



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Dr. Tom W. Kimbrell
Commissioner

May 30, 2013

**State Board
of Education**

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The Honorable Johnny Key, Chair
Senate Committee on Education
Arkansas Senate
State Capitol, Room 320
Little Rock, AR 72201

The Honorable James McLean, Chair
House Committee on Education
Arkansas House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 350
Little Rock, AR 72201

Re: Notice Pursuant to Act 1412 of 2013 (Mineral Springs School District)

Dear Senator Key and Representative McLean:

Pursuant to Act 1412 of 2013¹, please accept this letter as written notice that on Thursday, May 16, 2013, the Arkansas Department of Education assumed authority over the Mineral Springs School District. The Arkansas Department of Education took such action pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-1909. The following information is provided according to the requirements of Act 1412 of 2013:

(1) A clear statement of the reasons the district has been placed under the authority of the state board or the commissioner:

On December 12, 2012, the State Board of Education classified the Mineral Springs School District as a school district in fiscal distress pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-1906. The State Board of Education took this action due to a declining balance determined to jeopardize the fiscal integrity of the school district. The fiscal condition of the Mineral Springs School District negatively impacted the continuation of educational services by the district.

Earlier this month, Arkansas Department of Education staff determined that immediate action was necessary to move toward stabilizing the finances and management of the Mineral Springs School District. The district faces a severe budget deficit. Therefore, the Arkansas Department of Education assumed authority over the Mineral Springs School District pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-1909.

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Little Rock, AR
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(501) 682-4475
ArkansasEd.org

¹ Act 1412 of 2013 does not become effective until August 16, 2013. However, the Arkansas Department of Education provides this notice out of respect for the wish of the Arkansas General Assembly to be made aware of these developments.

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(2) A clear statement of the steps necessary for the school district to remove itself from the authority of the state board or the commissioner:

Arkansas law sets forth the process a school district must follow to remove itself from fiscal distress. The Mineral Springs School District may only petition the State Board of Education for removal from fiscal distress status after the Arkansas Department of Education certifies in writing that the Mineral Springs School District has corrected all criteria for being classified as in fiscal distress and has complied with all department recommendations and requirements for removal from fiscal distress. (Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-1908). As with any instance of state takeover, Arkansas Department of Education staff will work diligently to assist the district in its efforts to return to the local control of its patrons.

Every quarter, the Department of Education will provide you with a status report indicating the progress of the Mineral Springs School District toward removing itself from the authority of the Arkansas Department of Education. My staff will forward this report to each member of the General Assembly who represents the area in which the Mineral Springs School District is located.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me at (501) 682-4227 should you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,



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

cc: The Honorable Jimmy Hickey, Jr., Arkansas Senate
The Honorable Larry Teague, Arkansas Senate
The Honorable Fonda Hawthorne, Arkansas House of Representatives
The Honorable George Nathan Steel, Arkansas House of Representatives
The Honorable Brent Talley, Arkansas House of Representatives
Members of the State Board of Education
Ms. Phyllis Stewart, Arkansas Department of Education Chief of Staff
Mr. Jared Cleveland, Assistant Commissioner, Fiscal and Admin. Services
Ms. Michelle Griffin, Legislative Services
Mr. Jeremy Lasiter, General Counsel