

## Pine Bluff Limited Authority Board Report

Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner

This report focuses on the progress made by the Pine Bluff School District since it was placed under state authority in 2018. As a result of significant improvements within the district in various key areas, the Arkansas State Board appointed a limited authority board in December 2022, moving the district one step closer to local control by November 2023. The limited authority board members have exhibited exemplary performance since their appointments and as an entity has proven its capability to govern the district effectively.

Since its establishment, the limited authority board has been instrumental in facilitating the following developments:

1. **Professional Meetings and Commitment to Growth:** The limited authority board has initiated and actively participated in various opportunities for learning and growth in the areas of fiscal management, roles and responsibilities of board members, and due process procedures.
2. **Transparent Decision-Making:** Throughout their time, the limited authority board has consistently emphasized transparency and community engagement in the decision-making process. They have involved various stakeholders in discussions regarding proposals for a new high school and millage, as well as the closure and consolidation of campuses. By allowing community voices to be heard, the board has ensured that decisions are inclusive and well-informed.
3. **Stability and Effective Governance:** The limited authority board has demonstrated stability and effectiveness in governing the district by exhibiting leadership, sound decision-making, and effective management of resources. The board recognizes the dual role of a board and the superintendent and conducts business accordingly. The board has been an essential component in moving the community forward to support the work of the school district.

Despite the ongoing challenges within the district, a solid foundation has been laid to support the improvement of student achievement. The board has demonstrated that they are committed and equipped to lead the work moving forward. The Department of Education remains dedicated to offering unwavering support to enhance academic outcomes and streamline business operations. The Department suggests that the Pine Bluff Limited Authority Board present a proposal to the State Board of Education in September to ensure a seamless governance transition and bring stability to the district.