92nd General Assembly
Regular Session

Dr. Richard Abernathy
AAEA Executive Director

Dr. Tony Prothro
ASBA Executive Director
Some New Acts of 2019
Public School Districts and Open Enrollment Charter Schools shall include a literacy plan in their annual school-level improvement plan.

The Literacy Plan shall include without limitation a curriculum program and a professional develop program that is:

A) Aligned with the literacy needs of the district
B) Based on the Science of Reading

Beginning in 2020-2021 school year, a public school or open-enrollment public chart school that does not provide the PD required by this Act shall:

A) Be placed in probationary status; and
B) Provide notice to parents that the public school district has not met the requirement of the Act.
Allows for certified law enforcement officers, either on duty or off duty, to carry open or concealed handgun in any publicly owned building or facility, which would include school campuses.
SB 199 - Creates the School Counseling Improvement Act of 2019

• Repeals the Public School Student Services Act
• A school counselor shall spend at least ninety percent (90%) of their time during student contact days providing direct and indirect services to students.
• A school counselor shall not exceed more than ten percent (10%) of their time working on administrative activities during student contact days.

• Current law requires:
  • 75% Direct and Indirect Services
  • 25% Administrative Activities
SB 205 - Amends the Law Concerning Ethics and Campaign Finance

- Requires that unopposed candidates file financial disclosure statements, including school board members.
SB 250 - Modifies Educational Neglect to Include Custodians

- Custodians of a child are now included with Parents or Guardians concerning educational neglect and reports of educational neglect made to the Child Abuse Hotline
SB 336 - The Governors Highway Bill

- Provides estimated $300,000,000 additional revenue for the maintenance and repair of highways, streets, and bridges in the state

- Funding sources for revenue:
  - Additional three percent (3%) gas tax; and six percent (6%) diesel tax = $58,000,000 (Estimated)
  - Additional Fee on electric / hybrid vehicles = $2,000,000 (Estimated)
  - One time transfer from General Revenue = $35,000,000 (Estimated)
  - Raised by extending the half-cent sales tax through the passage of House Joint Resolution 1018, which provides for the issue to be considered by Arkansas voters on the 2020 General Election Ballot = $200,000,000 (Approximate)

$300,000,000 (Approximate)
SB 343 - Concurrent Credit Lottery Scholarship

• Creates the Arkansas Concurrent Credit Scholarship

• Eligibility: If the student is an Arkansas resident or; if the student is less than twenty-one (21) years of age, either the student or one (1) parent of the student is an Arkansas resident; and

• Submits a student success plan that is in consultation with school personnel, the student, the parent or legal guardian; or college advisor; and

• Includes a concurrent course or certificate program that is relevant to the student’s success plan; and measures that ensure the successful completion of the concurrent course or certificate program in which the student is enrolled; and
SB 343 - Concurrent Credit Lottery Scholarship (Continued)

• The student is enrolled as a Junior or Senior
• These scholarships shall be funded with any funds remaining after the Department of Higher Education allocates sufficient funding to award Arkansas Workforce Challenge Scholarships
• A scholarship shall not be awarded for an academic year if less than two hundred fifty thousand dollars ($250,000) is available
• The maximum scholarship award a student may receive in an academic year shall be the lesser of: Five hundred dollars ($500) or the tuition and mandatory fees of the endorsed concurrent credit course or certificate program
SB 381- Prohibits Corporal Punishment on Disabled Students

• Prohibits the use of corporal punishment on students who are intellectually disabled, non-ambulatory, non-verbal, or autistic
• Public School Districts and Open-Enrollment Charter Schools may establish and appoint an institutional law enforcement officer.

• Institutional law enforcement officer means an individual who is appointed by an executive head to exercise law enforcement authority on the property of an institution

• ILEO’s have the same authority as SRO’s

• An executive head of an institution may designate and appoint at least one (1) of the employees of the institution as an institutional law enforcement officer
Before an executive head may appoint a district ILEO, the institution shall appear before the Arkansas commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Training to be declared a new law enforcement agency.

A disadvantage would be that the district would be specifically liable for any constitutional violations by the ILEO, which would have previously gone to the SRO’s employer.
SB 409 - Fair Notice and Efficiency in Public Works Act

• Allows for the electronic notification of an invitation for bids and electronic submission of bids

• Before the notification of invitation for bids were required to be published in a newspaper of general circulation published in the county in which the proposed improvements were to be made; and the sealed bid was required in written format
SB 445 - Provides for a March Primary Election on Presidential Election Years

• Moves the date of the preferential primary election on the years when presidential elections are held to the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March.

• Moves the timeline for the submission of candidate petitions for the elections that would now be March to begin on the first Monday in November prior to the preferential primary election.

• Changes the date for school board elections in odd years to be the third Tuesday in May.
SB 477 - Amends Provisions of Public School Accountability

• Amends language in Closing the Achievement Gap program to match ESSA

• Amended language from, “chronically under performing schools” to “schools identified as in need of comprehensive support and improvement, additional targeted support, or targeted support and improvement under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act”, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act
The ADE may approve a course for weighted credit if the course:
  - Exceeds the curriculum standards for a nonweighted credit class; or
  - Meets or exceeds the standards of a comparable advanced placement course

The ADE in collaboration with the Department of Career Education may approve a career and technical course for weighted credit if the course:
  - Exceeds the curriculum standards for a nonweighted class; and
  - Leads to an approved industry recognized certification
SB 483 - ADE Fiscal Distress Update

• Amends provisions of Arkansas Code concerning public school fiscal accountability and reporting
• ADE will establish a system which shall review the financial management practices of public school districts, including without limitation identifying best financial management practices
• The program shall identify, assess, and address public school districts in any phase of fiscal distress and that includes without limitation identification of early indicators of fiscal distress and early intervention in public school districts that experience early indicators of fiscal distress; and
• The System will provide for continuous fiscal support and monitoring to public school districts that have been returned to local control after being identified as in fiscal distress
SB 490 - Expands Eligibility for Succeed Scholarship Program

• Student eligibility to participate in the Succeed Scholarship program was expanded to include:
  • Students who have been in the foster care system and achieved permanency through adoption, reunification, or permanent guardianship;
  • Students who have been medically diagnosed by a licensed physician as a child with a disability (without going through the IEP procedures);
  • Students who participated in the Succeed Scholarship Program during the prior school year and have not yet graduated from high school or attained twenty-one (21) years of age;
SB 535 - Revises Academic Facilities Wealth Index Calculation Method

Alters the formula for determining Partnership Fund Percentage Eligibility in two major ways:

• Amends the ADM determination to be the highest over the last ten (10) years rather than the last three (3) years; and
• Includes the medium household income in the district’s geographic boundaries as a portion of the formula

• See Act 1080 at the web address below for new calculation method: http://www.arkleg.state.ar.us/assembly/2019/2019R/Acts/Act1080.pdf
SB 538 - ADE Waivers Update

- A school district is no longer required to have students who live in their district, attending a charter school, to apply for the same waivers that a charter school receives.
- School districts now may apply for the same waivers any charter school receives, regardless of whether the district has students living in the district attending a charter school.
- Waivers shall not be granted for a period of time exceeding five (5) years.
- Allows the ADE to create rules governing the receipt of waivers by districts.
SB 549 - ADE Facility Distress Update

• Updated the State Board’s authority over districts classified in facilities distress to match the State Board’s authority from Act 930 of 2017 with the exceptions of the inability to waive the Teacher Fair Dismissal Act and the Public State Employee Fair Hearing Act.
• Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, the ADE shall provide:
  • Level 3 – Coordinated support to a public school district in which forty percent (40%) or more of the public school district’s students score “in need of support” on the state’s prior year summative assessment for reading

  • Level 3 – Coordinated support shall be provided in collaboration with the public school district's educational service cooperative; and

  • Level 4 – Directed support to a public school district in which fifty percent (50%) or more of its students score “in need of support” on the state’s prior year summative assessment for reading
A public school district in which forty percent (40%) or more of the public school district’s students scored “in need of support” on the state’s prior year summative assessment for reading shall develop a literacy plan as part of the public school district support plan.

- The literacy plan shall include:
  - Goals for improving reading achievement throughout the public school district
  - Information regarding the prioritization of funding, including without limitation national school lunch state categorical funds, for strategies to improve reading achievement throughout the public school district
SB 605 - NSLA to ESAF

- Amends the name of National School Lunch State Categorical funding (NSLA) to Enhanced Student Achievement Funding (ESAF)
SB 638 - Expand Interstate Compact for Military Children

• Ensures that all children of the uniformed services members, including active and activated reserve components of the uniformed services receive the benefits of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Children of Military Families

• Such as a military child transfers into a district and:
  • the receiving district has specific graduation requirements, the receiving district is required to accept credit from transferring district even though the course was not the exact course as in the receiving district
  • tryouts for activity teams had already occurred, the military student must be given an opportunity to tryout
SB 654 - Civil Penalty for Fake Service Animals

• Authorizes a civil penalty for misrepresenting an animal as a service animal not to exceed two hundred fifty dollars ($250) for each violation
• Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, each public school shall provide bleeding control training as a component of a health course to be taught to students in grades nine through twelve (9-12)

• The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Department of Health, shall develop this required bleeding control training using instructional materials developed or endorsed by the: American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma, the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians, or the Department of Health.
Audit training is part of the initial nine hours a new board member must receive by December 31 of the year after being elected.

Regardless of whether the board member was elected in May or November.
HB 1022 - Mandated Reporter Immunity from Criminal or Civil Penalties

• Reassures mandated reporters are immune from criminal or civil penalties when performing their duties in good faith.

• Provides a single section of Arkansas code where mandated reporters may see responsibilities

• Provides a complete list of who is a mandated reporter
HB1023 - Reduces Number of Sex Offenders at School Sponsored Events

• Reduces the degrees of kinship (consanguinity) a Level 3 sex offender must be related to a student in order to attend school sponsored ticketed events from four (4) to two (2) or a student’s great-grandparent.

• Level 3 sex offenders related at the third degree, except for great-grandparents, and beyond would be prohibited from attending ticketed school sponsored events - entirely.
HB 1145 - Teacher Salary Enhancement Act

- Increased the State Minimum Teacher Salary Schedule:

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HB 1167 - Sunscreen at School

• Students may possess and use an over-the-counter topical sunscreen while on school property or at a school-related event or activity

• Before, the only person authorized to administer an over-the-counter medication was the school nurse

• Also allows students to use or possess sunscreen without a prescription
Military children are exempt from school choice application deadline of May 1.

Students whose parent or guardian resides on a military base may request for a school choice transfer at any time during the calendar year in which the student intends to transfer, so long as they make the request within fifteen (15) days from when they move into a district.

This transfer will be effective upon the approval of the accepting school board at its next regularly scheduled meeting.
HB1182 - Distracted Driving/Wireless Telephone

- Makes the use of a handheld wireless telephone in a school zone a primary offense (an offense for which you can be pulled over)

- Does not apply to law enforcement officers engaged in the performance of his or her official duties

- A law enforcement officer may stop or detain a driver of a motor vehicle solely to determine compliance
HB 1223 - Bus Driver Health Insurance Eligibility

- A full-time school bus driver who is employed by a public school district to drive regular routes during the annual school year is eligible to participate in the state and public school life and health insurance program.
A disability retiree may be employed by a school and also receive disability retirement for LESS than 80 days. (Previously 40 days)
• Amends a provision for funding the public school employer contribution for ATRS from 14% to 15%.

• Funds appropriated by the State of AR (old language said appropriated to the ADE).
HB 1316 - ATRS

• Expands the eligibility for a dependent child to draw an annuity after a parent is deceased to 18-23 if they are continuously enrolled as a full-time student. (Previously the child had to be 18 or under to be eligible)
HB 1356 - Hunger Free Students Bill of Rights Act

- Requires a school to provide a meal or snack even if the student is unable to pay or does not have enough existing funds in their account

- If a student owes money for a meal or snack that is in excess of the amount charged a student for five (5) lunches, or another amount as determined by the student's school district, a school may contact the parent or guardian of the student to: (1) Attempt collection of the owed money; and (2) Request that the parent or guardian apply for meal benefits in a federal or state child nutrition program
If a student is unable to pay for a meal or snack or owes money for a meal or snack, a school shall not:

- Require the student to wear a wristband;
- Give the student a hand stamp;
- Require the student to dispose of a meal or snack after the student is served the meal or snack;
- Require the student to sit in a location separate from other students;
- Publicly make known the name of the student; or
- Perform any other action that may stigmatize the student.
A school district Board of Directors may implement a drug screening requirement for:

- Pre-employment drug screening of an individual who applies for employment at a public school district; or
- Random drug screening of current employees

Drug screening means; a chemical test administered for the purpose of determining the presence or absence of a drug in an individual’s blood, breath, or urine

Under SCOTUS interpretation of the search provision of the 4th Amendment, public employees must perform certain job duties to be eligible to be drug tested. Therefore, districts should consult with local counsel before implementing such policies.
• Adds section to current law to state the school districts committee on personnel policies shall review annually:
  • The school district’s student discipline policies; and
  • State and district discipline data and make recommendations based on the data

• Adds to current law to include programs, measures, or alternative means and methods to continue student engagement and access to education during periods of suspension or expulsion
HB 1400 - Succeed Scholarship Transparency Bill

• Requires a Succeed Scholarship biennial study, to be conducted by the House and Senate Committees on Education, to determine the following information:
  • The number of students currently participating in the program
  • The number of students currently participating in the program who:
    • Attended a traditional public school before receiving a Succeed Scholarship;
    • Did not attend a traditional public school before enrolling in a private school upon receipt of a Succeed Scholarship;
    • Have been dismissed from the Succeed Scholarship Program by a private school that is receiving funds through the Succeed Scholarship Program;
    • Who attended a private school with a Succeed Scholarship and voluntarily returned to a traditional public school;
• The number of children in foster care who have entered the Succeed Scholarship Program, have been dismissed from the Succeed Scholarship, or have been removed from the Succeed Scholarship Program by the Department of Human Services;

• The number of private schools receiving Succeed Scholarship funds that are currently accredited by the Arkansas Nonpublic School Accrediting Association or another accrediting association recognized by the State Board of Education;

• The number of private schools receiving Succeed Scholarship funds that are currently unaccredited but have applied for accreditation to Arkansas Nonpublic Accrediting Association or another accrediting association recognized by the state board, and where those schools are in the accreditation process;
• The number of students who are enrolled in the Succeed Scholarship Program and who have taken a nationally recognized norm-referenced test and received the test results;

• The number of students with individualized education programs under IDEA, who are enrolled in the Succeed Scholarship Program and have been exempted from standardized testing requirements; and

• The number of student portfolios that have been developed for exempt students and a general summary of the information contained in the student portfolios

The House and Senate Education Committees shall review norm-referenced test results and student portfolios; and provide comparative data regarding student performance in the Succeed Scholarship Program biennially, with the first report due on March 1, 2020.
HB 1404 - Publication of District Budget

• Requires a district to publish the district’s budget in a newspaper that is either published in or has a bona fide circulation in the county or counties in which the school district lies

• Before, districts were required to publish the district budget in a newspaper published in the county in which the school district lies or, if the school district lies in more than one (1) county, in the county in which the school district is administered
HB 1409 - Recess is Instructional Time

• Mandates at least forty (40) minutes of instructional time per school day be used for Recess.

• The recess shall consist of supervised, unstructured social time including free play and vigorous physical activity

• Before, schools were required to provide at least forty (40) minutes of P.E. and at least ninety (90) minutes of physical activity per week. The ninety (90) minutes of physical activity could include additional minutes of P.E. or recess
HB 1413 - Private/Home Schooled Students Free Concurrent Credit

- Students attending private or home school who enroll in an endorsed concurrent enrollment course shall not be charged for the course unless the public school district also charges public school students or open-enrollment public charter school students for the endorsed concurrent enrollment class.
HB 1419 - Districts Shall Enroll Private or Home Schooled Students

• A public school district or an open-enrollment public charter school shall adopt a policy that allows a student who attends a private school or a home school to enroll in an academic course(s) at the public school or open-enrollment public charter school if the student resides in the public school district where the public school or open-enrollment public charter school is located.

• The district or open-enrollment charter school will receive 1/6th foundation funding per academic course the private school or home school student attends, not to exceed the full amount of foundation funding.
HB 1420 - Candidate Filing and Petition Circulation Periods / Annual School Election Date Notification Process

• Requires school districts to adopt policy selecting the election timeline the district will use (May or November)

• Extends the timeline for petition circulation to ninety (90) days

• Amends the dates of the candidate filing period to be specific dates rather than so many days prior to the election
HB 1432 - Updated Arkansas Student Publication Act

- Changes the name of student publications to student media
- New section of law added which states:
  - That expression made by a student journalist in student media is not the expression of a school district’s policy
  - Public school officials and district board of directors shall not be held responsible in any civil or criminal action for any expression made or published by a student journalist in student media unless the individual interfered with, altered, or made substantial decisions with respect to the content of the student expression
Mandated Reporters shall notify law enforcement if he or she has a good faith belief that there is a serious and imminent threat to the public based on a threat made by an individual regarding violence in or targeted at a school that has been communicated to the person in the course of his or her professional duties.

The mandated reporter shall make every attempt to immediately notify law enforcement of the serious and imminent threat to the public with twenty-four (24) hours of learning of the threat.

Failure to notify in the first degree is a Class A misdemeanor.

Failure to notify in the second degree is a Class C misdemeanor (Recklessly fails to notify enforcement of the threat).
• Amended Opportunity School Choice to allow a student to be eligible to transfer to another school if the student was attending a school that was classified with a letter grade of “F” or a district classified as in Level 5 – In Need of Support

• The deadline for application for Opportunity School Choice is May 1st

• The Act also returned the Public School Choice application process to the original method of having a parent submit an application to both the resident and non-resident districts rather than only the non-resident district
HB 1485 - Amends National School Lunch Fund Uses

- Increased the statutory number of allowable expenditures for NSL funds, which will now be “Enhanced Student Achievement Funds – ESAF”
- The additional uses include:
  - Student transportation to and from before and after school academic programs
  - Dyslexia programs and interventions
  - Recruiting and retaining effective teachers
- Removes Teach For America, Inc. from list of approved expenditures for NSL funds
HB 1537 - Expands “Parent” for Compulsory Attendance

- Arkansas code concerning attendance requirements for children between the ages of five (5) and seventeen (17) is amended to add to those under which there is a penalty for noncompliance regarding school attendance requirements:
  - Every parent
  - Legal Guardian
  - Person having lawful control of the child, or
  - Person standing in loco parentis
HB 1562 - Tax Appealer Must Pay Amount Owed to County Pending Appeal

• Requires payment to be made for real and personal property tax while an appeal is pending

• Before, the owner of real property appealing a property tax assessment was not required to pay any taxes on the property until completion of the appeal
HB 1569 - Allows Excess Food Distribution

• Allows public schools to adopt a policy permitting the distribution of “excess food” that remains after a school has served breakfast and lunch to students during the school day.

• The method by which “excess food” is distributed shall be established by the public school or open-enrollment public charter school in accordance with the United States Department of Agriculture and the United States Food and Drug Administration requirements and guidelines for the distribution of excess food and in consultation with the Department of Health guidelines.

• The district may develop a policy describing the process for distributing excess food, saving excess food for later consumption, or donating excess food.
Already required local school superintendents and administrative officials of state agencies, this Act adds local public school building administrators or chief administrators, or institutions of higher education, or their respective designees to those who shall prominently display in a conspicuous place a durable poster or framed copy containing the national motto of the United States, “In God We Trust”, if funds are available.

The national motto shall:
- Be easily readable on a poster or framed copy of at least eleven (11) inches by fourteen (14) inches;
- Be the central focus of the poster or framed copy;
- Be displayed in a large font size.

The copies or posters shall either be donated or shall be purchased solely with funds made available through voluntary contributions to local school boards, local building governing entity, or Building Authority Division of the DFA.
The ADE shall identify, develop, and approve an elective Bible course for high school credit by the 2019-2020 school year.
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**ALE Funding**

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- Additional $12,500,000 each year in funding for Professional Learning Communities (PLC’s) in addition to statutory PD funding, totaling $25,000,000 for the biennium.
- For the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 School Year, this Act also includes a table for enhanced transportation funding to districts. This information may be found at this webpage: [http://www.arkleg.state.ar.us/assembly/2019/2019R/Acts/Act667.pdf](http://www.arkleg.state.ar.us/assembly/2019/2019R/Acts/Act667.pdf)
HB 1701 - No Pay for Individual or Group Activity Instruction

- Prohibits the requirement that a student participating in an extracurricular activity, interscholastic activity, or organized physical activity pay for individual or group instruction
HB 1733 - Criminalizes Threat of Mass Violence on School

• “Mass violence” means physical injury that a reasonable person would conclude could lead to permanent injury, including without limitation permanent physical injury, permanent mental injury, permanent emotional injury, or death to two (2) or more people.

• A person commits the offense of threatening to commit an act of mass violence on school property if:
  • The person knowingly threatens to commit an act of mass violence on school property or at a curricular or extracurricular activity sponsored by a school; and
  • Places a person or group of persons in a position to reasonably fear for their safety.

• Threatening to commit an act of mass violence on school property is a Class C felony.
HB 1751 - Remove Favorability for Minimum Wage

• **Repeals** language providing that statutes providing more favorable minimum wage and hour provisions shall govern instead of the state minimum wage

• Example – From July 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018 the classified employee hourly wage at §6-17-2203 was $8.64, which was higher than the $8.50 Arkansas state minimum wage; therefore classified employees were required the higher $8.64 hourly wage.

• In the future classified employees will receive the Arkansas minimum hourly wage regardless of whether the classified hourly wage at §6-17-2203 is higher
• Combines the former Arkansas Department of Education, the Department of Career Education, and the Department of Higher Education into one overarching department

• Converts old departments listed above into divisions under the Department of Education

• The chief officer of the new Department of Education will be the Secretary of Education
HB 1786 - Reporting Students With Immunization Waivers

• Requires public and private schools to report, by posting on their website, the number and percentage of students who have exemptions from or have not provided proof of required vaccinations

• The intent of this Act is to allow the public to know whether enough students have received age appropriate vaccinations to provide herd immunity, which indicates a low percentage rate of a disease spreading

• Removed language (unintentionally) that previously provided a loophole for parents of home schooled students to submit a letter for non-immunization. Now home school students must submit a waiver form from the Arkansas Department of Health to defer immunization (as other students currently submit).
HB 1790 - Virtual Courses for Expelled Students

- Requires a public school district that expels a student to offer to the expelled student digital learning courses or Alternative Educational Services for which the student may receive credit
HB 1847 - Facility Plan to Include Traffic Impact Study

- Requires a school district to notify the Department of Transportation of the district’s new facility site selection so the Department of Transportation may conduct a traffic impact analysis.

- The Department of Transportation will complete a traffic impact analysis within 90 days of receiving a district’s new facility site selection.

- While the Act does not include a set timeline for notification, the update to the Arkansas Division of Public School Facilities and Transportation Manual/Handbook should include a timeline.

- New facility site selections will become part of a district’s Facilities Master Plan in the future, which are due by February 1 each year.
HB 1928 - Record Public Meetings

- Requires all open public meetings to be recorded
- All open public meetings shall be recorded in a manner that allows for the capture of sound including without limitation:
  - A sound-only recording; or
  - A video recording with sound and picture; or
  - A digital or analog broadcast capable of being recorded
- This recording requirement does not apply to executive sessions
- A recording of an open public meeting shall be maintained by the public entity for a minimum of one (1) year from the date of the open public meeting.
• Requires a bullying and cyberbullying prevention professional development program.

• Requires that one time each school year, the superintendent of a public school district shall report to the school board of directors at a public meeting data regarding discipline in the district, including without limitation the number of incidents of bullying reported and the actions taken regarding the reported incidents of bullying.
Notable Bills That Failed, Went to Interim Study or Died
SB 452 - No Public Funds for Membership Dues

- Would have prohibited a public school district from using public funds to pay membership dues to educational professional organizations for Teachers, Classified Employees, or School Board Members, if the educational professional organization used public funds to directly or indirectly engage in lobbying.
SB 539 - The Arkansas Tax Credit Scholarship Act

- Would have allowed individuals or corporations to divert money that would have otherwise gone to State General Revenue to pay for students to attend private K-12 schools

- The private K-12 schools would have little to no required accountability to the public in order to receive these otherwise public funds

- This bill was currently limited to $3,000,000
SB 614 - Elimination of Gun Free Zones

- Intent of this bill was to provide for public safety by eliminating gun free zones

- Would have allowed any individual twenty-one (21) years of age who possessed a concealed carry license to bring a concealed firearm into a school building
SB 620 - Capital Promise Scholarship

• This five (5) year pilot program would have been for students who were:
  • Either receiving the Capital Promise Scholarship for the first time and entering kindergarten in an approved nonpublic school in Pulaski County; or
  
  • Transferring from a public school in Pulaski County at which the student was enrolled for at least one semester immediately preceding the transfer to a nonpublic Pulaski County school; or
    
  • At the time the scholarship was awarded, had a family income that was no more than the amount that qualifies a student for a free or reduced-price meal under NSLA.
HB 1173 - ATRS

- Stress Testing of the retirement system
- “Doomsday”
HB 1206 - ATRS

- Cost of Living Adjustment COLA
HB 1402 - Special Elections in May or November

- Would have moved all special elections, including school millage elections, to either May or November
• Bills purpose was to provide the parent or legal guardian of a public school student who reports to the public school principal, or his or her designee, a qualifying incident occurring on a public school district campus, an opportunity to transfer their student to another public school or to request a scholarship for their student to enroll in and attend an eligible private school.

• Qualifying incidents occurring on a public school campus include:
  - Battery, Harassment, Hazing, Bullying, Kidnapping, Physical Attack, Robbery, Sexual Offenses, Assault, Threats or Intimidation, or Fighting
HB 1832 - Additional Teacher Salary Funding

• Provided for additional funding for public school districts that currently pay a starting salary of $36,000 for teachers

• Intent was to financially supplement public school districts that had already made efforts to sufficiently pay teachers despite financial conditions and were already meeting the amounts required in Act 170

• Thirty four (34) districts would have received additional funding in amounts ranging from $28,744 to $256,728
SB 158 - School Election Process Standardization

- Ensures county clerks and county election commissions utilize the same election procedures in both even and odd year elections.

- Uniform process for all counties when a district’s boundaries fall within multiple counties.
SB 233 - Amends the Law Concerning Notice Requirements for Certain Elections

- Transfers election notification requirements from the school district to the county

- Thus, districts are no longer required to advertise school election notifications, as this responsibility will now be with counties.
SB 235 - Allows School Employees to Act as Election Officials

- The law concerning the qualifications of poll workers in school elections was amended to remove the section which prevented a paid employee of a school district holding the election from being a poll worker.

- Thus, paid employees of a school district may be a poll worker.
SB249 - Increases Ethics Commission Penalties

• Raises the maximum amount of fines that may be levied by the Arkansas Ethics Commission from $2,000 to $3,500
SB 316 - Personal Finance May Be Taken in 9th Grade

• Allows a student in grade nine (9) to earn credit in a course that includes personal and family finance standards

• Before, only students in grades ten (10) through twelve (12) could earn credit in a course that included personal and family finance standards
SB 382 - Reinstatement of a Revoked Teaching License

• The State Board of Education may adopt rules to reinstate a revoked teaching license which shall include information and requirements regarding an application for reinstatement of a revoked teaching license; and the use of evidence by the state board to determine whether the applicant:
  • Is rehabilitated, recovered, or in recovery, as applicable;
  • Has made restitution, as applicable;
  • Is currently fit to return to an educational environment appropriate to the licensure level of the applicant
  • Does not pose a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of public school students and employees
• An applicant for reinstatement of a revoked teaching license shall not apply for reinstatement until:
  • Ten (10) years after the date of revocation of the teaching license for:
    • A felony disqualifying offense;
    • An ethics violation; or
  • Five (5) years after the date of revocation for any other reason
SB 384 - Reimbursement of Educational Costs in a Bordering State

• Provides for consistency in the reimbursement of educational costs for students who are placed in a residential or inpatient facility that is located in a bordering state

• At time of placement, the juvenile’s physician determines that the out-of-state placement is medically necessary and is the most appropriate placement available

• Reimbursement comes from the State Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
SB 561 - The Arkansas Tax Reform Act of 2019

• Transferred certain duties with taxes to Department of Finance Administration from the Secretary of State (ex: franchise tax)

• Requires the State Assessment Board to develop uniform forms and procedures for determining the assessed value of business inventory
• Gross receipts or proceeds derived from sales of tangible personal property at a concession stand operated by a nonprofit youth athletic organization are exempt from sales tax if:
  • The individuals operating the concession stand are members of the nonprofit youth athletic organization or volunteers working on behalf of the nonprofit youth athletic organization; and
  • All of the proceeds from the sales of tangible personal property at the concession stand go to the nonprofit youth athletic organization
  • Effective date October 1, 2019
SB 593 - Create Human Trafficking Training Materials

• ADE and DHS shall collaborate on providing awareness and training materials to local school districts on human trafficking that include without limitation strategies for the prevention of the trafficking of children.

• Training materials shall describe local, state, and national resources to which a student, parent, counselor, or school personnel may consult for information on human trafficking that includes without limitation strategies for the prevention of the trafficking of children.
• Increased the criminal penalties and fines for the unlawful passing of a school bus
  From: not less than $250 nor more than $1,000
  To: not less than $500 nor more than $2,500

If the operator of a motor vehicle or motorcycle fails to comply while demonstrating a reckless disregard for the safety of the passengers of the school bus, the operator upon conviction shall be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor
• Allows districts to adopt policy to allow Licensed out-of-state teaching experience to be included in employee placement on teacher salary schedule.
HB 1467 - Succeed Scholarship for Students With Individualized Service Plan

• Deems a student with an Individualized Service Plan, in accordance with IDEA, eligible for participation in the Succeed Scholarship Program

• Before, students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), in accordance with IDEA, were eligible for participation in the Succeed Scholarship Program, but students with an Individualized Service Plan were not eligible.
• Students who do not withdraw from a AAA governed school are eligible to participate in interschool activity immediately upon approval, regardless of the age of the student

• Students who withdraw from a AAA governed school must still wait 365 days before being eligible to participate
HB 1621 - The Primary Risk Prevention Programs Act

- Allows a district to purchase a training program focused on establishing risk prevention behaviors, in lieu of immediate disciplinary action, in the student population.

- The intent of this Act is for school employees to receive training on how to train students to eliminate risky behavior before the behaviors could result in harm or injury to themselves or others, or the need for them to receive discipline.
HB 1648 - African American History Teaching

- Added Arkansas civil rights leaders and events during the civil rights era to be included in the teaching of African American History
• Expands the types of historical documents and events that may be discussed, read, or posted in a public school building or classroom to include:
  • Amendments 1-10 of the United States Constitution, known as "the Bill of Rights";
  • Thomas Paine's 1776 pamphlet entitled "Common Sense";
  • Executive orders of the presidents of the United States;
  • The Northwest Ordinance; President George Washington's Farewell Address;
  • The Emancipation Proclamation;
  • The Gettysburg Address; and
  • Any other document of historical significance relating to the founding of the United States or the State of Arkansas.
Amends requirements for a driver’s license or instruction permit by removing the requirement for a student to provide a copy of their course schedule and proof of a minimum 2.00 GPA

Before students were required to provide a course schedule to prove that they were enrolled as a full time student and a document signed by the school confirming proof of a minimum 2.00 GPA
• Requires all schools use the exact same audit process, whether using legislative audit or private audit
• For school financial audits, the financial statements shall be presented on a fund basis format with, as a minimum, the general fund and the special revenue fund presented separately and all other funds included in the audit presented in the aggregate
• Financial statements shall consist of:
  • A balance sheet
  • A statement of revenues, expenditures, and changes in fund balances
  • A comparison of the final adopted budget to the actual expenditures for the general fund and the special revenue fund
  • Notes to the financial statements
• Report shall include a report on internal control over financial reporting and on compliance and other matters based on an audit of financial statements performed in accordance with the Government Auditing Standards
  • Shall include as supplemental information a schedule of capital assets, including:
    • Land;
    • Buildings; and
    • Equipment
SB 276 - Moved Preferential Primary Election to February

• Would have moved general primary election dates:
  • From: The third Tuesday in June
  • To: The first Monday in March preceding the general election

• Would have moved preferential primary election dates:
  • From: The Tuesday four (4) weeks before the general primary election (May)
  • To: Three (3) weeks before the general primary election (February)
HB 1373 - Increase Licensure and Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Sealed or Expunged Criminal Records

• Would have allowed an individual to receive a teaching license or to be employed by a district if they had any sealed or expunged criminal conviction

• This would have overridden the current prohibition for people with sealed or expunged criminal convictions based around sexual mistreatment of a minor
HB 1511 - Any Student With an Alternative Education Program is Eligible for Succeed Scholarship

- Required that non-public students with disabilities who were enrolled in a public school, private school, or home school who had an Individualized education program (IEP) or alternate education program (AEP) be eligible for the Succeed Scholarship Program.
Questions & Answers

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