



Bureau Brief

Memorandum

TO : Members of the House and Senate Committees on Education

FROM: Nell Smith, Bureau of Legislative Research

DATE : October 15, 2013

SUBJECT : Questions on the Partnership Program and Facilities Distress

The Bureau of Legislative Research developed the following questions for the Arkansas Division of Public School Academic Facilities and Transportation to address in its presentation on the Partnership Program and Facilities Distress.

The Partnership Program and Facilities Distress

1. During the 2012 Adequacy Study, the Facilities Division expressed concern about districts discontinuing maintenance on some systems and structures so they would more rapidly qualify for replacement funding through the Partnership Program. Provide an overview of this problem, the extent to which it has continued, and the steps that have been taken to address it.
2. "Warm, safe and dry" projects are defined as those "deemed necessary by the [Facilities] Division to provide students a warm, safe and dry educational environment." How does the Division determine whether a project is a "warm, safe and dry" project? Please describe the districts' progress in completing these projects.
3. In 2012-13, the Division inspected 755 facilities. These inspections included custodial and maintenance inspections, life-cycle information collection, 153 ongoing construction inspections, and 65 special investigations, according to the 2013 report "Statewide State of Condition of Academic Facilities." Provide a general assessment of the issues Division inspectors have seen during these inspections. Considering these observations, how well is the Partnership Program getting facilities funding to the districts with the greatest facilities needs?
4. There are about a dozen districts that appear to have failed to complete the majority of their state-mandated routine inspections (fire alarm, elevators, hot water heaters, etc.). How is the Facilities Division addressing these districts?
5. Are any districts currently at risk of the Facilities Distress designation?