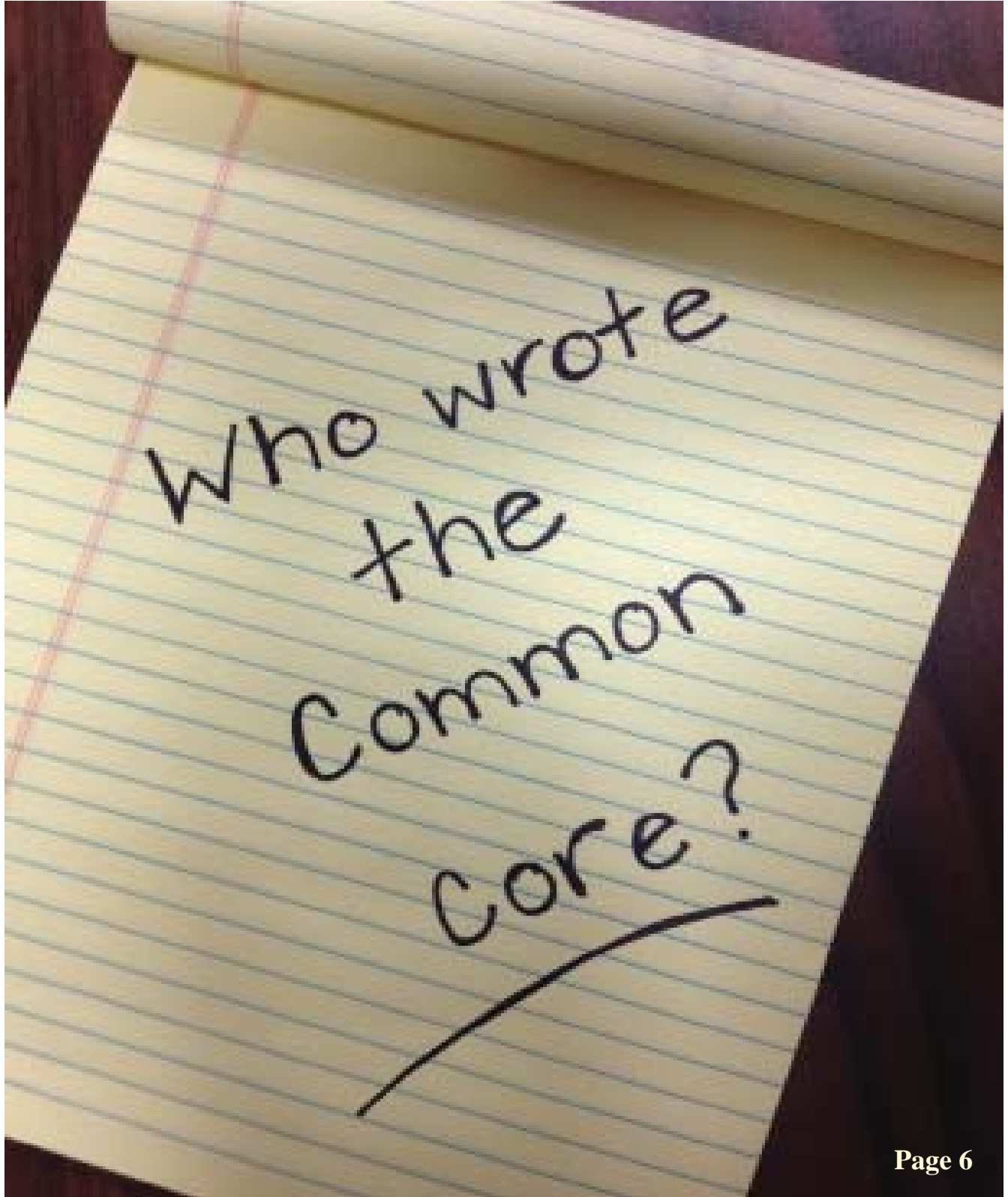


# ADVANTAGE

Winter 2011



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# MEET THE LEADERSHIP

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Charter School Board Chairman ..... John Bacon  
Rural School Board Chairman ..... Dr. Matt McClure

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Jim Cooper	Dr. Mary Gunter	Diane Tatum
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## APSRC Staff

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Director of Finance Services ..... Dr. Bobbie Davis  
Director of Teaching & Learning ..... Barbara Hunter Cox  
Director of Technology ..... Harry Dickens  
Director of Communications ..... Katie Booher  
Attorney ..... Tripp Walter  
Finance Specialist ..... Patsy Hammond  
Finance Specialist ..... Gary Parish  
Finance Specialist ..... Doug Brown  
Teaching and Learning Specialist ..... Dr. Ellen Treadway  
Instructional Technology Specialist ..... Brook Singletary  
Office Manager ..... Lisa Walters  
Administrative Assistant ..... Juli Warren



Arkansas Public School Resource Center



# EDUCATION CALENDAR

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## January 2012

1/9- Arkansas State Board of Education Meeting

1/9- Prefiling begins for Appropriation Bills and Concurrent Resolutions for Non-Appropriation Bills

1/16- Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

1/27- CIV with Stephen Barkley

1/31- ADE Common Core State Standards Institute #2

## February 2012

2/2- CIV with Diane Sweeney

2/13- Arkansas State Board of Education Meeting

2/13- Legislative Fiscal Session Begins

2/14- Valentine's Day

2/15- ADE Common Core State Standards Literacy CIV

2/20- President's Day

2/27- Deadline for filing Appropriation and Non-Appropriation Bills

2/29- ADE Common Core State Standards Mathematics Videoconference

## March 2012

3/12- Arkansas State Board of Education Meeting

3/13- 30th Day of Legislative Fiscal Session

3/13- ADE Common Core Institute #3

3/17- St. Patrick's Day

3/19-3/23- Spring Break

3/20- First Day of Spring

3/28- 45th Calendar Day of Legislative Fiscal Session - Last Possible Day of the Session

## *Congratulations APSRC!*



At the 32nd Annual Telly Awards, the Arkansas Public School Resource Center and Mitchell Communications were awarded a Bronze Telly for their Charter School commercial. The Telly Awards honor the very best local, regional and cable television commercials.



This holiday season, the staff at APSRC would like you to know how much we enjoy working with you. We appreciate the work you do in your schools and classrooms every single day. We are thankful for your support of our efforts to improve education in Arkansas.

Have a safe and restful holiday and we will see you in the new year! We are looking forward to a successful 2012.

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

<i>Scott</i>	<i>Bobbie</i>	<i>Harry</i>	<i>Barbara</i>
<i>Tripp</i>	<i>Patsy</i>	<i>Katie</i>	<i>Ellen</i>
<i>Doug</i>	<i>Gary</i>	<i>Brook</i>	<i>Lisa</i>
<i>Juli</i>			



# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

*Scott Smith*

I would like to thank each and every one of our members for a wonderful fall semester. Not only have we had a record number of members this fall, but the staff of APSRC has expanded as well. So far this year, APSRC has added the following new staff members: Barbara Hunter Cox, Director of Teaching and Learning, Katie Booher, Director of Communications, Brook Singletary, Associate Director of School Technology and Doug Brown, Associate Director of School Finance.

In the area of school finance, governed by Dr. Bobbie Davis and her team, one of our goals this semester was to enhance our financial guidance tools on our website. We have added a Title I and a Title II Budget Matrix to help districts and charters budget these funds in ACSIP. We have also updated the Categorical Funding Matrix to assist districts in knowing how to legally utilize these funds. The new professional development requirements have been posted on the site and the list of website requirements has also been updated. The information about what is required for your annual report to the public is posted on the APSRC website as well.

As mentioned, the Teaching and Learning team has expanded with the addition of Barbara Hunter Cox as Director. Teaching and Learning has focused on how to assist our partner schools with the implementation of the Common Core State Standards. The team wrote and received a grant, which is called the Achieving by Changing (ABC) Initiative and has begun the process of establishing pilot schools that will receive support for the next three years from the grant. To support that work, David Coleman presented an overview of the development of the CCSS on November 17th for over 300 of our partners and the Teaching and Learning staff provided professional development at 25 schools targeted to the specific needs of the partner districts for 908 educators. In addition, the team provided 31 data analysis trainings to 295 educators and 11 specialized professional development sessions on NWEA assessments to 386 participants.

The Technology team of Harry Dickens and Brook

Singletary has focused on technology plans for 2012-2015, business continuity planning, professional development on mobile technologies, and infusing instructional technology into the Common Core State Standards. We are researching federal grants that will allow the purchasing of distance learning equipment to replace or enhance what member districts currently have in place. In addition, we are looking forward to hosting the 2nd annual APSRC Spring Technology Institute. We are working on the details and you will be provided a conference date and agenda in the near future, but this event promises to be very helpful in addressing real life school technology issues and concerns. Thank you to the districts and COOPs for including the technology team in your professional development activities this past fall.

I especially want to highlight the success of our Fall Conference organized by our event planner, Katie Booher. This two day event, including a pre-conference Student Assessment Institute, brought over 300 educators to Little Rock. We know that those of you who attended found this time helpful, informative and challenging. The keynote speakers were relevant and engaging, and the breakout sessions were able to delve deep into some hot topics in education right now.

The School Law team of Tripp Walter and myself saw a record number of school law cases receiving APSRC legal assistance. So much so, that I am pleased to announce that APSRC is looking to add new legal staff to our team and is creating a Legal Defense Fund to provide greater legal assistance and support to member COOPs and APSRC schools.

As you can see, the staff of APSRC has been very busy working hard for all of our members this semester. We are looking forward to a break from December 23, 2011 through January 3, 2012. However, we want to be sure to thank each of our members again for your support and assistance... to take a moment and remind us all of the Reason for the Season and to wish each of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



# Who wrote the Common Core?



As many of us have spent time these past few months sorting through and analyzing the Common Core State Standards, there are many questions that come to mind. What is this going to look like? How am I going to be able to do this? Where do I start? Am I already behind? Perhaps you have grown frustrated or even angry before asking, “Who wrote this anyway?”

A *TIME* Magazine Article published on January 6, 2011 identified **David Coleman** as “The Architect” of the Common Core State Standards. Coleman runs his own consulting firm with partner **Jason Zimba**. *TIME* names Coleman as one of the most influential people in American education today. Coleman, Zimba and their team were challenged to write and develop the Common Core State Standards. As the lead authors, their decisions have an enormous impact on what your school and classroom will look like in the upcoming years.

So who are David Coleman and Jason Zimba?

Coleman and Zimba are the co-founders of Student Achievement Partners, LLC. Based in New York, the organization assembles leading thinkers and researchers to design actions to substantially improve student achievement. The organization focuses on policy and bases their work on evidence and research. Coleman serves as CEO of the organization.

Coleman, who specializes in Literacy, is a graduate of Yale, Oxford and Cambridge Universities. He is a classicist and a Rhodes Scholar who spent 5 years at McKinsey & Company, where his work focused on health care, financial institutions, and pro bono service to education. David comes from an educational family—his mother is the president of Bennington College in Vermont.

Zimba, a math specialist, graduated from Williams College with a double

major in mathematics and astrophysics before earning an M.S. in mathematics from the University of Oxford and a Ph.D. in mathematical physics from the University of California at Berkeley. His research spans a range of fields, including astronomy, astrophysics, theoretical physics, philosophy of science and pure mathematics. Like Coleman, Zimba was a Rhodes Scholar. Recipient of a Majorana Prize for theoretical physics, Jason has been on the faculty in physics and mathematics at Grinnell College and Bennington College. He has taught physics, mathematics, and other subjects to college students, university physics and engineering majors, adult prison inmates, disadvantaged high school students, and children of non-English speaking immigrants. In addition, Jason is the author of *Force and Motion: An Illustrated Guide to Newton's Laws*.

David and Jason also co-founded The Grow Network, whose mission is to make assessment results truly

*Continued from previous page*

useful to teachers, school leaders, parents and students. The company was created to help state and district school systems use assessments to inform instruction. Coleman and Zimba were responsible for standards alignment, curriculum design, product development, educational strategy, psychometrics, as well as working closely with nonprofit organizations, businesses, and education leaders. An education technology company, The Grow Network was acquired by McGraw-Hill in 2005.

APSRC brought David Coleman to Arkansas on November 17 to kick off our series titled *Common Core: Learning from the Experts*. Held at the Clinton Presidential Center in Little Rock, this event was well attended with around 300 participants representing our member schools from across the state. David shared the vision for the creation of the Common Core State Standards and offered specific recommendations and strategies on the implementation of the CCSS. He also gave a model lesson using the “Letter

from Birmingham Jail” by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

A set of follow-up survey data revealed that 84.8% of the participants ranked the quality of the presentation as excellent. When participants compared their CCSS knowledge prior to the conference (47%) and after the conference (89%) there was a self-reported increase of 42% in knowledge gained. Comments from the survey include:

- I told him he was “my hero” and I meant it because he brings passion to the debate, validates the sense of urgency to read, listen and learn as much as possible about Common Core and PARCC, and he has the courage to say things that need to be said, even if they are not politically correct or if they contradict current practice.
- This was one of the best things I have attended for CCSS.
- The best part is he can validate with evidence.
- I had confirmation that less is more with CCSS.

- David provided far and away the most informative of the many, many sessions that I have attended... the real thinking behind CCSS.
- Now I’ve been able to implement CCSS style thinking into my lessons every day!
- I believe that my district is more “on track” in the implementation process than I thought.
- As an author/architect of Common Core State Standards, David Coleman has a thorough understanding of the standards and a unique ability to make clear the instructional shifts needed as we make the transition. We are very fortunate that APSRC brought him to the state to speak to school leaders giving us more clarity so that we continue conversations in our schools on a deeper level.
- My whole day was filled with “aha!” moments. I understand the CCSS so much better after hearing Coleman. I now know what my teaching needs to look like under the standards. Thank you APSRC!
- He was powerful because as a member of the PARCC team, he knows firsthand what we should be preparing our students to know and be able to do. His presentation gave us concrete examples and practical applications that can be used in our classrooms as we transition into the Common Core.



David Coleman presents at the Clinton Presidential Center as part of APSRC’s *Common Core: Learning from the Experts* series.

*Photo/APSRC*

**APSRC is proud to announce that we will continue our *Common Core: Learning from the Experts* series this spring when we bring Jason Zimba to Arkansas. Look for more information coming soon! ■**

# NUMBER OF PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENTS IN U.S. SURPASSES TWO MILLION

The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools (NAPCS) announced that the number of students attending public charter schools across the nation has surpassed two million. Over 500 new public charter schools opened their doors in the 2011-12 school year, an estimated increase of 200,000 students. This year marks the largest single-year increase ever recorded in terms of the number of additional students attending charters.

There are now approximately 5,600 public charter schools enrolling what is estimated to be more than two million students nationwide. The numbers equate to a 13 percent growth in students in just one year, while more than 400,000 students remain on waiting lists to attend the public school of their choice. This significant milestone demonstrates

increased demand from families who want more high-quality educational options for their children.

“We are very encouraged to see the active role parents are playing to ensure their children receive a high-quality education,” said Ursula Wright, interim CEO of the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools. “The results that charter schools are demonstrating are not only a testament to the hard work of thousands of teachers and charter leaders, but to families demanding more in terms of what a high-quality education means for their individual children.”

In addition to the more than 500 new schools nationwide, roughly 150 public charter schools did not re-open their doors this fall. These schools closed for a variety of reasons, including low enrollment,

financial challenges and low academic performance. The closures provide further evidence that the charter school intent works—schools that do not meet the needs of their students should close.

Charter schools are tuition-free public schools that are allowed to be more innovative while being held accountable for improved student achievement. These figures were compiled based on data from state departments of education and state charter school support organizations and resource centers.

National and statewide public charter school data can be found on the Public Charter School Dashboard: <http://dashboard.publiccharters.org>. ■



## Flightline Upper Academy Opens

Flightline Upper Academy, a branch of Jacksonville Lighthouse Charter School, was officially opened in a School Dedication Ceremony and ribbon cutting on August 15, 2011 at 10:00 am.

Flightline Upper Academy is located on Little Rock Air Force Base in Jacksonville.

Congratulations to the Flightline Faculty, Staff and students!

# Singapore Math Author Andy Clark Presents Keynote at APSRC Fall Conference

Andy Clark, Consulting Author of *Math In Focus*, presented the keynote speech at the APSRC Fall Conference held on October 26 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Little Rock. *Math In Focus* is the popular Singapore Math curriculum, now implemented in many schools and districts across the state of Arkansas. Clark highlighted the differences in the way we have typically taught math here in the United States, compared to the way math is taught in other foreign entities, such as Singapore

and Hong Kong. He gave many concrete examples of the thinking that needs to take place in each of our classrooms in order for our students to be more successful. He challenged math teachers across the state to teach their students to “truly understand the numbers.”

Other featured speakers at the APSRC Fall Conference included Governor Mike Beebe, Arkansas Commissioner of Education Dr. Tom Kimbrell, and Efrain Mercado, Lead

Strategist for the Common Core for ASCD. Over 21 breakout sessions were offered at the conference, including sessions on teacher evaluation, iPads, school websites, and cash management. The day also included a congressional panel and a legal panel.

A Pre-Conference Student Assessment Institute was held in partnership with NWEA on October 25. ■

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## FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT

On our website ([www.apsrc.net](http://www.apsrc.net)), we have made available a copy of the Affidavit for you to use to submit to the ADE in response to Commissioner’s Memo Number COM-11-036 (“Classified School Employees with Paid Breaks and Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)”). We have also put a copy of the memo on our website.

You will need to submit the affidavit to the ADE Attorney’s Office no later than December 31, 2011. The affidavit is for the 2011-2012 school year, and also for the 2010-11 school year, if information for that school year has not been previously provided to the ADE.

In addition, we have posted a summary and briefing of the Memo on our website. Each of these items can be found on the Members Only section of our website, under Legal Services.

We especially want to draw your attention to the language in the third paragraph of the Memo:

Given the mandate that every school district must verify compliance with FLSA, the ADE strongly suggests that every school district seek the advice of legal counsel to ensure strict adherence.

Our research in this area causes us to advise that you should include the following areas in your internal FLSA review of your classified employees:

- “Suffered or Permitted”
- “Waiting Time”
- “Meal and Rest Periods”
- “Travel Time”
- “Use of Volunteers”
- “Recess and Field Trips”
- “Overtime Pay”

- “Recordkeeping Policies and Required Postings”

More information about each of these areas can be found on the summary of the FLSA on our website.

This information is being provided to give you some general guidance as to your responsibilities under the FLSA, and has been compiled from various sources including the U.S. Department of Labor, *Fair Labor Standards Act Handbook* and the National School Board Association.

Please contact either Tripp Walter or Scott Smith at (501) 492-4300 if you have specific questions or issues concerning the Fair Labor Standards Act. ■

# Banner Year for Participation in NWEA MAP Assessment Program - *Voices From Schools*

School year 2011-2012 has witnessed a marked increase in the number of APSRC member districts participating in the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) online adaptive assessment program: Measures of Academic Progress or MAP assessments. The number of MAP partners doubled from 17 schools (2010) to 36 schools (2011). Why are so many schools interested? Will Felton, Director of math and science K-8 at eStem Charter Schools, addressed the increased interest with the following comments:

“If the research suggests that we need frequent and adequate data to drive instruction and curriculum decisions, then NWEA is what is needed. The data provided to instructional leaders and teachers has the potential to change how we look at everything. Pacing guides and curriculum maps begin to fade and become more of scope and sequence chart because the data support looking at students on the basis of individual skills. NWEA also has the potential to change how we start to look at grade levels and “grades” on report cards. Skill-list report cards begin to seem more possible and provide parents with better insight on how to help students.”

Another view point was shared by Rosemary Weaver from the Pocahontas School District, who stated:

“The Pocahontas Public School District has found MAP testing extremely helpful in planning for whole group, small group, and individual instruction. MAP results provide student academic performance within days rather than weeks or months. However, the most valued

information is the prescriptive nature of the feedback. Teachers receive an individualized report that is accompanied with a set of skills that provide a teacher with 1) a view of what a student has learned, 2) an analyzed list of skills that are related to immediate instruction, and 3) a list of skills for enrichment. Teachers and students not only know the level of student performance, but they have identified individualized skills from which they can plan specific instruction. Assessments that the district has used in the past gave general feedback, but nothing that the district has used in the past has provided such targeted feedback for teachers and students. MAP assessments allow a student to set goals, work toward the goals, and feel a sense of pride when he or she accomplishes the collaborative goals set by the student and the teacher.”

On the other side of the state in Fayetteville Schools, Sarah McKenzie notes a similar theme that:

“MAP assessments have provided Fayetteville Public Schools with valuable information about our students’ learning. The information is used by teachers to focus differentiated instruction in their classrooms, ensuring that all students are provided with the learning opportunities they need. Principals have appreciated being able to view student performance at their schools through a different lens-- one that focuses on student growth during the course of the year. This information has been particularly valuable for our very high performing schools because it gives us a clear target for student

achievement even for those students who score Advanced. District leadership examines the data to identify students and schools that would benefit from additional resources, as well as to examine the impact of specific programs and interventions. The MAP data has allowed us to have MEANINGFUL conversations about ACTIONABLE data- and because the scores are available immediately, we have the information we need to make a difference for our students!”

Through funding from a grant from the Walton Family Foundation, APSRC has been able to include more districts in the program by underwriting the cost per student for three years and by providing professional development in regional hub sites at no cost to participating APSRC member districts. Dr. Lynda Samons, curriculum supervisor at Magnet Cove School District, spoke to the quality of the data and professional development.

“There are several things NWEA has done for us in Magnet Cove. First, having great data has helped in making the paradigm shift from measuring proficiency to measuring growth. There will be changes in teaching and learning strategies with the implementation of the Common Core State Standards and being a part of the NWEA process is not only taking us to accountability, but to doing what’s right for kids. The professional development opportunities delivered on-site have been phenomenal. Everyone with the NWEA organization has brought our leadership team to the highest

*Continued from previous page*

level of Bloom's taxonomy in understanding the process. Never could we have gotten on a plane and flown to a faraway place to interact with an expert for a couple of days and then returned to our own little world of school and made the kind of positive changes that have happened because NWEA has sent those experts to us to scaffold the information as we needed it."

APSRC's partnership with NWEA has made it possible for teachers and students across the state of Arkansas to experience computer-based adaptive assessments first-hand. Using computer-based testing is one way to prepare for the next generation assessment in 2014-2015. NWEA is administered three times during the school year in kindergarten through 10th grade and MAP coordinators receive on-demand support from NWEA staff working with APSRC MAP partners. In a recent update from Mountainburg School District, Martha Cochenour praised the Arkansas NWEA team members.

"The training that was given to our lead teachers was some of the best that we have had. Sandie Ellis, NWEA workshop facilitator, was so friendly and helpful. She explained the workings, and when she left the teachers were ready to go and get started the next day. The fall testing went as smoothly as any that I have ever been involved. We had a few glitches but mostly it went like clockwork with very few issues. Lance Atchison, our NWEA partner support representative, was a great support and helped us out with everything that we needed. When we got the results, the teachers were impressed with how well their students did. They told me the students showed exactly where they thought they would. They are using the

results to help their students. We are excited to do the winter testing in January 2012 and see how well they have improved. The District is so excited about having MAP and the results we get."

As Martha indicates, MAP assessments provide teachers, students, and parents with readiness data that indicates the starting point for instruction in the core content areas. In addition, teachers receive a Lexile or reading score that helps them work with students to choose literature on students' optimum reading level. Most importantly, MAP data enables teachers to organize small groups of students who have similar learning needs, thus ensuring the best educational experience for individual students.

### **Training Paradigm**

APSRC and NWEA use a trainer of trainers approach to professional development for MAP partners. National consultants from NWEA travel the state each year to provide regional workshops: two in the fall and one in the spring. In November, NWEA's "Stepping Stones to Using Data" workshop was held regionally across Arkansas. The first in a series of three workshops, it is designed to help teachers and administrators understand and interpret MAP data reports for the purpose of improving student learning. Understanding adaptive data is essential for districts to be able to gauge the effectiveness of programs. With this understanding, educators can make better informed decisions related to school and classroom improvement.

The second workshop was held in regional hubs in December and focused on the development of skills

related to the interpretation of MAP data and the use of effective instruction practices. Topics included differentiated instruction, data-informed lesson planning, and other strategies to support the instructional needs of all students. In all, over 300 educators from MAP partner districts participated in these workshops. Workshops scheduled for February and May 2012 will focus on analyzing student growth data over time and setting growth goals based on MAP data collected throughout the school year.

Beth Stewart, Assistant Superintendent at South Conway County School District summed up how NWEA and MAP data have made a difference in the ways in which educators in her district view teaching and learning.

"NWEA and the MAP tests have assisted us in changing the way we approach student learning. As educators, we tend to focus on advancing students that are not meeting minimum expectations. Due to participating in MAP testing, which is so data rich, we have been able to not only meet the needs of struggling students but further advance students at the higher end of the spectrum. In addition, wait time for results allows us to provide appropriate interventions as well as enrichments for every student. NWEA trainers and staff members have provided specific point-in-time support for any questions that might arise, while continuing to support and train teachers. South Conway School District is grateful to APSRC and the Walton Foundation for making this opportunity available for not only students in our district but throughout the state." ■

# Congratulations!

On November 4, the National Center for Educational Achievement (NCEA), a department of ACT, Inc., released its 2011 NCEA Higher Performing Schools List for Arkansas. The list identifies those elementary, middle, and high schools in Arkansas that have consistently outperformed their peers with similar student populations over a three year period. The National Center for Educational Achievement's annual list recognizes

Arkansas public schools that are most successful at preparing students for college and careers.

"The list of Higher Performing Schools is a valuable tool for any district that wants to evaluate areas of performance that might need strengthening. It's also a great way to compare your school or your district to other schools of similar demographics in the state," says Angela Hall Watkins, Assistant Vice President and Managing Director of NCEA.

NCEA began identifying Higher Performing Schools in 1998 and continues to annually release these lists as well as College and Career Readiness Charts for every public school in Arkansas.

## APSRC would like to congratulate the following schools and districts:

Academy of Service and Tech	Vilonia	Marshall Elementary School	Searcy
Amanda Gist Elementary	Cotter	Marshall High School	Searcy
Atkins Middle School	Atkins	McNair Middle School	Fayetteville
Benton High School	Benton	Mena High School	Mena
Bentonville High School	Bentonville	Midland Elementary School	Midland
Bragg Elementary	West Memphis	Monticello Middle School	Monticello
Cherokee Elementary School	Highland	Morrilton Elementary School	South Conway
Concord High School	Concord		County
DeQueen Elementary School	DeQueen	Mount Pleasant Elementary School	Melbourne
Eudora Elementary School	Lakeside	Mountain View Elementary School	Mountain View
Faulk Elementary School	West Memphis	Mountain View Middle School	Mountain View
Fouke Elementary School	Fouke	Mountain Home High Career	Mountain Home
Gentry Middle School	Gentry	Murfreesboro Elementary School	South Pike
Greenbrier Eastside Elementary	Greenbrier		County
Greenbrier Westside Elementary	Greenbrier	Ola Elementary School	Two Rivers
Harrisburg Elementary School	Harrisburg	Perrin Elementary School	Benton
Hector Elementary School	Hector	Pocahontas Upper Elementary	Pocahontas
Hunt Elementary School	Springdale	Prescott Elementary School	Prescott
John Tyson Elementary School	Springdale	Richland Elementary School	West Memphis
Kensett Elementary School	Riverview	Ruth Barker Middle School	Bentonville
KIPP Delta College Prep School	KIPP Delta	S.C. Tucker Elementary School	Danville
KIPP Delta Collegiate High School	KIPP Delta	Sidney Deener Elementary School	Searcy
Lake Hamilton Elementary School	Lake Hamilton	Star City Middle School	Star City
Lake Hamilton Middle School	Lake Hamilton	Taylor High School	Emerson-Taylor
Leslie Elementary School	Searcy	Weaver Elementary School	West Memphis
Lincoln Junior High School	Bentonville	West Junior High School	West Memphis
LISA Academy	LISA Academy	Wilson Intermediate School	Malvern
Malvern Junior High School	Malvern	Wonder Elementary School	West Memphis

# School Spotlight:



## *LISA Academy*

LISA Academy was established in 2004 and has a 100% graduation rate. LISA students consistently score above the state and national level on the ACT and the percentage of LISA students who meet the ACT College Readiness Benchmark is higher than the Arkansas state average. LISA has multiple student teams competing on the national level, including Science Quiz Bowl, Science Olympiad, Math Counts, and National History Day. In addition, LISA has had five student writers published in The ACTELA anthology, two students chosen as Editor's Choice Award winners, and a student who took 3rd place in the State Geography Bee.

### LISA Academy Selected as NCEA Higher Performing School

LISA Academy was selected as a 2011 NCEA Higher Performing School in the state of Arkansas. Higher Performing Schools are identified based on two measures: consistent improvement in student achievement from previous years (growth) and/or absolute student achievement using the schools Advanced Performance results on the 2009-2011 Augmented Benchmark Exams. APSRC Executive Director Scott Smith remarked, "This speaks about all of the hard work taking place by both the students and the faculty. Congratulations to LISA Academy on this honor."



*Photo/LISA Academy*

### LISA Opens New High School Building



The new LISA Academy High School building opened in a ribbon-cutting ceremony on October 25.

*Photo/APSRC*

LISA Academy held the Grand Opening of its new High School building on October 25, 2011 at 10:00 am. Governor Mike Beebe officially cut the ribbon to ceremonially open the building. Other local and federal officials also attended.

The state of the art High School building serves grades 8-12. The building contains three academic floors complete with two science labs, two computer labs, 17 classrooms and a new gymnasium. "We are very proud of the new building and the opportunities this facility will provide for our high school students. Our students and parents are very excited," said Superintendent Mr. Cuneyt Akdemir.

# Policy Update – Rural School and Community Trust

## Identifies Title I Inequities as a Major Factor in Reduced Funding for Rural Schools

The Rural School and Community Trust has been working for several months on targeting the inequities in Title I funding as a major policy issue impacting rural school districts. They have initiated a plan called the Formula Fairness Campaign, which is dedicated to eliminating Title I funding inequities. Currently a bipartisan bill, All Children are Equal (H.R. 2485) was introduced in Congress to accomplish this top priority. Please visit [www.formulafairness.com](http://www.formulafairness.com) to gain more information about this agenda.

Their work is defined with specific examples of the unfairness of Title I funding, including this passage from their website: “Why is the education of a disadvantaged child in a very poor rural community worth only half as much to the federal government as the education of a disadvantaged child in a very poor urban community?”

The federal government provides funding to local school districts to combat the negative effect of poverty on student achievement. It provides \$2,424 to the Philadelphia (PA) School District for each of the 33.6% of its students who are disadvantaged. It provides \$1,246 to the Philadelphia (MS) School District for each of the 41.3% of its students who are disadvantaged? Part of the answer is number weighting. Part of the answer is how much the state spends on education. None of the answer is acceptable. The purpose of this article is to share findings and to offer a suggestion on how you can be involved.

*Title I Inequities in Plain Language* Anthony Clark, a member of the North Carolina Rural Education Working Group, recently asked Secretary of Education Arne Duncan a tough question during his Rural Tour stop in Richmond County, North Carolina. Why, Mr. Clark wanted to know, did the small, rural Richmond County School District with a 32% poverty rate receive only \$1,209 per Title I student in 2008-09 while the Charlotte-Mecklenburg District, with only a 16% poverty rate, received \$1,398 per Title I student? Secretary Duncan didn’t have the answer, except to say that he understood that there are inequities in the Title I formula for rural schools and that they should be addressed when the No Child Left Behind Act is re-authorized.

### *Statewide Average Education Spending*

First, Title I funding varies from state to state based on the average amount each state spends per pupil in its public schools. This is supposed to account for state-to-state differences in the cost of providing schooling. What it really accounts for is state-to-state differences in wealth and in political commitment to education. That disadvantages high poverty rural schools in states that don’t spend much on education, schools like Richmond in states like North Carolina.

One-third of the students who attend the rural districts with the highest student poverty rates nationally are in the 12 lowest spending states. That spending difference explains

about half of the difference between the amounts per Title I pupil that Chicago receives and the amount the two North Carolina districts receive.

### *Number Weighting*

The second cause of Title I inequities are provisions in the formula that artificially inflate the count of students eligible for Title I funding in some districts. The purpose is to provide greater levels of per pupil funding in districts with heavy concentrations of poverty by “weighting” the student count, that is, by counting Title I kids in these districts more than once. The higher the percentage of students in poverty or the larger the sheer number of students in poverty (whichever provides greater benefit to the district), the more each student counts. A single student can count as many as four times.

What this means is that the higher the number of Title I students enrolled in a district, the more Title I money that district receives. The effect – apparently unintended – is to favor larger districts whether they have high poverty rates or not, and to disfavor smaller districts even if they have high poverty rates. Since the formula is used to calculate each district’s share of a fixed pot of Title I funding, any funding gain for one district comes at the expense of other districts.

How do our comparison districts fare under these weighting schemes? Richmond loses about \$11 per Title I student while Charlotte-Mecklenburg gains over \$122 per student, explaining most of the \$189

Continued from previous page

difference in Title I funding between these two North Carolina districts

### How Can You Become Involved?

First, check to see how your district is impacted. You can find the data on your District by visiting the Rural School and Community Trust web-page at: [http://www.formulafairness.com/state\\_tables](http://www.formulafairness.com/state_tables) selecting Arkansas and looking for your district in the chart. You can research more information by visiting the following site: [http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/02/bitter\\_pill.html](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/02/bitter_pill.html) which has a full research report on Title I funding inequities and possible solutions. In addition, you can sign the Formula Fairness petition. Visit [http://org2.democracyinaction.org/o/6316/p/dia/action/public/?action\\_KEY=1985](http://org2.democracyinaction.org/o/6316/p/dia/action/public/?action_KEY=1985) to see the signatures

from Arkansas. With a lot of small districts and a significant amount of poverty, Arkansas is, unfortunately, a major victim of the Title I formula abuses.

### The Rural 900

The Rural School and Community Trust has identified the 900 rural and small town school districts with the highest student poverty rate (900 because that is about 10% of all rural and small town districts). They enroll almost 1.3 million students. The Census Bureau estimates that more than 37 percent of them live in poverty, higher than the estimated poverty rate for Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles, Houston, Baltimore, and most other urban districts.

There is no racial majority among

these rural and small town students – 28 percent are African American, 23 percent Hispanic, 8 percent Native American, and 40% white. Over 70 percent qualify by reason of family income for federally subsidized meals at school. Of these 900 highest poverty rural districts, 797 lose money to number weighting. The other 103 break even. Together, they lose \$54.5 million. Visit [http://www.formulafairness.com/rural900\\_Arkansas](http://www.formulafairness.com/rural900_Arkansas) to view a map of the Rural 900 broken down into regions. Arkansas is represented in three of the regions – Delta, Piney Woods and the Ozarks. ■

## 2011 OEP Awards

Annually, the Office for Education Policy highlights many high performing schools around the state in their Outstanding Educational Performance Awards. Released in segments this fall, the awards recognize the high performing schools in Arkansas on the Benchmark exam in math and literacy, and End-Of-Course (EOC) exams in Algebra, Geometry, Literacy (Grade 11), and Biology. We are proud that this year's OEP Awards featured a significant number of APSRC partner schools. The entire OEP report can be seen at: [http://www.uark.edu/ua/oep/AER/8\\_2\\_OEP\\_Awards.pdf](http://www.uark.edu/ua/oep/AER/8_2_OEP_Awards.pdf). Congratulations to all of these award-winning schools!

## 2011 National Blue Ribbon Schools

Two of our member schools were recently recognized as 2011 National Blue Ribbon Schools. A total of four schools from Arkansas were chosen for this prestigious award. This is an incredible honor, and we are very proud of each of these schools. This award is a testament to all of the hard work being done by the faculty, staff, and students on both of these campuses.

Congratulations to Forest Heights Elementary School in Harrison (Principal Ryan Oswalt) and Richland Elementary School in West Memphis (Principal Gwendolyn Looney)! Keep up the good work!

## Districts Honored for AP Results

Bryant, Greenbrier and Monticello have recently made the College Board's prestigious "AP Honor Roll" for their efforts on Advanced Placement tests. Each of these districts posted significant gains in AP access and student performance over the past three years.

"Participation in college-level AP courses can level the playing field for underserved students, give them the confidence needed to succeed in college, and raise standards and performance in key subjects like science and math," said College Board President Gaston Caperton.

Congratulations to these districts!

Is there something exciting happening in YOUR school or district?? We want to know about it!! Contact Katie Booher at [kbooher@apsrc.net](mailto:kbooher@apsrc.net) or (501) 492-4300.

# The Flipped Classroom

Brook Singletary



## What is it?

The flipped classroom model replaces the standard lecture-in-class, traditional format with an opportunity for students to explore concepts and review materials outside of the classroom to front-load content before class. The underlying premise is that students review information outside of class and, instead of simply receiving information from an instructor, come to class prepared to discuss content and delve deeper into the concepts.

## Flipped Classroom Model

In the flipped classroom, lecture is transmitted outside of class and the deep learning and assimilation is done during class when the teacher is most available.

### Outside of Class

- Audio or Video recorded lecture
- Guided Practice
- Online Discussion

### In Class

- Short Quiz to assure students have front-loaded the material
- Group Work
- Discussion
- Assimilation

## How to get started

Start by using what you have and/or what you already know.

- Do you or your school currently use any online collaboration or instructional tools?
- Do you use PowerPoint or Keynote?
- What are some other tools/resources you currently use that could help you flip your classroom?
- You don't have to completely change everything you do to incorporate these ideas

## Start Small

- Khan Academy
- TED
- iTunes U
- Create a few short videos to complement skills being taught in class
- Short reviews of items that may show up on exams
- Podcasts or vodcasts of a lecture, with discussion time in class
- Start a discussion or tell your students to answer a question in an online forum

## iPad Apps

If you're an iPad junkie (or even if you're just getting started) here are some apps that you can use to help you to create a flipped classroom:

### Educreations

Educreations turns your iPad into a recordable whiteboard. Creating a great video tutorial is as simple as touching, tapping and talking.

Explain a math formula... Create an animated lesson... Add commentary to your photos... Diagram a sports play... With voice recording, realistic digital ink, photo imports, and simple sharing through email, Facebook or Twitter, now you can broadcast your ideas from anywhere.

### ShowMe

Turn your iPad into your personal interactive whiteboard! ShowMe allows you to record voice-over whiteboard tutorials and share them online. It is a radically intuitive app that anyone will find extremely easy to use, regardless of age or background. To see examples of smart, entertaining, fun, and inspirational ShowMe's that other people have made, check out [ShowMe.com](http://ShowMe.com).

### iMovie

Shoot video on your device and it automatically appears in iMovie, ready for you to edit just the way you want. Simply tap to add video and photos, drag to trim clips, and slide to preview your project – you'll have a four-star short film to share in no time at all.

For more information about flipping your classroom or if you have examples of how you have flipped your classroom, please contact Brook Singletary at [bsingletary@apsrc.net](mailto:bsingletary@apsrc.net) or (501) 492-4300. ■



# Featured Apps

Harry Dickens

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## Educreations *Description*



Educreations turns your iPad into a recordable whiteboard. Creating a great video tutorial is as simple as touching, tapping and talking. Explain a math formula... Create an animated lesson... Add commentary to your photos... Diagram a sports play... With voice recording, realistic digital ink, photo imports, and simple sharing through email, Facebook or Twitter, now you can broadcast your ideas from anywhere.

### *Teach What You Know*

- Help students with homework by working through an example problem.
- Put your lessons on the web so students can watch them before and after class.
- Tutor someone from afar.
- Showcase your video tutorials on [educreations.com](http://educreations.com) and share your knowledge with the world.
- Add your commentary to famous works of art.
- Diagram football plays, John Madden style.

### *Features*

- Record and replay your voice, handwriting and drawings
- Add photos from the iPad camera, Photo Albums or Dropbox
- Animate images by dragging them around while recording
- Pause and resume recording anytime
- Create multiple whiteboard pages
- Undo and redo your actions
- Choose from 10 different ink colors
- Create a free account on [educreations.com](http://educreations.com) and choose who can view your lessons
- Share your lessons via email, Facebook and Twitter
- Embed your lessons on your blog or website

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## iTell a Story *Description*



'I tell a story' is the new iPhone/iPad application that allows users to narrate and record (with enhanced editing options) their stories with their own voice, in their own language. This will let children share and cherish the same experience of hearing stories from their elders even if they are away or busy. Moreover, narrating stories encourages the habit of reading books as they grow older. 'I Tell A Story' Is An iOS Application That Can Make Any Story Come To Life.

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## SketchPad Explorer



On the lookout for possible apps that can help you replace Smartboard activities? Take a look at this math app that has a lot of possibilities! App designers need to take a cue from this app as well, as there are so many possibilities for developing better apps for iPads based upon this model. Content can be added to this app! Here is the description straight from the website itself;

"Drag, manipulate and animate visual mathematics to develop and generalize your understanding of fundamental concepts across elementary math, geometry, algebra, trigonometry, calculus, and beyond. Based on the award-winning software The Geometer's Sketchpad®, the Sketchpad Explorer app allows you to interact with, and investigate, any document created in Sketchpad. With a simple, powerful multitouch interface, Sketchpad Explorer puts mathematical comprehension at your fingertips."

# David Coleman Inspires Arkansas Educators

Since the event with David Coleman on November 17, APSRC has received an overwhelming amount of positive and encouraging feedback about the presentation. We are so thankful that those who attended enjoyed their day and left feeling rejuvenated and motivated. Many participants have remarked that their understanding of the Common Core and what it will look like has deepened since this event. Another comment that we have consistently received is a request for more information and resources from David Coleman (in addition to requests to bring him back!).

APSRC is continuing to work with

David Coleman, Jason Zimba, and the entire office at Student Achievement Partners. As our partnership with them grows, we will continue to pass along new information to you.

If you are interested in sharing videos of David Coleman with your staff, here are a few that we have found to be the most beneficial:

•Engage New York: Common Core Video Series- <http://engageny.org/resource/common-core-video-series/>

•Hunt Institute: Common Core Implementation Video Series- <http://www.youtube.com/user/TheHuntInstitute#g/u>

•Education Next-- <http://education-next.org/what-were-watching-david-coleman-on-the-common-core-standards/>

•Demonstration of “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” and “Gettysburg Address” lesson plans- <http://vimeo.com/25206110>

If you have questions about any of these resources, or about the Common Core and our work with David Coleman and Student Achievement Partners, please contact Barbara Hunter Cox or Dr. Ellen Treadway at (501) 492-4300 or [bhuntercox@apsrc.net](mailto:bhuntercox@apsrc.net) or [etreadway@apsrc.net](mailto:etreadway@apsrc.net). ■

## ABC Initiative

On November 17, APSRC announced the new *Achieving by Changing* (ABC) Initiative and shared the opportunity for member schools to join the initiative designed to support public schools as they transition to the Common Core State Standards.

The focus of ABC is to change classroom practice and prepare teachers to meet the rigorous new Common Core State Standards. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is available on the APSRC website at <http://www.screencast.com/t/ubBslwxfH> which should provide any interested school the initial information about the initiative.



## Monticello Teacher Named Teacher of the Year

Kimberly Kaye Wilson, a visual art teacher at Monticello High School, was named Arkansas Teacher of the Year. Governor Mike Beebe and Commissioner Dr. Tom Kimbrell presented the award.

Wilson has 16 years of teaching 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. Her resume includes teaching positions in the Monticello and Hamburg school districts and at the University of Vermont.

Wilson was among four finalists announced in September for the

award. She was recommended to Dr. Kimbrell to receive the prestigious honor after a team from the Department of Education visited each of the finalists at their schools and observed them in their classrooms.

Kathy Smith of the Walton Family Foundation, which sponsors the award, presented Wilson with a check for \$15,000. Wilson will be the Arkansas nominee for the National Teacher of the Year award and spend the 2012-2013 school year working in-residence at the Department of Education as a special advisor.

Congratulations to Kim Wilson and Monticello School District!

# Common Core Talking Points

At the December 1st Common Core Guiding Coalition Meeting, the Arkansas Department of Education released the following Common Core State Standards “talking points.” Please use these to guide conversations with your various stakeholder groups.

## For Parents

*Why Common Core State Standards?*

- Standards are our compact with students and parents.
- Standards make students and parents partners in education.
- Standards promote a meeting of the minds. Standards ensure ALL students have access to quality.
- Can you imagine a world without standards for teaching and learning?

*Standards are the Centerpiece of a strong academic program: The Power of Common Standards*

- Create one set of clear and consistent expectations—high goals—for ALL students.
- Ensure that students who move from school to school receive the same high quality education.
- Keep students’ dreams alive.
- Help to ensure a skilled workforce and an enlightened citizenry.
- Offer economies of scale for the development of curriculum, assessments, and teacher preparation programs.

## For Community and Business Groups

1. Why do we need Common Core State Standards?

Today, we live in a world without borders. To maintain America’s competitive edge, we need all of our students to be well prepared and

ready to compete with not on their American peers, but with students from around the world. Developing a common core of standards that are internally benchmarked, aligned with work and post-secondary education expectations, and include of the higher-order skills that they need is critical to this process.

2.What are the Common Core State Standards?

These standards define the knowledge and skills in mathematics and in English language arts that students should have within their K-12 education careers so that they will graduate high schools and be able to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs. The standards are:

- aligned with college and work expectations;
- clear, understandable, and consistent;
- Rigorous in content and application of knowledge through higher order thinking skills;
- built on strengths and lessons of current state standards;
- informed by other top performing countries so that all students are prepared to succeed in our global economy and society; and
- based on evidence and grounded in research.

3.What is the link between the math standards and STEM education?

The college-and career-readiness standards documents sets an ambitious goal for all students that will prepare them for success in entry-level, credit-bearing academic courses in college in workforce training programs. At the same time, as a nation, we want to ensure that an

ever-greater number of students graduate from high school ready to pursue STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) in college and careers. To meet this challenge, and to reflect the strong input on this subject received from the states that have adopted the CCSS, the K-12 standards will indicate what students who are interested in pursuing a STEM career must study while in high schools, while acknowledging that not all students need this materials for college readiness.

4.Has career readiness been a major part of the standards work so far? Has the career and technical education (CTE) community been involved?

Research and evidence on what is needed for success in careers has been a part of the standards development work. For this initiative, careers are defined as those in the top two tiers of career classifications identified by the U.S. Department of Labor. These careers provide sufficient wages and the opportunity for growth. The CTE community has provided feedback on the standards, and CTE organizations are supportive of the initiative, including the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE), which is an endorsing partner of the initiative.

5.Do the standards dictate certain approaches and curricula?

No. The standards define what to teach, not how or with what materials. The Common Core State Standards will not favor or prescribe any particular approach or course that students must take. The standards will articulate skills that students have to success in college and workforce training programs. The

# Common Core Talking Points

standards are designed to be cross-curricular and allow for courses that appeal to different students' needs and interests while helping them gain the requisite ELA and math skills.

6. How is the higher education community engaged in the initiative?

The U.S. Department of Higher Education Executive Officers have been engaged in the initiative through their role in PARCC's advisory group. Many individuals representing higher education participated in standards development.

## For Educators

I. The Common Core State Standards

- Our new standards will provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn so that teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them.

- Consistent standards will provide appropriate academic benchmarks for all students, regardless of where they live and allow states to more effectively help all students succeed.

- With students, parents, and teachers all on the same page, working together toward shared goals, we can ensure that students make progress each year and graduate from school prepared to succeed and building a strong future for themselves, our communities, and the nation.

- These new standards are designed to be relevant in the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in both college and career.

- When American students have the skills and knowledge needed in today's job market, our communities will be strong and competitive in the global economy.

- The standards incorporate the best

and highest of the previous U.S. state standards and are internally benchmarked to the top performing nations around the world.

- The best understanding of what works in education comes from experience. That's why the standards were developed by teachers, principals, parents, and education experts, not politicians in Washington.

- The best understanding of what works in the classroom comes from the teachers who are in them, which is why the standards allow each teacher to figure out what works best for his or her students.

II. The Development Process

- The Common Core State Standards Initiative was a state-led effort to establish consistent and clear education standards for ELA and math so that students will be prepared for success in today's world.

- The initiative was launched by state leaders through their members in the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors' Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center).

- The process used to write the standards was designed to ensure that the standards were informed by:

- o The best standards from around the globe;
- o The experience of teachers, content experts, and states; and
- o Feedback from the general public.

The development process began by working with higher education, employers, and the best research available to determine what students need to be college and career ready. Standards were then developed for each grade level to prepare students to meet those expectations for graduation.

- CCSSO and the NGA Center received nearly 10,000 comments from the public on the standards, and experts worked to incorporate that feedback for the final release.

- Next, CCSSO and the NGA Center worked with experts to ensure that the K-12 standards are aligned with the college and career ready standards,

- Finally, a validation committee of experts reviewed the standards and determines that they will prepare students for college and career.

- Each state that chose to adopt the standards did so through its own unique process of determining educational standards.

III. The Common Core State Standards for Mathematics

- The standards stress not only procedural skills, but also conceptual understanding to make sure students are learning and absorbing the critical information that they need to succeed at higher levels—rather than the current practices by which many students learning enough to get by on the next test, but forget it shortly thereafter, only to review it again the following year.

- The K-5 standards provide students with a solid foundation in whole numbers, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, and decimals, which help young students build the foundation to successfully apply more demanding math concepts and procedures, and move into practical applications of those core math principles.

- In kindergarten, the standards follow successful international models and recommendations from the National Research Council's Early Math Panel report by focusing kindergarten work on the number core:

# Common Core Talking Points

learning whole numbers correspond to quantities, and learning how to put numbers together and take them apart, which are the building block of addition and subtraction.

- The K-5 standards build on the best state standards to provide detailed guidance to teachers on how to navigate their way through complex topics such as fractions, negative numbers, and geometry, and to do so by maintaining a continuous progression from grade to grade.

- Having built a strong K-5 foundation, students can do hands-on learning in geometry, algebra, and probability and statistics once they reach the middle school level. Students who have completed grade 7 and mastered its content and skills will be well-prepared for algebra in grade 8.

- The middle school standards are robust and provide coherent and rich preparation for high school math.

- The high school standards call on students to practice applying mathematical ways of thinking to real world issues and challenges; they prepare students to think and reason mathematically.

- The high school standards set a rigorous definition of college and career readiness by helping students to develop a depth of understanding and ability to apply math to novel situations, as college students and employees regularly do.

## IV. The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

- The ELA standards establish a staircase of increasing complexity in what students must be able to read so that all students are ready for the demands of college and career-level reading no later than the end of high school. The standards also require

the progressive development of reading comprehension so that students advancing through the grades are able to gain more from what they read.

- Through reading a diverse array of classic and contemporary literature, as well as challenging informational texts in a range of subjects, students are expected to build knowledge, gain insights, explore possibilities, and broaden their perspectives. Because the standards are building blocks for successful classrooms—but recognize that teachers, school districts, and states, need to decide on appropriate curriculum—they intentionally do not offer a required reading list. Instead, they offer numerous sample texts to help teachers prepare for the school year and to allow parents and students to know what to expect during the year.

- The standards mandate certain critical types of content for all students, including classic myths and stories from around the world, foundational U.S. documents, and seminal works of literature. The standards appropriately defer the many remaining decisions about what and how to teach to states, districts and schools.

### Writing

- The ability to write logical arguments based on substantive claims, sound reasoning, and relevant evidence is a cornerstone of the writing standards, with opinion writing, a basic form of argument, extending down into the earliest grades.

- Student research, both short-focused projects (such as those commonly required in the workplace) and longer term in-depth research, is emphasized throughout the standards, but most prominently in the writing strand, since a written

analysis with the presentation of findings is a critical skills for students to master.

- Annotated samples of student writing accompany the standards and help to establish adequate performance levels in writing arguments, informational/explanatory texts, and narratives in the various grades.

### Speaking and Listening

- The standards for speaking and listening require that students gain, evaluate, and present increasingly complex information, ideas, and evidence through listening and speaking, as well as through various media platforms.

- An important focus of the speaking and listening standards is academic discussion in one-on-one, small-group, and whole-class settings. Formal presentations are one important way that these standards are put into practice, but so is the more informal discussion that takes place as students collaborate to answer questions, build understanding, and solve problems.

### Language

- The standards expect that students will grow their vocabularies through a mix of conversations, direct instruction, and reading. The standard will help students determine word meanings, appreciate the nuances of words, and steadily expand their repertoire of words and phrases.

- The standards help to prepare students for real life experience in college and in 21st Century careers. The standards recognize that students must be able to use formal English in their writing and speaking but that they must also be able to make informed, skillful choices to express themselves through language.

# Common Core Talking Points

•Vocabulary and conventions are treated in their own strand, not because skills in these areas should be handled in isolation, but because their use extends across reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

## Media and Technology

•Just as media and technology are integrated in schools and life in the 21st Century, skills related to media use, both critical analysis and production of media, are integrated throughout the standards.

## Implementation

- The standards do not tell teachers how to run their classrooms or principals how to run schools. They clearly lay out what students should learn and allow schools and teachers to decide how to best to help students reach their academic goals.
- The Common Core State Standards have always been, and continue to be, a state-led effort.
- The standards are being implemented by each state individually.
- The Federal government did not play a role in the development of the standards, and it is not playing a role in implementation.

## Assessments, Curricula, and Instructional Materials

- Development of assessments, curricula, and instructional materials will be up to the state and local communities.
- The standards offer an unprecedented opportunity for states to work together to dramatically improve the quality, cost-effectiveness, and comparability of state assessments.
- States voluntarily formed two coalitions to develop assessments and curriculum resources aligned to the standards the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) and the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). Forty-four states and the District of Columbia are participating in at least one of these groups.
- The consortia are focused on developing richer, more authentic measures of student learning. The assessments will be focused on providing more precise, actionable information for teachers to use to improve learning.
- Education publishing companies and education organizations, including teachers' unions, are also leading

efforts to develop curricula and instructional materials aligned to the standards

- Working together will allow states the opportunity to share best thinking and practice, as well as pool resources in their efforts to ensure that etachers have the tools that they need to successfully implement these standards.
- Districts and schools will continue to choose the curriculum that meets their local needs.
- Districts and schools will have at their disposal many rich curriculum resources that may help them set their own curriculum. There will not be a single national curriculum.

## V. Professional Development

- In most schools, fully implementing the Common Core State Standards will require shifts in instructional strategies and practices.
- Educators, school leaders, and teacher preparation programs will benefit from thoughtful and embedded professional development opportunities to prepare for and navigate the transition to the standards.
- There are many groups actively engaged in this issue, and professional development has been an important part of the implementation. ■



[www.apsrc.net](http://www.apsrc.net)

**Visit our website daily for updates on CCSS, school finance, school technology, legislative information, legal information, and events!!**

# Pulaski County Public Charter Schools Intervene

On September 16, Pulaski County open-enrollment charter schools requested intervention in the Pulaski County Desegregation School Case to defend against the Motion to Enforce the 1989 Settlement Agreement filed on May 19, 2010, by the Little Rock School District. The LRSD Motion seeks to halt approval of new open-enrollment public charter schools in Pulaski County or increases in enrollment of existing ones, to amend the charter contract between the state and each of the Pulaski County open-enrollment public charter schools, and to provide additional funding to LRSD under the 1989 Settlement Agreement for

students enrolled in open-enrollment charter schools.

The charter schools assert that they are not parties to the 1989 Settlement Agreement or subject to enforcement of the 1989 Settlement Agreement. They also assert that their charter contract rights are protected by state and federal law and LRSD cannot interfere with those contracts, that the race-based student assignment provisions used under the 1989 Settlement Agreement are unconstitutional, and that the 1989 Settlement Agreement should be terminated. In addition, the charter schools argue that freedom of choice in public education is

the best way to improve the quality of public education for all.

Open-enrollment public charter schools in Pulaski County have begun to bring families back to public education from private schools, home schools, and neighboring counties, the charter schools state in their pleading, adding, "The Court of Appeals recognized in 1985 the strategic use of voluntary educational choice as a means to enhance public education for all citizens in Pulaski County." ■

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## *ESEA Waiver Process*

The latest update from the U.S. Department of Education reports that so far, 11 states have submitted official requests for waivers. Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Tennessee all filed requests based on locally-designed plans to implement college- and career- ready standards, develop rigorous accountability systems that include a focus on low-performing schools and schools with persistent achievement gaps, and create better systems for developing, supporting, and evaluating teachers and principals. The 11 waiver requests are posted online, along with the names of the peer reviewers who met to review them.

Seven weeks ago, President Barack Obama announced a plan to offer greater flexibility from key provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in exchange for a firm commitment to reforms that boost student achievement.

Since President Obama made this announcement, 39 states, plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico have signaled their intent to seek flexibility from No Child Left Behind. The next deadline for requests is February 21, 2012. States can also make requests later in the spring. To learn more about ESEA Flexibility and to view States' requests, visit <http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility>.

To learn more where Arkansas stands in the waiver process, you may view the powerpoint from the regional meetings that ADE held about the process at:

<http://www.arkansased.org/about/pdf/AR-Flexibility-Discussion-Revised-1a9jleh.pdf>.

In addition, ADE is requesting your feedback on the waiver process. We encourage each of you to complete this survey. To complete the survey, visit: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ESEASurvey>. ■

KIPP DELTA *hosts*

# PROMISES OF A NEW DAY



**SAVE THE  
DATE**

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A conference to share **best practices and ideas** to **uplift and celebrate** student achievement.

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leadership sessions, teaching  
& learning workshops

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER:**  
Randy Zook, President &  
CEO, Arkansas State  
Chamber of Commerce

Conference to be held at the  
North Little Rock Hilton Garden Inn

**GET DIRECTIONS** ►

[www.kippdelta.org](http://www.kippdelta.org)



# 2012 Legislative Session

The Legislative fiscal session will begin at noon on February 13.

Because it is a fiscal session, the only bills that may be introduced are appropriation bills, or budget-related bills. If any member of Legislature wishes to introduce a non-appropriation bill, they must do so on the first day of the session. The agenda for this fiscal session is expected to include mostly budget bills to fund the operations of state agencies.

Prefiling for Appropriation Bills and Concurrent Resolutions for Non Appropriation Bills will begin on January 9.

Joint Budget Committee Budget Hearings will begin on January 17.

The first day of the fiscal session also marks the deadline for filing Concurrent Resolutions for non appropriation bills (2/3) vote required.

February 27 marks the deadline for filing appropriation bills (2/3 vote to extend).

March 13 is the 30th day of the session. This will be the end to the fiscal session, unless a 3/4 vote

passes to extend the session. In that case, the last possible day of the session is March 28, the 45th day of the session. There is no extension option available after March 28.

As a member of APSRC, you will receive legislative updates via email from Katie Booher. If you have questions about this process, or want to know whether or not you are on the legislative update contact list, please contact her at [kbooher@apsrc.net](mailto:kbooher@apsrc.net). ■

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## 2011 Charter Applications and SBE Hearings

This year, there were 37 Open-Enrollment Letters of Intent filed with the Arkansas Department of Education. Of those, only 7 applications for Open-Enrollment Charter Schools were filed.

The State Board of Education held Review Hearings for five of these applications at the State Board meeting held on November 14 and 15.

During the hearing for STRIVE, to be held in Marianna, the board moved to give the school's organizers some time to work with the Charter Review Council and come back to the board in January 2012.

The board moved unanimously to deny the application of KidSmart

Bilingual Education Academy, which was to be located in Little Rock.

Responsive Education Solutions, based in Lewisville, Texas, introduced a charter application for Premier High School of Texarkana to be located in Texarkana. The company's high schools serve a high percentage of students who have been unsuccessful in traditional schools by keeping the student-teacher ratio low. Charles Cook, Chief Executive Officer of Responsive Education Solutions, said that he was initially approached by a pastor in Texarkana who was interested in providing educational options to students. The motion to approve this application failed four to three in a roll call vote.

The board moved unanimously to deny the application of The Diploma School of Jonesboro to be located in Jonesboro.

The board also moved unanimously to deny the application of The Diploma School of West Memphis to be located in West Memphis.

Both The Diploma School of Jonesboro and that of West Memphis was to be sponsored by Ms. Sally Wilson and Osceola Communication, Business and Arts, Inc.

The hearing for STRIVE, the only remaining application, will be held at the January Board Meeting on January 9, 2012. ■

# Financial Reminders

*Bobbie Davis  
Doug Brown  
Patsy Hammond  
Gary Parish*

One of the roles of APSRC is to assist districts and charters in improving their financial management practices. With that in mind, districts and charters are reminded that expenditures from state categorical funds and federal funds are being closely monitored by legislative audit to ensure that the approved ACSIP budgets entered into APSCN and the total expenditures in those programs are reconciled. This audit finding has occurred in ARRA funds, Special Education funds, and Title I funds when the variance in expenditures exceeded more than 10% in the function and/or account codes or in instances where the expenditure was never even included in the budget.

These expenditures may be allowable and proper for that program but

when the total expenditures exceed the amount budgeted in APSCN by more than the 10% variance, this results in an audit finding.

The ACSIP plan is the approved, required federal application. Any expenditures in Title I must first be included in the ACSIP Plan. Then expenditures in APSCN for that Title I program must reconcile to the ACSIP Plan. Categorical state funds must be budgeted in ACSIP and that budget must be entered and expended in APSCN per the ACSIP Plan. If not, this results in an audit finding.

This audit concern translates to a requirement that districts must monitor their expenditures carefully as they move toward closing out the school year.

Districts must make sure that the detailed expenditures budgeted in APSCN have not been exceeded by more than 10%. If the district has exceeded the APSCN detailed budget by more than 10% per function and/or account code, an audit finding may result. The APSCN report which can identify this problem is the Detailed Expenditure Status Report.

If you have any questions, please contact Doug Brown at APSRC at [dbrown@apsrc.net](mailto:dbrown@apsrc.net) or (501) 492-4300. ■



The staff at APSRC would like to thank you for a successful 2011. We are looking forward to working with you in 2012.

As always, please let us know if there is anything we can do to help you!