



Bureau Brief

Memorandum

TO : Members of the House and Senate Committees on Education

DATE : August 20, 2013

SUBJECT : ACSIP Presentation Questions

The following questions were developed for the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) to address in its presentation on Arkansas Comprehensive School Improvement Plans (ACSIP).

1. **Value in school improvement:** In past adequacy study interviews and surveys, some school officials have said the ACSIP is a valuable process that results in a living document they use all year long. Others have complained that the ACSIP process is too time consuming and not particularly useful to them. Now that schools and districts have used ACSIPs for about a decade, discuss the value of the ACSIP as a tool for improving schools and school districts. How important is it in achieving real improvement in the quality of education in Arkansas schools? Please provide examples of districts and/or schools that have been successful in using their ACSIP to assess and drive improvements? Please compare these examples with those that have not been successful. For those that were not successful, were there identifiable components of the ACSIP that were obstacles?
2. **ESEA Flexibility:** Describe how the use of ACSIPs has changed under the state's Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Plan.
3. **Use of student data:** How is the student longitudinal data system used in ACSIP?
4. **Monitoring:** Act 807 of 2007 requires ADE to monitor each school's and each district's compliance regarding its ACSIP, including the use of funding for instructional facilitators, professional development, alternative learning environments, national school lunch students and English language learners. The law also requires ADE to monitor the implementation of programs for students who are testing below proficient. Describe ADE's ACSIP monitoring process, including any major changes in the process in recent years. Does ADE have the necessary tools to correct issues staff see when monitoring?
5. **ADE's use of ACSIP data:** Does ADE use the data in the ACSIP to identify patterns across all districts that may be useful in developing educational policies? For example, are ACSIP data on alternative learning environments (ALE) budget items analyzed, and then shared with and used by ADE staff responsible for overseeing ALE programs in the state? Are there barriers for aggregating and sharing this information across ADE? Can you identify any specific strategies that were successful in producing results?

6. **Scholastic Audit:** Are most schools that receive a scholastic audit effectively incorporating the audit findings into their ACSIP? Additionally, standards 9.5 and 9.6 of the scholastic audit assess how well a school uses its ACSIP. For example, 9.6a assesses how well a school's ACSIP "is implemented as developed." Are the results from the scholastic audit for these standards shared with the ADE staff monitoring ACSIPs?