From the OEP

The OEP staff is busy preparing for the conference next week. We are very excited and look forward to seeing those planning to attend! Here are a few words from the keynote address speaker, Senator Joyce Elliott: “Staffing Arkansas schools with highly qualified teachers requires an examination from at least three perspectives: Teachers must want to be, highly qualified. The public must demand and financially support highly qualified teachers. The Governor and the Legislature must exercise the will to put policies in place to support the first two perspectives. From my background as a student, teacher, parent, union leader, legislator and an unrelenting advocate for a high quality education for all children, I will share my thoughts on how “highly qualified” can be moved from paper to practice— that is, if we all want highly qualified teachers as passionately as we want the next NCAA Football Championship.”

In case you missed the newest publications last week, you can find them here: “Putting ‘Teaching to the Test’ to the Test” and “ARRA Spending on Education in Arkansas”

News from Around the Natural State

How Much Stimulus? Schools Get the Answer
The Arkansas Department of Education and the governor’s office posted to a public web site Tuesday the amounts of money that each Arkansas school district can expect to receive in each of four categories of the stimulus funding.

Legislators Leave Racial Element of School Choice Law Intact
The 2009 Arkansas General Assembly ended without any school choice reform, although there was some talk prior to the session that the issue would be addressed. It proved to be too complex of an issue for legislators, as the session ended without any school choice reform.

News from Around the Nation

Charter Schools Weigh Freedom Against Protection of a Union
As the number of charter schools in New York City and elsewhere swells, unions have become increasingly aggressive in trying to organize their
teachers. These two major forces in education politics, having long faced off in ideological opposition, have begun in some places to enter tentative and cautious partnerships, and in others to engage in fierce combat.

**Site Seeing**

Visit [www.recovery.arkansas.gov](http://www.recovery.arkansas.gov) to stay up to date with the latest information about the Arkansas recovery funds.

**Mark Your Calendar**

April 28th: The OEP conference, “Preparing Highly Qualified Teachers for Arkansas,” will begin at 8:00 at the Peabody Hotel in Little Rock. For more information, visit the [OEP Calendar](#).

**Final Thoughts**

“[This is] going to be a really good opportunity for us to bring up to standard the learning tools that our children deserve and need. We are really excited and appreciative of the opportunity to do that.” – Executive Director Brendly Clark of Dreamland Academy of Performing and Communication Arts

**Thanks for reading! See you next week!**

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