From the OEP

This week, we are releasing a policy brief that chimes in on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, commonly referred to as No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The reauthorization of NCLB is long overdue. Speculation concerning when and how this controversial act would be reauthorized has occurred throughout the Obama administration. In a somewhat surprising move, President Obama unilaterally created NCLB flexibility through waivers. This policy brief discusses the proposed ESEA reauthorization rules, the waivers, and how these changes will affect schools in Arkansas. Click here to read our policy brief on NCLB Waivers!!!

News from Around the Natural State

Four Finalists for Arkansas Teacher of the Year Announced

Four teachers from across Arkansas are one step closer to the title 2012 Teacher of the Year. Today, the Arkansas Department of Education released the names of the state finalists for the coveted award. The four state finalists are:

- Matthew Garrett of Rogers is a 4th and 5th grade science teacher at Old Wire Road Elementary School with 11 years experience. He has a bachelor's degree from the University of Louisiana at Monroe and a master's degree from Arkansas State University.
- Kara Jones of Conway is a 5th grade math teacher at Raymond and Phyllis Simon Intermediate School with eight years experience. She has a bachelor's degree and a master's degree from Christian Brothers University in Memphis.
- Shelina Mashail Warren of Pine Bluff is a 9th grade social studies teacher at Jack Robey Junior High School with eight years experience. She has a bachelor's degree and a master's degree from Christian Brothers University in Memphis.
- Kimberly Kaye Wilson of Monticello is a 9th-12th grade visual art teacher at Monticello High School with 16 years experience. She has bachelor's degrees from Winthrop University in South Carolina and Trinity College in Vermont and master's degrees from Kent State University in Ohio and the University of Arkansas at Monticello.

Bentonville School Board To Review Millage Options, Consider New Schools

The Bentonville School Board is set to decide whether to ask voters to fund a ninth-grade center or second high school. Depending on which project the board decides upon, voters will see a millage increase in the spring of 3.4 to 7.1 mills. School district officials have said the cost for building either the center or second high school will be higher than projects in the past because of inflation and other changes in the economy. Three ninth-grade center options are before the board.

The first option would require a 3.3 mill increase and be built near the current high school. The 274,912-square-foot center would hold 1,250 students and cost more than $55 million. A second $63 million option, requiring a 3.8 mill increase, also would be built near the high school. It
would have 315,000 square feet and hold 1,500 students. The third option could be 274,912 square foot facility constructed near Central Park Elementary on Bright Road requiring a 3.4-millage increase. The structure could hold 1,250 students, and cost nearly $57 million. The school board will also review the option of building a second high school with or without athletic facilities. A school with full athletic facilities would cost the district more than $120 million. Voters would need to pass a 7.09-millage increase. The 436,518 building would hold 2,500 students. A building without athletic facilities would cost more than $103 million. A millage increase of 6.08 would be needed, officials said.

**School Kids Flee Alabama for Arkansas**

Alabama’s tough immigration law is causing immigrants to flee the state. CNN reports that a large number of these immigrants, including school-aged children, are fleeing to Arkansas.

**Click here to check out these news stories and more on the OEP Blog!!!**

**News from Around the Nation**

**White House Says American Jobs Act Would Save 400,000 Education Jobs**

The American Jobs Act proposed by president Obama last month would save nearly 400,000 educator jobs if states spent all the money in one year, according to a report released today by the White House. The legislation is part of a nearly $450 billion package that would include $30 billion to prevent teacher layoffs, and $25 billion for school modernization and repair.

**TFA Teachers: How Long Do They Teach? Why Do They Leave?**

Established in 1990, TFA strives to close persistent racial and socioeconomic achievement gaps in U.S. public education by recruiting high-achieving college graduates to teach for two years in low-income urban and rural schools. In recent years, applications to TFA have soared, especially at highly selective colleges. Until now, solid information about how long TFA teachers actually remain in teaching and in their low-income schools has not been available to policy makers and school officials. This article highlights Pi Delta Kappan's large-scale, nationwide analysis of TFA teacher turnover and presents a more detailed picture of which TFA corps members stay, which ones leave the profession and some suggestions about why they leave.

**Click here to check out these news stories and more on the OEP Blog!!!**

**Don't forget, you can always keep up with more education news on the In the News section of our website.**

**Site Seeing**

For those of you accustomed to using the Arkansas Department of Education’s Website (www.arkansased.org), they are currently gathering user information in a new Web Survey of the ADE Website. Click on this link to take the survey.

**Mark Your Calendar**

Monday October 10: State Board of Education Meeting, Arch Ford Building Auditorium, State Capitol Complex, 9:00 AM

Tuesday October 11: Joint House and Senate Education Committee Meeting, State Capitol Complex Room 171, Little Rock, AR 10:00 AM
Tuesday October 11: Education-House, Vocational-Technical Institutions Subcommittee Meeting. State Capitol Complex Room 171, Little Rock, AR 10:00 AM
Wednesday October 26: APSRC Fall Conference, Double Tree Hotel and Robinson Center, Little Rock. Click Here for More Information.

**Final Thought(s)**

“Research shows the most important school-related factor affecting student performance is the effectiveness of teachers and school leaders. Arkansas is fortunate to have thousands of extraordinary educators serving students across our state. These four teachers are among the best. Their value to our students and our state is immeasurable. We are pleased to honor their work and dedication through this recognition.” - Arkansas Education Commissioner Dr. Tom Kimbrell on the four Arkansas Teacher of the year Finalists.

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

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