



## Press Release

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### Arkansas Virtual School Posts Strong Test Scores

#### Three year record of academic success and achievement for the Arkansas Virtual School; test scores consistently above state average

*Little Rock, AR* – Students in the Arkansas Virtual School (ARVS) posted another year of strong scores, exceeding the state average in all but one category on the 2006 state benchmark examinations.

For the third year in a row, the Arkansas Virtual School demonstrated high academic marks in math and literacy, surpassing the state average in most grades, making the K-8 public virtual school one of the top-scoring public schools in the state.

ARVS students in grades 3 through 8 took the criterion-referenced tests which compare students' performance to other students in the state and against the Arkansas frameworks in math and literacy. Benchmark results are reported in four performance levels: below basic, basic, proficient and advanced. Students scoring proficient are considered by the Arkansas Department of Education to have mastery of the material and skills set forth in the frameworks for each subject in each grade.

Below is a table showing the percentage of ARVS students, per grade level, performing at proficient and advanced, compared to statewide percentages as published by the Arkansas Department of Education:

#### 2006 Benchmark Exams

Grade Level	Literacy		Math	
	ARVS	State	ARVS	State
3 <sup>rd</sup>	61%	57%	76%	67%
4 <sup>th</sup>	63%	61%	63%	60%
5 <sup>th</sup>	74%	56%	57%	50%
6 <sup>th</sup>	63%	59%	52%	57%
7 <sup>th</sup>	67%	53%	70%	50%
8 <sup>th</sup>	87%	66%	57%	44%

Highlights from the 2006 benchmark exams:

- ARVS students in every grade scored above the state average in literacy.
- ARVS students in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades scored above the state average in math.
- The majority of ARVS students who reside in a school improvement school zone scored proficient or advanced in math and literacy.

## **A Consistent Record of Academic Success**

The Arkansas Virtual School showed similarly strong test scores in previous years:

- In 2005, ARVS students in 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades scored above the state average in literacy.
- In 2005, ARVS students in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades scored above the state average in math.
- In 2004, students in 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades scored at or above the state average in all categories except for one. (In 2004, the benchmark exams were only given to students in 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. During this year, ARVS was not offering courses for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students.)

In addition to the benchmark exams, Arkansas Virtual School students have also performed extremely well on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS).

Two years in a row (2005 and 2006), Arkansas Virtual School students in 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades scored at or above the state average in all categories on the ITBS.

Karen Ghidotti, the ARVS Head of School, said, “We are very pleased with the consistent high performance of our students on the statewide exams. The Arkansas Virtual School has proven to be an excellent public school option that delivers academic results for students across the state.

“We are very encouraged that results from both the benchmark exams and the ITBS indicate that the highest achievement is coming from students who have been in the Arkansas Virtual School for two or more years, which demonstrates that our school is producing real academic gains for students. Equally encouraging is that the majority of our students who reside in school improvement zones scored proficient or advanced in math and literacy.

“ARVS teachers, students and parents should be very proud of our school’s record of success over the past years. We look forward to continuing this standard of excellence, and we are hopeful that this high performing public school program can continue to be available to students across Arkansas for many years to come.”

To request a copy of the complete outline of ARVS student performance on the state benchmark and ITBS exams, contact Karen Ghidotti at (501) 664-4225 or [kghidotti@arvs.org](mailto:kghidotti@arvs.org).

## **About the Arkansas Virtual School**

The Arkansas Virtual School is a program of the Arkansas Department of Education offered to public school students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade. The ARVS program is currently in its fifth year of operation. ARVS uses the comprehensive standards-based curriculum provided by K12 Inc. The K12 curriculum provides a research-based learning program and innovative instructional tools, blending traditional content with powerful technology. The ARVS instructional approach involves a powerful partnership between parents and teachers in which children receive individual attention and a personalized course of instruction. Students complete daily lessons delivered through the K12 Online School. However, most student work is completed away from the computer using books, workbooks, art supplies, manipulatives, and other education tools provided to each student by the school.

This public school program is available to students throughout the state, but enrollment is limited to approximately 430 students due to limited funding. There is currently a waiting list of over 400 students across the state. In accordance with the guidelines of the U.S. Department of Education’s Voluntary Public School Choice Grant, ARVS grants priority enrollment to students assigned to attend schools designated as being in school improvement as identified by the Arkansas Department of Education in compliance with Arkansas Omnibus Education Act 1467 of 2003 and with the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Over 180 students from school improvement schools applied for enrollment for the 06-07 school year.

More information can be found at [www.arvs.org](http://www.arvs.org).