



Southern Region Leadership Conference

July 21, 2026

Meeting the Moment:
Strategic Leadership for Today's Schools
from the Superintendent's Perspective

Denny Rozenberg
Superintendent
Bearden School District

Agenda



- Strategic Thinking in Education
- School Safety
- Vision, Mission, and Core Beliefs
- Courage and Resilience
- Leadership Lessons
- Closing Reflections

Welcome and Thank You

- Introductions
- Background
- Purpose:
 - Leadership from a Superintendent's Perspective

Thinking Strategically



- Academics
- Finance
- Facilities
- Extracurricular Programs
- Safety and Security

School Safety

- Standard Response Protocol (SRP)
- Hold, Secure, Lockdown, Shelter, Evacuate
- Standard Reunification Method (SRM)
- Prepare before a crisis.

Leading with Vision, Courage, & Resilience



- Practice servant leadership
- Support staff and students
- Lead with gratitude
- Model high expectations

Vision and Mission

- Vision is shaped by experience.
- Every district should clearly define its purpose.
- Ask: Who do we serve? Why?



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Alvontae Austin: 06 / 2026



Bearden School District



- It is our vision and mission that each student in the Bearden School District is encouraged, motivated, and prepared to achieve their current and future goals. Every district should clearly define its purpose. (Adopted by Bearden School Board April 7, 2016)
- Remember the purpose in everything that you do.
- Align district mission with state goals.
- Honor your district's legacy. – Hold the line!



Bearden School District



Core Beliefs:

- All Children can learn and should be encouraged, motivated, and their achievements acknowledged.
- All students should be treated fairly.
- You should treat students how you want your own children / grandchildren to be treated.
- Teachers, staff, and students should show mutual respect.
- Our teachers should be prepared.
- You shouldn't ask people to do what you're not willing to do or have done.
- Character and work ethic are important in achieving your goals.
- A key part of a student's education is citizenship skills.
- Students and staff need a safe environment in which to learn / teach.
- Citizenship: Introduce students to American values such as duty, honor, country, patriotism, character education and assist in the development of a good work ethic.



Adopted by Bearden School Board on 7 April 2016

Arkansas Dept. of Education



DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

Vision

The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education is transforming Arkansas to lead the nation in student-focused education.

Mission

The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education provides leadership, support, and service to schools, districts, and communities so every student graduates prepared for college, career, and community engagement.

Goals

Goal
1

PREPARED GRADUATES

Each student will meet or exceed educational milestones along pathways to graduate prepared for college, career, and community engagement.

Goal
2

STUDENT GROWTH

Each student will meet or exceed his/her expected individual growth annually.

Goal
3

PERSONAL COMPETENCIES

Each student will develop and apply personal competencies that promote learning and success in life.

Goal
4

STUDENT SUCCESS

Each student will be actively engaged in college, career preparation, military service, and/or competitive employment one year after graduation.

Courage

- Courage looks different in every district.
- Lead with conviction during difficult decisions.



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Resilience

Depends on the situation - What does it look like in your district?



Area Small School Districts Below 500 Students:

- 1986– Kingsland, Thornton, Carthage, Mt. Holly, Bearden Sparkman, Norphlet, Harmony Grove, New Edinburg, Stephens, Emerson, Taylor, Bradley.
- 2026– Bearden



Alvontae Austin—Arkansas
State Bench Press Record
Holder—181 lb 20—23 yr old
Classification.
352 lbs Bench – 20 June 2026



Superintendent's Leadership Lessons Learned

- Be honest
- Avoid surprises
- Respect the chain of command
- Investigate before deciding
- Stay professional
- Accept responsibility

Final Comments / Conclusion



- Serve students well
- Invest in family
- Thank you