

**Arkansas Department of Education**  
Dr. Tom Kimbrell, Commissioner

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**FEDERAL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS AWARDED TO FOUR ARKANSAS HIGH SCHOOLS**

LITTLE ROCK — Arkansas Education Commissioner Dr. Tom Kimbrell today announced the recipients of the latest round of School Improvement Grants. Altogether, the schools will receive a combined \$7.5 million during the 2011-2012 school year to institute strategies to improve educational outcomes.

The recipients are:

- **Central High School**, Helena-West Helena School District: \$1,987,425
- **Dollarway High School**, Dollarway School District: \$1,987,425
- **Jacksonville High School**, Pulaski County Special School District: \$2,000,000
- **Marvell High School**, Marvell-Elaine School District, \$1,516,827

"These federal grants will infuse these schools with the resources they need to make changes and help students achieve," Kimbrell said. "These schools have long needed help. At the ADE, we will work hard to ensure that this money is used wisely at the schools toward turning around chronically low test scores."

The districts will be eligible for continued School Improvement Grant funds over the next two school years if they use the money properly and are able to demonstrate results. The ADE will hire two directors with federal funds to work closely with the districts to help administer the grants to ensure the students are helped to fullest extent possible.

School Improvement Grants are funded by the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. To be eligible, schools must routinely fall among the lowest 5 percent performing schools in the state.

The grants must be used to implement school-improvement models required by the federal government. This includes improving the school through comprehensive curriculum reform, professional development, extended learning time, and other strategies.

Initiatives proposed in the grant applications by the schools include: before- and after-school instructional planning; additional support staff, such as social workers; interventions to help reduce out-of-school suspensions and drop-outs; the hiring of firms that specialize in school improvement; partnering with higher education to highlight careers in science and mathematics; technology initiatives; and Saturday morning tutoring programs.