

ORDER

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED pursuant to Arkansas Code Annotated §§ 6-13-1401 et seq. and the March 12, 2012 vote of the Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) that:

1. The voluntary annexation petition submitted by the Lead Hill School District and the Ozark Mountain School District for the annexation of the Lead Hill School District into the Ozark Mountain School District is hereby denied.

2. The reasons for denial of the petition, as stated by the members of the State Board, are as follows:

a. The future negative impact of the proposed annexation on the ability of the Ozark Mountain School District to keep the Lead Hill campus open, leaving the Lead Hill patrons with no other option for their students other than to attend the Bergman School District through school choice transfers. This outcome would also present a problem in that the Lead Hill patrons' millage would be sent to the Ozark Mountain School District while the Lead Hill students attend the Bergman School District.

b. The future negative impact of transporting Lead Hill students long distances to school in the Ozark Mountain School District.

c. A concern about whether the students in the Lead Hill School District would be offered more educational opportunities in the Ozark Mountain School District.

d. A desire to review the Lead Hill School District's enrollment during the next school year and to have additional time to consider whether the proposed annexation is a viable option for the Ozark Mountain and Lead Hill school districts or whether the State Board should review other appropriate options.

e. A general concern with the efficiency and efficacy of the educational system in Arkansas. A critical mass of students is necessary for a meaningful education.

f. A concern about reliance on distance learning rather than face-to-face interaction between teachers and students.

3. For the reasons set forth above, the voluntary annexation petition submitted by the Lead Hill School District and the Ozark Mountain School District is hereby denied.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

ORDER SIGNED AND EXECUTED ON THIS 14th OF MAY, 2012.


Arkansas State Board of Education
Dr. Ben Mays, Chair