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April 2010 Issue 4

Welcome to Oklahoma A+ Schools ... Oklahoma's only research-based, whole school reform model with creativity in its mission.

US EDUCATION SECRETARY ARNE DUNCAN GIVES OKLAHOMA A+ SCHOOLS HIGH PRAISE ... At last week's Arts Education Partnership Forum, U.S. Department of Education Secretary Arne Duncan lauded **Oklahoma A+ Schools** as an example of a model that is doing things right! His speech was an emphatic affirmation of his support and the continued support of his agency for the right of every student to have a complete education that includes the arts. Click to read speech.

OK A+ PRINCIPAL MONTIE KOEHN RECEIVES 2010-2011 OKLAHOMA ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR / NATIONAL DISTINGUISHED PRINCIPAL AWARD ... Montie Koehn, Principal of Sequoyah Elementary School, Oklahoma City Public Schools, was named Oklahoma Administrator of the Year by The Oklahoma Association of Elementary School Principals. Nancy Turlington, Principal of Freedom Elementary, Sapulpa Public Schools, was also selected as one of the three finalists! Congratulations principals!

A+ Program Director, Rosalynn Wade, visits with Mitzi Winter, Jackson Elementary Principal, Pauls Valley

NEW A+ TOOL NOW AVAILABLE ... Principals, if you haven't received the NEW **OK A+ Principal Notebook** that was distributed at the Spring Mini-Institute, call 405-974-3779.

SAVE THESE DATES:

- **May 12 - Oklahoma A+ Schools Celebration at the State Capitol**
- **August 21 - Oklahoma A+ Statewide Conference!**

Quick Links

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LESSON

Garfield Elementary, in Ponca City, learned that **Making 3-Dimensional Shapes Is Fun!!** Click to find out how.

All Around A+

OK A+ TEACHER RECEIVES DAVINCI AWARD FOR CREATIVITY ... The prestigious DaVinci Institute honored Cecelia Cameron, second grade teacher at Freedom Elementary in Sapulpa, for her commitment to creativity and academics. Ms. Cameron was honored at the annual DaVinci awards banquet on March 26 at the Oklahoma History Center.

OK A+ SCHOOL, MILLWOOD ARTS ACADEMY, RECOGNIZED BY THE OKLAHOMA CENTER FOR NONPROFITS ... Millwood Arts Academy will be recognized by the Oklahoma Center for Nonprofits, April 24, in Tulsa at the Southern Hills Country Club. From more than 18,000 nonprofits in the state, Millwood Arts Academy was one of 27 selected by a group of community leaders to receive a ONE award. The ONE award is a tremendous honor and tribute to the work of Millwood Arts Academy and its staff. Congratulations Millwood Arts Academy we are proud to have you in the A+ network!!

OK A+ NETWORK PRINCIPALS TO BE RECOGNIZED AT THE 2010 STATE SUPERINTENDENT AWARDS FOR ARTS EXCELLENCE ... Monroe Elementary and Central Fine Arts Academy principals will be recognized April 20 at the 2010 State Superintendent Awards for Arts Excellence. The evening will be spent honoring high school seniors and the Administrative Award Recipients. Congratulations Gracie Branch, Principal of Monroe Elementary School, Norman Public Schools, and Jenny Chambers, Principal of Central Fine Arts Academy, Sand Springs Public Schools.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE "LETTERS TO AND BRIEFINGS BY BEETHOVEN" WINNERS ... In this OK A+/Keeping Score contest, students wrote letters to, or briefings by, Beethoven. Entries were judged on creativity, with winners receiving certificates and both winners and their teachers receiving tickets to OKC Philharmonic or Tulsa Symphony concerts. Click to listen to the winning entries.

West Oklahoma Winners:Victoria, Sky Ranch Elementary, and Han, Cleveland Elementary, Oklahoma City. East Oklahoma Winners: Charley and Grace, both from Grimes Elementary in Tulsa.

Special thanks to all students who participated in this year's competition; you did a great job!

OK A+ SCHOOL, HARDING FINE ARTS ACADEMY, FEATURED ON KCSC RADIO ... The Harding Fine Arts Academy choral students were featured March 25 on KCSC Radio, 90.1. Thank you for sharing your beautiful voices with us!

Kid Links

Check out these amazing websites

New Link!!!
meetthegreens.org

ArtForSmallHands.com

artsonia.com

kidsciencechallenge.com

Educator Links

Morals Class Is Starting; Please Pass the Popcorn

Can the Right Kinds of Play Teach Self-Control?

What Makes a Great Teacher

Building a Better Teacher

Room for Debate: Do School Libraries Need Books?

School Adds Weeding to Reading and Writing

Experiential Learning

portrayed by A+ artists

Creative Classrooms

Dove Science Academy

By Alissa Crawford, in collaboration with Jill Slay

How are the A+ Essentials implemented in the secondary arena? Each A+ School creates its own response to this question, and the teachers at Dove Science Academy have started answering!Joining the network in 2008, Dove has implemented the A+ Essentials within each classroom. Jill Slay, A+ Coordinator for Dove Science Academy, says that "A+ has been an invaluable program for DSA. We have worked really hard to bring the A+ Essentials into our school as a way to reach our students. These students are from disadvantaged populations, but if you spoke to our kids, you would hear that they feel anything but disadvantaged with the education they are getting at Dove Science Academy."

Article continued ...

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Essential Evidence

Staying familiar with current education research, particularly in the fields of art education, teacher preparation, creativity, motivation, and education policy, among other relevant topics, is important to well-rounded continuous professional development. There exist many great resources and journals, but finding the time to comb through them for meaningful and relevant articles can be difficult. With access to a host of online databases through the University of Central Oklahoma, I can search for material of potential interest and make them available for you. I invite you to read a current article with me each month. To get started, I have linked an article from the *Arts Education Policy Review*, a journal that grapples with questions such as: what is the value of studying the arts? Are the arts worth studying in their own right? Or only because they might improve pupils' SAT scores? How are future arts educators being prepared? How do other nations teach the arts in their schools? According to its publisher, *Arts Education Policy Review* discusses major policy issues concerning K-12 education in the various arts in the United States and the rest of the world. Addressing education in music, visual arts, theatre, and dance, the journal presents a variety of views and emphasizes analytical exploration. Its goal is to "produce the most comprehensive and rigorous exchange of ideas available on arts education" (Heldref, 2010).

In the linked article, "Teaching Creatively and Teaching for Creativity," the author provides a brief review of generally accepted ideas about creativity, followed by examples of teachers teaching creatively and teaching their students to be more creative. Implications for teacher education and policy recommendations for education are discussed (Brinkman, 2010).

I hope you find this short discussion interesting!

Tyler Weldon
Operations Director

Get Connected

Oklahoma A+ Schools cultivates creativity across its network and wants to invite you to get active through the arts, education and your community.

Not in an OK A+ School but would like to learn more? Click here to find out how to join the OK A+ Schools network.

Click here for **April Community Happenings and Resources for Educators**

New Connections:

A+ SCHOOLS PERFORMING AT THE OKLAHOMA ARTS FESTIVAL BEING HELD APRIL 20 - 25 IN DOWNTOWN OKLAHOMA CITY ... Please attend and support our students!!!

- **Millwood Arts Academy, Wednesday, April 21, 1:20 - 2:00 pm**
- **Dove Science Academy, Wednesday, April 21, 2:00 - 3:00 pm**
- **Sequoyah Choir, Friday, April 23, 11 am - 12 pm**
- **Nichols Hills Choir, Friday, April 23, 4:00 - 5:00 pm**
- **Russell Babb Choir, Sunday, April 25, 3:00 - 4:00 pm**

CONCERT OF ACADEMY SINFONIA, May 1, 11am, at Saint Paul's Episcopal Cathedral, 127 NW 7th St., Downtown Oklahoma City. This year's program will include works ofFuare, Ravel, Vivaldi, Viotti and Sarasate and will introduce four solo violinists: Katherine Cadzow, Carlysta Tran, Nathaniel Parker and Timmy Davis. Two Pavanes, Concerto Grosso, Concerto for Two Violins, Violin Concerto and Gipsy Air.

NETWORK PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH

Oklahoma A+ Schools