the heart of every school, and 5) is site-based and supportive of a clearly articulated vision for students.

8. Extend the requirement for teacher professional development from 30 to 60 hours per year by the year 2008.

The most important factor in student achievement is access to knowledgeable, well-prepared, high-quality teachers. High-quality teaching is linked to high-quality school environment and better student performance. Teachers tend to remain in positions in which they are increasingly successful. To improve teaching, the current professional development system should be improved with teachers contributing significantly toward the manner in which their development hours are spent. At the same time, students should not experience increased time without their regular classroom teacher. It has been demonstrated that when educators work with colleagues to address the needs of students, positive effects increase.

Professional development should be extended both in time and degree of flexibility for teachers to work collaboratively to direct their own personal development. Salary compensation should be provided for extended professional development hours. Teachers should be allowed greater flexibility for meeting these requirements, incorporating new ways of completing the annual requirement (e.g., collaboration days, applying more than thirty hours, with prior approval, to the next year's requirement, and others such as suggested in The National Foundation for the Improvement of Education's study, *Teachers Take Charge of their*

Learning”). The limits on college courses inhibit teachers from enrolling in high-quality college courses. A three-hour college course could count for a minimum of 15 professional development credit hours. These courses may be directed toward a teacher’s area of certification or toward the acquiring of additional certification or training. There must be strengthening and coordination of a professional development system so that everyone who has a part in professional development is more aware of and has better access to all other involved parties.

9. Encourage factors that assure quality and safety in classrooms and schools for teachers and students.

There is a connection between the school environment and quality of education. Quality teaching is linked with students’ having more positive attitudes about learning, school, and their future in general. A significant minority of students do not experience schools that are clean, safe, quiet, with sufficient classrooms. Principals’ views on school quality have been demonstrated to be rosier than teachers’ views. *The National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future* reported those who left teaching in 1994 were much more satisfied with all aspects of their new, nonteaching employment than those who stayed in teaching. Studies have suggested that some teachers might be lured back into the classroom by improvements in working conditions.

Considerations should include physical setting, administrative support, school climate, and support staff. Teachers leaving the profession because of dissatisfaction have recommended the following changes: smaller classes, more discipline, and better leadership.

Teacher Salary

10. Align beginning salaries for Arkansas teachers, with a focus toward equitability and competitiveness. The recommended levels for the required minimum starting salary (Bachelor’s degree, no experience) to be enacted by the 2003 legislative session are: \$26,000 (implemented by 2004-2005 School Year), \$28,000 (implemented by 2006-2007 School Year), and \$30,000 (implemented by 2008-2009 School Year). The overall goal should be to reach the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) average salary level by the 2006-07 academic year, estimated to be \$45,000.

Arkansas teacher salaries rank near the bottom nationally (43rd) and near the bottom of the Southern Regional Educational Board. States that have taken steps to raise and equalize salary levels, such as Connecticut and Kentucky, have greatly reduced shortages in central cities and rural communities. There is disparity in teachers’ salary within the State.

Consideration should be given to increasing both beginning salary and average salary levels. Larger school districts tend to have the ability to pay higher salaries, therefore consideration should be given to assuring that teachers in smaller districts, often those working with more challenging student populations in more challenging work environments, receive salaries reflecting minimal disparity.

11. Employee contributions made by teachers for health insurance and related benefits be the same amount as contributed by other state employees. The State of Arkansas shall provide additional state funding to cover the associated costs.

As teachers receive a significant portion of their pay from the state their benefits should be the same as state employees.

12. Establish multiple career paths for teachers.

Teachers have few opportunities to advance in their fields. The salary schedules used in the state provide for annual increments based on time in service and additional education. If teachers had possibilities for promotion that provided both recognition for additional knowledge and skills, as well as additional compensation, they would be encouraged to continue in the classroom.

Teachers may advance at least three career levels, without having to leave the classroom. Attached to advancement would be compensation in the form of three additional steps on the salary schedule. After meeting the requirements for the standard teaching license, teachers may choose to work toward advancement. To advance, teachers must meet specific, documented criteria. If a teacher is at the top of the scale, the equivalent increase is calculated based on the existing salary scale. Currently there is no way to recognize career achievement or to compensate more effective teachers more than less effective teachers. Teachers should be involved in the development of a career path program.

Current AFT (American Federation of Teachers) policy on teacher compensation supports the following:

- a. endorsing additional compensation to teachers who earn advanced certification by passing the demanding, performance-based assessments of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS);
- b. placing new teachers in shortage fields (e.g., math and science) further up on the salary schedule; and
- c. paying teachers for mentoring, peer support and other professional development activities.

13. Equate hiring practices throughout the state by accepting all of a teacher's previous experience in a school accredited by a regional accreditation agency (i.e., North Central Association).

Teachers serving in Arkansas contribute toward teacher retirement and contribute toward the achievement of Arkansas' students. Fluctuating salary practices may penalize teachers by not accepting experience in Arkansas when determining a teacher's position on the salary scale.

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Appendixes

Presentations to the Commission

Presenter/Organization	Topics
<p align="right">June 22, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senator John Riggs • Representative M. Olin Cook • Mr. Tristan D. Greene Special Assistant to Director Arkansas Department of Education 	<p>Background of Act 1398 of 2001 State’s obligations regarding public education Suggestions to the Committee</p> <p>Background of Act 1398 of 2001 Expansion of focus to how to make education better for every child Blue Ribbon Committee to work together with Advisory Committee</p> <p>Historical overview of school finance litigation in Arkansas and related aspects of recent cases.</p>
<p align="right">July 19, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Raymond Simon Director Arkansas Department of Education • Dr. Woodrow Cummins Deputy Director Arkansas Department of Education 	<p>Activities of the Arkansas Department of Education: ACTAAP Education Service Cooperatives Data Collection and Research</p> <p>Smart Start/Smart Step Curriculum Standards and Frameworks Professional Development for Educators Academic and Fiscal Distress Programs School and School District Report Card Arkansas Consolidated School Improvement Program (ACSIP)</p> <p>Arkansas Public School Network (APSCN) Office of Research, Measurement, and Evaluation (ORME) Just for the Kids Program Education Service Cooperatives</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">July 19, 2001, cont.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Krista Underwood Coordinator, K-12 Literacy Arkansas Department of Education • Dr. Linda Dorn Director Reading Recovery/Early Literacy University of Arkansas at Little Rock • Ms. Linda Wilsey Teacher Boone Park Elementary School North Little Rock School District • Mr. John Tull Chief Counsel Arkansas Press Association • Mr. Tristan Green Special Assistant to the Director Arkansas Department of Education 	<div style="border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Current initiatives in Arkansas to improve literacy in the elementary schools.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Arkansas' Freedom of Information Act</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Update on the status of <i>Lake View v. Huckabee, et al.</i></p> </div>
<p style="text-align: right;">August 22, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. John Kunkel Associate Director for Finance Management Arkansas Department of Education • Mr. Tristan Green Special Assistant to the Director Arkansas Department of Education • Mr. Mike Simmons Coordinator, School Transportation/Driver Education Arkansas Department of Education • Ms. Cindy Chaney Coordinator, School Loans and Bonds Arkansas Department of Education • Mr. Dave Floyd Coordinator, School Plant Services Arkansas Department of Education 	<div style="border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Methodology used to fund public education in Arkansas</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Legal and historical development of Arkansas' system of funding public education</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Transportation system for public education</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Use of debt funding by school districts to finance facilities and other long-term capital needs</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Arkansas' school facilities</p> </div>

September 26, 2001

- **Ms. Janinne Riggs**
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Arkansas Department of Education
- **Dr Gayle Potter**
Associate Director, Academic Standards and Assessment Unit
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- **Dr. Andre Guerrero**
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Information on curriculum and instruction

- **Ms. Janie Fletcher**
Director, Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education
Arkansas Department of Human Services

Operation of Arkansas' system of early childhood education

- **Mr. Tristan Green**
Special Assistant to the Director
Arkansas Department of Education

Update on the status of *Lake View v. Huckabee, et al.*

- **Mr. Raymond Simon**
Director
Arkansas Department of Education

Teacher compensation in Arkansas
Efforts to attract and retain qualified teachers

<p style="text-align: right;">October 3, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Charity Smith Associate Director for Accountability Arkansas Department of Education • Ms. Patricia Martin Assistant Director for Public School Finance and Administration Arkansas Department of Education 	<p>Teacher licensure and certification Process for addressing school districts in academic distress Benchmark Exams</p> <p>Mechanics of the program for assisting school districts in fiscal distress</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">November 21, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Raymond Simon Director Arkansas Department of Education 	<p>Update on recent funding reductions to public schools necessitated by the shortfall in state revenues and the potential impact of the reductions.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">December 5, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Bob McGinnis Member and Co-Chair Arkansas Blue Ribbon Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handout on pupil/teacher ratios by district • Copy of newspaper article regarding relationship between low socioeconomic status and poor academic performance by students <p>Discussed trip to Ft. Smith to visit Sunnymede Elementary School and an alternative school</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">December 19, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Diane Vibhakar Study Circles Coordinator Arkansas School Boards Association • Ms. Paulette Mabry College of Education University of Arkansas at Little Rock • Ms. Kathy Morledge Arkansas School Boards Association • Ms. Paula Cummins Arkansas Leadership Academy 	<p>} Conducted mock Study Circles session with committee members.</p> <p>} Facilitated a “visioning” session to establish and refine the role and scope of the Commission’s statutory responsibilities.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">January 2, 2002</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Kathy Morledge Arkansas School Boards Association • Ms. Paula Cummins Arkansas Leadership Academy 	<p>} Completed the facilitation of the “visioning” session begun December 19th, 2001.</p>

January 23, 2002	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor Mike Huckabee Governor, State of Arkansas 	Presented information on a series of educational reform proposals he put forth entitled: NEXT STEP.
February 6, 2002	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Raymond Simon Director Arkansas Department of Education 	Discussed: curriculum frameworks, core curriculum for high school students, standards for accreditation of the public schools, allocation and utilization of time during the school day, remediation rates for high school graduates, grade inflation report recently presented to the State Board of Education, mechanisms to ensure both student and institutional accountability.
February 20, 2002	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Tristan Green Special Assistant to the Director Arkansas Department of Education 	Update on the status of <i>Lake View v. Huckabee, et al.</i>
March 6, 2002	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Jeannie Cole President Arkansas Parent-Teachers Association 	National PTA's Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs.
April 3, 2002	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Stacy Pittman Co-Chair, Arkansas Blue Ribbon Commission 	Update on Speak Up, Arkansas!
April 17, 2002	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Tristan Green Special Assistant to the Director Arkansas Department of Education 	Update on the status of <i>Lake View v. Huckabee, et al.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Denise Cobb Research Survey Director Institute of Government University of Arkansas at Little Rock 	Initial findings from the data collected at the <i>Speak Up, Arkansas!</i> forums

April 27, 2002

- **Ms. Joyce Wroten**
Vice-President for University Relations and
Administration
University of Arkansas System
- **Mr. Tristan Green**
Special Assistant to the Director
Arkansas Department of Education

Historical background of University of Arkansas
System Administration Building

Update on the status of *Lake View v. Huckabee, et al.*

Presentations to the Curriculum/Early Childhood Education Subcommittee


Presenter/Organization	Topics
<p align="right">October 17, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Steve Franks Director Arkansas Department of Workforce Education 	<p>State's vocational education system</p>
<p align="right">November 7, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Janie Fletcher Director Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education Arkansas Department of Human Services 	<p>Information on early childhood education. Included information compiled by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB).</p>
<p align="right">November 21, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Janie Fletcher Director Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education Arkansas Department of Human Services • Ms. Karen Massey Early Childhood Coordinator Southwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative and Chair of the Arkansas Early Childhood Commission • Ms. Judy Clay Coordinator Early Childhood Special Education Southwest Arkansas Education Services Cooperative • Ms Elaine Davis Director Parents as Teachers Program Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative 	<p>Presented a range of successful early childhood education options operating in Arkansas. Discusses a draft document that presented the relative costs associated with various delivery systems.</p> <p>Role of the Early Childhood Commission in the delivery of preschool programs</p> <p>Special education services available to preschool children</p> <p>Parents as Teachers program</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">November 21, 2001, cont.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Penny Lunsford Coordinator Foster Grandparents Program DeQueen-Mena Educational Service Cooperative • Mr. Frank Scott Director DeQueen-Mena Educational Service Cooperative • Mr. Philip Young Director Arch Ford Educational Services Cooperative 	<p>Foster Grandparents program</p> <p style="text-align: center;">}</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Role cooperatives play in the delivery of early childhood education</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">December 5, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Linda Dorn Director, Reading Recovery/Early Literacy University of Arkansas at Little Rock • Ms. Donnie Skinner Literacy Coach, Boone Park Elementary School, North Little Rock • Ms. Mavis Cherry Principal, Boon Park Elementary School, North Little Rock • Judge Gary Isbell Juvenile Judge, Mountain Home Chair, Governor’s Commission on Nontraditional Education – Pygmalion Commission • Ms. Ann Smith Consultant Pygmalion Commission 	<p>Comprehensive Literacy Program. Noted requirement for intense staff development, teaching teams, continuous assessment, and literacy coaches.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">}</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussed impact of Comprehensive Literacy Program at their school.</p> <p>Alternative learning environments (ALEs) for students experiencing difficulty I the regular classroom environment.</p> <p>Provided additional information on ALEs.</p>


Presentations to the Funding/Facilities Subcommittee

Presenter/Organization	Topics
<p align="right">October 3, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Tim Leathers Deputy Director Department of Finance and Administration 	<p>State's system of taxation and its impact on public education</p>
<p align="right">October 17, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Frank Anthony Pine Bluff School District • Mr. J. M. Edington Biggers-Reno School District • Mr. Gene Gregory Arkansas City School District • Mr. Bill Kessinger West Memphis School District • Mr. Ulicious Reed Marvell School District • Dr. Jim Rollins Springdale School District • Dr. Gary Smith Pulaski County Special School District • Mr. Bob Watson El Dorado School District 	<p>Panel discussion with school superintendents providing information regarding the district's demographics, enrollment, facilities, finances, and critical needs.</p>
<p align="right">November 7, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Richard Wilson Administrator Office of Economic and Tax Policy Bureau of Legislative Research • Dr. Glen Cochran Professor Emeritus University of Arkansas, Fayetteville • Mr. Tristan Greene Special Assistant to the Director Arkansas Department of Education 	<p>Potential sources of revenue to fund improvements to the state's education system.</p> <p>School finance issues including the impact of student/teacher ratios on the overall funding for schools and school districts.</p> <p>School finance issues</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">November 7, 2001, cont.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Patricia Martin Assistant Director Public School Finance and Administration Arkansas Department of Education • Mr. David Floyd Coordinator, School Plant Service Arkansas Department of Education • Ms. Janie Fletcher Director Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education Arkansas Department of Human Services 	<p>Issues related to changes in student enrollment and the impact on funding to school districts</p> <p>Issues related to facilities</p> <p>Issues related to early childhood education</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">November 21, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. John Zimple Research Development and Technical Support Arkansas Assessment Coordination Department • Dr. Kellar Noggle Executive Director Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators • Mr. David Matthews Member of Funding/Facilities Subcommittee 	<p>State's system of property taxation and how it compares with the systems used by surrounding states</p> <p>Unit-based funding methodologies used in other states. Recommended reviewing system in state of Washington.</p> <p>Review of information received by the Subcommittee regarding the costs associated with improving the state's system of public education.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">December 5, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Nancy Blount Teacher, Lee County School District • Ms. Betty Butler Title I Supervisor, West Memphis School District • Ms. Nancy Downing Teacher, Little Rock School District • Ms. Connie Green 	<p style="text-align: center;">} Teachers responded to a series of questions concerning the financial needs of the state's system of public education. Critical issues were identified.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>

<p>Teacher, Little Rock School District December 5, 2001, cont.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Nelene Harris Teacher, Fouke School District • Ms. Louene Lipsmeyer Teacher, North Little Rock School District • Ms. Lou Ethel Nauden Teacher, Little Rock School District • Ms. Tracy Streeter Teacher, Hamburg School District • Ms. Charlotte Taft Counselor, Ozark School District • Ms. Cathy Tennison Teacher, Nettleton School District 	
<p style="text-align: right;">January 2, 2002</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Steve Franks Director Arkansas Department of Workforce Education 	<p>Issues related to Workforce-Technical Education</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">March 6, 2002</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Jeannie Cole & Representatives President Arkansas Parent-Teachers Association 	<p>Parental and family involvement in public schools</p>

Presentations to the Organizational Structure Subcommittee

Presenter/Organization	Topics
<p align="right">October 3, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Kellar Noggle Executive Director Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators (AAEA) 	<p>District and school organization</p>
<p align="right">October 17, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Winston Simpson P-16 Coordinator Arkansas Department of Higher Education 	<p>Results of a comparative study of school district administrative costs in Arkansas and Georgia</p>
<p align="right">November 7, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Richard Denniston Superintendent Deer School District • Mr. John Mertens Superintendent Greenbrier School District • Arch Ford Education Service Cooperative • Representatives from: Geographic Information System 	<p align="center">  Distance learning application </p> <p>Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and the potential application of this technology to assist the Subcommittee and its work</p>
<p align="right">November 21, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Jim Boardman Associate Director, Information and Technology Arkansas Department of Education • Mr. Hugh McDonald Organizational Structure Subcommittee Member • Mr. Gene Gregory Organizational Structure Subcommittee Member 	<p>Aspects of distance learning opportunities currently available in the state</p> <p>Report on trip to Lexington, Kentucky to the offices of the Pritchard Committee for Academic Excellence</p> <p>Report on trip to Missouri to review the organizational structure of its public education system</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">November 21, 2001, cont.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Kevin Moore Organizational Structure Subcommittee Member • Mr. Keith Stokes Organizational Structure Subcommittee Member 	<p style="text-align: center;">}</p> <p>Presentation on the report of Mr. Todd Ziebarth, Program Director, Governance, Education Commission of the States, to the November 19th meeting of the State Board of Education Advisory Committee</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">December 5, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Charles Hathaway Chancellor University of Arkansas at Little Rock • Ms. Tommie Sue Anthony Coordinator, Advanced Placement Teacher Development College of Education University of Arkansas at Little Rock • Ms. Belinda Kittrell Program Support Manager Distance Learning and Internet Applications Unit Arkansas Department of Education 	<p>1996 UALR Report, <i>A Study of the Arkansas Department of Education</i>, which proposed structural changes in the organization and operation of the Arkansas Department of Education.</p> <p>Advanced Placement Program</p> <p>Issues related to distance learning</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">January 2, 2002</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Raymond Simon Director Arkansas Department of Education • Mr. Richard Hutchinson Director Government Relations/Agency Relations Arkansas Education Association 	<p>Review of Arkansas Department of Education's Response to the University of Arkansas at Little Rock Study on reorganization of the Department</p> <p>Various issues related to the organizational structure of public education in Arkansas</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">March 6, 2002</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Marty Strange Director Rural Schools and Community Trust 	<p>Report on the correlation between school size and the academic achievement of low-income and minority students</p>

Presentations to the Teacher Salaries/Professional Development Subcommittee

Presenter/Organization	Topics
<p align="right">October 3, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Patricia Martin Assistant Director for Public School Finance and Administration Arkansas Department of Education • Ms. Janinne Riggs Associate Director for School Improvement and Professional Development Arkansas Department of Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher salary schedules Teacher scholarships and incentives Teacher professional development system Teacher pre-service and In-service
<p align="right">October 17, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Sid Johnson President Arkansas Education Association • Mr. Rich Nagel Executive Director Arkansas Education Association • Mr. Dan Farley Executive Director Arkansas School Boards Association • Ms. Kathy Morledge Director of Training and Communications Arkansas School Boards Association • Dr. Kellar Noggle Executive Director Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher salary and health care Professional development Teacher and administrator salaries

<p style="text-align: right;">November 7, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Ken James Superintendent Little Rock School District • Ms. Karen Ghdotti School Improvement and Professional Development, Character-Centered Teaching in Arkansas Coordinator Arkansas Department of Education • Dr. Frank Holman Arkadelphia School System 	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="font-size: 3em; margin-right: 10px;">}</div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Teacher Advancement Program of the Milken Family Foundation</p> </div> </div> <p>Teacher Advancement Program at Arkadelphia</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">December 5, 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Richard Hutchinson Director of Government Relations/Agency Relations Arkansas Education Association • Ms. Elaine Cowling Teacher Center Coordinator DeQueen/Mena Education Service Cooperative • Dr. Suzanne Mitchell Projector Director, Teacher Quality Enhancement Arkansas Department of Higher Education 	<p>Teacher professional development</p> <p>Teacher professional development services available</p> <p>Recommendations of Teacher Quality Enhancement Task Force on professional development</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">March 6, 2002</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Johnettee Walker Principal, Wilmot Elementary School • Ms. Kathie Janes Teacher, Wilmot Elementary School • Ms. Tot Barnes Teacher • Ms. Toni Thorn Research Assistant University of Arkansas 	<p>Overview of the work being done at the Wilmot Elementary School</p> <p>Overview of Measuring Performance Honors</p>

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.

State of Arkansas

As Engrossed: S3/19/01

83rd General Assembly
Regular Session, 2001

A Bill

Act 1398 of 2001
SENATE BILL 907

By: Senator Riggs

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS BLUE RIBBON
COMMISSION ON PUBLIC EDUCATION;
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

AN ACT TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS BLUE
RIBBON COMMISSION ON PUBLIC EDUCATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Education.

(a) There is created a legislative committee to be known as the “Arkansas Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Education”, to be composed of the following members:

(1) Twenty (20) members shall be residents of the state who are knowledgeable in teaching, education professions, business, labor, industry, or economic development;

(2) Five (5) members shall be parents of children currently enrolled in a kindergarten through twelve (K-12) public educational institution in the state;

(3) Two (2) members who are the chairs of the House and Senate Interim Committees on Education, who shall serve exofficio and shall be nonvoting members;

(4) Two (2) members who are the chairs of the House and Senate Interim Committees on Revenue and Taxation, who shall serve exofficio and *shall be nonvoting members; and*

(5) Two (2) members who are the chairs of the Joint Budget

As Engrossed: S3/19/01 SB907

Committee, who shall serve ex officio and shall be nonvoting members;

(b)(1)(A) The Governor, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Chairperson of the House Interim Committee on Education, and the Chairperson of the Senate Interim Committee on Education shall each appoint:

(i) Four (4) of the twenty (20) members as required under subsection (a)(1) of this section; and

(ii) One (1) of the five (5) members as required under subsection (a)(2) of this section.

(B) These appointments must be made within six (6) weeks after the effective date of this act.

(2) In the event a vacancy occurs on the commission, the vacancy shall be filled by the same process as the original appointment.

(c) The chairperson of the Senate Interim Committee on Education shall call the first meeting and serve as chairperson until the time, during the first meeting, the twenty-five (25) voting members of the board elect from among themselves a chairperson.

(d)(1) In carrying out its functions, the commission may create advisory committees as it deems necessary.

(2) The memberships of these advisory committees may include both members of the commission, and other persons drawn from sources other than the commission, all of whom shall serve at the pleasure of the task force.

SECTION 2. Purpose.

The purpose of the General Assembly in establishing the Arkansas Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Education is to:

(1) Seek to actively involve the private sector as full and valued partners in the improvement process;

(2) Define the components of the constitutional mandate for “a general, suitable and efficient system of free public schools”;

(3) Define an equitable and adequate system of free public education;

(4) Assess current efforts to improve the state’s system of public education; and
(5) Propose and recommend legislation for the 2003 Regular Session of the General Assembly.

As Engrossed: S3/19/01 SB907

SECTION 3. Donations, grants, or legislative appropriations.

(a) The research, activities, and other mandates performed by the commission under the provisions of this act may be funded by donations, grants, or legislative appropriation.

(b) All donations, grants, and appropriations received shall be accounted for by the commission.

(c) The chairperson of the commission may solicit and receive donations and grants for the purposes of this act.

SECTION 4. Report.

The Arkansas Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Education shall submit a report and its recommendations for any proposed legislation to the House and Senate Interim Committees on Education, the House and Senate Interim Committees on Revenue and Taxation, and the Arkansas Legislative Council on or before July 1, 2002. In addition, the commission shall submit a report and recommendations for any proposed legislation to the Governor, the State Board of Education, the State Board of Workforce Education and Career Opportunities, and the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

SECTION 5. Staff support.

The Bureau of Legislative Research shall provide staff support for the Arkansas Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Education. Additional support shall be provided by all the appropriate agencies of state government upon written request of the co-chairpersons.

SECTION 6. Per diem.

(a) Legislative members of the Arkansas Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Education shall be entitled to per diem and mileage at the same rate authorized by law for attendance at meetings of interim committees of the General Assembly and shall be paid from the same source.

(b) Non-legislative members of the task force shall receive per diem and mileage at the same rate authorized by law for attendance at meetings of interim committees of the General Assembly, provided appropriated funds are available.

As Engrossed: S3/19/01 SB907

SECTION 7. Expiration.

This act shall expire on January 1, 2003.

SECTION 8. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the General Assembly that recent information indicates that the state has severe and pressing needs regarding the state's system of elementary and secondary education. In order to fully address all issues relevant to the state's system of elementary and secondary education, a thorough review of the state's education system shall immediately be undertaken. Therefore, an emergency is declared to exist and this act being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety shall become effective on the date of its approval by the Governor. If the bill is neither approved nor vetoed by the Governor, it shall become effective on the expiration of the period of time during which the Governor may veto the bill. If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is overridden, it shall become effective on the date the last house overrides the veto.

/s/ Riggs

APPROVED: BECAME LAW ON 4/6/2001, WITHOUT THE GOVERNOR'S SIGNATURE.