



Arkansas House Newsletter

August 23, 2024

Education Committee Continues Adequacy Study

**IMPORTANT DATES FOR
EDUCATIONAL ADEQUACY REPORT**

OCTOBER 16TH, 2024
BOTH COMMITTEES MUST APPROVE THE
DRAFT VERSION OF THE FINAL REPORT
WITH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE
**2025-2027
BIENNIUM.**

NOVEMBER 1ST, 2024
FINAL REPORT DUE
TO SENATE PRESIDENT
PRO TEMPORE
& SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

The graphic also features a row of icons representing various educational fields: a lightbulb, a brain, a rocket, an apple, a graduation cap, a person, a book, and a bell.

This week, the House and Senate Education Committee convened to continue important work on the Educational Adequacy Study, a crucial study aimed at ensuring that every student in Arkansas has access to a high-quality education. One area of focus has been teacher recruitment and retention—an essential component in providing a stable and effective learning environment for our students.

Historically, Arkansas has taken significant steps in educational funding following landmark legal cases such as the 2002 Lake View case. At the heart of our funding strategy is the foundation funding model established in 2003, which outlines the essential resources needed for an adequate education. This funding matrix, while largely unchanged in its composition, has seen adjustments in funding amounts over the years. For 2023, the per-pupil foundation funding stood at \$7,413, reflecting our ongoing commitment to supporting our schools.

In recent years, we have seen positive trends in teacher qualifications and experience. The percentage of teachers holding bachelor's, master's, and advanced degrees has risen, along with an increase in fully certified teachers. From 2021 to 2023, the average years of teacher experience grew from 10.5 to 11.8 years,

showcasing a more experienced workforce in our classrooms. Currently, 92% of teachers have at least one year of experience, and 3% are nationally board-certified, indicating a dedicated and skilled teaching staff.

While our average teacher retention rate stands at 74%, we will always strive for improvement.

Under the LEARNS Act, we raised starting teacher salaries to \$50,000/year. Investing in our teachers is paramount. We must continue to explore ways to ensure they feel valued and supported in their vital roles.

The final Educational Adequacy Report must be completed by November 1. You can find copies of the presentations at the committee meetings at [arkansashouse.org](https://www.arkansashouse.org).