

Arkansas Education Legislation Review



July 1, 2025



Arkansas Department of Education

Four Capitol Mall • Little Rock, Arkansas • 72201-1030 • (501) 682-4475 • Fax (501) 682-1079

Sarah Huckabee Sanders
Governor

Jacob Oliva
Secretary

Dear Educators:

The 2025 legislative session has come to a close. From the passage of Governor Sanders' ACCESS legislation to landmark legislation regarding cellphones in classrooms, the session proved to be another historic session for education in Arkansas.

To help you navigate the new legislation and better understand the impact of new laws on learning, the department has created this legislative guide. The document includes a summary of each law that was passed that impacts public schools and higher education, as well as important information regarding implementation timelines and whether rules are required.

As we look to the future, we embrace the opportunity to collaborate with you to identify the next steps regarding implementation. We appreciate your expertise and efforts to make learning exceptional in Arkansas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Oliva", is written over the word "Sincerely,".

Jacob Oliva
Secretary of Education



Acts Concerning Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education

**(Certain Acts apply to both secondary education
and higher education; accordingly, such Acts may
be referenced in both sections of this document.)**

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY LEGISLATION QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Act Number	Bill Number	Topic	Requires review of local policy and/or school board action	Requires change to district documentation	Requires additional information to be disseminated to parents	Requires information to be posted on district website	Requires information to be submitted to state	Related to funding	Related to student instruction or advising	Requires State Board of Education action	Rules	Other
53	HB1236	Employment	X	X								X
116	SB3	Prohibit Discrimination	X	X		X					X	
118	HB1199	Legal Transfers	X	X							X	
119	HB1215	Locker Room Supervision	X		X						X	
120	SB89	Website Posting	X			X					X	X
121	HB1074	Property Tax Relief										X
122	SB142	Bell to Bell, No Cell	X	X	X	X	X				X	
123	SB59	Free Breakfast						X			X	X
134	HB1060	Instruction							X	X	X	
135	HB1189	Novice Teacher Mentoring							X			
143	SB134	Health Commission Meetings									X	X
159	HB1071	Publicity Rights Protection Act										X
195	SB206	Right to Read Act						X			X	
197	SB228	Background Checks									X	X

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY LEGISLATION QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Act Number	Bill Number	Topic	Requires review of local policy and/or school board action	Requires change to district documentation	Requires additional information to be disseminated to parents	Requires information to be posted on district website	Requires information to be submitted to state	Related to funding	Related to student instruction or advising	Requires State Board of Education action	Rules	Other
229	HB1117	Firearm Safety			X				X	X	X	
234	SB150	Life and Health Insurance						X				
245	HB1166	Epinephrine Use	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
247	SB226	Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act					X	X				
264	SB292	Elections				X						
303	HB1477	Arkansas Teacher of the Year									X	X
304	HB1496	Licensure							X		X	
329	SB200	Tax Exemption						X				
340/ 341	SB246/ HB1512	ACCESS	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
352	HB1398	Cardiac Emergency Response Plan	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	
353	HB1451	Scholarship						X	X		X	X
355	HB1689	Military Recruiting	X		X		X					
399	SB135	Elections	X									
400	SB223	Religious Rights	X		X							X

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY LEGISLATION QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Act Number	Bill Number	Topic	Requires review of local policy and/or school board action	Requires change to district documentation	Requires additional information to be disseminated to parents	Requires information to be posted on district website	Requires information to be submitted to state	Related to funding	Related to student instruction or advising	Requires State Board of Education action	Rules	Other
401	SB413	District Board of Directors	X									
405	SB353	Elections										X
472	SB391	Robotics Competition Grant						X			X	
474	HB1598	School Rating System									X	X
475	HB1633	Homeschool Students and Interscholastic Activities	X		X						X	X
476	HB1640	Ethics	X	X			X				X	
478	HB1705	Social Studies Standards							X		X	
501	HB1545	Military Child School Transitions Act				X					X	X
502	HB1571	Adult Diploma Program Act									X	X
503	HB1724	Elections	X									
504	HB1733	Arkansas Better Chance Program									X	X
505	SB227	Freedom of Information Act	X									
560/779	HB1821	Insurance					X	X			X	X

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY LEGISLATION QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Act Number	Bill Number	Topic	Requires review of local policy and/or school board action	Requires change to district documentation	Requires additional information to be disseminated to parents	Requires information to be posted on district website	Requires information to be submitted to state	Related to funding	Related to student instruction or advising	Requires State Board of Education action	Rules	Other
563	SB167	School Choice	X								X	
565	SB1062	Teacher and Student Protection Act	X									
573	SB433	National Motto and Ten Commandments	X	X								
587	SB148	Teacher Retirement System						X				
631	HB1543	Workforce Experience Opportunities Act										X
644	SB303	Private School Students and Interscholastic Activities						X				
645	SB467	Concussion Education	X									
646	SB470	Assessments		X	X							X
647	SB515	History Instruction							X	X		
648	SB522	School for Math, Sciences, and the Arts						X				
649	SB572	Public School Access and Transparency Act	X						X			
669	SB449	Nicotine Products										X
685	HB1799	Child Maltreatment Act										X
695	SB390	Apprenticeship Agency Act						X			X	

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY LEGISLATION QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Act Number	Bill Number	Topic	Requires review of local policy and/or school board action	Requires change to district documentation	Requires additional information to be disseminated to parents	Requires information to be posted on district website	Requires information to be submitted to state	Related to funding	Related to student instruction or advising	Requires State Board of Education action	Rules	Other
721	SB352	Prohibit Antisemitism	X	X			X					X
722	SB425	Transportation						X				
724	SB183	Assessments	X	X	X						X	X
725	SB402	Employee Organizations and Professional Associations										X
726	SB484	Board Vacancies										X
728	SB547	Homeschool Students and Interscholastic Activities										X
729	SB559	Military Child School Transitions							X		X	X
730	SB604	Course Choice Program	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
732/913	SB624/ HB1945	School Choice	X			X	X				X	
756	SB508	Stipend Payment										X
794	HB1986	Excused Absences		X	X						X	X
795	HB1874	Funding						X				
796	HB1810	School for the Deaf and Blind									X	X

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY LEGISLATION QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Act Number	Bill Number	Topic	Requires review of local policy and/or school board action	Requires change to district documentation	Requires additional information to be disseminated to parents	Requires information to be posted on district website	Requires information to be submitted to state	Related to funding	Related to student instruction or advising	Requires State Board of Education action	Rules	Other
800	HB1672	District of Innovation Program									X	X
801	HB1580	Diabetes	X	X	X							
803	HB1756	Community Service Diploma		X	X	X	X		X			
804	HB1793	Positive Behavioral Supports	X	X								X
805	HB1805	Bullying	X	X	X	X						X
807	HB1938	District Strategic Plans	X			X	X		X		X	
808	HB1939	Teacher Incentive and Merit Pay									X	X
809	HB1941	Boards and Commissions									X	X
865	HB1817	Anaphylaxis Policy	X	X	X						X	X
878	HB1732	Tax Benefits for Teachers										X
902	SB90	Public Comment	X									
903	SB640	State Library Board	X			X					X	
904	HB1017	Maternity Leave						X			X	X
905	HB1719	Maternity Leave					X	X	X		X	
908	HB1866	Audio Recording Devices in Locker Rooms	X		X	X		X			X	

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY LEGISLATION QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Act Number	Bill Number	Topic	Requires review of local policy and/or school board action	Requires change to district documentation	Requires additional information to be disseminate to parents	Requires information to be posted on district website	Requires information to be submitted to state	Related to funding	Related to student instruction or advising	Requires State Board of Education action	Rules	Other
909	HB1312	Funding										X
910	HB1484	Course Credit Recovery Program	X	X	X				X			
911	HB1903	Alternative Learning Environments	X						X			
912	HB1933	Elections										X
914	HB1966	Local School Establishment									X	X
915	SB450	Instruction		X	X				X	X		
916	HB1642	School Performance Report Act										X
917	HB1646	Library Media	X		X		X		X		X	
918	HB1812	Attendance and GED	X									X
919	SB619	Isolated School Districts	X				X					X
920	SB625	Educational Freedom Account Program									X	X
938	HB1365	Removing Quotas										X



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 53

AN ACT TO ALLOW A PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEE TO BE RELEASED FROM HIS OR HER CONTRACT BY A CERTAIN DATE UPON HIS OR HER WRITTEN REQUEST; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1236
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative J. Carr
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Davis
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	February 13, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-17-311
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act allows school employees of public school districts or open-enrollment public charter schools to cancel a signed contract for the upcoming school year if the individual submits a signed written request to the superintendent or director of a public school district or an open-enrollment public charter school, prior to the end of business on May 15 each year.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 116

AN ACT TO PROHIBIT DISCRIMINATION OR PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT BY THE STATE OF ARKANSAS AND OTHER PUBLIC ENTITIES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 3
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Sullivan
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Bentley
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 3-4-223, 6-10-111, 6-15-202(f)(1), 6-17-1901 – 6-17-1903, 6-60-703(b)(3), 6-61-121 – 6-61-123, 6-82-1501 – 6-82-1506, 6-123-338, 21-3-101, 22-9-203, 35-36-103
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act removes or revises various provisions of state law with the purpose of prohibiting discrimination by public entities on the basis of sex, race, color, ethnicity, or national origin. With respect to education, the Act makes several changes including the repeal of teacher and administrator minority recruitment and retention plans as well as higher education minority retention programs. It also repeals affirmative action programs at institutions of higher education. The Act renames the Equity Assistance Center to the Equality Assistance Center, also known as the Compliance Assistance Center, and clarifies that the center's mission is to assist schools in ensuring the schools comply with their desegregation and nondiscrimination responsibilities. The Act further prohibits preferential treatment or discriminating against a person based on their race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in matters of state employment, education, or state procurement.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 118

AN ACT TO REPEAL THE STATUTE CONCERNING THE PROHIBITION
AGAINST A SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS GRANTING
A LEGAL TRANSFER UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS;
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1199
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Barker
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Bryant
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-18-317
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act removes a procedural requirement that all school board members sign a form certifying that an approved legal transfer of a student does not violate a desegregation order. School districts are still obligated to deny a transfer that would violate a desegregation order, but a lawful transfer will not be delayed due to the absence of the form.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 119

AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE A COACH OR ATHLETICS PERSONNEL MEMBER OF THE OPPOSITE SEX TO ADDRESS, SUPERVISE, OR TREAT STUDENT ATHLETES IN A MULTIPLE OCCUPANCY RESTROOM OR CHANGING AREA UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1215
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Bentley
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Bryant
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-21-120
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act updates the law restricting access to bathrooms and changing rooms in public schools to allow a coach or athletics personnel of the opposite sex to enter a bathroom or changing area a reasonable time before, during, or immediately after an organized athletic activity that is sponsored by or associated with the school so long as no person is in a state of undress and another adult of the same sex as the student athletes is present. The entry is authorized for the purposes of addressing, supervising, or treating student athletes.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 120

AN ACT TO AMEND THE INFORMATION THAT A SCHOOL DISTRICT SHALL PROVIDE ELECTRONICALLY WITH RESPECT TO ITS SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 89
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator English
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Brooks
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-11-129(a)(1)
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act amends the requirements for website posting following school district board meetings. Minutes must be posted no later than twenty-four (24) hours following the approval of the minutes. This Act also requires the agenda for an upcoming regular or special meeting to be posted on the website twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting. Further, all school board members must have the following information posted on a school district's website: name, address, position, zone, and term of office.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 121

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE FUNDS USED FOR PROVIDING PROPERTY TAX RELIEF; TO AMEND THE PROPERTY TAX RELIEF TRUST FUND; TO REQUIRE A HIGHER VOTE THRESHOLD FOR USING MONEYS IN THE PROPERTY TAX RELIEF TRUST FUND FOR PURPOSES OTHER THAN PROPERTY TAX RELIEF; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1074
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Ray
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Crowell
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 19-5-1103(b), 26-26-310
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act increases the number of votes necessary for the General Assembly to use the Property Tax Relief Trust Fund for purposes other than property tax relief from a simple majority to a three-fourths vote of both houses. The purpose of this fund is to offset the impact of the homestead tax credit on local property tax revenue, ensuring public schools receive full funding from the millage rate that has been adopted.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 122

AN ACT TO CREATE THE BELL TO BELL, NO CELL ACT; TO AMEND THE REQUIREMENTS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICIES WITH REGARD TO STUDENT USE OF PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 142
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senators Dees, Hester, Boyd, Davis, English, Flippo, Gilmore, Hammer, Irvin, B. Johnson, M. Johnson, McKee, Murdock, Petty, Stone
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Eubanks, Evans, N. Burkes, R. Burkes, Crawford, Duke, Gramlich, Hall, Lundstrum, McAlindon, McKenzie, Puryear, S. Richardson, Torres, Underwood
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	Beginning with the 2025-2026 School Year
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-18-515
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act prohibits the use of personal electronic devices, including phones, during the school day and provides limited exceptions including use in an emergency, at a special school event, or when necessary under an individualized education program (IEP) or 504 plan. The law does not prohibit the use of personal electronic devices before the time students are required to be at school and after the time students are dismissed from school, including during extracurricular activities held after school hours. Each public school must create a policy that complies with this Act and submit that policy for approval by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 123

AN ACT TO PROVIDE EACH PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENT WITH ONE BREAKFAST AT NO COST DURING EACH SCHOOL DAY UPON HIS OR HER REQUEST WITHOUT CONSIDERATION OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENT'S ELIGIBILITY FOR A FEDERALLY FUNDED FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE MEAL; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 59
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senators Dismang, Tucker, Boyd, Crowell, Davis, Dees, Dotson, English, Flowers, Gilmore, Hammer, Hester, Irvin, B. Johnson, M. Johnson, Leding, Love, Murdock, Payton, Petty, Rice, Scott, Stone, Stubblefield, Wallace
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Gramlich, McCullough, Vaught, Achor, Allen, Andrews, Barker, Barnes, Barnett, Beaty Jr., Bentley, Berry, Breaux, Brooks, K. Brown, M. Brown, J. Carr, Cavanaugh, Childress, Clowney, Collins, Cozart, Crawford, Eaton, Eaves, Ennett, Evans, Ferguson, Furman, Garner, Gazaway, Worthen, Hall, Henley, Holcomb, Hollowell, Hudson, Jean, Maddox, Magie, McClure, McElroy, McGruder, McNair, Milligan, K. Moore, Painter, Perry, Pilkington, Puryear, Richardson, Richardson, Rye, Schulz, Shephard, Springer, Steele, Tosh, Walker, Warren, Whitaker, Wooten
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	Beginning with the 2025-2026 School Year
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-18-722, 19-5-202(b)(2)(B)(v), 19-5-1287
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act requires that Arkansas public schools offer free breakfast to all students. For breakfast not already reimbursed to the school through a federal program, the school will receive reimbursement by the state at the same rate as the federal reimbursement.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 134

AN ACT TO REVISE THE INSTRUCTION PROVIDED ON THE FAILURE OF COMMUNIST AND AUTOCRATIC SYSTEMS AND TO REINFORCE IN REQUIRED INSTRUCTION THE RESILIENCY OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL REPUBLIC SYSTEM ADOPTED BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1060
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative S. Richardson
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Dotson
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	Beginning with the 2026-2027 School Year
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-16-156
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

Starting in the 2026-2027 school year, public schools are required under this Act to incorporate instruction on the perils of communism and autocratic governments. The State Board of Education will approve the curricula for grades seven through twelve (7-12). The curricula will include information about the following: communism and autocratic governments' record of mass murder and oppression, how communist economic structures lead to economic collapse, issues and failures associated with communism, and examples of current governments failing under communism and autocratic governments. The curricula also will teach education on elections, the constitution, and constitutional republic structures.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 135

AN ACT TO AMEND NOVICE TEACHER MENTORING REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE TEACHER EXCELLENCE AND SUPPORT SYSTEM; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1189
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Vaught
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Leding
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-17-2806(d)
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act clarifies that teachers who have completed a year-long residency approved by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education are not required to participate in novice teacher mentoring.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 143

AN ACT TO AMEND THE FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEE HEALTH BENEFIT ADVISORY COMMISSION; TO REDUCE THE STIPEND FOR CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEE HEALTH BENEFIT ADVISORY COMMISSION; TO AMEND THE FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS OF THE STATE EMPLOYEE HEALTH BENEFIT ADVISORY COMMISSION; TO REDUCE THE STIPEND FOR CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE STATE EMPLOYEE HEALTH BENEFIT ADVISORY COMMISSION; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 134
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Irvin
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Lundstrum
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 21-5-423(c)(3), 21-5-423(d), 21-5-424(c)(3), 21-5-424(d)
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act modifies the operation of the Public School Employee Health Benefit Advisory Commission and the State Employee Health Benefit Advisory Commission by reducing the number of required meetings from twelve to four and the compensation to commission members per meeting from \$500 to \$100. The purpose of these bodies is to review and make recommendations regarding their respective health insurance programs.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 159

AN ACT TO AMEND THE FRANK BROYLES PUBLICITY RIGHTS PROTECTION ACT OF 2016; TO PROVIDE PROTECTIONS FOR AN INDIVIDUAL WHOSE PHOTOGRAPH, VOICE, OR LIKENESS IS REPRODUCED THROUGH MEANS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND USED COMMERCIALY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1071
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative S. Richardson
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Bryant
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 4-75-1103(3), 4-75-1103(5)
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act adds new protections to an existing law designed to prohibit unauthorized commercial use of a person's likeness without that individual's consent. The new law includes an individual's voice to that list of protected attributes under the law and clarifies that representations of an individual created through artificial intelligence are protected to the same extent as genuine representations. The Act being amended is designed in part to protect student athletes as well as others.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 195

AN ACT TO AMEND THE RIGHT TO READ ACT; TO AMEND THE AMOUNT OF THE LITERACY TUTORING GRANT AWARDED UNDER THE RIGHT TO READ ACT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 206
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Crowell
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative R. Burkes
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-17-429
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act increases the amount of the literacy tutoring grant from \$500 to \$1,500 per eligible student per year on a first-come, first-served basis with priority given to eligible students who are to be retained in third grade. This Act also removes any past deadlines tied to a specific school year currently in the law.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 197

AN ACT CONCERNING A WAIVER FOR A RENEWED BACKGROUND CHECK GRANTED BY A BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF AN EDUCATIONAL ENTITY TO AN APPLICANT FOR A NONLICENSED STAFF POSITION; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 228
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Hammer
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Hawk
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-17-414(g)(5)
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act clarifies that if a school board exercises discretion to waive a criminal conviction indicated on a background check for a non-licensed staff position, that waiver remains in effect unless there is a break in employment or the employee has an additional disqualifying conviction.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 229

AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION AND THE ARKANSAS STATE GAME AND FISH COMMISSION TO DETERMINE THE EARLIEST GRADE IN WHICH IT IS APPROPRIATE FOR STUDENTS TO RECEIVE INSTRUCTION ON FIREARM SAFETY; TO REQUIRE A PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT AND AN OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL TO ANNUALLY PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH INSTRUCTION ON FIREARM SAFETY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1117
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representatives S. Richardson, Andrews, Duffield, Perry, Rye
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Bryant
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	Beginning with the 2025-2026 School Year
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-16-163
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act establishes that the Arkansas Department of Education and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission will work together to create age-appropriate firearm safety and education courses to be taught annually at school districts or open-enrollment public charter schools. These courses will teach the handling and safe storage of firearms, gun rights under the Second Amendment, and the prevention of accidental firearm injury. The firearm safety course also may include a live-fire exercise or sporting event with parental permission.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 234

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE STATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOL LIFE AND HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM; TO AMEND THE POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE EMPLOYEE BENEFITS DIVISION; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 150
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator B. Johnson
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Eaves
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 21-5-406(e)(3)
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act authorizes the director of the Employee Benefits Division to cooperate with the U.S. Government in matters of mutual concern, including and without limitation Medicare.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 245

AN ACT TO CLARIFY THE TYPES OF EPINEPHRINE FOR USE IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THIS STATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1166
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Gramlich, L. Johnson
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Penzo
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-18-707
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act defines epinephrine as a neurotransmitter and hormone approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of anaphylaxis. It specifies that only auto-injectable epinephrine and nasal spray epinephrine may be used in schools. A change also is made to current law to ensure certifications from a physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse authorizing the use of epinephrine are permissible.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 247

AN ACT TO AMEND THE SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST PREVENTION ACT; TO MODIFY THE REQUIREMENTS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS RELATED TO SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 226
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Leding
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative McKenzie
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-18-708(b)
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act amends the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act by enhancing the requirements for professional development training in school districts pertaining to sudden cardiac arrest. It increases the types of employees who need to complete training to include licensed teacher, coaches, registered volunteers, and competitive/noncompetitive spirit coaches. It requires that all covered personnel, including athletics coaches, maintain a basic life support certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and the use of an Automated External Defibrillator in accordance with American Red Cross or American Heart Association best practices.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 264

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE DATE OF AN ANNUAL SCHOOL ELECTION; TO MOVE THE ANNUAL SCHOOL ELECTION IF THE ANNUAL SCHOOL ELECTION IS SCHEDULED ON A STATE HOLIDAY IN CERTAIN INSTANCES; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 292
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Hammer
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Rose
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	March 12, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-14-102(a)(1)(A)
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act adds a provision moving an odd year annual school election to the third Tuesday of a month when a state holiday falls on the second Tuesday of the month.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 303

AN ACT CONCERNING THE ARKANSAS TEACHER OF THE YEAR ACT; TO ALLOW THE GOVERNING BODY OF AN OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL TO SUBMIT AN APPLICANT FOR CONSIDERATION FOR THE ARKANSAS TEACHER OF THE YEAR; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1477
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Barker
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Bryant
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-17-2503, 6-17-2504, 6-17-2505
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act allows school boards of directors and governing boards of public charter schools to directly submit candidates for Arkansas Teacher of the Year and provides that all submissions shall be made to the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education by April 1. In so doing, this Act also removes the limitations of the educational cooperative boundaries from the process.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 304

AN ACT TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE TO ENSURE ARKANSAS STUDENTS ARE TAUGHT BY QUALIFIED TEACHERS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1496
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Andrews
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Dotson
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-15-1004(b), (c), and (d)
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act prohibits broad waivers of teacher licensure for school districts but allows an individual teacher to be provisionally licensed while on a teacher licensure plan. A teacher licensure plan may be initially granted for up to three (3) years and may be extended one time for extenuating circumstances. This Act also consolidates other processes currently in law to deal with unlicensed teachers into the new teacher licensure plan. The result is that a teacher will fall into one of two categories: The teacher will be licensed, or the teacher is on a licensure plan that will expire unless the teacher becomes licensed.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 329

AN ACT TO INCLUDE TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS THAT ARE LEASED IN THE EXEMPTION FROM THE GROSS RECEIPTS TAX; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 200
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Hammer
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Hawk
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 26-52-437
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act clarifies that a sales tax exemption for instructional materials acquired by a public school or by the state for a public school would apply in the same way to property that is leased as it does to property that is purchased. This Act is designed to ensure that the decision to buy or lease instructional materials will not have a tax impact on the school.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 340/341

AN ACT TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS ACCESS ACT; TO AMEND VARIOUS PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE AS THEY RELATE TO EDUCATION IN THE STATE OF ARKANSAS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 246/House Bill 1512
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Dismang, Representative Shepherd
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Evans, Beaty Jr., Brooks, Eubanks, Wardlaw, Barker, K. Brown, M. Brown, J. Carr, Cavanaugh, Crawford, Gramlich, Hawk, McAlindon, McClure, Meeks, Nazarenko, Rose, Torres, Wing, Achor, Beck, Eaves, Unger, Andrews
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	Many provisions of this Act are effective at the beginning of the 2025-2026 school year; however, unless otherwise noted, the effective date is August 5, 2025.
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-1-404(a), 6-1-404(d), 6-5-1101 through 6-5-1201 through 6-5-1205, 6-13-629(1)(3)-(5), 6-13-808, 6-15-202, 6-15-214, 6-15-901 and 6-15-902, 6-15-1004(b)(2)(C), 6-15-1301(b)(1), 6-15-1303(d)(3)(A), 6-15-2102, 6-15-2108, 6-16-140(a), 6-16-148(a)(1), 6-16-801 through 6-16-806, 6-16-1202 through 6-16-1204, 6-17-309, 6-17-709(d), 6-18-237, 6-18-1104(b), 6-18-2004(b)(2)(G)(vi), 6-18-2004(c), 6-20-2203(a)(4), 6-20-2204(a)(3)(A), 6-20-2204(b)(2), 6-20-2207(b)(1), 6-21-113(a), 6-21-817(b), 6-21-112(b), 6-28-207, 6-41-610(b)(2), 6-51-602 and 6-51-603, 6-51-605, 6-51-606, 6-51-607(a)(1), 6-51-609(k), 6-51-610(a), 6-51-616, 6-51-617(a), 6-51-621, 6-51-622(d), 6-53-203(a), 6-60-1504, 6-60-1601 through 6-60-1604, 6-60-1701 through 6-60-1704, 6-61-144, 6-61-201(a)-(c), 6-61-202(a), 6-61-231(b)(1), 6-61-231(c), 6-61-231(d)(2)(B), 6-61-234, 6-61-1919, 6-61-1403, 6-61-1406, 6-63-104, 6-80-105, 6-80-110, 6-80-201 through 6-80-203, 6-81-604(6), 6-81-605, 6-81-607(3), 6-81-608 and 6-81-609, 6-81-608 and 6-81-609, 6-82-108(e), 6-82-302, 6-82-306, 6-82-310, 6-82-501 through 6-82-507, 6-82-601(i)(3), 6-82-1802(c), 6-82-1803(a)(1), 6-82-1804(a), 6-82-2206(a), 6-82-2501 through 6-82-2508, 6-85-212(d)(1)(A), 6-85-302, 6-85-304(a), 6-85-305, 6-85-401 through 6-85-406, 6-85-502(b)(5), 6-85-502(b)(7)(C), 20-7-133(b)(2), 21-5-703(c), 21-5-705(a)(3)(B)(i), 23-115-801(b)(1)(B)(i), 23-115-801(b)(1)(B)(ii) and (iii), 23-115-801(c)(1)(C), 23-11-801(c)(2)(D)(ii)(a), 23-115-802(c)(2) and (3)
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

Acceleration:

Expand Achievement Opportunities:

Replaces the Advanced Placement Training and Incentive Program with an Accelerated Learning Training and Incentive Program to incentivize accelerated pathways outside of AP including IB Diploma Programme, Cambridge Advanced International Certificate of Education, and concurrent credit courses.

Repeal of Outdated or Unnecessary Programs:

Council on Postsecondary Education and Career Readiness; Arkansas Traveling Teacher Program; Arkansas Smart Core Incentive Funding Program; and the High school equivalency diploma.

Standards for Accreditation:

The State Board of Education may deny courses that do not meet the approved program requirements. All accelerated learning courses shall meet the approved program requirements.

School Rating System:

Establishes authority for a rating system over educational services cooperatives and provides more flexibility in the school rating formula.

Common Sense:

Limitations on Unjust Practices Related to DEI:

Protects free speech for applicants, employees, and students; prohibits compelled speech and DEI statements; prohibits accrediting agencies from basing decisions in any way on DEI policies or programs; prohibits universities in violation from receiving state funding; requires institutions to reject funding which requires DEI programs or campus activities; prohibits institutions from hiring a third party for DEI activities.

Policies Regarding Protests and Riots:

Prohibits state-supported institutions of higher education from granting excused absences for political protests, social or public policy advocacy, or attempts to influence legislation or other governmental policy-making at the local, state, or federal level. Prevents institutions from permitting student walkouts. Prohibits public school districts and public charter schools from granting excused absences for political protests, social or public policy advocacy, or attempts to influence legislation or other governmental policy-making at the local, state, or federal level.

Absences for Certain Purposes Unexcused:

Absences for political protests, social or public policy advocacy, or attempts to influence legislation or other governmental policy-making at the local, state, or

federal level shall not be excused by public school districts or open-enrollment public charter schools. Student walkouts for the same purposes shall not be authorized by public school districts or open-enrollment public charter schools.

Arkansas Purple Star Campuses:

Recognizes public school districts and public charter schools which excel at serving Armed Forces families. Honors military families through a simple designation. Recognizes institutions of higher education that excel at serving Armed Forces families. Honors military families through a simple designation. Full implementation is expected by December 31, 2025.

Tenure Review:

Expands upon the existing tenure review process and implements corrective actions for faculty members at state supported institutions of higher education pursuant to decisions made during performance reviews. Allows for immediate for cause reviews of faculty members based on specific conduct and/or performance. Implementation expected by July 2025.

Removal of Professional Organizations from Arkansas Code

Cost:

Higher Education Funding Formula:

Begins to incorporate a return on investment metric in the productivity funding formula. The ROI metric will capture post-enrollment earnings, baseline earnings, and cost of attendance; and the metric will align with the state's workforce needs. Authorizes the division to promulgate rules to implement funding for non-credit programs and to define non-credit programs in rule. The change incentivizes non-degree, industry-aligned credentials of value. Implementation is expected to begin by Summer 2025, and full implementation is expected by 2026-2027.

Concurrent Credit Uniform Tuition Rate:

Establishes a uniform tuition rate for endorsed concurrent enrollment courses through an institution of higher education beginning in the 2025-2026 school year. The rate for a one-hour semester course will be reviewed annually. Implementation expected by September 2025.

Higher Education Coordinating Board Member Reduction:

Creates government efficiency and resolves issues with this board meeting a quorum due to only having 9 of the required 12 members serving. Amendment 33 boards are required to have 5, 7, or 10 board members, therefore, reducing the number of members will ensure compliance with Amendment 33. Implementation is expected by April-July 2025.

Powers and Duties of Higher Education Coordinating Board in Technical Schools and Community Colleges:

Provides the Higher Education Coordinating Board rulemaking authority for implementing the provisions related to Technical College and Community College Systems.

Technical Schools and Community Colleges Economic Feasibility:

Provides the Higher Education Coordinating Board rulemaking authority for implementing the Technical College and Community College Capital Improvement Act and determining economic feasibility of projects.

Private Resident and Correspondence Schools:

Creating government efficiency and compliance with Amendment 33 by dissolving this board and reconstituting its duties to fall under the purview of the Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Eligibility:

Direct Admission Program:

Creates a direct admission program for in-state applicants: any state-supported university, college, or technical college may opt to participate in a statewide direct admission program that provides provisional student admission. Implementation expected to begin by Summer 2025.

Scholarships:

Residency Classification for Scholarships:

Creates a uniform residency requirement of 6 months across all scholarships unless otherwise specified in law. Currently, residency requirements for scholarships range from 6 months to 3 years. Implementation is expected by Fall 2025.

Student Financial Aid Scholarship Stacking:

Requires the Federal Cost of Attendance method to be used for all students receiving state aid.

Federal aid must be applied before state aid. Institutions must award aid based on the stacking order:

- Academic Challenge,
- Any other state scholarship excluding Arkansas Future Grant Program, Arkansas Teacher Academy Scholarship Program, and Arkansas National Guard Tuition Waiver Program, Arkansas Future Grant Program, Arkansas Teacher Academy Scholarship Program, and Arkansas National Guard Tuition Waiver Program, then
- Institutional aid.

This ensures students cannot receive more than the cost of attendance. Implementation is expected by Fall 2025.

Arkansas Teacher Opportunity Program:

For licensed teachers returning to school seeking dual licensure training or additional training. Provides tuition and fees for up to 6 semester hours per academic year and distributes funds as a scholarship rather than reimbursement. This award is up to \$3,000 a year. Allows a teacher to seek dual licensure in an additional subject area, thus, repealing the Dual Licensure Incentive Program. Implementation expected by October 1, 2025, for the Fall 2026 semester.

Governor's Higher Education Transition Scholarship Program:

This scholarship is being codified after previously only being appropriated in special language and promulgated as a rule. This scholarship is for Arkansas students with disabilities admitted to qualifying programs at state-supported institutions of higher education. Qualifying programs are those for students with intellectual disabilities accredited by the Inclusive Higher Education Accreditation Council. Students maintain eligibility for up to eight continuous semesters or until credentialing is obtained. The maximum award per semester is \$2,500.

Arkansas Workforce Challenge Scholarship:

For workforce training in high-demand fields; funded by the Arkansas Scholarship Lottery. Currently, the award amounts for individuals are capped at \$800 at two-year and four-year state institutions. This draft removes that \$800 cap. Awards are now determined based on program costs, workforce demands, credentials of value, and projected wages. May be used at public or private vocational-technical schools and public or private technical institutes. Implementation is expected by the Fall 2026 semester.

Arkansas Heroes Scholarship:

This scholarship honors the heroic efforts of Arkansas families who served as Arkansas heroes or in the United States Armed Forces. It is available to certain U.S. Armed Forces spouses and dependents, dependents of law enforcement, or heroic state personnel who suffered fatal injury or permanent disability. Arkansas Heroes replaces the Law Enforcement Officer's Dependents Scholarship Military Dependents Scholarships and covers the tuition, fees, and board for eligible dependent students. Adds DOD Medical Retirees, Medal of Honor, and Purple Heart recipient dependents as eligible for scholarships. Implementation expected by October 1, 2025, for the Fall 2026 semester.

Arkansas Future Grant Program:

This scholarship is for workforce education including certificate and associate degree programs. Allows students to be eligible for an award for a maximum of 75 course credit hours. It covers the tuition and fees at two-year institutions or \$3,800 at four-year institutions. Part-time students are eligible to receive this award. Implementation expected by the Fall 2025 semester.

Arkansas Teacher Academy Scholarship Program:

Given to aspiring teachers who commit to teaching in an Arkansas public school. Funds are dedicated to students who have already been accepted into a teacher preparation program. Awards are up to \$12,000 a year. Gives preference to juniors and seniors in college for best use of scholarship funds according to the logic that older students have had more time to demonstrate a commitment to the teaching profession. Implementation expected to include private schools and implement academy attendees by Fall 2026.

Academic Challenge Scholarship Program:

Higher education scholarship funded by the Arkansas Scholarship Lottery. Updates eligibility to include students earning a Diploma of Merit or based on high school GPA, thus providing further incentive for Arkansas high school students to excel. Increases Freshman award to \$2,000. There is a typo in the title, it lists it as Arkansas Challenge Scholarship, but this is Academic Challenge Scholarship. Should have no effect on codification. First year of implementation expected by Fall 2026 with full integration expected four years after initial implementation.

Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarship Program:

This scholarship is being repealed. It is being replaced by the new scholarship ACCESS to Acceleration Program.

ACCESS to Acceleration Scholarship Program:

Replaces the Concurrent Challenge Scholarship Program. Students are eligible to receive lottery scholarship funds, if available, while enrolled in a concurrent credit course, except for courses at vocational centers that are reimbursed under 6-51-305. Funds are awarded at \$65 per concurrent credit course hour for a maximum of fifteen course credit hours per semester, not to exceed \$2,000 in any given academic year. Implementation is expected to happen in phases: the concurrent course reimbursement increase will be implemented by Fall 2025; the impact on the Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship funding is expected to start by Fall 2027; and full implementation is expected by Fall 2029.

Arkansas Governor's Scholars Program:

This is the most academically rigorous scholarship based on test scores and GPA. It now defines "exemplary academic achievement" for students distinguished as Governor's Scholars in situations in which there are no recipients of the Governor's Distinguished Scholarship. Students may now qualify by earning their associate's degree upon graduation or by graduating with a diploma of distinction. This scholarship award is up to \$5,000 an academic year. Implementation of the updated application, including a question regarding associates degrees, is expected by October 2025.

Standardization:**Common Course Numbering:**

Requires the Higher Education Coordinating Board to develop a statewide common course numbering system for upper-division courses that currently are not included in the system; also requires HECB to begin aligning elementary and secondary courses. Expanding the course number system will allow students to transfer high school and upper-level courses to institutions of higher learning, reducing the time and cost of earning a degree.

Statewide Transfer Agreement:

Creates a reverse transfer agreement for students who transfer to a four-year institution before they have completed their associate's degree. The change provides students with stackable credentials (an associate's degree). When students have completed the requirements for the AA, the four-year institution must transfer credits earned to the two-year institution, which will award the associate's degree.

Admissions Entrance Exam Equivalency Criteria:

Creates entrance exam equivalency across Arkansas institutions to encourage acceptance of the ACT, SAT, and CLT (Classic Learning Test).



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 352

AN ACT TO REQUIRE SCHOOLS TO SUPPORT, ESTABLISH,
AND IMPLEMENT A CARDIAC EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN THAT
INTEGRATES NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED ELEMENTS;
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1398
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative L. Johnson
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Wallace
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	Beginning with the 2025-2026 School Year
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-18-713
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act requires a public school's emergency response plan to include protocol for addressing a cardiac arrest or a similar life-threatening emergency. It also sets out the minimum components of the plan and requires that the plan be disseminated throughout the campuses. School staff are required to be trained in First Aid, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation, and Automated External Defibrillator use through the guidelines of nationally-recognized organizations. It requires annual practice drills and the integration of local emergency medical services within the cardiac emergency response plan. Schools are required to update the emergency response plan in the 2025-2026 school year and fully implement the Act beginning in the 2026-2027 school year.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 353

AN ACT CONCERNING THE ARKANSAS CONCURRENT CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM; TO AMEND THE DEFINITION OF A STUDENT UNDER THE ARKANSAS CONCURRENT CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1451
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Lundstrum
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Wallace
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	Beginning with the 2025-2026 School Year
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-18-713
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act expands the Concurrent Challenge Scholarship eligibility to include ninth grade students. It allows the Division of Higher Education to award up to \$250,000 in total scholarship awards to ninth graders. Act 340, the Arkansas ACCESS Act, repealed the Concurrent Challenge Scholarship program and replaced it with the ACCESS to Acceleration Scholarship. Therefore, when the ACCESS Act becomes effective, it will supersede this Act.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 355

AN ACT TO REQUIRE A PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL TO GRANT ACCESS TO ITS FACILITIES TO OFFICIAL RECRUITING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MILITARY; TO REQUIRE CERTAIN STATE-SUPPORTED POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS TO GRANT ACCESS TO ITS FACILITIES TO OFFICIAL RECRUITING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MILITARY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1689
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Shepherd, Eubanks
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Wallace
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-13-626, 6-61-144
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act requires all public school districts to grant access to military personnel to recruit high school students and inform them about the education and career opportunities in the military. If the public high school does not typically grant such access to prospective employers, institutions of higher education, and occupational entities, it shall grant limited access to military recruiters to students in grades ten through twelve (10-12) in an in-person setting during normal school hours and at events that are open to the public and outside of normal school hours. State-supported institutions of higher education and state-supported career academies, pre-college academies, secondary career centers, and technical centers also shall permit access to official recruiting representatives of the military forces to inform students about the educational and career opportunities in the military.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 399

AN ACT TO AMEND ELECTION REQUIREMENTS IN THE CASE OF AN UNCHANGED RATE OF AN ANNUAL AD VALOREM PROPERTY TAX LEVIED BY A PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 135
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Boyd
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Gramlich, Crawford
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-14-125
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act simplifies school elections in which no candidate is on the ballot and no change to the structure or rate of the millage is proposed. This Act establishes a process, similar to an election by a candidate, in which an individual is designated by the school district holding the election to cast a single ballot. The purpose of this procedure is to satisfy the requirement under Article 14, §3(c) of the state constitution that the tax rate be voted on once a year with the minimum expense considering the rule in Article 14, §3(c) that if a tax measure fails, the tax rate reverts to the rate in the prior year.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 400

AN ACT TO CREATE THE RELIGIOUS RIGHTS AT PUBLIC SCHOOLS ACT OF 2025; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 223
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator M. Johnson
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative A. Brown
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-10-140
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act requires that public school students receive a copy of the text of this Act at the beginning of the school year. This Act lists fourteen circumstances or examples in which a student is authorized by law to engage in religious activities of various kinds on public school campuses. The general formulation is that religious activities are protected under the First Amendment to the same extent that non-religious activities of the same nature are protected. In similar fashion, employees of the school are notified of five religious activities protected under the First Amendment. Finally, two activities related to religion are identified as appropriate for a school district itself.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 401

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING A SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS; TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE CERTIFICATION OF AN OATH FOR A SCHOOL BOARD DIRECTOR; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 413
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Hammer
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Hawk
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-13-617
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act resolves a contradiction in code relating to the administration of the oath of office to individuals elected or appointed to a school board. The result is a clarification that the deadline to take the oath of office is ten days from the day the school board director elect (or appointee) receives notice from the county clerk. This Act also removes authority from the county clerk to make determinations regarding the validity or sufficiency of the oath when it is filed.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 405

AN ACT TO AMEND ARKANSAS LAW CONCERNING THE DATES FOR ELECTIONS; TO AMEND THE DATES OF PRIMARY ELECTIONS, SCHOOL ELECTIONS, AND CERTAIN SPECIAL ELECTIONS; TO CHANGE THE DATE OF THE FISCAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 353
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Hester
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Wooldridge
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-14-102, 6-14-111, 7-7-203, 7-7-304, 7-7-305, 7-11-205, 10-2-101, 10-2-112, 10-3-2104, 19-4-304
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act moves the date of the preferential primary to be held every odd-numbered year on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March. Current law has the primary election held at this time in March in presidential election years and in May in gubernatorial election years. Spring annual school elections and spring and special elections are aligned to be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March every year. Currently, the election calendar sets these elections in May in a non-presidential election year. This Act adjusts filing periods and other election-related deadlines to conform to the new election calendar. This Act also sets the first day of the fiscal session of the General Assembly as the second Wednesday in April of every even-numbered year.

NOTE: Act 503 of 2025 makes more substantial changes to the election calendar and should be considered together with this Act.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 472

AN ACT TO CREATE THE ROBOTICS COMPETITION GRANT PROGRAM FOR ELIGIBLE ROBOTICS TEAMS IN PUBLIC OR PRIVATE SCHOOLS FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENCOURAGING STUDY IN THE FIELDS OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 391
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Dismang
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Eaves
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-16-2001 et seq.
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act creates a Robotics Competition Grant Program. The purpose of the program is to create Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics opportunities for students that provide hands-on learning; establish community partnerships; provide career opportunities through adult mentors; prioritize manufacturing, machine, and fabrication skills for students in grades six through twelve (6-12); prepare for future career opportunities through industrial proficiency; and develop students' skills. School grant teams must receive a twenty-five percent matching contribution from a community sponsor, business entity, an institution of higher education, or a technical school.

NOTE: No funding has been provided for this program.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 474

AN ACT CONCERNING THE SCHOOL RATING SYSTEM; TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO ESTABLISH A NEW ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS; TO REMOVE PUBLIC SCHOOLS FROM SCHOOL RATINGS FOR CERTAIN SCHOOL YEARS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1598
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Brooks
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator English
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	Expires June 30, 2026
STATUTE(S)	Not codified
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act pauses the assignment of letter grades for the 2023-2024 school year. The Act also directs the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education to revise the school accountability system and issue letter grades under the new system for the 2024-2025 school year. A school that receives a lower letter grade under the new system than was previously assigned may appeal its rating and request that DESE evaluate the rating using all available data and information



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 475

AN ACT TO AMEND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR HOMESCHOOLED STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES THAT ARE ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES AT PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS; TO AMEND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS WHO TRANSFER SCHOOLS UNDER THE ARKANSAS OPPORTUNITY PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE ACT TO PARTICIPATE IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES; TO AMEND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS WHO TRANSFER SCHOOLS UNDER THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE ACT OF 2015 TO PARTICIPATE IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1633
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Brooks, Evans, Shepherd, Hawk, McGruder
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senators Hester, English
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	April 8, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-15-509, 6-15-510, 6-18-116, 6-18-227, 6-18-1904
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act provides that students, including homeschool students, who transfer to a public or private school and want to be eligible to participate in a varsity athletic activity must be enrolled prior to June 1 of the enrolling school year and entering grades seven through twelve (7-12). If a student is not enrolled by June 1 of the enrolling school year, they must wait up to 365 days to participate in varsity athletic activities.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 476

AN ACT CONCERNING ETHICAL GUIDELINES AND PROHIBITIONS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEES; TO AMEND THE DEFINITION OF “ADMINISTRATOR” AS IT RELATES TO ETHICAL GUIDELINES AND PROHIBITIONS; TO AMEND THE RESTRICTIONS ON EMPLOYMENT SPECIFIC TO PUBLIC SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1640
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Duke
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Sullivan
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-24-102(1), 6-24-102(16), 6-24-111(a)(1)
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act amends the law requiring the disclosure and approval of financial relationships between the school districts and relatives of administrators within the district to also include principals, assistant principals, and curriculum directors. This Act also adds a requirement that the school board approve employment of a covered administrator in addition to approval by the commissioner.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 478

AN ACT TO REQUIRE CERTAIN INFORMATION BE EMBEDDED INTO EXISTING SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS; TO REQUIRE INFORMATION CONCERNING HOW THE RELIGIOUS AND MORAL BELIEFS OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS INFLUENCED THE FOUNDING OF THE UNITED STATES TO BE EMBEDDED INTO EXISTING SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1705
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Duke, S. Richardson, Bentley, Breaux, A. Brown, K. Brown, J. Carr, Cozart, Long, McGrew, Meeks, Rye, Vaught
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senators Bryant, Dotson
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	Beginning with the 2026-2027 School Year
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-16-163
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act requires the State Board of Education to embed information that addresses the founding of the United States into existing social studies standards and courses for grades six through twelve (6-12) by the beginning of the 2026-2027 school year. The content includes, without limitation, the founder's belief in the importance of ordered liberty; equality; natural rights; defense of self, community, and nation; freedom of speech and press; and the free exercise of religion. Also to be included is the preamble of the Declaration of Independence, the influence of religious and moral beliefs held by the founders, and the traceability of freedoms enjoyed today to the beliefs of the founders.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 501

AN ACT TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS MILITARY CHILD SCHOOL TRANSITIONS ACT OF 2021; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1545
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative K. Brown
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator English
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-28-105, 6-28-108, 6-28-109, 6-28-113, 6-28-116, 6-28-117, 6-28-204, 6-28-301, 6-28-302, 6-28-303
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act amends the Arkansas Military Child School Transitions Act of 2021 and codifies the existing Purple Star School Program. The program assists children of uniformed services families by addressing the educational, social, and emotional challenges they face during school transitions. It ensures these students remain on track to enroll in college, join the workforce, and become life-ready. This Act eliminates the one-year limitation on the eligibility of children of Gold Star families and medically-separated or retired families. It ensures military families can take advantage of school choice via advanced enrollment upon receiving orders for a permanent change in station that brings them to Arkansas. Information about the districts' military family education coordinator shall be posted on district websites to ensure a smooth transition.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 502

AN ACT TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS ADULT DIPLOMA PROGRAM ACT;
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1571
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Ray
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Davis
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-44-302, 6-44-305, 6-44-306, 6-44-307, 6-44-308
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act amends the Adult Diploma Program to specify in statute milestones met by enrolled, eligible students and sets the amount which the Arkansas Department of Education will reimburse to approved program providers for each milestone met. The department shall notify all program providers once funds are exhausted. Program providers that do not meet minimum performance standards shall provide the department with an improvement plan.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 503

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING NONPARTISAN ELECTIONS; TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING MEMBERS OF LOCAL SCHOOL BOARDS OF DIRECTORS; TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS; TO AMEND THE DATE ON WHICH AN ELECTION OF A SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS IS HELD; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1724
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative McKenzie
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator English
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-13-608, 6-13-611, 6-13-634, 6-13-1415, 6-13-1417, 6-14-102, 6-14-111, § 6-14-121, 7-10-102
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act makes changes to the election of school board members. First, it requires that school board elections are held with the primary election, and school board runoff elections are held with the general elections. Second, this Act eliminates odd-year candidate elections for school board positions and sets the number of years for a school board term to four or six. This Act also provides a process for transitioning to the new term lengths and establishes that a school board must be elected after the following triggering events: (1) when changing between at-large, zoned, or a combination school board; (2) rezoning following the decennial census; (3) returning to local control; or (4) reconstitution or consolidation. This Act provides that the board members will draw lots when their term begins after an entire board is elected at once to balance the terms.

NOTE: The State Board of Election Commissioners has issued a declaratory order clarifying that this Act repealed the authority for the 2025 November annual school election. Consequently, any school that has not held a millage election in 2025 will need to call a special millage election to comply with the requirements of Article 14, Section 3 of the Arkansas Constitution. Office holders whose terms are expiring will holdover until the next annual school election held in the spring of 2026.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 504

AN ACT TO AMEND VARIOUS PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE CONCERNING THE ARKANSAS BETTER CHANCE PROGRAM ACT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1733
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representatives J. Carr, Tosh
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Caldwell
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-45-104, 6-45-105, 6-45-108
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act merges and streamlines the Arkansas Better Chance Program and the Arkansas Better Chance for School Success Program to promote efficiency and administration of the programs. This will expand both programs to allow early childhood options for ages birth through five. The Arkansas Department of Education will establish rules for children to qualify under the programs.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 505

AN ACT TO AMEND THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT OF 1967; TO AMEND THE PROVISIONS OF THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT OF 1967 CONCERNING PUBLIC MEETINGS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 227
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senators Tucker, Davis, Boyd, Penzo, Stubblefield, Petty
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Eubanks, Collins, Gazaway, Gramlich, Hawk, L. Johnson, McElroy, J. Richardson, Womack, Wooldridge
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 25-19-103, 25-19-106
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act revises the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) as it relates to public meetings. This Act amends the definition of “public meeting” to now mean a formal gathering of a governing body. This would narrow the scope of what is considered a meeting; however, the discussion by two members of a matter upon which official action may be taken in the future is still prohibited. The definition of polling (the practice of a non-member querying the members to determine the likely outcome of any future board action) also is codified and prohibited. Discussion between members for a court-ordered settlement conference or mediation is permitted outside of a meeting. Executive session is now permitted to discuss cybersecurity plans.

Governing bodies are now required to publish the time, place, and date of a meeting on their websites. The body also must post the “most current agenda” online at least three days before a regularly-scheduled meeting and two hours before a special meeting. If items are added to the agenda, the agenda must be updated. Regarding members of governing bodies attending meetings remotely, the law will require the body to adopt a policy governing remote meetings; however, school districts will still be required to comply with Arkansas Code § 6-13-619, and city councils and quorum courts may only hold remote meetings in times of emergencies. Remote attendance policies must allow the public to attend remotely if a member attends remotely; allow the public and the body to be able to verify the remote attendee is a member of the body; allow the public and the body to be able to discern the identity of the remote member whenever speaking or voting; and require that the public notice include the method by which a member of the public may attend remotely. Also, if a remote meeting is held, it must be recorded in the format it is conducted.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 560/779

AN ACT TO CREATE A MORE SUSTAINABLE SYSTEM OF PROPERTY INSURANCE FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS, STATE-SUPPORTED INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION, AND STATE-OWNED PROPERTY; TO CREATE THE OFFICE OF PROPERTY RISK WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSFORMATION AND SHARED SERVICES; TO AMEND THE PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL INSURANCE ACT; TO REVISE THE EMPLOYEE BENEFITS DIVISION OVERSIGHT SUBCOMMITTEE; TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS MULTI-AGENCY INSURANCE TRUST FUND ACT; TO COMBINE PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS WITH STATE-SUPPORTED INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND STATE-OWNED PROPERTY UNDER A SINGLE PROGRAM TO ENSURE PROPER VALUATION FOR PROPERTY INSURANCE PURPOSES; TO CREATE THE STATE CAPTIVE INSURANCE PROGRAM ACT; TO PROHIBIT THE USE OF PUBLIC ADJUSTING IN PROPERTY INSURANCE CLAIMS; TO ALLOW FOR THE CREATION OF A CAPTIVE INSURANCE COMPANY BY THE STATE OF ARKANSAS; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1821
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Wardlaw, Evans, Shepherd, Achor, Allen, Beaty Jr., Bentley, M. Brown, J. Carr, Cavanaugh, Cozart, Crawford, Dalby, Eaves, Eubanks, Gramlich, Hawk, Holcomb, Jean, Maddox, McNair, Milligan, J. Moore, Painter, Pearce, Puryear, J. Richardson, Richmond, Steimel, Vaught, Walker, Warren, Whitaker, Wing, Wool-dridge, Wooten
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senators Gilmore, Boyd, Bryant, Davis, Dismang, Hester, Hill, Irvin, B. Johnson, Petty, Rice, Stone
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	April 14, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-20-1503, 6-20-1505, 6-20-1506, 6-20-1508, 6-20-1513, 6-21-114(d) and (e), 6-21-806, and other various statutes
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act creates the Captive Insurance Program to provide property insurance for public schools, state-supported institutions of higher education, and state-owned property. Public schools and state agencies that accept a state appropriation for a facility must participate in the program. The Arkansas Insurance Department will now provide cybersecurity insurance for public elementary and secondary schools and can require public schools to furnish a complete report of its cybersecurity insurance program to it. This Act also requires that the Academic Facilities Master Plan be submitted to the Arkansas Department of Transformation and Shared Services (Arkansas Department of Shared Administrative Services as of July 1, 2025) in addition to the Arkansas Department of Education and must comply with both agencies' rules.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 563

AN ACT TO AMEND THE DATES BY WHICH APPLICATIONS FOR A TRANSFER UNDER THE ARKANSAS OPPORTUNITY PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE ACT AND PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE ACT OF 2015 SHALL BE SUBMITTED; TO AMEND THE DATE BY WHICH A FOSTER CHILD SHALL SUBMIT A REQUEST TO TRANSFER SCHOOLS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 167
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Clark
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Brooks
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-18-227, 6-18-233, 6-18-1904, 6-18-1905
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act moves the deadline to submit a school choice request from May 1 to June 1 starting in the 2025-2026 school year.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 565

AN ACT TO CREATE THE TEACHER AND STUDENT PROTECTION ACT OF 2025; TO PROHIBIT A STUDENT WHO IS REMOVED FROM A CLASSROOM DUE TO VIOLENT OR ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR AGAINST A TEACHER OR ANOTHER STUDENT FROM BEING PLACED IN A CLASS WITH THE TEACHER OR STUDENT AGAINST WHOM THE VIOLENT OR ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR WAS DIRECTED; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1062
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative S. Richardson
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Dees
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-18-511
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

The Teacher and Student Protection Act of 2025 will help provide a safe environment for teachers and students to learn. A teacher will be able to remove from class a student who is violent toward either the teacher or other students. The student will not be placed back into that teacher's classroom until a conference has been held to determine if a behavioral threat assessment is necessary or if the student's actions are due to a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The student may then be temporarily placed in an appropriate interim learning environment not to exceed ten (10) days, disciplined, or receive behavioral services.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 573

AN ACT REGARDING THE DISPLAY OF THE NATIONAL MOTTO AND THE TEN COMMANDMENTS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 433
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senators Dotson, McKee, Boyd, Clark, Dees, Hammer, Penzo, Stone
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representatives A. Brown, Bentley, Breaux, N. Burkes, Long, McGrew, Meeks
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 1-4-133
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act requires public schools and institutions of higher education to post in each classroom a durable poster or framed copy of the U.S. motto “In God We Trust” and The Ten Commandments. This Act incorporates the requirement to display the Ten Commandments into an existing law requiring public schools and institutions of higher education to post the motto of the United States. Like the national motto, if a qualifying version of the Ten Commandments is donated, or funds raised for this purpose are made available, the educational institution is required to display a durable poster or framed copy of the Decalogue in each classroom. The new law also allows displays not satisfying the statutory requirements to be replaced with displays purchased using public funds.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 587

AN ACT CONCERNING THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE ARKANSAS
TEACHER RETIREMENT SYSTEM; TO ESTABLISH THE CREATING
AN INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD
WORKERS ACT OF 2025; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 148
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator English
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Achor
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 24-7-212
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act provides a voluntary mechanism for early childhood workers to participate in the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System. This would include anyone employed at an early childcare facility that provides teaching, early childcare education, or supervision for a child enrolled in a licensed childcare facility under the Childcare Licensing Act. Additionally, the provider must be licensed and regulated by the Arkansas Department of Education and receive state or federal funding from the department.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 631

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING PUBLIC ASSISTANCE;
TO ESTABLISH THE WORKFORCE EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES
ACT OF 2025; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1543
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Underwood
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Irvin
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	January 1, 2026
STATUTE(S)	§ 20-76-901 et seq.
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act establishes that “state-funded entities,” which include a public school, “shall accept and accommodate” a person volunteering in order to fulfill a work requirement based on the person’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. State-funded entities can opt out if the presence of a work requirement volunteer anywhere on the premises will inevitably or inherently interfere with the essential operations of the state-funded entity or negatively impact the health and safety of the community served by the state-funded entity.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 644

AN ACT TO ALLOW A RESIDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT TO PERMIT
A PRIVATE SCHOOL STUDENT TO PARTICIPATE IN AN
INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITY AT THE RESIDENT SCHOOL
DISTRICT UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS; AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 303
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Dees
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Torres
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-18-237
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act would permit public school districts and open-enrollment public charter schools to allow a student enrolled in a private school to participate in an interscholastic activity at the student's resident school district or at a charter school located within that district. This permission applies only if the private school does not offer an Arkansas Activities Association-approved version of the activity.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 645

AN ACT TO MODIFY THE DEFINITION OF “HEALTHCARE PROVIDER” REGARDING STUDENT ATHLETE CONCUSSION EDUCATION TO INCLUDE CHIROPRACTORS OR CHIROPRACTIC PHYSICIANS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 467
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Penzo
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Gramlich, Achor
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-18-710(a)(1)
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act amends the definition of “healthcare provider” implemented by Act 266 of 2025 regarding student athlete concussion education by adding chiropractors or chiropractic physicians. Act 266 requires that if a student is concussed during a game, activity, or practice for a game, the student shall be removed and cannot return until a healthcare provider gives the student written clearance.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 646

AN ACT CONCERNING THE ADMINISTRATION OF A STATEWIDE STUDENT ASSESSMENT TO A STUDENT IN A VIRTUAL SETTING; TO REQUIRE AN ADULT APPROVED TO OVERSEE THE ADMINISTRATION OF A STATEWIDE STUDENT ASSESSMENT TO CERTAIN STUDENTS IN A VIRTUAL SETTING TO MEET CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 470
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Dotson
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Brooks
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-18-114(b)(5)
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act amends provisions pertaining to the administration of the statewide student assessment in a virtual setting. For kindergarten through eighth grade (K-8), the students, parents, legal guardian, or person standing in loco parentis, must be physically present with the student for the duration of the assessment. For grades nine through twelve (9-12), the adult and student must attest that the student will adhere to all current testing security protocols during the administration of the assessment.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 647

AN ACT TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS HISTORY UNIT REQUIREMENT IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS; TO REQUIRE THAT A UNIT DEDICATED TO ARKANSAS VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES BE INCLUDED WITHIN EXISTING ARKANSAS HISTORY COURSE CONTENT GUIDELINES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 515
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senators Petty, Boyd, Love, Bryant
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Nazarenko, Gramlich, Hall, Puryear, Crawford
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	Beginning the 2025-2026 School Year
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-16-124
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act amends provisions pertaining to Arkansas history taught in schools. Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, in consultation with veterans' organizations, is required to develop and implement a unit within existing Arkansas history courses that is dedicated to veterans and their families. The course will cover material about Arkansas veterans serving in both national and international conflicts, contributions and sacrifices of veteran families, personal accounts from veterans, and challenges faced by veterans and their families upon returning to civilian life.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 648

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW REGARDING THE ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR MATHEMATICS, SCIENCES, AND THE ARTS; TO AMEND THE LAW RELATED TO THE TUITION AND FEES PAID BY STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE ONLINE PROGRAMS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 522
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senators McKee, Clark
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representatives M. Brown, Warren, Barnett
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-42-304(c)
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act authorizes the Arkansas School for Math, Sciences, and the Arts to charge tuition and fees for its online programs as established by the University of Arkansas Board of Trustees. Residents of the school will continue to attend without cost.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 649

AN ACT TO CREATE THE PUBLIC SCHOOL ACCESS AND
TRANSPARENCY ACT; TO REQUIRE PUBLIC ACCESS TO LEARNING
MATERIALS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 572
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Dotson
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative McAlindon
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 25-19-103, 25-19-105
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act amends the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to define “learning materials” to include curricula, syllabi, lesson plans, instructional materials, assignments, presentations, books, articles, video recordings, audio recordings, digital resources, and other resources that are used for classroom instruction regardless of format or medium. It excludes tests or other assignments. Public schools are prohibited from denying access to learning materials on the basis of a copyright or intellectual property exemption. New language prohibits public schools from entering into a contract for learning materials that does not allow for release under the Freedom of Information Act. This Act also prohibits non-disclosure agreements from being a prerequisite of assessing learning materials. Finally, this Act allows the inspection of materials that would be “impractical” to duplicate, e.g. a book, to be inspected during normal business hours.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 669

AN ACT TO PROVIDE CIVIL IMMUNITY FOR CONFISCATION OF ALTERNATIVE NICOTINE PRODUCTS, VAPOR PRODUCTS, E-LIQUID PRODUCTS, TOBACCO PRODUCTS, AND CIGARETTE PAPERS FROM A MINOR AT A SCHOOL; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 449
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Dees
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Beaty Jr.
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 16-120-805
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act establishes that a law enforcement officer, employee of the school, or a person in trust or authority over a minor shall be immune from civil liability if he or she confiscates nicotine, tobacco products, vapor products, alternative nicotine products, e-liquid products, or cigarette papers from a minor at a school. This immunity does not cover the confiscation of any sort of medical device or medication such as asthma medication. Minor is defined as a person under twenty-one years of age. "School" includes the buildings, parking lots, playing fields, playgrounds, school buses, and school events for public, private, and charter schools.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 685

AN ACT TO AMEND THE PERMISSIBLE METHODS OF REPORTING
UNDER THE CHILD MALTREATMENT ACT; AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1799
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Vaught
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Tucker
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 12-18-302(a)
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act removes the ability to report child maltreatment by fax. Mandated reporters can still use the telephone or report maltreatment online.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 695

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE STATE APPRENTICESHIP AGENCY ACT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 390
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator English
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Lundstrum
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	Multiple Code Sections
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act repeals the Apprenticeship Training Programs and replaces it with a new State Apprenticeship Agency pursuant to 29 U.S. Code § 50 and 29 Code of Federal Regulations §§ 29 and 30. The programs are similar in nature, but the new program is designed to qualify for a particular federal funding stream. The purpose of the State Apprenticeship Agency would be to determine whether an apprenticeship program qualifies for federal funds, to administer federal funds, and to administer state funds for an apprenticeship program. This Act provides that the State Apprenticeship Agency will apply for recognition from the Department of Labor to administer federal apprenticeship dollars.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 721

AN ACT TO PROHIBIT ANTISEMITISM IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS; TO PROHIBIT ANTISEMITISM IN STATE-SUPPORTED INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 352
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senators Stone, Gilmore, Hester, B. Johnson, Davis, McKee, Dotson, Boyd
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Beaty Jr., McKenzie, Gramlich, Walker, Achor, Andrews, Barker, Bentley, Breau, Brooks, A. Brown, K. Brown, M. Brown, Burkes, J. Carr, J. Carr, Cavanaugh, Cozart, Crawford, Eaves, Eubanks, Furman, Hawk, Holcomb, Lundstrum, Maddox, McClure, McNair, Moore, Ray, Richmond, Rose, Rye, Shepherd, Underwood, Unger, Vaught, Warren, Wooten
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-16-2001 et seq., 6-60-1601 et seq.
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act is designed to prohibit harassment or discrimination based on antisemitism to an equal extent that harassment or discrimination based on race is prohibited. Publicly-funded educational institutions, both K-12 and institutions of higher education, are required to update their policies and practice consistent with the Act. The Arkansas Department of Education is required to designate a Title VI coordinator to receive complaints of discrimination or harassment including but not limited to antisemitism. The Title VI coordinator must determine whether the institution engaged in, allowed, or has not taken necessary actions in response to alleged wrongdoing. If the school or institution of higher education fails to make necessary correction within thirty (30) days of notice by the coordinator, the coordinator shall report its finding to the U.S. Department of Education and the Department of Justice by making a complaint. The department also is required to report to the General Assembly including the number and type of discrimination-related incidents, the category of bias-motivation, and a statement regarding the resolution or status of the matter.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 722

AN ACT TO AMEND VARIOUS PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE CONCERNING ENHANCED TRANSPORTATION; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 425
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator English
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Brooks
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	April 17, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-20-2309
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act modifies the amount of enhanced transportation funding provided to specified school districts defined in Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-20-2305(a)(2). The Arkansas Department of Education shall distribute enhanced transportation funding to school districts pursuant to this Act.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 724

AN ACT CONCERNING STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENTS; TO AMEND THE UNIVERSAL ACT ASSESSMENT PROGRAM ACT; TO AMEND THE TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS PUBLIC SCHOOLS MAY PROVIDE TO STUDENTS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 183
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Dotson
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Brooks
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	Beginning With the 2025-2026 School Year
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-18-1601 et seq.
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act restructures an existing law requiring that students in grades nine through twelve (9-12) be provided with an American College Test (ACT) assessment at no cost and replaces it with access to an array of tests from which students may choose. The added tests include the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), the Classical Learning Test (CLT), and other tests designed as precursors to the college entrance exams. Public schools also are required to offer the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) to their students.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 725

AN ACT TO PROHIBIT A PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT AND AN EDUCATIONAL SERVICE COOPERATIVE FROM REQUIRING OR TAKING CERTAIN ACTIONS RELATED TO EMPLOYEE ORGANIZATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 402
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Penzo
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Brooks
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-13-114
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act prohibits a public school district or an educational service cooperative from requiring or coercing employees to meet, communicate, listen to, or otherwise interact with an employee organization or a professional association. It also prohibits distribution of membership solicitations for an employee organization or a professional association. Finally, it prohibits the use of or access to public school facilities, property, or events by an employee organization or a professional association.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 726

AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARDS OF DIRECTORS;
TO ESTABLISH A PROCESS WHEREBY A VACANCY IS FILLED ON A
SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS; AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 484
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Irvin
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative McCollum
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-13-611(c)
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act gives the school district board of directors ninety days in all cases to fill a vacancy on the school board. At least thirty days before the vacancy is filled, the district (or the domicile quorum court in certain cases) must publish a notice of the vacancy along with information describing how to be considered for the position. All qualified persons who submit a petition with the signatures of twenty qualified electors shall be considered and have not less than five minutes to address the board. The school district's board may vote not to fill the position, and if it does, then the vacancy will pass to the quorum court immediately. If after substantially complying with these provisions there has not been a sufficient petition to fill the vacancy, an alternative method to fill the vacancy may be used.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 728

AN ACT CONCERNING A HOMESCHOOLED STUDENT'S PARTICIPATION IN INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES AT PRIVATE SCHOOLS; TO REPEAL THE REQUIREMENT THAT A HOMESCHOOLED STUDENT LIVE WITHIN A CERTAIN RADIUS OF A PRIVATE SCHOOL FOR PURPOSES OF PARTICIPATING IN AN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 547
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Sullivan
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Meeks
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-15-510(b)
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act eliminates the requirement that a homeschooled student live within a twenty-five mile radius of the private school to participate in extracurricular activities. All previously established requirements for homeschooled students to participate in activities are still enforceable.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 729

AN ACT TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS MILITARY CHILD SCHOOL TRANSITIONS ACT OF 2021; TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE CONCERNING ADVANCE ENROLLMENT OF A STUDENT UNDER THE ARKANSAS MILITARY CHILD SCHOOL TRANSITIONS ACT OF 2021; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 559
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator English
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative K. Brown
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-28-108
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act makes mandatory a previous discretionary obligation under the Arkansas Military Child School Transitions Act that allowed a receiving district to enter an “academic course request” on behalf of incoming students based on transcripts from the sending district. Additional language authorizes a public school to seek a waiver to accommodate a student under the Arkansas Military Child School Transitions Act.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 730

AN ACT TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE REGARDING THE COURSE CHOICE PROGRAM; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 604
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Davis
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Brooks
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-16-1702, 6-16-1703, 6-16-1704 and 6-16-1705
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act expands the definition of “course provider” as it pertains to the Course Choice Program to now include virtual education programs that are not public school districts or open-enrollment public charter schools; the Arkansas School for Math, Sciences, and the Arts; and an educational entity that is not a public school district or open-enrollment public charter school. Schools with a “D” or “F” rating are not eligible to offer courses to students under the Course Choice Program. Eligible students are those in grades six through twelve attending schools rated “D” or “F” that do not offer a course the student requires for graduation.

Foundation funding received will be eight percent of the per-pupil amount each year pursuant to Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-20-2305. Fifty percent of the per-course amount for a course provider that is paid or transferred shall be paid or transferred after verification of eligible student enrollment in a course on October 1 each year. The remaining fifty percent shall be paid or transferred upon course completion and the eligible student receiving credit for the course.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 732/Act 913

AN ACT TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS OPPORTUNITY PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE ACT; TO AMEND THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE ACT OF 2015; TO ALLOW A STUDENT TO TRANSFER TO ANOTHER PUBLIC SCHOOL WITHIN HIS OR HER RESIDENT DISTRICT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 624/House Bill 1945
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senators Davis, Dotson
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative McCollum
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-18-202(g), 6-18-227(b)(1), (b)(2)(A), (d)(2)(A)(ii), (g), & (i), 6-18-1903, 6-18-1904, 6-18-1905, 6-18-1907(b), 6-18-1909(b) & (e)
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act expands the existing school choice laws to allow all Arkansas students to request a transfer to any school within their resident district (intra-district) in addition to another non-resident (inter-district). This Act also allows a district to deny a transfer under public school choice and opportunity school choice if the grade level is at ninety-five percent (95%) of capacity. This Act further clarifies that the determination regarding whether an inter-district transfer is approved rests with the receiving district. This Act also requires the schools to report to the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education the number of transfer applications, acceptances, denials, and the reasons for the denials. The division is required to publish this information on its website.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 756

AN ACT TO AMEND THE FREQUENCY OF PAYMENT OF A STIPEND FOR CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEE HEALTH BENEFIT ADVISORY COMMISSION; TO AMEND THE FREQUENCY OF PAYMENT OF A STIPEND FOR CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE STATE EMPLOYEE HEALTH BENEFIT ADVISORY COMMISSION; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 508
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Irvin
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative L. Johnson
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 21-5-423(d), 21-5-424(d)
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act amends the frequency that each appointed member who is not an active employee shall be paid. Previously, the appointed member who was not an active employee was paid a stipend of \$100 per month plus mileage. This Act amends the previous language to now require that each appointed member who is not an active employee shall be paid a stipend of \$100 per meeting plus mileage.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 794

AN ACT CONCERNING EXCUSED ABSENCES FOR CHILDREN OF
FALLEN SERVICE MEMBERS AND CHILDREN OF FALLEN FIRST
RESPONDERS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1986
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Nazarenko
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Wallace
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-18-238
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act establishes that a child of a fallen service member or first responder may be absent from school for mental health concerns or to attend an event from a sponsoring organization that provides support to family members for traumatic loss, grief, or resiliency. The student must already be in good academic standing and have a prior record of good school attendance. The student must not miss standardized testing and still turn in missed classwork.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 795

AN ACT CONCERNING THE PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING ACT OF 2003; TO AMEND THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDING THAT IS USED BY THE DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES; TO REQUIRE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDING THAT EXCEEDS THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT AWARDED TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS TO BE USED TO IMPLEMENT ACTS 2023, NO. 237, ALSO KNOWN AS THE “LEARNS ACT”; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1874
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative McKenzie
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Davis
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-20-2305
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act removes a statutory obligation to spend \$16.5 million for a particular type of professional development above the general professional development funding. The Act replaces the prior requirements with language authorizing the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education to use the funds above those allocated to districts for professional development to implement the LEARNS Act to improve student academic outcomes.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 796

AN ACT TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE CONCERNING THE ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND THE ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF; TO TRANSFER THE ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND THE ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF TO THE ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1810
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative J. Carr
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator English
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	July 1, 2025
STATUTE(S)	Multiple Code Sections
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act unifies the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf into a single entity called the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind. This change will improve the quality and efficacy of the services and resources provided to students attending the schools. This Act also eliminates outdated and redundant statutes and provides for modern policies to be implemented.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 800

AN ACT TO REPEAL THE LAWS CONCERNING THE DISTRICT OF INNOVATION PROGRAM; TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE TO CREATE A MORE EFFICIENT SYSTEM FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF INNOVATION IN ARKANSAS; TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS QUALITY CHARTER SCHOOLS ACT OF 2013; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1672
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative McCollum
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Boyd
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	Multiple Code Sections
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act provides a general update to the statutes governing charter schools. Additional clarity and simplification are provided by added definition and a folding of Schools of Innovation into the district conversion charter process.

Also, this Act clarifies and adds additional structure to the Charter Authorizing Panel and the process by which charters are reviewed and approved. Accountability is enhanced by creating an early sunset for waivers in low performing schools and automatic termination of a charter receiving an “F” letter grade for three consecutive years.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 801

AN ACT TO REQUIRE SCHOOLS TO PROVIDE CERTAIN
INFORMATION ON TYPE 1 AND TYPE 2 DIABETES WHEN OTHER
HEALTH INFORMATION IS PROVIDED; AND
FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1580
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Gramlich
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Petty
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-18-711
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act requires public school districts to provide information on Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes to parents. The information to parents should include the following: (1) definitions for Types 1 and 2 diabetes, (2) risk factors and warning signs, (3) guidance on contacting a primary care doctor if these warning signs appear, (4) a description of how doctors diagnose diabetes and the stages of diabetes, and (5) a recommendation to create a plan to treat diabetes with a primary care provider. The Arkansas Department of Education, with the help of the Arkansas Department of Health, will create this information and then disseminate it to schools. The Arkansas Department of Education also will place the information on the department's website. This information is for educational purposes and not a medical diagnosis.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 803

AN ACT CONCERNING THE COMMUNITY SERVICE DIPLOMA REQUIREMENT; TO ALLOW A PARENT, LEGAL GUARDIAN, OR PERSON STANDING IN LOCO PARENTIS TO A STUDENT TO DOCUMENT AND MAINTAIN THE COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS THE STUDENT OBTAINS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1756
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Vaught
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Davis
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	Beginning with the Graduating Class of 2026-2027
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-16-1901
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act provides that beginning with the graduating class of 2026-2027, parents, legal guardians, or a person in loco parentis may document and maintain hours of community service performed by students rather than community service agencies or organizations. The documentation must include an attestation that the student obtained the community service hours documented and may be audited by the Arkansas Department of Education to ensure proper documentation and accuracy of community service hours.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 804

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE USE OF POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1793
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Duke
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Dees
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-18-2401, 6-18-2402(c), 6-18-2403(22), 6-18-2403(24), 6-18-2404, 6-18-2407(3)(C)(iii), 6-18-2407(3)(D)(iii), 6-18-2409(2)
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act replaces positive behavioral support with behavioral intervention. It repeals the sections detailing the implementation of positive behavioral support and adds a section that places responsibility on each school district to discipline based on behavior intervention strategies and the needs of its students and personnel. This Act allows school districts to adopt physical restraint policies and procedures that apply to this subchapter and are appropriate based on the needs of the student population and personnel. It repeals the section on positive behavioral supports as it relates to the use of physical restraint and removes from the definition of punishment an action that is not taken with the goal of replacing the inappropriate behavior of the student with future appropriate behavior by the student. This Act updates the statute to include a multi-tiered system of support of behavioral intervention teams and now requires a school to evaluate its behavioral intervention procedures instead of a positive behavioral support system to minimize future use of physical restraint after an incident of physical restraint.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 805

AN ACT TO AMEND THE DEFINITION OF “BULLYING” WITH RESPECT TO PUBLIC SCHOOL ANTIBULLYING POLICIES; TO CREATE A PROCESS WHEREBY A PUBLIC SCHOOL MAY CONDUCT MULTIPLE, SIMULTANEOUS INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE SAME ALLEGATION OF BULLYING UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1805
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Childress, Hawk
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Hammer
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-18-514
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act amends the definition of “bullying” and modifies the procedural requirements for addressing bullying to reduce repetitive investigations for the same conduct or incident. The definitions include two additional components requiring the behavior to involve an actual or reasonably-perceived power imbalance and requiring the behavior to be repeated or have a high likelihood of repetition. If the same conduct would trigger an investigative requirement, for example a Title IX investigation that is mandated by state or federal law, the school may elect to conduct the investigation under the requirements of that law rather than under the requirements of the anti-bullying law.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 807

AN ACT TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE CONCERNING THE CREATION OF DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLANS AND THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1938
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative J. Carr
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator English
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-15-1702(a), 6-15-2904, 6-15-2914, 6-15-2919, 6-20-2305(b)(4), 20-7-135(e)
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act updates the law governing school improvement plans and requires that those plans to be filed with the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education by June 30 each year. Approved plans must be posted no later than October 1 each year. This Act clarifies that the requirements regarding school improvement plans apply to charter schools and that charter schools are required to publish their plans. School improvement plans also must include components addressing literacy, mathematics, parental involvement, usage of Enhanced Student Achievement Funding, and the role of support by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education. This Act tasks educational service cooperatives with conducting an annual review and monitoring the implementation of the plans. This Act improves efficiency in government by creating a single system to satisfy the requirements of the state-mandated district strategic plan and to allow districts to apply for federal funding with a single submission.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 808

AN ACT TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE
CONCERNING TEACHER INCENTIVE AND MERIT PAY; TO
AMEND REQUIREMENTS CONCERNING SUMMATIVE EVALUATIONS
UNDER THE TEACHER EXCELLENCE AND SUPPORT SYSTEM;
TO AMEND PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE
MERIT TEACHER INCENTIVE FUND PROGRAM;
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1939
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative J. Carr
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator English
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-17-413, 6-17-2805, 6-17-2904
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act clarifies the process through which merit pay is administered by requiring annual ratings but defining how the ratings fit into the existing process of five-year summative evaluations. This Act also transitions the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards program into the Merit Pay program as of July 1, 2025.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 809

AN ACT TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE TO IMPROVE THE EFFICIENCY OF GOVERNMENT AND RESTRUCTURE AND REPEAL THE DUTIES OF CERTAIN BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION; TO PROTECT ARKANSAS STUDENTS BY ENSURING THE EFFICIENT DISPOSITION OF ETHICS COMPLAINTS AGAINST TEACHERS; TO IMPROVE THE EFFICIENCY OF GOVERNMENT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1941
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative J. Carr
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator English
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-17-422, 6-17-428, 6-17-1113, 6-17-1118, 6-20-2513, 6-20-2516, 6-21-114
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act addresses the structure of several Arkansas Department of Education boards. The School Worker Defense Fund Advisory Board and the Academic Facility Review Board were eliminated to increase efficiency. This Act also restructures the process governing the Professional Licensure Standards Board by making the board's findings final unless there is an appeal to the State Board of Education. This Act establishes term limits for members of the board.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 865

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH ELIJAH’S LAW IN ARKANSAS; TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO ESTABLISH A STATEWIDE ANAPHYLAXIS POLICY FOR CHILDCARE FACILITIES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	HB1817
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative L. Johnson
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Boyd
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 20-13-1901 et seq.
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

The Arkansas Department of Education in consultation with the Arkansas Department of Health will establish an anaphylaxis policy for child care facilities setting forth guidelines and procedures for both the prevention of anaphylaxis and treatment during a medical emergency from anaphylaxis. These guidelines should include weight-based guidelines for administering epinephrine; ensuring training and access to emergency medication for children with food allergies; and having the Arkansas Department of Education set compliance requirements. The anaphylaxis policy should be created using allergy medicine representatives; pediatric physicians; other healthcare providers who treat anaphylaxis in children; parents; childcare facility personnel; child care facility administrators; child care facility food service directors; and nonprofit corporations representing individuals with allergies that cause anaphylaxis. When creating this policy, the Arkansas Department of Education and the Arkansas Department of Health should consider the existing child care policies and guidelines by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 878

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING TAX BENEFITS FOR TEACHERS; TO INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF THE INCOME TAX DEDUCTION ALLOWED FOR A TEACHER'S CLASSROOM INVESTMENT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1732
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Vaught, Andrews, K. Brown, M. Brown, J. Carr, Cavanaugh, Clowney, Collins, Crawford, Eaves, Garner, Gramlich, Holcomb, Hudson, Ladyman, Maddox, Magie, McClure, McCullough, McElroy, McGrew, McGruder, McNair, Milligan, J. Moore, K. Moore, Painter, S. Richardson, Richmond, Rye, Springer, Unger, Walker, Warren, Whitaker, Wooldridge, Wooten
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senators Leding, Crowell, Hammer, Wallace
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	Effective for the 2025 Tax Year and Thereafter
STATUTE(S)	§ 26-51-459(c)
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act doubles the income tax deduction for teachers who spend personal funds on classroom materials from \$500 to \$1,000 per taxpaying teacher.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 902

AN ACT CONCERNING MEETING REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARDS OF DIRECTORS; TO REQUIRE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO BE AFFORDED THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT PUBLIC COMMENT AT EACH MEETING OF A SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 90
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator English
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Brooks
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-13-619
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

Under this Act, residents of a public school district, parents, and employees of a public school district will be allowed at least three minutes of public comment before a school board meeting. The board may require a sign-up sheet and move public comments to the end of a meeting or another time if public comments exceed thirty minutes.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 903

AN ACT TO RECONSTITUTE THE STATE LIBRARY BOARD; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 640
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Dismang
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Beaty Jr.
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	April 21, 2025
STATUTE(S)	Board reconstitution - not codified
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act reconstitutes the Arkansas State Library Board by removing all seven current board members and replacing them with the governor's newly-appointed board. One member will serve for a single year, two for three years, two for five years, and two for seven years. All subsequent members will serve a seven-year term, and any newly-appointed member serving less than a full seven-year term will not be considered as having served a full term.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 904

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW REGARDING PAID MATERNITY LEAVE FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEES; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION TO PAY FOR ALL INCURRED COSTS FOR APPROVED PAID MATERNITY LEAVE FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1017
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Collins, Springer, Worthen, Barnett, Brooks
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Davis
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-17-122
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act provides up to twelve weeks of paid maternity leave for all female employees of public schools who have been employed for more than one year. This Act also provides paid maternity leave for female employees following the placement of a foster child under one year of age and adoption of a child less than one year of age. The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education is responsible for one hundred percent (100%) of the additional costs for substitute staff for the employee on maternity leave.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 905

AN ACT CONCERNING MATERNITY LEAVE SCHOOL PERSONNEL;
TO AMEND THE DAYS INCLUDED IN THE TOTAL NUMBER OF
MATERNITY LEAVE DAYS APPROVED BY A SCHOOL THAT OFFERS
MATERNITY LEAVE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1719
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Vaught
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Davis
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-17-122
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act provides that holidays or other school days (i.e. spring break) in a contract year in which no academic classes are held will not count against the twelve weeks of paid maternity leave available in participating districts under Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-17-122.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 908

AN ACT TO CREATE ELI'S LAW; TO REQUIRE EACH PUBLIC SCHOOL TO INSTALL AN AUDIO RECORDING DEVICE IN EACH LOCKER ROOM AND DRESSING ROOM ON THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CAMPUS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1866
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Brooks
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Dotson
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	Beginning with the 2027-2028 School Year
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-21-122
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act creates Eli's Law, which will require audio recording devices to be installed in each locker room and dressing room at public and open-enrollment charter schools in Arkansas. Signage will be required to alert students of the recording devices, and only administrators, parents, guardians, or someone standing in loco parentis to a student presenting an allegation of wrongdoing may request the recording. Recordings must be stored for at least ninety days from the date of recording before being destroyed. Recordings cannot be stored longer than twelve months from the date of recording unless there has been an allegation of wrongdoing in which the recording would be used as evidence.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 909

AN ACT TO AMEND PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING AMOUNTS UNDER THE PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING ACT OF 2003; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1312
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Brooks, Evans, McKenzie, Cozart
CO-SPONSOR(S)	
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	No Modification
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-20-2305(a)(2), 6-20-2305(b)(2)(A), 6-20-2305(b)(3), 6-20-2305(b)(4)(A), 6-20-2305(b)(5)(C)(i), 6-20-2305(b)(6)(A)
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act sets the school funding amounts for the next biennium. In the 2025-26 school year, foundation funding per student is increased by \$544 to \$8,162, which is specified to include \$320 for the minimum employer contribution for participation in the state-sponsored insurance program. In the 2026-27 school year, foundation funding per student is reduced by \$130 to \$8,037; however, the minimum employer contribution for district employees participating in the state-sponsored insurance program will be paid directly by the Arkansas Department of Education to the Employee Benefits Division, reducing costs to districts. Other categorical funding levels are modified as specified in the Act.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 910

AN ACT TO LIMIT THE NUMBER OF CREDITS A STUDENT MAY OBTAIN IN A COURSE CREDIT RECOVERY PROGRAM; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1484
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Gramlich
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Boyd
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	Beginning with the Entering Ninth-Grade Class of 2025-2026
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-16-163
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act limits the number of credits a student may obtain when participating in a course credit recovery program to ten credits. This Act then sets out eleven categories of students not subject to the limitation.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 911

AN ACT TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE TO PROVIDE SCHOOL DISTRICTS WITH FLEXIBILITY REGARDING ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1903
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Walker, Breaux, M. Brown, J. Carr, Gramlich, Painter
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator English
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-18-5034 and 6-48-102
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act makes it optional for public schools in Arkansas to have an Alternative Learning Environment.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 912

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING A SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS; TO CREATE A RECALL ELECTION AND PETITION FOR REMOVAL FOR A MEMBER OF A SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1933
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative McCollum
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Irvin
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-13-611, 6-13-637
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act provides a process to recall a school board member. The recall election is triggered by a petition calling for the recall with signatures of thirty-five percent (35%) of the registered voters in the school district or zone if the district utilizes single member zones. The election is to be held at the next annual school election or the following annual school election if the petition is filed within sixty (60) days of the next annual school election.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 914

AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE AN INCORPORATED TOWN OR A CITY OF THE SECOND CLASS TO PETITION THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A LOCAL PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OR SATELLITE SCHOOL UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1966
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Barnett
CO-SPONSOR(S)	
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-13-1419
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act allows cities/towns and parents in towns of schools that have been annexed or consolidated under this chapter to file a written appeal with the receiving school district to maintain an elementary school in the city/town that is being consolidated or annexed. In order to appeal, the town/city would be required to prove (1) the school would be an elementary school; (2) the district is within the boundaries of the town/city; (3) the consolidation happened within the last twenty years; and (4) the town/city can provide adequate school facilities.

If the receiving school district approves the appeal, then an appeal would be filed with the Arkansas State Board of Education to establish the school. The elementary school would be a part of the receiving school district. The town/city and the receiving school district would enter into a contractual agreement on how to distribute funds to implement the school.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 915

AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO INCLUDE A HUMAN FETAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION IN THE RELEVANT STANDARDS DURING THE ARKANSAS ACADEMIC STANDARDS REVISION CYCLE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 450
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senators Davis, English, Irvin, Hester, Dismang, Gilmore, Flippo, B. Johnson, Hill, McKee, Stone
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Moore, Vaught, Beaty Jr.
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-18-1008
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act requires the Arkansas Department of Education to add a human fetal growth and development discussion in the relevant standards during the Arkansas Academics Standards revision cycle. The human fetal growth and development discussion should include a high-definition ultrasound that shows the brain, heart, sex organs, and vital organs in early fetal development along with the process of fertilization and every stage of human development in the uterus. “Human fetal growth and development” discussion means an oral, written, or digital lesson, lecture, or presentation regarding human biology as it relates to pregnancy and human development inside the womb.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 916

AN ACT TO AMEND THE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REPORT ACT; TO AMEND THE MEASURES CONSIDERED WHEN CALCULATING A SCHOOL RATING; TO ENSURE A STUDENT IS NOT COUNTED AS A DROPOUT FOR PURPOSES OF CALCULATING A SCHOOL-LEVEL GRADUATION RATE IF THE STUDENT PASSES A GED TEST; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1642
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Gramlich
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Boyd
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-15-2108
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act simply provides that in the context of the school rating system, a student who receives a Graduate Equivalency Degree (GED) is not included as a “dropout” for the purposes of calculating a five-year graduation rate.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 917

AN ACT CONCERNING KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE FIVE LIBRARY MEDIA CENTERS; TO REQUIRE CERTAIN MATERIALS TO BE STORED IN LOCKED COMPARTMENTS WITHIN A DESIGNATED AREA; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1646
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative McGrew
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator McKee
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-25-107
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act requires that a library media center for kindergarten through fifth grade (K-5) that is located in an elementary school building store “any material that concerns non-age-appropriate sexual content, including without limitation a book or other resource” in a “locked compartment within a designated area.” The Act then requires that the students be excluded from the area unless the students’ parents provide prior written consent.

This Act establishes sanctions for a person found to have knowingly failed to comply with the requirements of the Act based on the number of knowing violations that have occurred. On a first offense, a knowing violation is to be documented by the administration that may suspend the individual without pay for up to five (5) days. A second offense requires a referral to the Professional Licensure Standards Board with sanctions limited to suspension. The third offense requires a referral to the Professional Licensure Standards Board but with a “mandatory sentence” of license revocation.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 918

AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDENT WHO TAKES AND PASSES A GED TEST; TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT; TO CREATE AN EXCEPTION TO THE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR A STUDENT WHO TAKES A GED TEST AND RECEIVES A GED; TO AMEND THE SCORE REQUIREMENTS FOR PASSAGE OF THE GED TEST; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1812
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Gramlich
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Boyd
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-15-2913, 6-18-201
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act amends various code provisions pertaining to obtaining a Graduate Equivalency Degree (GED). When determining the level of support to be provided to a public school district, the act provides that students who pass a Graduate Equivalency Degree test shall not be counted as a dropout when calculating a public school district's five-year graduation rate.

The Act also provides that students who earn their Graduate Equivalency Degree (GED) are not subject to compulsory attendance requirements as a matter of law. Pertaining to students enrolled in private parochial schools, students must achieve a score as determined by the Adult Education Section on either the test for Adult Basic Education or the Graduate Equivalency Degree (GED) practice test. This previously required a minimum score of 450 on the Adult Basic Education test and 490 on the Graduate Equivalency Degree (GED) test. This Act also removes a requirement that non-public students seek authorization from the public school to take the Graduate Equivalency Degree (GED) test and requires public students to obtain the approval from the public school in which they are enrolled before they can take the test.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 919

AN ACT CONCERNING THE FORMATION OF AN ISOLATED SCHOOL DISTRICT; TO ESTABLISH THE MEMBERSHIP OF AN ISOLATED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS; TO CREATE A FUNDING MECHANISM FOR A NEWLY FORMED ISOLATED SCHOOL DISTRICT; TO DIRECT OWNERSHIP OF FACILITIES AND PROPERTY OF ISOLATED SCHOOLS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 619
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Irvin
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Walker
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-13-1801 et seq.
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act allows an isolated school that was annexed or consolidated with another school district under the Public Education Reorganization Act to form its own isolated school district. To qualify, the isolated school district must have been operating a K-12 school for two years prior to applying. The minimum school enrollment to establish a new public school district shall not apply.

The process to re-establish an isolated school district requires that it either have a petition signed by 350 registered voters or no less than fifty-one percent (51%) of registered voters within the boundaries of the isolated school. These signatures must be verified within five days by the county clerk. The receiving school district board of directors will review the petition and call an election on the issue of an isolated school district detaching from a receiving district. The election on re-establishing the isolated school district must be for all voters who reside within the school district boundaries of the isolated school before it is consolidated with the receiving district.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 920

AN ACT TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE
CONCERNING THE ARKANSAS CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL
FREEDOM ACCOUNT PROGRAM; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY;
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 625
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Davis
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Brooks
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	April 21, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-18-2503, 6-18-2505, 6-18-2506, 6-18-2507
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act updates the law governing the Educational Freedom Account Program. Changes include technical updates including the deletion of language governing the scope of the program in prior years now that the program is universal. This Act also clarifies the authority of the Arkansas Department of Education to protect against the distribution of public funds in the case of fraud or a failure to provide services by a service provider. This Act updates what is a qualified expense to include clarification regarding co-curricular courses and limits expenditures regarding technology to twenty-five percent (25%) of the funds provided for the year. Other changes include a reduction in the percentage of funds allowed for administrative costs from five percent (5%) to two percent (2%). This Act also provides clarification regarding the disposition of unused funds when an account is no longer in use and clarifies the application period.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 938

AN ACT TO REMOVE RACIAL AND GENDER QUOTAS AND QUALIFICATIONS OF MEMBERSHIP FOR CERTAIN BOARDS, COMMITTEES, COUNCILS, AND COMMISSIONS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1365
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative K. Brown
CO-SPONSOR(S)	
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-1-703, 6-11-101, 6-15-1601, 6-15-1603, 6-15-2502, 6-61-529, 24-7-301
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act removes all existing requirements that government boards established in Arkansas law satisfy racial requirements or preferences regarding their membership. The boards identified as relating to education are as follows: Arkansas Financial Education Commission; State Board of Education; Commission on Closing the Achievement Gap in Arkansas; local task forces on closing the achievement gap; local advisory groups related to education renewal zones; local community college boards; and the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System.



Acts Concerning Higher Education

(Certain Acts apply to both secondary education and higher education; accordingly, such Acts may be referenced in both sections of this document.)

HIGHER EDUCATION LEGISLATION QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Act Number	Bill Number	Topic	Requires institutional action and/or approval by the board of trustees	Requires revision of institutional documentation or governing policies	Requires information to be made available to the public	Requires info. to be submitted to state	Related to funding of the institution	Related to scholarships or student funding	Related to student instruction or advising	Rules	Other
10	HB1133	Northwest Technical Institute									X
14	HB1005	Tuition Waivers				X		X	X	X	
25	SB46	East Arkansas Community College				X					
165	SB172	Technical Corrections									X
196	HB1384	Graduate Medical Education Residency Expansion Board		X				X	X	X	X
305	HB1634	Charitable Bingo and Raffles			X		X				X
340/341	SB246/ HB1512	ACCESS		X		X	X	X	X	X	
351	SB317	Prohibited Activities		X							
354	HB1601	Career Counseling		X	X	X					
355	HB1689	Military Recruiting									X
402	SB417	Various Laws Amended		X							
429	SB232	Arkansas Scholarship Lottery Act								X	X
473	HB1561	Research and Education Protection Act		X							
477	HB1697	Higher Education	X			X	X				

HIGHER EDUCATION LEGISLATION QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Act Number	Bill Number	Topic	Requires institutional action and/or approval by the board of trustees	Requires revision of institutional documentation or governing policies	Requires information to be made available to the public	Requires info. to be submitted to state	Related to funding of the institution	Related to scholarships or student funding	Related to student instruction or advising	Rules	Other
564	SB545	Property and Finances	X	X	X	X					X
566	HB1696	Strengthening Arkansas Education Act	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
645	SB467	Concussion Education		X					X		
649	SB572	Public School Access and Transparency Act	X						X		
714	HB1851	Sales Tax Exemption		X							
721	SB352	Prohibit Antisemitism		X					X		
727	SB504	Arkansas Rural Preceptorship Program Act		X		X		X	X		
731	SB618	Student Due Process and Protection Act	X	X					X		
779	SB481	Insurance	X	X		X	X			X	X
802	HB1085	Brighter Future Fund Plan Act									X
806	HB1833	Admissions	X	X	X				X		
826	HB1786	Tuition Benefits						X			
839	HB1917	Student-Athlete Publicity Rights act	X	X	X	X	X				X

HIGHER EDUCATION LEGISLATION QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Act Number	Bill Number	Topic	Requires institutional action and/or approval by the board of trustees	Requires revision of institutional documentation or governing policies	Requires information to be made available to the public	Requires info. to be submitted to state	Related to funding of the institution	Related to scholarships or student funding	Related to student instruction or advising	Rules	Other
906	HB1728	Accommodations for Disabilities			X	X					X
907	HB1766	RISE Act	X	X					X		
910	HB1484	Course Credit Recovery Program									X
929	HB1951	Website Domains									X



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 10

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING NORTHWEST TECHNICAL INSTITUTE; TO AUTHORIZE NORTHWEST TECHNICAL INSTITUTE TO APPOINT A PRESIDENT WITH AN INDUSTRY BACKGROUND; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1133
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Unger, Lundstrum
CO-SPONSOR(S)	
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	January 30, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 25-43-505
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act allows the Northwest Technical Institute to appoint a president who has a background in industry in place of a background in education.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 14

AN ACT REGARDING HIGHER EDUCATION; TO AMEND THE LAW REGARDING TUITION WAIVERS FOR ARKANSAS NATIONAL GUARD SOLDIERS AND AIRMEN TO INCLUDE PROGRAMS OF STUDY LEADING TO A POSTSECONDARY CERTIFICATE OR CREDENTIAL; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1005
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Ray
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senators Hill and Dotson
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-60-214(a)
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act expands opportunities for soldiers and airmen of the Arkansas National Guard to attend a state-supported institution of higher education tuition-free. Prior law allowed tuition to be waived for programs leading to an undergraduate degree. This Act expands tuition waivers to programs leading to postsecondary credentials or certificates for guardsmen who have not yet received a bachelor's degree.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 25

AN ACT CONCERNING EAST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE;
TO REFLECT A MERGER BETWEEN THE UNIVERSITY OF
ARKANSAS AND EAST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE BY
CHANGING THE NAME OF EAST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
TO THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS EAST ARKANSAS
COMMUNITY COLLEGE; TO REPEAL PORTIONS OF THE LAW
CONCERNING A PREVIOUS MERGER INVOLVING EAST ARKANSAS
COMMUNITY COLLEGE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 46
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senators Caldwell, Murdock
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Hollowell, Barnett
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	Begins the effective date of the merger pursuant to board vote
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-5-302, 6-51-1101-1104 (repeal), 6-51-1105-1106, 6-63-305(b)(8), 19-4-906(a)(093), 19-5-303(n), 19-11-220(a)(19)
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act amends language to reflect the merger of the East Arkansas Community College into the University of Arkansas System. The campus' new name will be the University of Arkansas East Arkansas Community College. This Act also repealed the relevant provision of code and established procedures for the merger of Crowley's Ridge Technical Institute and East Arkansas Community College.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 165

AN ACT TO MAKE TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS TO
TITLE 6 OF THE ARKANSAS CODE CONCERNING EDUCATION;
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 172
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senators Tucker, Bryant
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Gazaway, Shepherd
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-13-1006, 6-15-215, 6-16-152, 6-17-2403, 6-63-317
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act makes technical, non-substantive, changes to the title of Arkansas Code pertaining to education. It repeals language related to the Smart Core program that expired in 2020, corrects erroneous cross citation within the code, places existing special language into code, and repeals deadlines in code that are no longer relevant.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 196

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION RESIDENCY EXPANSION BOARD; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1384
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative L. Johnson
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Dismang
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	February 27, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-82-2002-6-82-2006
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act amends the enabling statute for the Graduate Medical Residency Expansion Board to remedy issues the board has been facing with awarding grants to entities, fellowships, and residents in the medical field. It creates implementation grants and details qualifications and how funds are awarded.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 305

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW REGARDING RAFFLES; TO PROVIDE THAT THE CHARITABLE BINGO AND RAFFLES ENABLING ACT DOES NOT REGULATE CERTAIN RAFFLES CONDUCTED BY INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION OR AFFILIATED NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS; TO ESTABLISH THE ARKANSAS SPORTS RAFFLE ACT; TO AMEND THE LAW REGARDING ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES TO ADD THE ARKANSAS SPORTS RAFFLE ACT AS AN EXCEPTION TO VARIOUS PROHIBITED PRACTICES; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1634
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Hawk, Shepherd, Eubanks, Evans, Achor, Duffield, Brooks, Maddox, Ray, L. Johnson
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senators Dismang, Hester, Boyd, McKee
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	March 18, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 23-114-103(c), 23-120-101 et seq.
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act creates the Arkansas Sports Raffle Act, and allows an institution of higher education and its affiliated nonprofit organizations to hold raffles that provide financial resources to advance the educational endeavors of student athletes and other students. They also increase exposure of the institutions to attract additional financial support for academic programs at the institutions. The primary focus is to raise funds for institutions of higher education collegiate athletic programs.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 340/341

AN ACT TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS ACCESS ACT; TO AMEND VARIOUS PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE AS THEY RELATE TO EDUCATION IN THE STATE OF ARKANSAS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 246/House Bill 1512
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Dismang, Representative Shepherd
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Evans, Beaty Jr., Brooks, Eubanks, Wardlaw, Barker, K. Brown, M. Brown, J. Carr, Cavanaugh, Crawford, Gramlich, Hawk, McAlindon, McClure, Meeks, Nazarenko, Rose, Torres, Wing, Achor, Beck, Eaves, Unger, Andrews
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	Many provisions of this Act are effective at the beginning of the 2025-2026 school year; however, unless otherwise noted, the effective date is August 5, 2025.
STATUTE(S)	6-1-404(a), 6-1-404(d), 6-5-1101 through 6-5-1201 through 6-5-1205, 6-13-629(1)(3)-(5), 6-13-808, 6-15-202, 6-15-214, 6-15-901 and 6-15-902, 6-15-1004(b)(2)(C), 6-15-1301(b)(1), 6-15-1303(d)(3)(A), 6-15-2102, 6-15-2108, 6-16-140(a), 6-16-148(a)(1), 6-16-801 through 6-16-806, 6-16-1202 through 6-16-1204, 6-17-309, 6-17-709(d), 6-18-237, 6-18-1104(b), 6-18-2004(b)(2)(G)(vi), 6-18-2004(c), 6-20-2203(a)(4), 6-20-2204(a)(3)(A), 6-20-2204(b)(2), 6-20-2207(b)(1), 6-21-113(a), 6-21-817(b), 6-21-112(b), 6-28-207, 6-41-610(b)(2), 6-51-602 and 6-51-603, 6-51-605, 6-51-606, 6-51-607(a)(1), 6-51-609(k), 6-51-610(a), 6-51-616, 6-51-617(a), 6-51-621, 6-51-622(d), 6-53-203(a), 6-60-1504, 6-60-1601 through 6-60-1604, 6-60-1701 through 6-60-1704, 6-61-144, 6-61-201(a)-(c), 6-61-202(a), 6-61-231(b)(1), 6-61-231(c), 6-61-231(d)(2)(B), 6-61-234, 6-61-1919, 6-61-1403, 6-61-1406, 6-63-104, 6-80-105, 6-80-110, 6-80-201 through 6-80-203, 6-81-604(6), 6-81-605, 6-81-607(3), 6-81-608 and 6-81-609, 6-81-608 and 6-81-609, 6-82-108(e), 6-82-302, 6-82-306, 6-82-310, 6-82-501 through 6-82-507, 6-82-601(i)(3), 6-82-1802(c), 6-82-1803(a)(1), 6-82-1804(a), 6-82-2206(a), 6-82-2501 through 6-82-2508, 6-85-212(d)(1)(A), 6-85-302, 6-85-304(a), 6-85-305, 6-85-401 through 6-85-406, 6-85-502(b)(5), 6-85-502(b)(7)(C), 20-7-133(b)(2), 21-5-703(c), 21-5-705(a)(3)(B)(i), 23-115-801(b)(1)(B)(i), 23-115-801(b)(1)(B)(ii) and (iii), 23-115-801(c)(1)(C), 23-11-801(c)(2)(D)(ii)(a), 23-115-802(c)(2) and (3)
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

Acceleration:

Expand Achievement Opportunities:

Replaces the Advanced Placement Training and Incentive Program with an Accelerated Learning Training and Incentive Program to incentivize accelerated pathways outside of AP including IB Diploma Programme, Cambridge Advanced International Certificate of Education, and concurrent credit courses.

Repeal of Outdated or Unnecessary Programs:

Council on Postsecondary Education and Career Readiness; Arkansas Traveling Teacher Program; Arkansas Smart Core Incentive Funding Program; and the High school equivalency diploma.

Standards for Accreditation:

The State Board of Education may deny courses that do not meet the approved program requirements. All accelerated learning courses shall meet the approved program requirements.

School Rating System:

Establishes authority for a rating system over educational services cooperatives and provides more flexibility in the school rating formula.

Common Sense:

Limitations on Unjust Practices Related to DEI:

Protects free speech for applicants, employees, and students; prohibits compelled speech and DEI statements; prohibits accrediting agencies from basing decisions in any way on DEI policies or programs; prohibits universities in violation from receiving state funding; requires institutions to reject funding which requires DEI programs or campus activities; prohibits institutions from hiring a third party for DEI activities.

Policies Regarding Protests and Riots:

Prohibits state-supported institutions of higher education from granting excused absences for political protests, social or public policy advocacy, or attempts to influence legislation or other governmental policy-making at the local, state, or federal level. Prevents institutions from permitting student walkouts. Prohibits public school districts and public charter schools from granting excused absences for political protests, social or public policy advocacy, or attempts to influence legislation or other governmental policy-making at the local, state, or federal level.

Absences for Certain Purposes Unexcused:

Absences for political protests, social or public policy advocacy, or attempts to influence legislation or other governmental policy-making at the local, state, or

federal level shall not be excused by public school districts or open-enrollment public charter schools. Student walkouts for the same purposes shall not be authorized by public school districts or open-enrollment public charter schools.

Arkansas Purple Star Campuses:

Recognizes public school districts and public charter schools which excel at serving Armed Forces families. Honors military families through a simple designation. Recognizes institutions of higher education that excel at serving Armed Forces families. Honors military families through a simple designation. Full implementation is expected by December 31, 2025.

Tenure Review:

Expands upon the existing tenure review process and implements corrective actions for faculty members at state supported institutions of higher education pursuant to decisions made during performance reviews. Allows for immediate for cause reviews of faculty members based on specific conduct and/or performance. Implementation expected by July 2025.

Removal of Professional Organizations from Arkansas Code

Cost:

Higher Education Funding Formula:

Begins to incorporate a return on investment metric in the productivity funding formula. The ROI metric will capture post-enrollment earnings, baseline earnings, and cost of attendance; and the metric will align with the state's workforce needs. Authorizes the division to promulgate rules to implement funding for non-credit programs and to define non-credit programs in rule. The change incentivizes non-degree, industry-aligned credentials of value. Implementation is expected to begin by Summer 2025, and full implementation is expected by 2026-2027.

Concurrent Credit Uniform Tuition Rate:

Establishes a uniform tuition rate for endorsed concurrent enrollment courses through an institution of higher education beginning in the 2025-2026 school year. The rate for a one-hour semester course will be reviewed annually. Implementation expected by September 2025.

Higher Education Coordinating Board Member Reduction:

Creates government efficiency and resolves issues with this board meeting a quorum due to only having 9 of the required 12 members serving. Amendment 33 boards are required to have 5, 7, or 10 board members, therefore, reducing the number of members will ensure compliance with Amendment 33. Implementation is expected by April-July 2025.

Powers and Duties of Higher Education Coordinating Board in Technical Schools and Community Colleges:

Provides the Higher Education Coordinating Board rulemaking authority for implementing the provisions related to Technical College and Community College Systems.

Technical Schools and Community Colleges Economic Feasibility:

Provides the Higher Education Coordinating Board rulemaking authority for implementing the Technical College and Community College Capital Improvement Act and determining economic feasibility of projects.

Private Resident and Correspondence Schools:

Creating government efficiency and compliance with Amendment 33 by dissolving this board and reconstituting its duties to fall under the purview of the Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Eligibility:

Direct Admission Program:

Creates a direct admission program for in-state applicants: any state-supported university, college, or technical college may opt to participate in a statewide direct admission program that provides provisional student admission. Implementation expected to begin by Summer 2025.

Scholarships:

Residency Classification for Scholarships:

Creates a uniform residency requirement of 6 months across all scholarships unless otherwise specified in law. Currently, residency requirements for scholarships range from 6 months to 3 years. Implementation is expected by Fall 2025.

Student Financial Aid Scholarship Stacking:

Requires the Federal Cost of Attendance method to be used for all students receiving state aid.

Federal aid must be applied before state aid. Institutions must award aid based on the stacking order:

- Academic Challenge,
- Any other state scholarship excluding Arkansas Future Grant Program, Arkansas Teacher Academy Scholarship Program, and Arkansas National Guard Tuition Waiver Program, Arkansas Future Grant Program, Arkansas Teacher Academy Scholarship Program, and Arkansas National Guard Tuition Waiver Program, then
- Institutional aid.

This ensures students cannot receive more than the cost of attendance. Implementation is expected by Fall 2025.

Arkansas Teacher Opportunity Program:

For licensed teachers returning to school seeking dual licensure training or additional training. Provides tuition and fees for up to 6 semester hours per academic year and distributes funds as a scholarship rather than reimbursement. This award is up to \$3,000 a year. Allows a teacher to seek dual licensure in an additional subject area, thus, repealing the Dual Licensure Incentive Program. Implementation expected by October 1, 2025, for the Fall 2026 semester.

Governor's Higher Education Transition Scholarship Program:

This scholarship is being codified after previously only being appropriated in special language and promulgated as a rule. This scholarship is for Arkansas students with disabilities admitted to qualifying programs at state-supported institutions of higher education. Qualifying programs are those for students with intellectual disabilities accredited by the Inclusive Higher Education Accreditation Council. Students maintain eligibility for up to eight continuous semesters or until credentialing is obtained. The maximum award per semester is \$2,500.

Arkansas Workforce Challenge Scholarship:

For workforce training in high-demand fields; funded by the Arkansas Scholarship Lottery. Currently, the award amounts for individuals are capped at \$800 at two-year and four-year state institutions. This draft removes that \$800 cap. Awards are now determined based on program costs, workforce demands, credentials of value, and projected wages. May be used at public or private vocational-technical schools and public or private technical institutes. Implementation is expected by the Fall 2026 semester.

Arkansas Heroes Scholarship:

This scholarship honors the heroic efforts of Arkansas families who served as Arkansas heroes or in the United States Armed Forces. It is available to certain U.S. Armed Forces spouses and dependents, dependents of law enforcement, or heroic state personnel who suffered fatal injury or permanent disability. Arkansas Heroes replaces the Law Enforcement Officer's Dependents Scholarship Military Dependents Scholarships and covers the tuition, fees, and board for eligible dependent students. Adds DOD Medical Retirees, Medal of Honor, and Purple Heart recipient dependents as eligible for scholarships. Implementation expected by October 1, 2025, for the Fall 2026 semester.

Arkansas Future Grant Program:

This scholarship is for workforce education including certificate and associate degree programs. Allows students to be eligible for an award for a maximum of 75 course credit hours. It covers the tuition and fees at two-year institutions or \$3,800 at four-year institutions. Part-time students are eligible to receive this award. Implementation expected by the Fall 2025 semester.

Arkansas Teacher Academy Scholarship Program:

Given to aspiring teachers who commit to teaching in an Arkansas public school. Funds are dedicated to students who have already been accepted into a teacher preparation program. Awards are up to \$12,000 a year. Gives preference to juniors and seniors in college for best use of scholarship funds according to the logic that older students have had more time to demonstrate a commitment to the teaching profession. Implementation expected to include private schools and implement academy attendees by Fall 2026.

Academic Challenge Scholarship Program:

Higher education scholarship funded by the Arkansas Scholarship Lottery. Updates eligibility to include students earning a Diploma of Merit or based on high school GPA, thus providing further incentive for Arkansas high school students to excel. Increases Freshman award to \$2,000. There is a typo in the title, it lists it as Arkansas Challenge Scholarship, but this is Academic Challenge Scholarship. Should have no effect on codification. First year of implementation expected by Fall 2026 with full integration expected four years after initial implementation.

Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarship Program:

This scholarship is being repealed. It is being replaced by the new scholarship ACCESS to Acceleration Program.

ACCESS to Acceleration Scholarship Program:

Replaces the Concurrent Challenge Scholarship Program. Students are eligible to receive lottery scholarship funds, if available, while enrolled in a concurrent credit course, except for courses at vocational centers that are reimbursed under 6-51-305. Funds are awarded at \$65 per concurrent credit course hour for a maximum of fifteen course credit hours per semester, not to exceed \$2,000 in any given academic year. Implementation is expected to happen in phases: the concurrent course reimbursement increase will be implemented by Fall 2025; the impact on the Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship funding is expected to start by Fall 2027; and full implementation is expected by Fall 2029.

Arkansas Governor's Scholars Program:

This is the most academically rigorous scholarship based on test scores and GPA. It now defines "exemplary academic achievement" for students distinguished as Governor's Scholars in situations in which there are no recipients of the Governor's Distinguished Scholarship. Students may now qualify by earning their associate's degree upon graduation or by graduating with a diploma of distinction. This scholarship award is up to \$5,000 an academic year. Implementation of the updated application, including a question regarding associates degrees, is expected by October 2025.

Standardization:**Common Course Numbering:**

Requires the Higher Education Coordinating Board to develop a statewide common course numbering system for upper-division courses that currently are not included in the system; also requires HECB to begin aligning elementary and secondary courses. Expanding the course number system will allow students to transfer high school and upper-level courses to institutions of higher learning, reducing the time and cost of earning a degree.

Statewide Transfer Agreement:

Creates a reverse transfer agreement for students who transfer to a four-year institution before they have completed their associate's degree. The change provides students with stackable credentials (an associate's degree). When students have completed the requirements for the AA, the four-year institution must transfer credits earned to the two-year institution, which will award the associate's degree.

Admissions Entrance Exam Equivalency Criteria:

Creates entrance exam equivalency across Arkansas institutions to encourage acceptance of the ACT, SAT, and CLT (Classic Learning Test).



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 351

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW REGARDING HIGHER EDUCATION; TO PROHIBIT AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION FROM PARTICIPATING IN CERTAIN ACTIVITIES WITH A PROHIBITED FOREIGN PARTY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 317
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Johnson
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Puryear, Achor, Andrews, Barker, Beaty Jr., Beck, Bentley, Berry, Breaux, Brooks, K. Brown, M. Brown, N. Burkes, R. Burkes, J. Carr, J. Carr, Cav- enaugh, Childress, Cooper, Cozart, Crawford, Eaton, Evans, Furman, Gazaway, Gramlich, Hall, Hawk, Hollowell, Johnson, Long, Lundstrum, Lynch, Maddox, McAlindon, McClure, McElroy, McGrew, McKenzie, McNair, Milligan, Moore, Nazarenko, Painter, Pearce, Perry, Pilkington, Ray, S. Richardson, Richmond, Rose, Rye, Schulz, Shepherd, Torres, Tosh, Underwood, Unger, Vaught, Walker, Wing, Wooten
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-60-123
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act prohibits institutions of higher education from engaging in the following activities with a prohibited foreign party: conducting classified research, selling agricultural products like seeds, producing agricultural products, conducting agricultural research under a contract with a prohibited foreign party, and entering into a nondisclosure agreement. A prohibited foreign party principally means an individual, entity, or government subject to international traffic in arms regulations governed by federal law or an “entity of particular concern” designated by the U.S. Department of State.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 354

AN ACT REGARDING HIGHER EDUCATION; TO REQUIRE STATE-SUPPORTED INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO PROVIDE CAREER COUNSELING AND OTHER RESOURCES TO CERTAIN STUDENTS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1601
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representatives L. Johnson, McGruder
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Dotson
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-60-123
RULE PROMULGATION	NA

SUMMARY

This Act creates a requirement for institutions of higher education to provide career counseling and other career-related resources to students at the institution. Both the department and institution will need to maintain access to career counseling materials and resources on their respective websites. Other career-related resources include career and technical training and trade industries that provide employment opportunities. This resource must be available to students who have not graduated and remain available for six months after graduation. This Act does not impact concurrent enrollment or subsequent institutions of higher education.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 355

AN ACT TO REQUIRE A PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL TO GRANT ACCESS TO ITS FACILITIES TO OFFICIAL RECRUITING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MILITARY; TO REQUIRE CERTAIN STATE-SUPPORTED POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS TO GRANT ACCESS TO ITS FACILITIES TO OFFICIAL RECRUITING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MILITARY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1689
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Shepherd, Eubanks
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Wallace
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-13-626, 6-61-144
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act requires all public school districts to grant access to military personnel to recruit high school students and inform them about the education and career opportunities in the military. If the public high school does not typically grant such access to prospective employers, institutions of higher education, etc., it shall grant military recruiters limited access to students in grades ten through twelve (10-12) in an in-person setting during normal school hours and at events that are open to the public and outside of normal school hours. State-supported institutions of higher education and state-supported career academies, pre-college academies, secondary career centers, and technical centers also shall permit access to official recruiting representatives of the military forces to inform students about the educational and career opportunities in the military.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 402

AN ACT TO AMEND VARIOUS LAWS RELATED TO HIGHER EDUCATION; TO REPEAL THE REQUIREMENT FOR AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAMS AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION; TO AMEND CERTAIN LAWS RELATED TO REPORTING AND SERVICES BY INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION; TO AMEND LAWS RELATED TO CERTAIN CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS, PERSONNEL, LAND, AND SERVICES OF INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 417
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Dotson
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Maddox
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-60-703, 6-61-141, 6-61-221, 6-61-1601 et seq., 6-62-314, 6-62-606, 6-63-103, 6-63-321, 6-64-218, 19-4-1415, 21-4-203, 21-4-503, 21-4-505, 22-2-114
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act makes several amendments to various Arkansas Code provisions pertaining to higher education. Namely, affirmative action programs and reporting are now repealed. It also repeals the duplication of services between institutions of higher education located within a twenty-five mile radius of the main campus.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 429

AN ACT TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS SCHOLARSHIP LOTTERY ACT; TO AMEND THE DEFINITION OF “LOTTERY PROCEEDS”; TO AMEND THE DEFINITION OF “NET PROCEEDS”; TO AMEND THE CONTENTS OF THE FINANCIAL REPORT; TO PROVIDE THAT THE COSTS OF ADMINISTERING SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS ARE EXPENSES OF THE DIVISION OF HIGHER EDUCATION THAT WILL CONTINUE TO BE REIMBURSED BY THE OFFICE OF THE ARKANSAS LOTTERY USING LOTTERY NET PROCEEDS; TO ELIMINATE THE SCHOLARSHIP SHORTFALL RESERVE TRUST ACCOUNT; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 232
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Hickey
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Cozart
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	July 1, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-85-303(a), 6-85-404(b)(1), 6-85-603(b)(1), 23-115-103, 23-115-206, 23-115-302, 23-115-801, 23-115-802
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act repeals the Scholarship Shortfall Reserve Trust Account, transferring authority to the Division of Higher Education to administer the lottery-funded scholarships rather than the Office of the Arkansas Lottery.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 473

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW REGARDING HIGHER EDUCATION;
TO ESTABLISH THE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION PROTECTION
ACT OF 2025; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1561
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Painter, Achor, Andrews, Barker, Beaty Jr., Beck, Bentley, Berry, Breaux, Brooks, K. Brown, M. Brown, N. Burkes, R. Burkes, J. Carr, J. Carr, Cavanaugh, Childress, Cooper, Cozart, Crawford, Eaton, Evans, Furman, Gazaway, Gramlich, Hall, Hawk, Hollowell, L. Johnson, Long, Lundstrum, Lynch, Maddox, McAlindon, McClure, McElroy, McGrew, McKenzie, McNair, Milligan, J. Moore, Nazarenko, Pearce, Perry, Pilkington, Puryear, Ray, S. Richardson, Richmond, Rose, Rye, Schulz, Shepherd, Torres, Tosh, Underwood, Unger, Vaught, Walker, Wing, Wooten
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Hill
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-60-1601 et seq.
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act creates the Research and Education Protection Act of 2025 to protect Arkansas' research and educational systems from malign influence from foreign adversaries (China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, Cuba, Venezuela, Syria, and any foreign terrorist organization). By January 1, 2026, each institution of higher education or affiliate organization that has a federal research expenditure of \$10 million or more shall establish a foreign adversary travel approval and monitoring program.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 477

AN ACT TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF TITLE 6 OF THE ARKANSAS CODE CONCERNING PROVISIONAL POSITIONS FOR STATE-SUPPORTED INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION; TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF TITLE 19 OF THE ARKANSAS CODE CONCERNING MOTOR VEHICLE RESTRICTIONS FOR STATE-SUPPORTED INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1697
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Carr
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Dotson
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	July 1, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-63-305, 19-4-906
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act amends the maximum number of new additional positions established for the biennium for state-supported institutions of higher education specified in this Act at salary rates not to exceed the salary rate or the highest grade-level position of comparable positions established in the regular salaries section of the appropriations act for operations for each institution. It also amends the maximum number of passenger motor vehicles used to purchase, lease for over thirty days, operate, repair, or provide services except in an emergency as proclaimed by the governor.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 560/779

AN ACT TO CREATE A MORE SUSTAINABLE SYSTEM OF PROPERTY INSURANCE FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS, STATE-SUPPORTED INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION, AND STATE-OWNED PROPERTY; TO CREATE THE OFFICE OF PROPERTY RISK WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSFORMATION AND SHARED SERVICES; TO AMEND THE PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL INSURANCE ACT; TO REVISE THE EMPLOYEE BENEFITS DIVISION OVERSIGHT SUBCOMMITTEE; TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS MULTI-AGENCY INSURANCE TRUST FUND ACT; TO COMBINE PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS WITH STATE-SUPPORTED INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND STATE-OWNED PROPERTY UNDER A SINGLE PROGRAM TO ENSURE PROPER VALUATION FOR PROPERTY INSURANCE PURPOSES; TO CREATE THE STATE CAPTIVE INSURANCE PROGRAM ACT; TO PROHIBIT THE USE OF PUBLIC ADJUSTING IN PROPERTY INSURANCE CLAIMS; TO ALLOW FOR THE CREATION OF A CAPTIVE INSURANCE COMPANY BY THE STATE OF ARKANSAS; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 481
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senators Gilmore, Boyd, Bryant, Davis, Dismang, Hester, Hill, Irvin, B. Johnson, Petty, Rice, Stone
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Wardlaw, Evans, Shepherd, Achor, Allen, Beaty Jr., Bentley, M. Brown, J. Carr, Cavanaugh, Cozart, Crawford, Dalby, Eaves, Eubanks, Gramlich, Hawk, Holcomb, Jean, Maddox, McNair, Milligan, J. Moore, Painter, Pearce, Puryear, J. Richardson, Richmond, Steimel, Vaught, Walker, Warren, Whitaker, Wing, Wooldridge, Wooten
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	April 17, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-20-1503, 6-20-1505, 6-20-1506, 6-20-1508, 6-20-1513, 6-21-114(d) - (e), 6-21-806, 10-3-320, 19-3-706, 19-5-1134, 19-5-1161, 23-63-1614, 23-63-1625, 23-65-315, 25-35-102, 25-35-103(b), 25-35-104(a), 25-35-105(b), 25-35-107, 25-35-108, 25-44-101 - 25-44-111
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act creates the Captive Insurance Program to provide property insurance for public schools, state-supported institutions of higher education, and state-owned property. Public schools and state agencies that accept a state appropriation for a facility must participate in the program. The Arkansas Insurance Department will now provide cybersecurity insurance for public elementary and secondary schools and can require public schools to furnish a complete report of its cybersecurity insurance program to it. This Act also requires that the Academic Facilities Master Plan be submitted to the Department of Transformation and Shared Services in addition to the Department of Education and must comply with both agencies' rules.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 564

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING HIGHER EDUCATION; TO AMEND THE LAW RELATED TO THE PROPERTY AND FINANCES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS; TO AMEND THE LAW RELATED TO BONDS; TO AMEND THE LAW REGARDING RENTS, TOLLS, FEES, AND OTHER CHARGES RELATED TO ATHLETIC CONTESTS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 545
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator M. Johnson
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative Dalby
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-62-302, 6-62-305, 6-62-311
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act authorizes the boards of trustees of the University of Arkansas, Arkansas State University, University of Central Arkansas, Arkansas Tech University, and Southern Arkansas University to acquire, improve, install, license, lease, or equip other facilities, improvements, leaseholds, infrastructure, technologies, or any other tangible or intangible properties that the board of trustees deems proper or suitable for the school. The boards also may enforce rules regarding their property.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 566

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW REGARDING HIGHER EDUCATION; TO ESTABLISH THE STRENGTHENING ARKANSAS EDUCATION ACT; TO PROVIDE A CORE CURRICULUM AT STATE-SUPPORTED INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1696
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative McAlindon
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Dotson
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	Beginning with the Fall 2027 entering class
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-41-704(2), 6-41-804(2), 6-61-105, 6-61-144, 6-61-218
RULE PROMULGATION	Yes

SUMMARY

This Act creates the Arkansas Requisite Core Curriculum. Beginning with the entering class of Fall 2027, the Division of Higher Education, in consultation with state-supported institutions of higher education, is required to establish a minimum general education core curriculum that shall include the requisite core curriculum and apply toward the minimum requirements for associate and baccalaureate degree programs. Core curriculum classes are required to be included in the requisite core curriculum: two three-semester credit hours of oral or written communications; a three-semester credit hour course that cultivates critical thinking, problem-solving, and logical reasons; a three-semester credit hour course of American history; and a three-semester credit hour course of American government that includes instruction on the essentials of the United States Constitution and the study of American institutions and ideals.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 645

AN ACT TO MODIFY THE DEFINITION OF “HEALTHCARE PROVIDER” REGARDING STUDENT ATHLETE CONCUSSION EDUCATION TO INCLUDE CHIROPRACTORS OR CHIROPRACTIC PHYSICIANS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 467
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Penzo
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Gramlich, Achor
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-18-710(a)(1)
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act amends the definition of “healthcare provider” implemented by Act 266 of 2025 regarding student athlete concussion education by adding chiropractors or chiropractic physicians. Act 266 requires that if a student is concussed during a game, activity, or practice for a game, the student shall be removed and cannot return until a healthcare provider gives the student written clearance.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 649

AN ACT TO CREATE THE PUBLIC SCHOOL ACCESS AND TRANSPARENCY ACT; TO REQUIRE PUBLIC ACCESS TO LEARNING MATERIALS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 572
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Dotson
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative McAlindon
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 25-19-103, 25-19-105
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act amends the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to define “learning materials” to include curricula, syllabi, lesson plans, instructional materials, assignments, presentations, books, articles, video recordings, audio recordings, digital resources, and other resources that are used for classroom instruction regardless of format or medium. It excludes tests or other assignments. Public schools are prohibited from denying access to learning materials on the basis of a copyright or intellectual property exemption. New language prohibits public schools from entering into a contract for learning materials that does not allow for release under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). This Act also prohibits non-disclosure agreements from being a prerequisite of assessing learning materials. Finally, this Act allows the inspection of materials that would be “impractical” to duplicate, e.g. a book, to be inspected during normal business hours.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 714

AN ACT TO AMEND THE SALES TAX EXEMPTION FOR FOOD, FOOD INGREDIENTS, AND PREPARED FOOD SOLD IN A PUBLIC, COMMON, HIGH SCHOOL, OR COLLEGE CAFETERIA OR DINING FACILITY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1851
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Jean
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Crowell
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	October 1, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 26-52-401
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act clarifies that a dining facility operated by a school or institution of higher education, primarily for teachers and pupils, and not operated primarily for the public is exempt from sales taxes even if those dining facilities are operated by a for-profit contractor.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 721

AN ACT TO PROHIBIT ANTISEMITISM IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS; TO PROHIBIT ANTISEMITISM IN STATE-SUPPORTED INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 352
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senators Stone, Gilmore, Hester, B. Johnson, Davis, McKee, Dotson, Boyd
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Beaty Jr., McKenzie, Gramlich, Walker, Achor, Andrews, Barker, Bentley, Breau, Brooks, A. Brown, K. Brown, M. Brown, N. Burkes, J. Carr, J. Carr, Cavanaugh, Cozart, Crawford, Eaves, Eubanks, Furman, Hawk, Holcomb, Lundstrum, Maddox, McClure, McNair, J. Moore, Ray, Richmond, Rose, Rye, M. Shepherd, Underwood, Unger, Vaught, Warren, Wooten
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-16-2001 et seq., 6-60-1601 et seq.
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act is designed to prohibit harassment or discrimination based on antisemitism to an equal extent that harassment or discrimination based on race is prohibited. Publicly-funded educational institutions, both K-12 and institutions of higher education, are required to update their policies and practice consistent with the Act. The Arkansas Department of Education is required to designate a Title VI coordinator to receive complaints of discrimination or harassment including but not limited to antisemitism. The Title VI coordinator must determine whether the institution engaged in, allowed, or has not taken necessary actions in response to alleged wrongdoing. If the school or institution of higher education fails to make necessary correction within thirty (30) days of notice by the coordinator, the coordinator shall report its finding to the U.S. Department of Education and the Department of Justice by making a complaint. The Arkansas Department of Education also is required to report to the General Assembly including the number and type of discrimination-related incidents, the category of bias-motivation, and a statement regarding the resolution or status of the matter.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 727

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING HIGHER EDUCATION;
TO ESTABLISH THE ARKANSAS RURAL PRECEPTORSHIP PROGRAM
ACT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 504
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Irvin
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative L. Johnson
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-60-1601 et seq.
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act establishes a “Rural Preceptorship Program,” which is essentially a mentoring program that will be designed to incentivize students in medical fields to spend time in rural medical practices. This Act will direct the Division of Higher Education to “administer the program” and to pay a per diem to the four participating institutions to reimburse a participating student for up to three weeks of placement within the new program. This Act provides that the funding may be from public or private sources. The four participating institutions are the (1) University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences; (2) Arkansas College of Osteopathic Medicine; (3) New York Institute of Technology College of Osteopathic Medicine at Arkansas State University; and (4) Alice L. Walton School of Medicine.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 731

AN ACT TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS STUDENT DUE PROCESS AND PROTECTION ACT; TO REQUIRE AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO INFORM A STUDENT OF HIS OR HER RIGHT TO REPRESENTATION; TO AMEND THE TIME FRAME FOR APPEALS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	Senate Bill 618
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Senator Irvin
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Representative McKenzie
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-60-1404
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act amends the Arkansas Student Due Process and Protection Act. Institutions will now be required to advise a student under investigation or disciplinary proceeding under this statute to seek legal representation. The student will now only have seven (7) days instead of the current twenty-five (25) days to request an appeal after receiving an institution's final notice of decision.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 802

AN ACT TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS BRIGHTER FUTURE FUND PLAN ACT; TO ADOPT CHANGES IN FEDERAL LAW CONCERNING TAX-DEFERRED TUITION SAVINGS PROGRAMS; TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING INCOME TAX LIABILITY FOR DISTRIBUTIONS FROM AN ARKANSAS BRIGHTER FUTURE FUND PLAN OR OTHER TAX-DEFERRED TUITION SAVINGS PROGRAM TO A ROTH INDIVIDUAL RETIREMENT ACCOUNT; TO ADOPT FEDERAL LAW CONCERNING THE INCOME TAX TREATMENT OF ROLLOVER CONTRIBUTIONS FROM AN ARKANSAS BRIGHTER FUTURE FUND PLAN OR OTHER TAX-DEFERRED TUITION SAVINGS PROGRAM TO A ROTH INDIVIDUAL RETIREMENT ACCOUNT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1085
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative K. Brown
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator English
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	Tax years beginning on or after Jan. 1, 2024
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-84-101 et seq.
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act modifies the law governing tuition savings accounts established under the Arkansas Brighter Future Fund Plan that are tax advantaged savings plans allowing funds to be transferred to a Roth Individual Retirement Account. Rollover contributions from tuition savings accounts established under the Arkansas Brighter Future Fund Plan or any other state's tax-deferred tuition savings program are exempt from being computed in Arkansas tax income liability.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 806

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING HIGHER EDUCATION; TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE ADMISSIONS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS COLLEGE OF MEDICINE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1833
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Shepherd, Achor, Allen, Brooks, M. Brown, Cavanaugh, Clowney, Collins, Eaves, Evans, Gramlich, Hawk, L. Johnson, Maddox, Perry, Pilkington, Torres, Tosh, Underwood, Warren
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senators Davis, Boyd, Hester, Leding
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-64-406(b)
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act restructured the allocation of seats in the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences College of Medicine to reserve twenty-five (25) positions for Arkansans residing in each congressional district. An additional twenty-five (25) positions shall be allocated to applicants residing in Arkansas generally. If there are insufficiently qualified applicants to fill these positions, the remaining positions shall be filled by Arkansas applicants followed by those most likely to complete the program and stay in Arkansas.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 826

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING TUITION BENEFITS FOR SOLDIERS AND AIRMEN OF THE ARKANSAS NATIONAL GUARD; TO PROVIDE ELIGIBILITY FOR A TUITION BENEFIT TO SOLDIERS AND AIRMEN ATTENDING CERTAIN PRIVATE TWO-YEAR AND FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1786
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Brooks
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Bryant
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-60-214
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act allows an Arkansas National Guard soldier or airman to attend two-year or four-year colleges or universities headquartered in Arkansas and which are eligible to receive Title IV student aid. To qualify, the soldier or airman must meet the qualifications required under the section for the existing state-supported institutions of higher education tuition program. The limiting factor for private institutions is that the amount of the benefit must be “equal to the amount that the soldier or airman... would have received under this section if... attending a state-supported college or university.”



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 839

AN ACT TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS STUDENT-ATHLETE PUBLICITY RIGHTS ACT; TO AMEND THE LAW RELATED TO ATHLETIC PROGRAM FUNDING; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1917
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representatives Shepherd, Evans
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Hester
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	A section of this Act dealing with income tax liability is effective for the tax year beginning January 1, 2025. The rest of the act is effective on August 5, 2025.
STATUTE(S)	§§ 4-75-1303, 4-75-1304, 4-75-1305, 4-75-1307, 4-75-1308, 6-62-803
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act modifies the Arkansas Student-Athlete Publicity Rights Act and establishes rules for the compensation of student athletes for their name, image, and likeness. This law generally authorizes institutions of higher education to directly compensate students for the commercial use of the athlete's publicity rights. The Act also authorizes institutions of higher education to revoke or rescind a name, image, and likeness agreement that violates contracts or policies of the institution of higher education. The law provides that the decision of the institution of higher education or its representatives to terminate a name, image, and likeness deal is non-justiciable and makes certain contract terms currently prohibited with respect to a student athlete or third-party licensee permissible if prior written agreement is obtained from the institution of higher education. Obligations requiring prior approval include acts or displays during practices, competitions, or activities and signing name, image, and likeness agreement that are conditioned on athletic performance or lack of performance.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 906

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW REGARDING HIGHER EDUCATION;
TO REQUIRE REPORTING ON THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS
RECEIVING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR A DISABILITY AT INSTITUTIONS
OF HIGHER EDUCATION; TO AMEND THE COMPREHENSIVE
ARKANSAS HIGHER EDUCATION ANNUAL REPORT TO INCLUDE
REPORTING ON STUDENTS RECEIVING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR
A DISABILITY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1728
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Ennett
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Davis
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-60-123, 6-60-703
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act requires institutions of higher education that are eligible to receive Title IV federal student aid funds to report annually to the Division of Higher Education the number of students with disabilities at the institution of higher education based upon the number of students with disabilities who are registered to receive accommodations. This report would include the number of students receiving accommodations; percentage of students registered to receive accommodations of all undergraduate students; and total number of undergraduate certificates or degrees awarded to students with disabilities who are registered to receive accommodations. An institution of higher education is exempt from reporting this data if either the number of students would reveal personally-identifiable information or the total number of students with disabilities is less than three percent (3%) of the student population. This data also would be added to the report for the Comprehensive Arkansas Higher Education Annual Report in Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-60-703.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 907

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW REGARDING HIGHER EDUCATION; TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS RESPOND, INNOVATE, SUCCEED, AND EMPOWER (RISE) ACT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1766
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Ennett
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Davis
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	January 1, 2026
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-60-1601 et seq.
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act is known as the Arkansas Respond, Innovate, Succeed, and Empower (RISE) Act. Institutions of higher education that receive federal aid will be required to adopt a policy in which it evaluates whether a student is considered one with a disability. This will then be used to determine whether to grant the student reasonable accommodations consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students must be informed about the process for requesting reasonable accommodations and should not be reevaluated if the student previously provided proof of permanent disability to that institution of higher education.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 910

AN ACT TO LIMIT THE NUMBER OF CREDITS A STUDENT MAY OBTAIN IN A COURSE CREDIT RECOVERY PROGRAM; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1484
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Gramlich
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Boyd
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	August 5, 2025
STATUTE(S)	§ 6-16-163
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act limits the number of credits a student may obtain when participating in a course credit recovery program to ten credits. The act then sets out eleven categories of students not subject to the limitation.



LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Act 929

AN ACT TO SET FORTH AUTHORIZED DOMAIN EXTENSIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION AND GOVERNMENT WEBSITES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

HOUSE/SENATE BILL	House Bill 1951
BILL SPONSOR(S)	Representative Collins
CO-SPONSOR(S)	Senator Bryant
EFFECTIVE DATE(S)	January 1, 2027, for cities with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants; January 1, 2026, for all other entities
STATUTE(S)	§§ 6-1-109, 14-1-112, 25-1-131
RULE PROMULGATION	No

SUMMARY

This Act requires that beginning January 1, 2026, for everyone but cities with fewer than ten thousand inhabitants (theirs is January 1, 2027), public institutions of higher education will be required to use .edu in website domains as well as email addresses. Additionally, it will now be required that either .gov or .mil, whichever applies, be used for municipal governmental entities, state agencies, boards, and commissions. Waivers may apply.

INDEX

Acts Concerning Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education

Quick Reference Guide	2	Act 501	50
Act 53	9	Act 502	51
Act 116.....	10	Act 503	52
Act 118.....	11	Act 504	53
Act 119.....	12	Act 505	54
Act 120	13	Act 560/779	55
Act 121	14	Act 563	57
Act 122	15	Act 565	58
Act 123	16	Act 573	59
Act 134	17	Act 587	60
Act 135	18	Act 631	61
Act 143	19	Act 644	62
Act 159	20	Act 645	63
Act 195	21	Act 646	64
Act 197	22	Act 647	65
Act 229	23	Act 648	66
Act 234	24	Act 649	67
Act 245	25	Act 669	68
Act 247	26	Act 685	69
Act 264	27	Act 695	70
Act 303	28	Act 721	71
Act 304	29	Act 722	72
Act 329	30	Act 724	73
Acts 340/341.....	31	Act 725	74
Act 352	38	Act 726	75
Act 353	39	Act 728	76
Act 355	40	Act 729	77
Act 399	41	Act 730	78
Act 400	42	Acts 732/913.....	79
Act 401	43	Act 756	80
Act 405	44	Act 794	81
Act 472	45	Act 795	82
Act 474	46	Act 796	83
Act 475	47	Act 800	84
Act 476	48	Act 801	85
Act 478	49	Act 803	86

INDEX

Act 804	87	Act 909	99
Act 805	88	Act 910	100
Act 807	89	Act 911	101
Act 808	90	Act 912	102
Act 809	91	Act 914	103
Act 865	92	Act 915	104
Act 878	93	Act 916	105
Act 902	94	Act 917	106
Act 903	95	Act 918	107
Act 904	96	Act 919	108
Act 905	97	Act 920	109
Act 908	98	Act 938	110

Acts Concerning Higher Education

Quick Reference Guide	112	Act 564	137
Act 10	115	Act 566	138
Act 14	116	Act 645	139
Act 25	117	Act 649	140
Act 165	118	Act 714	141
Act 196	119	Act 721	142
Act 305	120	Act 727	143
Acts 340/341	121	Act 731	144
Act 351	128	Act 802	145
Act 354	129	Act 806	146
Act 355	130	Act 826	147
Act 402	131	Act 839	148
Act 429	132	Act 906	149
Act 473	133	Act 907	150
Act 477	134	Act 910	151
Act 560/779	135	Act 929	152