



October 25, 2019

Dear Parents:

The purpose of this letter is to update you about the decisions by the Arkansas State Board of Education regarding the return of local control to the Little Rock School District and the status of the Little Rock Education Association (LREA). As parents, we know it is important for you to understand how these decisions will impact your student(s).

The State board voted to return local control to the Little Rock School District with the election of a board in 2020. The Board also voted to no longer recognize the Little Rock Education Association (LREA) as the bargaining organization for LRSD employees and directed LRSD to do the following:

- Develop a Personnel Policy Committee, which will include all certified and all classified staff. LRSD has contracted a third party to hold elections to secure 16 representatives; eight from certified staff and eight from classified staff. Information about this process has been shared with staff with continual updates to follow.
- Reestablish Teacher Fair Dismissal Rights

We have been informed that the LREA may vote to take work actions following these decisions. While we are uncertain of what the LREA's actions will be, parents need our schools to be open and we are committed to doing everything we can to avoid disruption to the learning environment, taking steps to ensure that our schools remain open in the event of a job action. All schools will be open, buses will run, and meals will be served. We will have security officers to keep your children safe and qualified substitute teachers to replace any teachers who do not report to work. The substitute teachers will have undergone and completed state-mandated background checks.

We believe having students in school is the best place for them. If we were to close schools, we would have to extend the school year. Additionally, we are required to take attendance each day, so parents must continue to report absences. This year, we have made significant strides to take learning to the next level for our students, with enhanced literacy efforts, new partnerships between the business community and our middle schools – including a \$5.4 million technology investment by Verizon, and introduction of the Ford Next Generation Learning project. We want to continue to build on those successes together.

Again, we have no plans to close schools. We have created a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page, posted on LRSD.org. We will also provide regular updates and communication, notifying you the following ways:

- ParentLink notification message (calls, texts, emails)
- Website
- Social Media
- Broadcast and Print Media

Our priority during any job action is the safety and well-being of our students. We ask for your continued cooperation. Please call your building principal if you encounter any problems in the schools. We will be providing regular updates in the methods we listed above, so please be sure to stay informed by checking for information daily. Thank you for entrusting your child's education to LRSD.

Sincerely,

Mike Poore  
Superintendent of Schools