

**Southwest Arkansas Education Cooperative Board's Minutes  
December 14, 2022**

**Schools Present:** Lafayette, Prescott, Nevada-proxy (Tonda Pennington), Spring Hill, Texarkana-proxy (Lea Metcalf), and Hope

**Schools Not Present:** Blevins, Genoa and Fouke

**Co-op Staff Present:** Phoebe Bailey, Monica Morris, Eva Wood, David Hampton, Gina Perkins, Tanya Collins, Vicki Jewell, and Holli Boyett

**Guests Present:** Dennis Copeland

The meeting was called to order by Director Phoebe Bailey.

Robert Poole made a motion to approve the minutes from November seconded by Ms. Pennington. The minutes were approved.

Robert Poole made a motion to approve the financial and expenditure reports for November. The motion was seconded by Opal Anderson. The financial and expenditure reports were approved.

**RURAL ED. ASSOCIATION:** Dennis Copeland

Mr. Dennis Copeland from AR Rural Ed. Association spoke to the board members about the benefits of becoming members of the organization. He spoke about the advocacy the organization provides on behalf of rural districts with legislators, and professional organizations. Mr. Copeland also spoke about the conferences Rural Ed. hosts as well as the scholarships it provides to Arkansas students.

**RECRUITMENT & RETENTION:** Vicki Jewell

Ms. Jewell spoke briefly to the board about correcting novice teacher data in eSchool. She also gave them a handout with details on how to interpret their novice teacher spreadsheet information. Ms. Jewell let them know that she would be getting in contact with them individually to give a more detailed breakdown of the data for their district.

**CYBER SECURITY:** David Hampton

Mr. Hampton addressed the board about the recent cyber attacks on schools around the state. He gave a brief overview of the situation the schools are facing and the specifics they are having to do to repair the damage that's been done. Mr. Hampton gave some suggestions to the board members to keep this from happening in their districts, such as checking their firewall systems to be sure they are being updated regularly. He let them know that he is staying up to date on all information from the state as it comes out in regards to cyber attack activity and the necessary precautions to take and he will pass the information along as needed.

#### Fixed Assets:

Ms. Bailey let the board know that SWAEC has three items that need to be removed from the fixed assets list: a file server, a smartboard setup, and an inventory system. Robert Poole made a motion to remove these items from the fixed assets list and it was seconded by Mr. Steed. The motion passed.

#### Personnel:

Ms. Bailey let the board know that Tanya Collins has submitted a letter of resignation. After a brief discussion Robert Poole made a motion to accept the resignation and was seconded by Dr. Crossley. The letter was accepted.

#### **DIRECTOR UPDATES:** Phoebe Bailey

##### Federal Updates:

- Ms. Bailey let the board know the new chairman and ranking members of the Senate Health Education Labor and Pensions Committee as well as the House Education and Labor Committee.
- Hearings are to be expected to conduct oversight on “hot button” issues including the probe of parents at school board meetings, ESSER spending and the participation of transgender students in athletics and other Title IX issues.
- The Senate Appropriations Chair will be Patty Murray who has long led or co-led the Senate Health Education Committee and is a champion for increased funding for Title I and IDEA.
- The House Appropriations Committee is expected to be led by Kay Granger and Rosa DeLauro who are outstanding champions for K-12 funding.
- The Dept. of Ed. is considering long awaited action to rescind the problematic parental consent regulation that has been on the books since 2005.

##### State Updates:

- Governor Hutchinson presented a balanced budget proposal to the Joint Budget Committee in November. He proposed an increase in spending for education FY24. He identifies teacher salaries as a possible use of these increased funds. However, the Governor’s proposed increased dollar amount does not align with the House or Senate adequacy reports that were previously submitted.

##### Teacher Residency:

- Arkansas is one of the eight states in the nation to be approved by US Dept. of Labor to receive federal funding for the Teacher Residency Apprenticeship Program.
- This will launch in 2023.
- The focus will be on high school student’s or para’s earning CTA credentials that will lead to licensure.
- District responsibilities will be to offer a CTA pathway, offer flexibility for para’s to complete the coursework, establish Educator Rising student organization, and employ a mentor for the apprentice during the instructional phase.

**TEACHER CENTER UPDATES:** Monica Morris

Ms. Morris addressed the board briefly about a new grant that all the co-ops in the state will be receiving. The grant is Communities of Practice and is for \$210,000. The grant will support the Arkansas Initiative for HQIM for all students. Ms. Morris asked the board for their thoughts about the new grant and all were supportive and had input.

With no other business Robert Poole made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Dr. Crossley. The meeting was adjourned.