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March 2009

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Welcome to Oklahoma A+ Schools ...

Oklahoma's only research-based, whole school reform model with creativity in its mission.

Spring fever has hit, and we are out and about in creative schools across the state. Throughout our network of early childhood, elementary and secondary schools in urban, rural and suburban communities, [OK A+ Fellows](#) have provided more than 30 professional development workshops and have scheduled many upcoming workshops for this spring.



Oklahoma A+ Schools has served more than 1,600 staff and 17,000 students in the 2008-2009 school year. We're excited to continue this network service with the addition of several schools, which are currently in the last phase of the application process. New OK A+ schools will be announced at the May 13th State Capitol Celebration. (More details to come about this, but check out our [OK A+ Web site](#) any time.)

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Creativity - Pass it on!

Rosalynn Wade

Oklahoma A+ Schools Program Director

Creative Classrooms

Throughout the OK A+ network, PK-12 teachers nurture creativity in every learner. In this Snapshot of Creativity, students explore Visual/Spatial and Verbal/Linguistic [multiple intelligences](#) through *Cave Paintings*.

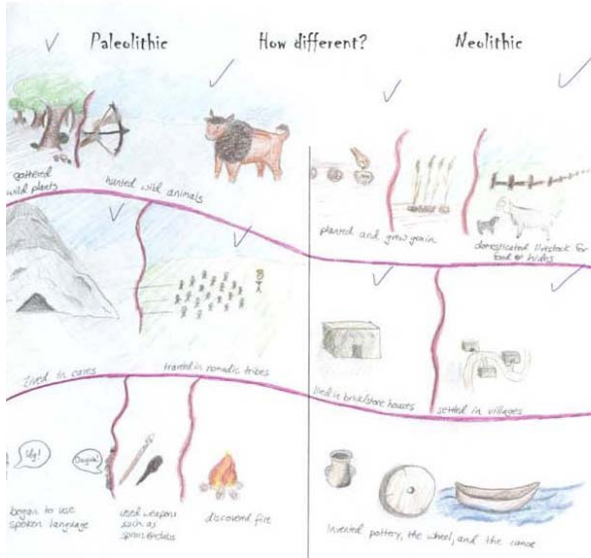
s m A+ r t s

Do a little dance,
Read a little book,
It's Family Night!



OK A+ school [Wilson](#) in Bartlesville, OK is opening its doors to its community for Family Literacy Night. The students are preparing readers theaters and puppets for this annual family night. Also, puppet artist Joann McMillan will share with students and families at the event.

The evening's literacy activities vary by grade level, but all have a connection to poetry, reader's theater, biographies, or autobiographies.



[Click here to view the lesson plan and details.](#) How could you adapt and adopt this for your classroom or practice? How could you use technology in your classroom with this lesson plan? See more examples of creativity across Oklahoma in an OK A+ Featured School [here](#).

Wilson began its Spring family night two years ago and rotates between literacy and math connections. The first year's title was "WE are family" and included making books. The next year's title was "WE got the beat" and included math games and take-home games for families.

Each year, a DJ, music and prizes add to the fun at family night. Food is provided by Wilson's community partner, BancFirst.

"It's like a giant family block party and parents start asking about it in the fall," said Wilson Elementary Principal Sandy Kent.

Kent says they structure the time wisely so everyone is involved and there is an emphasis on learning in the fun.

"It takes a lot of collaboration to get it all done, but it is certainly worth every bit of effort when we see the families enjoying learning together," said Kent.

All Around A+



How can you adapt, adopt or create an opportunity to invite families, students and local communities to engage together in learning and fun?

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

Oklahoma A+ educators from across the state met in Tulsa for the annual Spring Mini-Institute event.

"We are exploring new tools and resources for communication, effective leadership and learning. Not only is this event a touchstone for connecting as the Oklahoma network of creative schools, but also for sharing new information and practice," said OK A+ Program Director Rosalynn Wade.

"It's vitally important that we share our evidence of what makes OK A+ Schools so successful," added OK A+ Executive Director Jean Hendrickson.

New teachers in OK A+ Schools learned about the eight A+

Essentials™, networked with other PK-12 grade educators, and experienced basic "101" sessions in music, visual art, drama, creative movement and multiple intelligences.

Principals and Coordinators gathered for professional development and arts experiences at the Oklahoma Jazz Hall of Fame in downtown Tulsa, OK.



At the [Oklahoma Jazz Hall of Fame](#), CEO and Jazz musician Chuck Cissel gave a tour of the Jazz Hall. Artist in residence and spoken word artist [Deborah Hunter](#) shared her heartfelt poetry. Jazz pianist [Donald Ryan](#) introduced new ways to consider familiar tunes. These artists expressed the relevance of arts in their practice and personal journeys. [Click here for more information or ways to contact these artists.](#)



Coordinators exchanged best practices of the A+ Essentials™, learned ways to creatively engage all learners and addressed the need to continue relevance in their daily practice. Coordinators are teachers who serve as their school's representative to effectively communicate professional development needs to the OK A+ office.

Principals received a free copy of [The Element by Sir Ken Robinson](#). "One of the world's leading thinkers on creativity and innovation," Sir Ken is an active advocate of Oklahoma A+ Schools. Using [OK A+ Linwood Elementary](#) in Oklahoma City as an example of "Making the Grade," Sir Ken discusses how the philosophy and practices found in Oklahoma A+ Schools lead to the kinds of enriched school environments that help students and teachers discover their "Element."

"Nothing could be better for our children in schools than to be taught by people who are passionate about what they are doing and feel that all children deserve a rich, connected and relevant school experience," said Hendrickson.



As the Spring Mini-Institute drew to a close, principals and coordinators collaborated to discuss ways to take back these experiences to their schools' staff. Their ideas spanned everything from poetry to online tools and theatre to visual art.

"This experience was relevant to my practice because it helped me refocus on the importance of the whole child," said an OK A+ Principal.

OK A+ provides Professional Development to 52 A+ schools throughout the year. If you are affiliated with an OK A+ School, [click here for a 2008-2009 A+ Calendar of Events](#).

Want to learn more about becoming an A+ School? [Click here for details](#).

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.



Whether you're in an OK A+ School, or want to experience OK A+ first-hand, The Arts Integration Workshop is for you! The Arts Integration Workshop will feature Movie Soundtrack Theatre, a creative and interactive approach to history, visual art and more. Back by popular demand, this workshop is available again on Saturday, March 28, 2009, 1:00-3:30 p.m. [Read more Arts Integration Workshop. Register today!](#)

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.

Check out [A+ Resources](#) for more links to arts, education and the community.

Community Happenings and Resources for Educators: Special Edition

This Month ...

Oklahoma City Philharmonic Youth Concerts

Book your school-day concert now

OKC, OK

[Read More OKC Phil Concerts](#)

Piano Masterworks From Metropolitan Library System

March 16, 2009, 7 p.m.

The Village Library, OKC, OK

[Read More Piano Masterworks](#)

Zydeco Music from Louisiana at Metropolitan Libraries

Various dates in March

Various Metropolitan Library locations in OK County

[Read More Zydeco](#)

Oklahoma Children's Theatre Presents ...

March 16-20: Spring Break Camps

(for students ages 5-12 years) Oklahoma City, OK

[Read More Oklahoma Children's Theatre](#)

2009 Spring Jazz Concert Series**March 22, 5:00 p.m. Jazz Hall Blues Inductee & vocalist Ray D. Rowe**

Oklahoma Jazz Hall of Fame, Tulsa, OK

[Read More Jazz Hall](#)**Writers From the Row - concerts and workshops with Nashville Recording Artists and hit songwriters originally from Oklahoma****March 26-28, 2009**

Rodeo Opry, OKC, OK

[Read More Rodeo Opry Workshop](#)**2009 Spring Jazz Concert Series****March 29, 5:00 p.m. Bruce Guthrie tribute to Chet Baker**

Oklahoma Jazz Hall of Fame, Tulsa, OK

[Read More Jazz Hall](#)**Eighth annual Respect Diversity Symbol Exhibit****March 23 - April 15, 2009**

Science Museum Oklahoma, OKC, OK

[Read More Respect Diversity](#)

Looking Ahead ...

Drawing For Dollars Contest for K-5 students and educators**April 3, 2009 DEADLINE**

Sponsored by the Oklahoma Council on Economic Education

[Read More Drawing for Dollars](#)**You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown****April 3-4, 2009, 7 p.m.**[Harding Fine Arts Academy, OKC, OK](#)**Kennedy Center's Theater for Young Audiences presents *The Phantom Toll Booth*****April 20-21, 2009**

Putnam City North High School, Oklahoma City, OK

Contact: [Carrie Leonard](#)[Read More Kennedy Center](#)**Moving Stories from the Page to the Stage: Professional Development workshop for K-12 Teachers****Saturday, June 20, 2009, 9 a.m.- 4 p.m.**

University of Central Oklahoma, Edmond, OK

Contact: Jamie Jacobson, UCO Director of Dance at (405) 974-5231 or jjacobson@uco.edu.[Read More Dance](#)**Save the Date: OK A+ Statewide Conference****Saturday, Sept. 12, 2009**

Moore-Norman Technology Center, OKC, OK

On-going ...

Junior Achievement of Greater OKC Book Now: Spring Classes Available

Junior Achievement is dedicated to educating students in grades K-12 about business, work readiness and financial literacy through experiential, hands-on programs.

Contact: Amy Serrata (405) 235.3399 or aserrata@jaokc.org

[Read More Junior Achievement](#)

The Opry Heritage Foundation of Oklahoma presents The Opry Heritage Concert Series Fieldtrips Now - May 2009

The Rodeo Opry, Oklahoma City, OK

Contact: [E-mail](#) or (405) 297-9773 Cindy Scarberry, Program Director and OK A+ Fellow

[Read More OK Heritage](#)

Philbrook Museum of Art Ongoing

Tulsa, OK

MyMuseum program for families and free second Saturdays

Contact: Cindy Williams, Museum Educator, (918) 749-7941 or

CWilliams@philbrook.org

[Read More Philbrook](#)

Untitled [ArtSpace] Educational Tours Ongoing

Oklahoma City, OK

Untitled [ArtSpace] would love to host your school group for an educational tour of our exhibit and printmaking studio! We never charge a fee for tours and they are a great way to educate students of all ages about art and the creative process. For more information or to schedule a tour, call (405) 815-9995

[Read More Untitled \[ArtSpace\]](#)

NETWORK PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH

Oklahoma A+ Schools

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