

Lawrence County School District Annual Report to the Public 2020

District Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Lawrence County School District to develop the ability of all students by motivating, challenging, and fostering independent education. To accomplish this mission, the Lawrence County School District will ensure a positive educational environment that enhances learning, fosters growth, and provides opportunities for all students and faculty to exceed and excel beyond the educational setting.

Schools

The Lawrence County School District is home to 916 students and 131 staff members. The Walnut Ridge Elementary serves students in grades kindergarten through the sixth grade. Walnut Ridge High serves students in grades seven through twelve. The Lawrence County School District strives to support the schools in administering academic and extracurricular programs that aim at benefiting all students. District personnel accept the responsibility that ALL students can learn and the faculty and staff will continue to work diligently to accomplish that endeavor in order to develop future productive citizens of our communities.

Arkansas schools continue to ensure high quality instruction and instructional leadership through the implementation of the [Teacher Excellence and Support System](#) (TESS) that defines a system to support high quality classroom instruction and effective teaching and leading in Arkansas's schools. The teacher evaluation system provides school districts a transparent and consistent teacher evaluation system that ensures effective teaching and promotes professional learning.

The Lawrence County School recently completed the construction of a new gymnasium and baseball/softball complex. Voters passed a 2.9 millage for the purpose of the project.

Annual Public Meeting

The Lawrence County School District held a public meeting on October 13, 2020 at 6:30p.m.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss progress toward accomplishing district program goals, creating opportunities for excellence, accreditation standards, and school objectives for the 2021-2022 school year. Principals gave an overview of programs in each school. All parents and patrons were encouraged to attend.

Walnut Ridge Elementary School 2020 Public Report

The Walnut Ridge Elementary School accredited by ADVANCED-ED is in full compliance with the state standards. The faculty and staff remain committed to the school mission while developing the abilities of each student through the implementation of motivating, challenging, and independent learning within a safe and positive school environment.

New personnel for the 2020-21 school year include Amanda Moskop, Kindergarten Teacher; Ashley Manning, Kindergarten Aide; Stephan Petty, Second grade Teacher; Mary Beth Dickson, Second grade Teacher; Elisabeth Schoenecke, Music Teacher; Hillary Anderson, Middle School Librarian; Tashena Tate, Sixth grade Literacy Teacher; Brittany Jones, Custodian; Samantha Collins; Custodian; and Lila Cook, Food Services.

The elementary school consists of Kindergarten through Sixth Grade. Grades K-4 is located in the Ben R. Bush building along with an ABC program. Grades 5-6 location is in the Middle School building. There are 324 students enrolled in K-4 and 151 at the middle school totaling 475 students

in the elementary school. The total enrollment for preschool is 55. Sixty percent of the students qualify for the federal food program.

Third through sixth grade students have the opportunity to participate in intramural basketball. Fourth grade through sixth grade boys may participate in football, and fourth through sixth grade girls may participate in volleyball. All of these sports are part of the Walnut Ridge Elementary Booster Club's program under the direction of the school's Athletic Director. Learning extends at WRES through a variety of additional activities available to students. The Lawrence County Spelling Bee, Chess Tournaments, Quiz Bowl, Elementary Field Day, and Odyssey of the Mind are some of the opportunities. Our K-4th graders participate in the One School, One Book. One School, One Book provides excellent involvement between the school, parents, and community.

The Walnut Ridge Elementary Before and After School Program remains a growing part of the elementary school. There are currently 50 students enrolled in this program. The Walnut Ridge Elementary Summer Program met the essentials of over 50 students. The average daily attendance is between 20-30 students. Our school is committed to serving the needs of our parents and community.

Two Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled for the 2020-21 school year. The first parent-teacher conference occurs at the end of the first nine weeks' period. The second conference follows at the end of the third nine weeks. Mid-term progress reports are sent home to parents five weeks into each quarter. Scheduling of individual conferences transpire as deemed necessary.

Student Recognition is a very important part of Walnut Ridge Elementary. Students receive quarterly awards for Honor Roll and Perfect Attendance. Faculty and Staff award Grow & Glow Reports to highlight areas where the students are making improvements as well as celebrating achievements and classroom leadership. Faculty are encouraged to let the students make a "brag call" to the parents to share their Grow & Glow Report. End of year awards will be presented fourth quarter. Mrs. Andrea Roark, WRES Counselor, focuses on character education through the incorporation of the quarterly character award and the monthly VIP award.

The Walnut Ridge School implements PLC learning communities meeting school wide with expectations that all students learn at high levels. The administration and faculty works diligently to obtain professional development that will foster student growth and provide an enhanced learning environment. All professional development alignment coincides with the district ACSIP Plan and meets the requirements mandated by the state. Teachers continue to grow professionally through active involvement in professional organizations and the state mandated TESS evaluation system. Professional Development will focus on Literacy, Data, and Mathematics. The Walnut Ridge Elementary certified teaching staff receives 60 hours of staff development during the 2020-21 school year.

Students at Walnut Ridge Elementary take the state required assessments annually. This includes the I Station Assessment for grades K-2, and the ACT Aspire Assessment for grades third through sixth. Students with academic deficiencies obtain opportunities for improvement within the Bobcat Block that provides multiple interventions through small group instruction. The Parent Center provides academic prescriptions for home learning reinforcement. We also offer After School Tutoring, In School Tutoring through the remediation/enrichment period in 5th and 6th grades, and one-on-one time with instructional aides are programs used for students who need additional academic instruction. Our reading staff assists teachers through the implementation of small intervention groups for students in grades K-4.

Walnut Ridge Elementary faculty and staff will continue to work with the students, parents, and community to meet the needs of all students. Walnut Ridge Elementary strives to make our school a true learning environment that promotes the belief that all students can learn. Researched base teaching strategies and techniques help support fundamental growth for our students.

Administrators, teachers, and parents working together can make a positive difference in student achievement and educational quality, thereby initiating a “School of Choice”.

Due to state mandated school closures in March 2020, all Arkansas public school students were excused from taking the state and federally required end-of-the year exams. Therefore, no data is available to report for the following annual summative examinations:

- ACT Aspire | 3rd – 6th grade
- iStation | Kindergarten – 2nd grade
- Alternate assessments for students with severe disabilities

Walnut Ridge High School 2020 Public Report

Walnut Ridge High School meets the Standards for Accreditation as established and set forth by the Arkansas Department of Education. Walnut Ridge High School is also a fully accredited member of the North Central Association.

The faculty and administration are involved in an ongoing effort to accomplish goals of the school’s mission statement. Workshops and training to obtain the highest level of services for our students and faculty are provided. The professional development hours are based on the requirements found within the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Rules, board policies, student achievement data, and the District and School-level improvement plans. Specifically, professional development activities are designed to increase student academic performance. Two key focuses of professional development at WRHS are the improvement of reading scores and the continued development of a Professional Learning Community. In 2019, WRHS earned a letter grade of “B” on the ESSA school report card (there were no school report cards in 2020).

At Walnut Ridge High School, 28 faculty members provide instruction in a broad spectrum of subjects ranging from special education and basic skills to Advanced Placement courses. WRHS offers seven Advanced Placement courses. A smart core curriculum and a core curriculum are offered that benefit both the college bound student and those students who will be entering the workforce after graduation. Students may also become a “Completer” by completing a course of study in one of five career and technical pathways at WRHS: Agriculture, Business, Jr. Firefighter, Criminal Justice, and Family & Consumer Science. Students are allowed to pursue a course of study that will enable them to attend the Northeast Arkansas Career and Technical Center in Jonesboro which offers 13 technical programs. Walnut Ridge High School also offers courses in academic subjects totaling twelve concurrent credit hours through Black River Technical College that allows students who qualify academically to receive college credit in those courses for a reduced rate of tuition. BRTC has also allowed our students to take online courses through their campus at the reduced rate for any course not offered on our campus. Two new concurrent credit courses have been added for the 2019-20 school year, Trigonometry and Calculus. With new legislation, the lottery scholarship will now pay for up to six hours of concurrent credit in both the junior and senior years of high school.

WRHS partners with BRTC in their new BRTC Secondary Center program. This program allows students to attend BRTC for half of the day during their junior and senior years and receive training and certifications in welding, advanced manufacturing, electrical, or allied health (nursing). This program is grant-funded and is of no charge to the students. WRHS offers a complete course of study in fire science. Students can learn basic firefighting and first responder skills and earn numerous certifications and concurrent credit through BRTC. This year, Criminal Justice was introduced as a new program at WRHS.

In 2018-19 WRHS added an EAST (Education Accelerated through Service and Technology) program. The EAST Initiative is a high tech project-based program that requires students to problem solve and create while encouraging them to be active in the community.

Walnut Ridge High School students participate in a variety of nationally sponsored activities that include FFA, FCCLA, FBLA, Key Club, National Honor Society, Student Council, and a number of school sponsored clubs. WRHS students have excelled both at the state and national level in such competitions as Quiz Bowl and Odyssey of the Mind. Students are also involved in community activities with Key Club, Ralph Joseph Leadership, and Red Cross. Walnut Ridge High School students attended Boys and Girls State sponsored by the American Legion.

Students are given the opportunity to attend an ACT summer program hosted by Walnut Ridge High. The preparation course offered during the summer months gives many students a significant increase in scores as a result of their participation. ACT help sessions are also sponsored throughout the school year in the week before a scheduled test.

Students may participate in a host of extracurricular activities that enhance the learning process. Athletic programs include football, volleyball, basketball, baseball, softball, track and field, golf, the “Alleycats” dance team, and trap shooting team. An active cheerleading squad, band, and choir compete in a host of local, state, and national events. Individual clubs and organizations meet a diverse range of student needs.

Alternative Education is located on the Walnut Ridge High School campus and serves students in grades 9-12. This program serves students for behavioral issues, attendance issues and academic issues. WRHS teachers teach most courses. Students may also take electives in their field of interest or attend the Jonesboro Career and Technical Center or BRTC Secondary Center to learn skills for specific trades.

Technology continues to be an important component of the educational process. Every classroom has Internet accessibility and the high school library has sixteen computers available for student research and projects. The high school has three computer labs. One of the labs is used for classroom instruction in the business department. One lab is used for students to take online college classes and for students to earn lost credits through Credit Recovery. The other is a general lab adjacent to the Library used for a variety of educational needs. This year, WRHS purchased a new laptop computer for every student in the high school and is now an official one to one school. Additionally, WRHS utilizes Microsoft Office 365 and the Canvas Learning Management System to enhance online and traditional learning.

Students at Walnut Ridge High take the state-required assessments annually. ACT Aspire became the state-mandated test for grades 3-10 in 2015-16. The chart below describes the results of the ACT Aspire test:

****Due to the abrupt closure of schools in March 2020 there was no ACT Aspire testing in the 2019-20 school year statewide.

Walnut Ridge High School is committed to excellence in education. The mission of Walnut Ridge High School is to enable all students and faculty an opportunity to exceed and excel. We recognize that the responsibility of a solid educational foundation lies with the students, teachers, school leaders, parents, and community. Our mission is to develop the abilities of each student by maintaining an educational setting that enhances learning, fosters growth, and ensures development.

Alternative Learning Environment

The Lawrence County School District continues to advance its Alternative Learning Environment program. The CATS (Creating A Thriving Student) Program is located in the Walnut Ridge High School and serves students 9-12. This program serves students who are at risk for not graduating, who have behavioral issues, and who have attendance issues. Students may earn credits in English, Social Science, Science, Math and various electives. Core courses in English, Math,

Science and Social Science are taught by accredited on-campus faculty. If a student elects to learn in an off-site setting, the CATS Program offers online courses as well. For electives, students may take either on-campus or online electives and complete courses in Agriculture, Business or Consumer Science. Students who meet the proper criteria may also attend the Jonesboro Service Center to learn skills for vocational trades.

Parent Center

The Walnut Ridge School Parent Center is committed to providing materials and services to assist parents in improving their child's academic achievement. We continue to encourage and support active parental involvement in a variety of ways including but not limited to volunteering.

Informational packets are prepared in the center and will be distributed during parent/teacher conferences. Packets consist of useful information including but not limited to school calendar, contact information, parental involvement plan, volunteer opportunities, parenting tips in areas such as homework, health or nutrition, and projected parent involvement activities planned for the school year.

The Parent Center is using the app Remind to provide communication between the school and parents in a regular and meaningful manner for the elementary school. Remind announcements are posted on the school website, and can be available in paper form. The school website is another method for parents to communicate or be informed in a regular and meaningful manner. Parents are encouraged to visit the website at www.bobcats.k12.ar.us to check their child's progress, assignments, and activities.

Parent Center surveys will be sent home annually and are available to download on the parent center page on the school website. Results from the surveys will be used to better understand the needs of the parents. Parent meeting topics and material suggestions are also compiled from the surveys.

Volunteerism is supported and encouraged at Walnut Ridge School. Volunteer surveys are sent home annually and are also available to download on the school website. Instructional volunteers are trained through the center each year. Faculty members receive a volunteer resource book which is updated yearly from the survey results. Teachers are encouraged to take advantage of this useful resource.

The parent center provides resources and materials free of charge. The center is available daily and is located near the middle level building. It is coordinated by Lindsey Romine and facilitated by Dyan Heard. Mrs. Romine may be reached at 870-819-0443 and Mrs. Heard at 870-819-0441 or both at www.bobcats.k12.ar.us. The Walnut Ridge Elementary School encourages all parents to utilize this valuable asset.

Gifted, Talented, and Creative Program

The Lawrence County School District's gifted and talented program provides students with various program options such as Whole Group Enrichment, Resource Room, Pre-Advanced Placement, and Advanced Placement Courses.

Kindergarten through second grade are served through Whole Group Enrichment by the GT coordinator for 30 minutes per week.

Students in the third through sixth grade are provided services in the resource room for 150 minutes per week by the GT coordinator.

Students in the fifth through tenth grade are served through Pre-Advanced Placement courses such as Civics, English, Economics, Math, Physical Science, Biology, and Algebra II, by a certified teacher for 250 minutes per week.

Students in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade are provided services through Advanced Placement courses such as Biology, Calculus, Music Theory, U.S. History, World History, American Government, English Language, and English Literature and Composition by a certified teacher for 250 minutes per week.

All seventh through twelfth grade students have the opportunity to meet with the GT coordinator on the third Monday of the month from 8:00 a.m. until 8:45 a.m.

Identified students also have the opportunity to participate in outside learning opportunities such as Odyssey of the Mind, quiz bowl, chess competitions, NEAC Business Expo, U.S. Space Camp, Story Store, Bioscience Institute, Stock Market Game, and Project Fair. Additional field trips are arranged when appropriate.

Referrals for the gifted and talented program are accepted throughout the year. Please feel free to access Tonda Brand's website page for more information or contact her at 819-0439.

District Technology

New laptops and cases have been purchased for all students 9-12. This allows us to assign each student a device of their own that they can use both on and off campus. We have implemented Microsoft Intune cloud-based management so that we still have control of these devices no matter where they are being used.

Laptops that were being used in the High School classrooms have been moved to grades 5-8. This gave us enough devices to assign all of these students a device. These are picked up in their homeroom in the morning, carried with them throughout the day, and then returned at the end of the day. We have purchased additional chargers so that in the case of the need to transition to virtual learning, we can send the device home with the student.

Grades K-4 have had an iPad assigned to each student. As with the laptops 5-8, we have additional chargers on-hand in case there is a need to send the devices home with the students.

Students 5-12 now have school email accounts to help facilitate communication with their teachers for both on campus and virtual students. These are cloud-based accounts and are managed through Microsoft Office 365.

We have laptops and cases for all teachers on order, but due to the shortages in the supply chain due to Covid, this order is still pending.

Due to the age of the wiring, the northern wings of the High School building and the North half of Upper Elementary building were completely stripped of all network cabling and new Cat-6 cabling installed this past summer. This was the first step of a multi-year project to replace all of the cabling in several of the buildings on campus. This is primarily an E-Rate funded project.

Underground fiber optic cable and a new network switch stack have been installed to provide network/internet to the new gymnasium and ballfields. We are currently working on plans to install TV's for the gymnasium lobby and locker-rooms, security cameras for the gymnasium and ballfields, as well as wi-fi in the gymnasium.

Capital Improvements

- Computers
- Student Laptops 9-12
- Teacher Desks

- Window Blinds
- Replacing Outdated Heat and Air Systems
- New Cameras
- Upgrades to Server
- Purchase of Student Desks and Tables
- Halls Painted
- Various Doors Replaced
- Replaced Ceiling Tiles
- New Copiers
- Purchase of iPads
- Various Water Fountains Replaced
- Playground Equipment
- Bus
- Cafeteria Tables

Federal and State Categorical Funding

The Lawrence County School District receives federal monies and state categorical monies to supplement educational programs. The District receives Title I, Title II-A, Title IV-A, Title V (state), Carl Perkins, National School Lunch Act (NSL), English Language Learners (ELL), Professional Development (PD), and Alternative Learning Environment (ALE) funding. All funds (except Carl Perkins) are administered through the LCSD School Improvement Plans.

Title I funds are utilized for Walnut Ridge Elementary (grades K-6). Funds are used to provide additional academic support and learning opportunities for teachers and students. Literacy, math, and science are targeted areas of improvement. The Parent Center is funded using Title I funds.

Title II-A funds are used to help with professional development in the elementary grades. Currently, Brooke Bramlett's salary as Literacy Coach is partially funded by Title II-A funds.

Title IV-A funds are transferred to Title I to help with expenses in the Title I budget.

Title VI (state) funds are used to help provide a security officer for the district.

Carl Perkins funds are specifically used in the Vocational Department. Business, Agriculture, and Family and Consumer Science classes provide supplemental activities with Carl Perkins funds. Funds are also used to provide teachers with professional development opportunities and travel expenses.

National School Lunch Act (NSL) funds are geared at increasing student academic performance in math, literacy, science, and social studies. Positions paid with NSL funds: School Nurse, Security Officer, MS Guidance Counselor, Technology Lab teacher in HS, Librarian in ES, Before and After School Tutoring, Summer School at the high school, and others. NSL monies are used for software, materials, and supplies for math, literacy, science, and social studies.

Professional Development funds allow teachers to attend various trainings throughout the year. Teachers are also afforded the opportunity to attend meetings that address best practices in their respective academic field and that pertain to their Professional Growth Plan.

Alternative Learning Environment (ALE) funds assist in the establishment of the Alternative School located on the Walnut Ridge campus. Part of the salary of the ALE Coordinator is paid with ALE funds.

The Lawrence County School District does not have a soda contract.

Equity

The Lawrence County School Equity coordinator for the district is Amy Privett. She can be reached at 870-886-6697.

Homeless

The Lawrence County School Homeless Coordinator for the District is Candace Eveland. She can be reached at 870-886-6697.

Agenda
Lawrence County School District
Annual Public Meeting
October 13, 2020
6:30 p.m.

- I. Call to Order**

- II. Superintendent's Report**
 - A. Progress of Goals**
 - B. Accreditation Status**
 - C. General Overview**

- III. Walnut Ridge Campus - Elementary K-6 Principal's Report**
 - A. Progress of Goals**
 - B. Accreditation Status**
 - C. General Overview**

- IV. Walnut Ridge Campus – High School Principal's Report**
 - A. Progress of Goals**
 - B. Accreditation Status**
 - C. General Overview**

- V. Closing Report**

- VI. Adjourn**

**Minutes
Lawrence County School District
Annual Public Meeting
October 13, 2020**

The Lawrence County School District met Tuesday, October 13, 2020 for the Annual Public Meeting.

At 6:45p.m. President Brittany Schmidt called the meeting to order.

The first item was the Superintendent's Report, which was given by Superintendent Terry Belcher, who gave a general update for the school, discussed goals, and accreditation status. Mr. Belcher discussed enrollment and the virtual option being offered for students.

Principal Lea Andra Foster gave the Walnut Ridge Elementary report. At the annual public meeting, she discussed the goals for the elementary school, the accreditation status, and the test scores results.

Principal Jacob Kersey gave the Walnut Ridge High School report. At the annual public meeting, he discussed the goals for the high school, the accreditation status, and proposals for the upcoming year.

Superintendent Belcher gave the Federal and State Categorical Funding Report.

At 7:10 p.m. Doyne Davis moved the meeting adjourned. Pat Roby seconded the motion. The motion received unanimous approval.

Clay Sloan, Secretary