

**SUMMARY MINUTES OF  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SCHOOL ACADEMIC FACILITIES  
MEETING  
April 24, 2018**

**Committee Members – Present**

Jim Alessi, Chairman  
Charles Stein, Vice Chairman  
Brad Montgomery, Secretary  
Brent Massey  
Cody Beene  
Jeff Steiling  
Jim Tucker  
Jim Yeager

John Hoy  
Jon Collins  
LaKenya Riley  
Malinda Martin-Johnson  
Nathan Smith  
Rusty Mullen  
Scott Archer

**Committee Members – Absent**

Craig Boone, *Ex Officio*  
Doug Harris, *Ex Officio*  
Scott Copas, *Ex Officio*

**Division Staff – Present**

Brad Montgomery, Director  
Carol Bowman, Administrative Analyst

**Approval of Meeting Minutes from March 27, 2018**

**DudeSolutions (CMMS) – Teleconference**

Herb Crawford, Director of Strategic Relationships, and Brent Hair, Project Manager, participated via teleconference.

Brad Montgomery indicated that the Advisory Committee supports the Division's need for better data and ability to search and generate reports. A superintendent member wanted the Division Area Project Managers-Maintenance (APM-M)s to enter site visit results into SchoolDude so superintendents could run reports and access all their facilities' documents in one tool. Mr. Montgomery stated that the Advisory Committee is not requesting SchoolDude write new programs for the Division, but to clarify what is available within the products the State of Arkansas already pays to use.

Mr. Crawford asked the Advisory Committee who would access the data, and the responses indicated the State, Division, and school districts. Mr. Hair stated they could provide the needed tools through the existing PM product, that SchoolDude would create a template using the Division's current site visit inspection form and the APM-Ms could create a PM work order to mimic the existing form. The APM-M would generate the PM work order before the site visit, then enter the findings in SchoolDude once the inspection was completed. The school district superintendents on the Advisory Committee had no objections or concerns about the Division APM-Ms accessing the individual school district SchoolDude accounts to do these tasks.

Mr. Alessi stated that the school districts should be accountable for using SchoolDude as designed and efforts trackable. Mr. Montgomery stated some school districts barely use it at all. A question was asked regarding what would happen if school districts did not fulfill the PM work orders and close them out, and could the State withhold their funding. Mr. Alessi stated the Division needed "teeth" to require school districts meet their obligations and facilities maintenance, especially if requesting State funding.

Mr. Montgomery stated ADE and the Division were pushing for a proactive partnership with the school districts. The Division could speak with the Educational Service Cooperatives (*Cooperatives*) to address the school district maintenance, after which the Cooperatives could explain to their respective school districts that to qualify for State funding, they had to utilize the tools correctly, and perform maintenance on their facilities and systems.

**Superintendent Survey Results Regarding School Safety**

Mike Mertens, AAEA, Assistant Executive Director, reviewed the results of their Superintendent School Safety Survey.

The first question was to rank seven items in order of greatest need. The survey results included:

- Additional security staff needed
- Make existing school buildings more secure
- Additional security measures needed such as cameras, swipe ID cards, etc.
- Additional mental health services
- Conduct staff training in emergency management systems
- Conduct safety audits of buildings and grounds
- Develop building safety plans.

Regarding facilities, the survey asked for the most pressing need in school safety in facilities. The responses included:

- Securing entrances – outside/inside doors, windows, replacing existing doors, and updating hardware
- Controlling access – magnetic locking systems, buzzers to allow entry, access by ID badges, “too many access points”, and “multiple outside doors”
- Security Cameras, staff to monitor, communication devices
- Aesthetically pleasing fencing, additional campus gates
- “Partnership funding for safety measures”

Mr. Mertens shared the AAEA Position Statement on School Safety, which states:

- The state should provide funds, possibly via matching grants, for security equipment, security assessments, and additional school resource officers.
- The state should provide funds for districts to upgrade their facilities if internal safety audits warrant improvement.

Mr. Montgomery stated he serves on the Governor’s School Safety Commission, which will address many of these issues and concerns once their studies and report are completed.

### **Recommendation #1**

Charles Stein thanked Brad Montgomery and Carol Bowman for their hard work editing and formatting the Summary of Discussions and Recommendations.

Dr. Stein reviewed the presentation with the Advisory Committee again, starting with the Timeline (January-July) and the 15 recommendations.

Representative Charlotte Douglas asked if the needs list would be boots-on-the-ground or would input include the school districts’ opinion of their facilities. Dr. Stein stated the needs list is in Statute and the Master Plan would be used as foundation. Brad Montgomery indicated the Division had the FCI and it was a factor already. Nathan Smith stated the superintendents could potentially “game the system” with the needs list. Cody Beene and Jon Collins, superintendents on the Advisory Committee, stated the needs list would take the “game” out of the process because accuracy was going to be paramount, and you cannot “game” the system if you do not have matching funds in the bank. Additionally, that the superintendent would be in trouble with the school board and patrons if it was later discovered the school district was in poor shape, the input was not accurate, and could place the school district in facilities distress.

Representative Douglas stated that, for example, Fort Smith School District has 57-year old facilities in excellent condition. Mr. Beene indicated that his school district had two WPA buildings that had been renovated, that the FCI age was old, but the quality was new.

Dr. Stein reviewed the ranking processes, Warm, Safe, and Dry needs for all campuses (3 factors) and Space/Growth needs for all school districts (4 factors), which Representative Douglas stated were good.

**Recommendation #1 was passed by the Advisory Committee.**

### **Recommendation #2**

Dr. Stein stated currently there was one “pot” of funding, but the recommendation would be for two “pots. One pot would be for Warm, Safe, and Dry and the second for Space/Growth. A 50/50 split of funds would be the more sellable split with less pushback. Jimmy Alessi indicated the leftover funds would go into the other category. LaKenya Riley suggested a 60/40 split instead to provide more funds to WSD projects. Dr. Stein explained that the WSD projects would go from a \$10 million limit and receive more funding. Representative Charlotte Douglas voiced her support of the two categories and the 50/50 two “pot” funding.

**Recommendation #2 was passed by the Advisory Committee.**

### **Recommendation #3**

Discussion included:

- Project definitions refined to focus Partnership Program to address most critical facility needs into two categories:
  - WSD Space Replacement and Space/Growth
  - WSD System Replacement
- Suitability based on need
- New schools
- Additions of only spaces required by POR with funding for support spaces limited to new percentages

- Eligible systems include roofs, plumbing, electrical, fire and life safety, structural, and security.
- Minimum project costs \$150,000 or \$300 per student. Waivers may be granted for life and safety.
- HVAC projects may be part of an energy savings contract with performance of a comprehensive energy savings plan.
- School minimum size 10,000 SF discussed regarding safety/security of children. Waivers can be requested.
- 5 year/ 10 year enrollment option available for use.
- Nathan Smith concerned about local discretion. Response was local discretion would place more burden on Division and more room for error, thus appeals.
- Representative Charlotte Douglas stated the Division always “wins” appeals. Dr. Stein responded the reason is that the Division always follows Rule.
- School districts must maintain their facilities and HVAC systems.

**Recommendation #3 was passed by the Advisory Committee.**

#### **Recommendation #4**

Facilities Maintenance Composite Assessment include

- Provide a statewide overview of Arkansas public school facilities conditions and maintenance operations performance.
- Provide constructive feedback to each school district on its facilities maintenance program.
- Gather and share “best practices” across the State.
- Establish a baseline condition score of current facilities maintenance programs.
- Identify school districts that require additional technical assistance from the Division.
- Provide an additional ranking factor to be used in funding requested Academic Facilities Partnership Program projects.

Mr. Montgomery stated that New Mexico’s program is similar to Arkansas and they control the design of their school facilities, but use Wealth Index and a “FMAR” (*Facilities Maintenance and Assessment Report*). He suggested the Division could speak with the Educational Service Cooperatives (*Cooperatives*) to address the school district maintenance, after which the Cooperatives could explain to their respective school districts that to qualify for State funding, they had to utilize the tools correctly, and perform maintenance on their facilities and systems. The Division could offer professional development for school districts in PM and corrective maintenance plans.

As a result of discussions, the Advisory Committee agreed to change the recommendation to (1) the Minimum project costs to \$150,000 or \$300 per student, and (2) HVAC projects “may” be part of an energy savings contract. It was also noted that suitability will be based on need.

**Recommendation #4 was passed by the Advisory Committee with the two revisions.**

#### **Recommendation #5**

Representative Charlotte Douglas spoke regarding the Wealth Index previously presented on behalf of herself, Senator Blake Johnson, Shane Broadway, Bill Stovall, and Harvie Nichols. She discussed why State paying architects on projects and suggested State funded projects needed a cap on their average fees.

Dr. Smith indicated he would get Representative Douglas’ data and prepare maps, etc.

**Recommendation #5 was passed by the Advisory Committee.**

#### **Recommendation #6**

Dr. Stein indicated Representative Mark Lowery’s bill responded to the legal fund balances, and the Advisory Committee needed to address the building fund balance, which could be retrieved from ABSCAN.

It was suggested that school districts continue to borrow money but that was not good for the community, and the overall debt of the school district should be considered.

**Recommendation #6 was passed by the Advisory Committee.**

#### **Recommendation #7**

Dr. Stein spoke about the Cost Factors. Representative Douglas stated she strongly disagreed with raising the Cost Factor from \$175 to \$200 because, in her opinion, the vendors would go to \$200 and there would be issues with funding.

Mr. Beene stated he has never spent more than \$125, never reaching the \$175. Mr. Montgomery stated some school districts cannot pay the \$25 difference. Ms. Riley stated she could see both sides, that construction staff need jobs and money, but the Division needs to do something to prevent school districts from over-spending. Mr. Beene indicated the Advisory Committee needed to look at the profit margin. Mr. Hoy suggested controlling costs by putting projects out for bid, that there will never be enough funds. Dr. Smith stated do not raise the \$175 but adjust the wealth index. He indicated that unless it would stop wealthy school districts from receiving funding, then he would opposed to it. Mr. Hoy stated the State is responsible for the funding, not the local communities.

Representative Douglas suggested the Advisory Committee look at how the State is paying architects, for example, 4% of 6% on various projects, and the State needs an average cap on their fees.

Mr. Montgomery stated that Construction Managers bill school districts for equipment they own, which should already be built into their profits. Melinda Martin-Johnson asked why the State pays for maintenance of equipment when the school district has a signed contract. Mr. Hoy stated that the Lakeview Law Suit directed the State, not locals, pay for education. He stated he had reviewed all the proposed Wealth Index plans and stated there is a Cost Factor problem that needs adjusted. Mr. Beene stated that individuals pay for health insurance, but it is your own responsibility to take care of yourself. Mr. Smith stated that it would be smarter to build in cost inflation, and he would vote against it because there is not anything to control the State's costs.

**Recommendation #7 was passed by the Advisory Committee.**

### **Recommendation #8**

Dr. Stein stated the Governor stated that \$100 million per year was not sustainable, and there needs to be a levelized budget. As a result of the changes made to Recommendation \$4, the funding would go from \$87 million to \$90 million (\$60 million GIF and \$30 million Public School Fund Transfer).

Dr. Smith stated he did not understand the rational or constitutionality of levelized funding because there appeared there were funding spikes. He stated the Advisory Committee is overshooting what the Governor stated and the Legislature would not agree with this. He stated the solution was to cut funding to the wealth school districts instead.

Mr. Montgomery stated it was unrealistic to go to the Governor and Legislature to get \$209 million for year-one funding, and only \$47 million for year-two. A more reasonable solution was to request a levelized amount, such as \$90 million per year. He reminded the members that the Legislature took \$18 million from the Division funds to settle the teacher insurance situation. He indicated the statewide needs list would help with the levelized amount if the Division worked with the school districts to balance the project submissions into year-one and year-two. Mr. Alessi stated the needs list would place the poorer school districts on top of the needs list.

Mr. Montgomery indicated the needs list would not be a static list, but one that fluctuated. Dr. Smith suggested an adjustment to the Wealth Index.

Dr. Stein stated the main factor was planning. He indicated the State presently does not have a state plan. The needs list should result in the State funding needs not wants.

**Recommendation #8 was passed by the Advisory Committee.**

### **Recommendation #9**

Discussion included:

- Need two "pots" funding
- Ms. Riley favored 60/40 split for WSD
- Need 50/50 split to pass through Legislature
- 50/50 split of funds would be the more sellable split with less pushback.
- WSD projects would go from a \$10 million limit and receive more funding.
- Carryover could be used as needed
- Representative Charlotte Douglas voiced her support of the 50/50 two "pot" funding.

**Recommendation #9 was passed by the Advisory Committee.**

### **Recommendation #10**

Discussion:

- Needs List

- Wealth Index with poor school districts first
- Maintenance Composite Assessment – school districts benefit if maintenance performed
- Projects on two lists will be funding in priority order using funds available for that category

**Recommendation #10 was passed by the Advisory Committee.**

#### **Recommendation #11**

Discussion:

- Dr. Stein indicated this was a helpful process and formalizing Representative Charlotte Douglas' process as a standard process of automatically receive early review
- Representative Charlotte Douglas stated she was in agreement with change but wanted to review remainder or Act to be more useful to Division and school districts.

**Recommendation #11 was passed by the Advisory Committee.**

#### **Recommendation #12**

All changes and recommendations should be enacted in the appropriate statute and/or rules effective with 2021-2023 Partnership Program project funding cycle and 2020 Master Plan

**Recommendation #12 was passed by the Advisory Committee.**

#### **Recommendation #13**

Mr. Montgomery indicated the Recommendation was to investigate "explore" only a statewide means to save funds. Work with State Procurement, use drones with infrared equipment to find wet spots on roofs requiring repairs, use a national purchasing company.

**Recommendation #13 was passed by the Advisory Committee.**

#### **Recommendation #14**

ACA § 6-20-2514, Academic Facilities Extraordinary Circumstances, was discussed by the Advisory Committee and it was determined to table the discussion and leave the Act in statute at this time.

**Recommendation tabled**

#### **Recommendation #15**

Dr. Stein stated the Division needed ability to collect and use data to best practice standards, which would improve the Division's ability to support adequate education of students and limit fiscal burden on taxpayer.

**Recommendation #15 was passed by the Advisory Committee.**

#### **Other Business**

##### **Next Meeting Date**

The Committee selected the next meeting date of May 22, 2018, at 9:30 a.m. *(Prior to meeting date, meeting changed to May 29, 2018, at 10:30 a.m.)*

#### **Adjourn**