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EXECUTIVE ORDER TO LIMIT GOVERNMENT OVERREACH, REDUCE RED TAPE, AND IMPROVE EDUCATION

WHEREAS: The way that Arkansas public school districts plan and apply for state and federal funds is burdensome, fragmented, and inefficient;

WHEREAS: Academic and financial planning processes should operate collaboratively—not in silos;

WHEREAS: Arkansas' existing academic and financial planning processes create significant administrative burdens for local school districts, encourage inefficient spending, exacerbate bureaucratic waste, and detract school officials from more critical education priorities;

WHEREAS: Consolidating these processes into a single, comprehensive application and planning framework will ultimately lead to higher student achievement; and

WHEREAS: Intelligent planning can help identify specific state laws, regulations, bureaucratic rules, and red tape that needlessly complicate school district operations and hurt students.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, SARAH HUCKABEE SANDERS, acting under the authority vested in me as the Governor of the State of Arkansas, do hereby order the following:

1. The Secretary of the Department of Education shall develop a unified system that streamlines applications for all state and federal funding programs away from multiple plans and multiple budgets into a single application: one plan and one budget. The unified application shall be operational for the 2024-2025 budget cycle.
2. Prior to launching the unified application, the Secretary of the Department of Education shall

conduct a review to identify out-of-date, unnecessary, or otherwise burdensome state laws, regulations, reporting requirements, and processes that apply to public schools, officers, and employees. This review shall include considerations and input from educators, advocates, and families.

3. Prior to launching the unified application, the Secretary of the Department of Education shall recommend to the Governor and/or the State Board of Education executive orders, statutory changes, or regulatory reforms to empower schools, reduce bureaucracy, and improve student achievement.

4. Prior to launching the unified application, the Secretary of the Department of Education shall establish a process whereby, as part of the annual planning and application process, school districts may submit feedback to the Department for any overburdensome and redundant state laws, regulations, reporting requirements, or processes.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and cause the Great Seal of the State of Arkansas to be affixed this 19th day of January, in the year of our Lord 2023.

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