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ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Dr. Tom W. Kimbrell, Commissioner

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206 Public Schools Honored With Reward Funds

LITTLE ROCK - Being a high performing school not only draws recognition and honor, it also can result in additional funding for educational programs.

In the 2013-2014 school year, 206 public schools were recognized as high performing schools through the Arkansas School Recognition and Reward Program. The program recognizes the top 20 percent of schools based on academic achievement, academic growth and graduation rates.

To help honor the schools that received funding, Gov. Mike Beebe will participate in a kick-off recognition event at 10:30 a.m. April 3 in the cafeteria at Southwest Middle School, 1000 W. Beebe Capps Expressway, in Searcy.

Four of the six schools in the Searcy School District were identified as top 20 percent schools, with two of those in the top 10 percent. The four received a total of \$165,722.27 and will be recognized at the event.

“Academic achievement and growth not only mean students are getting a quality education, they resulted in additional funds for high performing schools,” Arkansas Department of Education Commissioner Dr. Tom Kimbrell said. “The funds will allow schools to provide additional resources and tools to help students become ready for college and careers.”

Act 1429 of 2013 revised the program, and Act 703 of 2013 appropriated funding. A total of \$7 million from the governor’s allocation of the General Improvement Fund was designated for the program this school year. The Legislature supported Beebe’s recommendation to fund the program with \$7 million from General Revenue in school year 2014-2015.

Schools in the top 20 percent this year received \$45.35 per student. Schools that were in the top 10 percent received \$90.70 per student.

Schools receiving recognition funds established a committee to determine the best use of the funds. The committee included the principal, a teacher elected by the faculty, and a parent representative selected by the local Parent Teacher Association or another parental involvement group.

Schools can use the funds for faculty and staff bonuses, educational equipment and materials, or personnel to assist with improving or maintaining student performance.

Additional recognition events will be planned on the local level. For a complete list of schools and amounts they received, go to <http://adesharepoint2.arkansas.gov/memos/Lists/Approved%20Memos/DispForm2.aspx?ID=1093>.

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