

**Affirmations:**

“ALA's Student Voice Institute has been an amazing experience for our student leaders at Sylvan Hills High School. The institute not only cultivates student leadership, but it also enhances their leadership. Where else do students have the opportunity to discuss curriculum and issues with education in Arkansas with multiple Arkansas Teacher of the Year recipients and multiple members of the Secretary of Education's cabinet? The Arkansas Leadership Academy made this possible for our students via the Student Voice Institute.”

**Mr. Tracy Allen, Principal, Sylvan Hills High School**

"The Student Voice Institute has opened my eyes to the true impact students can have on their environment and culture. My school will forever be changed for the better, I couldn't imagine what it would have been like if our team didn't go to the Institute. That's something I'm glad I will never see."

**Madison Jaronitzky, Student, Fort Smith Southside High School**

The Student Voice Institute is the best educational experience I have ever had. I learned student voice is mainly about how to help/assist building and district administration to improve education and students' scores and what motivates students. The Student Voice Institute was very productive and engaging and I loved it. If I get another opportunity to attend the Student Voice Institute I would not turn that opportunity down, and I strongly recommend this experience to all schools in the state.

**Jaylen Smith, Student, Earle High School**

During my time attending the Student Voice Institute, I really began learning how powerful a voice could be. The institute truly helped me find a voice and understand the importance of good relationships within a school district. Bringing back what I learned into my community was a school-wide changing experience. Together, the staff and I began assemblies and programs to implement what we had learned in hopes to build a school where students and their teachers had strong relationships that reflected in the growth of the community. Schools can be a safe place to learn, experience, and be heard.

**Ashley Stucker, Student, Highland High School**

I have attended many professional development sessions designed to help teachers close the student achievement gap. It wasn't until attending the Student Voice Institute that all the rest of my training was put into context. Learning alongside students and other teachers from all over the state of Arkansas on building relationships and how to work together to close that achievement gap, shows that it IS possible. Observing students becoming leaders in their educational process within the various systems in their schools has been an amazing experience. Helping students learn how to use their voice and the chance to be that leader now, rather than later, proves that we CAN learn from our students and CAN solve problems together. We must let them speak and we must learn to listen. This is Student Voice.

**Chad G. Simpson, Teacher, Clarendon High School of Innovation**