



# Division of Elementary and Secondary Education

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May 1, 2020

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Dr. Zrano Bowles, Superintendent  
Lee County School District  
214 S. Alabama St.  
Marianna, AR 72360

**Re: Notice of Probationary Status Review Hearing  
(Via email and Certified Mail)**

Dear Dr. Bowles:

On March 10, 2020, the Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education began onsite monitoring in the Lee County School District. Indicators from the 2019-2020 Standards and Accreditation Monitoring Tool were assessed. The Lee County School District and Anna Strong Learning Academy were found to be in violation of the Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts for the following reasons:

1. **Standard 1-C.1** Each public school district must comply with the laws of the State of Arkansas and the rules of the Division regarding the statewide student assessment system. (*District Probationary*)

Specifically, the District did not administer the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA21) to identified English Learners.

2. **Standard 2-J.2** Each public school district shall offer a Language Instruction Educational Program for identified English Learners in accordance with the laws of the State of Arkansas and the rules of the Division. (*School Cite*)

Specifically, Anna Strong Learning Academy has twelve (12) students identified as English Learners that are not participating in an approved English support program.

At the June 11, 2020, State Board of Education meeting, the Division will recommend that Lee County School District be assigned Accredited – Probation Year 2 status and that Anna Strong Learning Academy be assigned Accredited - Cited status for the above-listed violations. The meeting will be held at 10:00 a.m. in the auditorium of Arch Ford Education Building, Four Capitol Mall, Little Rock, Arkansas. You will be notified if the format of the meeting changes due to the continued restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The hearing will be conducted pursuant to the authority vested in the State Board by The Quality Education Act of 2003, Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-201 *et seq.*, and the Rules Governing the Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts. District officials who can respond to State Board questions should attend this hearing. If the State Board places the District in probationary status, it must take one or more of the actions listed in Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-207 and Section 9.00 of the Rules Governing Standards for Accreditation unless the State Board, at its discretion, issues written findings supported by a majority of the State Board that the school district could not meet current standards for the relevant time period due to impossibility caused by external forces beyond the school district's control.

Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-203, the District has the right to appeal the Division's determination to the State Board at this hearing. Any appeal must be filed with my office on or before May 16, 2020. Any exhibits or other documents that the District wishes to submit to the State Board should be sent to me via email at [Deborah.Coffman@arkansas.gov](mailto:Deborah.Coffman@arkansas.gov) no later than noon on Thursday, May 27, 2020. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or require further information.

Respectfully,



Deborah Coffman, Assistant Commissioner Public School Accountability  
Arkansas Department of Education  
Phone: 501-682-1298

cc: Johnny Key, Commissioner of Education  
Ivy Pfeffer, Deputy Commissioner of Education  
Lori Freno, General Counsel