From the OEP

Happy Wednesday to you! The education news this week has been pretty light as most headlines are focused on the upcoming Midterm elections less than a week away. We hope you all are able and willing to participate in the voting process that can very well impact education in our state.

Our main story this week is that the Joint House and Senate Education Committee of the Arkansas State Legislature approved a 2% - 2.4% “range increase” in Arkansas’ education budget. This will amount to a $60 million increase in education funding for the 2012 fiscal year - or rather, $60 million dollars added to the 2011 education budget of $2.76 billion. This, of course, is all contingent upon whether the legislature enacts this recommendation in the upcoming legislative session beginning in January. Read more about this story in our “News From Around the Natural State” section below.

Also be sure to check out our 2010 Fall OEP Conference information under our “Site Seeing” section below. We are hoping to get an attendance figure into the Clinton Presidential Center soon, so if you have not yet registered for this FREE conference where you can also earn 6 hours of Professional Development Credit, click here now!

Have a great rest of the week!!

News from Around the Natural State

School Funding Backed
Arkansas schools will receive a nearly $60 million increase in fiscal 2012 if the Legislature enacts the recommendation of the House and Senate education committees. Committee members recommended Monday that the state provide between a 2 percent and 2.4 percent increase to public education to make up for inflation.

News from Around the Nation

School Fiscal Concerns Haunt Electoral Landscape
Money for schools—how to spend it, or make do without it—has emerged as a major issue in federal and state elections this fall, with voters going to the polls Nov. 2 in contests that could bring new party majorities to Congress and to many state capitals.

States Set Widely Varying 'Proficiency' Bars
What students are expected to know in order to reach proficiency levels on exams in some states may be as much as four grade levels below the standards set in the states with the most rigorous assessments, according to a study by the American Institutes for Research that uses international testing data to gauge states against a common measuring stick.
Don't forget, you can always keep up with more education news on the In the News section of our website.

Site Seeing
We have created a Fall 2010 OEP Conference Website which includes a presentation highlighting our speakers, the conference flyer and registration link. We hope to see you on Tuesday November 9th at the Clinton Presidential Center in Little Rock. The cost to attend the conference is FREE and you can earn up to 6 hours of Professional Development credit! Also, to see what other topics we have covered in past years, visit the OEP Conference Websites from our 2008 Conference: Adequacy Achieved…Now What; our 2009 Conference: Preparing Highly Qualified Teachers for Arkansas; and our Spring 2010 Conference: Preparing Effective Leaders.

Mark Your Calendar
Oct 27: Arkansas Public School Resource Center (APSRC) Annual Conference, Hilton Metro Center, Little Rock, AR
Nov 4-5: Arkansas Curriculum Conference, Statehouse Convention Center, Little Rock AR
Nov 4-5 Culture Abilities Resilience Effort (CARE) Conference, AEA Building, Little Rock, AR
Nov 8: State Board of Education Meeting, Arch Ford Education Building, State Capitol Complex, Little Rock, AR
Nov 11: Joint House and Senate Education Committee Meeting, Room 171 State Capitol Building, Little Rock, AR

OEP Conference Reminder: November 9, 2010 - Annual OEP Conference at the beautiful Clinton Presidential Center in Little Rock, Arkansas. We have an excellent line-up of speakers at this year's OEP Conference including Richard Abernathy (pictured), Ray Simon, Lisa Carter, Susan Harriman, John Cronin, and we will also feature numerous practitioners and policymakers from around the state. We are also happy to announce that attendance at the OEP conference is worth 6 hours of professional development credit through the Arkansas Department of Education. This year we will also be presenting high achieving schools in Arkansas with Office for Education Policy Awards. Check out our agenda on the OEP Website.

There is no charge for the 2010 OEP Conference! Click here to register online and earn up to 6 hours of Professional Development Credit!!!

Final Thought
“Yes education is going to be adequately funded but when... families are hurting, employees of state government are all under a freeze, I think the public expects us to be frugal with the dollars.” - Senator Steve Bryles on the 2% - 2.4% increase in education funding.

Thanks for reading! See you next week!

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