



Arkansas Department of Education

Johnny Key, Commissioner

Transforming Arkansas to lead the nation in student-focused education

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Governor Hutchinson Promotes Educator Commitment Signing Week

LITTLE ROCK — Gov. Asa Hutchinson continued the early celebration of Educator Commitment Signing Week today at a press conference and signing event at the Capitol.

Similar to athletic signing events, Educator Commitment Signing Week, which is from April 14 to 20, 2019, celebrates those who are committed to the teaching profession and education in Arkansas.

"In my life, I have found few things more rewarding or important than education," Hutchinson said. "Our students are our future, and our educators are a critical part of shaping that future. I am proud to celebrate a new generation that is committed to a career in the education profession."

In addition to the State Board of Education resolution signed at yesterday's meeting and Hutchinson's press conference today, the Arkansas Department of Education, colleges and universities, education service cooperatives, and high schools are coordinating and hosting more than 20 events around the state during this special week. New, veteran, and future teachers, as well as students, parents, and community members, are showing their support of education by signing a commitment to education certificate.

"It's an exciting time for education in Arkansas as educators, pre-service teachers, parents, students, policymakers, and community members come together to sign their commitment to education," said 2018 Arkansas Teacher of the Year Randi House. "This declaration of having the same vision of student-focused education to support the students of Arkansas is quite powerful."

Signing Week and Lecture Series

Educator Commitment Signing Week events represent one of many efforts by ADE's Teach Arkansas campaign to promote the teaching profession. The campaign's goals are to increase teacher recruitment and retention and encourage those who have left the profession to return.

To further promote the profession and signing week activities, ADE will host the fourth Teach Arkansas Lecture Series event April 15 in Pine Bluff. Marie Ferdinand-Harris, an Olympic gold medalist and former WNBA basketball player, will provide a motivational speech about the importance of teachers in shaping the futures of their students.

Prior to Ferdinand-Harris' presentation, an Educator Commitment Signing Event will be held at 5 p.m. at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff's Hathaway-Howard Fine Arts Center, 1200 N. University Drive, Pine Bluff, AR 71601. The first 200 educators will receive a free gift. Ferdinand-Harris' presentation will begin at 6:15 p.m. at the same location, followed by a question and answer session at 7:30 p.m. Educators who attend the evening lecture will be eligible to receive 1.5 hours of professional development credit. To sign up to attend, go to <http://bit.ly/TALectureFour>.

Ferdinand-Harris also will be available from 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. April 15 at the fine arts center to talk with the media.

To learn more about Educator Commitment Signing Week and to see a list of scheduled activities, visit <https://bit.ly/2D5jq1r>. Participants are encouraged to post photos or videos on social media during the week using #TeachArkansas and #ARSigningWeek2019.

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