Proposed Rulemaking

RECEIVED
September 9, 2026
BLR

Title

Promulgated by:
Arkansas Ethics Commission

Title 21. Public Officers and Employees

Chapter I. Arkansas Ethics Commission

Subchapter A. Generally

Part 2. Rules on Conflicts

Subpart 1. Generally

21 CAR § 2-101. Definitions.

As used in this part:

(1)(A) "Administrative action" means any decision on, or proposal, consideration, or making of any rule, ratemaking proceeding, or policy action by a governmental body.

(B) It does not include ministerial action;

(2) "Business" means any:

(A) Corporation;

(B) Partnership;

(C) Sole proprietorship;

(D) Firm;

(E) Enterprise;

(F) Franchise;

(G) Association;

(H) Organization;

(I) Self-employed individual;

(J) Receivership;

(K) Trust; or

(L) Legal entity through which business is conducted;

(3) "County government" means any office, department, commission, council, board, bureau, committee, legislative body, agency, or other establishment of a county;

(4) "Family" means an individual's:

(A) Spouse;

(B) Children of that individual or his or her spouse; or

(C) Brothers, sisters, or parents of the individual or his or her spouse;

(5) "Governmental body" means any office, department, commission, council, board, committee, legislative body, agency, or other establishment of the executive, judicial, or legislative branch of the:

(A) State;

(B) Municipality;

(C) County;

(D) School district;

(E) Improvement district; or

(F) Any political district or subdivision thereof;

(6)(A) "Income or compensation" means any money or anything of value received or to be received as a claim for future services, whether in the form of a:

(i) Retainer;

(ii) Fee;

(iii) Salary;

(iv) Expense;

(v) Allowance;

(vi) Forbearance;

(vii) Forgiveness;

(viii) Interest;

(ix) Dividend;

(x) Royalty;

(xi) Rent; or

(xii) Any other form of recompense or any combination thereof.

(B) It includes a payment made under obligation for services or other value received.

(C) The term "compensation" does not include anything of value presented to an employee of a public school district, ~~the Arkansas School for the Blind,~~ the ~~Arkansas School for the Deaf,~~ Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind, the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts, a university, a college, a technical college, a technical institute, a comprehensive life-long learning center, or a community college in recognition of the employee's contribution to education;

(7) "Legislative action" means introduction, sponsorship, consideration, debate, amendment, passage, defeat, approval, veto, or any other official action or nonaction on any bill, ordinance, law, resolution, amendment, nomination, appointment, report, or other matter pending or proposed before a:

(A) Committee or house of the General Assembly;

(B) Quorum court; or

(C) City council or board of directors of a municipality;

(8) "Legislator" means any person who is a member of:

(A) The General Assembly;

(B) A quorum court of any county;

(C) The city council or board of directors of any municipality; or

(D) A member of a school district board of directors;

(9) "Lobbying" means communicating directly or soliciting others to communicate with any public servant with the purpose of influencing legislative action or administrative action;

(10) "Municipal government" means any office, department, commission, council, board, bureau, committee, legislative body, agency, or other establishment of a municipality;

(11) "Person" means a:

(A) Business;

(B) Individual;

(C) Corporation;

(D) Union;

(E) Association;

(F) Firm;

(G) Partnership;

(H) Committee;

(I) Club; or

(J) Other organization or group of persons;

(12)(A) "Public appointee" means an individual who is appointed to a governmental body.

(B) It does not include an individual appointed to an elective office;

(13)(A) "Public employee" means an individual who is:

(i) Employed by a governmental body; or

(ii) Appointed to serve a governmental body.

(B) It does not include public officials or public appointees;

(14)(A) "Public official" means a person holding an elective office of any governmental body, whether elected or appointed to the office.

(B) "Public official" includes without limitation:

(i) A person holding an elective office of any governmental body, whether elected or appointed to the office, during the time period between the date he or she is elected or appointed and the date he or she takes office; and

(ii) A member of a school district board of directors;

(15) "Public servant" means all:

(A) Public officials;

(B) Public employees; and

(C) Public appointees;

(16) "Special privileges or exemption" means:

(A) A particular benefit or advantage unfairly extended to a person beyond the common advantages of others; or

(B) The unjustified release of a person from a duty or obligation required of others;

(17) "State government" means any office, department, commission, council, board, bureau, committee, legislative body, agency, or other establishment of the State of Arkansas; and

(18) "Unwarranted privileges or exemptions" means:

(A) A particular benefit or advantage unfairly extended to a person beyond the common advantages of others; or

(B) The unjustified release of a person from a duty or obligation required of others.

21 CAR § 2-102. Confidential information.

(a) No public servant shall:

(1) Accept employment or engage in any public or professional activity while serving as a public official which he or she might reasonably expect would require or induce him or her to disclose any information acquired by him or her by reason of his or her official position which is declared by law or rule to be confidential;

(2) Disclose any such information gained by reason of his or her position, nor shall he or she otherwise use such information for his or her personal gain or benefit; or

(3) Purposely use or disclose to any other person or entity confidential government information acquired by him or her in the course of and by reason of the public servant's official duties, to secure anything of material value or benefit for himself or herself or his or her family.

(b) No member of a state board or commission or board member of an entity receiving state funds shall disclose confidential information acquired by him or her in the course of the member's official duties or use such information to further his or her personal interests.

21 CAR § 2-103. Fair treatment.

(a) No public servant shall use or attempt to use his or her official position to secure special privileges or exemption for himself or herself or his or her spouse, child, parents, or other persons standing in the first degree of relationship, or for those with whom he or she has a substantial financial relationship that is not available to others except as may be otherwise provided by law.

(b) No member of a state board or commission or board member of an entity receiving state funds shall use or attempt to use his or her official position to secure unwarranted privileges or exemptions for himself or herself or others.

21 CAR § 2-104. Decision making.

No member of a state board or commission or board member of an entity receiving state funds shall:

(1)(A) Participate in, vote on, influence, or attempt to influence an official decision if the member has a pecuniary interest in the matter under consideration by the board, commission, or entity.

(B) A member of a state board or commission or board member of an entity receiving state funds may participate in, vote on, influence, or attempt to influence an official decision if the only pecuniary interest that may accrue to the member is incidental to his or her position or accrues to him or her as a member of a profession, occupation, or large class to no greater extent than the pecuniary interest could reasonably be foreseen to accrue to all other members of the profession, occupation, or large class; or

(2) Participate in any discussion or vote on a rule or regulation that exclusively benefits the member.

21 CAR § 2-105. Appearances.

(a) No legislator shall appear for compensation on behalf of another person, firm, corporation, or entity before any entity of:

(1) State government, if the legislator is a member of the General Assembly;

(2) The legislator's county government, if the legislator is a member of a quorum court;

(3) The legislator's municipal government, if the legislator is a member of a city council or board of directors of a municipality; or

(4) The legislator's school district board of directors, if the legislator is a member of a school district board of directors.

(b) This section shall not:

(1) Apply to any judicial proceeding or to any hearing or proceeding which is adversarial in nature or character;

(2) Apply to any hearing or proceeding on which a record is made by the:

(A) Entity of state government;

(B) Entity of county government;

(C) Entity of municipal government; or

(D) School district board of directors;

(3) Apply to an appearance which is a matter of public record;

(4) Apply to ministerial actions; or

(5) Preclude a legislator from acting on behalf of a constituent to determine the status of a matter without accepting compensation.

(c) An appearance which is a matter of public record as provided in subdivision (b)(3) of this section may be made by:

(1)(A) Filing a written statement within twenty-four (24) hours with the agency head of the entity of state government, entity of county government, entity of municipal government, or school district before which an appearance is sought.

(B) In the event that a written statement cannot be provided to the agency head prior to the meeting, telephonic notice must be given to the agency head or his or her office; or

(2) Filing a quarterly statement with the agency head of the entity of state government before which an appearance is sought.

(d)(1) A statement filed under subsection (c) of this section shall identify the client on behalf of whom the appearance is made and contain a general statement of the action sought from the governmental body.

(2)(A) The statements shall be retained by the agency head and shall be a matter of public record.

(B) If the agency head determines that the release of the client's name would be an unwarranted invasion of individual privacy or would give advantage to competitors for bidding, the agency head may withhold the name until appropriate.

(e) No member of the General Assembly shall receive any income or compensation as defined in 21 CAR § 2-101(6), other than income and benefits from the governmental body to which he or she is duly entitled, for lobbying other members of the General Assembly by communicating directly or soliciting others to communicate with any other member with the purpose of influencing legislative action by the General Assembly.

21 CAR § 2-106. Reporting.

(a) A legislator who is required to take an action in the discharge of his or her official duties that may affect his or her financial interest or cause financial benefit or detriment to him or her, or a business in which he or she is an officer, director, stockholder owning more than ten percent (10%) of the stock of the company, owner, trustee, partner, or employee, which is distinguishable from the effects of the action on the public generally or a broad segment of the public, shall:

(1) Prepare a written statement describing the matter requiring action and stating the potential conflict; and

(2)(A) Deliver a copy of the statement to the appropriate official to be filed with the statement of financial interest.

(B) The copy of the statement may be delivered in person by the public official, by mail, or by a person authorized by the public official to deliver the copy.

(b) The obligation to report a potential conflict of interest under this section arises as soon as the legislator is aware of the conflict.

(c) If the statement of financial interest filed by the legislator makes the conflict readily apparent, then no report need be filed.

21 CAR § 2-107. School district board members, administrators, and employees.

(a) No school district board member, administrator, or employee shall:

(1) Use or attempt to use his or her official position to secure unwarranted privileges or exemptions for himself or herself or others;

(2) Accept employment, contract, or engage in any public or professional activity that a reasonable person would expect might require or induce him or her to disclose any information acquired by the member by reason of his or her official position that is declared by law or rule to be confidential;

(3) Disclose any confidential information gained by reason of his or her position, including without limitation disclosing information acquired by attending an executive session of the board of directors unless the disclosure of that information is otherwise authorized or required by law; or

(4) Use information acquired by reason or his or her position for his or her personal gain or benefit.

(b) A school district board member shall not act in a manner on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event that:

(1) Results or otherwise would have resulted in the removal of the board member from campus or the event if the board member's actions resulted in removal or otherwise would have resulted in removal if the actions were conducted by a member of the public; or

(2) Results in a violation of the criminal laws of this state or the federal government.

(c) Any school district board member, administrator, or employee who knew or should have known his or her actions were prohibited under subsections (a) or (b) of this section may be subject to Arkansas Code § 6-24-118.

(d) Nothing in this part prohibits school district board members, administrators, or employees from donating services or property to a public educational entity.

(e)(1) The Arkansas Ethics Commission shall supervise compliance with Arkansas Code § 6-24-101 et seq., by school district board members and investigate citizen complaints alleging violations of this part by board members.

(2) Upon completion of an investigation of a complaint that a board member has violated this part, the commission may assess a penalty under Arkansas Code § 7-6-218(b)(4).

(3) All moneys received by the commission as payment of fines shall be deposited in the State Treasury as general revenues.

(f) At the request of the commission, the appropriate prosecuting attorney shall review contracts or transactions for compliance with the provisions of Arkansas Code § 6-24-101 et seq.

~~(g) **Note.** This section is based upon Acts 2023, No. 883, and shall be effective on and after May 1, 2024.~~

21 CAR § 2-108. Advance notice.

(a) No public employee shall provide advance notice of an inspection to be conducted by a governmental body to any person, business, or entity subject to an inspection when the purpose of the disclosure is to improperly influence the outcome of the inspection.

(b) A public employee violates subdivision (a) of this section when he or she knowingly communicates information, directly or indirectly, regarding the timing, scope, or details of an upcoming inspection with the intent to:

(1) Alter or manipulate conditions to evade detection of noncompliance or violations;

(2) Provide an unfair advantage to the inspected party; or

(3) Otherwise interfere with the integrity or impartiality of the inspection process.

(3) A public employee found in violation of subsection (a) of this section shall be subject to disciplinary action, including without limitation suspension, termination, and any penalties provided by law.

(4) Subsection (a) of this section does not prohibit:

(A) Routine scheduling disclosures required by law;

(B) Public safety notifications; or

(C) Official communications necessary for the proper administration of inspections.

State of Arkansas *As Engrossed: H2/27/25*
95th General Assembly **A Bill**
Regular Session, 2025 HOUSE BILL 1410

By: Representatives Unger, Lundstrum
By: Senator J. Bryant

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES BY PUBLIC SERVANTS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES BY PUBLIC SERVANTS.

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

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 21-8-304 is amended to read as follows:

21-8-304. Prohibited activities.

(a) No public servant shall use or attempt to use his or her official position to secure special privileges or exemptions for himself or herself or his or her spouse, child, parents, or other persons standing in the first degree of relationship, or for those with whom he or she has a substantial financial relationship that are not available to others except as may be otherwise provided by law.

(b) No public servant shall accept employment or engage in any public or professional activity while serving as a public official which he or she might reasonably expect would require or induce him or her to disclose any information acquired by him or her by reason of his or her official position that is declared by law or rule to be confidential.

(c) No public servant shall disclose any such information gained by reason of his or her position, nor shall he or she otherwise use such information for his or her personal gain or benefit.

(d)(1) No public employee shall provide advance notice of an

inspection to be conducted by a governmental body to any person, business, or entity subject to an inspection when the purpose of the disclosure is to improperly influence the outcome of the inspection.

(2) A public employee violates subdivision (d)(1) of this section when he or she knowingly communicates information, directly or indirectly, regarding the timing, scope, or details of an upcoming inspection with the intent to:

(A) Alter or manipulate conditions to evade detection of noncompliance or violations;

(B) Provide an unfair advantage to the inspected party; or

(C) Otherwise interfere with the integrity or impartiality of the inspection process.

(3) A public employee found in violation of subdivision (d)(1) of this section shall be subject to disciplinary action, including without limitation suspension, termination, and any penalties provided by law.

(4) Subdivision (d)(1) of this section does not prohibit:

(A) Routine scheduling disclosures required by law;

(B) Public safety notifications; or

(C) Official communications necessary for the proper administration of inspections.

/s/Unger

APPROVED: 3/18/25

State of Arkansas *As Engrossed: H3/31/25 S4/8/25*
95th General Assembly
A Bill
Regular Session, 2025 HOUSE BILL 1810

By: Representative Joey Carr
By: Senator J. English

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE CONCERNING THE ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND THE ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF; TO TRANSFER THE ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND THE ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF TO THE ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE CONCERNING THE ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND THE ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF; AND TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY.

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

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 5-14-132(a)(3), concerning the definition of "public school" as it relates to registered offenders who are prohibited from entering school campuses, are amended to read as follows:

(3) "Public school" means any school in this state that is:

(A) A public school operated by a public school district;

(B) A charter school established under the Public School Funding Act of 2003, § 6-20-2301 et seq.;

(C) A state-funded prekindergarten program operated by a public school or an education service cooperative;

(D) The Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind;

(E) ~~The Arkansas School for the Deaf;~~

~~(F)~~ The Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts;

~~(G)~~(F) An educational facility of the Division of Youth Services or contracting with the Division of Youth Services; or

~~(H)~~(G) An educational facility of the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-10-121(a)(2), concerning the definition of "public school" as it relates to required tornado and earthquake safety drills, is amended to read as follows:

(2) "Public school" includes the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts, the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind, ~~the Arkansas School for the Blind,~~ and juvenile detention centers.

SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-15-1402(g), concerning the requirement that the Arkansas School for the Blind and Arkansas School for the Deaf submit certain items to the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education under the School Performance Report Act, is amended to read as follows:

(g) The Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind ~~and the Arkansas School for the Deaf~~ shall submit to the division:

(1) The results of the appropriately adopted student achievement tests for the students enrolled at these schools; and

(2) A list of other schools' programs to which these schools can be compared.

SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 6-15-2913(b)(1), concerning alternate processes of determining the levels of support provided to public schools serving specific populations, is amended to read as follows:

(b)(1) The state board may adopt, by rule, an alternate process of determining the level of support to be provided to public schools or school districts serving specific student populations, including without limitation:

(A) A public school that is designated solely as an alternative learning environment;

(B) An open-enrollment public charter school whose mission and enrollment are primarily focused on students who have dropped out of school or are identified as at risk of dropping out of school;

(C) A conversion public charter school whose mission and enrollment are primarily focused on students who have dropped out of school or are identified as at risk of dropping out of school;

(D) The Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind;

~~(E) The Arkansas School for the Deaf;~~ and

~~(F)~~(E) A public school or system of education that primarily serves adjudicated youth.

SECTION 5. Arkansas Code § 6-17-1113(a)(1)(P), concerning the entities covered by the School Worker Defense Program, is amended to read as follows:

(P) Each employee of the following who is required to hold an educator license issued by the division:

(i) A public school district;

(ii) The Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts; and

(iii) The Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind;

~~and~~

~~(iv) The Arkansas School for the Blind;~~

SECTION 6. Arkansas Code § 6-17-1113(a)(1)(R) and (S), concerning the entities covered by the School Worker Defense Program, are amended to read as follows:

(R) Each teacher's aide and each student teacher:

(i) In a public school district;

(ii) In a public charter school;

(iii) In the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts; and

(iv) In the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind; and

~~(v) In the Arkansas School for the Blind; and~~

(S) Each member of the dormitory staff of:

(i) The Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts; and

(ii) The Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind~~; and~~

~~(iii) The Arkansas School for the Blind~~.

SECTION 7. Arkansas Code § 6-21-105 is amended to read as follows:

6-21-105. Braille and large print textbooks.

(a) It is declared to be the duty of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind to provide braille and large print textbooks for blind and visually impaired students attending public schools in this state.

(b) The superintendents of school districts shall make application to the Superintendent of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind for textbooks of braille and large print when students in school districts qualify for such books and the requested textbooks are required for other students in the district.

(c)(1) The Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind may use funds from the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind Fund Account for costs associated with providing braille and large print textbooks as authorized under this section.

(2) If funding allows and a need is present, the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind may use funds from the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind Fund Account to purchase electronic textbooks, adaptive technology, and library media.

(d)(1) The State Board of Education shall make reasonable rules regarding moneys appropriated for the purchase of braille and large print textbooks.

(2) The state board may negotiate directly with publishers of braille and large print textbooks for the purchase of braille and large print textbooks.

SECTION 8. Arkansas Code § 6-28-104(8)(B), concerning the definition of "public school" under the Arkansas Military Child School Transitions Act of 2021, is amended to read as follows:

(B) "Public school" includes without limitation:

(i) Alternative learning environments;

(ii) The Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind;

~~(iii) The Arkansas School for the Deaf;~~ and

~~(iv)~~(iii) The Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts;

SECTION 9. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 43, Subchapter 1 is amended

to read as follows:

6-43-101. Board of trustees.

(a) There is created ~~an honorary~~ a board constituting the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the ~~Blind and the Arkansas School for the~~ Deaf and Blind.

(b)~~(1)~~ The board shall consist of five (5) members appointed by the *Governor, subject to the confirmation of the Senate*.

~~(2) The Governor, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint the members of the board.~~

~~(3) The Secretary of State shall furnish a certificate to each board member within ten (10) days following appointment, whereupon the appointee shall notify the Governor and the Secretary of State in writing of his or her acceptance of the appointment within thirty (30) days, and if the appointee fails to give notice of his or her acceptance within the time required, then the appointment shall be declared void and another appointment shall be made.~~

(c)(1) Members of the board appointed by the Governor under the provisions of this section~~, in addition to possessing~~ shall:

(A) Possess the qualifications of an elector~~, shall reside~~; and

(B) Reside in the State of Arkansas.

(2)(A) The Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, Auditor of State, Treasurer of State, Commissioner of State Lands, Supreme Court Justices, and the directing head of any state department, state agency, or state institution shall be ineligible for membership on the board provided for in this section during the time for which he or she was elected or appointed.

(B) No individual may be a member of ~~more than one (1) of the boards~~ the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind created under the provisions of this section and another board created under § 25-17-201 at the same time.

~~(3) There shall be at all times one (1) member of the board who is a deaf person who fluently utilizes deaf sign language.~~

(d)~~(1)~~ The term of office for each member shall commence on January 15 and shall end on January 14 of the fifth year following the year in which the regular term commenced.

~~(2)(A) The Governor shall submit to the Senate for approval the names of all appointments made by him or her to fill expired terms within ten (10) days following the appointment.~~

~~(B) The members appointed by the Governor to fill vacancies caused by the expiration of the terms of members may qualify and hold office until the appointments are rejected by the Senate.~~

(e) Any vacancies arising in the membership of the board for any reason other than the expiration of the regular terms for which the members were appointed shall be filled by the appointment of the Governor~~, subject to the approval by a majority of the remaining members of the board,~~ and shall be thereafter effective until the expiration of the regular terms.

(f)(1) Before entering upon his or her respective duties, each board member shall take and subscribe and file in the office of the Secretary of State an oath to support the United States Constitution and the Arkansas Constitution and to faithfully perform the duties of the office upon which he or she is about to enter and that he or she will not be or become interested, directly or indirectly, in any contract made by the board.

(2)(A) Any violation of the oath shall be a Class B misdemeanor.

(B) Any contract entered into in violation of the oath shall be void.

(g) The board shall meet at least monthly and shall fix a regular date for the monthly meeting.

(h) Each member of the board may receive expense reimbursement in accordance with § 25-16-901 et seq.

(i)~~(1)~~ The Governor shall have the power to remove any member of the board before the expiration of his or her term for cause ~~only,~~ after notice and hearing.

~~(2) The removal shall become effective only when approved in writing by a majority of the total number of the board, but the member removed or his or her successor shall have no right to vote on the question of removal.~~

~~(3) The removal action shall be filed with the Secretary of State, together with a complete record of the proceedings at the hearing.~~

~~(4)(A) An appeal may be taken to the Pulaski County Circuit Court by the Governor or the member ordered removed, and the appeal shall be tried de novo on the record of the hearing before the Governor.~~

~~(B) An appeal may be taken from the circuit court to the Supreme Court, which shall likewise be tried de novo.~~

6-43-102. Powers and duties of board.

(a) The Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind ~~and the Arkansas School for the Deaf~~ created in § 6-43-101 is charged with the management and control of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind ~~and the Arkansas School for the Deaf~~.

(b) The board shall ~~have the power, authority, and duties formerly conferred by law on the board it succeeds including those set forth below:~~

~~(1) The board shall~~ exercise such powers of supervision and control as are not specifically reserved to ~~superintendents~~ the Superintendent of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind~~; and~~.

~~(2) The board, in consultation with the Secretary of the Department of Education, shall fix the salaries of officers and employees not already fixed by law.~~

(c) The board may adopt policies for the governance of the school as deemed necessary and in consultation with the Secretary of the Department of Education.

(d) The board shall:

(1) Keep a record of all board proceedings; and

(2) Adopt formal operating procedures.

(e) The superintendent, general business manager, and teachers of the school shall not be eligible for the board while employed by the school.

6-43-103. ~~Superintendents~~ Superintendent.

(a) There is established the position of the Superintendent of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind.

(b) The immediate conduct and management of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind ~~and the Arkansas School for the Deaf~~, school employees, and students enrolled in the school shall be entrusted to ~~superintendents~~ the superintendent.

~~(b)~~(c)(1)(A) The Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind ~~and the Arkansas School for the Deaf~~, in consultation with the Secretary of the Department of Education, shall select ~~the superintendents of the institutions committed to its care~~ a superintendent from the candidates

recommended by the secretary.

(B) The superintendent shall be selected based on his or her previous training and qualifications relevant to the education of students enrolled in the school.

(2)(A) The board may recommend to the secretary termination, suspension, or other discipline permitted by law of the superintendent.

(B) The secretary may terminate, suspend, or otherwise discipline the superintendent in accordance with applicable policies and laws.

~~(c)(1) Each of the superintendents shall be required to give bond in a sum fixed by the board, payable to the State of Arkansas, for the faithful discharge of his or her duties and the proper accounting for all moneys and property coming into his or her possession as such officer.~~

~~(2) The bonds shall be made by any surety company authorized to do business in Arkansas, approved by the Governor, filed in the office of the Secretary of State, and paid for by the state out of current expenses appropriated by the respective institutions.~~

~~(d) The superintendents of the schools shall be required to give their entire time to the management and operation of their respective institutions and shall be selected because of their previous training and fitness to care for the schools entrusted to their care.~~

(d) The board may, in consultation with the secretary, require the superintendent or other school officials to reside on the school campus.

(e) The superintendent shall:

(1) Have a superintendent license; and

(2) Be responsible for the management and operation of the school.

6-43-104. Employees generally.

(a) The ~~superintendents shall have power to~~ superintendent may select ~~and engage all~~ employees of the ~~schools at salaries fixed by the Board of Trustees of the~~ Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind ~~and the Arkansas School for the Deaf~~ in consultation with the Secretary of the Department of Education in accordance with state law, reporting the same for approval to the ~~board~~ Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind at the next regular meeting ~~thereof~~ of the board.

~~(b) The superintendents shall have the power to remove employees of the respective schools and may remove any employee at any time in their discretion for cause, but, in case of removal, the superintendent shall report the removal and the ground therefor to the board and the secretary~~ Each employee of the school, as a state employee, shall be subject to and receive the benefits of the provisions of Title 21 of the Arkansas Code, including without limitation policies and procedures established for the implementation of all provisions that are applicable to state employees.

(c) A teacher for a student with sensory impairments is eligible for a salary differential after he or she becomes certified by the Department of Education in teaching students who are blind, visually impaired, deaf, or hard of hearing.

6-43-105. Attendance ~~— Enforcement~~.

(a) ~~Every parent, guardian, or other person having control of any minor over eight (8) years of age who is defective in hearing or sight to the extent that he or she cannot be benefited by instruction in the public schools shall be required to send such a minor to the~~ The Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind ~~or the Arkansas School for the Blind~~ shall maintain student records as required by law and rules applicable to public school districts.

(b) The ~~minor shall continue to attend the schools for a term of at least thirty-two (32) weeks each year until he or she has completed the course of instruction prescribed for the schools by the~~ Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind ~~and the Arkansas School for the Deaf or any other body or person designated by law to have control of the schools, respectively, or until he or she has been discharged by the superintendent of the school~~ may adopt a student attendance policy necessary to ensure compliance with the purpose and function of the school.

~~(c) The deaf or blind minor shall be exempt from attendance at the schools for any of the following reasons:~~

~~(1) Instruction by a private tutor or in another school approved by the board or any other body or person designated by law to have control of the schools for a time equal to that required by subsection (b) of this section;~~

~~(2) Physical incapacity for school work; or~~

~~(3) Any other reason deemed good and sufficient by the superintendent of the school with the approval of the board.~~

~~(d)(1) Failure for a period of one (1) week within the school year to send such a minor to school shall constitute an offense.~~

~~(2) However, the time necessary for such a minor to travel from his or her home to Little Rock shall not be counted as time absent from school.~~

~~(e) Any person who induces or attempts to induce such deaf or blind minor to absent himself or herself from school or who employs or harbors such a minor unlawfully while the schools are in session shall be guilty of a violation and upon conviction shall be fined not less than twenty dollars ($20.00) nor more than fifty dollars ($50.00) for each offense.~~

~~(f) It shall be the duty of county boards, or the boards' designees, school attendance officers, prosecuting attorneys, and any special attendance officers appointed by the Arkansas School for the Deaf and the Arkansas School for the Blind as well as all peace officers to enforce the provisions of this section.~~

~~(g) Any parent, guardian, or other person in charge of such a minor or minors who fails or refuses to comply with the requirements of this section shall be guilty of a violation and upon conviction shall be fined not less than ten dollars ($10.00) nor more than fifty dollars ($50.00) for each offense.~~

~~6-43-106. Deaf and blind children -- Out-of-state facilities.~~

~~(a) The Arkansas School for the Blind is authorized to expend available funds for the purpose of sending children under twenty-one (21) years of age, who are deaf as well as blind and for which there are no facilities for education in this state, to any school, institution, or other place outside the State of Arkansas providing a qualified program of education for such children.~~

~~(b) The funds may be spent for room, board, tuition, transportation, and other items which are necessarily relevant to the education of such children.~~

~~(c) In interpreting and carrying out the provisions of this section, the words "deaf-blind children", wherever used, will be construed to include any child whose combination of disabilities of deafness and blindness would~~

~~prevent him or her from profiting satisfactorily from educational programs now provided for the blind child or the deaf child by the State of Arkansas.~~

~~(d) The school is authorized to determine if such children should be sent to such out-of-state facilities.~~

~~(e) The school is authorized to promulgate such rules as it deems necessary and proper for carrying out the purposes and intent of this section.~~

6-43-107. Application for admission ~~— Certificate of residence~~.

~~Whenever application is made for the admission of any blind or Deaf, deaf, or Hard of Hearing person into the Arkansas School for the Blind or the Arkansas School for the Deaf, as a beneficiary of the privileges thereof, the application shall be accompanied by the certificate of the county judge that the person is a legal resident of the county of the State of Arkansas in which it is claimed that he or she resides.~~

(a) All students between the ages of three (3) and twenty-one (21) who are blind or visually impaired or who are deaf or hard of hearing and who reside in the State of Arkansas shall be eligible to apply and be referred for admission to the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind at no cost to the student or the parent, legal guardian, or person standing in loco parentis to the student.

(b) The Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind may adopt an admission policy, including requirements for admission to the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind, that is necessary to ensure compliance with the purpose and function of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind.

(c)(1) A public school district, an open-enrollment public charter school, an education service cooperative, or an early childhood facility that receives state or federal funds shall at least annually at an individualized education program meeting share information with a parent, legal guardian, or person standing in loco parentis to a student regarding services available from the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind and whether the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind is the appropriate placement for a student if the student:

(A) Is between the ages of three (3) and twenty-one (21);

(B) Qualifies under the Individuals with Disabilities

Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq., as it existed on January 1, 2025; and

(C) Is blind, visually impaired, deaf, or hard of hearing.

(2) If the individualized education program team determines that the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind is the appropriate placement for a student, a referral on behalf of the student shall be made to the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind.

(3)(A) If the individualized education program team does not determine that the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind is the appropriate placement for a student, the parent, legal guardian, or person standing in loco parentis to the student may submit an application for admission to the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind in accordance with Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind policy.

(B) A student who is accepted for admission to the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind under subdivision (c)(3)(A) of this section shall unenroll from the school in which he or she is currently enrolled and the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind shall become responsible for all requirements under the student's individualized education program.

(d) An eligible student from outside the state may be admitted to the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind upon the payment of tuition and fees in accordance with Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind policy.

(e) A student who is older than twenty-one (21) years of age who is blind or visually impaired or who is deaf or hard of hearing may attend the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind in order to access career and technical programs made available by the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind in accordance with Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind policy.

6-43-108. ~~Removal of pupils~~ Discharge of student.

~~(a)(1) Whenever it shall be deemed necessary by the proper officers of either the Arkansas School for the Blind or the Arkansas School for the Deaf, in accordance with the bylaws and rules thereof, to have pupils removed, either temporarily on account of ill health or the vacation of the Arkansas School for the Blind or the Arkansas School for the Deaf, or permanently on account of having completed their course of instruction or having been found disqualified, from any cause, for a longer continuance in the Arkansas School~~

~~for the Blind or the Arkansas School for the Deaf, the parents, or guardians, if they have any, of such pupils shall promptly remove them upon the requirement of the officers~~ The Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind may dismiss a student for disciplinary violations upon recommendation by the superintendent of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind and in accordance with school policy and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq., as it existed on January 1, 2025.

~~(2) In case they shall not be thus provided for, it shall be the duty of the superintendent or principal of such institution to cause them to be so removed to their houses or delivered to the proper officers of the counties in which they may reside.~~

~~(b)(1) The expense of removal shall be refunded to each institution in the same manner as is provided in § 6-43-109.~~

~~(2) The county sheriff may collect it in the same manner as is provided in § 6-43-109.~~

~~6-43-109. Clothing and traveling expenses — Generally.~~

~~(a) When such persons, upon proper application, are admitted as pupils of either the Arkansas School for the Blind or the Arkansas School for the Deaf, it shall be the duty of their parents, guardians, or other friends to suitably provide them with clothing at the time of their entrance into the Arkansas School for the Blind or the Arkansas School for the Deaf, and during their continuance therein, and to defray their traveling expenses to and from the institution, not only at the time of their first entrance and final departure but at any other time when it shall become necessary for them to leave or return to the Arkansas School for the Blind or the Arkansas School for the Deaf.~~

~~(b)(1)(A) In all cases in which suitable clothing and means for defraying traveling expenses are not otherwise supplied to the pupils of the schools, suitable clothing and means of defraying travel expenses shall be provided by the superintendent or principal of the respective schools, who shall make out and file with the Auditor of State accounts for the clothing and travel expenses, separate in each case, against the respective counties from which such pupils are sent, in an amount not exceeding forty dollars ($40.00) per annum for any one (1) pupil.~~

~~(B) The accounts shall be severally signed by the proper superintendent or principal.~~

~~(2) The Auditor of State shall draw his or her warrant on the Treasurer of State for the amounts, which shall be paid out of any money in the State Treasury not otherwise appropriated.~~

~~(3) However, the amount drawn by either institution for the aforesaid purposes per year shall not exceed two thousand dollars ($2,000).~~

~~(4) Each account thus certified shall be charged to the county from which the pupil named therein was sent.~~

~~(5)(A) The Auditor of State shall forward a certified copy of each account so filed with him or her to the sheriff of the proper county, who shall proceed to collect the account in the name of the State of Arkansas, as other debts are collected, and the money so collected shall be paid over to the Treasurer of State, who shall give receipts therefor as in case of other moneys paid into the State Treasury.~~

~~(B) However, if the sheriff shall be unable to collect the amount of any bill from the parents or estate of any pupil, then the bill shall be refunded to the state out of the county treasury.~~

~~6-43-110. Clothing and travel expenses — Warrants.~~

~~(a) It shall be the duty of the sheriffs of this state to receive from the county clerks all warrants ordered by their respective county courts by virtue of § 6-43-109(b)(5) and present them to the county treasurer for payment.~~

~~(b)(1) The county treasurer of the proper county shall pay the warrants on presentation from any money on hand and appropriated for pauper purposes.~~

~~(2) However, if there is no money in the county treasurer's hands from which to pay off the warrants, he or she shall endorse the fact on the warrants, date and sign the endorsement, and return them to the sheriff.~~

~~(c)(1) The Treasurer of State is authorized to receive from the several sheriffs and collectors of the state any and all such warrants as may be ordered and issued in payment for clothing and expenses of indigent pupils in the Arkansas School for the Blind or the Arkansas School for the Deaf by the county courts of the counties that are or may be liable for such expenses.~~

~~(2) The warrants shall be drawn in favor of the state, shall state on their face the name of the pupil or inmate whose expenses are thereby refunded, and shall be endorsed as required by subsection (b) of this section.~~

~~(d) The Treasurer of State is authorized to apply such county warrants so received in payment of the Auditor of State's warrants drawn in favor of the counties for funds received from sales or redemption of lands in lieu of any currency in his or her hands from the source belonging to the respective counties whose warrants he or she holds, replacing the county warrants with the currency.~~

~~(e) The State Board of Finance may biennially in October make such disposition of the county warrants so received and not converted into par funds, as provided in subsection (d) of this section, as shall in the judgment of the board be for the best interest of the state and shall order the proper adjustment of the account of the county warrants on the books of the Treasurer of State and Auditor of State.~~

~~6-43-111. Funeral expenses.~~

~~In case of the death of any pupil at the Arkansas School for the Blind or the Arkansas School for the Deaf, when funeral expenses are not otherwise provided for, an account thereof shall be made out, certified to, collected, and applied as provided in § 6-43-109.~~

6-43-112. ~~Transportation of students~~ Student transportation.

(a) The Arkansas School for the Deaf and ~~the Arkansas School for the~~ Blind ~~are hereby authorized to~~ may transport students to and from school in chartered vehicles that are licensed to do business in the State of Arkansas and ~~which~~ meet minimum safety standards established by the United States Department of Transportation.

(b) The school may spend general revenue funds to provide transportation services, including without limitation transportation via bus, motor vehicle, or airline if traveling out of state.

~~6-43-113. Compensation limitation.~~

~~(a) No employee drawing a salary or other form of compensation from the Arkansas School for the Blind or the Arkansas School for the Deaf shall~~

~~be paid an additional salary or receive additional compensation, other than reimbursement for actual expenses, from that agency, nor from any other agency or institution of higher education, except from the superintendent's written certification to and approval by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State that the work performed by the employee for the other position does not interfere with the proper and required performance of the employee's primary duties and that the combined salary payments from both positions will not exceed the maximum annual salary for whichever of the two (2) positions has the higher authorized maximum annual salary.~~

~~(b) Any employee knowingly violating the provisions of this section shall be subject to immediate termination and shall be barred from employment by any agency or institution of the State of Arkansas for a period of not less than three (3) years or until the employee shall repay to the State of Arkansas any sums received by the employee in violation of this section, together with interest at a rate of ten percent (10%) per annum.~~

6-43-114. Applicability of § 21-8-304.

Section 21-8-304 relating to nepotism, ethics, or conflicts of interest ~~which~~ that are applicable to state agencies and state employees generally shall ~~hereafter~~ be applicable to the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind ~~and the Arkansas School for the Deaf~~ and to the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind ~~and the Arkansas School for the Deaf~~ and employees of those institutions.

6-43-115. [Repealed.]

6-43-116. Special allowance.

(a) The Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind ~~and the Arkansas School for the Deaf~~ may make special allowances available to any employee who performs one (1) of the following duties outside his or her normal working hours in addition to his or her normal duties:

(1) Teaching adult education classes~~, parent training, or student tutorial services on weekends or evenings~~;

(2) Coaching one (1) or more sports or activities;

(3) Sponsoring a club or organization ~~that involves additional hours outside the normal working day~~; ~~or~~

(4) Interpretive services; or

(5) Other duties related to school-sponsored activities or leadership teams with approval from the superintendent and the Secretary of the Department of Education.

(b) Compensation for additional duties may not exceed ~~three thousand five hundred dollars ($3,500)~~ five thousand dollars ($5,000) per school term for any one (1) employee during each fiscal year.

~~(c) Compensation provided for under this section shall not be construed as exceeding the maximum salary authorized for the employee's position.~~

~~6-43-117. Dual position occupancy.~~

~~The Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf shall employ and maintain a separate superintendent and secondary principal as authorized by law for each school. In no event shall any one (1) person employed as a superintendent or principal for either school occupy more than one (1) position at one (1) time.~~

6-43-118. Teacher salary increase.

If public schools receive funds from the General Assembly to raise the salaries of teachers employed in public school districts and open-enrollment public charter schools, the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind ~~and the Arkansas School for the Deaf~~ shall ~~be included~~ increase teacher salaries accordingly.

SECTION 10. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 43, Subchapter 1, is amended to add additional sections to read as follows:

6-43-119. Qualifications of teachers.

A teacher employed by the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind shall be subject to teaching license requirements in law and rules promulgated by the State Board of Education.

6-43-120. Student-made objects sale.

Unless otherwise approved by the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind, any funds resulting from the sale of objects

made by students at the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind shall be placed in an appropriated cash fund to be used for student-related school purposes as determined by the superintendent.

6-43-121. Student housing.

(a) No individual, student enrolled in the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind, or individual employed by the school shall be boarded, lodged, or in any manner provided for during the vacation of the school unless the superintendent grants prior written approval for purposes of participating in a school event, an event occurring on the school's campus, or due to an emergency circumstance as defined by school policy.

(b) No individual, student enrolled in the school, or individual employed by the school shall be lodged, boarded, or permitted to remain at the school at the expense of the state unless specifically authorized under this subchapter.

(c) The school shall make available lodging and boarding for eligible students in accordance with school policy.

SECTION 11. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 43, Subchapter 2, is repealed.

~~6-43-201. Board of trustees — Eligibility.~~

~~The superintendent, general business manager, and teachers of the Arkansas School for the Blind shall not be eligible for the office of trustee for the school.~~

~~6-43-202. Records of board's proceedings.~~

~~The Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf shall keep a full and correct account of their proceedings in books to be provided for such purpose.~~

~~6-43-203. Rules.~~

~~The Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf shall make all rules necessary for the government of the Arkansas School for the Blind not otherwise provided by law, and it shall incorporate the rules in the next report it makes after the promulgation of the rules to the General Assembly.~~

~~6-43-204. General control of property and institutional affairs.~~

~~The Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf is invested with the general control and direction of the property and affairs of the school, with power to direct such purchases as, under the advice of the superintendent, may be deemed necessary for the comfort, health, and educational advancement of the blind.~~

6-43-205. Real and personal property.

(a) The Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind ~~and the Arkansas School for the Deaf~~ may take and hold in trust for the use of the school any lands conveyed or devised, and any money or other personal property given or bequeathed, to be applied to the benefit of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind.

(b)(1) All property that has been or may be acquired by appropriation from the state, or in any other manner, for the use and benefit of the school, shall be held and deemed to be the property of the state for such use and purposes.

(2) All real estate purchased shall be deeded to the State of Arkansas, and, after recording the deed conveying the real estate in the proper recorder's office, the deed shall be filed in the office of the Secretary of State.

(c) All property pertaining to the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind shall be exempt from taxation.

~~6-43-206. Materials and supplies.~~

~~No trustee shall be allowed to furnish material for building purposes; nor shall they be, either directly or indirectly, personally interested in the purchase of any article of merchandise or other supplies for the use of such institution.~~

~~6-43-207. Approval of building expenditures.~~

~~No expenditures for building purposes shall be made for the benefit of the Arkansas School for the Blind unless the expenditure shall be recommended by the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf.~~

~~6-43-208. Superintendent.~~

~~(a) The Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf shall have the power to elect a Superintendent of the Arkansas School for the Blind, who shall receive an annual compensation to be fixed by the board of trustees. This amount shall be reported to the General Assembly.~~

~~(b) The superintendent shall be permitted to accept and use free transportation on any railroad in this state without incurring the penalty incurred in § 23-4-803 [repealed].~~

~~6-43-209. General business manager.~~

~~(a) The general business manager, before entering upon the duties of his or her office, shall give bond to the state in penalty and with surety, to be approved by the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf, conditioned for the faithful performance of his or her official duties. The bond is to be filed in the office of the Auditor of State.~~

~~(b) The general business manager shall discharge his or her various duties under the direction of the Superintendent of the Arkansas School for the Blind, who shall examine all statements prepared by the general business manager, whether for past or contemplated expenditures, and the board of trustees shall receive no statement of expenditures from the general business manager unless the approval of the superintendent is endorsed thereon.~~

~~6-43-210. Performance of duties by employees.~~

~~(a) The teachers, officers, and employees shall perform such other duties as the Superintendent of the Arkansas School for the Blind may direct, and when their services are not needed, they shall be discharged.~~

~~(b) However, if the teachers, officers, and employees are unjustly discharged, they shall be entitled to a fair and impartial hearing before the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf.~~

~~6-43-211. Qualifications of teachers.~~

~~No teacher shall be employed in the Arkansas School for the Blind~~

~~unless the teacher holds a current teacher's license issued by the State Board of Education.~~

~~6-43-212. Employment of operatives to make repairs and cultivate grounds.~~

~~The Superintendent of the Arkansas School for the Blind may employ such operatives as are necessary for the proper management of the school, the repair of buildings, and cultivation of adjacent grounds belonging thereto, and the superintendent shall report the same to the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf at its next meeting.~~

~~6-43-213. Salaries.~~

~~(a)(1) The salary of any person connected with the Arkansas School for the Blind shall not be increased during the period for which he or she has been elected or employed.~~

~~(2) When any increase of salary is granted by the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf by this subsection, the increase shall take effect and be in force at the beginning of the next school term after the increase is granted.~~

~~(b) Teachers for the sensory impaired shall be eligible for an additional step increase after being certified in teaching the vision impaired, Deaf, deaf, or Hard of Hearing by the Department of Education.~~

~~(c) The Arkansas School for the Blind is hereby authorized to pay employees hired in the position of teacher for the sensory impaired for the yearly school term the maximum annual salary rate established for each position.~~

~~6-43-214. Admissions.~~

~~(a) All blind persons of suitable character and capacity between three (3) and twenty-one (21) years of age, residing in the state shall be entitled to the benefits of the Arkansas School for the Blind free of charge.~~

~~(b) Pupils from outside the state may be admitted to the privileges of the institution upon the payment of such sums as the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf may consider sufficient to defray expenses.~~

~~(c) If, in the opinion of the board of trustees, any blind person over twenty-one (21) years of age may be benefited by being received into the institution for a limited time to learn a trade or receive instruction, they may, by unanimous vote, and with approval of the Superintendent of the Arkansas School for the Blind, admit such person.~~

~~6-43-215. Expulsions.~~

~~The Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf may expel from the Arkansas School for the Blind any pupil whose longer continuance in the school would be injurious to the school.~~

~~6-43-216. Use of buildings during vacation period.~~

~~(a) No person, teacher, party, servant, or employee shall be boarded, lodged, or in any manner whatever provided for during the vacation of the Arkansas School for the Blind, neither shall any party or person at any time be lodged, boarded, or permitted to remain at the school at the expense of the state not specifically designated and provided for in this subchapter.~~

~~(b) However, this section shall not apply to those employees and pupils who have no homes and are required to remain at the school during vacation.~~

~~6-43-217. Sale of articles made by students.~~

~~The funds arising from the sale of articles made at the Arkansas School for the Blind by student labor shall be used as a contingency fund by the Superintendent of the Arkansas School for the Blind, under the direction of the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf, for the purpose of paying for postage, freight, expressage, telegraph and telephone tolls, emergencies, medicines, and such other purposes as the board of trustees may direct, and the superintendent shall submit an itemized statement of receipts and expenditures from this fund to the board of trustees at its monthly meetings.~~

~~6-43-218. Financial aid to graduates attending postsecondary educational institutions.~~

~~(a)(1) Any graduate of the Arkansas School for the Blind who is a~~

~~resident of this state and who is a regularly enrolled student in any university, college, conservatory of music, or technical institution may, under the direction of the Superintendent of the Arkansas School for the Blind and subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf, receive aid for the purpose of defraying his or her necessary expenses, including a reader, while in attendance at such university, college, conservatory of music, or technical institution.~~

~~(2) However, not more than seven hundred fifty dollars ($750) shall be so expended on account of any one (1) such person during any fiscal year.~~

~~(b) No person shall become a beneficiary under the provisions of this section until it shall appear to the satisfaction of the superintendent, after investigation, that the person has no sufficient separate estate to provide for his or her education and that the parents of the person, if living, are unable to provide for such higher education.~~

~~(c) No person shall receive the benefits of this section for more than four (4) years.~~

~~6-43-219. Sacred Scriptures and copy of United States Constitution presented to blind pupils.~~

~~The Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf and the Superintendent of the Arkansas School for the Blind are authorized to present to each pupil who shall have finished the course in the Arkansas School for the Blind and who shall be honorably discharged from the school, having learned to read by touch, a copy of the Sacred Scriptures and a copy of the United States Constitution in braille.~~

~~6-43-220. Records of purchasing agent.~~

~~(a)(1) The purchasing agent shall keep a full and complete record of all contracts made and entered into for all articles bought for the Arkansas School for the Blind and all bids accepted and rejected.~~

~~(2) The record shall show all contracts in full, price paid for all items, quantity of each item, and from whom purchased.~~

~~(b) The purchasing agent shall keep a copy and record of all building contracts of whatsoever nature and kind.~~

~~6-43-221. Report of school officers.~~

~~The officers of the Arkansas School for the Blind shall make reports to the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf as it may from time to time require.~~

~~6-43-222. Record of allowances — Statement of expenditures.~~

~~(a) The Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf shall keep a book in which they shall record all allowances and make an entry of the proceedings had thereon.~~

~~(b)(1) The general business manager shall report to the board of trustees a detailed statement, under oath, of all the expenditures he or she may have made for the preceding three (3) months, to whom made, and for what purpose, to the truth of which he or she shall take and subscribe an oath.~~

~~(2) The report shall be accompanied by proper vouchers.~~

~~6-43-223. Reports — Publication.~~

~~(a) The Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf and the Superintendent of the Arkansas School for the Blind shall make a full and complete report, to be submitted to the Governor and the General Assembly, not later than January 15 of each year the General Assembly is in regular session.~~

~~(b) These reports shall deal with improvements made during the previous two (2) fiscal years, together with the suggestions and recommendations covering the Arkansas School for the Blind for the next two-year period.~~

~~(c) The report of the board of trustees shall cover the preceding school year.~~

~~(d)(1) The board of trustees and the superintendent shall each make detailed reports biennially to the General Assembly of their proceedings, the condition of the school, the number of pupils, and other facts connected with the institution, including the exact receipts and expenditures of the board of trustees.~~

~~(2) The superintendent shall report to the board of trustees before each regular session of the General Assembly a detailed statement of the number of pupils admitted and discharged, their place of residence and~~

~~supposed cause of blindness, the amount of money expended and for what purpose, and the probable sum necessary to defray the current expenses of the institution until the next regular session of the General Assembly, which report shall be embodied in that of the board of trustees.~~

~~(c)(1) The reports shall be made and printed together not later than January 15 of each year the General Assembly is in regular session.~~

~~(2) There shall be, of each biennial report of the board of trustees to the General Assembly, one thousand five hundred (1,500) copies printed, one thousand (1,000) for the use of the General Assembly and five hundred (500) for the school.~~

SECTION 12. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 43, Subchapter 3, is repealed.

~~6-43-301. Establishment.~~

~~An institute of learning is established in the State of Arkansas for the education of Deaf, deaf, or Hard of Hearing persons of the state, by and under the name and title of the Arkansas School for the Deaf.~~

~~6-43-302. Real and personal property.~~

~~(a) The Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf may take and hold in trust for the state to the use of the Arkansas School for the Deaf any lands conveyed or devised and any money or other personal property given or bequeathed, to be applied to the use and benefit of the school.~~

~~(b) All property pertaining to the Arkansas School for the Deaf shall be exempt from taxation.~~

~~6-43-303. Rent, construction, or repair of facilities.~~

~~The Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf shall have power to make all contracts for the rent or construction and repair of any building and appurtenances belonging to or used by the Arkansas School for the Deaf.~~

~~6-43-304. Action for trespass or other wrongs brought by state.~~

~~For all damages for trespass and other wrongs upon the buildings or any other property, personal or real, belonging to the Arkansas School for the~~

~~Deaf, actions may be maintained in the name of the state, and all damages received in such actions shall be appropriated to the repair of the injured property.~~

~~6-43-305. Teachers generally.~~

~~(a) The Arkansas School for the Deaf is hereby authorized to pay employees hired in the position of teacher for the sensory impaired or senior audiologist for the yearly school term the maximum annual salary rate established for each position.~~

~~(b) Teachers for the sensory impaired shall be eligible for an additional step increase after being certified in teaching the vision impaired, Deaf, deaf, or Hard of Hearing by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education.~~

~~6-43-306. Duties of teachers and employees.~~

~~(a) The teachers, officers, and employees shall perform such other duties as the Superintendent of the Arkansas School for the Deaf may direct, and, when their services are not needed, they shall be discharged.~~

~~(b) However, if the teachers, officers, and employees are unjustly discharged, they shall be entitled to a fair and impartial hearing before the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf and to be represented by counsel if they desire.~~

~~6-43-307. Limitations on salary increases.~~

~~The salary of any person connected with the Arkansas School for the Deaf shall be as determined by law.~~

~~6-43-308. Custodian of funds — Payment of bills, warrants, etc.~~

~~(a) The Treasurer of State, in consultation with the Secretary of the Department of Education, shall have the custody of all moneys, notes, securities, and other obligations belonging to the Arkansas School for the Deaf and shall be responsible for them under his or her bond and oath as the Treasurer of State.~~

~~(b) The Treasurer of State, in consultation with the secretary, shall pay all the expenses of the school out of the funds appropriated for the use of the school, upon warrants drawn by the Auditor of State in favor of the~~

~~Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf, who shall issue his or her warrants upon orders signed by the Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf and at least two (2) members of the board of trustees, except as herein otherwise provided.~~

~~6-43-309. Accounts and records -- Reports.~~

~~(a) The accounts and records of the Arkansas School for the Deaf shall be so kept by the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf and the superintendent as to show the:~~

~~(1) Kind, quality, cost, and of whom bought, of each article purchased for use thereof;~~

~~(2) Condition of the school;~~

~~(3) Specific amount of the receipts and expenditures;~~

~~(4) Number, name, and date of admission of each pupil;~~

~~(5) Age, cause of deafness, and length of time under instruction of each pupil, of beneficiaries of each pupil, and all other pupils received into the school; and~~

~~(6) Number and salaries of officers and employees.~~

~~(b) This information shall be embodied in a report made to the Governor on or before the convening of the General Assembly at each regular session, and shall be presented to that body by the Governor with his or her message.~~

~~6-43-310. Records of secretary and purchasing agent.~~

~~(a)(1) The secretary and purchasing agent shall keep a full and complete record of all contracts made and entered into for the purchase of all articles bought for the Arkansas School for the Deaf and all bids accepted and rejected.~~

~~(2) The record shall show all contracts in full, price paid per item, for all items and quantity of each item, and from whom purchased.~~

~~(b) The secretary and purchasing agent shall keep a copy and a record copy of all building contracts of whatsoever nature or kind.~~

~~6-43-311. Biennial reports.~~

~~(a) The Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the~~

~~Arkansas School for the Deaf and the Superintendent of the Arkansas School for the Deaf shall make a full and complete report to be submitted to the Governor, which shall be printed together and presented to the General Assembly not later than January 16 of each year the General Assembly is in regular session.~~

~~(b) The report of the board of trustees shall cover the two (2) preceding calendar years, and the report of the superintendent shall cover the two (2) preceding school years.~~

~~(c) These reports shall deal with the improvements made during the biennial period covered by them, together with the suggestions and recommendations concerning the Arkansas School for the Deaf for the next biennium.~~

~~6-43-312 — 6-43-314. [Repealed.]~~

~~6-43-315. List of applications in numerical order.~~

~~The Superintendent of the Arkansas School for the Deaf is required to keep a list of all applications for admission in their numerical order.~~

~~6-43-316. Length of time students may remain.~~

~~(a) Any Deaf, deaf, or Hard of Hearing person who may be admitted into the school and supported as a beneficiary at the expense of the state shall be permitted to remain in the school for thirteen (13) years unless, in the judgment of the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf, he or she shall be sooner discharged.~~

~~(b)(1) The board is empowered to extend the term of such pupils as may be recommended by the superintendent from time to time beyond the original period of thirteen (13) years, either for further instruction with a view to entering college, or for perfecting themselves in their trades.~~

~~(2) However, no more than twenty (20) pupils shall be so recommended in one (1) year, nor any one (1) for more than three (3) years' extension.~~

~~6-43-317. Boarding and lodging.~~

~~(a)(1) It shall be the duty of the Superintendent of the Arkansas School for the Deaf to furnish, or cause to be furnished, suitable and proper~~

~~boarding and lodging, as well as suitable instruction, for all Deaf, deaf, or Hard of Hearing persons received as beneficiaries.~~

~~(2) He or she shall receive into the school other Deaf, deaf, or Hard of Hearing persons according to such rules as the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf may prescribe.~~

~~(b)(1) The Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf may require the superintendent or other school official to reside at the institution.~~

~~(2) The Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf may provide other benefits to the superintendent out of the operation funds of the respective school.~~

~~(c) No person shall lodge or board in the school who is not a pupil thereof, except its officers and their families.~~

~~6-43-318. Aid to deaf students at college.~~

~~When the county judge of any county has certified that a deaf pupil is indigent, the provisions of § 6-43-109 shall be extended to the pupil while the pupil is a student of a college.~~

~~6-43-319. Cruel or severe punishment forbidden.~~

~~There shall be no cruel or severe punishment inflicted upon the pupils of the Arkansas School for the Deaf.~~

~~6-43-320. Shift differential.~~

~~For the Arkansas School for the Deaf, shift work must begin not earlier than 2:30 p.m. and end no later than 8:00 a.m. the following day.~~

~~6-43-321. Maintenance, transportation, and security for Arkansas School for the Blind.~~

~~(a) The Arkansas School for the Deaf shall be responsible for providing maintenance, transportation, and security for the Arkansas School for the Blind.~~

~~(b) The Arkansas School for the Deaf is authorized to spend general revenue funds to provide for these services.~~

SECTION 13. Arkansas Code § 19-4-906(a)(3)(032) and (033), concerning passenger motor vehicle limits, are amended to read as follows:

(032) Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind ~~8~~ 22

~~(033) Arkansas School for the Deaf 14~~

SECTION 14. Arkansas Code § 19-5-304(5) and (6), concerning the School for the Blind Fund Account and School for the Deaf Fund Account within the Education Fund, is amended to read as follows:

(5) Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind Fund Account.

(A) The Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind Fund Account shall be used for the maintenance, operation, and improvement required by the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind in carrying out those powers, functions, and duties as set out in § 6-43-101 et seq. ~~and § 6-43-201 et seq.~~

(B) The Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind Fund Account shall consist of those general revenues as may be provided by law and nonrevenue income derived from services provided by the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind and any other nonfederal grant funds provided by law.

(C) Federal reimbursement funds received on account of vocational education programs conducted by the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind shall not be deposited into the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind Fund Account;

~~(6) School for the Deaf Fund Account.~~

~~(A) The School for the Deaf Fund Account shall be used for the maintenance, operation, and improvement required by the Arkansas School for the Deaf in carrying out the powers, functions, and duties as set out in § 6-43-301 et seq. or other duties imposed by law upon the Arkansas School for the Deaf, which were transferred to the Department of Education by §§ 6-11-101, 6-11-102, and 25-6-102.~~

~~(B) The School for the Deaf Fund Account shall consist of those general revenues as may be provided by law and nonrevenue income derived from services provided by the Arkansas School for the Deaf and any other nonfederal grant funds provided by law.~~

~~(C) Federal reimbursement funds received on account of vocational education programs conducted by the Arkansas School for the Deaf shall not be deposited into the School for the Deaf Fund Account;~~

SECTION 15. Arkansas Code § 19-5-402(6) and (7) under the Education Fund, Allocation A, concerning maximum allocations of revenues for upcoming fiscal years, are amended to read as follows:

(6) School for the Deaf and Blind Fund Account ~~$8,218,836~~ $20,031,769

~~(7) School for the Deaf Fund Account $ 11,812,933~~

SECTION 16. Arkansas Code § 21-8-402(5)(B)(ix), concerning the definition of "gift" as it relates to the Disclosure Act for Lobbyists and State and Local Officials, is amended to read as follows:

(ix) A monetary or other award presented to an employee of a public school district, the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind, ~~the Arkansas School for the Deaf,~~ the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts, a university, a college, a technical college, a technical institute, a comprehensive life-long learning center, or a community college in recognition of the employee's contribution to education;

SECTION 17. Arkansas Code § 21-8-402(7)(B), concerning the definition of "income" or "compensation" as it relates to the Disclosure Act for Lobbyists and State and Local Officials, is amended to read as follows:

(B) The term "compensation" does not include anything of value presented to an employee of a public school district, the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind, ~~the Arkansas School for the Deaf,~~ the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts, a university, a college, a technical college, a technical institute, a comprehensive life-long learning center, or a community college in recognition of the employee's contribution to education;

SECTION 18. Arkansas Code § 21-8-701(d)(10), concerning individuals required to file a statement of financial interest under the Disclosure Act for Lobbyists and State and Local Officials, is amended to read as follows:

(10) Each monetary or other award of more than one hundred dollars ($100) received by the public servant or candidate in his or her capacity as an employee of a public school district, the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind, ~~the Arkansas School for the Deaf,~~ the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts, a university, a college, a technical

college, a technical institute, a comprehensive life-long learning center, or a community college in recognition of his or her contribution to education;

SECTION 19. Arkansas Code § 25-11-205 is amended to read as follows:

25-11-205. Board of the Division of State Services for the Deaf and Blind.

(a) There is created a board to be known as the Board of the Division of State Services for the Deaf and Blind, to be constituted as follows:

(1)(A) The board shall be composed of seven (7) members appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate.

(B)(i) One (1) member shall be appointed by the Governor after consulting each of the following:

(a) The National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas;

(b) The Arkansas Council of the Blind, Inc.;

(c) The Arkansas Lions Clubs Council of Governors, which shall be a member of a member club of the Lions Clubs International within Multiple District Seven for Arkansas;

(d) The Arkansas Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired; and

(e) The Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind.

(ii) Appointments made by the Governor under subdivision (a)(1)(B)(i) of this section shall be subject to confirmation by the Senate.

(C) The Governor shall appoint two (2) at-large members.

(D) One (1) or more of the members of the board shall be at least fifty-five (55) years of age.

(E) At least four (4) members of the board shall be blind as defined in § 25-11-202.

(2) Any board member whose term has expired shall continue to serve as a member of the board until the member's successor is appointed and qualified;

(3) All board members shall be appointed for terms of four (4) years, and no person may serve more than two (2) consecutive full terms; and

(4) All vacancies which occur for any reason shall be filled by

appointment by the Governor, and any interim appointments shall be limited to the unexpired term of the position vacated. Any person appointed to fill a vacancy shall meet the qualifications for appointment held by his or her predecessor on the board.

(b) The President of World Services for the Blind, the Superintendent of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind, one (1) representative appointed by the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired of Arkansas, one (1) representative appointed by the Blinded Veterans Association of Arkansas, and one (1) representative appointed by the Arkansas Association of Blind Business Managers shall serve as ex officio nonvoting members of the board. Additional ex officio nonvoting members may be appointed by the Governor at the request of a majority of the board.

(c) Each member or ex officio member appointed to the board, before entering upon the duties of office, shall take the oath prescribed by the Arkansas Constitution for state officers and shall file the oath in the office of the Secretary of State, who shall thereupon issue to the member a certificate of appointment.

(d) Upon recommendation of a majority of the regular board members, the Governor may remove any member of the board at any time for misconduct, incompetency, neglect of duty, or any other good cause as may be determined by the board.

(e) The board members shall not receive compensation for performance of their duties. However, they may receive expense reimbursement in accordance with § 25-16-901 et seq.

(f) After the members of the board have been duly appointed and are serving, the board shall choose a chair from among the regular members as presiding officer, who shall serve for a term of two (2) years. The board shall also elect from among its regular members a vice chair and a secretary, who shall serve for a term of one (1) year.

(g) The board shall meet at least quarterly at those times and places as it may determine from time to time.

(h)(1) The board shall employ a commissioner, subject to the approval of the Governor, qualified by experience to administer and implement the policies and directives of the board.

(2) The ~~commissioner~~ Commissioner of the Board of the Division

of State Services for the Deaf and Blind shall report to the Secretary of the Department of Commerce.

(3) The board may employ or appoint any additional personnel necessary to carry out the functions, duties, and responsibilities entrusted to the Division of State Services for the Deaf and Blind in accordance with the requirements of law and within the limits of available appropriations.

SECTION 20. Arkansas Code § 25-16-904(19), concerning a stipend for membership on the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf, is amended to read as follows:

(19) Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind ~~and the Arkansas School for the Deaf~~;

SECTION 21. Arkansas Code § 25-17-201(1), concerning an honorary board for the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf, is amended to read as follows:

(1) A board of five (5) members constituting the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind ~~and the Arkansas School for the Deaf~~;

SECTION 22. Arkansas Code § 26-51-2503 is amended to read as follows:

26-51-2503. Contribution to the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind ~~and the Arkansas School for the Deaf~~.

(a)(1) The Revenue Division of the Department of Finance and Administration shall include on the Arkansas individual income tax forms, including those forms on which a husband and wife file separately on the same form, and on all corporate income tax forms, a designation as follows:

"(A) If you are entitled to a refund, check if you wish to designate [ ] $1, [ ] $5, [ ] $10, [ ] _____ (write in amount) or [ ] all refund due of your tax refund for the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind ~~and the Arkansas School for the Deaf~~. Your refund will be reduced by this amount.

(B) If you owe an additional amount, check if you wish to contribute an additional [ ] $1, [ ] $5, [ ] $10, [ ] _____ (write in amount) for the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind ~~and the Arkansas School for the Deaf~~. If you wish to make a contribution to the

schools, you must enclose a separate check for the amount of your contribution payable to the Department of Finance and Administration."

(2) The Arkansas School for the Deaf and *Blind* ~~*and the Arkansas School for the Deaf*~~ *check-off program on state income tax returns shall be effective beginning with the returns for the 2001 income year and each income year thereafter.*

(3) The Secretary of the Department of Finance and Administration may promulgate all rules and all income tax forms, returns, and schedules necessary to implement this section.

(b) The Department of Finance and Administration shall quarterly certify to the Treasurer of State the amount contributed to the Arkansas School for the Deaf and *Blind* ~~*and the Arkansas School for the Deaf*~~ *through this state income tax check-off during the quarter, and the Treasurer of State shall deduct from the Individual Income Tax Withholding Fund the amount so certified.*

~~*(c) The Treasurer of State shall credit fifty percent (50%) of the amount certified each quarter to the School for the Blind Fund Account and fifty percent (50%) to the School for the Deaf Fund Account.*~~

SECTION 23. DO NOT CODIFY. Transfer of the Arkansas School for the Blind to the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind.

(a) The Arkansas School for the Blind is transferred, and its authority, duties, functions, records, contracts, personnel, property, and unexpended balances of appropriations, allocations, and other funds, including the functions of budgeting or purchasing of the Arkansas School for the Blind, are transferred to the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind.

(b) The Arkansas School for the Blind's statutory powers, duties, and functions, including functions of budgeting or purchasing, records, contracts, personnel, property, and unexpended balances of appropriations, allocations, and other funds are transferred to the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind.

(c)(1) The transfer of the Arkansas School for the Blind does not affect the orders, rules, directives, registration, licensing, or standards made or promulgated by the Arkansas School for the Blind before the effective date of this act.

(2) The orders, rules, directives, registration, licensing, or

standards of the Arkansas School for the Blind shall continue to be in effect until they are amended or repealed under authority provided under this act.

SECTION 24. DO NOT CODIFY. Transfer of the Arkansas School for the Deaf to the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind.

(a) The Arkansas School for the Deaf is transferred, and its authority, duties, functions, records, contracts, personnel, property, and unexpended balances of appropriations, allocations, and other funds, including the functions of budgeting or purchasing of the Arkansas School for the Deaf, are transferred to the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind.

(b) The Arkansas School for the Deaf's statutory powers, duties, and functions, including functions of budgeting or purchasing, records, contracts, personnel, property, and unexpended balances of appropriations, allocations, and other funds are transferred to the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind.

(c)(1) The transfer of the Arkansas School for the Deaf does not affect the orders, rules, directives, registration, licensing, or standards made or promulgated by the Arkansas School for the Deaf before the effective date of this act.

(2) The orders, rules, directives, registration, licensing, or standards of the Arkansas School for the Deaf shall continue to be in effect until they are amended or repealed under authority provided under this act.

SECTION 25. EFFECTIVE DATE. Section 22 of this act is effective for tax years beginning on or after January 2, 2025.

SECTION 26. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that the merger of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf under this act cannot occur during the middle of a school year; that if this act did go into effect during the middle of a school year, there would be significant disruptions in funding and confusion among administration, staff, students, and parents of students; and that this act is immediately necessary to ensure that the necessary changes to implement the merger of the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf are made before the 2025-2026 school year and to guarantee funds for the newly created Arkansas School for

the Deaf and Blind are correctly appropriated in advance of the upcoming 2026 fiscal year. Therefore, an emergency is declared to exist, and this act being necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become effective on July 1, 2025.

/s/Joey Carr

APPROVED: 4/17/25