From the OEP

We have exciting news this Thursday! The OEP annual conference is April 28th at the Peabody in Little Rock and we would like you to consider attending. The title of our conference is “Preparing Highly Qualified Teachers for Arkansas.” We have some great speakers that will be presenting that we think you’ll find interesting and enjoyable. The Keynote Address will be given by Senator Joyce Elliott. We’ll also have leaders from Yale University, KIPP Academy, the Arkansas Department of Education, and The Learning Institute. Representative Rainey and Senator Jeffress will also be joining us, along with several other excellent speakers. There are many other great speakers that will be with us that day. The conference will be from 9 am until 3:30 pm and breakfast and lunch will be provided. If you would like to join us, send a note to oep@uark.edu and let us know!

News from Around the Natural State

Grant Boosts Pre-Engineering Programs at Fayetteville Schools
Fayetteville’s two junior high schools will each receive $94,872 for pre-engineering programs as part of the grants awarded this year by the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education.

State Approves Lincoln Charter School Request
The Arkansas State Board of Education approved an application from the Lincoln School District to start a conversion charter school at its meeting Monday. The school will be known as the Lincoln Academic Center for Excellence Charter School, and will be housed on the high school campus, operating as its own program. It will include the district’s in-house alternative learning program, but will be open to other students also.

Beebe Signs Measure to Set Up State Lottery
Governor Mike Beebe signed into law Wednesday the bills setting up the state lottery for college scholarships, and one Lottery Commission appointee was revealed to be former Congressman Ray Thornton.

News from Around the Nation
State Seeks to Gauge How Well Students and Teachers are Doing
A new education measurement in Massachusetts will track the performance of individual students as they advance from one grade to the next. It could shed light on who is falling short, teacher or pupil, and lead to fundamental changes in the way students are taught.

Study of Charters in 8 States Finds Mixed Effects
A new study of hundreds of charter schools in eight states contains both good news and bad news for supporters of the nation’s roughly 4,600 public charter schools. The researchers also found that charter schools are not more racially segregated and do not appear to be skimming the best students from the local public systems.

Reading, Math Software Found to Have Little Effect on Scores
For the second year in a row, a controversial $14.4 million federal study testing the effectiveness of reading and math software programs has found few significant learning differences between students who used the technology and those taught using other methods.

Site Seeing
Access aims to form “a national network of education litigators, policy makers, and advocates, in order to strengthen the links between school finance litigation, public engagement, and education policy.” Access has sections for litigation, policy, and advocacy news, as well as a state-by-state section with links to resources in each state.

Mark Your Calendar
The next State Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 13th.
The OEP conference, “Preparing Highly Qualified Teachers for Arkansas,” is Tuesday, April 28th from 9:00 – 3:30 in Little Rock.
For more information, visit the OEP Calendar.

Final Thoughts
“The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you.” – B.B. King

Thanks for reading! See you next week!

The Office for Education Policy
University of Arkansas
Director: Gary W. Ritter
Research Associates:
Nathan Jensen
Caleb Rose
Stuart Buck
Bentley Seal
Rachel Duncan

If you would like to be added or removed from this list, please send an e-mail to oep@uark.edu.