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Walters Statement on Tulsa Public Schools

Oklahoma City, Okla – State Superintendent Ryan Walters has issued the following statement regarding Tulsa Public Schools (TPS):

“Despite months of assurances from TPS that it would take seriously the profoundly troubling issues in the district, the TPS board showed the exact opposite last night,” said Walters. “While I welcome a close partnership with Dr. Johnson moving forward, TPS is barreling toward drastic action being taken because the district has been unable to make the tough decisions necessary to turn the district around. The State Board of Education and I expect TPS to make decisions that prioritize student outcomes and not simply be a continued rubber stamp for the unions.”

As per the November State Board order, TPS has been given the following goals:

- 1) At least 50% of TPS students must score basic or above on the 2024 OSTP ELA assessment or increase the amount of students who score basic or above by 5%.
- 2) All teachers and school administrators will be trained in an OSDE approved Science of Reading model
- 3) 12 of the 18 current MRI designated sites will not be redesignated

The financial issues that have plagued the district demand immediate attention. Excessive spending on external vendors has led to a lack of fiscal controls and questionable purchasing quality. The Board has expressed these concerns to TPS for months, yet substantive efforts to address the district's finances remain lacking. A clear strategy is essential and student outcomes must be prioritized in the budget.

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