

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.  
Act 156 of the Fiscal Session

State of Arkansas  
95th General Assembly  
Fiscal Session, 2026

As Engrossed: H4/22/26

**A Bill**

HOUSE BILL 1005

By: Joint Budget Committee

**For An Act To Be Entitled**

AN ACT TO MAKE AN APPROPRIATION FOR PERSONAL SERVICES  
AND OPERATING EXPENSES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2027;  
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

**Subtitle**

AN ACT FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
APPROPRIATION FOR THE 2026-2027 FISCAL  
YEAR.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. REGULAR SALARIES - SHARED SERVICES. There is hereby established for the Department of Education - Shared Services for the 2026-2027 fiscal year, the following maximum number of regular employees.

Item No.	Class Code	Title	Maximum	Maximum Annual
			No. of Employees	Salary Rate Fiscal Year 2026-2027
(1)	ESE05A	SECRETARY OF EDUCATION	1	GRADE EXE04
(2)	EEX10A	CHIEF OF STAFF II	1	GRADE EXE02
(3)	FAC09C	CHIEF FISCAL OFFICER II	1	GRADE SPC10
(4)	LAT08C	CHIEF LEGAL COUNSEL I	1	GRADE SPC10
(5)	EEA03C	HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM MANAGER	2	GRADE SPC09
(6)	EEA01C	EDUCATION DIVISION ADMINISTRATOR	2	GRADE SPC08



(7)	LAT05P ATTORNEY III	1	GRADE SPC08
(8)	CPR02C CHIEF OF COMMUNICATIONS II	1	GRADE SPC07
(9)	EEP04C EDUCATION PROGRAM MANAGER	1	GRADE SPC06
(10)	FIN03P FINANCE SUPERVISOR/EXPERT	1	GRADE SPC06
(11)	CPR03C GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS SPECIALIST	1	GRADE SPC05
(12)	HDH02C HR ADMINISTRATOR I	1	GRADE SPC05
(13)	LAT04P ATTORNEY II	4	GRADE SPC05
(14)	EES02P EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL II	1	GRADE SPC04
(15)	LAT03P ATTORNEY I	1	GRADE SPC03
(16)	FAC02P ACCOUNTANT II	2	GRADE SPC02
(17)	FAU04P AUDITOR II	1	GRADE SPC02
(18)	EES01P EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL I	1	GRADE SPC02
(19)	FAC01P ACCOUNTANT I	1	GRADE SPC01
(20)	FFS03C FISCAL SUPPORT MANAGER	1	GRADE SGS09
(21)	SSP06I OMBUDSMAN	1	GRADE SGS08
(22)	PAS08I EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT	1	GRADE SGS07
(23)	EEP03P EDUCATION PROGRAM COORDINATOR	5	GRADE SGS07
(24)	FFS05P FISCAL SUPPORT SUPERVISOR/EXPERT	5	GRADE SGS07
(25)	CME03P GRAPHIC ARTIST	2	GRADE SGS07
(26)	HDH05P HR COORDINATOR	5	GRADE SGS07
(27)	PPR02P PROCUREMENT COORDINATOR	1	GRADE SGS07
(28)	CPR05P PUBLIC INFORMATION COORDINATOR	2	GRADE SGS07
(29)	ILS03I LEGAL SUPPORT SPECIALIST	2	GRADE SGS06
(30)	FFS02P FISCAL SUPPORT COORDINATOR	2	GRADE SGS06
(31)	TMA04P MAINTENANCE SUPERVISOR/EXPERT	4	GRADE SGS06
(32)	PAS01P ADMINISTRATIVE ANALYST	1	GRADE SGS05
(33)	TIW04P INVENTORY SUPERVISOR/EXPERT	1	GRADE SGS05
(34)	PAS02P ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR	3	GRADE SGS04
(35)	FFS04P FISCAL SUPPORT SPECIALIST	1	GRADE SGS04
(36)	FGM01P GRANTS ANALYST	1	GRADE SGS04
(37)	HDH07P HR SPECIALIST	3	GRADE SGS04
(38)	TMA05P MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN	2	GRADE SGS03
(39)	PAS03P ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST	1	GRADE SGS02
(40)	IIA03C CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER III	1	GRADE IST14
(41)	IDA01C DATA ARCHITECT	1	GRADE IST13
(42)	IIS08C IT INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGER	1	GRADE IST11

(43)	IAS06C APPLICATIONS SUPERVISOR/EXPERT	2	GRADE IST10
(44)	IIS07C IT INFRASTRUCTURE ENGINEER	1	GRADE IST10
(45)	IDM01P DATABASE ADMINISTRATOR	1	GRADE IST09
(46)	IIS01P IT COORDINATOR	2	GRADE IST08
(47)	IAS01P APPLICATIONS ANALYST I	1	GRADE IST07
(48)	IDN01P DATA ANALYST	2	GRADE IST07
(49)	IUS02P USER SUPPORT COORDINATOR	3	GRADE IST05
(50)	TMA03P MAINTENANCE SPECIALIST	3	GRADE SGS04
(51)	IIP03P IT SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER	<u>1</u>	GRADE IST10
	MAX. NO. OF EMPLOYEES	88	

SECTION 2. EXTRA HELP - SHARED SERVICES PAYING ACCOUNT. There is hereby authorized, for the Department of Education - Shared Services Paying Account for the 2026-2027 fiscal year, the following maximum number of part-time or temporary employees, to be known as "Extra Help", payable from funds appropriated herein for such purposes: six (6) temporary or part-time employees, when needed, at rates of pay not to exceed those provided in the Uniform Classification and Compensation Act, or its successor, or this act for the appropriate classification.

SECTION 3. APPROPRIATION - SHARED SERVICES PAYING ACCOUNT. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Education, to be payable from the paying account as determined by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State, for personal services and operating expenses of the Department of Education - Shared Services for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM	FISCAL YEAR
<u>NO.</u>	<u>2026-2027</u>
(01) REGULAR SALARIES	\$6,776,073
(02) EXTRA HELP	80,000
(03) PERSONAL SERVICES MATCHING	2,228,979
(04) MAINT. & GEN. OPERATION	
(A) OPER. EXPENSE	100,000
(B) CONF. & TRAVEL	10,000
(C) PROF. FEES	0
(D) CAP. OUTLAY	0

(E) DATA PROC.	0
(05) PROMOTIONAL ITEMS	<u>300,000</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED	<u>\$9,495,052</u>

SECTION 4. REGULAR SALARIES - STATE OPERATIONS. There is hereby established for the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - State Operations for the 2026-2027 fiscal year, the following maximum number of regular employees.

Item No.	Class Code	Title	Maximum No. of Employees	Maximum Annual Salary Rate Fiscal Year 2026-2027
(1)	EEX11A	CHIEF PROGRAMS DIRECTOR	2	GRADE EXE03
(2)	EEA02C	EDUCATION DIVISION DIRECTOR	3	GRADE SPC09
(3)	EEA01C	EDUCATION DIVISION ADMINISTRATOR	4	GRADE SPC08
(4)	EEP02C	EDUCATION PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR	2	GRADE SPC07
(5)	FAC10C	CONTROLLER	1	GRADE SPC06
(6)	EEP04C	EDUCATION PROGRAM MANAGER	1	GRADE SPC06
(7)	EES03P	EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL SUPV/EXP	7	GRADE SPC06
(8)	FIN03P	FINANCE SUPERVISOR/EXPERT	1	GRADE SPC06
(9)	EES02P	EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL II	17	GRADE SPC04
(10)	FAC02P	ACCOUNTANT II	4	GRADE SPC02
(11)	EES01P	EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL I	107	GRADE SPC02
(12)	SIA23P	PUBLIC SAFETY SUPERVISOR/EXPERT	1	GRADE SGS08
<del>(13)</del>	<del>PQA04P</del>	<del>QUALITY ASSURANCE SUPERVISOR/EXP</del>	<del>2</del>	<del>GRADE SGS08</del>
<del>(14)</del>	<del>FGM03C</del>	<del>GRANTS MANAGER</del>	<del>1</del>	<del>GRADE SGS07</del>
(15)	PAS08I	EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT	3	GRADE SGS07
(16)	EEP03P	EDUCATION PROGRAM COORDINATOR	26	GRADE SGS07
(17)	FFS05P	FISCAL SUPPORT SUPERVISOR/EXPERT	4	GRADE SGS07
(18)	HDH05P	HR COORDINATOR	2	GRADE SGS07
(19)	IIV05P	INVESTIGATOR SUPERVISOR/EXPERT	1	GRADE SGS07
(20)	PPE04P	PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISOR/EXP	1	GRADE SGS07
(21)	CPR05P	PUBLIC INFORMATION COORDINATOR	2	GRADE SGS07
<del>(22)</del>	<del>PQA01P</del>	<del>QUALITY ASSURANCE COORDINATOR</del>	<del>9</del>	<del>GRADE SGS07</del>
(23)	CTR02P	TRAINER	1	GRADE SGS07

(24)	ILS03I LEGAL SUPPORT SPECIALIST	2	GRADE SGS06
<del>(25)</del>	<del>EEPO5P EDUCATION PROGRAM SPECIALIST</del>	<del>1</del>	<del>GRADE SGS06</del>
(26)	FFS02P FISCAL SUPPORT COORDINATOR	9	GRADE SGS06
(27)	IIV04P INVESTIGATOR III	1	GRADE SGS06
(28)	PAS01P ADMINISTRATIVE ANALYST	16	GRADE SGS05
(29)	FGM02P GRANTS COORDINATOR	1	GRADE SGS05
(30)	PPR04P PROCUREMENT SPECIALIST	1	GRADE SGS05
(31)	PAS02P ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR	23	GRADE SGS04
(32)	EEC04P EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM SPECIALIST	5	GRADE SGS04
(33)	FFS04P FISCAL SUPPORT SPECIALIST	3	GRADE SGS04
(34)	FGM01P GRANTS ANALYST	4	GRADE SGS04
(35)	PAS09P LICENSING COORDINATOR	6	GRADE SGS03
(36)	TMA05P MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN	1	GRADE SGS03
(37)	PAS03P ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST	22	GRADE SGS02
(38)	MNU06P REGISTERED NURSE	1	GRADE MED05
(39)	IAS01P APPLICATIONS ANALYST I	8	GRADE IST07
(40)	IDN01P DATA ANALYST	3	GRADE IST07
(41)	IAS08I WEBSITE SPECIALIST	1	GRADE IST05
(42)	IUS01P USER SUPPORT ANALYST	1	GRADE IST04
(43)	IUS04P USER SUPPORT SPECIALIST	3	GRADE IST02
(44)	EEC01C EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR	1	GRADE SGS10
(45)	EEC02P EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM COORDINATOR	3	GRADE SGS06
<del>(46)</del>	<del>EEPO6P EDUCATION PROGRAM SUPERVISOR/EXPERT</del>	<del>3</del>	<del>GRADE SGS10</del>
(47)	FAC01P ACCOUNTANT I	1	GRADE SPC01
(48)	IIS01P IT COORDINATOR	1	GRADE IST08
(49)	SPS08P SCHOOL SAFETY COORDINATOR	<u>1</u>	GRADE LES07
	MAX. NO. OF EMPLOYEES	308	

SECTION 5. EXTRA HELP - STATE OPERATIONS. There is hereby authorized, for the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - State Operations for the 2026-2027 fiscal year, the following maximum number of part-time or temporary employees, to be known as "Extra Help", payable from funds appropriated herein for such purposes: seven (7) temporary or part-time employees, when needed, at rates of pay not to exceed those provided in the Uniform Classification and Compensation Act, or its successor, or this act for the appropriate classification.

SECTION 6. APPROPRIATION - STATE OPERATIONS. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Education, to be payable from the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Fund Account, for personal services and operating expenses of the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - State Operations for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027
(01) REGULAR SALARIES	\$13,520,917
(02) EXTRA HELP	160,000
(03) PERSONAL SERVICES MATCHING	4,756,796
(04) MAINT. & GEN. OPERATION	
(A) OPER. EXPENSE	3,399,057
(B) CONF. & TRAVEL	56,500
(C) PROF. FEES	25,000
(D) CAP. OUTLAY	100,000
(E) DATA PROC.	<u>0</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED	<u>\$22,018,270</u>

SECTION 7. APPROPRIATION - FEDERAL GRANTS ADMINISTRATION. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Education, to be payable from the federal funds as designated by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State, for personal services and operating expenses of the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Federal Grants Administration for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027
(01) REGULAR SALARIES	\$254,677
(02) PERSONAL SERVICES MATCHING	88,477
(03) MAINT. & GEN. OPERATION	
(A) OPER. EXPENSE	49,970
(B) CONF. & TRAVEL	19,672
(C) PROF. FEES	260,000

(D) CAP. OUTLAY	0
(E) DATA PROC.	<u>0</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED	<u><u>\$672,796</u></u>

SECTION 8. APPROPRIATION - BUILDING MAINTENANCE. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Education, to be payable from the Educational Buildings Maintenance Fund, for operating expenses of the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Building Maintenance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM <u>NO.</u>	FISCAL YEAR <u>2026-2027</u>
(01) MAINT. & GEN. OPERATION	
(A) OPER. EXPENSE	\$500,000
(B) CONF. & TRAVEL	0
(C) PROF. FEES	0
(D) CAP. OUTLAY	0
(E) DATA PROC.	<u>0</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED	<u><u>\$500,000</u></u>

SECTION 9. APPROPRIATION - REVOLVING LOAN CERTIFICATES PROGRAM. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Education, to be payable from the Education Revolving Loan Certificates Fund, for personal services, operating expenses, and loans to school districts by the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Revolving Loan Certificates Fund for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM <u>NO.</u>	FISCAL YEAR <u>2026-2027</u>
(01) REGULAR SALARIES	\$54,790
(02) PERSONAL SERVICES MATCHING	20,856
(03) MAINT. & GEN. OPERATION	
(A) OPER. EXPENSE	27,500
(B) CONF. & TRAVEL	2,500
(C) PROF. FEES	10,000
(D) CAP. OUTLAY	0

(E) DATA PROC.	0
(04) LOANS TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS	13,000,000
(05) LOANS TO OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS	<u>10,000,000</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED	<u>\$23,115,646</u>

## SECTION 10. EXTRA HELP - FEDERAL ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION.

There is hereby authorized, for the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Federal Elementary and Secondary Education for the 2026-2027 fiscal year, the following maximum number of part-time or temporary employees, to be known as "Extra Help", payable from funds appropriated herein for such purposes: four (4) temporary or part-time employees, when needed, at rates of pay not to exceed those provided in the Uniform Classification and Compensation Act, or its successor, or this act for the appropriate classification.

## SECTION 11. APPROPRIATION - FEDERAL ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION.

There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Education, to be payable from the federal funds as designated by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State, for personal services, operating expenses, aid and reimbursements of the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Federal Elementary and Secondary Education for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027
(01) REGULAR SALARIES	\$4,282,186
(02) EXTRA HELP	60,000
(03) PERSONAL SERVICES MATCHING	1,608,156
(04) MAINT. & GEN. OPERATION	
(A) OPER. EXPENSE	91,242,005
(B) CONF. & TRAVEL	100,000
(C) PROF. FEES	1,500,000
(D) CAP. OUTLAY	200,000
(E) DATA PROC.	0
(05) ENTITLEMENT GRANT PROGRAMS	1,181,832,710

(06) REFUNDS/REIMBURSEMENTS	<u>1,110,000</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED	<u>\$1,281,935,057</u>

SECTION 12. APPROPRIATION - MULTIPLE GRANT AWARD PROGRAM. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Education, to be payable from the cash fund deposited in the State Treasury as determined by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State, for operating expenses and grants by the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Multiple Grant Award Program for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027
(01) MAINT. & GEN. OPERATION	
(A) OPER. EXPENSE	\$422,000
(B) CONF. & TRAVEL	16,500
(C) PROF. FEES	40,000
(D) CAP. OUTLAY	100,000
(E) DATA PROC.	0
(02) MULTIPLE GRANT AWARDS	<u>1,900,000</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED	<u>\$2,478,500</u>

SECTION 13. APPROPRIATION - MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Education, to be payable from the cash fund deposited in the State Treasury as determined by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State, for Medicaid reimbursement and administration of the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Medicaid Reimbursement Program for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027
(01) REFUNDS/REIMBURSEMENTS	\$13,659,017
(02) MEDICAID ADMIN	<u>10,500</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED	<u>\$13,669,517</u>

SECTION 14. APPROPRIATION - ALTERNATIVE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM. There

is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Education, to be payable from the cash fund deposited in the State Treasury as determined by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State, for operating expenses and grants by the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Alternative Certification Program for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027
(01) MAINT. & GEN. OPERATION	
(A) OPER. EXPENSE	\$27,367
(B) CONF. & TRAVEL	8,500
(C) PROF. FEES	35,420
(D) CAP. OUTLAY	0
(E) DATA PROC.	0
(02) ALT. CERT. PROG. GRANTS AND AID	<u>827,925</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED	<u><u>\$899,212</u></u>

SECTION 15. APPROPRIATION - CONFERENCES. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Education, to be payable from the cash fund deposited in the State Treasury as determined by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State, for operating expenses of conferences sponsored by the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Conferences for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027
(01) MAINT. & GEN. OPERATION	
(A) OPER. EXPENSE	\$400,000
(B) CONF. & TRAVEL	25,000
(C) PROF. FEES	50,000
(D) CAP. OUTLAY	0
(E) DATA PROC.	<u>0</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED	<u><u>\$475,000</u></u>

SECTION 16. APPROPRIATION - MEDICAID ADMINISTRATION CLAIMING PROGRAM.

There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Education, to be payable from the cash fund deposited in the State Treasury as determined by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State, for reimbursement of school districts for administrative activities that support the Arkansas Medicaid Program of the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Medicaid Administration Claiming Program for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027
(01) AR MEDICAID ADMIN CLAIMS	<u>\$45,000,000</u>

SECTION 17. APPROPRIATION - ARKANSAS BETTER CHANCE PROGRAM - ADMINISTRATION. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Education, to be payable from the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Fund Account, for personal services and operating expenses of the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Arkansas Better Chance Program - Administration for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027
(01) REGULAR SALARIES	\$611,206
(02) PERSONAL SERVICES MATCHING	231,426
(03) MAINT. & GEN. OPERATION	
(A) OPER. EXPENSE	1,245,291
(B) CONF. & TRAVEL	3,917
(C) PROF. FEES	297,610
(D) CAP. OUTLAY	0
(E) DATA PROC.	<u>0</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED	<u>\$2,389,450</u>

SECTION 18. REGULAR SALARIES - PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE STANDARDS BOARD. There is hereby established for the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Professional Licensure Standards Board for the 2026-2027 fiscal year, the following maximum number of regular

employees.

Item No.	Class Code	Title	Maximum	Maximum Annual
			No. of Employees	Salary Rate Fiscal Year 2026-2027
(1)	LAT05P	ATTORNEY III	1	GRADE SPC08
(2)	ILS03I	LEGAL SUPPORT SPECIALIST	1	GRADE SGS06
(3)	FFS02P	FISCAL SUPPORT COORDINATOR	1	GRADE SGS06
(4)	IIV04P	INVESTIGATOR III	4	GRADE SGS06
(5)	PAS01P	ADMINISTRATIVE ANALYST	2	GRADE SGS05
(6)	PAS02P	ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR	<u>2</u>	GRADE SGS04
		MAX. NO. OF EMPLOYEES	11	

SECTION 19. APPROPRIATION - PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE STANDARDS BOARD.

There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Education, to be payable from the cash fund deposited in the State Treasury as determined by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State, for personal services, operating expenses, and grants of the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Professional Licensure Standards Board for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR
	2026-2027
(01) REGULAR SALARIES	\$629,772
(02) PERSONAL SERVICES MATCHING	235,810
(03) MAINT. & GEN. OPERATION	
(A) OPER. EXPENSE	376,325
(B) CONF. & TRAVEL	10,000
(C) PROF. FEES	9,505
(D) CAP. OUTLAY	50,000
(E) DATA PROC.	0
(04) EDTPA PROGRAM GRANTS	<u>100,000</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED	<u><u>\$1,411,412</u></u>

SECTION 20. APPROPRIATION - OPEN ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

CLOSURE. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Education, to be payable from the cash fund deposited in the State Treasury as determined by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State, for outstanding obligations incurred by closed charter schools of the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Open Enrollment Public Charter School Closure for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027
(01) CHARTER SCHOOL CLOSURE	<u>\$300,000</u>

SECTION 21. APPROPRIATION - SAVE THE CHILDREN GRANT. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Education, to be payable from the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Fund Account, for a grant for statewide in-school, summer, and after school literacy, nutrition, home visiting, and early childhood programs to be administered by Save the Children for low income, at-risk children by the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Save the Children Grant for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027
(01) SAVE THE CHILDREN GRANTS	<u>\$500,000</u>

SECTION 22. APPROPRIATION - SCHOOL SAFETY GRANTS. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Education, to be payable from the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Fund Account, for School Safety Grants by the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - School Safety Grants for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027
(01) SCHOOL SAFETY GRANTS	<u>\$50,000,000</u>

SECTION 23. APPROPRIATION - EDUCATIONAL FREEDOM ACCOUNTS. There is

hereby appropriated, to the Department of Education, to be payable from the Arkansas Children’s Educational Freedom Account Fund, for Educational Freedom Accounts by the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Educational Freedom Accounts for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM	FISCAL YEAR
<u>NO.</u>	<u>2026-2027</u>
(01) EDUCATIONAL FREEDOM ACCOUNTS	<u>\$309,487,318</u>

SECTION 24. APPROPRIATION - ASTHMA TRAINING AND TREATMENT PROGRAM GRANTS. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Education, to be payable from the cash fund deposited in the State Treasury as determined by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State, for grants for expenses related to providing asthma treatment in local school districts, asthma treatment equipment for school districts, school personnel training, and monitoring and tracking of asthma cases in local public school districts by the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM	FISCAL YEAR
<u>NO.</u>	<u>2026-2027</u>
(01) ASTHMA TRAINING AND TREATMENT PROGRAM GRANTS	<u>\$1,000,000</u>

SECTION 25. APPROPRIATION - OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAM GRANTS. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Education, to be payable from the cash fund deposited in the State Treasury as determined by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State, for a grant program for comprehensive out-of-school time programs for school aged children which shall provide evidence-based academic enhancement programs and activities that align with and support state curriculum standards by the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM	FISCAL YEAR
<u>NO.</u>	<u>2026-2027</u>

(01) OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAM GRANTS \$3,900,000

SECTION 26. SPECIAL LANGUAGE. NOT TO BE INCORPORATED INTO THE ARKANSAS CODE NOR PUBLISHED SEPARATELY AS SPECIAL, LOCAL AND TEMPORARY LAW.

CARRY FORWARD. Notwithstanding any law pertaining to the transfer of year-end fund balances or any law to the contrary, any funds which remain in the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Fund Account at the end of a fiscal year shall remain in the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Fund Account and be made available to fund appropriation(s) authorized by law and made payable from the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Fund Account for the following fiscal year.

Any carry forward of unexpended balance of funding as authorized herein, may be carried forward under the following conditions:

(1) Prior to June 30, ~~2026~~ 2027 the Agency shall by written statement set forth its reason(s) for the need to carry forward said funding to the Department of Finance and Administration Office of Budget;

(2) The Department of Finance and Administration Office of Budget shall report to the Arkansas Legislative Council or Joint Budget Committee all amounts carried forward by the September Arkansas Legislative Council or Joint Budget Committee meeting which report shall include the name of the Agency, Board, Commission or Institution and the amount of the funding carried forward, the program name or line item, the funding source of that appropriation and a copy of the written request set forth in (1) above;

(3) Each Agency, Board, Commission or Institution shall provide a written report to the Arkansas Legislative Council or Joint Budget Committee containing all information set forth in item (2) above, along with a written statement as to the current status of the project, contract, purpose etc. for which the carry forward was originally requested no later than thirty (30) days prior to the time the Agency, Board, Commission or Institution presents its budget request to the Arkansas Legislative Council/Joint Budget Committee; and

(4) Thereupon, the Department of Finance and Administration shall include all information obtained in item (3) above in the budget manuals and/or a statement of non-compliance by the Agency, Board, Commission or Institution.

The provisions of this section shall be in effect only from July 1, ~~2025~~

2026 through June 30, ~~2026~~ 2027.

SECTION 27. SPECIAL LANGUAGE. NOT TO BE INCORPORATED INTO THE ARKANSAS CODE NOR PUBLISHED SEPARATELY AS SPECIAL, LOCAL, AND TEMPORARY LAW. SCHOOL SAFETY SET-ASIDE.

(a)(1) The Department of Education shall not begin the process of promulgating rules for the distribution of funds in the School Safety Set-Aside or Contingency Vote 3/5 Set-Aside until authorized by Legislative Council.

(2) The department shall not disburse any funds in the School Safety Set-Aside or Contingency Vote 3/5 Set-Aside until the rules have been approved by Legislative Council.

(b) Notwithstanding other provisions of law, the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State may from time to time transfer on his or her books and those of the Treasurer of State and the Auditor of State funds from the Restricted Reserve Fund School Safety Set-Aside or Contingency Vote 3/5 Set-Aside after receiving prior approval of the greater of three-fifths (3/5) of the quorum present or a majority of the membership of the Legislative Council or, if the General Assembly is in session, the Joint Budget Committee, for the Department of Education to distribute funds for the School Safety Grant program, as approved in this section as set out in subsection (a) herein, or for the distribution of funds from this set-aside for unanticipated state needs.

(c)(1) The General Assembly finds:

(A) Determining the maximum amount of appropriation and funding for a state agency or institution each fiscal year is the prerogative of the General Assembly;

(B) Determining the maximum amount of appropriation and funding for a state agency or institution is usually accomplished by delineating the maximum amounts in the appropriation acts for the state agency or institution and in the general revenue allocations authorized for each relevant fund and fund account by amendment to the Revenue Stabilization Law, § 19-20-101 et seq.; and

(C) The Restricted Reserve Fund has established procedures for the transfer of funds to various funds and fund accounts for the efficient and effective operation of state government.

(2)(A) It is necessary and appropriate that the General Assembly maintain oversight by requiring prior approval of the Legislative Council or, if the General Assembly is in session, the Joint Budget Committee, as provided in § 19-27-317(c).

(B) The requirement of approval by the Legislative Council or, if the General Assembly is in session, the Joint Budget Committee, is not a severable part of § 19-27-317.

(C) If the requirement of approval by the Legislative Council or, if the General Assembly is in session, the Joint Budget Committee, is ruled unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, § 19-27-317(c)-(e) are void in their entirety.

(d) The provisions of this section shall be in effect only from July 1, ~~2025~~ 2026 through June 30, ~~2026~~ 2027.

SECTION 28. SPECIAL LANGUAGE. NOT TO BE INCORPORATED INTO THE ARKANSAS CODE NOR PUBLISHED SEPARATELY AS SPECIAL, LOCAL AND TEMPORARY LAW.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A "POSITION POOL". (a) To address needs emerging from statewide education issues and the necessity of recruiting and retaining qualified personnel, the Arkansas Department of Education or its successor agency is authorized for the ~~2025-2026~~ 2026-2027 fiscal year a pool of no more than five (5) Information Systems and Technology positions at a salary not to exceed the maximum salary for a grade IST12. These positions are to be used by the Department of Education in the event that the personal services needs of the Department during the ~~2025-2026~~ 2026-2027 fiscal year require additional positions, either by title or in number, that are not authorized by the General Assembly in the Regular Salaries section of this Act. These positions may also be used to properly classify positions when the Department does not have a vacant position available with the appropriate title and salary level.

(b) To address needs emerging from statewide education issues and the necessity of recruiting and retaining qualified personnel, the Arkansas Department of Education or its successor agency is authorized for the ~~2025-2026~~ 2026-2027 fiscal year a pool of ten (10) State Government Services positions at up to a grade SGS12. These positions are to be used by the Department of Education in the event that the personal services needs of the Department during the ~~2025-2026~~ 2026-2027 fiscal year require additional

positions, either by classification or in number, that are not authorized by the General Assembly in the Regular Salaries section of this Act. These positions may also be used to properly classify positions when the Department does not have a vacant position available with the appropriate title and grade level.

(c) Any salary determinations or adjustments administered under the provisions of Subsections (a) and (b) of this Section shall be made by comparing the qualifications and salary levels of similar employees in school districts or in other state education agencies.

(d) The Department of Education is authorized to access the pool positions authorized in this Section at any time when it is determined by the Secretary that the need exists. The Secretary shall provide a monthly report of the justification for the need to allocate titles from this growth pool to the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State and to the Arkansas Legislative Council or Joint Budget Committee for review. The report shall also include an accounting of the names, titles, and salaries of personnel whose salaries have been adjusted under provisions of Subsections (a) and (b) of this Section.

(e) If the Department of Education requests continuation of any "Position Pool" position(s) as established herein during the next fiscal year, the position(s) must be requested as a new position(s) in the agency's budget request.

(f) Determining the number of personnel to be employed by a state agency is the prerogative of the General Assembly and is usually accomplished by delineating the maximum number of personnel by identifying job titles and the maximum grade or salary attached to those titles. The General Assembly has determined that the Arkansas Department of Education could be operated more efficiently if some flexibility is given to that agency. That flexibility is being accomplished by providing a position pool in Subsections (a) and (b) of this Section and since the General Assembly has granted the agency broad powers under the growth pool concept, it is both necessary and appropriate that the General Assembly maintain oversight of the utilization of the position pool by requiring review of the Legislative Council or Joint Budget Committee in the utilization of the position pool. Therefore, the requirement of review by the Legislative Council or Joint Budget Committee is not a severable part of this section. If the requirement of review by the

Legislative Council or Joint Budget Committee is ruled unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, this entire section is void.

The provisions of this section shall be in effect only from July 1, ~~2025~~ 2026 through June 30, ~~2026~~ 2027.

SECTION 29. SPECIAL LANGUAGE. NOT TO BE INCORPORATED INTO THE ARKANSAS CODE NOR PUBLISHED SEPARATELY AS SPECIAL, LOCAL AND TEMPORARY LAW.

SHARED SERVICES. (a)(1) The Chief Fiscal Officer of the State may create a Shared Services paying accounts on his or her books and on the books of the Treasurer of State and the Auditor of State for the payment of personal services and operating expenses in the Shared Services Paying Account Appropriation by the Department of Education.

(2) The Chief Fiscal Officer of the State shall direct the transfer of funds and appropriations to the Shared Services Paying Account appropriation section of this act on the books of the Treasurer of State, the Auditor of State, and the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State.

(3) The transfer authority provided to the department in subdivision (a)(2) of this section may be used to make transfers only within the department's appropriation act or between other appropriation acts authorized for the department.

(4) The provisions of this section shall be in effect from the date of passage through June 30, ~~2026~~ 2027.

SECTION 30. SPECIAL LANGUAGE. NOT TO BE INCORPORATED INTO THE ARKANSAS CODE NOR PUBLISHED SEPARATELY AS SPECIAL, LOCAL AND TEMPORARY LAW. OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAM GRANTS REQUIREMENTS.

(a) Of the amount appropriated to the Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education for Out-Of-School Time Program Grants in this act, funding shall only be made available to eligible entities for comprehensive out-of-school time programs for school aged children.

(b) Eligible programs shall be limited to applicants meeting the following criteria:

(1) Provide out-of-school time programs during the school year to school aged children;

(2) Provide regular activities designed for evidence-based academic enhancement that aligns and supports state curriculum standards and will

include a minimum of two of the following five activity areas:

- (A) STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math);
- (B) Academic support;
- (C) Goal setting/leadership;
- (D) Career exposure/Workforce Readiness; and
- (E) Community service.

(3) Provide activities above as a part of a comprehensive out-of-school program;

(4) Operate for a minimum of 12 hours weekly during the school year; minimum of four days per week during the calendar school year; not including school breaks such as holiday or seasonal;

(5) Collect data on participants' demographics, attendance and program participation and compile statewide aggregated data;

(6) Implement rigorous safety standards including employee background checks, compliance with mandated reporting laws; and

(7) Must be a qualified 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4) organization that has been in operation for more than 5 years and has a record of fiscal accountability. Organizations must also provide a sustainability model with a minimum of 50% of funding derived from non-state resources.

(c) The Department of Education - Division of Elementary and Secondary Education shall promulgate rules for the determination of eligibility and administration of the Out-Of-School Time Program Grants.

(d) The provisions of this section shall be in effect only from July 1, ~~2025~~ 2026 through June 30, ~~2026~~ 2027.

*SECTION 31. SPECIAL LANGUAGE - CODE AMENDMENT. Arkansas Code § 6-18-722 is amended to read as follows:*

*6-18-722. Free and reduced-price meals – Definitions.*

*(a) Federal funds appropriated to the Department of ~~Education~~ Agriculture for a child nutrition program shall be used to provide school breakfasts and lunches at no cost to each qualifying student.*

*(b)(1) A public school that serves a school breakfast or a school lunch as part of a child nutrition program shall not charge a qualifying student a reduced-price copayment for a school breakfast or a school lunch.*

*(2)(A) If necessary to comply with the requirements of this section, the ~~department~~ Department of Agriculture shall provide funds that*

have been disbursed to the ~~department~~ Department of Agriculture from the United States Government for purposes of funding child nutrition programs to each public school that serves a school breakfast or a school lunch as part of a child nutrition program to cover the cost of eliminating reduced-price copayments as required by subdivision (b)(1) of this section.

(B) If federal funds appropriated to the ~~department~~ Department of Agriculture for a child nutrition program are insufficient to provide a school breakfast or a school lunch at no cost under subdivision (b)(2)(A) of this section, the ~~department~~ Department of Agriculture shall use funds as authorized by law to provide a school breakfast or a school lunch not initially covered by federal funds under subsection (a) of this section or other funds as authorized by law.

(c)(1) Annually by November 15, the Department of ~~Education~~ Agriculture shall report on and provide to the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education an overview of each child nutrition program offered in public schools.

(2) The report required under subdivision (c)(1) of this section shall include without limitation:

(A) The procedure for applying for free or reduced-price meals in public schools; and

(B) The number of students who:

(i) Apply for free or reduced-price meals;

(ii) Are accepted to receive free or reduced-price meals;

(iii) Are denied from receiving free or reduced-price meals; and

(iv) Automatically qualify for free or reduced-price meals based on federal eligibility requirements.

(d)(1) Arkansas Legislative Audit shall audit the Department of Education Child Nutrition Unit by December 15, 2023, and report the audit findings to the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education.

(2) The audit required under subdivision (d)(1) of this section shall determine whether each public school's participation in a child nutrition program effectively:

(A) Serves the intent of the General Assembly to expand

students' access to free meals in public schools; and

(B) Complies with federal and state law and rules.

(e) As used in this section:

(1) "Child nutrition program" includes the following as established under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C. § 1751 et seq., as it existed on January 1, 2023:

(A) The National School Lunch Program; or

(B) The School Breakfast Program; and

(2) "Qualifying student" means a kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) student enrolled in a public school who is eligible for receipt of a reduced-price meal in a child nutrition program.

(f)(1) Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year and each school year thereafter, a public school student who is not a qualifying student under this section and does not receive a free breakfast through any local, state, or federal program shall be provided one (1) breakfast at no cost during each school day upon his or her request without consideration of his or her eligibility for a federally funded free or reduced-price meal.

(2)(A) If necessary to comply with the requirements of subdivision (f)(1) of this section, the ~~department~~ Department of Agriculture shall provide funds that have been disbursed to the ~~department~~ Department of Agriculture from the United States Government for purposes of funding child nutrition programs to each public school to cover the cost of providing one (1) breakfast at no cost during each school day to each public school student who is not a qualifying student under this section.

(B) If federal funds appropriated to the ~~department~~ Department of Agriculture for a child nutrition program are insufficient to cover the cost of providing one (1) breakfast at no cost during each school day to each public school student who is not a qualifying student, the ~~department~~ Department of Agriculture shall use funds as authorized by law to cover the cost of providing one (1) breakfast at no cost during each school day to each public school student who is not a qualifying student.

(C) The cost of providing one (1) breakfast shall not exceed the rate of reimbursement to public schools established by the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C. § 1751 et seq., and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, 42 U.S.C. § 1771 et seq., for a free school breakfast.

(g) The ~~department~~ Department of Agriculture may promulgate rules to

implement this section.

SECTION 32. SPECIAL LANGUAGE - CODE AMENDMENT. Arkansas Code § 19-27-341(c)-(f), concerning the Food Insecurity Fund, are amended to read as follows:

(c)(1) By July 31 each fiscal year:

(A) The Department of ~~Education~~ Agriculture shall submit a certification to the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State of the amount expensed by the Department of ~~Education~~ Agriculture the prior fiscal year to comply with § 6-18-722(b) to eliminate a charge to students for a reduced-price copayment for a school breakfast or a school lunch, which shall be reviewed by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State; and

(B) The Department of Human Services shall submit a certification to the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State of the estimated amount required to fund the state matching funds requirement for the federal Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer Program for Children, commonly known as "Summer EBT", for the current fiscal year, which shall be reviewed by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State.

(2) After reviewing the certifications submitted under subdivision (c)(1) of this section, the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State may deny, modify, or approve the certifications based on the:

(A) Estimated amount of funding needed and available;

(B) Purpose; and

(C) Preferred spending priority.

(3) Based on the certifications from the Department of ~~Education~~ Agriculture and the Department of Human Services in subdivision (c)(1) of this section, the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State shall instruct the Treasurer of State to transfer those amounts on a pro rata basis to the fund or fund accounts designated by the Secretary of the Department of ~~Education~~ Agriculture and the Secretary of the Department of Human Services.

(d) Any unexpended balance of moneys in the fund accounts designated by the Department of ~~Education~~ Agriculture and the Department of Human Services to be allocated for the purposes under subsection (c) of this section that are remaining at the end of each fiscal year shall be designated and retained for the purposes under subsection (c) of this section for the following fiscal year, and certifications required under subdivision (c)(1)

*of this section shall be adjusted to reflect the remaining balances.*

*(e) After making the transfers under subdivision (c)(3) of this section, the Treasurer of State shall then transfer the remainder of the balance of the Food Insecurity Fund to the fund account designated by the Department of ~~Education~~ Agriculture to be used by the Department of ~~Education~~ Agriculture to comply with § 6-18-722(f).*

*(f) Any unexpended balance of moneys in the fund account designated by the Department of ~~Education~~ Agriculture allocated for the purposes under subsection (e) of this section that are remaining at the end of each fiscal year shall be designated and retained for the purposes outlined under subsection (e) of this section for the following fiscal year.*

SECTION 33. COMPLIANCE WITH OTHER LAWS. Disbursement of funds authorized by this act shall be limited to the appropriation for such agency and funds made available by law for the support of such appropriations; and the restrictions of the State Procurement Law, the General Accounting and Budgetary Procedures Law, the Revenue Stabilization Law, the Regular Salary Procedures and Restrictions Act, or their successors, and other fiscal control laws of this State, where applicable, and regulations promulgated by the Department of Finance and Administration, as authorized by law, shall be strictly complied with in disbursement of said funds.

SECTION 34. LEGISLATIVE INTENT. It is the intent of the General Assembly that any funds disbursed under the authority of the appropriations contained in this act shall be in compliance with the stated reasons for which this act was adopted, as evidenced by the Agency Requests, Executive Recommendations and Legislative Recommendations contained in the budget manuals prepared by the Department of Finance and Administration, letters, or summarized oral testimony in the official minutes of the Arkansas Legislative Council or Joint Budget Committee which relate to its passage and adoption.

SECTION 35. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the General Assembly, that the Constitution of the State of Arkansas prohibits the appropriation of funds for more than a one (1) year period; that the effectiveness of this Act on July 1, 2026 is essential to the operation of the agency for which the appropriations in this Act are provided, and that in

the event of an extension of the legislative session, the delay in the effective date of this Act beyond July 1, 2026 could work irreparable harm upon the proper administration and provision of essential governmental programs. Therefore, an emergency is hereby declared to exist and this Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety shall be in full force and effect from and after July 1, 2026.

*/s/Joint Budget Committee*

**APPROVED: 5/1/26**