



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

July 10, 2023

The Honorable Jacob Oliva
Secretary of Education
Arkansas Department of Education
Four Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Secretary Oliva,

I am writing to recognize Arkansas' ongoing commitment to the maintenance of equity requirements under section 2004(b) of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP). Knowing the numerous, competing priorities facing States, State educational agencies, and local educational agencies, Arkansas' early work to implement these new, critically important resource equity requirements is appreciated. We note that Arkansas' action is a result of cooperative efforts involving your executive branch, appropriators in your State legislature, and State educational agency leadership and staff.

ARP maintenance of equity requirements help ensure that State and local education funding supports students who experienced longstanding opportunity gaps before, and were disproportionately impacted by, the COVID-19 pandemic. In implementing these provisions through a mix of data quality efforts, engagement with Department-provided technical assistance, and maintenance of State education funding for the communities and students who need it most, Arkansas is taking critical steps to accelerate academic recovery and close opportunity and achievement gaps.

My team looks forward to continuing our work with yours in implementation of maintenance of equity requirements. Thank you for your collaboration, and all you do for Arkansas' students, educators, and families.

Sincerely,

James F. Lane, Ed. D.
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
Delegated the Authority to Perform the
Functions and Duties of the Assistant Secretary
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education

CC: The Honorable Sarah Huckabee Sanders
Governor of Arkansas
500 Woodlane Street
Little Rock, AR 72201