



# ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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LITTLE ROCK: Governor Mike Beebe today joined Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) officials and others to announce Arkansas's participation in an education initiative that allows Arkansas students to gain engineering experience and thus stimulate students' interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics education (STEM). This initiative compliments Arkansas's efforts to increase STEM education in the state.

The Real World Design Challenge is a partnership between the state of Arkansas, NASA, the U.S. Department of Energy, the Federal Aviation Administration and others. Through the agreement, eighty-five teachers in Arkansas schools and career centers will receive approximately \$1 million in computer-aided design software (CAD).

"While the State will do all it can to promote STEM education, it is the hands-on opportunities like this one that will truly inspire future scientists and engineers," Governor Beebe said. "The sense of accomplishment these students draw from the Real World Design Challenge will help them further understand what a full and comprehensive education can mean for their future careers."

In future years, school teams will be able to enter the Real World Design Challenge, according to Ralph K. Coppola, director of the Real World Design Challenge and director of Global Government & Strategic Education Programs with PTC. The challenge consists of schools establishing teams of three to seven students to respond to an engineering challenge, he explained at the news conference.

The Federal Aviation Administration and other national partners joined the initiative out of concern for the future work force of engineers in the United States, according to Teri A. Bruner, southwest regional administrator with the administration.

"We are very excited about this partnership and the opportunities it will offer students to engage in high-level problem solving situations," said Dr. Charity Smith, ADE assistant commissioner for accountability. "This is the kind of activity that brings relevance to math and science classrooms."

The list of participating teachers and their schools is attached.

***The Arkansas Department of Education strives to ensure that all children in the state have access to a quality education by providing educators, administrators and staff with leadership, resources and training.***