

**Kentucky Board of Education Special Meeting
December 12, 2019 10:00 AM
Kentucky Department of Education, 300 Sower Boulevard
State Board Room, Room 514
Frankfort, KY 40601**

Minutes

The Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) held its special meeting on December 12, 2019 at the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), 300 Sower Boulevard, Frankfort, Kentucky. The board conducted the following business:

I. Call to Order

Chair Karem welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Chair Karem announced for everyone watching via live webcast that the agenda and board documents may be found on the KDE website. Chair Karem thanked the interpreters for their service and reminded everyone to silence their cell phones.

II. Roll Call

Chair Karem asked for a roll call of members. The following members were present: JoAnn Adams, Claire Batt, Holly Bloodworth, Mike Bowling, Alvis Johnson, David Karem, Patrice McCrary, Cody Pauley Johnson, Sharon Porter Robinson, Lee Todd, Lu Young, Lt. Governor and Secretary of Education and Workforce Development Cabinet Jacqueline Coleman, Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) President Dr. Aaron Thompson, and Allison Slone.

Chair Karem stated a quorum was present.

III. Swearing in of New Board Members

Retired Circuit Court Judge Roger Crittenden administered the official oath to the following members: JoAnn Adams, Claire Batt, Holly Bloodworth, Mike Bowling, Alvis Johnson, Patrice McCrary, Cody Pauley Johnson, Sharon Porter Robinson, Lee Todd, Lu Young and Allison Slone.

IV. Introduction of New Board Members

Chair Karem asked all members to introduce themselves to the public.

Lt. Governor Jacqueline Coleman shared that she is serving in a dual role as Lt. Governor and Secretary of the Workforce and Development Cabinet. Prior to that, she served in a variety of different teaching and leadership positions in public education. Coleman thanked everyone on the board for their past work and the work they will continue to do as a member of the board.

JoAnn Adams stated that she is a retired classroom teacher who served as a special education teacher and middle school language arts and social studies teacher. Adams continues to volunteer and mentor students. Adams shared about her family's dedication to the field of public education.

Dr. Sharon Porter Robinson started by saying she is a native of Louisville and proud three times graduate of the University of Kentucky. Robinson shared that she moved away to Washington D.C. to work with national education organizations, including the United States Department of Education. Upon retirement, Robinson returned to Kentucky where she continues to find ways to serve in or support education.

Holly Bloodworth announced her recent retirement from 32 years of teaching in the early grades, library/media and the arts. Bloodworth currently works with preservice teachers and enjoys the current opportunities she has to share her knowledge. Bloodworth also shared that she was the 2014 Kentucky Teacher of the Year.

Alvis Johnson shared he spent most of his career in a dual capacity as a teacher and in athletics for 28 years in Kentucky public education. In 1997, Johnson left the public school arena to go to the University of Kentucky as an assistant athletic director. Johnson also revealed that his wife and sister are teachers.

Patrice McCrary stated she is a recently retired elementary school teacher where she taught in Warren County for 26.5 years, for a total of 31.5 years including teaching time in Texas. McCrary announced that she was the 2003 Kentucky Teacher of the Year and a USA All Star Teacher Team Member, among having received other distinguished awards. McCrary shared her background and personal experiences that signify the importance of public education to her.

Chair David Karem shared that his background included 33 years in the Kentucky General Assembly. In that time, Karem spent 32.5 years serving on the Education Committee in both the House and Senate. He then served on the state board of education for seven years, with three of those serving as chair. He also announced his family's involvement with and value of public education.

Cody Pauley Johnson announced she is from eastern Kentucky and currently serves as a manager and accountant of Johnson Law Firm. As a resident of a rural county, Johnson professed she understands the importance of public education and is honored to serve on the board.

Dr. Lu Young shared information about her family and background, and that she was a first generation college graduate which accounted for her view of the importance of public education. Young spent 31.5 years in P-12 Kentucky public education, with 30 of those years in Jessamine County before she went to Fayette County. Young then went to work at the University of Kentucky where she currently serves in a variety of roles.

Mike Bowling stated he is from Middlesboro, Kentucky and was the recipient of a ROTC scholarship he used to attend and graduate from the University of Kentucky. Bowling then attended law school and served in the military. He shared that as a result of many family moves

when he was young, he was afforded the opportunity to see the needs across the country and world. When he returned to Middlesboro, he served as the Bell County school board attorney for 12.5 years. Following that, he served as the Representative of Bell and Harlan Counties.

Claire Batt announced that education was a second career for her. Growing up as a child of a military family, she attended 12 different elementary schools that informed her outlook that kids needs support. After graduating from the University of Kentucky with a French degree, she moved to Bermuda where she had a career in business. Upon returning to the United States, she began law school but got interested in education as a means of leveling the playing field. After 32 years in the field of public education in Fayette County, Batt now spends her time as an education advocate.

Dr. Lee Todd shared that he is a product of the Kentucky public school system where he met his wife. Todd professed that one of his teachers in his junior year of high school imprinted on him the importance of hands-on learning. Todd stated he was a first generation college student and went on to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he received six patents. After returning to Kentucky, he taught engineering at the University of Kentucky only to see a majority of students leave the state which concerned him. As a result, he started technology companies where he shared the value that there's a place for all education, whether through vocational or higher education experiences. From 2001-2011 he served as president of the University of Kentucky and on a variety of other boards and organizations.

Allison Slone stated she is a current special education teacher from Morehead, Kentucky where she has been a teacher for 21 years. Slone shared a story of her family and the significance of education for her. She also shared about her children, specifically about her son and challenges because of his diagnosis of dyslexia, which prompted her passion to help all children who struggle with literacy and the creation of Kentucky READS. Additionally, Slone shared about the development of another group she started, Kentucky Teachers in the Know, to help bridge the gap between those making the decisions about what is happening in classrooms and those in classrooms.

CPE President Aaron Thompson shared that in order for Kentucky to have a great economic system, it has to have a great public education system. Dr. Thompson further announced that finding funding for education is about making a statement on the value of education. Thompson then shared about his family background and the importance of public education to him. He also stated that he spent a lot of time focused on how to help the disenfranchised portion of the population which led to his dedication to higher education and creating opportunities for all students.

Chair Karem thanked the members and emphasized the vast educational experience shared by the membership of the board. The chair then expressed the importance of a quality national search for a commissioner of education in the Commonwealth.

V. Executive Session Pursuant to KRS 61.810(1)(f) for Discussion Which Might Lead to the Dismissal of the Commissioner of Education

Chair Karem entertained a motion to move into closed session under the Open Meeting Act of KRS 61.810(1)(f) as allowed under the requirements of KRS 61.815 for a discussion which might lead to the dismissal of the commissioner of education.

Sharon Porter Robinson made a motion to move to executive session and Alvis Johnson seconded that motion. The motion passed with unanimous voice vote.

VI. Adjournment of Executive Session Pursuant to KRS 61.810(1)(f)

Chair Karem announced that the board concluded its confidential closed session and discussion that might lead to the dismissal of the commissioner of education.

VII. Discussion and Possible Action to Terminate Contract of the Commissioner of Education

Following a break, the board resumed its meeting in open session at 1:00 p.m.

Chair Karem stated that during the recess he received a conditional letter of resignation from Commissioner Lewis. The chair read a recommended resolution to accept Dr. Lewis's conditional resignation and requested voluntary termination of his contract upon the board's approval of certain conditions.

Mike Bowling moved and Sharon Porter Robinson seconded a motion to adopt the resolution to accept the conditional resignation of Dr. Lewis and terminate his contract.

Mike Bowling then moved and Sharon Porter Robinson seconded to amend the resolution to reflect calendar days, which was unanimously approved on voice vote.

Mike Bowling again moved and Sharon Porter Robinson seconded a motion to adopt the resolution as revised, to accept the resignation of Dr. Lewis and terminate his contract. The motion was unanimously approved on voice vote.

VIII. Discussion and Possible Action to Appoint an Acting Commissioner of Education

Chair Karem explained that it was necessary to appoint an acting commissioner of education to immediately carry out the duties and responsibilities of the position. The chair proposed the board appoint Robin Kinney, associate commissioner, as the acting commissioner who would continue to serve in her role at the same rate of pay until such time as an interim education commissioner assumes the duties and responsibilities of the position or until the board takes further action. The acting commissioner shall not be eligible for the position of permanent commissioner of education.

Patrice McCrary moved and Alvis Johnson seconded a motion to appoint Robin Kinney as acting commissioner, which was unanimously approved on voice vote

IX. Discussion and Possible Action to Appoint an Interim Commissioner of Education

Chair Karem explained that it was necessary to appoint an interim commissioner of education to serve until a permanent commissioner of education is hired. The chair proposed the board appoint Kevin C. Brown as the interim commissioner to begin on December 18, 2020 and authorize the KDE to negotiate the terms of employment with a salary of \$200,000. The interim commissioner of education shall assume the duties and responsibilities of the position until such time as a permanent commissioner of education is hired or the board takes further action. The interim commissioner shall not be eligible for the position of permanent commissioner of education.

JoAnn Adams moved and Lu Young seconded a motion to approve Kevin C. Brown as interim commissioner, which was unanimously approved on voice vote.

X. Discussion and Possible Action to Authorize the Kentucky Department of Education to Issue Solicitation for Services to Conduct a National Search for the Commissioner of Education

Chair Karem asked the board to authorize the KDE to issue a solicitation for services to conduct a national search for the next commissioner of education.

Alvis Johnson moved and Holly Bloodworth seconded a motion to authorize the KDE to issue a solicitation for services to conduct a national search for the education commissioner, which was unanimously approved on voice vote.

XI. Discussion and Possible Action Set Next Special Meeting Date(s) for Board Member Orientation and Commissioner Selection Process.

Chair Karem shared, as an informational item, he would like for the board to attend a full-day meeting, after the first of the year, to focus on new member orientation. The chair stated that after an agreeable date was determined, he would call a special meeting.

XII. Adjournment

Mike Bowling motioned to adjourn the meeting, Cody Pauley Johnson seconded the motion and it was approved by unanimous voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 1:46 p.m.