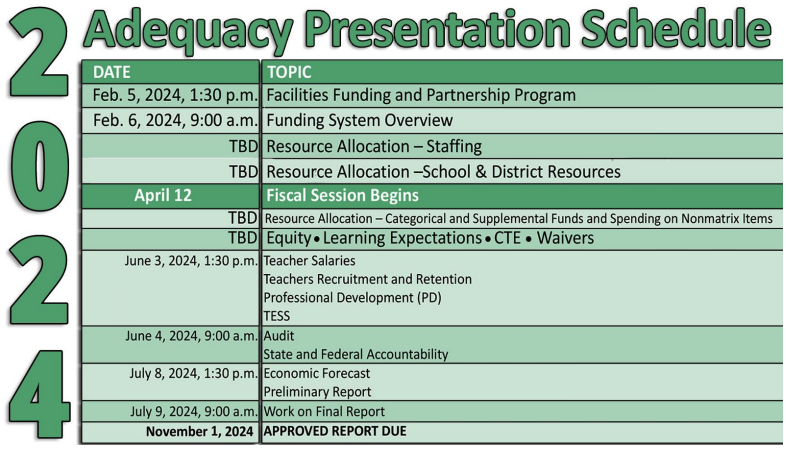
STATE OF ARKANSAS
House of Representatives

Arkansas House Newsletter

January 19, 2024

Education Committee Begins Adequacy Study



2024 Adequacy Presentation Schedule

DATE	TOPIC
Feb. 5, 2024, 1:30 p.m.	Facilities Funding and Partnership Program
Feb. 6, 2024, 9:00 a.m.	Funding System Overview
TBD	Resource Allocation – Staffing
TBD	Resource Allocation –School & District Resources
April 12	Fiscal Session Begins
TBD	Resource Allocation – Categorical and Supplemental Funds and Spending on Nonmatrix Items
TBD	Equity • Learning Expectations • CTE • Waivers
June 3, 2024, 1:30 p.m.	Teacher Salaries Teachers Recruitment and Retention Professional Development (PD) TESS
June 4, 2024, 9:00 a.m.	Audit State and Federal Accountability
July 8, 2024, 1:30 p.m.	Economic Forecast Preliminary Report
July 9, 2024, 9:00 a.m.	Work on Final Report
November 1, 2024	APPROVED REPORT DUE

Public education stands as the primary expenditure within state government. This month, the House and Senate Education Committees began working on the Educational Adequacy Study. This study will serve as a recommendation to the legislature to determine funding for the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 school years.

This in-depth process involves assessing the entirety of public education to ensure equal opportunities for students, covering aspects from teacher salaries to technological requirements. Arkansas employs a specific formula, the matrix, to calculate per-student funding, which is set to increase from $7,618 to $7,771 for the 2024-2025 school year.

The committees will later examine facilities funding and partnership programs in February, followed by a review of teacher-related aspects such as recruitment, retention, salaries, and professional development in June.

The culmination of this study results in a final report due on November 1, serving as a crucial guide for funding decisions in the subsequent year.

At the most recent meeting, committee members reviewed student achievement data. Reports revealed that in 2022, 30% of Arkansas 4th-grade students scored proficient or above in reading, slightly below the national average of 32%. Additionally, 28% of Arkansas 4th-grade students and 35% nationally scored proficient or above in math.

The House and Senate Education Committees approved an emergency rule to implement literacy tutoring grants and High Impact Learning Grants.

The literacy grant program is designed to help struggling readers in grades K-3. It will allow families to invoice up to $500 per year for tutoring services.

The second program will provide a limited amount of funding for schools to spend on tutoring services during the school day.

The proposed rule now goes before the Arkansas Legislative Council Executive Committee, scheduled to meet on January 18.

The House and Senate Education Committees will convene again on February 5 and February 6, with live-streamed and recorded meetings accessible at www.arkansashouse.org.