

MINUTES
HOUSE EARLY CHILDHOOD PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE OF EDUCATION
Thursday, March 19, 2026
3:00 PM
Room A, MAC
Little Rock, Arkansas

Committee members present: Representatives Denise Garner, Chair; Karilyn Brown, Vice Chair; Tony Furman, Julie Mayberry, and Stetson Painter

Other members present: Representatives Wade Andrews, Lincoln Barnett, Alyssa Brown, Rebecca Burkes, Joey L. Carr, Cameron Cooper, Denise Ennett, Tippi McCullough, Jessie McGruder, Chad Puryear, Jay Richardson, Bart Shulz, Joy Springer, and Tracy Steele

Representative Garner called the meeting to order.

Consideration of a Motion to Approve the February 17, 2026, Meeting Minutes [Exhibit B]

Without objection, the minutes were approved.

Update on Early Childhood Education from the Arkansas Department of Education [Exhibit C]

Ashelyn Abney, Education Division Director, Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) and Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner, DESE, ADE provided updates from the Office of Early Childhood including information regarding the School Readiness Assistance grant and Arkansas Better Chance program.

Other Business [Handouts D1-D2]

Representative Garner discussed the Arkansas Better Chance Funding and Expenditures for Fiscal Years 1999 through 2025 document and the Arkansas Early Childhood System Key Oversight Questions for Legislators document.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.