STATE OF ARKANSAS
ASA HUTCHINSON
GOVERNOR

August 12, 2015

Chairwoman Toyce Newton
4 Capitol Mall #26
Little Rock, AR 7201

Dear Chairwoman Toyce Newton and the State Board of Education:

On Thursday, July 30, the Governor's Council on Common Core Review voted unanimously to approve a set of findings and recommendations. To arrive at the recommendations, the Council on Common Core Review heard testimony from experts and received comments from Arkansans across the state about the standards and related issues.

The purpose of this letter is to formally submit the Council's recommendations to the State Board of Education. It is my understanding that any revision of educational standards must follow a formal review, assessment, and public comment procedure.

I have reviewed the recommendations with Commissioner Key, and I understand that the Department of Education (ADE) will initiate revision of the English Language Arts and math standards according to A.C.A. § 6-15-101 and ACTAAP Rules 4.0. The process allows the ADE to seek feedback from the public on the current and revised standards, and it allows the Content Revision Committees ample time to review and revise the standards as necessary. During this process, I am instructing the ADE to examine any copyright issues with the Common Core State Standards. To avoid any issues, I would recommend the ADE proceed with a new name for the standards, if need be. As noted by the Council, throughout this process, I would like to encourage the ADE and the State Board of Education to facilitate and support increased communication between the ADE, school districts, and parents about standards.

In addition, I would like the ADE and the State Board to take into consideration the other areas addressed by the Council, including the implementation of the standards. The ADE and the State Board may decide that

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certain recommendations are suitable for other bodies to review; and if this is the case, we can discuss what action should be taken. For example, the Council recommended the state to examine funding, which is a matter that the legislature addresses each biennium through the adequacy study. In regard to recommendations about special education testing, I recognize that the ADE will need to take into account federal regulations about special education students. Lastly, I want to direct the ADE and the State Board to continue to utilize safeguards and protect student data.

I appreciate your service to the state. I look forward to continuing to work together to ensure success for all of Arkansas' students.

Sincerely,

Asa Hutchinson

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