

MEETING SUMMARY

JOINT MEETING
OF THE
HOUSE AND SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEES ON EDUCATION

Monday, December 18, 2017

1:30 P.M.

Room 171, State Capitol

Little Rock, Arkansas

Senator Jane English, the Chair of the Senate Interim Committee on Education, called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

MEMBERS OF THE SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE: Senator Jane English, Chair; Senator Joyce Elliott, Vice Chair; Senator Alan Clark; Senator Jim Hendren; Senator Blake Johnson; and Senator Uvalde Lindsey.

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE: Representative Bruce Cozart, Chair; Representative Charlotte V. Douglas, Vice Chair; Representative Sonia Eubanks Barker; Representative Frances Cavanaugh; Representative Jana Della Rosa; Representative Jon S. Eubanks; Representative Grant Hodges; Representative Mark Lowery; Representative Mark D. McElroy; Representative Stephen Meeks; Representative James Sturch; Representative Dan Sullivan; and Representative DeAnn Vaught.

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ATTENDANCE: Senator Eddie Cheatham; Senator Jonathan Dismang; Senator Trent Garner; Senator Jimmy Hickey, Jr.; Senator Bryan King; Representative Fred Allen; Representative Scott Baltz; Representative Justin Boyd; Representative Carol Dalby; Representative Jim Dotson; Representative Dan M. Douglas; Representative R. Trevor Drown; Representative Kenneth B. Ferguson; Representative Vivian Flowers; Representative Jimmy Gazaway; Representative Jeremy Gillam; Representative Justin Gonzales; Representative Michael John Gray; Representative Ken Henderson; Representative David Hillman; Representative Monte Hodges; Representative Bob Johnson; Representative Fredrick J. Love; Representative Roger D. Lynch; Representative Austin McCollum; Representative Reginald Murdock; Representative Milton Nicks, Jr.; Representative Aaron Pilkington; Representative Laurie Rushing; Representative Johnny Rye; Representative Matthew J. Shepherd; Representative Brandt Smith; Representative James J. Sorvillo; Representative Les Warren; and Representative Carlton Wing.

Minutes:

Without objection, the minutes of November 20, 2017, and November 29, 2017, were approved as written.

Exhibits:

Exhibit C1 – 11/20/2017 Minutes

Exhibit C2 – 11/29/2017 Minutes

Reports from Members Who Attended Recent Meetings Concerning Public or Higher Education

The Honorable Joyce Elliott, State Senator, District 31, was recognized. Senator Elliott discussed her attendance at the recent NCSL (National Conference of State Legislatures) Capitol Forum in San Diego, CA. She said the International Study Group on Education met and continued its efforts to try to give some guidance to exactly how to implement what high-performing countries are doing in pre-K and Career Tech. She said meetings of the NCSL Education Committee, in addition to discussing other topics, dealt even more with Career Tech, looking specifically at aerospace and aviation career fields.

Senator English congratulated Senator Elliott, and requested she describe the award she had received at the Capitol Forum. Senator Elliott stated that each year the Americans for the Arts and the NCSL present the Public Leadership in the Arts Award for State Arts Leadership to one state legislator who has demonstrated outstanding leadership in the advancement of the arts at the state level. Senator Elliott stated she and Arkansas had been so honored this year.

Discussion of the Texarkana School District's Montage Project

Presenters:

Dr. Becky Kesler, Superintendent, Texarkana School District, was recognized. In her introduction, Dr. Kesler briefly described the city of Texarkana, situated on the state line between Arkansas and Texas, the demographics of the city's population, and that of the Texarkana Arkansas School District (TASD). She said the demographics of the city and that of TASD do not mirror each other; each has its own diversity. Dr. Kesler stated unique challenges are presented to a school district in a twin city. She noted one obstacle is that the Texarkana Texas School District has open enrollment which has resulted in a loss of Arkansas students to Texas schools. Dr. Kesler expressed excitement over receipt of a \$14.8 million 2017 Magnet School Assistance Program (MSAP) grant from the United States Department of Education (DoED), which will be paid to TASD over a 5-year period. She said the grant will allow the school district to implement the TASD Montage Project and become more competitive; the grant will help TASD make improvements at the secondary level and to expand programs which had been initiated by previous grants at the elementary level.

Ms. Rachel Scott, Magnet Coordinator, Texarkana School District, was recognized. Ms. Scott discussed magnet schools, and the goals of the TASD Montage Project: 1) Achieve excellence in daily operations; 2) Achieve STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) accreditation; and 3) Recruit our students back to our district.

Ms. Christian Irvin, Coordinator of Alumni Recruitment and Marketing, Texarkana School District, was recognized, and elaborated on the goal of recruiting students back to TASD.

Ms. Robin Hickerson, Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education, Texarkana School District, was recognized. Ms Hickerson discussed how the grant, which supports Governor Asa Hutchinson's STEM initiative, will prepare students for the 21st century - college, jobs, and beyond. She noted the theme for the TASD Montage Project is: *start with a dream and finish with a future.*

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- lessons learned from loss of students to the Texarkana Texas School District,
- applicability of per student funding considering student mobility,
- extending the magnet program into the upper grades,
- alignment of career programs with colleges to continue career pathways,
- STEM certification for schools,
- competitive advantages provided to TASD from new facilities and reconfiguration plans,
- opportunity for a magnet school specializing in technical training; refocusing areas of study in local Secondary Center,
- retaining and recruiting teaching staff,
- professional development (PD) as a primary investment over 5-year life of magnet grant,
- state constitutional and statutory differences (State of Texas can raise taxes without a vote of the people to improve teachers' salaries),
- magnet grant enabling TASD to compete with advantages existing in Texarkana Texas School District,
- sustaining TASD projects beyond 5-year life of grant, and
- necessity of commitment by local community.

Handouts:

TASD Montage Project, Goals
TASD Montage Project, What is a magnet school?

Presentation Concerning SAS EVAAS for K-12 Software

Presenter:

Ms. Katrina Miller, Education Industry Consultant, SAS, was recognized. Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Ms. Miller discussed SAS® EVAAS® (Education Value-Added Assessment System) for K-12. She stated EVAAS focuses on student growth measures and has also be used to evaluate teachers. She said there are currently 13 states employing the System; and used scatter charts from the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) to illustrate how data can be visualized for assessment purposes. Ms. Miller also walked the Committees through a demo login portal, explaining customization and use of various diagnostic reports to analyze state student data.

Contributors to the Discussion:

Mr. Johnny Key, Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- guidance about efficacy of using value-added measures as part of a teacher’s evaluation; reliability,
- concern about privacy of student data,
- compiling data internally within a state department or agency,
- concern about a data breach,
- school districts in Arkansas using the System,
- data privacy legislation,
- whether a ROI (Return on Investment) on this product can be determined,
- current state system collects and compiles data, but does not make predictions about student outcomes, and
- indicators that usage of System improves performance.

PowerPoint Presentation:

SAS Commitment to Education

Handout:

SAS Commitment to Education

Update on Arkansas PLC At Work™ Pilot Program

Representative Cozart requested that questions be held until after the following presentations.

Presenters:

Ms. Tina Smith, Director, Policy and Special Projects, Arkansas Department of Education, was recognized. Ms. Smith explained that Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) “are educators committed to working collaboratively in ongoing processes of collective inquiry and action research in order to achieve better results for the students they serve.” Ms. Smith discussed components of the pilot project in schools, and listed participating schools. Additionally, she referred Committees to the Education Northwest handout, *PLC at Work™ in Arkansas Evaluation Blueprint*. She said the blueprint lays out the first year of the three-year implementation and impact evaluation of PLC at Work in Arkansas.

Mr. Robert Poole, Superintendent, Prescott School District, was recognized. Mr. Poole said Prescott School District was the only K-12 school district selected to be in the pilot program. He said, with intensive support from trained and certified PLC at Work associates working with the school district and teachers, he has come

to understand the transformative nature of the process. He stated that participation has shifted focus to learning for children and helped organize ways things are being done. He said the entire staff is part of the process and is on the same page. Mr. Poole said he is excited about progress made in establishing the mission, vision, and goals for the school district in this first semester.

Ms. Missy Walley, Principal, Prescott School District, was recognized. Ms. Walley discussed accomplishments thus far in the implementation of PLC at Work, including developing a needs assessment, receiving an overview of PLC at Work, project planning, setting goals, developing a shared mission/vision, establishing standards, training in leadership implementation, visiting other PLC at Work schools, and on-site coaching.

Ms. Cathy Riggins, Assistant Superintendent, Vilonia School District, was recognized. Ms. Riggins stated the Vilonia School District has also been working on three main ideas: focusing on learning, being collaborative and having collective accountability, and being results oriented. She focused her discussion on collective accountability, which, she said, is a big piece of this process. Ms. Riggins commented that the Vilonia School District is excited about participating in the PLC at Work process because it is the foundational piece that will change how students are served, and will really impact student achievement.

Mr. Andy Pennington, Principal, Vilonia School District, was recognized. Mr. Pennington presented slides of photos of Frank Mitchell Intermediate School, Vilonia, AR, explaining how the PLC at Work process has impacted student engagement and learning.

Dr. Lewis Villines, Principal, Rogers High School, was recognized. With regard to Rogers High School, Dr. Villines talked about student demographics, general demographic information, English Language Learners (ELLs), and recognition and awards. His discussion continued with reasons why Rogers High School applied to become part of the PLC at Work project, and commented that PLC at Work is real, authentic work. Dr. Villines discussed changes PLC at Work has brought about with regard to students and teachers, the district, and the state; and what participation in PLC at Work will mean for Rogers High School going forward.

Contributor to the Discussion:

Mr. Johnny Key, Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- ✓ capability of a school district doing this themselves,
- ✓ allowing professionals to lead the way,
- ✓ breakdown into components of 50 days of PD,
- ✓ how co-ops function with regard to pilot program,
- ✓ school-focused culture change process,
- ✓ utilizing national-level consultants for pilot program, and
- ✓ culture driven by leadership.

PowerPoint Presentation:

PLC Presentation, Frank Mitchell Intermediate, Vilonia School District

Handouts:

ADE Arkansas PLC at Work Pilot Program Talking Points and FAQ
ADE Arkansas PLC at Work Pilot Project
ADE PLC at Work in Arkansas Evaluation Blueprint
PLC Presentation, Frank Mitchell Intermediate, Vilonia School District
PLC Presentation, Prescott School District
PLC Presentation, Rogers High School
Vilonia School District, Brochure

Next Scheduled Meeting:

Tuesday, December 19, 2017, at 9:00 a.m. in Room 171 of the State Capitol, Little Rock

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 4:16 p.m.

Approved: 01/22/2018