

ADMINISTRATIVE RESTRUCTURING IN LITTLE ROCK SCHOOL DISTRICT SAVED \$4.8 MILLION

In 1998, the Murphy Commission, a Policy Foundation project, recommended Arkansas' 311 school districts should be restructured into not more than 134 administrative units to save tax dollars. Through last summer (2006), 66 districts, more than 20 percent of Arkansas K-12 districts had been restructured.

(June 18, 2007) Recent events in Arkansas' largest school district—Little Rock—have generated media coverage in national outlets including *The Wall Street Journal* and *New York Times*. The school board, in a 4-to-3 vote, decided to buyout the contract of Dr. Roy G. Brooks. Little Rock was released from federal court supervision under Dr. Brooks, the superintendent who in three years enacted administrative restructuring while moving to make Little Rock the highest performing urban school district in the U.S.

Documents obtained by the Policy Foundation under the state Freedom of Information Act reveal that a 2005 administrative restructuring overseen by Dr. Brooks and staff saved \$4.8 million. The records show most of the funds were later redirected into classroom instruction, with the rest of the money providing a "soft landing" salary adjustment for administrators effected by the plan.

FOIA Documents: Cost Savings Possible with Restructuring

The FOIA documents reveal the 2005 Little Rock School restructuring generated \$4.8 million in available funds. Non-recurring funds accounted for \$1.3 million of that amount. The remaining funds, totaling \$3.5 million, were redirected to classroom instruction for activities that included the following uses:

Textbooks	\$1,600,000
Materials	150,000
Meadowcliff Elementary School	179,000
Instructional Coaches	250,000
Art Teachers	900,000

Another \$710,000 was redirected to the "soft landing" under the restructuring, which eliminated 100.4 positions, record show.

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