

Proposed MOU Outline for LRSD Return to Local Control

I. Introduction & History

Student success requires explicit investment in collaborative planning and implementation through mutual respect, trust, and professionalism. This Memorandum of Understanding holds the parties accountable to providing leadership, support, and service to the Little Rock School District and Little Rock community so that every student graduates prepared for college, career, and community engagement.

It is the State's responsibility to provide a general, suitable, and efficient system of free public schools to the children of the state as required by the Arkansas Constitution, Article 14, § 1. It is also the State's responsibility to provide all public school children with a substantially equal opportunity for an adequate education to meet the State's duty set forth by the Arkansas Supreme Court in *Lake View School District No. 25 v. Huckabee*, 351 Ark. 31 (2002).

II. Definitions

- “CAB” means the Community Advisory Board
- “Commissioner” means the Commissioner of Education
- “CSPA” means Community School Partnership Alliance
- “DESE” means the Arkansas Department of Education, Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
- “LRSD Local Board” means the locally elected Little Rock School District school board
- “LRSD” means Little Rock School District

III. Community Schools

- DESE, LRSD, and the Mayor of Little Rock will establish a Community Schools Model to provide support to schools.
 - The DESE, LRSD, and the Mayor of Little Rock's office will decide which LRSD schools will receive this support.
- A community school is a public school that is the hub of its neighborhood, uniting facilities, educators, and community partners to provide all students with top-quality academics, enrichment, health and social services, and opportunities to succeed in school and in life.
- Community schools will have a Community School Partnership Alliance (CSPA), comprised of community members, school staff, and parents.
 - Each CSPA will have one CAB member, one representative from the DESE, and one representative from the City of Little Rock, each appointed by their respective organizations.
- The CSPA will work actively to identify and confront policies, practices, and school cultures that keep students from diverse backgrounds from achieving equitable outcomes. It will also

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work to utilize the assets of the entire community and to invest in a whole-child approach to education.

- The CSPA will be responsible for determining the mission, vision, and strategic planning for its school.
- The CSPA will work with the District's Personnel Policy Committees (PPCs) to establish personnel policies, including salary schedules and teacher incentives, for its school.
 - These personnel policies may differ from the District's policies.
 - Each school must meet the minimum teacher salary.
 - The CSPA may approve personnel policies, contingent on the approval from the CAB, with a right of appeal to the Commissioner if the CAB denies the request.
- The CSPA will make recommendations to the CAB on student policies, including student discipline policies.
 - The CSPA may elect to have differing student policies from the District. The CSPA will make these recommendations to the CAB, with a right of appeal to the Commissioner if the CAB denies the request.
- The CSPA will make recommendations to the CAB on its school calendar and school day.
 - The CSPA may elect to have a different school calendar or school day than the rest of the District.
 - The CSPA will make recommendations to the CAB, with a right of appeal by the CSPA to the Commissioner.
- The CSPA will decide how success in its school will be measured, in addition to the ESSA School Index and Letter Grade.
- Once the CSPA's recommendations are approved and the CSPA determines additional measures of success, they should be incorporated into the school-level improvement plan required by DESE Rules Governing the Arkansas Educational Support and Accountability Act (AESAA) and Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-2901 et seq.
- These schools will receive priority staffing.
- Each CSPA will give input to LRSD administration concerning staffing needs for its school.

IV. Support from the City of Little Rock

V. Level 5 – Intensive Support

- DESE will provide quarterly reports to the State Board regarding the progress of the district toward meeting the identified criteria for exiting Level 5 – Intensive Support.
 - DESE will work with LRSD to establish new criteria for exiting Level 5 – Intensive Support.
 - The quarterly report will also include progress of each school with a CSPAs toward meeting goals established in the school-level improvement plan.
 - DESE will include the measures identified in Section VI.
 - The State Board will review the progress of the district toward improving the issues that caused classification and implementation of the district improvement/exit plan.

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- The State Board may approve that the exit criteria has been met and remove the district from Level 5 – Intensive support and place the district in Level 4 – Directed support for one (1) year with monitoring by the Division and quarterly reporting to the State Board.
- While the District receives Level 5 – Intensive support, there will be no recognition of a sole bargaining agent for LRSD teachers.
- While the District receives Level 5 – Intensive support, the State Board of Education must approve all employment decisions related to the district’s superintendent.
- The Teacher Fair Dismissal Act and the Public School Employee Fair Hearing Act shall remain in place. The LRSD will fairly and effectively implement the Teacher Excellence and Support System (TESS) and the Leader Excellence and Development System (LEADS).
- So long as the District receives Level 5 – Intensive support, the State Board of Education may exercise its authority as it would with any other District receiving Level 5 -- Intensive support, subject to the representations made in this agreement.
- While the District receives Level 5 – Intensive support, the LRSD and DESE will work collaboratively to establish the district budget and the budget for schools with CSPAs.
 - The budget will be approved by the LRSD Local Board, with a right of appeal to the Commissioner if there are disputes.

VI. Measuring Success

- In addition to the ESSA School Index and the Letter Grade, school success may be measured by DESE, including consideration of, but not limited to, the following:
 - Student enrollment
 - Workforce stability
 - Teacher attendance
 - Student Attendance
 - NWEA – Map for Growth data
 - Qualitative analysis and evaluation of the community school model

VII. Transition to LRSD Local Board

- The LRSD Local Board will be locally elected in November 2020.
 - Until that time, the Community Advisory Board will remain in place.
 - Once the LRSD Local Board is elected and seated, all duties of the CAB, as outlined in this MOU, will transfer and become the responsibility of the LRSD Local Board.
- The LRSD Local Board will consist of 9 elected members from 9 zones.

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