

Section 16: Recommendations

On November 1, 2016, the Senate Education Committee voted to adopt the following recommendations for each topic:

Topic	Recommendation
Special Education Funding	Increase Catastrophic Occurrences Funding by \$2,000,000 in FY18 and \$2,020,000 in FY19.
Teacher Salaries	Increase each step of the statutory minimum teacher salary schedule by the corresponding increase provided to the teacher salary line of the matrix.
Declining Enrollment Funding	Review declining enrollment funding.

Categorical Funding

Topic	Recommendation
National School Lunch Funding	No change to the NSL funding rates, but create a separate \$4.3 million NSL matching grant program to help districts provide tutoring services, pre-K programs and before- and after-school programs.
Professional Development Funding	Increase PD funding to \$41 per student in FY18 and \$50 per student in FY 19.
English Language Learner Funding	Increase ELL funding to \$338 per ELL student in FY18 and FY19.
Alternative Learning Environment Funding	Increase ALE funding to \$4,640 per ALE FTE student in FY18 and FY19.

Foundation Funding and the Matrix

Topic	Recommendation
Teacher Salary	Increase the teacher salary in the matrix to \$64,998 in FY18 and \$65,811 in FY19.
Secretary	Increase the per-student amount for a secretary to \$80.90 in FY18 and \$81.70 in FY19.
Extra Duty Funds	Increase the per-student amount for extra duty funds to \$65.50 in FY18 and \$66.20 in FY19.
Substitutes	Increase the per-student amount for substitutes to \$70.40 in FY18 and \$71.80 in FY19.
Operations and Maintenance	Increase the per-student amount for O&M to \$674.90 in FY18 and \$685.00 in FY19
Transportation	Leave the per-student amount for transportation flat, but create a separate \$3 million supplemental transportation program.
Total Foundation Funding Rate	With the increases noted above and any necessary rounding adjustments, increase the per-student foundation funding rate to \$6,713 in FY18 and \$6,781 in FY19.

Supplement to the Final Report on the Legislative Hearings for the 2016 Adequacy Study

On February 1, 2017, the House and Senate Education Committees met jointly and voted to adopt the following supplemental recommendations.

1. Change the definition of adequacy.

The definition the General Assembly uses for educational adequacy should be amended to include the following underlined language:

1. The standards included in the state's curriculum frameworks, which define what all Arkansas students are to be taught, including specific grade level curriculum, a mandatory thirty-eight (38) Carnegie units defined by the Arkansas Standards of Accreditation to be taught at the high school level, and opportunities for students to develop career readiness skills;
2. The standards included in the state's testing system. The goal is to have all, or all but the most severely disabled, students perform at or above proficiency on these tests; and
3. Sufficient funding to provide adequate resources as identified by the General Assembly.

2. Provide additional funding for the Academic Facilities Partnership Program.

The General Assembly should provide up to \$100 million in new state funding for the Academic Facilities Partnership Program for the biennium. This funding should be in addition to the proposed \$41.8 million in General Revenue for the Partnership Program each year of the biennium and in addition to any transferred savings the Partnership Program receives from the Bonded Debt Assistance program.

3. Set aside a portion of the Professional Development funding for professional learning communities.

Increase the Professional Development state categorical funding rate from \$32.40 per student to \$41 per student in FY18 and \$50 per student in FY19, and set aside the increased amount to be used exclusively for professional learning communities.