Greetings from the OWL! There was a State Board of Education meeting on Monday so we have highlighted several news stories below. As always, you can find a complete list of education news on the In the News section of our website.

News from Around the Natural State

**Madison County: $1 Million Gift Thrills Huntsville Educators**
A.T. Smith bought 60,000 shares of stock in Tyson Foods Inc. about 18 months ago, and recently transferred 50,000 of them to the Huntsville School District. The gift of $1 million is believed to be the largest in the school district’s history.

**Board Rejects Teacher Pact; Union Aims to Resume Bargaining**
The School Board for the Pulaski County Special School District voted 4-3 Tuesday against a proposed teacher contract, a move that the president of the teachers union happily expects will send teacher and district representatives back to the contract bargaining table.

**ASMSA Distance Learning Program Earns National Kudos**
The Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences and the Arts’ Office of Distance Education Department of Foreign Languages recently received an International Distance Learning Award, which was presented during the 2010 National Conference in St. Louis by the U.S. Distance Learning Association.

Here are a few updates from the State Board of Education meeting on Monday:

**Board Hears Update on Humphrey School of Excellence**
Dr. Mary Ann Duncan told the Arkansas State Board of Education that the Friends of Humphrey School and the charter school’s board voted to close the school to students on May 28 and the school would close for good in June. The report was given Monday morning during the State Board’s regular monthly meeting.

**Board Takes Action on Future of Twin Rivers School District**
After a hearing that lasted about an hour and touched on assertions regarding the length of bus rides and funding levels for isolated schools, the Arkansas State Board of Education voted unanimously to consolidate the Twin Rivers School District into six contiguous districts: Highland,
Hillcrest, Mammoth Spring, Maynard, Pocahontas, and Sloan-Hendrix. In addition, to allow more school choice for the students, the enrollment cap on the Imboden Charter School was raised to 150. This action will be effective July 1, 2010.

**Charter's New Location Approved**
The Urban Collegiate Public Charter School for Young Men in Little Rock appeared before the Arkansas State Board of Education at its May meeting to request approval for a change in location of the new school from a building on South University Avenue to the former Lutheran High School facility on West Markham, which is 4 1/2 miles away.

**Armorel School District Placed in Fiscal Distress**
Due to declining fund balances, the Arkansas Department of Education recommended that the Armoreal School District be classified as being in fiscal distress. The district did not appeal the recommendation and the State Board of Education voted unanimously to do so.

**News from Around the Nation**

**Colo. District Boots Traditional Salary Schedule**
Harrison School District Two, the 11,000-student district south of Colorado Springs, this fall will be among the first in the nation to replace the traditional salary schedule with a pay system based entirely on observations of teacher practice and student-achievement results.

**Site Seeing**
In case you missed it, last week we posted a Northwest Arkansas edition of the report card. You can find it [here](#).

**Mark Your Calendar**

**May 14**: Professional Licensure Standards Board Meeting  
**May 19**: Joint Adequacy Evaluation Oversight Subcommittee meeting in room 171 of the State Capitol, 1:30pm  
**May 20**: Joint Adequacy Evaluation Oversight Subcommittee meeting in room 171 of the State Capitol, 9:30am  
**May 24**: Joint Subcommittee on Grade Inflation in room 171 of the State Capitol, 10:00am  
**May 24**: Joint Adequacy Evaluation Oversight Subcommittee in room 171 of the State Capitol, 1:30pm  
**June 11**: UCA Leadership Institute, 8:30am – 3:00pm. View the [flyer](#) for more information.  
**June 15**: “Common Standards, Common Sense: What the Common Core State Standards Mean for Arkansas” hosted by The Learning Institute at Bryant Middle School, 9am – 3:30pm. Contact Quentin.suffren@tli.net for more information.
More information is available on the OEP Calendar.

**Final Thought**

"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go." – Dr. Seuss

**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
Bentley Kirkland
James Shuls
Helen Barnard
If you would like to be added or removed from this list, please send an e-mail to oep@uark.edu.

*Note from the OEP: In past publications, we have referred to the Grade 11 Literacy exam as an End-of-Course exam. It was brought to our attention that we need to clarify and correct our wording. We often group the Grade 11 Literacy exam with the End-of-Course exams. However, the literacy exam is not an End-of-Course exam and we apologize for any confusion. We will make a better distinction in future reports. We would also like to thank Ron Harder, of the Arkansas School Boards Association, for bringing this to our attention.*