

Lawrence County School District Annual Report to the Public 2021

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 960 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 November 9, 2021 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 2022-2023 school year. Principals gave an overview of programs in each school. All parents and patrons were encouraged to attend.

Walnut Ridge Elementary School 2021 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 2021-22 school year include: Emily Sheets, Kindergarten Teacher; Alyssa Nichols, K-2 SpEd Teacher; Tristan Simpson, SpEd Aide; Courtney Wilcoxson, SpEd Aide; Erin Manning, First grade Teacher; Sarah Hudson, Second grade Teacher; Cameron Priest, Third grade Teacher; Emily Herring, Third grade Teacher; Madalyn Manus, Fourth grade Teacher; Natalie Wallin, Fifth & Sixth grade Social Studies Teacher; Jennifer Roark, WRMS Counselor; Tammy Fisher, WRMS Aide; Jessica Harris, WRMS SpEd Aide; Amanda Rice, Cafeteria; and Katy Jones, Cafeteria.

The Walnut Ridge Elementary School consists of students in Kindergarten through Fourth grade. Classrooms for Kindergarten through Fourth graders are located in the Ben R. Bush building. ABC Preschool classrooms are located across the street from the Elementary. Classrooms for Fifth

and Sixth students are located in the Middle School building. Enrollment reported on October 1, 2021, was:

Students	Number Enrolled
ABC Preschool, ages 3 – 5 years	60
Kindergarten – Fourth grade	351
Fifth and Sixth grade	137
Total Enrolled	548

Fifth and Sixth grade students have the opportunity to participate in intramural basketball. Third grade through Sixth grade boys may participate in football. Third grade through Sixth grade girls may participate in volleyball. All of these sports are part of the Walnut Ridge Elementary Booster Club program under the direction of the Walnut Ridge Public School Athletic Director. Learning extends at Walnut Ridge Elementary School through a variety of additional activities available to students. The Lawrence County Spelling Bee, Chess Tournaments, Quiz Bowl, and Elementary Field Day are some of the opportunities. Kindergarten through Fourth graders participate in the One School, One Book which 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 child-care needs of our parents and community.

Two Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled for the 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 "Something to Buzz About" 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 Buzz Report. End of year awards will be presented fourth quarter. Mrs. Andrea Roark, WRES Counselor, focuses on character education through the incorporation of monthly character awards.

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 school year.

During the 2020-2021 school year, 51 students (35 students in Kindergarten through Fourth grade, 16 students in Fifth and Sixth grade) enrolled as full-time virtual students. Walnut Ridge Elementary School classroom teachers utilized the Lincoln Learning program to facilitate simultaneous instruction for online and on-campus students through the Buzz Learning Management System offered by the Arkansas Department of Education. Using the same instructional tool for on-campus students offered a seamless transition with minimal interruption to the learning process when students were home on quarantine.

Due to school closure in March 2020 as well as COVID-19 related absences of faculty and students throughout the 2020-2021 school year, we had students who would need additional time and exposure to foundational content. A “Bobcat Builder” Summer Learning Program was created to address the needs of at-risk students who were identified by RTI data collected throughout the school year. The goal of the program was to lessen (or close) their learning gap by addressing grade-level literacy skills using research based enrichment activities. Based on post-testing results, 71.4% of the students demonstrated growth in phonetic features while participating in the Bobcat Builder program.

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 Fifth and Sixth, 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 Kindergarten through Fourth grade.

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”.

Students at Walnut Ridge Elementary take the state required assessments annually. This includes iStation Assessment for grades Kindergarten through Second graders and the ACT Aspire Assessment for Third through Sixth graders. Students with academic deficiencies obtain opportunities for improvement within the Bobcat Block that provides multiple interventions through small group instruction. Instructional Aides are to facilitate effective interventions during Bobcat Block.

*Spring 2021, iStation Test Results
Students tested and Tier Level Percentages in Reading and Mathematics*

Grade	Content	# Tested	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Kindergarten	Reading	58	37.9%	27.6%	22.4%	9.6%	8.2%
	Math	58	12.1%	17.2%	25.9%	20.5%	17.8%
First	Reading	74	32.4%	24.3%	14.9%	6.9%	5.2%
	Math	74	41.9%	36.5%	13.5%	34.5%	10.3%
Second	Reading	73	35.6%	23.3%	23.3%	17.6%	10.8%
	Math	73	16.4%	13.7%	31.5%	5.4%	2.7%

Spring 2021 ACT Aspire Test Results
*Percentage of Students meeting or exceeding ACT Readiness Benchmarks.
National Percentage of students meeting or exceeding ACT Readiness Benchmarks.*

Grade	# Tested	% Meeting or Exceeding	National %
Third			Due to the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic, National ACT Aspire Testing results were not available for Spring 2020testing.
English	64	50%	
Reading	64	29.7%	
Science	64	23.4%	
Math	64	21.9%	
Fourth			
English	62	58.1%	
Reading	62	30.6%	
Science	62	27.4%	
Math	62	29%	

Fifth		
English	76	57.9%
Reading	76	28.9%
Science	76	26.3%
Math	76	21.1%
Sixth		
English	83	73.5%
Reading	83	30.1%
Science	83	27.7%
Math	83	30.1%

Walnut Ridge High School 2021 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 or 2021).

At Walnut Ridge High School, 27 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 four career and technical pathways at WRHS: Agriculture, Business, Jr. Firefighter, and Criminal Justice. 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 or the Black River Career and Technical Center in Poca which offers 5 technical programs. Walnut Ridge High School also offers courses in academic and CTE subjects totaling 15 concurrent credit hours through Black River Technical College taught on our campus that allows students who qualify academically to receive college credit in those courses. 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. 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, as long as students complete the courses with a grade of "C" or better.

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, 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. In 2020-21, 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 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:

2020-21 Walnut Ridge High School ACT Aspire Subject Proficiency

	9th	10 th
English	53%	55%
Math	22%	14%
Science	36%	23%
Reading	28%	19%

2020-21 ACT College Admission Exam---State-Tested 11th Grade

	2021 WRHS
Number Tested	64
English	19.5
Mathematics	18.4
Reading	19.5
Science	19.2
Composite	19.3

2020-21 Advanced Placement Tests/ Scores of 3 or higher

AP Course	# Taking Exam	3.0	4.0	5.0
Biology	3	0	0	0
English Lang./Comp	22	2	1	0
Government & Politics	4	1	0	0
Calculus AB	0	0	0	0
World History	28	1	0	0
English Lit./Comp.	11	0	0	0
U.S. History	16	0	0	0

Lawrence County School District Graduation, Drop-Out, Remediation Rate

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Graduation Rate*	85.0	90.6	90.3	93.0
Drop-out Rate	1.45	1.20	0.75	0.69
College Remediation Rate	60.3	50.9	61.3	79.7

* School Report Card not available for 2020-21

**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 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. For electives, students may take either on-campus and completer 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 posted on our website and made available 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 and 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 have been purchased for all students in 5th through 8th grades. The previous devices were nearing the end of their useful life. The new laptops will help to address the increased demand on devices now that classrooms have shifted to more online/digital learning plans.

New iPads have been purchased for the 4th grade. This is the first step in rotating the devices down 4th through kindergarten so that older devices will rotate out as they reach the end of their useful life. Some of the spare devices that have been freed up from this will be used in the Special Education rooms as well as the elementary library.

All 3 of the computer labs in high school have been upgraded. The older PCs were no longer able to meet the demands of our digital learning. The new PCs are a modern design that has a much faster processor and larger screens. These will assure that we are able to meet the needs of the students for the next several years to come.

Teachers were provided laptops so that they are able to teach remotely and work from home when needed.

We are in the process of adding charging stations in common areas of the high school so that students may charge their laptops before school and during lunch if needed.

We have seen a great increase in reliance on technology in the classroom. We have started the process of replacing the computers that run the interactive Smart Boards with more powerful units.

The project to add Wi-Fi coverage into the new gymnasium was completed earlier this year. Televisions were added to the new gymnasium to allow viewing of the game while in the front lobby.

We are currently in the process of upgrading all of the camera systems on our buses to address the need for contact tracing as well as the safety of our students.

We are also currently adding several new cameras to our security system to be able to better ensure the safety of our students, help deter bad behavior, and help with contact tracing. The cameras will add additional coverage to public areas, hallways, entrances, and exterior of the buildings as well as coverage on the new gymnasium and the ball fields.

Capital Improvements

- PCs in all 3 high school labs
- Student Laptops 5th-8th grades
- New Cameras
- Upgrades to Server
- Purchase of Student Desks and Tables
- Various Doors Replaced
- Replaced Ceiling Tiles
- New Copiers
- Purchase of iPads for 4th grade
- Buses
- Teacher Laptops
- Smart Board Computers in Elementary

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 (ESA), 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/benefits as Literacy Coach is partially funded by Title II-A funds. Materials and supplies for Professional Development provided by Ms. Bramlett may also be purchased using these 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 resource security officer for the district.

Carl Perkins funds are specifically used in the Vocational Department. Business, Agriculture, and Fire/ Criminal Justice 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, Resource 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. ESA monies are used for software, materials, and supplies for math, literacy, science, and social studies. Since our district and schools state and/or federal accountability status is Coordinated Support for Reading, ESA monies will be prioritized for 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. 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. You may reach Ms. Privett at 870-886-6697.

Homeless

The Lawrence County School Homeless Coordinator for the District is Jennifer Roark. You may reach Ms. Roark at 870-886-6697.