



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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LITTLE ROCK: The Arkansas Department of Education learned today that it has been awarded a \$9.8 million grant for the design and implementation of a statewide longitudinal data system. U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan today announced that Arkansas was one of 20 states to receive one of the grants, which was funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 to support the development and implementation of data systems to enable states to examine student progress from early childhood into career, including matching teachers to students, while protecting student privacy and confidentiality consistent with applicable privacy protection laws.

“This is truly exceptional news for our state,” said Tom W. Kimbrell, commissioner of education. “We have already created a quality longitudinal data system that has been recognized as one of the best in the nation by the Data Quality Campaign. This funding will allow us to take the system to the next level so that it is able to be easily used by teachers, administrators and policy-makers to reach informed, data-driven decisions that will improve the quality of education for students in Arkansas.”

Last year, Congress expanded the program to include not only K-12 data systems, but also provide links with pre-K, postsecondary, and workforce data. The Arkansas Department of Education has signed memorandums of understanding with the Arkansas Department of Career Education and the Arkansas Department of Higher Education to create this linkage between data systems and is working further toward this end with agencies belonging to the Governor’s Work Force Cabinet.

“This is the third grant from the U.S. Department of Education that we’ve applied for and received to create our longitudinal data system,” said Jim Boardman, ADE assistant commissioner for research and technology. “We are going to be able to do some amazing things.”

Plans include creating a robust growth model that allows educators to have a more distinct picture of the educational improvement students are making as well as “dashboards” and other easy-to-understand representations of student and school performance to inform both educators and the public.

State Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) grants were authorized by the Educational Technical Assistance Act of 2002 and the first grants were awarded in 2005. The 2009 ARRA grantees were selected in a competition based on the merit of the applicants’ proposals and the funding available for the program. An independent peer review panel evaluated the proposals on aspects such as need for the project, project goals and

outcomes, activities and timeline, management and governance, and personnel and financial resources.

The process is independent from Race to the Top and was administered by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) at the Department of Education. In total, \$250 million was awarded this year through the SLDS grant competition. States received varying award sizes based on differing needs and requests. The full list of award winners is: Arkansas- \$9.8 million; Colorado- \$17.4 million; Florida - \$10.0 million; Illinois - \$11.9 million; Kansas - \$9.1 million; Maine - \$7.3 million; Massachusetts - \$13.0 million; Michigan - \$10.6 million; Minnesota - \$12.4 million; Mississippi - \$7.6 million; New York - \$19.7 million; Ohio - \$5.1 million; Oregon - \$10.5 million; Pennsylvania - \$14.3 million; South Carolina - \$14.9 million; Texas - \$18.2 million; Utah - \$9.6 million; Virginia - \$17.5 million; Washington - \$17.3 million; Wisconsin - \$13.8 million. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands applied.

The Arkansas Department of Education strives to ensure that all children in the state have access to a quality education by providing educators, administrators and staff with leadership, resources and training.