

Minutes
State Board Meeting
April 9, 2026

Present: Adrienne Woods, Chair; Dr. Gary Arnold; Ken Bragg;
Randy Henderson; Leigh Keener; Jeff Wood; Jacob Oliva, ADE Secretary.

Absent: Lisa Hunter, Vice Chair; Dr. Aaron Abbott; David Peacock;
Jeanie Wilcoxon, 2025 Teacher of the Year

The Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) met on Thursday, April 9, 2026. Adrienne Woods, Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:39 PM, followed by a moment of silence, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the National Anthem, sung by Adaia Hicks, a student from Lee County High School.

Changes to Agenda

X.2 April's ATOY Report will not be presented in Jeanie Wilcoxon's absence.

Action Agenda

VII.1 Recommendation to Return Lee County School District to Local Control

Item VII.1 was presented by Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner.

A motion that Lee County School District had met all requirements to exit Level 5 classification (Intensive Support) and receive Level 4 (Directed Support) was made by Ken Bragg, seconded by Jeff Wood. The motion unanimously passed.

A motion to return Lee County School District to local control was made by Dr. Gary Arnold. The motion was seconded by Ken Bragg and unanimously passed.

A motion to appoint the current advisory board, Dr. Kellie Farris, Reverend Carl Bledsoe, Yolanda Lemon, Kelly Reddick, and Kristi Wilson as the new local school board was made by Randy Henderson. The motion was seconded by Leigh Keener and unanimously passed.

VII.2 Request for Final Approval of the Rules Governing the Arkansas Children’s Educational Freedom Account Program

Item VII.2 was presented by Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner.

The Rules Governing the Arkansas Children’s Educational Freedom Account Program were approved to be released for public comment by the State Board of Education on November 13, 2025. The public comment period began on November 15, 2025, and ended on December 16, 2025. Public comments have been received and are being reviewed.

A motion for final approval of the rules was made by Jeff Wood and seconded by Dr. Gary Arnold. The motion unanimously passed.

New Business

None

Consent Agenda

- Minutes for March 12, 2026, Regular State Board Meeting
- March 12, 2026, Special State Board Meeting

A motion was made by Ken Bragg to approve Consent Agenda items. The motion was seconded by Leigh Keener and unanimously passed.

Public Comments

None

Adjournment

Adrienne Woods, Chair, adjourned the State Board meeting at 2:04 PM.

Minutes recorded by Melody Pettit.

Jacob Oliva, Secretary
Arkansas Department of Education

Adrienne Woods, Chair
State Board of Education