

**Lawrence County School District
Annual Report to the Public 2015**

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 970 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.

In the 2012-2013 school year Arkansas schools moved a critical step toward ensuring high quality instruction and instructional leadership through the passage 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 new teacher evaluation system provides school districts a transparent and consistent teacher evaluation system that ensures effective teaching and promotes professional learning.

Annual Public Meeting

The Lawrence County School District held a public meeting on October 26, 2015 at 6:30p.m. in the Middle level building library.

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 2016-2017 school year. Principals gave an overview of programs in each school. All parents and patrons were encouraged to attend.

Walnut Ridge Elementary School 2015 Public Report

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

The elementary school is currently made up of Kindergarten through Sixth Grade. Grades K-4 is housed in the Ben R. Bush building along with an ABC program. Grades 5-6 are housed in the Middle School building. There are 379 students enrolled in K-4 and 145 at the middle school for a total of 524 students in the elementary school. The total enrollment for preschool is 46. Sixty-two percent of the students qualify for the federal food program.

Third through sixth grade students have the opportunity to participate in intramural basketball. Fourth through sixth grade students may participate in football, and 5th and 6th 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 is extended at WRES through a variety of additional activities available to students. The Lawrence County Spelling Bee, Chess Tournaments, Quiz Bowl, and Odyssey of the Mind are some of the opportunities.

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

Parent-Teacher conferences have been scheduled for the 2015-16 school year. The first parent-teacher conference will be held at the end of the first nine weeks period. The second conference will be held at the end of the third nine weeks. Mid-term progress reports will be sent to parents each five weeks during the four quarters. Individual conferences may be scheduled as deemed necessary.

Student Recognition is a very important part of Walnut Ridge Elementary. Students will receive awards for Honor Roll, Perfect Attendance, Good Work, Birthday, Principal's Award, Star Award, Happy Face Award, Paws-actively Awesome, and High Five Award. The awards will be presented at the end of the first, second, and third quarters. End of year awards will be presented fourth quarter. Students are awarded Bobcat Bucks for exhibiting good behavior and work ethics. The Catch Me Doing Good certificates are awarded throughout the school year. Mrs. Kelly Rider is continuing the Word of the Month Program which places emphasis on words associated with good character.

The Walnut Ridge School continues the use of PLC Committees school wide with the goal of insuring 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 is aligned with the local ACSIP Plan and meets the requirements mandated by the state. Teachers continue to grow professionally through active involvement in professional organizations and the new mandated TESS evaluation system. Professional Development this year will focus on Literacy, Science, Math, Differentiated Instruction, and Classroom Management. The Walnut Ridge Elementary certified teaching staff will receive 60 hours of staff development during the 2015-16 school year.

Students at Walnut Ridge Elementary take the state required assessments annually. These include the Qualls Readiness Skills for Kindergarten, the IOWA Skills Test for grades 1 and 2, and the ACT Aspire Assessment will replace the PARCC Exams for 3rd thru 6th. Students with academic deficiencies on the assessments are given multiple opportunities for improvement. Small pull-out booster groups, Reading Recovery, mathematics push-in programs, and Academic Prescriptions are filled in the Parent Center. 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 the programs in place for students who need additional academic instruction.

Walnut Ridge Elementary is committed to providing additional support to your child's school and we are taking steps to address the problem of low achievement and have several interventions in place for the 2015-16 school year. Our reading staff has been placed in Kindergarten through Fourth grades to assist teachers in small intervention groups. Our K-4th graders participated in the One School, One Book program again this past year. We received positive feedback on the program and will continue it again this year. We are continuing remediation during the school day and after school tutoring for students needing extra instruction.

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. Administrators, teachers, and parents working together can make a positive difference in student achievement and the quality of education to become the "School of Choice".

**Spring, 2015 Iowa Tests of Basic Skills
(Number & Percent Scoring At or Above the 50 Percentile)**

	ITBS	Number Tested	% at or Above 50th Percentile
First Grade	Reading Total	72	35%
	Math Total	72	37%
Second Grade	Reading Total	62	49%
	Math Total	62	43%

Walnut Ridge High School 2015 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 ACTAPP State Rules, Board policies, student achievement data, and local ACSIP plans. Specifically, professional development activities are designed at increasing student academic performance. Two key focuses of professional development at WRHS include the Smart Step Literacy Lab Project and the continued development of a Professional Learning Community.

At Walnut Ridge High School, twenty eight faculty members provide instruction in a broad spectrum of subjects ranging from special education and basic skills to 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 three vocational pathways. Students are allowed to pursue a course of study that will enable them to attend the Northeast Arkansas Technical Center in Jonesboro. Walnut Ridge High School also offers seven concurrent credit courses through Arkansas State University and Black River Technical College that allows students who qualify academically to receive college credit in those courses for a reduced rate of tuition.

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, tennis, track and field, cross-country, 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.

The Lawrence County School District has established an Alternative Learning Environment program. It is located in the Walnut Ridge High School and serves students grades 7-12. This program serves students for credit recovery, behavior issues, and students who are at risk of not graduating. These students may earn credits in English, Social Science, Science, Health/PE and Math taught by highly qualified teachers. Students may also earn electives and attend the Northeast Arkansas Technical Center to learn skills for vocational 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 utilized as a remediation center to remediate students who scored below proficient on the End-of-Course and Benchmark exams and the other is a general lab adjacent to the Library used for a variety of educational needs. The entire high school building has wi-fi access.

In the 2014-15 school year Walnut Ridge High School was the recipient of a Farm To School Grant. This grant, which is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture, is designed to allow students to grow food on the school campus and distribute that food to the school cafeteria to be served to the student body. As a result of this grant, a fully functional greenhouse and growing structure was constructed adjacent to the Agriculture building. Also, two new courses were added to the WRHS Vocational Agriculture curriculum to support the program.

Students at Walnut Ridge High take the state-required assessments annually. Most of the benchmark exams and the end-of-course examinations were replaced with PARCC testing in 2014-15. Those scores will not be released until later in the Fall. The chart below describes the results of the EOC Biology examination.

2015 Percent Proficient or Advanced – EOC Biology

	Biology
Combined Population	48%
Economically Disadvantaged	18%
Students with Disabilities	25%
Caucasian	48%
African-American	NA
Hispanic	NA

NA – An insignificant number of students in the subgroup.

2011-2015 WRHS Graduate’s performance on the ACT College admission exam:

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Number Tested	29	40	53	72	60
English	20.5	18.5	17.7	19.1	19.0
Mathematics	19.3	19.7	18.6	19.6	19.3
Reading	20.7	19.8	18.1	20.2	19.5
Science	20.7	19.9	18.7	19.0	19.6
Composite	20.4	19.5	18.4	19.6	19.5

Students at Walnut Ridge High have the opportunity to take Advanced Placement courses. The chart below states the number of students enrolled in each class during the 2014-15 school year, the number of students who participated in the exam, and the number who scored a “3” or higher.

AP Course	# Enrolled	# Taking Exam	Score of:		
			3.0	4.0	5.0
Biology	3	3	0	0	0
English Lang./Comp	16	16	4	1	0
Government & Politics	10	10	0	0	0
Calculus AB	2	2	0	0	0
World History	26	26	1	0	0
English Lit./Comp.	11	11	0	0	0
Music Theory	1	1	0	0	0
U.S. History	13	13	1	1	0

The following table reflects the graduation rate, drop-out rate, college remediation rate, and inflation rate for Lawrence County School District, according to the 2013 School Report Card, the latest data available.

	2010-2011	2011-12	2012-13
Graduation Rate*	92.5%	87.2%	95.4%
Drop-out Rate	0.84%	1.01%	1.57%
College Remediation Rate	58.6%	64.7%	35.5%
Grade Inflation Rate	NA	NA	1.92%

*State Goal for Graduation Rate is 85%

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 its Alternative Learning Environment program. It is located in the Walnut Ridge High School and serves students grades 7-12. This program serves students for credit recovery, behavioral issues, and students who are at risk for not graduating. These students may earn credits in English, Social Science, Science, Health/PE and Math taught by highly qualified teachers. Students may also earn electives and attend the Jonesboro Service Center to learn skills for vocational trades. Teachers meet with students on a daily basis to teach in these classes.

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.

Newsletters are created monthly in the parent center to provide communication between the school and parents in a regular and meaningful manner for each campus including elementary, middle, and high schools. Newsletters are posted on the school website, available in paper form, and may be received electronically through email. 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 a www.bobcats.k12.ar.us. The Walnut Ridge School encourages all parents to utilize this valuable asset.

Gifted, Talented and Creative Program

The Lawrence County School District's gifted, talented, and creative 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 gtc 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 gtc 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 gtc 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, Stock Market Game, and Project Fair. Additional field trips are arranged when appropriate.

Referrals for the gifted, talented and creative 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

The district continues to implement technology at a responsible pace. The rolling out of wireless networking has become a moving target. Technology and best practices continue to evolve. The new wireless standard, 802.11ac, will require a wireless access point in every room to take full advantage of the new technology. This is eligible for E-rate and if funding is available next year we will try to put those access points in place.

Our goal is for all buildings to have a robust wireless network capable of simultaneously supporting large numbers of devices at any location in the buildings. There is a wireless network connection available in the basketball gym for patrons to use at athletic events. There are no plans at this time to provide wireless access outside of the buildings other than what can be accessed using what wireless signal is propagated outside the building. The wireless network availability has not only enabled students to access information "anywhere, anytime", it has also enabled the use of mobile labs. We are up to eleven carts of laptops from seven that can be moved to a classroom and allow the teachers to have a lab in their own rooms. We have over 800 computers on campus including servers, desktops, and laptops.

We are looking at a one to one initiative where students in K-2 will each have a tablet and students 3-12 will have a laptop of some form, convertible/detachable. Students in grades 7-12 will be allowed to take the device home. Faculty training in preparation for this initiative is being planned for.

The state is taking over the internet connection state wide and will be increasing the speed from our current 100 mbps to 200 mbps. Our current internet connections are very expensive and the state will reduce that cost to zero. Unfortunately, E-rate will no longer be paying for the phone bill so there will not be a huge cost savings.

We continue to investigate a phased in approach of replacing Smartboards with touch screen LCD displays. We plan to start with a couple of smaller models as a pilot in areas where it makes sense. If the cost advantage is realized, as Smartboards fail due to age or other reasons, they will be replaced with this technology. This plan is still very much in early stages. Projector bulbs have advertised lifetimes of 2000 hours and cost \$300-\$400 each. LCD displays are rated at 10,000 hours and beyond and the picture quality is vastly better. The LCD pricing continues to fall.

Windows 8 turned out to be less than expected and now that Windows 10 is out, to great reviews, we are upgrading from Windows 7 to Windows 10. Improvements in the user interface in

Windows 10 are proving to be very popular and there are several new features of the new operating system that promise to reduce support costs and improve reliability.

We are in the very last stages of getting a new 10 gbps backbone installed. Some buildings with low user counts will continue to have a 1 gbps connection to the backbone but most buildings are now on the new 10 gbps backbone including the community center. We will move the servers to the new backbone as funding becomes available. Some servers are older and cannot support the new speed but we do have a few that can and any new servers purchased in the future will have a 10 gbps network connection.

The tech office is being moved in preparation for moving the school data center to the central point of the network. This will free up a classroom as well as position the servers to improve network efficiency.

A new IP based surveillance camera recording system has been installed but will be a phased in approach. We are still running the older DVRs at three locations and as these fail the cameras will be added to the new system. The new system will enable much higher resolution cameras and a centralized server for storing video. We will use the old fiber that is in place for the video cameras which will allow us to keep that high bandwidth traffic off of our main network.

Capital Improvements

- **Computers**
- **New Cafeteria Tables**
- **Additional Surveillance Cameras and DVRS**
- **Glass Doors At High School**
- **Addition of Two Buses**
- **New School Vehicle**
- **Cafeteria Storage Building**
- **New Bus Shop Fence**
- **Community Center Roof**
- **Greenhouse and Growing Structure**
- **Modular Building**

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 VI (state), Carl Perkins, National School Lunch Act (NSLA) English Language Learners (ELL), Professional Development (PD), and Alternative Learning Environment (ALE) funding. All funds (except Carl Perkins) are administered through the schools' Arkansas Consolidated School Improvement Plans.

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

Title II-A funds assist the school in creating a smaller teacher-student ratio in the elementary grades. Currently, Walnut Ridge Elementary has staff positions that are funded from Title II-A funds.

Title VI (state) funds are allocated to a host of areas to increase student academic performance. Technology and security services are the two key areas where Title VI funds are utilized.

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 (NSLA) funds are geared at increasing student academic performance in math, literacy, science, and social studies. Positions paid with NSLA funds are: School Nurse, Security Officer, MS Guidance Counselor, Technology Lab aide in HS, Librarian, Before and After School Tutoring, and others. NSLA monies are also used for software, HS library, and materials and supplies for math and literacy.

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. Teachers are compensated for providing instruction at the school. Materials and supplies are also purchased to assist with the instructional program of the ALE.

The Lawrence County School District does not have a soda contract at the present time. The district is looking at possible options.

Equity

The Lawrence County School Equity coordinator for the District is Debbie Findley. She can be reached at 870-886-6623.

Homeless

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

Statement

The Lawrence County School District is committed to provide our students an excellent education. We want parents and the community involved in the educational process. With everyone working toward the same goals, we can provide the education our children need. At the Lawrence County Schools, we are committed to this challenge.

The Lawrence County School Board and Administration are committed to improve our facilities and modernize the school. This is an ongoing effort by all. We want everyone to be proud of our school district and our combined success.

