

## 2019 Policy Recommendations and Progress

This year, ForwARd worked directly to develop key pieces of legislation (**bolded below**). We are pleased to see that many of our policy recommendations were championed by members of the 92nd General Assembly and were enacted into legislation listed below.

### INCREASE ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY PRE-K PROGRAMS

RECOMMENDATIONS	LEGISLATION / OUTCOMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality incentives, in the form of refundable tax credits, for early childhood educators to earn a family-supporting wage and improve outcomes for children</li> <li>Strengthening of the Better Beginnings Quality Rating Scale for Pre-K programs</li> <li>Formation of an Early Childhood Caucus among policymakers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>SB618 - Passed the Senate unanimously; no hearing in the House prior to adjournment</b></li> <li>An Interim Study is being conducted on parity between pay of teachers across pre-K programs</li> <li>ForwARd is working with ADE on the transition of ABC administration to ADE as part of Act 910, the "Transformation &amp; Efficiencies Act"</li> <li>Work is underway to develop an Early Childhood Caucus</li> </ul>

### ELEVATE EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS AS A LEARNING OUTCOME

RECOMMENDATIONS	LEGISLATION / OUTCOMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of a cohesive state strategy and accompanying regulatory structure for enhancing employability</li> <li>Support for increased public-private investment in career education, bringing business voice into education to affirm industry needs</li> <li>A Scholarship Lottery program for high school students pursuing concurrent credit and industry certification</li> <li>CTE capstone courses offered on a 5.0 GPA scale</li> <li>Certainty for Arkansas schools around waivers of academic rules</li> <li>Support for the affordability of and greater access to broadband</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Act 1079 - Creation of a Comprehensive Statewide Workforce Development System</li> <li>Act 179 - Improvement of the funding system for Secondary Vocational Area Centers</li> <li>Act 944 - Allows state-supported two-year institutions of higher education to market and provide services to any individual in Arkansas regardless of the service area in which the individual resides</li> <li><b>Act 456 - Creation of the Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarship</b></li> <li><b>Act 632 - Makes it easier for schools to offer CTE capstone courses for weighted credit</b></li> <li>Act 815 - Allows ADE to promulgate rules to clarify the waiver process</li> <li>Act 198 - Allows municipalities to build broadband infrastructure</li> </ul>

### STRENGTHEN THE EDUCATOR PIPELINE

RECOMMENDATIONS	LEGISLATION / OUTCOMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for teacher recruitment and retention efforts, including expansion of alternative programs</li> <li>Expansion of professional development and training, incorporating approaches to mental health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ForwARd continues to work in support of ADE's efforts to improve teacher recruitment and retention. Educator Preparation Program enrollment increased this year for the first time in more than five years.</li> <li>Act 190, the "School Counseling Improvement Act" - Increases the amount of time counselors will spend with students</li> <li>Act 1029 - Bullying and cyberbullying prevention improvements</li> <li>Act 1064 - Creation of a School Safety &amp; Crisis Line at UAMS's Psychiatric Research Institute</li> </ul>

### DATA SYSTEMS IMPROVEMENTS

RECOMMENDATIONS	LEGISLATION / OUTCOMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthening of a statewide, longitudinal data system in Arkansas and increased emphasis on data-driven decision-making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Act 936 - Expands duties and membership of the state's Data &amp; Transparency Panel</li> <li>Act 943 - Creation of the Data-Sharing &amp; Data-Driven Decision-Making Task Force</li> </ul>

### INNOVATION POLICY

RECOMMENDATIONS	LEGISLATION / OUTCOMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for Community Schools as a means of improving academic achievement and strengthening family and community engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>SR25 - Unanimously adopted by the Senate as a show of support for the Community Schools model</b></li> </ul>