



Arkansas Department of Education

Johnny Key, Commissioner

Transforming Arkansas to lead the nation in student-focused education

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ADE Announces Opportunities for Stakeholder Engagement Regarding the Arkansas Accountability System

LITTLE ROCK — The Arkansas Department of Education today announced opportunities for stakeholder engagement regarding the Arkansas Accountability System.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), signed into law Dec. 10, 2015, reauthorizes the 50-year-old Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). ESSA replaces the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and gives states and districts more authority to develop their own accountability system.

For more than a year, ADE has collaborated with stakeholders to develop a strategic vision for excellence in education in Arkansas. In order to transform Arkansas to lead the nation in student-focused education, a comprehensive accountability system must be developed in order to measure whether students and schools are meeting educational expectations.

“Arkansas is leading the nation in computer science education, and we can provide the same leadership role in education as a whole by providing a more student-focused education starting with every child in Arkansas,” Gov. Asa Hutchinson said. “Our Department of Education is leading the way by creating a state plan and accountability system under the new Every Student Succeeds Act. ADE, under Commissioner Key’s leadership, is working to create a transparent process that engages students, educators, parents and other stakeholders from across the state. Together we can create a plan that will not only elevate the level of education in Arkansas but will cement our state as a national leader on this critical issue for generations to come.”

“Adequacy is not enough,” ADE Commissioner Johnny Key said. “We are striving for excellence in education; however, we cannot achieve that vision on our own. It is essential that our partners, including students, parents, teachers, administrators and communities around the state, be involved in this process. I look forward to visiting with these important stakeholders and obtaining their input and guidance as we move Arkansas’ education system toward excellence.”

ADE is offering numerous feedback opportunities. In collaboration with education service cooperatives, STEM Centers and Education Renewal Zones around the state, ADE will begin a listening tour in September. Parents, students, educators, businesses and the public are invited to attend the meetings and provide input and feedback. A list of the meetings, including dates and times, are available on the ESSA page on the ADE website: <http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/public-school-accountability/every-student-succeeds-act-essa>.

In addition to the listening tour, ADE is asking for additional feedback via online surveys. Anyone interested in staying informed can sign up to receive newsletters, press releases and ESSA updates. Links to both, as well as to the overall ESSA timeline, are located on the ESSA webpage.

Because community input is essential to the development of the Arkansas Accountability System, ADE has formed the ESSA Steering Committee. Comprised of parent, educator and community stakeholders, the committee will meet monthly beginning Aug. 31 to obtain additional input and provide guidance on the development of the Arkansas Accountability System. To learn more about committee members and meeting dates, visit the ESSA webpage.

The video from today's press conference will be available this afternoon on the ESSA webpage.

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