

State of Arkansas  
95th General Assembly  
Regular Session, 2025

As Engrossed: S4/8/25

## A Bill

SENATE BILL 149

By: Senator J. English

### For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO AMEND PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING AMOUNTS UNDER  
THE PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING ACT OF 2003; AND FOR OTHER  
PURPOSES.

### Subtitle

TO AMEND PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING AMOUNTS  
UNDER THE PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING ACT OF  
2003.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

*SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY. Legislative findings and intent.*

*(a) The General Assembly finds that:*

*(1) It is the duty of the General Assembly to provide a suitable  
and efficient free public education to the students of Arkansas;*

*(2) Acts 2023, No. 237, the "LEARNS Act", ensured that public  
school teachers receive a minimum salary of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000)  
and that public school teachers with salaries above fifty thousand dollars  
(\$50,000) receive a raise in the amount of two thousand dollars (\$2,000);*

*(3) The House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on  
Education, meeting jointly, determined through the adequacy review process  
the foundation funding amounts to meet the obligation of the General Assembly  
to provide a suitable and efficient free public education to students; and*

*(4) The 2025-2026 school year foundation funding amount  
recommended and adopted by the General Assembly includes three hundred twenty  
dollars (\$320) to pay the minimum employer contribution for participants in  
the state-sponsored insurance program that public school districts pay and*



1 that ultimately is paid to the Employee Benefits Division.

2 (b) It is the intent of the General Assembly to:

3 (1) Provide funding to assist public school districts to meet  
4 salary requirements enacted by the LEARNS Act;

5 (2) Create a more efficient process of funding;

6 (3) Gradually phase out teacher salary equalization funding to  
7 increase the average teacher salary in Arkansas public schools and transfer  
8 the funds to be used to assist in meeting the minimum teacher compensation  
9 requirements under § 6-17-2403;

10 (4) Deduct the minimum employer contribution for participants in  
11 the state-sponsored insurance program from the 2026-2027 foundation funding  
12 amount; and

13 (5) Direct the Department of Education to pay the employer  
14 contribution rate in the amount of three hundred thirty-three dollars (\$333)  
15 directly to the Employee Benefits Division on behalf of public school  
16 districts.

17  
18 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-20-2305(a)(2), concerning per-student  
19 foundation funding amounts under the Public School Funding Act of 2003, is  
20 amended to read as follows:

21 (2)(A) For the ~~2023-2024~~ 2025-2026 school year, the foundation  
22 funding amount is equal to ~~seven thousand six hundred eighteen dollars~~  
23 ~~(\$7,618)~~ eight thousand one hundred sixty-two dollars (\$8,162), which  
24 includes three hundred twenty dollars (\$320) for the minimum employer  
25 contribution for participants in the state-sponsored insurance program,  
26 multiplied by the school district's average daily membership for the previous  
27 school year.

28 (B) For the ~~2024-2025~~ 2026-2027 school year and each  
29 school year thereafter, the foundation funding amount is equal to ~~seven~~  
30 ~~thousand seven hundred seventy-one dollars (\$7,771)~~ eight thousand thirty-  
31 seven dollars (\$8,037), which does not include three hundred thirty-three  
32 dollars (\$333) for the minimum employer contribution for participants in the  
33 state-sponsored insurance program that will be paid directly to the Employee  
34 Benefits Division on behalf of public schools, multiplied by the school  
35 district's average daily membership for the previous school year.  
36

1        *SECTION 3.* Arkansas Code § 6-20-2305(b)(2)(A), concerning alternative  
2 learning environment funding under the Public School Funding Act of 2003, is  
3 amended to read as follows:

4            (A)(i) For the ~~2023-2024~~ 2025-2026 school year,  
5 alternative learning environment funding shall be ~~four thousand nine hundred~~  
6 ~~eighty-seven dollars (\$4,987)~~ five thousand two hundred twelve dollars  
7 (\$5,212) multiplied by the number of identified alternative learning  
8 environment students enrolled during the previous school year.

9            (ii) For the ~~2024-2025~~ 2026-2027 school year,  
10 alternative learning environment funding shall be ~~five thousand eighty-six~~  
11 ~~dollars (\$5,086)~~ five thousand three hundred forty-one dollars (\$5,341)  
12 multiplied by the number of identified alternative learning environment  
13 students enrolled during the previous school year.

14            (iii) Funding for students in alternative learning  
15 environments shall be distributed based on rules promulgated by the State  
16 Board of Education.

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18        *SECTION 4.* Arkansas Code § 6-20-2305(b)(3), concerning funding for  
19 English learners under the Public School Funding Act of 2003, is amended to  
20 read as follows:

21            (3)(A) For the ~~2023-2024~~ 2025-2026 school year, funding for  
22 students who are identified as English learners shall be ~~three hundred sixty-~~  
23 ~~six dollars (\$366)~~ three hundred seventy-five dollars (\$375) for each  
24 identified English learner.

25            (B) Funding for English learners shall be distributed to  
26 public school districts for students who have been identified as not  
27 proficient in the English language based upon a state-approved English  
28 proficiency assessment instrument.

29            (C) Funds allocated for English learners to public school  
30 districts under this subchapter shall be expended only for eligible  
31 activities as identified in current rules promulgated by the State Board of  
32 Education and are a supplement to funding for national school lunch students  
33 provided in subdivision (b)(4) of this section.

34            (D) For the ~~2024-2025~~ 2026-2027 school year and each  
35 school year thereafter, funding for students who are identified as English  
36 learners shall be ~~three hundred sixty-six dollars (\$366)~~ three hundred

1 eighty-four dollars (\$384) for each identified English learner.

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3 *SECTION 5.* Arkansas Code § 6-20-2305(b)(4)(A), concerning Enhanced  
4 Student Achievement funding under the Public School Funding Act of 2003, is  
5 amended to read as follows:

6 (4)(A) Enhanced Student Achievement Funding for each identified  
7 national school lunch student shall be as follows:

8 (i) For a public school district in which ninety  
9 percent (90%) or more of the previous school year's enrolled students are  
10 national school lunch students, the amount of per-student Enhanced Student  
11 Achievement Funding for the ~~2023-2024~~ 2025-2026 school year is ~~one thousand~~  
12 ~~six hundred thirteen dollars (\$1,613)~~ one thousand six hundred fifty-three  
13 dollars (\$1,653) and for the ~~2024-2025~~ 2026-2027 school year is ~~one thousand~~  
14 ~~six hundred thirteen dollars (\$1,613)~~ one thousand six hundred ninety-four  
15 dollars (\$1,694);

16 (ii) For a public school district in which at least  
17 seventy percent (70%) but less than ninety percent (90%) of the previous  
18 school year's enrolled students are national school lunch students, the  
19 amount of per-student Enhanced Student Achievement Funding for the ~~2023-2024~~  
20 2025-2026 school year is ~~one thousand seventy-six dollars (\$1,076)~~ one  
21 thousand one hundred three dollars (\$1,103) and for the ~~2024-2025~~ 2026-2027  
22 school year is ~~one thousand seventy-six dollars (\$1,076)~~ one thousand one  
23 hundred thirty dollars (\$1,130); and

24 (iii) For a public school district in which less  
25 than seventy percent (70%) of the previous school year's enrolled students  
26 are national school lunch students, the amount of per-student Enhanced  
27 Student Achievement Funding for the ~~2023-2024~~ 2025-2026 school year is ~~five~~  
28 ~~hundred thirty-eight dollars (\$538)~~ five hundred fifty-one dollars (\$551) and  
29 for the ~~2024-2025~~ 2026-2027 school year is ~~five hundred thirty-eight dollars~~  
30 ~~(\$538)~~ five hundred sixty-five dollars (\$565).

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32 *SECTION 6.* Arkansas Code § 6-20-2305(b)(5)(C)(i), concerning  
33 professional development funding for professional learning communities under  
34 the Public School Funding Act of 2003, is amended to read as follows:

35 (C)(i) For the ~~2023-2024~~ 2025-2026 school year and  
36 each school year thereafter, additional funding up to sixteen million five

1 hundred thousand dollars (\$16,500,000) provided for professional development  
2 above the amount in subdivision (b)(5)(A) of this section shall be used by  
3 the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education for the development and  
4 administration of professional learning communities for the benefit of public  
5 school districts.

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7 *SECTION 7. Arkansas Code § 6-20-2305(b)(6)(A), concerning the*  
8 *statewide target average annual salary for teachers under the Public School*  
9 *Funding Act of 2003, is amended to read as follows:*

10 (6)(A)(i) Beginning with the 2021-2022 school year, for school  
11 districts identified by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education as  
12 having an average annual teacher salary below the statewide target average  
13 annual salary, teacher salary equalization funding shall be equal to ~~one~~  
14 ~~hundred eight-five dollars (\$185)~~ the amount established in subdivisions  
15 (6)(A)(ii)-(iv) of this section multiplied by the average daily membership of  
16 the school district for the previous school year.

17 (ii) ~~For the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 school years~~  
18 2025-2026 school year, the statewide target average annual salary shall be  
19 fifty-one thousand eight hundred twenty-two dollars (\$51,822) and teacher  
20 salary equalization funding shall be one hundred eight-five dollars (\$185).

21 (iii) ~~The House Committee on Education and the~~  
22 ~~Senate Committee on Education shall set jointly the statewide target average~~  
23 ~~annual salary for the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 school years, and each biennium~~  
24 ~~thereafter, as part of the adequacy review process required under § 10-3-2102~~  
25 For the 2026-2027 school year, the statewide average annual salary shall be  
26 fifty-one thousand eight hundred twenty-two dollars (\$51,822) and teacher  
27 salary equalization funding shall be one hundred dollars (\$100).

28 (iv) For the 2027-2028 school year, the statewide  
29 average annual salary shall be fifty-one thousand eight hundred twenty-two  
30 dollars (\$51,822) and teacher salary equalization funding shall be fifty  
31 dollars (\$50).

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33 /s/J. English  
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