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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ForwARd Arkansas Announces First ForwARd Communities

Will Partner with Batesville, Crossett, Marianna, Pea Ridge and Springdale

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (Oct. 12, 2016) – ForwARd Arkansas today announced Batesville, Crossett, Marianna, Pea Ridge and Springdale as the first ForwARd Communities. With this announcement, the communities will now begin implementation of [A New Vision for Arkansas Education](#) to help ensure every Arkansas student graduates prepared for college and the workplace.

“We’re excited to unveil these new ForwARd communities, which represent the cultural, economic and geographic diversity of our state,” said Dr. David Rainey, co-chair of the Implementation Working Group. “We look forward to partnering with them to help expand access to quality pre-K and reach ForwARd’s goal of significantly improving student achievement in Arkansas.”

Beginning this school year, the communities will work to develop individualized plans for the implementation of recommendations as laid out in [A New Vision for Arkansas Education](#). They will receive support from ForwARd and the Arkansas Department of Education. Throughout the process, ForwARd will continue to engage with other communities, education advocates and policymakers across the state. It will utilize these partnerships, implementation plans and lessons learned when adding to the list of ForwARd Communities in the future.

To celebrate the launch of these communities, ForwARd will host events throughout the month of October. On Friday, Oct. 7, ForwARd kicked off its statewide tour during a pep rally with Crossett High School. There will be additional announcements in Marianna on Friday, Oct. 14; Pea Ridge and Springdale on Wednesday, Oct. 19; and Batesville on Thursday, Oct. 20.

About ForwARd Arkansas

ForwARd Arkansas is a partnership of education, business, government and community leaders committed to improving public education in Arkansas. This partnership has conducted extensive research and continues to encourage statewide discussion and bold action to strengthen public education. ForwARd was established through a partnership between the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, Walton Family Foundation and Arkansas Board of Education. For more information, visit forwardarkansas.org.

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