



Arkansas House Newsletter

June 29, 2012

US Department of Ed Grants Arkansas Flexibility

Arkansas can now reward schools for exemplary performance and improvement and distribute resources to help struggling schools. The state now has more flexibility after the US Department of Education announced that Arkansas is one of five states granted a waiver from certain requirements of No Child Left Behind. The state's plan for flexibility under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) runs parallel with the implementation of college and career ready learning standards. Education Commissioner Dr. Tom Kimbrell said he is grateful for the ruling, "This flexibility allows Arkansas to evaluate schools in terms of performance, growth, and graduation rate," said Kimbrell. "We are not turning our back on accountability. With our system of accountability, support and intervention, we will focus on specific problems unique to each public school in Arkansas." Arkansas launched the Common Core Standards in grades K-2 during the previous school year. Grades 3-8 will begin implementation in the fall. The Common Core State Standards initiative is a state-led effort coordinated by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). The standards were developed in collaboration with teachers, school administrators and other experts to provide a clear and consistent framework to prepare our students for college and the workforce. For more information visit www.commoncorearkansas.org