



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Legislative Update for Earle School District

State Authority

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Submitted by

Office of Coordinated Support & Service

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Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-13-112, a quarterly status report is provided for each school district currently under state authority. The following report is submitted to the State Board of Education, the Chairs of both the House and Senate Education Committees, and others prescribed by law. The current report is part of the new process of quarterly reporting under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Although a district may be under state authority for various purposes, the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) believes that all systems must be fortified in order to have an effective school district. These systems are Academics, Facilities and Transportation, District Operations and Fiscal Governance, Human Capital, Student Support, and Stakeholder Communication/Family and Community Engagement. The major focus of this report will be around the Academic System and District Operations and Fiscal Governance System.

The Academic System consists of academic updates from the district based on the district plan of support. The district plan of support is based on school-level plans that were developed by the schools. These school-level plans are based on the review of data and the development of a continuous cycle of inquiry. The district plan of support includes items that were responsive to the needs of the schools by the district. The ADE then can work in a collaborative manner to support the district based on items identified in the district plan of support and continue to work with the districts to prioritize and identify solutions to further enhance any other systems including the use of ADE supports. ADE will further work with the districts to develop local capacity in addressing each system by developing measurable goals and monitoring progress. This is intended to be reflective in nature and a way for ADE and the districts to be purposeful in their future work together for the betterment of students.

The legislative report consists of information related to the district plan of support. All subsequent reports will be updates on the monitoring of the district plan of support and any other relevant academic information that supports the goals of the schools. In the event that the district is under state authority for fiscal reasons, the report will contain all relevant financial information as well. The final part of the report will be a list of current ADE support provided to the district by system.

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BACKGROUND

Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. §6-20-1905, the Earle School District received notice by certified mail as being identified by the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) for Fiscal Distress status. The District was classified in Fiscal Distress on October 12, 2017 due to the district failing to file an audit report within the nine month time period or within the time period under any extension granted by the Department of Education. The identification is based on acts or violations determined to jeopardize the fiscal integrity of the district including without limitations failure to fully develop and implement adequate corrective actions for previously identified audit findings and deficiencies.

Because of significant findings that jeopardize the fiscal integrity of the district the state assumed authority of the district and appointed Richard Wilde Interim Superintendent on November 6, 2017. As a result of the issues, ADE Commissioner Johnny Key exercised the authority granted under Arkansas Code 6-20-1901 et seq. to assume authority over the board of directors; however, Commissioner Key offered the board the opportunity to remain in place in an advisory capacity to the new superintendent. ADE personnel determined the following Fiscal Distress Indicators during an internal audit:

Title I 2015-16 unallowable expenditures \$300,299.97; 2016-17 unallowable expenditures \$303,436.85

NSL 2015-16 potential unallowable expenditures \$555,128.63; 2016-17 potential unallowable expenditures \$717,429.86

Athletic/Activity Concessions had gate receipts unaccounted for one football game one in concession two and basketball game 17 in concession 20.

Payroll had some contracts that could not be tied to a W2 and some W2's have no contract.

District website was missing documents listing legal balances, budget, salary reports, monthly expenditures reports, student handbook, audits, policy signature page, ASCIP plan, statistical report, and board minutes were not up to date.

Credit card showed unmonitored use/unaccounted for documentation; potential cash advance to cover payroll.

State statute requires quarterly progress monitoring of districts in state authority with updates provided to the legislature. The intent of the requirement for quarterly reporting is to keep both the public and the legislature informed regarding progress toward the exit criteria from state authority. This report seeks to fulfill that

requirement for the Earle School District for quarter four of FY18 and the start of FY19 which is under state authority for fiscal distress.

Updated ESSA School Index By School.

The link [here](#) shows the updated ESSA School Index scores and each indicator for the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school year.

School Level Plans (Links)

[Earle Elementary Plan](#)

[Earle High School Plan](#)

District Support Plan

Background by the District

The Earle School District has a high graduation rate. Generally, this means that students progressing through the Earle School District will graduate with their cohort peers. To accomplish this goal, the district has utilized a number of credit make-up programs ranging from Virtual Arkansas after school to summer credit make-up.

However, this high success in graduation rates does not reflect in high numbers of students completing two or four year colleges. Indeed, data from the ACT and ACT Aspire assessments suggest that less than 30% of our students are prepared for college coursework. Equally concerning is the fact that less than 50% of students attend 95% of the school days. On average, teachers miss more than 10 days of work out of 180 school days. While we have many staff that seldom miss a day of school, we have had others that miss many more than 10 days per year. Thus, when a student with more than 10 days of absence is in a class where a teacher misses more than 10 days, student academic growth is clearly less than we should expect for

a year of school. This problem of low achievement is related to a general feeling that everything is “okay” if my child progresses to the next grade level. The district has reinforced this “feeling” by not closely monitoring the academic growth of each child as we progress through the school year.

Review of our students’ reading levels will show that less than 10% of them read fluently at grade level. The majority of the students read two to four grade levels below their age expectation. Analysis of math assessments reflects similar student progress.

In summary, we as a community and school district appear to be satisfied if our children/students graduate on time, regardless of their lack of skills for work or college. In the past, we have accepted high absences from both students and staff. We have promoted students that give less than minimal effort and we have failed to help students see the importance or relevance of academic knowledge and skills. We have all simply failed to give the majority of children/students a personal vision in which to strive. Furthermore, we have not inspired students to attain skills that will give them options after high school.

Action Strategies at the Schools

So what will the schools do to address the needs of students? The schools have chosen three main strategies to help improve instruction: Standards based instruction, Team Leaders and Team Planning of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and Formative Assessments. The schools will implement these strategies by:

- Preparing teachers to use standards based curriculum including unpacking standards for unit and lesson development
- Training teachers in the science of reading
- Providing resources and materials
- Observing instruction and providing feedback related to research on effective methods of instruction
- Collaborating with the Crowley Ridge Cooperative content specialists to develop units and lessons
- Analyzing student work and formative assessment data to determine instructional plans
- Planning together with PLC teams—sharing ideas and practices

- Increasing instructional support to teachers to gain a better understanding of planning and management to improve both teacher and student attendance

Support Strategies by the District

What will the district do to support the schools? The schools have developed three main strategies to assist in improvement of student achievement. The district will assist the schools in implementing their strategies by:

- Coordinating training of leadership teams in the concepts of a Professional Learning Community
- Providing schools with time and resources to facilitate planning, collaborating and analyzing data
- Collaborating with Crowley Ridge Educational Cooperative to coordinate real time support and high quality professional development for teachers to assist in improving instruction
- Providing ongoing professional development in the Science of Reading
- Monitoring the use of systems and processes to improve efficiency and satisfaction by staff

Instructional Transformation Logic Model

- IF we have an aligned course of study with the appropriate pacing guides and
- IF we focus on quality development of units of instruction with proficiency scales for representative standards and
- IF we engage teachers in deep analysis of student learning related to units of instruction and
- IF we provide adequate resources for students and teachers to engage in learning activities and
- IF we expand staff and student voice in the decision making processes and
- IF we embed professional development for deeper knowledge of the standards and for teaching and assessing DOK into the planning of units of instruction
- IF we adopt and support a learning model based on high levels of student and teacher engagement

- THEN we will develop our teacher talent at the same time we are improving our teacher support which will result in improved student outcomes and an improved Human Capital System

District Quarterly Progress Reports

[Q3 QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT \(Current\)](#)

[Q2 QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT](#)

[Q1 QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT \(Original\)](#)

ADE Systems Supports

The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) continually provides all districts general supports. There are numerous supports that are provided to districts on a daily basis. The items listed below are highlights of some of the supports provided to the district that are beyond general support. **New supports since last report are in bold.**

Academic System

- Support of the district in crafting and review of school-level plans with the aid of the Standards and Systems Support Specialists and Office of Coordinated Support and Service (OCSS)
- Support of the district in review of the District Plan of Support
- Support with RTI
- Notification of CSI Schools.
- Commissioner Key site visit
- Multiple Days of onsite RISE support
- **OCSS Support Meeting with Superintendent**
- **SPED Training for Administrators**
- **Crowley's Ridge Support**
- **RISE Update 1**
- **RISE Update 2**
- **Curriculum Audit**
- **RISE Update 3**
- **OCSS Support Meeting with Superintendent 2**

Student Support System

- Support by SPDG on PBIS and RTI

District Operations and Fiscal Governance System

- Support of the district by providing ADE personnel to assist the district in revising current board policies to align with ASBA Model policies.
- Support of the district by providing ADE personnel to support the district with budgets, business manager functions, training and other fiscal operations.
- Support with Budget and Bus leases
- Additional Support with Budget
- Continued support with board policies related to student discipline
- Unrestricted Budget projections as of 11/19/18
- **Policy Support**
- **Updated Budget projections as of 2/11/19**

Human Capital System

- Support of the district by providing grant funds to cover the cost of EdReflect Premium Services that include video observations
- Support of the district by providing ADE and OCSS personnel to train in TESS/LEADS
- Support of the district by providing ADE and OCSS personnel to train in TESS Recalibration
- Support of the district by hosting an Equity Lab onsite that included multiple stakeholders with the purpose of aiding the district to review human capital data. This will result in action plans developed by the team to lead to effective teachers in every classroom
- Training on Standards for Accreditation
- Support by State Leadership Coach on TESS Observations at all building
- [Principal Support Update 1](#)
- [Principal Support Update 2](#)
- [Principal Support Update 3](#)

Facilities and Transportation System

- Support of the district in planning for facility needs in the future by ADE personnel including development of the master facility plan and partnership applications
- Support of the district in planning and construction of the new elementary school. This includes ADE staff to work on the financial portion as well as working with construction manager and architect
- Support with Bus Leases
- Support by ADE and other state agencies with elementary sidewalk preservation

Stakeholder Communication/Family and Community Engagement

- No supports at this time