

MINUTES

**Joint Meeting
of
THE ARKANSAS BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION ON PUBLIC EDUCATION
and
THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Thursday, July 19, 2001

10:00 a.m.

**Room 171, State Capitol
Little Rock, Arkansas**

Mr. Robert McGinnis, the Co-Chair of the Arkansas Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Education, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Arkansas Blue Ribbon Commission On Public Education Members in Attendance: Mr. Robert McGinnis, Co-Chair; Ms. Stacy Pittman, Co-Chair, Mr. Frank Anthony; Ms. Charlie Cole Chaffin; Ms. Judy Donovan; Dr. Charles Dunn; Dr. Benny Gooden; Dr. Reed Greenwood; Ms. Pat Harris; Mr. Wayne Hartsfield; Ms. Shelby Hillman; Mr. Randy Hughes; Mr. Phil Jones, Sr.; Dr. Don Love; Ms. Kathy McFetridge; Ms. Martha McNair; Mr. David Matthews; Mr. Kevin Moore; Ms. Alisia Ramirez-Hartz; Mr. Ulicious Reed; Mr. Larry Ross; Ms. Keith Stokes; and Ms. Johnette Walker.

Ex-Officio Members of the Arkansas Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Education in Attendance: Representative M. Olin Cook; Senator Jim Hill; Senator David Malone; and Representative Larry Teague.

State Board Of Education Advisory Committee in Attendance: Senator David Bisbee; Representative LeRoy Dangeau; Mr. J. M. Edington; Mr. Morrill Harriman; Dr. Kenneth James; Ms. Mertice Kray; Senator Jodie Mahony; Ms. Dana Newberg; Dr. Rhonda Richards; Dr. Winston Simpson; and Dr. Naccaman Williams.

Members of the General Assembly in Attendance: Senator Jim Argue; Representative Johnnie Bolin; Representative Pat Bond; Representative Travis Boyd; Representative Shane Broadway; Senator Jimmy Jeffress; Representative Calvin Johnson; Representative Jim Magnus; Representative Thomas Moore; Representative Harmon Seawel; and Representative Lindbergh Thomas.

Mr. McGinnis welcomed everyone to the meeting. He went on to outline the scope of the work the Blue Ribbon Commission and the State Board Of Education Advisory Committee faced as they sought to address the issues raised by Judge Kilgore's decision.

Approval of the Minutes of the June 22, 2001 Meeting of the Blue Ribbon Commission

Without objection, the Minutes of June 22, 2001 meeting of the Blue Ribbon Commission were approved as written.

Overview of the Activities of the Arkansas Department of Education related to:

- 1. Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment, and Accountability Program**
 - a. Curriculum Standards and Frameworks**
 - b. Student Assessment**
 - c. Professional Development Activities**
 - d. Accountability Mechanisms for Students, Schools, and School Districts**
- 2. Education Service Cooperatives**
- 3. Data Collection and Research**

Mr. Raymond Simon, Director, Arkansas Department of Education (ADE), was recognized. Mr. Simon made a computer-assisted presentation to the Commission and the Advisory Committee that covered the following components of the Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment, and Accountability Program (ACTAAP):

- ❖ 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)

Following Mr. Simon's presentation, there was a discussion by members of the Commission and the State Board Advisory Committee regarding the information presented to them.

The joint meeting recessed for lunch from 11:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

After the lunch break, **Mr. David Matthews**, a member of the Commission, was recognized and discussed several pieces of information concerning the state's public education system he had asked be distributed.

Dr. Woodrow Cummins, Deputy Director, Arkansas Department of Education, resumed the computer-assisted presentation, discussing the following topics:

- ❖ Arkansas Public School Computer Network (APSCN)
- ❖ Office of Research, Measurement and Evaluation (ORME)
- ❖ Just for the Kids Program
- ❖ Education Service Cooperatives

Members of the Commission requested the following information:

- Expenditure per student calculations:
 - a) How do other states calculate it?
 - b) How is it calculated in Arkansas?
- A list of the federal education programs the state participates in and the amount of funding for each.
- A list of the Advanced Placement (AP) courses available in the state and a breakdown of AP course offerings by school.
- A report on the expenditures by school districts for athletic programs, broken down by each type of sport, and a comparison of school district expenditures for athletics and AP classes.

Mr. McGinnis thanked Mr. Simon and Dr. Cummins for their presentations.

Overview of Statewide Reading Initiatives

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, and **Ms. Linda Wilsey**, Teacher, Boone Park Elementary School, North Little Rock School District, were recognized. They discussed the various initiatives currently underway in the state to improve the literacy skills of students in the elementary grades. Following their presentation, there was a discussion by members of the Commission and the State Board Advisory Committee regarding the information presented to them. Members of the Commission requested the following information:

- How many schools, by type, have a Reading Recovery Program?
- What is the cost per student to operate a Reading Recovery Program?
- How many Reading Recovery Programs does the state need to ensure that every child has the opportunity to achieve?

Mr. McGinnis thanked Ms. Underwood, Dr. Dorn, and Ms. Wilsey for their presentations.

Discussion of Resources Regarding Public Education Available to Members of the Blue Ribbon Commission

Ms. Stacy Pittman, the Co-Chair of the Blue Ribbon Commission, was recognized. Ms. Pittman discussed the availability of information resources to the members of the Commission. She noted that the staff would keep a resource file available for use by Commission members.

Discussion of the Communications Process to be used by the Blue Ribbon Commission

Ms. Stacy Pittman, the Co-Chair of the Blue Ribbon Commission, was recognized. Ms. Pittman discussed the necessity of two-way communication for the benefit of the Blue Ribbon Commission. She asked the members of the Commission to consider communications as one of the critical elements of its mission. A Communications Subcommittee was established to assist the Commission.

Discussion of the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act

Mr. John Tull, Chief Counsel, Arkansas Press Association, was recognized. Mr. Tull discussed the state's Freedom of Information Act with the members of the Commission and the Advisory Committee.

Mr. Tristan Green, Special Assistant to the Director, Arkansas Department of Education was recognized. Mr. Green provided the members of the Commission and the Advisory Committee with an update on the Lake View litigation.

Following discussion by members of the Blue Ribbon Commission, the next meeting date was set for August 22, 2001 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 171 of the State Capitol.

There being no further business, the joint meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.