Abstract

The Oklahoma A+ Schools project is continuing to move forward in providing schools with relevant and important training towards systemic change. There are 14 schools that have completed their first year in the A+ network. A commitment was made to the inaugural schools that our support for them would be unwavering. New schools would be added only as the A+ staff and finances could assure quality. Therefore, in addition... Read More

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Oklahoma A+ Foundation
Executive Director’s Report
March 5, 2003

- Jefferson Elementary School A+ Family Night
- Jefferson Elementary School—Kathy Taber, principal, selected as the Oklahoma Association of Elementary School Principals “Principal of the Year” for Oklahoma
- Mark Twain—Jean Hendrickson selected as Medal of Excellence Administrator
- Sequoyah—Selected as Year Round School of Merit
- Garfield Academy, Ponca City—As of Feb. 2003 their school will be renovated. At the current time, the administration has chosen to divide the faculty and students among the other elementary schools in Ponca City.
- Major Rizwan Ali, Tinker Air Force Base—Meeting to discuss possible partnership with A+
- Feb. 14—Spoke to Deans of all Colleges and Departments of Education in Oklahoma regarding the Oklahoma A+ Schools project and its possible impact on colleges and university pre-service students
- McKinley Elementary in Norman—Presentation with Schools Attuned, Great Expectations. This school is deciding on a professional development process to follow
- Selection Committee for new Oklahoma A+ Schools
  New Schools: Oologah Elementary
  Britton Elementary in OKC
  Millwood Elementary
  Madison Elementary in Norman
  Lee Elementary in Pauls Valley
- Tri-State (Oklahoma, Arkansas, North Carolina) Network meeting in Arkansas
- Oklahoma A+ Staff meeting (each Monday morning at 10:00 a.m.). Meets to discuss philosophy of the A+ process, discuss and evaluate events and to make decisions and assignments for future events.
- Feb. 7-9—Training for 16 new Oklahoma A+ Faculty—Trainers were both North Carolina and Oklahoma A+ Fellows
- Recruitment of new Oklahoma A+ Faculty—Three meetings were held—Tulsa (5 attended), Lawton (3 attended), Norman (8 attended). Applications from these teachers are due no later than September 30, 2003.
- Oklahoma A+ Schools Principals’ Meeting—Agenda included role and commitment of principal in A+ School, finances, future projects, pre-conferences for Summer Institutes
- Gerry Howell, North Carolina Coordinator was in Oklahoma for three days. Rosalynn Wade and she worked extensively with Gerry, visited schools, and with Rosalynn, developed a tentative “Scope of Work” for the next three years. (Gerry has given a copy to Vincent Marron for his input)
- Frank Merrick— Asked Oklahoma A+ to apply in August 2003
- Cheryl Cartwright & Susan Franz, Sarkeys—Requested to withdraw the Oklahoma A+ request and resubmit in February 2004
- Sonic Corporation—Resubmit in May 2003
- Windgate Charitable Foundation—$250,000 matching grant was confirmed
- Rosalynn Wade continues to have job alike meetings that have become an opportunity for teachers to share information, lesson plans, successes, difficulties.
- Currently planning for Principals’/Coordinators’ Retreat, pre-conference meetings with principals, pre-institute meetings, recognition ceremony at State Capitol (May 5) and Summer Institutes
- National Art Education Partnership meeting
**OKLAHOMA A+ SCHOOLS**

**Calendar of Events**

### 2003

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**Notes**

- 3/4/03 Principals Dinner Meeting
- 3/28/03 Principals & Coordinators Retreat (Hilton)
- 4/8/03 Pre-Institute I (OSSM)
- 4/11/03 DaVinci Scholars Award Banquet (Regal Room)
- 4/11-4/13/03 Spring Fellows Retreat (Sheraton)
- 5/7/03 Pre-Institute II (OSSM)
- 6/8-6/13/03 Summer Institutes (OSSM)
- 6/15-6/20/03 Summer Institutes (OSSM)
- 6/22-6/25/03 Summer Institutes (OSSM)
- 7/6-7/9/03 Summer Institutes (OSSM)
- 9/19/03 Integrating the Arts Lecture, Camille Hardy, "Literacy Criticism"
- 2/20/04 Integrating the Arts Lecture, Jane Bonbright, "Dance Certification"
- 4/22/04 Integrating the Arts Lecture, David Elliott, "Music Matters"
The Oklahoma A+ Schools project is continuing to move forward in providing schools with relevant and important training towards systemic change. There are 14 schools that have completed their first year in the A+ network. A commitment was made to the inaugural schools that our support for them would be unwavering. New schools would be added only as the A+ staff and finances could assure quality. Therefore, in addition to the 14 initial schools, five new schools have been awarded placement and are beginning the process towards becoming an A+ School.

The following information provides details concerning school preparation, the building of infrastructure to assure appropriate and continued implementation, collaboration within Oklahoma schools and the tri-state network with Arkansas and North Carolina, program implementation and in-depth research.

School Preparation

Information packets related were sent to every elementary school and middle school inviting administrators and faculties to attend regional meetings to learn more about the A+ process.

Regional information meetings were held in five locations covering every major geographic area of Oklahoma. (Thirty-five schools were represented at these meetings.)

Applications to become an Oklahoma A+ School were accepted.

The A+ School Selection committee met to discuss and make recommendations for new Oklahoma A+ Schools. Five new schools were accepted.

Infra-structure

Oklahoma A+ Foundation convenes. This group of educators, community volunteers, state agency administrators, and funders meets monthly under the auspices of the Da Vinci Institute to provide direct guidance to the Oklahoma A+ staff.
Deans of all Colleges of Education meet with the Executive Director of Oklahoma A+ Schools to gain greater knowledge of the A+ School’s process and how it might relate to their colleges mission and goals.

The Da Vinci Institute, Oklahoma A+ Foundation, A+ School Selection Committee, Arkansas and North Carolina A+ staff, and individual schools continue to have a positive, significant impact on the development of the Oklahoma A+ Schools.

Relevant partnerships are continuing with the Oklahoma Arts Council, Oklahoma State Department of Education, Oklahoma Arts Institute, Business Circle for the Arts, foundations, corporations, school districts, and colleges and universities.

**Tri-State Collaboration**

Oklahoma, Arkansas, and North Carolina A+ Programs continue to have a close working relationship through extensive use of electronic communication, interstate visits, and telephone conversations. Leaders of each state’s A+ group met initially in Arkansas in January with subsequent meetings currently set on April 11 in Oklahoma. The Tri-State network has entered into a more formal working relationship with the development of a plan that governs the interaction among the states. A “Scope of Work” that encompasses the next two years has been developed with Oklahoma and North Carolina.

**Program Implementation**

Each of the 14 initial Oklahoma A+ Schools have been provided extensive professional development and support. Through February 2003, the following activities have occurred in support of each of these schools:

- **Mini-Institute** Continued Training for site principals, coordinators, and new teachers who were not able to attend the Summer Institute

- **Training Fellows** Fourteen new Oklahoma Fellows (mentor teachers) were provided with extensive training using the A+ process. This training occurred over a three day period of time.

- **Potential Fellows** Twenty potential Fellows were invited to a day long
informational meeting. These potential Fellows were recruited from teachers who are National Board Certified, Oklahoma Teachers of the Year, Medal of Excellence Winners, Milken Award winners, and/or recommendations from administrators and faculty.

- Recruiting Fellows

Regional meetings were held to continue the process of recruiting the outstanding teachers of Oklahoma to become Oklahoma A+ Fellows.

Over the next several weeks, the Oklahoma A+ staff will hold conferences with all of the returning Oklahoma A+ Schools to ascertain needs for the summer institutes. The Fellows from Oklahoma and North Carolina Fellows will work together to implement appropriate professional development for each school. Also, the Oklahoma and North Carolina staffs and Fellows will develop teams to work with the five new Oklahoma A+ Schools.

Research

The teams of researchers from the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University are spending a significant amount of time gathering information and observing changes that may be occurring in each Oklahoma A+ Schools. They meet once each month to share data, to develop appropriate strategies for gathering information, and to disaggregate data. By the end of June 2003 the researchers will have an interim, one year report on the Oklahoma A+ Schools project.
# OKLAHOMA A+ SCHOOLS GOALS

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<th>GOALS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Train Oklahoma A+ Fellows</td>
<td>Fourteen Oklahoma A+ Fellows attended training meetings facilitated by North Carolina A+ Fellows</td>
<td>Continue training process</td>
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<td>Oklahoma A+ Fellows prepare and present to other Attendees for critical response and improvement</td>
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<td>Recruit Potential A+ Faculty</td>
<td>Teachers and administrators who are Nationally Board Certified, Oklahoma Teachers of the Year, Medal of Excellence winners, Milken Award winners, and/or recommended by other faculty and administration were invited to and attended regional meetings to learn more about Oklahoma A+ Schools.</td>
<td>Review applications and select additional A+ Faculty</td>
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<td>Train Oklahoma A+ Faculty</td>
<td>Current Oklahoma A+ Faculty (pre-Fellow) committed to four days of training and observation. This training was facilitated by Oklahoma and North Carolina staff.</td>
<td>Oklahoma Faculty will continue the observation/training process for a full year before being considered for A+ Fellow status.</td>
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<td>Develop Oklahoma A+ Foundation for direct input into the development of Oklahoma A+ schools</td>
<td>Oklahoma A+ Foundation is developed. This group consists of educators, state agencies personnel, Da Vinci representatives, college and university administration, funders, and a foundation director.</td>
<td>Continue development of this board with regular meetings and informational reports and dialogue</td>
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<td>Develop two-year implementation plan</td>
<td>“Scope of Work” for the next two years has been developed</td>
<td>Monitor “Scope of Work” and adjust accordingly</td>
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<td>Support current 14 Oklahoma A+ Schools</td>
<td>Professional development, supplied by the Oklahoma A+ staff, has occurred on a regular basis in each of these schools. Additionally, principals, site coordinators, and selected faculty have received additional off-site training.</td>
<td>Develop appropriate professional development for Summer Institutes</td>
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<td>Build Oklahoma’s capacity through the tri-state A+ network</td>
<td>Through travel and communication, an excellent working and personal relationship has been developed among the staffs in Arkansas, Oklahoma and North Carolina.</td>
<td>Continue network meetings—April 11, 2003 in Oklahoma</td>
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<td>Research the changes that may occur to students, faculty and administrator during the A+ educational process</td>
<td>Researchers are documenting changes through analysis and comparison with base line data.</td>
<td>One year interim report due from researchers in June 2003. Continue use of methodological approach, collection, and reporting of findings.</td>
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