

# ADE DAILY NEWS CLIPS

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## Local schools take a beating (Editorial, Pine Bluff Commercial)

In 1819, Lord Byron's "Don Juan" Canto the Second reads in part, "O ye! who teach the ingenuous youth of nations, Holland, France, England, Germany, or Spain, I pray ye flog them upon all occasions, It mends their morals, never mind the pain."

In this passage the speaker admonishes us to literally beat morality into children. While administrators of the Pine Bluff School District don't practice that kind of punishment, the managerial path they've chosen is no less painful.

As reported in The Commercial, the majority of schools in the PBSB were placed on probation by the Arkansas State Board of Education on Monday for violations of state standards. This sad tally includes all six of the district's elementary schools. They made the list because an instructor who provided gifted and talented services failed to meet state licensure requirements, according to the state board.

Pine Bluff High School also was placed on probationary status after an instructor teaching a survey course failed to meet licensing requirements.

To her credit, PBSB Superintendent Linda Watson indicated the gross ignominy had found purchase with her, "I am making sure that this August before classes start all of those people who are supposed to be teaching classes have licenses that line up with what they are teaching ahead of time. If you're supposed to be in classes required for a particular certification, then you'd better be in those classes."

We applaud Watson's understanding of the impending doom should she and her staff fail. We would suggest her no-nonsense, no-excuses policy be adopted by other institutions of education.

Those who choose teaching as a profession have sworn a sacred oath to the future. Far too many in our midst have forsaken that oath or, at the least, not been able to deliver. As Watson indicated, it's time for some of those people to go.

Relatedly, two other schools need to have the same kinds of introspective moment. UAPB has announced intentions to reconstitute its nursing program yet again. Surely that will mean a fresh start under new leadership. If not, we'll know that the school's commitment to change was only superficial.

And what to make of the men's basketball program at the school that looks to be barred from post-season play — for a second year? The athletic department continues to refute the NCAA determination that the team's academic performance falls below a minimum threshold. But that didn't change the

outcome last year and may not again this year. Question: How long will the university allow the condition to exist?

The grievous sins of the Dollarway School District are almost too numerous to enumerate. While state control is no guarantee of improvement, they'd be hard-pressed to do much worse.

With all this misfortune, what's a community to do? With regard to the K-12 schools, the National Center for Public Education notes several successful approaches.

First, they cite several studies that indicate more school time produces more learning — when the time is focused on academic activities. In other words, schools need to “maximize the time during which students are actively and appropriately engaged in learning,” or what is often simply called “time on task.”

Second, professional development is key, “Teachers trained in traditional modes of instruction, including the reliance on lecture, will likely need appropriate professional development to make the best use of class time and keep students actively engaged.”

Third, students in full-day kindergarten post more gains than their peers in half-day programs. Younger students seem to benefit from more school time regardless of other factors.

While these are just three suggestions, it's clear we need change; and we need it now — and at all levels.

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### **Title One Funding on Chopping Block for Schools (KNWA)**

Video available at [http://nwahomepage.com/fulltextfox?nxd\\_id=437452](http://nwahomepage.com/fulltextfox?nxd_id=437452)

Title One funds are government monies given to districts with disadvantaged students. In Fayetteville, 40 percent of all students fall under that category and losing the funding from the sequester could cause problems this fall.

About 275,000 dollars could be cut from the Fayetteville Public Schools 2013 - 2014 budget.

"The priority right now is to retain as many staff members as we can and forgo some of the materials and supplies and purchased services that we've done in the past."

Those title one funds are government issued to help low-income children succeed in school but the Sequester has decreased the amount schools can receive.

"You hate to lose instructional programs that are effective, especially with disadvantaged students but in this day and age of budget cuts we have to be very conscientious of what's being successful with our students and stick with that," Christie Jay, Director of Federal Programs for Fayetteville Schools said.

Forty percent of the Fayetteville student population fall under title one requirements.

"It's very difficult because these are the students that are in the most need," she said.

But schools like Asbell Elementary, where 80 percent of the children are underprivileged, could be most effected.

"We know that the students need certain things to be successful so we're trying to insulate and protect some of those programs that we really believe in while we move forward."

Those programs at risk, translate into possible jobs lost.

Though Jay will be working to protect those jobs, not all can be saved.

"There's a possibility that not all of those will be rehired but we are hoping to retain as many as possible," she said.

The 12 to 15 percent of funds the Fayetteville School District could lose is based off of preliminary numbers. Schools throughout Northwest Arkansas will know their financial fate officially July 1st.

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### **Carver awarded School Boards Scholarship (Little River News)**

Jared Carver of Foreman, a 2013 graduate of Foreman High School, recently received the J.K. Williams Scholarship from the Arkansas School Boards Association (ASBA) Education Foundation.

The \$650 scholarship is awarded to a graduating high school senior who is the child of an Arkansas school board member and who will attend an Arkansas institution of higher learning in the fall. The award is based on a student's academic record and leadership potential. The award honors the late J. K. Williams, a longtime Arkansas educator who served as Executive Director of ASBA.

Carver graduated first in his class of 30 with a 4.18 grade point average and plans to study biology at Hendrix College in the fall.

During his senior year, Carver served as president of both the Student Council and Key Club, secretary of the National Honor Society and vice president of Future Business Leaders of America. He also participated on the Foreman EAST team, earning a superior ranking during conference competition.

Outside of his school activities, Carver has volunteered at Temple Memorial Rehabilitation Center throughout high school. He is a member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church.

He is the son of Anita Carver, a member of the Foreman School Board.