



BureauBrief

**Scholastic Audit
Interim Study Proposal 2011-189**

December 10, 2012

**Prepared for
Representative Johnnie Roebuck**

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INTRODUCTION

A scholastic audit is an analysis of a school's learning environment, efficiency and academic performance. It is conducted by a team of evaluators assembled by the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE). The evaluators visit the school and provide a comprehensive review of its instructional and organizational effectiveness, using nine evidence-based standards (see Appendix A). The scholastic audit provides information about the school's strengths and weaknesses and offers recommendations for improvement.

Since Arkansas began using the scholastic audit in the 2006-07 school year, educators and policy makers have generally viewed the scholastic audit as a useful tool for identifying problems in struggling schools. However, there also have been concerns that the scholastic audit process was not as effective as it could be. Some of the concerns have focused on the following issues:

- A lack of monitoring and follow up on schools' implementation of the scholastic audit recommendations.
- Inadequate screening of scholastic audit evaluators to ensure they have a record of effective school leadership. In some cases, the members of the scholastic audit teams have been administrators of schools that were, themselves, in advanced phases of school improvement.
- School administrators and Education Renewal Zone (ERZ) employees being paid to conduct scholastic audits during their regular work hours.

To explore these issues, Representative Johnnie Roebuck filed an interim study proposal (ISP) with the House Committee on Education. ISP 2011-189 called for the review of strategies to strengthen the school improvement process after a scholastic audit has been performed.

ISP 2011-189 was established to study legislation that proposes adding the following language to the A.C.A. subchapter on school improvement and education accountability:

6-15-2203. School improvement efforts.

(a) For a public school that is in year two (2) or more of school improvement:

- (1) The school district where the public school is located shall pay the cost of a scholastic audit required by the Department of Education; and
- (2) All school improvement efforts that the public school undertakes after a scholastic audit is conducted shall be based on the findings of the scholastic audit.

(b) For a public school that is in year four (4) or more of school improvement, the school district where the public school is located shall pay the cost of a department intervention or restructuring conducted under the rules of the State Board of Education.

To study the issue, Representative Roebuck invited stakeholders from ADE, the Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators (AAEA), the Arkansas Education Association (AEA), the Arkansas Rural Education Association (AREA), the Arkansas School Boards Association (ASBA), and representatives of two school improvement consulting companies to discuss the issues and develop possible solutions. Attendees included the following:

- Representative Johnnie Roebuck
- Dr. Richard Abernathy, AAEA
- Richard Hutchinson, AEA
- Ron Harder, ASBA

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- Tony Prothro, ASBA
 - Bill Abernathy, AREA
 - Dr. Tom Kimbrell, ADE
 - June Haynie, ADE
 - Dr. Donna Gordy, Elbow 2 Elbow Educational Consulting (E2E)
 - Ellouise Tubbs, Osceola STEM Academy
 - Albert Brown, JBHM Education Group
 - Luke Gordy, Arkansans for Education Reform Foundation

The group met on August 15, 2012. This report provides a summary of the information gathered and the solutions discussed during that meeting.

SCHOLASTIC AUDIT IN STATUTE AND RULES

The scholastic audit is an integral part of ADE's school accountability initiatives. State law allows the Department of Education to require chronically underperforming schools to use their National School Lunch categorical funds to pay for scholastic audits [A.C.A. §6-15-2701(c)(2)(A)]. This language, passed as Act 949 of 2009, is the only reference to scholastic audits in the Arkansas Code.

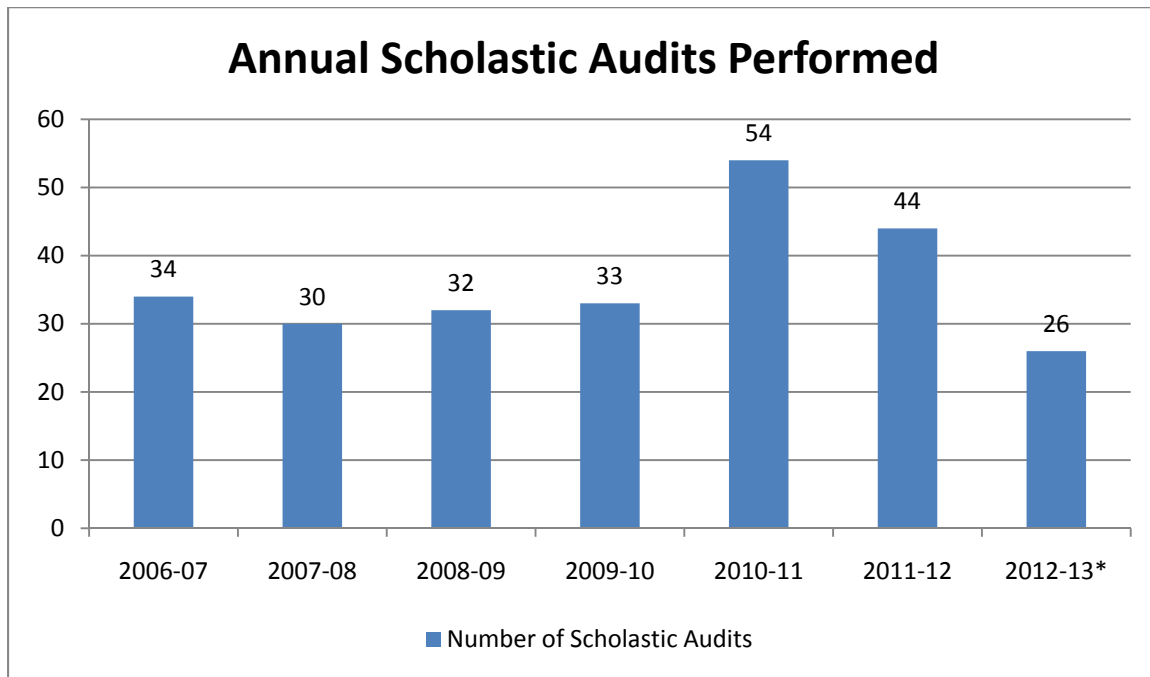
ADE rules approved in 2006 required all schools in year three, four, or five of school improvement to participate in a scholastic audit (Rules Governing the Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment and Accountability Program and the Academic Distress Program, 9.13, January 2006). New rules approved in 2010 expanded the schools required to participate in a scholastic audit by including all schools in year two or more of school improvement.

THE SCHOLASTIC AUDIT PROCESS

ADE adapted its scholastic audit process from the model developed by the Kentucky Department of Education. In a typical scholastic audit, team members arrive in the school's town on a Sunday afternoon. School administrators are asked to bring boxes of documentation, including information on the school's curriculum and profile data, to the scholastic audit team's hotel where the review begins. During the week, team members observe teachers and conduct interviews with educators, students and community members. They spend their evenings documenting the day's observations.

Once the school has reviewed the scholastic audit report, scholastic audit evaluators discuss the findings with any school officials who request a meeting. The actual scholastic audit site visit takes up to five days, but the entire scholastic audit process—from the time the team visits the school to the time the school receives the final report—typically takes four weeks. ADE is hoping to cut that time in half.

The following chart identifies the number of scholastic audits performed each year since the program began.



*Planned scholastic audits for the 2012-13 school year.

During the first semester of the 2012-13 school year, ADE hopes to complete scholastic audits on all of the 48 schools designated as “needs improvement priority schools,” under the state’s newly approved Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility program. The priority schools are the lowest performing 5 percent of schools in the state. Of the 48 priority schools, eleven have never had a scholastic audit. ADE is not requiring priority schools that had an audit in 2010, 2011, and 2012 to have another one in 2013.

Arkansas also has identified 109 “needs improvement focus schools.” Focus schools are those with the largest achievement gaps between students in the Targeted Achievement Gap Group (TAGG) and all other students. The TAGG students are those who fall into one or more of three categories: economically disadvantaged, English Language Learners, or students with a disability. Focus schools will not be required to have an audit. They will be allowed to use an external school improvement consultant instead.

The scholastic audit process has undergone some revisions over the years, but its impact on student achievement and school improvement has never been comprehensively evaluated.

IMPLEMENTATION AFTER A SCHOLASTIC AUDIT

For a number of reasons, some school leaders disregard the scholastic audit and ignore the recommendations. Schools are not required to follow the recommendations. In some instances, school leaders disagree with findings. Other times, the scholastic audit gets lost in the transition from one principal to the next. ADE acknowledged that the follow up process after a scholastic audit is not as robust as the scholastic audit process itself.

Following the scholastic audit, the ADE school improvement advisor assigned to the school will work with school and district leaders on how to implement the recommendations. However, the school improvement advisor has a heavy workload and may not have sufficient time to devote to the significant monitoring efforts.

During the August 15th meeting, Dr. Kimbrell noted that the Arkansas ESEA flexibility plan, approved June 2012 by the U.S. Department of Education, takes steps towards ensuring the scholastic audit is actually used by the schools and its recommendations are implemented.

Arkansas's ESEA Flexibility plan, which replaces the state's school improvement accountability structure, calls for more oversight of the schools with the lowest level of student achievement, known as the priority schools. Priority schools will be required to participate in a scholastic audit (just as schools in year two and above have been required to do in recent years) and the findings will be used to develop a three-year Priority Intervention Plan (PIP).

The scholastic audit will be used to identify the barriers within each priority school's district that prevented the "development of a supportive school culture for high achievement," according to the ADE's Flexibility plan document. The plan allows priority schools to use Title I funds to support implementation of its PIP. It also requires schools to collaborate with an external provider for at least three years, a relationship the school can end only with approval from ADE. Schools will be required to continue interventions under ADE school improvement specialist monitoring for three years after exiting Priority Status to ensure continuity of interventions and sustained progress.

Some external school improvement consultants already incorporate the scholastic audit in their plans for client schools. Dr. Gordy and Mr. Brown indicated that their companies, E2E and JBHM, use the scholastic audit as a roadmap for their school improvement consulting work. It also lends credibility to the companies' own advice, they said, because the scholastic audit is a separate evaluation noting the same problems the companies are pushing their schools to address.

SCHOLASTIC AUDIT COSTS

Typically a scholastic audit costs a school \$25,000 to \$30,000. That price includes payment for team members, lodging and meals during the scholastic audit visit. Scholastic audit team members are paid \$350 per day, and team leaders receive \$450 per day. In 2011 and 2012, school districts spent a total of \$1,174,362 and \$1,063,399, respectively, on scholastic audits.

SCHOLASTIC AUDIT EVALUATORS

The members of the scholastic audit team who visit the schools and perform the evaluation are individual contractors, not ADE employees. Seventy-two people are currently contracted to conduct scholastic audits in the 2012-13 school year. Typically each team is made up of nine people, allowing for about eight teams from the current pool of 72 scholastic audit members. Some team members are recently retired educators; others are staff members of the Education Renewal Zones. Still others are administrators currently employed as principals or superintendents in Arkansas public schools. Teams work in each school for up to five days, but the teams may work in a number of schools throughout the school year. Some teams work in four to five schools during the year, while others work in more. Initially auditors were asked to make a three-year commitment. Recently, ADE has not requested a specific length of time that all auditors must serve.

ADE uses an application process to select interested educators and most team members are self-selected rather than recruited by ADE (see Appendix B). However, ADE does recruit team members from the pool of recently retired, effective educators. An ADE selection committee then reviews the applications and selects qualified candidates. According to the 2012 application, the committee bases its selection on the strength of the applicant's résumé, experience, self assessment questionnaire, and confidential reference questionnaire. Scholastic audit team members are required to participate in a three-day training session, usually held in September. Dr. Kimbrell said the training may need to be provided earlier in the year.

During the August 15th meeting, there was concern voiced regarding currently employed school administrators and ERZ staff working as scholastic audit team members. Many districts do not want their administrators leaving their schools for a week at a time to evaluate schools in other districts. Other districts, however, view this absence as beneficial, allowing administrators to practice identifying a school's strengths and weaknesses and gain experience with the scholastic audit tool. Another complaint from school board members is administrators getting paid by their district as well as by ADE for their scholastic audit work. A similar issue exists for staff members of the ERZs. Some school districts and ERZs require their staff to take personal leave when they accept paid scholastic audit work, while others do not.

Some administrators conducting scholastic audits see the added pay as compensation for the work required outside the normal work day. Scholastic audit team members typically evaluate a school from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. and then meet with team members to discuss and draft their findings until sometimes as late as midnight.

Dr. Kimbrell noted that ADE originally intended to conduct scholastic audits using mostly retired educators. However, he noted that ADE's scholastic audit section is now having to compete with school improvement consulting companies, such as E2E and JBHM, for top retirees. Additionally, changes to Arkansas Teacher Retirement System (ATRS) laws have inadvertently created a barrier to ADE's effort to select recent retirees. Act 743 of 2009 requires retirees younger than 65 or those who have less than 38 years of service to wait 180 days after retirement before returning to work with a covered employer. The legislation was intended to cut down on the number of teachers retiring and immediately going back to work, drawing both a salary and retirement payment—so called double dipping. However, the law may have created new challenges for ADE's ability to attract retirees.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

During the August 15th meeting, the group generally agreed that legislation may not be needed. However, the group made the following changes to the proposed language of the ISP if legislation is later deemed necessary:

6-15-2203. School improvement efforts.

(a) For a public school that is ~~in year two (2) or more of school improvement~~ designated as a priority school:

(1) The school district where the public school is located shall pay the cost of a scholastic audit required by the Department of Education; and

(2) ~~All~~ School improvement efforts that the public school undertakes after a scholastic audit is conducted shall be based on the findings of the scholastic audit.

(b) For a public school ~~that is in year four (4) or more of school improvement~~ designated as a priority school and has not made progress required under the school's Priority Improvement Plan, the school district where the public school is located shall pay the cost of a department intervention or restructuring conducted under the rules of the State Board of Education.

The group also discussed the following possible policy solutions to the problems identified during the meeting.

- Require all ERZs to provide a specified number of days toward conducting scholastic audit, without paying the individual staff members extra money for the scholastic audit work.

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- Require all scholastic audit team members currently employed in Arkansas public schools or in Education Renewal Zones to have the conditions under which they may enter into consulting arrangements spelled out in their employment contracts. For example, a team member's contract must specify the number of days of paid consulting work he or she may be allowed to provide during the school year.
 - Require school districts with priority schools to exchange staff to conduct one another's scholastic audits. This policy could help avoid part or all of the considerable expense of conducting an audit, while also providing school and district leaders with experience evaluating another school. However, swapping staff could dilute the scholastic audit's effectiveness. It could create a situation in which the audit team from one district is motivated to give a positive audit to another district to ensure the audits of their schools are also positive.
 - ADE should send out a notification to all superintendents that the agency is recruiting scholastic audit team members. The notification should include the qualifications for becoming a team member as well as the restrictions on retirement.
 - Require one faculty member from each university education leadership program to volunteer their services and serve as a scholastic audit team member. Each university should provide one faculty member each semester. The requirement could have the added benefit of helping to keep faculty members up to date on classroom practices.

APPENDIX A – SCHOLASTIC AUDIT’S NINE STANDARDS

1.1 CURRICULUM

- 1.1a There is evidence that the curriculum is aligned with the Arkansas Academic Content Standards and Student Learning Expectations.
- 1.1b The district/school initiates and facilitates discussions among schools regarding curriculum standards to ensure they are clearly articulated across all levels (K-12).
- 1.1c The district initiates and facilitates discussions between schools in the district in order to eliminate unnecessary overlaps and close gaps.
- 1.1d There is evidence of vertical communication with an intentional focus on key curriculum transition points within grade configurations (e.g., from primary to middle and middle to high).
- 1.1e The school curriculum provides specific links to continuing education, life and career options.
- 1.1f In place is a systematic process for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the curriculum.
- 1.1g The curriculum provides access to an academic core for all students.

2.1 EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT

- 2.1a Classroom assessments of student learning are frequent, rigorous and aligned with the Arkansas’ Academic Content Standards.
- 2.1b Teachers collaborate in the design of authentic assessment tasks aligned with core content subject matter.
- 2.1c Students can articulate the academic expectations in each class and know what is required to be proficient.
- 2.1d Test scores are used to identify curriculum gaps.
- 2.1e Multiple assessments are specifically designed to provide meaningful feedback on student learning for instructional purposes.
- 2.1f Performance standards are clearly communicated, evident in classrooms and observable in student work.
- 2.1g Implementation of the Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment and Accountability Program (ACTAAP) is coordinated by school and district leadership.
- 2.1h Samples of student work are analyzed to inform instruction, revise curriculum and pedagogy, and obtain information on student progress.

3.1 INSTRUCTION

- 3.1a There is evidence that effective and varied instructional strategies are used in all classrooms.
- 3.1b Instructional strategies and learning activities are aligned with the district, school and state learning goals, and assessment expectations for student learning.
- 3.1c Instructional strategies and activities are consistently monitored and aligned with the changing needs of a diverse student population to ensure various learning approaches and learning styles are addressed.

3.1d Teachers demonstrate the content knowledge necessary to challenge and motivate students to high levels of learning.

3.1e There is evidence that teachers incorporate the use of technology in their classrooms.

3.1f Instructional resources (textbooks, supplemental reading, technology) are sufficient to effectively deliver the curriculum.

3.1g Teachers examine and discuss student work collaboratively and use this information to inform their practice.

3.1h There is evidence that homework is frequent and monitored and tied to instructional practice.

4.1 SCHOOL CULTURE

4.1a There is leadership support for a safe, orderly, and equitable learning environment.

4.1b Leadership creates experiences that foster the belief that all children can learn at high levels in order to motivate staff to produce continuous improvement in student learning.

4.1c Teachers hold high expectations for all students academically and behaviorally, and this is evidenced in their practice.

4.1d Teachers and non-teaching staff are involved in both formal and informal decision-making processes regarding teaching and learning.

4.1e Teachers recognize and accept their professional role in student success and failure.

4.1f The school intentionally assigns staff to maximize opportunities for all students to have access to the staff's instructional strengths.

4.1g Teachers communicate regularly with families about individual students' progress (e.g., engage through conversation).

4.1h There is evidence that the teachers and staff care about students and inspire their best efforts.

4.1i Multiple communication strategies and contexts are used for the dissemination of information to all stakeholders.

4.1j There is evidence that student achievement is highly valued and publicly celebrated (e.g., displays of student work, assemblies).

4.1k The district/school provides support for the physical, cultural, socio-economic, and intellectual needs of all students, which reflects a commitment to equity and an appreciation of diversity.

5.1 STUDENT, FAMILY, COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAMS/SERVICES

5.1a Families and community members are active partners in the educational process and work together with the school/district staff to promote programs and services for all students.

5.1a (Continued) Families and community members are active partners in the educational process and work together with the school/district staff to promote programs and services for all students.

5.1b Structures are in place to ensure that all students have access to all the curriculum (e.g., school guidance, supplemental or remedial instruction).

5.1b (Continued) Structures are in place to ensure that all students have access to all the curriculum (e.g., school guidance, supplemental or remedial instruction).

5.1c The school/district provides organizational structures and supports instructional practices to reduce barriers to learning.

5.1d Students are provided with a variety of opportunities to receive additional assistance to support their learning beyond the initial classroom instruction.

5.1e The school maintains an accurate student record system that provides timely information pertinent to the student's academic and educational development.

6.1 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

6.1a There is evidence of support for the long-term professional growth needs of the individual staff members. This includes both instructional and leadership growth.

6.1b The school has an intentional plan for building instructional capacity through on-going professional development.

6.1c Staff development priorities are set in alignment with goals for student performance and the individual professional growth plans of staff.

6.1d Plans for school improvement directly connect goals for student learning and the priorities set for the school and district staff development activities.

6.1e Professional development is on-going and job-embedded.

6.1f Professional development planning shows a direct connection to an analysis of student achievement data.

6.2 PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND EVALUATION

6.2a The school/district provides a clearly defined evaluation process.

6.2b Leadership provides the fiscal resources for the appropriate professional growth and development of licensed staff based on identified needs.

6.2c The school/district effectively uses the employee evaluation and the individual professional growth plan to improve staff proficiency.

6.2d Leadership provides and implements a process of personnel evaluations, which meets or exceeds standards set in statute and regulation.

6.2e The school/district improvement plan identifies specific instructional leadership needs and has strategies to address them.

6.2f Leadership uses the evaluation process to provide teachers with the follow-up and support to change behavior and instructional practices.

7.1 LEADERSHIP

7.1a Leadership has developed and sustained a shared vision.

7.1b Leadership decisions are focused on student academic performance and are data-driven and collaborative.

7.1c There is evidence that all administrators have an individual professional growth plan focused on the development of effective leadership skills.

7.1d There is evidence that the school/district leadership team disaggregates data for use in meeting the needs of a diverse population, communicates the information to school staff and incorporates the data systematically into the school's plan.

7.1e Leadership ensures all instructional staff has access to curriculum related materials and the training necessary to use curricular and data resources relating to the student learning expectations for Arkansas public schools.

7.1f Leadership ensures that time is protected and allocated to focus on curricular and instructional issues.

7.1g Leadership plans and allocates resources, monitors progress, provides organizational infrastructure, and removes barriers in order to sustain continuous school improvement.

7.1h The school/district leadership provides the organizational policy and resource infrastructure necessary for the implementation and maintenance of a safe and effective learning environment.

7.1i Leadership provides a process for the development and the implementation of district policy based on anticipated needs.

7.1j There is evidence that the local board of education and the school have an intentional focus on student academic performance.

7.1k There is evidence that the principal demonstrates leadership skills in the areas of academic performance, learning environment and efficiency.

8.1 ORGANIZATION OF THE SCHOOL

8.1a There is evidence that the school is organized to maximize use of all available resources to support high student and staff performance.

8.1b The master class schedule reflects all students have access to all of the curriculum (Smart Core).

8.1c The instructional and non-instructional staff are allocated and organized based upon the learning needs of all students.

8.1d There is evidence that the staff makes efficient use of instructional time to maximize student learning.

8.1e Staff promotes team planning vertically and horizontally across content areas and grade configurations that is focused on the goals, objectives and strategies in the improvement plan (e.g., common planning time for content area teachers; emphasis on learning time and not seat time and integrated units).

8.1f The schedule is intentionally aligned with the school's mission and designed to ensure that all staff provide quality instructional time (e.g., flex time, organization based on developmental needs of students, interdisciplinary units, etc.)

8.2 RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND INTEGRATION

8.2a The school/district provides a clearly defined process to provide equitable and consistent use of fiscal resources.

8.2b The district budget reflects decisions made about discretionary funds and resources are directed by an assessment of need or a required plan, all of which consider appropriate data.

8.2c District staff and local board of education analyze funding and other resource requests to ensure the requests are tied to the school's plan and identified priority needs.

8.2d State and federal program resources are allocated and integrated (Safe Schools, Title I, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, NSLA, ALE, ELL, and Professional Development) to address student needs identified by the school/district.

9.1 DEFINING THE SCHOOL'S VISION, MISSION, BELIEFS

9.1a There is evidence that a collaborative process was used to develop the vision, beliefs, mission and goals that engage the school community as a community of learners.

9.2 DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROFILE

9.2a There is evidence the school/district planning process involves collecting, managing and analyzing data.

9.2b The school/district uses data for school improvement planning.

9.3 DEFINING DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING

9.3a School and district plans reflect learning research and current local, state and national expectations for student learning and are reviewed by the planning team.

9.3b The school/district analyzes their students' unique learning needs.

9.3c The desired results for student learning are defined.

9.4 ANALYZING INSTRUCTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

9.4a Perceived strengths and limitations of the school/district instructional and organizational effectiveness are identified using the collected data.

9.4b The school/district goals for building and strengthening the capacity of the school/district instructional and organizational effectiveness are defined.

9.5 DEVELOPMENT OF THE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

9.5a The action steps for school improvement are aligned with the school improvement goals and objectives.

9.5b The plan identifies the resources, timelines and persons responsible for carrying out each activity.

9.5c The means for evaluating the effectiveness of the ACSIP is established.

9.5d The ACSIP is aligned with the school's profile, beliefs, mission, desired results for student learning and analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness.

9.6 IMPLEMENTATION AND DOCUMENTATION

9.6a The ACSIP is implemented as developed.

9.6b The school evaluates the degree to which it achieves the goals and objectives for student learning set by the plan.

9.6c The school evaluates the degree to which it achieves the expected impact on classroom practice and student performance specified in the plan.

9.6d There is evidence of attempts to sustain the commitment to continuous improvement.

Arkansas Department of Education



2012 Scholastic Audit Application Process



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Dr. Tom W. Kimbrell
Commissioner

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Little Rock



Scholastic Audit Team Members:

In Arkansas, we recognize students begin at very different starting points in respect to academic success. However, the finish line is the same for each one: college- and career-readiness. What happens between those mile markers is up to us, the educators.

Therefore, it is imperative we have an education system in place to ensure all students receive the support they need throughout their public school careers to achieve at high levels. The Arkansas Scholastic Audit is the research- and evidence-based tool we use to evaluate "the system" at each school.

As we implement Common Core State Standards and transition to a next generation assessment system, it is critical to consider the implications of these shifts. This year, the state has worked to redesign its accountability system into a more streamlined process that sets ambitious yet achievable goals for all students. The new system focuses state and federal resources on schools most in need of improvement.

Scholastic Audit will be key in the diagnostic review of these schools to ensure accurate conclusions about the root cause of performance.

Schools across the state have found this exercise to be extremely thorough, accurate, occasionally eye opening and almost always helpful. Sometimes the findings are not surprising; sometimes they are painfully obvious but invisible until pointed out by an objective outsider.

Thank you for your interest in supporting the work of the Arkansas Department of Education as a member of our Scholastic Audit team. Your expertise will assist school leaders as they take an objective look at the strengths and weaknesses of their schools in order to capitalize on best practices for the benefit of all students.

Sincerely,

Tom W. Kimbrell, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Education

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What is a Scholastic Audit?

A scholastic audit is a comprehensive review of the learning environment, organizational efficiency, and academic performance of schools and districts. Audit findings will be used to determine the type and level of support necessary to continuously improve student academic performance in each school and district audited.

How will Schools and Districts be Evaluated?

A scholastic audit team will evaluate schools and districts using documents developed by the Kentucky Department of Education that are supported by research-based strategies. (These documents, with the permission of the Kentucky Department of Education, were revised by the ADE for use by the state of Arkansas.) The audit process results in recommendations unique to each school and district to improve teaching and learning. Schools and districts will be advised to incorporate these recommendations into their Arkansas Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (ACSIP).

How are Schools Selected to Participate in a Scholastic Audit?

Arkansas Public Schools identified as being Priority Schools shall participate in a scholastic audit conducted by the ADE or its designees. Other schools may receive an audit upon request.

Who Should Apply?

- *Active or retired teachers
- *Active or retired school level administrators
- *Active or retired district level administrators
- *Active or retired university/college faculty members
- *Prefer retired within the last two years or previous scholastic audit experience.



What Responsibilities Will a Team Have?

The scholastic audit team shall:

- Make recommendations for assistance to the school and the district.

- Submit a comprehensive report following the site visit to the ADE following the site visit regarding:
 1. the appropriateness for the school's classification,
 2. specific recommendations to improve teaching and learning for inclusion in the school's improvement plan
 3. the evaluation of local school board decisions in the critical instructional areas,
 4. the identification of the assistance and resources needed to assist in the revision of the school improvement plan,
 5. the identification of priorities and strategies, which the school or district may adopt to support the improvement effort, and
 6. the identification of district strengths and limitations of its schools' instructional and organizational effectiveness, where applicable.

Need More Information?

For more information about the scholastic audit process, please contact:

Ms. June Haynie
Arkansas Department of Education
Scholastic Audit Unit
Four Capitol Mall, Mail Slot 6
Little Rock, AR 72201
Telephone (501) 683-5780

For a copy of the application, visit the ADE website at <http://ArkansasEd.org>



The Arkansas Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability in employment or the provision of services.

Application
Arkansas Department of Education (ADE)
Scholastic Audit Team Member

Name: _____

Which role group(s) reflect(s) your experience? (Mark all that apply)

	Teacher
	School level administrator
	District level administrator
	University/College faculty member

Which role group would you prefer to represent on the scholastic audit team?

Do you have previous scholastic audit experience? Yes No
When? _____

Present or former employer: _____ Dates of last employment: _____

Work site
(if applicable): _____

Work phone
(if applicable): _____ Ext.: _____

Home Address: _____

Home Telephone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Include the following with application:

- * One page resume citing professional experiences and work history
- * Your responses to the "Candidate Self-Assessment Questionnaire" (attached)
- * Your signed "Individual Commitment Statement" (attached)

Confidential Reference Questionnaire:

- * Ensure that one professional reference using the "Confidential Reference Questionnaire" is submitted on your behalf (attached).

Selection Criteria

A selection committee comprised of ADE scholastic audit program personnel will review applications and select participating members. This committee will base the selections on the following criteria:

- * Strength of resume and experience
- * Strength of the candidate self-assessment questionnaire
- * Strength of the confidential reference questionnaire

Candidate Self-Assessment Questionnaire
--

Please rate yourself in the following areas by checking the appropriate box
 3=Strong Skills; extensive experience in this area
 2=Moderate Skills; some experience in this area
 1=Novice; limited experience in this area

Skills needed to be an Effective Team Member	3	2	1
Professional Judgment			
Organizational Skills			
Written Communication Skills			
Working with Diverse Groups			
Analyzing and Interpreting Assessment and Other Data			
Working with Parents/Community			
Interpersonal Skills			
Facilitation Skills			
Presentation Skills			
Knowledge in the Audit Standards	3	2	1
Curriculum			
Classroom Evaluation/Assessment			
Instruction			
School Culture			
Student, Family and Community Support			
Professional Growth, Development and Evaluation			
School/District Leadership			
School Organizational Structure and Resources			
Comprehensive and Effective Planning			

Individual Commitment Statement

Please read carefully and sign.

By applying to be a scholastic audit team member, I am agreeing to participate in a selection process. Further, I will respect the integrity and fairness of the process and those associated with it. In the event that I am selected and accept the position of a scholastic audit team member, I agree to perform the duties as outlined in the Scholastic Audit Guidebook.

I agree to:

- Participate in a 3 to 4 day scholastic audit training provided by the ADE September 23-26, 2012 for applicants selected to be Team Leaders and September 23-25, 2012 for applicants selected to be Team Members.
- Be available for scholastic audit work during the months of October 2012 through May 2013. I understand that I may be replaced on a team if I am not able to commit to the full schedule of audits assigned.
- Participate in the audit process of a **minimum of three schools** in accordance with the schedule assigned by the Arkansas Department of Education.
- Spend approximately 4-6 days on-site for each school audit conducted. I understand that the on-site audit begins Sunday evening and includes evenings.
- Assist the team in writing and completing a report of audit findings.

I understand:

- The Arkansas Department of Education, in accordance with state guidelines, will pay for meals, mileage, and lodging for the duration of the scholastic audit training and the actual on-site scholastic audit assignment.
- Team members will receive daily stipends of \$350.00 for participation in the scholastic audit process and daily stipends of \$150.00 for the scholastic audit training experience.
- Team Leaders will receive daily stipends of \$400.00 for leadership roles and additional responsibilities.
- Team Leaders will be required to participate in 3-4 days of additional training at a daily stipend of \$150.00.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

How Do You Apply To Serve As An Audit Team Member?

To apply to serve as a scholastic audit team member, complete the attached application and return by mail to:

Ms. June Haynie
Arkansas Department of Education
Scholastic Audit Unit
Four Capitol Mall, Mail Slot 6
Little Rock, AR 72201



Persons interested in applying to be on a scholastic audit team should print the entire application, read it carefully to understand the commitment, and follow the instructions for each portion of the process. The application cannot be completed or submitted on-line, but may be downloaded and printed from the on-line document.

**The Scholastic Audit Team
Confidential Reference Questionnaire
Important Information--Please Read**

Please use this form to submit your recommendation for the applicant regarding the position of a scholastic audit team member. References must be submitted on the original form and copies cannot be accepted. This is confidential and will not be shared with the applicant.

Please mail to:
Ms. June Haynie
Arkansas Department of Education
Scholastic Audit Unit
Four Capitol Mall, Mail Slot 6
Little Rock, AR 72201

Full name of the applicant you are recommending for designation as a scholastic audit team member:

Applicant's title/position:

Full name of person completing this form:

Title/Position:

Work Phone:

Relationship to scholastic audit team member applicant:

Supervisor _____ Colleague _____ Other Professional Affiliation _____

How long have you known the applicant? _____

Reference Questions:

Please answer the next three questions.

Reference Questions:

1. What personal characteristics does the applicant possess that you believe enables him/her to successfully work with others?

2. What professional experiences and characteristics qualify this applicant as a scholastic audit team member?

3. What are this applicant's greatest assets as an educational leader and supporter of school reform?