

# Adequacy Study 2024

Accountability

Prepared for the  
House and Senate  
Committees  
on Education



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# Introduction

In accordance with the adequacy statute (Ark. Code Ann. § 10-3-2102), this report examines the federal and state structures for holding Arkansas schools accountable. This report examines three state systems: the Arkansas Educational Support and Accountability Program, the Arkansas Fiscal Assessment and Accountability Program, and Academic Facilities Distress Program. Furthermore, the report addresses two federal accountability measures: the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 as reauthorized by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, and state compliance with Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Act.

## Academic Accountability

### Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 was a reauthorization of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). ESSA replaced the No Child Left Behind Act (2002), and provided states with additional flexibility to design accountability systems tailored to state needs while addressing the needs of low-performing schools.

Each state education agency was required to submit an ESSA plan to the United States Department of Education (USDOE). Plans had to be developed with input from governors and members of the state legislatures and boards of education, as well as teachers, principals, parents, and others. The USDOE approved Arkansas's ESSA plan on January 16, 2018, with an amendment changing long-term goals approved on March 11, 2019, and additional addenda relating to COVID-19 approved August 20, 2021, and April 22, 2022. The 2019 amendment was to accommodate for ACT Aspire cut score changes. The 2021 addendum allowed the state to skip the 2020 data reporting requirements, since no assessments were given in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2022 addendum shifted the years used to identify schools for comprehensive, targeted, and additional targeted support and improvement to the 2021-22 school year, as well as modified the methodology used to identify schools for targeted support and improvement by excluding the 2019-20 school year. The 2022 addendum also excluded the 2019-20 school year when determining whether a school has met the statewide exit criteria for comprehensive and additional targeted support and improvement.

Arkansas's ESSA plan provided more autonomy and flexibility to districts, more support from the state, and multiple measures for districts and schools to prove success with students. Arkansas's ESSA plan was codified in Act 930 of 2017, which repealed the previous accountability system that had been in place since 1999, and replaced it with the Arkansas Educational Support and Accountability Act (which will be discussed in further detail below).

ESSA covers several broad areas: standards and assessments, accountability, public reporting, teachers, and school funding.

ESSA provisions related to school funding deal with federal Title I funding. Since this is not within the purview of the House and Senate Education Committees, this report does not address this portion of ESSA.

## Standards and Assessment

Under ESSA, states are required to adopt challenging statewide academic content standards and statewide academic achievement standards that apply to all public schools and public school students in the state. States must adopt standards for math, reading or language arts, and science, but may also adopt standards for other subjects. States are allowed to set alternative achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. States must also have standards for English-language proficiency that address speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

States are also required to have statewide, annual assessments aligned with academic standards. States must assess students in reading and math annually in grades three through eight, as well as once in high school. States must assess students in science at least once in grades three through five, once in grades six through nine, and once in grades ten through twelve. States may also assess other subjects.

Assessments must involve multiple measures of student achievement, including measures that assess higher-order thinking skills and understanding, which may be partially delivered in the form of portfolios, projects, or extended performance tasks.

States may administer alternate assessments for students with the most significant disabilities, but no more than 1% of students across the state may be assessed using the alternate exams.

In addition, ESSA sets a requirement that schools test at least 95% of their students each year.

## Accountability

Under ESSA, states are required to have a statewide accountability system based on the state academic standards. The accountability system must establish long-term goals for all students and each subgroup of students in the following areas: proficiency on the annual assessments, high-school graduation rates, and percentage of English language learners making progress in achieving English language proficiency.

The accountability system must establish a system for meaningfully differentiating all public schools in the state. ESSA requires several indicators:

- Academic achievement (proficiency on state assessments)
- Another academic indicator (for high schools, four-year graduation rate)
- English proficiency
- At least one other indicator of school quality of student success (must be valid, reliable, comparable, and statewide).

Each of the academic indicators (the first three indicators on the list above) must carry substantial weight.

Arkansas's ESSA plan sets goals over a 12-year time period, based on stakeholder feedback and the recommendation of the Arkansas Technical Advisory Committee for Assessment and Accountability. According to the plan, setting goals over a 12-year period encourages districts and schools to focus on all students, not just those close to achievement level cut points. Goals in the Arkansas ESSA plan are intended to be aspirational.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Every Student Succeeds Act, Arkansas Plan, retrieved at [https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Files/2022.05.13\\_Arkansas\\_ESSA\\_Plan\\_PSA.pdf](https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Files/2022.05.13_Arkansas_ESSA_Plan_PSA.pdf).

Arkansas’s long-term achievement goal is 80% of students achieving a test-based grade-level proficiency score. For graduation rates, the long-term goal for the four-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate is 94%, and the long-term goal for five-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate is 97%. The goal for English language proficiency is 52% of students on track to English Language proficiency; English Language proficiency is based on a number of factors, including students’ test scores on the ELPA21, when students were identified as English language learners, and whether students have exited English language learner status.<sup>2</sup>

The accountability system must also have a process for identifying Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools, Targeted Support and Improvement Schools, and Additional Targeted Support Schools.<sup>3</sup>

Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools are Title I schools that are in the lowest performing 5% of Title I schools in the state, and all high schools that fail to graduate one-third or more of their students.<sup>4</sup>

Targeted Support and Improvement Schools are schools that are consistently underperforming for one or more student groups. Additional Targeted Support Groups are schools that, for any student subgroup, meet the criteria for the lowest performing 5% of Title I schools in the state for students overall.<sup>5</sup>

ESSA sets out specific requirements for state education agencies about the kinds of support that must be provided to each category of schools.<sup>6</sup>

### Public Reporting

ESSA requires that states must describe the state’s accountability system, list the schools identified for Comprehensive Support and Targeted Support and Improvement, and include results of assessments, graduation rates, other indicators, progress toward goals, assessment participation rates, and number and percentage of English learners achieving English-language proficiency.

In Arkansas, schools are identified as Targeted Support and Improvement, Additional Targeted Support and Improvement, Comprehensive Support and Improvement—Additional Targeted Support and Improvement, Comprehensive Support and Improvement, and More Rigorous Interventions. The tables below show how many schools were in each category in the 2023 school year.

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<sup>2</sup> Every Student Succeeds Act, Arkansas Plan, retrieved at [https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Files/20201126142803\\_Arkansas\\_ESSA\\_Plan\\_Final\\_rv\\_January\\_30\\_2018.pdf](https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Files/20201126142803_Arkansas_ESSA_Plan_Final_rv_January_30_2018.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> National Conference of State Legislatures, Summary of the Every Student Succeeds Act, retrieved at [https://www.ncsl.org/documents/educ/ESSA\\_summary\\_NCSL.pdf](https://www.ncsl.org/documents/educ/ESSA_summary_NCSL.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> National Conference of State Legislatures, Summary of the Every Student Succeeds Act, retrieved at [https://www.ncsl.org/documents/educ/ESSA\\_summary\\_NCSL.pdf](https://www.ncsl.org/documents/educ/ESSA_summary_NCSL.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> National Conference of State Legislatures, Summary of the Every Student Succeeds Act, retrieved at [https://www.ncsl.org/documents/educ/ESSA\\_summary\\_NCSL.pdf](https://www.ncsl.org/documents/educ/ESSA_summary_NCSL.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> National Conference of State Legislatures, Summary of the Every Student Succeeds Act, retrieved at [https://www.ncsl.org/documents/educ/ESSA\\_summary\\_NCSL.pdf](https://www.ncsl.org/documents/educ/ESSA_summary_NCSL.pdf).



<b>Targeted Support and Improvement—one or more consistently underperforming subgroups</b>	
<b>Total Schools</b>	54
<b>Elementary</b>	25
<b>Middle</b>	28
<b>High School</b>	1

Special education was the underperforming subgroup in most of the schools identified for Targeted Support and Improvement.

<b>Additional Targeted Support and Improvement—schools with a subgroup falling below the 1<sup>st</sup> percentile of Title I schools in 2021 and 2022</b>	
<b>Total Schools</b>	16
<b>Elementary</b>	3
<b>Middle</b>	13
<b>High School</b>	0

All 16 of the Additional Targeted Support and Improvement Schools were identified for the school’s special education subgroup.

<b>Comprehensive Support and Improvement—Additional Targeted Support and Improvement—schools that were identified for Additional Targeted Support and Improvement in 2018 that did not exit the program within four years</b>	
<b>Total Schools</b>	125
<b>Elementary</b>	89
<b>Middle</b>	36
<b>High School</b>	0

Districts in this classification had a consistently underperforming subgroup that did not improve over time, and are now identified as needing comprehensive support.

<b>Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools—Title I schools that are at or below the 5<sup>th</sup> percentile value of all Title I schools in the grade span</b>	
<b>Total Schools</b>	28
<b>Elementary</b>	13
<b>Middle</b>	6
<b>High School</b>	9

**Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools—schools that were identified as in need of Comprehensive Support and Improvement in 2018 and did not sufficiently improve to exit by 2022**

<b>Total Schools</b>	30
<b>Elementary</b>	19
<b>Middle</b>	5
<b>High School</b>	6

In addition, seven schools were identified by not having at least two-thirds of students in the four-year adjusted cohort graduate. Four of the schools were already identified for low performance.

### Teachers

State ESSA plans must describe how the state will ensure low-income and minority students are not taught at a disproportionate rate by ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers.

## Arkansas Educational Support and Accountability Act (AESAA)

The Arkansas Educational Support and Accountability Act (Act 930 of 2017) repealed the state’s previous accountability system and replaced it with a new accountability system that conformed to ESSA. Under the new system, the state is to provide needed support for school districts so they can assist their schools in improving student performance. The Arkansas Department of Education Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is responsible for developing and implementing a comprehensive accountability system that does the following:

- Establishes clear academic standards that are periodically reviewed and revised
- Maintains a statewide student assessment system that includes a variety of assessment measures
- Assesses whether all students have equitable access to excellent educators
- Establishes levels of support for public school districts
- Maintains information systems composed of performance indicators that allow DESE to identify levels of public school district supports and generate reports for the public.

The Educational Support and Accountability Act has multiple components, which are discussed in further detail below.

### Academic Standards

DESE is required to establish academic standards that define what students shall know and be able to demonstrate in each content area. In the 2024 adequacy process, as in previous years, academic standards are covered in the “Learning Expectations” report.

### Student Assessment

The Educational Support and Accountability Act requires a statewide student assessment system, which must contain the following:

- Developmentally appropriate measurements or assessments for kindergarten through grade two in literacy and mathematics;
- High-quality, evidence-based literacy screeners for kindergarten through grade three;
- Assessments to measure English language arts, mathematics, and science as identified by the state board;
- Assessment of English proficiency of all English learners; and

- Assessments to measure college and career readiness.<sup>7</sup>

Arkansas administered the ACT Aspire test as the statewide assessment from 2016 to 2023. Beginning in the 2023-24 school year, Arkansas schools use the Arkansas Teaching & Learning Assessment System (ATLAS).

Arkansas received a waiver from the U.S. Department of Education for conducting assessments in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Arkansas did conduct assessments in the 2020-21 school year, with DESE allowing districts flexibility to reduce the risk of COVID-19 while still meeting the goal of testing at least 95% of students.

On January 11, 2024, the State Board of Education (SBOE) approved DESE’s request to place seven schools on “Accredited—Cited Status” for violations of standard 1-C.1.1, Testing at Least 95% of All Students.<sup>8</sup>

### Levels of Support

Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-15-2913 sets out the levels of support that DESE is required to provide to districts. The levels are further described in DESE Rules.

In determining levels of support, DESE considers schools’ ESSA designations (which are determined by the ESSA School Index score), fidelity of implementation of school-level improvement plans and district support plans, school and district level data, and fidelity of implementation of DESE directives. Districts may request a certain level of support.<sup>9</sup>

Act 1082 of 2019 added some specific requirements for levels of support beginning in the 2019-20 school year. DESE must provide level 3 support to districts in which 40% or more of the district’s students score “in need of support” on the state’s prior year summative assessment for reading. Additionally, DESE must provide level 4 support to districts in which 50% or more of the district’s students score “in need of support” on the state’s prior year summative assessment for reading.

The table below shows the number of districts in each level of support for the 2022-23 school year.

2022-23 Level of Support	Number of Districts	Percentage of Districts
1	127	49%
2	49	19%
3	47	18%
4	31	12%
5	4	2%

<sup>7</sup> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-2907(a).

<sup>8</sup> The seven schools were Graduate Arkansas Charter High, Little Rock Southwest High School, Sylvan Hills High School, Founders Classical Academy High School Online, Premier High School of Fort Smith, Premier High School of Texarkana, and Premier High School Online.

<sup>9</sup> DESE “Rules Governing the Arkansas Educational Support and Accountability Act (AESAA)” Rule 8.02.

In Level 1—General support, DESE provides guidance and tools to assist districts; districts have access to contacts at DESE for questions. Schools must have school improvement plans, including a literacy plan. School and district improvement plans are discussed further below.

In Level 2—Collaborative support includes minor or temporary technical assistance of a department initiative or state expectations. Level 2 is required if the district is receiving a federal 1003 grant.<sup>10</sup> Schools in Level 2 districts must have school improvement plans (including literacy plans) and district support plans.

In Level 3—Coordinated support districts receive technical assistance and monitoring. This level of support requires both school and district improvement plans.

In Level 4—Directed support DESE provides direct guidance on the development and implementation of school-level plans, resource allocation, monitoring, and evaluation. This level of support also requires district and school improvement plans; DESE must approve district improvement plans.

Level 5—Intensive support requires State Board approval (although districts may request to receive Level 5 supports). Once a district is classified as being in need of Level 5—Intensive support, DESE creates a district improvement/exit plan in collaboration with district leadership and the local school board. Districts in Level 5 make quarterly reports to the SBOE. The SBOE must vote to remove districts from Level 5.

Additionally, if a district is classified as being in need of Level 5—Intensive Support, the SBOE may take other actions, including assuming authority of the public school district (excluding open-enrollment charters).<sup>11</sup> Districts under state authority are discussed later in the report. All four districts that were in Level 5 support in the 2022-23 school year were also in state takeover: Earle, Helena-West Helena, Lee County, and Marvell-Elaine.

## Educator Input

The BLR adequacy superintendent survey asked about district’s level of support. A quarter (26%) of superintendents responded that they did not know their district’s assigned level of support. Another quarter (26%) responded that their district is in Level 1. As shown above, almost 50% of districts were in Level 1 in 2023.

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<sup>10</sup> 1003 grants are required under Section 1003 of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act. State Education Agencies must allocate funds to local education agencies to support Title I schools identified for improvement to close the educational gap through goals in their school improvement, corrective action, and/or restructuring plans and thereby improving student performance.

<sup>11</sup> If an open-enrollment public charter is identified as being in need of Level 5—Intensive Support, the SBOE may request that the charter authorizer review the school’s charter and determine necessary action. See DESE “Rules Governing the Arkansas Educational Support and Accountability Act (AESAA)” Rule 8.11.3.

Superintendents were asked to select which DESE supports their district used in the 2022-23 school year. The three most frequently used were electronic trainings, recorded and live (66%); assistance with monitoring and implementation of school-level improvement plans (40%), and support in collecting, analyzing, and using relevant data to create a school-level improvement plan (39%).

Forty-nine percent of superintendents responded that DESE support is either very useful or essential. Nineteen percent of superintendents responded that their district does not receive support from DESE.

### School Improvement Plans and District Support Plans

Each school in the state is required under Act 930 to develop a school-level improvement plan by May 1 of each year. The school-level plan is to be submitted to the district and posted on the district website by August 1 of each year. The law also requires all school districts to continually monitor and assess their schools' improvement efforts.

School districts are to incorporate school improvement plans into their strategic planning for the school year, but not all have to develop an actual support plan. Districts receiving support categorized as Level 2 and higher must develop districts' plans of support by September 1 and post them on their websites within 10 days. Districts in Level 2 must submit plans to DESE at the request of the Secretary. Districts receiving Level 3, 4, or 5 support must submit plans to DESE.

A district in which 40% or more of the students scored "in need of support" on the state's prior year summative assessment for reading shall develop a literacy plan as part of its district support plan. The literacy plan must include goals for improving reading achievement throughout the district and information regarding the prioritization of funding for strategies to improve reading.

### Educator Input

The principal survey asked principals two questions about school-improvement plans. Fifty-seven percent of responding principals said that school-improvement plans were very useful or essential in planning strategies to improve student achievement. Forty-four percent of principals responded that school-level improvement plans have been very useful or essential in improving student achievement.

### Student Success Plans

Under Act 930 of 2017, the DESE "shall collaborate with public school districts to transition to a student-focused learning system to support success for all students." As part of that system, beginning with the 2018-19 school year, each student, by the end of eighth grade, must have a student success plan, developed by school personnel in collaboration with parents and the student. Success plans must be reviewed and updated annually.

Success plans must: 1) guide the student along pathways to graduation (required coursework, courses of interest, consideration for student's postsecondary plans using multiple measures to inform decisions about a pathway); 2) address accelerated learning opportunities (could include Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, concurrent credit, career pathways, apprenticeships, internships, courses based on identified areas of academic strength, extracurricular activities, and other opportunities); 3) address academic deficits and interventions (courses based on identified areas of academic deficit, point-in-time remediation, credit recovery, tutoring, additional learning supports, transitional coursework, and other opportunities); and 4) include college and career planning components

(College and Career Readiness Assessment data, interest inventories, college and career planning tools, industry-recognized credentials or technical certifications, and other postsecondary preparations).<sup>12</sup>

An Individualized Education Plan for a student with a disability meets the requirements of a student success plan if it addresses academic deficits and interventions for students not meeting standards-based academic goals at an expected rate or level and includes a transition plan that addresses college and career planning components.<sup>13</sup>

Changes made to student success plans in the LEARNS Act are discussed in the LEARNS section later in this report.

### Educator Input

Principals serving at a high school were asked which elements are included in their schools' student success plans. The three most common elements selected were courses the student will take in high school (96%), four- or two-year college planning (89%), and post-high school jobs (75%). Principals also indicated the parties involved in creating student success plans. The most common parties included were counselors (95%), students (87%), and teachers (73%).

Of the responding principals who serve high schools, 51% indicated that all of their students have a student success plan. A third of principals responded that between 75% and 99% of their students have a student success plan.

Ninety-three percent of responding principals said that the impact of creating a student success plan on students was somewhat or very positive. Eighty-seven percent of responding principals said that the impact of creating a student success plan on school personnel was somewhat or very positive.

### Educator Excellence

The Educational Support and Accountability Act allows the SBOE to promulgate rules that promote the state's goal of providing all Arkansas public school students with qualified and effective educators. Under the current rules, districts are responsible for recruiting, hiring, retaining, and developing effective teachers and leaders by using programs provided by DESE, including TESS (the state's teacher evaluation system, known as the Teacher Excellence and Support System)<sup>14</sup>, LEADS (the state's leader evaluation system, known as the Leader Excellence and Development System)<sup>15</sup>, and other DESE resources.

Districts and schools must report information to DESE, including professional qualifications, teaching assignments, professional development, and performance evaluation information. Districts with data reflecting disproportionality must develop and implement strategies for equitable access in the district's support plan.

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<sup>12</sup> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-2911(b)(2).

<sup>13</sup> *Id.* at (b)(4).

<sup>14</sup> See "Teacher Excellence and Support System," Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-17-2801 et seq.

<sup>15</sup> See Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-17-2809 (requiring the DESE to "design a system of administrator leadership support and evaluations," which is done with the DESE "Rules Governing the Leader Excellence and Development System," Rule 5.01, and known as the "Arkansas Leader Excellence and Development System ("LEADS)").

## Data Reporting

DESE has multiple methods of communicating data to districts, schools, parents, and the public, one being the annual school report cards.<sup>16</sup> Report cards are published for each district and contain data on achievement, enrollment, college readiness, school environment, accreditation, graduation rates, remediation rates, retention, teacher quality, and school expenditures.

## Letter Grade Rating System

Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-15-2101 *et seq.* lays out the state's school rating system (also known as the letter grade system). The school rating system must be a multiple-measures approach including:

- academic achievement on the annual statewide student assessment;
- student growth on the annual statewide student assessment;
- school-level graduation rate or rates; and
- English-learner progress or growth in acquiring English.

In addition, the rating system must consider at least one of the following indicators:<sup>17</sup>

- closing the achievement gap;
- academic growth of student subgroups (economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups, English learners, and students with disabilities);
- the percentage of grade 9 cohort with on-time completion of credit attainment at the end of grade 9;
- equity in resource allocation;
- the percentage of students who earn:
  - Advanced Placement credit;
  - concurrent credit;
  - International Baccalaureate credit; or
  - industry-recognized certification that leads to articulated or concurrent credit at a postsecondary institution;
- student access to multiple flexible learning continua;
- student access to preschool offered by the public school district;
- the proportional percentage of qualified educators who hold a National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification or have an advanced degree beyond their bachelor's degree;
- public school district and community partnerships.

Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-15-2106 directs the SBOE to promulgate rules to implement the rating system. Under DESE rules, the School Rating System uses the ESSA School Index, which consists of the following indicators:

- Weighted achievement;
- School Mean Growth plus English Learner Growth:
  - Content growth (ELA and math growth scores combined for each student);
  - English Learner progress to English Language Proficiency at a rate that is proportional to number of English Learners;
- Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate:
  - Four-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate;
  - Five-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate;

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<sup>16</sup> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-2202.

<sup>17</sup> *Id.* at § 6-15-2108(b).

- School Quality and Student Success.

The **School Quality and Student Success indicator** is based on the chart below:

Indicator	Grade Level or Cohort for Points Available	Points for Student
Student Engagement	Grades K -11	Point based on Chronic Absence (CA) risk level: CA<5% = 1.0 Point 5<=CA < 10% = 0.5 Point CA >=10% = 0.0 Point
Science Achievement	Grades 3 – 10	Ready or Exceeds = 1.0 Point Close or Not Ready = 0.0 Point
Science Growth	Grades 4 – 10	Using ACT Aspire Science Value-Added Score Percentile Rate VAS PR ≥ 75 = 1.0 Point 25 ≤ VAS PR < 75 = 0.5 Point VAS PR ≤ 25 = 0.0 Point
Reading at Grade Level	Grades 3 – 10	Ready or Exceeds = 1.0 Point Close or Not Ready = 0.0 Point
ACT	Grade 12 Cycle 7 Enrollment	Best ACT Composite Score ≥ 19 = 1.0 Point Use best ACT score from prior 3 years.
ACT Readiness Benchmark	Grade 12 Cycle 7 Enrollment	ACT Reading ≥ 22 = 0.5 point ACT Math ≥ 22 = 0.5 point ACT Science ≥ 23 = 0.5 point Use best ACT score from prior 3 years for ea. subject
GPA 2.8 or better on 4.0 scale	Grade 12 Cycle 7 Enrollment	High school final GPA ≥ 2.8 = 1.0 Point
Community Service Learning Credits Earned	Grade 12 Cycle 7 Enrollment	1 or more SL credits earned = 1.0 Point Act 648 of 1993 course #496010 or other state approved courses Credits earned at any time during grades 9 - 12
On-time Credits	Grades 9 -11	Grade 9 completed ≥ 5.5 credit = 1.0 Point Grade 10 completed ≥ 11.0 credits = 1.0 Point Grade 11 completed ≥ 16.5 credits = 1.0 Point
Computer Science Course Credits Earned	Grade 12 Cycle 7 Enrollment	Credits earned ≥ 1 = 1.0 Point Credits earned at any time during grades 9 - 12
Adv. Placement / Intl. Baccalaureate or Concurrent Credit Courses (ACE included)	Grade 12 Cycle 7 Enrollment	Credits earned ≥ 1 = 1.0 Point Credits earned at any time during grades 9 - 12



After each of the indicators is calculated, they are weighed according to this chart:

Component	Weight of Indicator within Index Grades K – 5 & 6 - 8		Weight of Indicator within Index High Schools
Weighted Achievement Indicator	35%	Weighted Achievement and Academic Growth	70% total with Weighted Achiev. accounting for half (35%) and School Growth Score accounting for half (35%)
Growth Indicator Academic Growth English Language Progress	50%		
Progress to English Language Proficiency	Weight of indicator in School Value-Added Growth Score is proportionate to number of English Learners	Progress to English Language Proficiency	Weight of indicator in School Value-Added Growth Score is proportionate to number of English Learners
Graduation Rate Indicator 4-Year Adjusted Cohort Rate 5-Year Adjusted Cohort Rate	NA		15% total 4-Yr = 10% 5-Yr = 5%
School Quality and Student Success Indicator	15%		15%

The result is the ESSA School Index for the school. To figure the letter grades, the Department uses the following cut scores:

Letter Grade	Elementary	Middle School	High School
A	79.26 <= Score	75.59 <= Score	73.22 <= Score
B	72.17 - 79.25	69.94 - 75.58	67.96 - 73.21
C	64.98 - 72.16	63.73 - 69.93	61.10 - 67.95
D	58.09 - 64.97	53.58 - 63.72	52.95 - 61.09
F	Score < 58.09	Score < 53.58	Score < 52.95

DESE is required to prepare the reports annually.<sup>18</sup> However, because of COVID-19, the U.S. Department of Education granted Arkansas a waiver from the assessment, accountability, and reporting ESSA requirements for the 2019-20 school year. Because Arkansas did not conduct its annual assessments in the 2019-20 school year, DESE was unable to calculate ESSA School Index scores. Since the states' letter grade system is based on the ESSA School Index scores, no school received letter grades for the 2019-20 school year. In addition, Act 89 of 2021 suspended the public school rating system for the 2020-21 school year; therefore, DESE did not issue letter grades for the 2020-21 school year. Arkansas did conduct its annual assessments in the 2020-21 school year, and calculated and published schools' ESSA School Index scores, as required under ESSA.

Annual performance reports must be made available in hard copy to parents or guardians upon request, posted on the DESE website, and posted on the local school district's website.<sup>19</sup> Annual reports must also list student performance on statewide student assessments, student academic growth based on statewide student assessments, and the school's graduation rate (if applicable).<sup>20</sup>

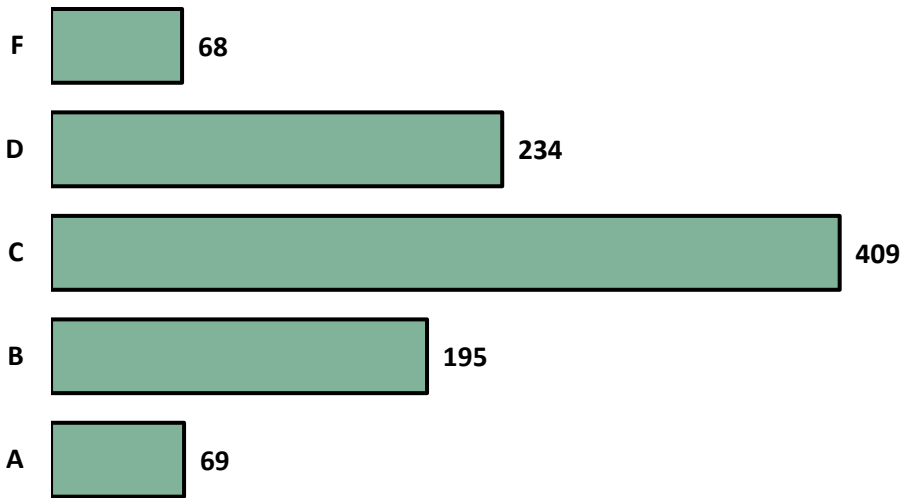
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<sup>18</sup> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-2101(a)(1).

<sup>19</sup> *Id.* at § 6-15-2101(a)(3)

<sup>20</sup> *Id.* at § 6-15-2101(c).

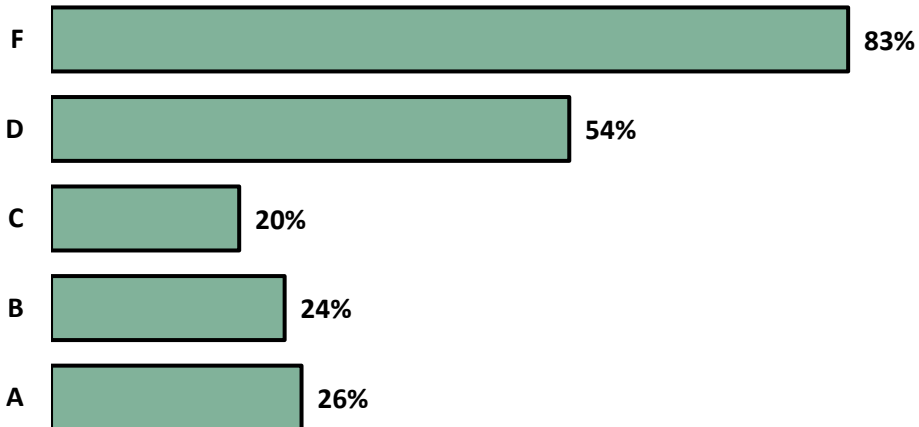
The chart below shows the number of schools assigned each letter grade for the 2023 school year.



### Characteristics of Schools by Letter Grade

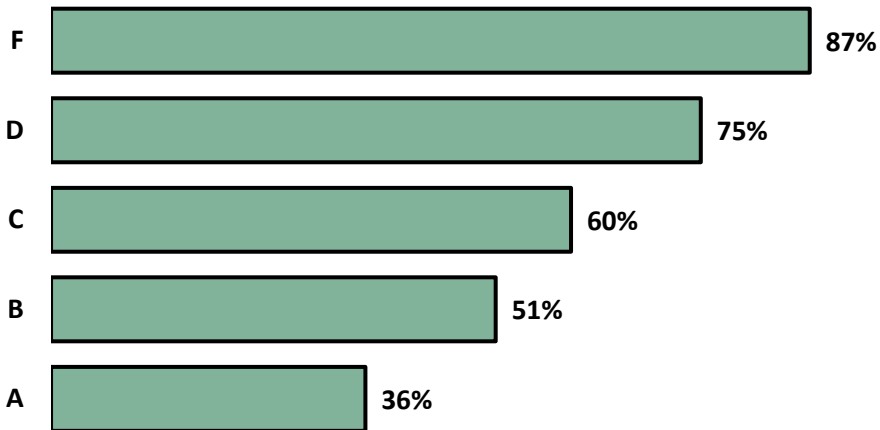
The charts below show characteristics of schools by letter grade.

#### Percent Nonwhite



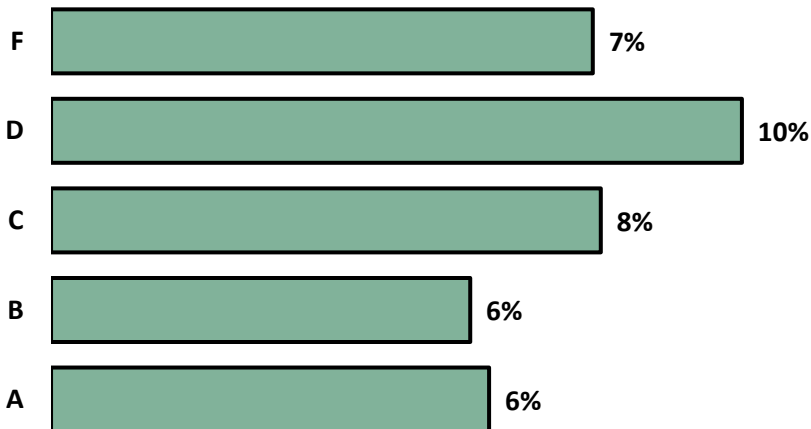
“D” and “F” schools have higher percentages of nonwhite students.

### Percent Free and Reduced Lunch



The percentage of students eligible for free and reduced lunch goes up as the school’s letter grade goes down.

### Percent English Language Learner



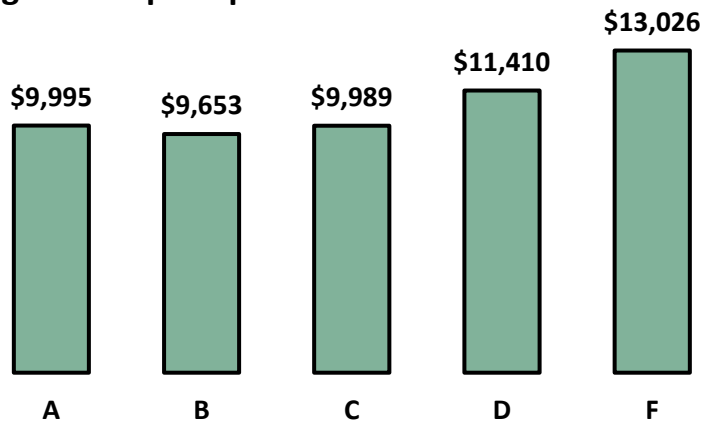
“D” schools have the highest percentage of English Language learners.

### Percent Special Education



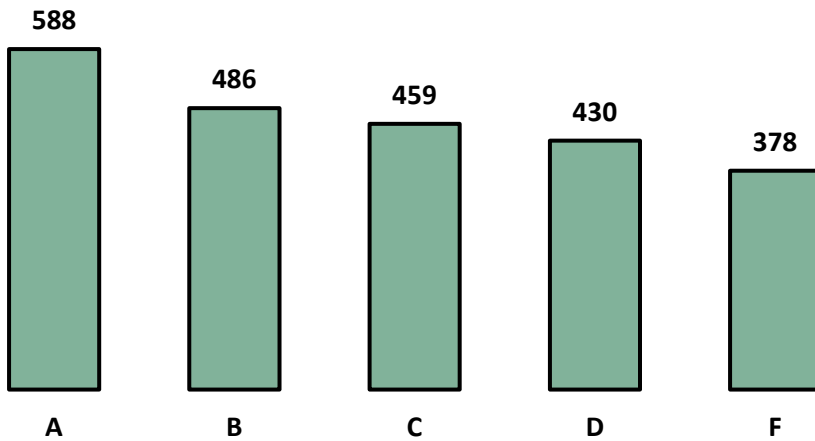
The percentage of special education students is similar for each letter grade.

### Average Per Pupil Expenditures



“F” schools spend the most on average per pupil.

## Average School Size



The average school size gets smaller as letter grades go down.

## Correlations

A correlation is a mathematic calculation that shows how closely two indicators are related. When schools' ESSA Indexes are compared to several demographic measures, a few have statistically significant correlations:

- The concentration of white students has a statistically significant positive correlation (.48) to the ESSA School Index (meaning that as the percentage of white students in a school goes up, the school's ESSA School Index goes up).
- The concentration of African-American students has a statistically significant negative correlation (-.57) to the ESSA School Index (meaning that as the percentage of African-American students in a school goes up, the school's ESSA School Index goes down).
- The concentration of special education students has a statistically significant negative correlation (-.19) to the ESSA School Index (meaning that as the percentage of special education students in a school goes up, the school's ESSA School Index goes down). The correlation coefficient's nearness to 0 indicates the relationship is not strong.
- The concentration of students eligible for free and reduced lunch has a statistically significant negative correlation (-.6) to the ESSA School Index (meaning that as the percentage of students eligible for free and reduced lunch goes up, the school's ESSA School Index goes down).

There was not a statistically significant relationship between the concentration Hispanic students or the concentration of English Learners and the ESSA School Indexes.

Letter grades for the 2023-24 school year and going forward will be calculated differently. DESE's LEARNS Accountability work group has discussed changes to the ESSA School Index. The new index will be used, along with the 2024 ATLAS results, to calculate grades for the 2023-24 school year.

## Educator Input

When asked about letter grades, 44% of responding principals somewhat or strongly agreed with the statement, “Letter grades are helpful in determining the areas where my school needs to improve.” Eighty-five percent of responding principals somewhat or strongly agreed with the statement, “I know the factors that are used to calculate my school’s letter grade.”

Seventy-one percent of responding principals said that they sometimes or often consider letter grades when making budgeting decisions.

## Reward Schools

The Arkansas School Recognition Program<sup>21</sup> provides financial awards to public schools that experience high student performance, student academic growth, and, where applicable, high graduation rates. A public school or open-enrollment charter school in the top 5% of all Arkansas public schools in student performance or student academic growth (which includes high school graduation rates for secondary schools) may receive a one-time distribution of up to \$100 per student. A public school or open-enrollment charter school in the top 6% to 10% in student performance or student academic growth may receive a one-time distribution up to \$50 per student.

For 2023, schools received a total of \$6,950,900 from this program. A full list of schools can be found in Appendix A.

## Schools on the Move

Schools on the Move Toward Excellence is a DESE campaign recognizing schools that uses a continuous cycle of inquiry (plan, do, check) to demonstrate improvement on recent state and federal accountability reports.

DESE highlights schools that show significant progress on different indicators, including an increase in letter grade and ESSA School Index score by at least five points, Weighted Achievement score increase by at least 10 points, and Value-Added Growth score higher than 97.5% of schools.

Appendix B contains more information about the 2023 Schools on the Move.

## Special Education

The USDOE annually assesses whether each state meets the requirements of Part B of the IDEA. Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) relates to the provisions of services and federal funding for states to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment for children with disabilities ages three to 21. This is determined by looking at multiple pieces of information: educational results and functional outcomes of students with disabilities, the validity and reliability of the data provided by the state, and the percentage of the compliance with federal special education requirements.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-2107.

<sup>22</sup> 20 USC Chapter 33 § 1411.

The following table shows the indicators used in this assessment. The first part shows indicators used in the Results Matrix, and the second table shows indicators used in the Compliance Matrix. Both use “information related to the participation of children with disabilities (CWD) on regular Statewide assessments; the participation and performance of CWD on the most recently administered (2022) National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP); exiting data on CWD who dropped out and CWD who graduated with a regular high school diploma; the State’s Federal fiscal year (FFY) 2021 State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR); information from monitoring and other public information, such as Specific Conditions on the State’s grant award under IDEA Part B; and other issues related to State compliance with the IDEA [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act].”<sup>23</sup> Part C indicators under the Program for Infants and Toddlers birth through age 2 are not included.

Part B Results Indicators
Percentage of 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade and 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Students with Disabilities Participating in Regular Statewide Assessments (Math and Reading)
Percentage of 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade and 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Students with Disabilities Included in Testing on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (Math and Reading)
Percentage of 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade and 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Students with Disabilities Scoring at Basic or Above on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (Math and Reading)
Percentage of who Dropped Out
Percentage of who Graduated with a Regular High School Diploma
Part B Compliance Indicators
Indicator 4B: Significant discrepancy, by race and ethnicity, in the rate of suspension and expulsion, and policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with specified requirements.
Indicator 9: Disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services due to inappropriate identification.
Indicator 10: Disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories due to inappropriate identification.
Indicator 11: Timely initial evaluation
Indicator 12: IEP developed and implemented by third birthday
Indicator 13: Secondary transition (Percent of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, transition services, and annual IEP goals related to the student’s transition services’ needs.
Timely and Accurate State-Reported Data
Timely State Complaint Decisions
Timely Due Process Hearing Decisions
Longstanding Noncompliance (Special Conditions and Uncorrected identified noncompliance)

**Data Source:** U.S. DOE<sup>24</sup> **Note:** 2023 Part B Results Matrix relies on performance and participation data from the 2021-22 school year and the Compliance Matrix relies on data from FFY21 and any findings identified in FFY20.

<sup>23</sup> U.S. DOE. “How the Department Made Determinations Under Section 616(D) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 2023: Part B.” (June 23, 2023). Retrieved from: <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/files/how-the-department-made-determinations-part-b-2023.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> U.S. Department of Education. “2023 SPP/APR Submission Part B – Arkansas; 2023 Part B - Arkansas.” Retrieved at <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/state/arkansas/>



Based on results from the above Part B Results and Compliance Matrices, each state receives a determination from the USDOE’s Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services in regards to meeting the IDEA requirements. Those determinations include the following:

IDEA Determinations	Technical Assistance or Enforcement Actions Taken by the U.S. DOE
<b>Meets the requirements</b> and purposes of IDEA	N/A
<b>Needs assistance</b> in implementing the requirements of IDEA	<b>For two consecutive years:</b> At least one of the following, but not limited to: Requiring the State to access technical assistance, designating the State as a high-risk grantee, or directing the use of State set-aside funds to the area(s) where the State needs assistance.
<b>Needs intervention</b> in implementing the requirements of IDEA	<b>For three consecutive years:</b> At least one of the following, but not limited to: Requiring a corrective action plan or compliance agreement, or withholding further payments to the State.
<b>Needs substantial intervention</b> in implementing the requirements of IDEA	<b>Anytime:</b> Must take immediate enforcement action, such as withholding funds or referring the matter to the Department’s inspector general or to the Department of Justice.

Data Source: U.S. DOE<sup>25</sup>

The last five determinations for Arkansas are shown in the table below, along with a summary of results from the results and compliance matrices. The full results for Arkansas’s 2023 Matrix Results are shown in Appendix C. The following map shows how these determinations vary by state.

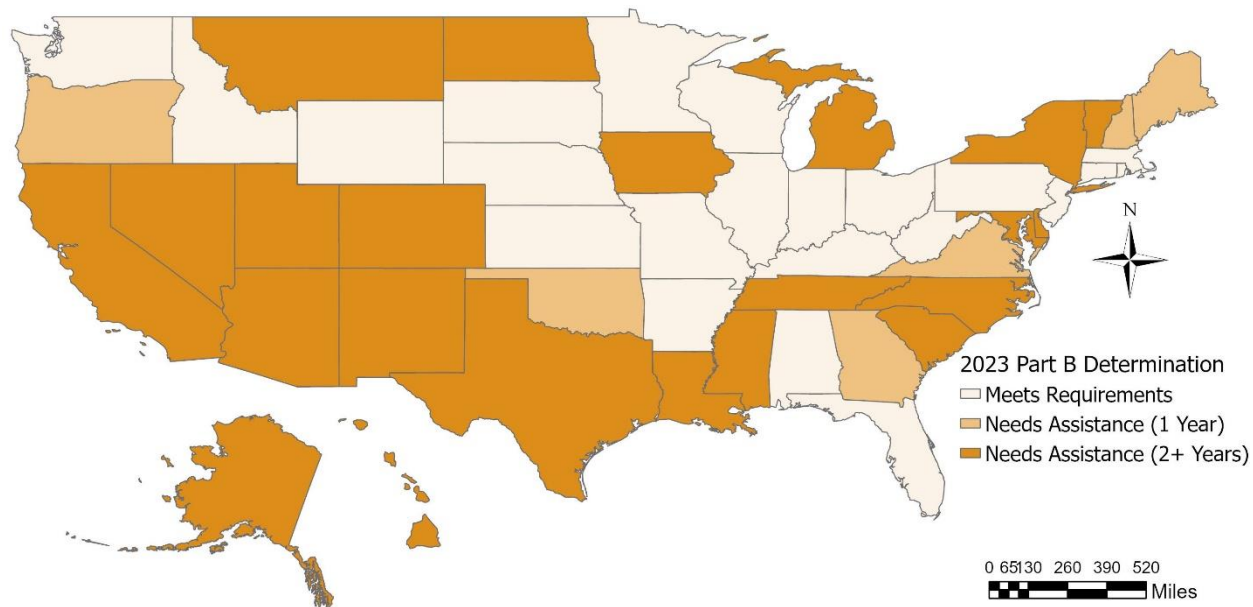
Year Issued	Results-Driven Accountability Percentage and Determination		Results and Compliance Overall Scoring					
	Percentage	Determination	Results			Compliance		
			Total Points Available	Points Earned	Score	Total Points Available	Points Earned	Score
<b>2019</b>	62.50%	Needs Assistance	24	12	50%	20	15	75%
<b>2020</b>	80.83%	Meets Requirements	24	16	66.67%	20	19	95%
<b>2021</b>	70.00%	Needs Assistance	16	8	50%	20	18	90%
<b>2022</b>	72.5%	Needs Assistance	16	8	50%	20	19	95%
<b>2023</b>	80.83%	Meets Requirements	24	16	66.67%	20	19	95%

Data Sources: U.S. DOE Part B Results-Driven Accountability Matrices from 2019-2023<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> “2023 SPP/APR Submission Part B – Arkansas; 2023 Part B - Arkansas.” <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/files/how-the-department-made-determinations-part-b-2023.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/state/arkansas/>

## 2023 IDEA Part B Determinations



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## Fiscal Assessment and Accountability

### Fiscal Distress Process

The Arkansas Fiscal Assessment and Accountability Program<sup>28</sup>, known more commonly as fiscal distress, is the state program used to identify and correct school districts that are struggling to maintain fiscal stability. Under state law, DESE identifies districts in fiscal distress, and the SBOE approves or denies the identification and classifies school districts as being in distress. DESE, the Commissioner of Education, and SBOE have authority to take corrective actions in districts identified and classified in fiscal distress.

The original fiscal distress program began in 1995, but the program has been modified significantly several times since 1995. Most recently, the General Assembly passed Act 929 of 2019, which mirrored the changes Act 930 of 2017 made to the academic distress program (now known as Level 5 – Intensive Support).

This section outlines the current fiscal distress process, which includes early warning, identification and classification, possible sanctions and corrective actions, and removal.

<sup>27</sup> <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/spp-apr-letters>

<sup>28</sup> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-1901 et seq.

## Early Warning

Under the early warning system (also known as early intervention), DESE is required to report to school district superintendents if DESE is aware that the school district has experienced two or more nonmaterial indicators of fiscal distress that DESE believes could put the district at risk without intervention before November 1. Superintendents are required to report the same information about their districts to DESE, also by November 1. Under DESE rules, a nonmaterial violation is something that does not directly jeopardize the fiscal integrity of a school district but has the potential to put the school district in fiscal distress.

Indicators of distress may be the indicators listed in the statute<sup>29</sup> or in DESE rules.

To help identify potential problems, DESE provides an early intervention checklist to school districts. This tool helps districts identify issues that could lead to a fiscal distress classification if left unaddressed. Districts are not required to complete the checklist. DESE reviews three years of districts' unrestricted fund balances, audits, and average daily membership records. If DESE has concerns about a district after the review, DESE sends the district the checklist.

A district may move into or out of early intervention at any time in any given school year. The districts in early intervention in the 2022-23 school year were Forrest City, Huntsville, Nevada, and Helena-West Helena.

If a district is experiencing fiscal distress at a nonmaterial level, the district must comply with all requirements of the state board in rules (including review of budget, reporting, and hiring and termination of staff), and receive written approval from DESE before incurring debt.<sup>30</sup>

DESE may request that Arkansas Legislative Audit conduct an annual audit of a public school district determined to be experiencing fiscal distress at a nonmaterial level. Under DESE rules, school districts must be audited annually; however, Legislative Audit does not conduct all school district audits. Under certain circumstances, districts may request that Legislative Audit conduct the audit, but otherwise, the school district board must select a private auditor.

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<sup>29</sup> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-1904.

<sup>30</sup> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-1904(b)(4).

## Identification and Classification

Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-20-1904 lists the indicators of fiscal distress. DESE may identify a district in distress if the district has any of the indicators. The indicators include:

- Declining balance determined to jeopardize the fiscal integrity of the district
- An act or violation determined to jeopardize the fiscal integrity of the district
- Material failure to comply with Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-20-1913, which concerns the minimum qualifications for a general business manager
- Material failure to comply with reporting, debt approval, or other requirements placed on a public school district that has been returned to local control
- Any other fiscal condition of a school district deemed to have a detrimental negative impact on the continuation of educational services by the district

Such acts, violations, and conditions include:

- Material failure to maintain school facilities, provide timely and accurate financial reports to specific state agencies, meet minimum teacher salaries, comply with state purchasing, bid agreements, or audit requirements
- Material violation of local, state, or federal fire, health, safety, or construction codes
- Material default on any school district debt obligation
- Material discrepancy between budgeted and actual expenditures
- Insufficient funds to cover payroll, salary, employment benefits, or legal tax obligations

Once DESE has identified a district in distress, DESE is required to notify the district in writing prior to June 30; however, DESE may identify a school district as being in fiscal distress at any time after June 30 if DESE discovers that a fiscal condition of the school district negatively impacts the continuation of educational services by the district.

Once the district receives the notification from DESE, the district has 30 days to appeal to the SBOE. The SBOE must hear the appeal within 60 days after receiving the appeal from the district. If the district chooses not to appeal, the SBOE must still vote to classify the district in distress. While DESE *identifies* districts in distress, only the SBOE may vote to *classify* the district in distress.

Most districts do not appeal the fiscal distress identification. Districts that DESE has identified as being in fiscal distress are prohibited from incurring additional debt without written approval from DESE.

In the 2022-23 school year, the Pine Bluff and Lee County school districts were in fiscal distress. Both districts will be discussed in further detail below in the Districts in State Authority section.

### Possible Sanctions and Corrective Actions

Once a district is classified in fiscal distress, a district has certain responsibilities. A district in fiscal distress must:

- File an improvement plan with DESE that includes specific ways to correct fiscal deficiencies
- Allow on-site technical evaluations and other assistance conducted by members of the DESE Fiscal Services and Support Unit
- Adhere to recommendations from DESE to improve staffing and fiscal policy practices
- Report the reason for fiscal distress to the newspaper
- Obtain written permission from DESE before incurring additional debt

After a district is classified in fiscal distress, DESE and the SBOE may take actions in the district, including:

- Removing and replacing the superintendent
- Suspending or removing the local school board
- Requiring fiscal training for the district staff or local board
- Monitoring the fiscal operations and accounts of the district
- Petitioning to the SBOE to annex, consolidate, or reconstitute the district
- Imposing additional reporting requirements on the district
- Authorizing an individual appointed to the school district to remove, replace, reassign, or suspend public school district personnel in accordance with state law
- Suspending on a temporary basis some or all of the powers and duties granted to the current public school district board of directors but allowing the board of directors to continue to operate under the direction and approval of the Commissioner (the SBOE defines the powers of the board of directors in this situation)
- Requiring reassignment of some or all of the staff of the district
- Requiring reorganization, closure, or dissolution of one or more of the district's schools
- Taking any other action allowed by law that is deemed necessary to assist a school district in removing the classification of fiscal distress

### Removal

To be removed from fiscal distress, a school district must demonstrate that all causes of fiscal distress have been corrected. In addition, the district must not have experienced any additional indicators of fiscal distress.

The SBOE must vote to remove a district from distress. If a school district is not removed from fiscal distress within five years, the SBOE is required to annex, consolidate, or reconstitute the district. However, if the district is unable to be removed from fiscal distress due to conditions beyond its control, the law allows the SBOE to grant additional time. Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-20-1908 does not specify what conditions qualify as “beyond the school district’s control.”

Districts returned to local control or removed from fiscal distress must comply with all monitoring and reporting requirements from DESE and the SBOE, cannot incur additional debt without written approval from DESE, and must use Arkansas Legislative Audit to conduct an annual audit. In addition, DESE must monitor the fiscal operations of the district for three years, provide support to the district, and may impose reporting requirements on the district.

If a district's board of directors has been removed, the Commissioner may return administration of the school district to the previous board of directors or a newly elected board of directors. DESE must first certify that the district has corrected all issues that led to the classification of fiscal distress and that the school district has not experienced any additional indicators of fiscal distress. The SBOE must also determine that the school district has corrected all issues that caused the classification of fiscal distress.

## Facilities Distress

Act 1426 of 2005 established the Academic Facilities Distress Program to provide the state with a mechanism to intervene when districts do not provide adequate academic facilities or comply with facilities rules. The Arkansas Division of Public School Academic Facilities and Transportation administers the facilities distress program. Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-21-813 requires random, unannounced on-site inspections of all academic facilities in the state, conducted by the Division. According to the Division, with the Division's new iPad technology, the maintenance staff will be able to visit every campus and building within a two-year time frame, if they are fully staffed.

### Early Indicators of Facilities Distress

State law requires the Division to notify superintendents when they have identified two or more indicators of facilities distress that, while nonmaterial, could place the district in facilities distress if not addressed.<sup>31</sup> Superintendents are also required to report to the Division if the superintendent is aware the school district has experienced two or more indicators of facilities distress in one school year that the superintendent deems to be nonmaterial, but that without intervention could place the district in facilities distress.

Within 30 days of the Division determining that a school district may be experiencing facilities distress at a nonmaterial level, the Division must provide notice to the superintendent and board of directors that describes the indicators and identifies support available from the Division to address the indicators. In addition, the board of directors must place a discussion of the indicators on its next regular meeting agenda.

### Identification and Classification

Under Ark. Code Ann. § 6-21-811(a)(1), the Commission for Arkansas Public School Academic Facilities and Transportation (Commission) "shall classify a public school or school district as being in academic facilities distress if the Division of Public School Academic Facilities and Transportation recommends and the commission concurs that the school or school districts has engaged in actions or inactions that results in any of the following:

- Material failure to properly maintain academic facilities;
- Material violation of local, state, or federal fire, health or safety code provisions or laws;
- Material violation of applicable building code provisions or law;
- Material failure to provide timely and accurate facilities master plans to the division;
- Material failure to comply with state law governing purchasing, bid requirements or school-construction related laws or rules in relation to academic facilities projects;
- Material default on any school district debt obligation; or

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<sup>31</sup> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-21-811(c).

- Material failure to plan and progress satisfactorily toward accomplishing the priorities established by the division and the approved school district’s facilities master plan”

DESE is required to provide written notice to the superintendent and president of the board of directors of a school district identified or containing a school identified by the division as being in facilities distress.

## Requirements and Removal

A district in facilities distress is required to submit a facilities improvement plan for Division approval within 30 days from the date of classification.<sup>32</sup> The plan must identify and provide a detailed timeframe to remedy all material failures that led to facilities distress.

The Division may provide on-site technical evaluation and assistance and make written and binding recommendations to the superintendent regarding the care and maintenance of school facilities.<sup>33</sup>

If a district or school has immediate needs for urgent repairs, renovations, or construction, it may apply for a loan from the Division<sup>34</sup> or other assistance, such as the Academic Facilities Partnership Program. If a loan is provided, it must be repaid from funds not required to provide an adequate education. In addition, a school or district in facilities distress may not incur a new debt obligation without permission from the Division.

Besides restriction on debt, the Division can impose other sanctions on schools or districts in facilities distress such as:

- Requiring a special election for a millage increase to support facilities construction or repair;
- Requiring the superintendent to step down and appoint a replacement;
- Suspending or removing local school board members;
- Assuming authority over a district in facilities distress;
- Prohibiting the district from spending money on any activity that is not part of providing an adequate education; or
- Petitioning the SBOE to consolidate, annex, reconstitute, or dissolve the district.

During this time, a student may transfer to another district or school that is not in facilities distress.<sup>35</sup>

To be removed from facilities distress, the Division must certify that the school or district has corrected all issues that caused it to be in facilities distress. Then, the Commission must approve the Division’s recommendation for removal. Schools or districts in facilities distress must correct their academic facility issues within five consecutive school years.<sup>36</sup> A school district that cannot be removed from facilities distress within five years must be consolidated, annexed, or reconstituted. However, the SBOE may grant more time if it determines that the school or district could not be removed from facilities distress “due to impossibility caused by external forces beyond the control of the public school or school district.”<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-21-811(d)(1).

<sup>33</sup> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-21-811(g).

<sup>34</sup> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-21-811(k)(1)(A).

<sup>35</sup> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-21-812(a).

<sup>36</sup> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-21-811(g)(11)(C).

<sup>37</sup> Ark. Code Ann. § 6-21-811(g)(11)(D).

## Districts in Facilities Distress

No individual schools have been placed in facilities distress, and, to date, only one school district has received that designation. Hermitage School District was put in facilities distress in 2008 due to building code and procurement law violations. After correction of the violations, Hermitage was removed from facilities distress in 2009.

The Division has a facilities distress indicator tracker. In the 2022-23 school year, 11 districts had issues placed on the indicator, with only one district having multiple indicators on the tracker. Eleven of the 13 indicators were remediated within the school year. Several of the indicators related to districts not notifying the Division as required before performing maintenance or construction.

## Districts under State Authority

In the 2022-23 school year, four districts were under state authority: Earle, Helena-West Helena, Lee County, and Pine Bluff.

### Earle

The Earle School District was classified in fiscal distress on October 12, 2017. The SBOE took over the district on November 6, 2017, appointing a new superintendent and suspending the school board (then-Commissioner Key asked the school board to continue to serve in the capacity of an advisory board). On May 9, 2019, the Earle School District was classified as being in need of Level 5—Intensive Support.

The Earle School District was removed from fiscal distress on June 1, 2023. The SBOE also voted to assume authority over the district due to the district being in Level 5—Intensive Support. The SBOE voted to appoint the members of the school district’s board of directors to a limited authority board that could, following training, make all the decisions of an elected board except selecting the superintendent.

### Helena-West Helena

Helena-West Helena was classified as being in need of Level 5—Intensive Services on July 14, 2022. The SBOE also voted to require the Commissioner of Education to provide support to the district and remove the powers and duties of the local board of directors to make all personnel decisions.

### Lee County

Lee County School District was originally placed under state authority on March 25, 2019, for violations of the Standards for Accreditation. The SBOE classified the distress in fiscal distress on May 9, 2019. The SBOE also classified the district as being in need of Level 5—Intensive Support on May 13, 2021.

### Pine Bluff

The Pine Bluff School District was classified in fiscal distress on September 13, 2018, and placed in state takeover. On November 8, 2018, the SBOE voted to classify the district as being in need of Level 5—Intensive Services. On September 15, 2023, the SBOE voted to remove the district from fiscal distress and Level 5 and place the District in Level 4—Directed Support. The SBOE also removed the limits on the Pine Bluff School District Board of Directors.



## LEARNS Act

The LEARNS Act requires each local school district board of directors to establish written performance targets in the district superintendent’s contract of employment. The targets shall include student achievement for the entire district and for any schools within the district that have received a “C”, “D”, or “F” under the letter grade system, and graduation rates for the entire district and for any schools district that have received a “C”, “D”, or “F” under the letter grade system.

The LEARNS Act also made changes to the requirements for student success plans beginning the 2023-24 school year. Each student’s success plan (or individualized education program, as relevant) must include the recommended sequence of courses for completion of a diploma pathway selected by the student. The plan must be flexible enough to allow the student to change his or her diploma pathway. Plans must be reviewed yearly until all required courses are completed.

The LEARNS Act created the Arkansas Children’s Education Freedom Account Program, allowing students attending participating private schools or utilizing a participating service provider to receive funds up to 90% of the previous year’s foundation funding amount. Participating schools and providers must test participating students each year using a state-approved assessment, unless the student has an exemption. DESE is required to collect and publish aggregate test results.

Finally, LEARNS created transformation contracts. Schools with a “D” or “F” letter grade and districts classified as being in Level 5—Intensive Support are eligible to contract with a partner to operate a public school district transformation campus with the governing body of an open-enrollment public charter or another entity approved by the SBOE. Schools operating under a transformation contract will receive an alternate letter grade for the first two years of the contract; in addition, while the school is receiving an alternate letter grade, the school cannot receive sanctions for failure to satisfy academic performance standards. DESE may make funding available for financial incentives to support transformation.

The Marvell-Elaine School District is the only district currently operating under a transformation contract. The district was placed in state takeover on July 7, 2023, for being classified as being in need of Level 5—Intensive Services. The SBOE voted to remove the superintendent and school board. The district began a transformation contract with Friendship Aspire, a charter management organization that will provide education services to the district, on August 1, 2023.

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## 2023 LEGISLATION

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### Implications of LEARNS Act

#### Transformation Campuses

The act states that a public school with a “D” or “F” school rating or a public school district classified as in need of Level 5 – Intensive support is eligible to partner with an open-enrollment public charter school or other approved entity to operate a public school district transformation campus. The act also prohibits the establishment of a maximum on school choice transfers into or from a public school unless the public school is required to do so according to an enforceable desegregation order or a public school district’s court-approved desegregation plan.

#### Arkansas Children’s Education Freedom Account Program

The act creates the Arkansas Children’s Education Freedom Account Program, which establishes a phased-in approach whereby qualifying students may attend a participating private school or a participating service provider. The act requires that funds allocated annually to participating student accounts be in an amount equal to ninety percent (90%) of the prior year’s foundation funding amount allocated per student.

##### Rules

The act requires the SBOE to promulgate rules to implement the Arkansas Children’s Educational Freedom Account Program, including on:

- The process for determining eligibility for students, schools, and service providers;
- The process for conducting account and program audits;
- The authority of the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education to deem a student ineligible to participate in the program and refer a case involving the misuse of account funds for investigation;
- The establishment or creation of a contract for the establishment of an online, anonymous fraud reporting service, including a telephone hotline;
- The requirement that participating service providers receiving more than \$100,000 in account funds have a surety bond;
- A mechanism for the refunding of payments from service providers back to an original account under certain circumstances;
- The requirements related to state procurement laws and procedures; and
- A means for preventing unreasonable inflation or fraud in tuition and fees.

##### Testing

Each participating school and service provider shall provide for each participating student to annually take a state board-approved assessment, except if the participating student has some form of exemption. The department shall develop a process for the collection and aggregate reporting of the assessment results, including the public dissemination of the results collected by participating schools and participating service providers.

## Other 2023 Legislation related to Accountability

### Act 425 – Boards of Directors – Academic Data or Performance

The act requires that a report or presentation regarding student academic performance be provided to a school district board of directors during each regular monthly meeting of the board of directors.

### Act 423 – School Performance Report Act – Students Counted Towards Drop-Out Count

The act specifies that students who pass a GED test and students in grades nine through twelve (9-12) who transfer from a public school to a home school, private school, or parochial school do not count towards a public school district’s dropout rate for purposes of the school performance report.

### Act 643 – Virtual Schools – Statewide Student Assessments

The act permits a public school that operates primarily as a virtual school to administer a statewide student assessment to a student enrolled in the public school in a virtual setting that best meets the educational needs of the student and requires the public school to meet certain requirements in order to administer a statewide student assessment in a virtual setting.

### Act 543 – Public Education Reorganization

The act prohibits the SBOE from administratively consolidating a school district that is on the consolidation list and that does not submit a petition to voluntarily consolidate if the school district is currently classified as in need of Level 5 – Intensive support and a public school student enrolled in the school district would have to ride a bus for more than forty (40) miles in order to arrive at and attend a receiving district. The act requires the state board to assume authority of such a school district and prohibits the state board from closing a public school or public school facility within and removing permanently the superintendent and assistant superintendent of such a school district. The act declares an emergency and is effective on and after April 11, 2023.

## APPENDIX A: REWARD SCHOOLS

District Name	School Name	Performance Award	Award Amount
ACADEMICS PLUS PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS	MAUMELLE CHARTER ELEMENTARY	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$58,200
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	APPLE GLEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$47,600
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	ARDIS ANN MIDDLE SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$59,300
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	BRIGHT FIELD MIDDLE SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$65,200
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	CENTRAL PARK AT MORNING STAR	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$54,200
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	EVENING STAR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$65,400

BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	J. WILLIAM FULBRIGHT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$66,200
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	LINCOLN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$63,900
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	SUGAR CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$43,700
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	THOMAS JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$43,100
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	WASHINGTON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$68,400
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	WILLOWBROOK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$60,100
CABOT SCHOOL DISTRICT	MOUNTAIN SPRINGS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$47,100
CONWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT	CAROLYN LEWIS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$54,700
CONWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT	WOODROW CUMMINS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$45,500
DANVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	S.C. TUCKER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$30,200
EMERSON-TAYLOR-BRADLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT	EMERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$15,800
EMERSON-TAYLOR-BRADLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT	TAYLOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$32,200
FAYETTEVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	MCNAIR MIDDLE SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$74,400
FAYETTEVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	ROOT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$46,800
FAYETTEVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	VANDERGRIFF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$60,200
FAYETTEVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	WOODLAND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$74,600
FORT SMITH SCHOOL DISTRICT	JOHN P. WOODS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$46,800
FORT SMITH SCHOOL DISTRICT	L. A. CHAFFIN MIDDLE SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$71,000
FOUNDERS CLASSICAL ACADEMIES OF ARKANSAS	FOUNDERS CLASSICAL ACADEMIES OF ARKANSAS BENTONVILLE	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$63,700
FOUNDERS CLASSICAL ACADEMIES OF ARKANSAS	FOUNDERS CLASSICAL ACADEMIES OF ARKANSAS ROGERS	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$51,200
GENOA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	GARY E. COBB MIDDLE SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$25,500
GENOA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	GENOA CENTRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$37,500

GREENBRIER SCHOOL DISTRICT	GREENBRIER WOOSTER ELEMENTARY	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$40,700
GREENWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT	WESTWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$74,500
HAAS HALL ACADEMY	HAAS HALL ACADEMY	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$41,600
HAAS HALL ACADEMY	HAAS HALL ACADEMY AT THE LANE	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$25,200
HAAS HALL ACADEMY	HAAS HALL ACADEMY JONES CENTER	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$15,300
HAAS HALL ACADEMY	HAAS HALL BENTONVILLE	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$39,800
HARRISBURG SCHOOL DISTRICT	WEINER ELEMENTARY	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$10,500
LISA ACADEMY	LISA ACADEMY ROGERS-BENTONVILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$3,900
LITTLE ROCK SCHOOL DISTRICT	DON ROBERTS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$100,400
LITTLE ROCK SCHOOL DISTRICT	FOREST PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$33,700
LITTLE ROCK SCHOOL DISTRICT	JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$41,100
POTTSVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	POTTSVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$56,500
PULASKI COUNTY SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	BAKER INTERDISTRICT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$35,800
PULASKI COUNTY SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	CHENAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$43,300
ROGERS SCHOOL DISTRICT	BELLVIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$39,500
ROGERS SCHOOL DISTRICT	EASTSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$45,900
ROGERS SCHOOL DISTRICT	GARFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$10,300
ROGERS SCHOOL DISTRICT	JANIE DARR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$41,600
RUSSELLVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	SEQUOYAH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$54,200
SPRINGDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT	BERNICE YOUNG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$47,700
SPRINGDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT	HUNT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$52,000
VILONIA SCHOOL DISTRICT	VILONIA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 5% PERFORMANCE	\$46,800

ACADEMICS PLUS PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS	MAUMELLE CHARTER MIDDLE SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$28,450
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	BENTONVILLE HIGH SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$163,800
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	COOPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$32,700
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	CREEKSIDE MIDDLE SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$34,050
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	ELM TREE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$28,000
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	OLD HIGH MIDDLE SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$24,450
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	RUTH BARKER MIDDLE SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$24,700
BRYANT SCHOOL DISTRICT	BETHEL MIDDLE SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$35,600
BRYANT SCHOOL DISTRICT	HURRICANE CREEK ELEMENTARY	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$22,150
BRYANT SCHOOL DISTRICT	SPRINGHILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$28,100
CABOT SCHOOL DISTRICT	EASTSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$27,100
CABOT SCHOOL DISTRICT	WARD CENTRAL ELEMENTARY	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$21,400
CONWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT	JULIA LEE MOORE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$19,550
DES ARC SCHOOL DISTRICT	DES ARC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$17,550
EL DORADO SCHOOL DISTRICT	HUGH GOODWIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$24,200
EUREKA SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT	EUREKA SPRINGS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$10,000
FARMINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT	JERRY "POP" WILLIAMS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$20,100
FAYETTEVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	BUTTERFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$26,000
FAYETTEVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	FAYETTEVILLE VIRTUAL ACADEMY A DISTRICT CONVERSION CHARTER SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$8,550
FAYETTEVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	HOLCOMB ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$31,250
FOUNDERS CLASSICAL ACADEMIES OF ARKANSAS	FOUNDERS CLASSICAL ACADEMIES OF ARKANSAS HIGH SCHOOL ROGERS	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$11,900

GENOA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	GENOA CENTRAL JUNIOR HIGH	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$13,200
GRAVETTE SCHOOL DISTRICT	GRAVETTE MIDDLE SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$23,750
GREENBRIER SCHOOL DISTRICT	GREENBRIER EASTSIDE ELEMENTARY	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$21,900
GREENBRIER SCHOOL DISTRICT	GREENBRIER MIDDLE SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$29,650
GREENBRIER SCHOOL DISTRICT	GREENBRIER SPRINGHILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$22,400
GREENWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT	EAST POINTE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$36,750
GREENWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT	GREENWOOD JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$31,450
HARRISON SCHOOL DISTRICT	HARRISON MIDDLE SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$41,600
HOT SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT	PARK MAGNET AN IB PYP WORLD CLASS SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$19,800
LISA ACADEMY	LISA ACADEMY ROGERS-BENTONVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$13,750
MOUNTAIN VIEW SCHOOL DISTRICT	RURAL SPECIAL HIGH SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$4,200
NORTH LITTLE ROCK SCHOOL DISTRICT	CRESTWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$24,750
OZARK SCHOOL DISTRICT	ELGIN B MILTON PRIMARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$26,500
POTTSVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	POTTSVILLE MIDDLE GRADE	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$20,300
ROGERS SCHOOL DISTRICT	FAIRVIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$29,500
ROGERS SCHOOL DISTRICT	FRANK TILLERY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$24,750
RUSSELLVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	CENTER VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$18,400
SEARCY SCHOOL DISTRICT	SOUTHWEST MIDDLE SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$45,400
SEARCY SCHOOL DISTRICT	WESTSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$21,950
SPRINGDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT	HELLSTERN MIDDLE SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$39,450
SPRINGDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT	JOHN TYSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$25,650

SPRINGDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT	WILLIS SHAW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$30,200
VALLEY SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT	VALLEY SPRINGS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$16,150
VALLEY SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT	VALLEY SPRINGS MIDDLE SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$11,600
VALLEY VIEW SCHOOL DISTRICT	VALLEY VIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$33,150
VALLEY VIEW SCHOOL DISTRICT	VALLEY VIEW INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$44,750
VALLEY VIEW SCHOOL DISTRICT	VALLEY VIEW JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$35,400
VAN BUREN SCHOOL DISTRICT	PARKVIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$20,650
VILONIA SCHOOL DISTRICT	VILONIA MIDDLE SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$23,750
VILONIA SCHOOL DISTRICT	VILONIA PRIMARY SCHOOL	TOP 6%-10% PERFORMANCE	\$17,250

<b>District Name</b>	<b>School Name</b>	<b>Growth Award</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
ACADEMICS PLUS PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS	MAUMELLE CHARTER ELEMENTARY	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$58,200
ALMA SCHOOL DISTRICT	ALMA HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$98,200
BENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT	BENTON HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$131,500
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	APPLE GLEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$47,600
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	LINCOLN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$63,900
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	R.E. BAKER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$41,000
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	WASHINGTON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$68,400
BOONEVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	BOONEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$23,700
CABOT SCHOOL DISTRICT	MOUNTAIN SPRINGS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$47,100
CABOT SCHOOL DISTRICT	STAGECOACH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$48,200
CABOT SCHOOL DISTRICT	WARD CENTRAL ELEMENTARY	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$42,800
CABOT SCHOOL DISTRICT	WESTSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$34,100



CAVE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT	CAVE CITY HIGH CAREER & COLLEGIATE PREPARATORY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$37,000
CONCORD SCHOOL DISTRICT	CONCORD HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$18,600
CONWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT	CAROLYN LEWIS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$54,700
CORNING SCHOOL DISTRICT	CORNING HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$22,900
DANVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	DANVILLE HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$24,300
DANVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	S.C. TUCKER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$30,200
DARDANELLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	DARDANELLE HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$62,300
EAST END SCHOOL DISTRICT	BIGELOW HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$30,400
EMERSON-TAYLOR-BRADLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT	EMERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$15,800
FARMINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT	FARMINGTON HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$63,500
FAYETTEVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	ROOT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$46,800
FAYETTEVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$30,800
GENOA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	GENOA CENTRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$37,500
GREEN FOREST SCHOOL DISTRICT	GREEN FOREST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$43,200
HAAS HALL ACADEMY	HAAS HALL ACADEMY	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$41,600
HAAS HALL ACADEMY	HAAS HALL ACADEMY AT THE LANE	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$25,200
HAAS HALL ACADEMY	HAAS HALL ACADEMY JONES CENTER	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$15,300
HAAS HALL ACADEMY	HAAS HALL BENTONVILLE	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$39,800
HECTOR SCHOOL DISTRICT	HECTOR HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$30,500
HERMITAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT	HERMITAGE HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$20,800
JACKSON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT	TUCKERMAN HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$29,300
JASPER SCHOOL DISTRICT	JASPER HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$20,500
JASPER SCHOOL DISTRICT	OARK HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$6,800
LITTLE ROCK SCHOOL DISTRICT	DON ROBERTS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$100,400
MAYNARD SCHOOL DISTRICT	MAYNARD HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$23,800
MOUNTAIN VIEW SCHOOL DISTRICT	RURAL SPECIAL HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$8,400
PANGBURN SCHOOL DISTRICT	PANGBURN HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$35,100
POTTSVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	POTTSVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$56,500
POTTSVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	POTTSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$37,300
PULASKI COUNTY SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	CHENAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$43,300

RUSSELLVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	CENTER VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$36,800
SOUTHSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT (INDEPENDENCE)	SOUTHSIDE CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$43,700
SPRINGDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT	HUNT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$52,000
SPRINGDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT	JOHN TYSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$51,300
STAR CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT	STAR CITY HIGH SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$44,000
VAN BUREN SCHOOL DISTRICT	PARKVIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$41,300
VILONIA SCHOOL DISTRICT	VILONIA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$46,800
VILONIA SCHOOL DISTRICT	VILONIA PRIMARY SCHOOL	Top 5% Growth/Grad	\$34,500
ARMOREL SCHOOL DISTRICT	ARMOREL HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$9,600
AUGUSTA SCHOOL DISTRICT	AUGUSTA HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$9,200
BATESVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	BATESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL CHARTER	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$48,750
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	BENTONVILLE WEST HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$119,700
BENTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	WILLOWBROOK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$30,050
BRYANT SCHOOL DISTRICT	COLLEGEVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$24,150
BRYANT SCHOOL DISTRICT	HILL FARM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$29,800
CLARENDON SCHOOL DISTRICT	CLARENDON HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$10,350
CLEVELAND COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT	RISON HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$17,800
CONWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT	WOODROW CUMMINS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$22,750
DECATUR SCHOOL DISTRICT	DECATUR HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$8,400
ELKINS SCHOOL DISTRICT	ELKINS HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$20,700
ESTEM PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL	ESTEM HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$26,450
FAYETTEVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	ASBELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$17,350
FAYETTEVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	BUTTERFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$26,000
FAYETTEVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	FAYETTEVILLE VIRTUAL ACADEMY A DISTRICT CONVERSION CHARTER SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$8,550

FAYETTEVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	LEVERETT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$13,800
FORT SMITH SCHOOL DISTRICT	JOHN P. WOODS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$23,400
FOUNDERS CLASSICAL ACADEMIES OF ARKANSAS	FOUNDERS CLASSICAL ACADEMIES OF ARKANSAS BENTONVILLE	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$31,850
FOUNDERS CLASSICAL ACADEMIES OF ARKANSAS	FOUNDERS CLASSICAL ACADEMIES OF ARKANSAS HIGH SCHOOL ROGERS	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$11,900
GREENLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT	GREENLAND HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$12,550
GREENWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT	GREENWOOD HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$43,450
HARMONY GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT (SALINE)	HARMONY GROVE HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$14,900
HIGHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT	HIGHLAND HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$26,050
HUNTSVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	ST. PAUL HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$5,450
IZARD COUNTY CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT	IZARD COUNTY CONSOLIDATED HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$9,650
JASPER SCHOOL DISTRICT	KINGSTON HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$5,350
LAKE HAMILTON SCHOOL DISTRICT	LAKE HAMILTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$28,850
LAKE HAMILTON SCHOOL DISTRICT	LAKE HAMILTON PRIMARY SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$28,000
LAKESIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT (CHICOT)	LAKESIDE HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$13,200
LAWRENCE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT	WALNUT RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$22,800
LISA ACADEMY	LISA ACADEMY ROGERS-BENTONVILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$1,950
LITTLE ROCK SCHOOL DISTRICT	JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$20,550
MALVERN SCHOOL DISTRICT	MALVERN HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$28,600
MELBOURNE SCHOOL DISTRICT	MELBOURNE HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$19,400
POYEN SCHOOL DISTRICT	POYEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$12,250
POYEN SCHOOL DISTRICT	POYEN HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$12,000

PULASKI COUNTY SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	PINE FOREST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$15,900
QUITMAN SCHOOL DISTRICT	QUITMAN HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$12,350
ROGERS SCHOOL DISTRICT	BELLVIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$19,750
ROGERS SCHOOL DISTRICT	EASTSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$22,950
ROGERS SCHOOL DISTRICT	FRANK TILLERY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$24,750
RUSSELLVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	LONDON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$8,750
SCRANTON SCHOOL DISTRICT	SCRANTON HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$9,950
SPRINGDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT	MONITOR ELEMENTARY	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$30,250
VALLEY SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT	VALLEY SPRINGS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$16,150
VILONIA SCHOOL DISTRICT	VILONIA MIDDLE SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$23,750
WALDRON SCHOOL DISTRICT	WALDRON HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$20,500
WEST FORK SCHOOL DISTRICT	WEST FORK HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$14,300
WEST SIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT (CLEBURNE)	WEST SIDE HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$10,900
WHITE COUNTY CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	WHITE COUNTY CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL	Top 6%-10% Growth/Grad	\$17,000

## APPENDIX B: SCHOOLS ON THE MOVE

In 2023, DESE recognized six schools as Schools on the Move Toward Excellence: Pottsville Elementary Schools (Pottsville School District), Mountain Springs Elementary School (Cabot School District), Rural Special High School (Mountain View School District), Vilonia Primary School (Vilonia School District), Star City High School (Star City School District), and Flippin Elementary School (Flippin School District). Flippin Elementary did not meet the growth requirement for being a School on the Move, but increased its Public School Rating by two letter grades.

The Schools on the Move report also includes information on schools' letter grades and ESSA scores and increases from 2022 to 2023.

One hundred forty seven schools increased one letter grade from 2022 to 2023. Five hundred eighteen schools improved their ESSA Index Score from 2022 to 2023.

Five hundred twenty four schools improved their Weighted Achievement Score from 2022 to 2023.

Five hundred forty schools had a Value Added Growth Score of 80 points or more. Schools that report a growth score of 80 are schools where students, on average, are growing in their learning as expected.

## APPENDIX C: 2023 IDEA PART B RESULTS AND COMPLIANCE MATRICES

2023 Part B Results Matrix		
	Performance	Score
<b>Reading Assessment Elements (Children with Disabilities)</b>		
<b>Percentage of 4th Grade Participating in Regular Statewide Assessments</b>	93%	2
<b>Percentage of 8th Grade Participating in Regular Statewide Assessments</b>	92%	2
<b>Percentage of 4th Grade Scoring at Basic or Above on the National Assessment of Educational Progress</b>	15%	0
<b>Percentage of 4th Grade Included in Testing on the National Assessment of Educational Progress</b>	91%	1
<b>Percentage of 8th Grade Scoring at Basic or Above on the National Assessment of Educational Progress</b>	21%	0
<b>Percentage of 8th Grade Included in Testing on the National Assessment of Educational Progress</b>	91%	1
<b>Math Assessment Elements (Children with Disabilities)</b>		
<b>Percentage of 4th Grade Participating in Regular Statewide Assessments</b>	93%	2
<b>Percentage of 8th Grade Participating in Regular Statewide Assessments</b>	92%	2
<b>Percentage of 4th Grade Scoring at Basic or Above on the National Assessment of Educational Progress</b>	29%	0
<b>Percentage of 4th Grade Included in Testing on the National Assessment of Educational Progress</b>	95%	1
<b>Percentage of 8th Grade Scoring at Basic or Above on the National Assessment of Educational Progress</b>	16%	0
<b>Percentage of 8th Grade Included in Testing on the National Assessment of Educational Progress</b>	94%	1
<b>Exiting Data Elements</b>		
<b>Percentage of who Dropped Out</b>	8%	2
<b>Percentage of who Graduated with a Regular High School Diploma</b>	89%	2

Source: U.S. DOE.<sup>38</sup> Note: Based on data from Federal Fiscal Year 2022.

<sup>38</sup> U.S. Department of Education. "2023 SPP/APR Submission Part B – Arkansas; 2023 Part B - Arkansas." Retrieved at <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/state/arkansas/>

Part B Compliance Matrix			
Part B Compliance Indicator	Performance	Full Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2020	Score
Indicator 4B: Significant discrepancy, by race and ethnicity, in the rate of suspension and expulsion, and policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with specified requirements.	0%	N/A	2
Indicator 9: Disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services due to inappropriate identification.	0%	N/A	2
Indicator 10: Disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories due to inappropriate identification.	0%	N/A	2
Indicator 11: Timely initial evaluation	99.37%	Yes	2
Indicator 12: IEP developed and implemented by third birthday	100%	N/A	2
Indicator 13: Secondary transition (Percent of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, transition services, and annual IEP goals related to the student's transition services needs.	78.22%	Yes	1
Timely and Accurate State-Reported Data	100%		2
Timely State Complaint Decisions	100%		2
Timely Due Process Hearing Decisions	100%		2
Longstanding Noncompliance			2
Special Conditions	None		
Uncorrected identified noncompliance	None		

Source: U.S. DOE.<sup>39</sup> Note: Based on data from Federal Fiscal Year 2022.

<sup>39</sup> U.S. Department of Education. "2023 SPP/APR Submission Part B – Arkansas; 2023 Part B - Arkansas." Retrieved at <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/state/arkansas/>