



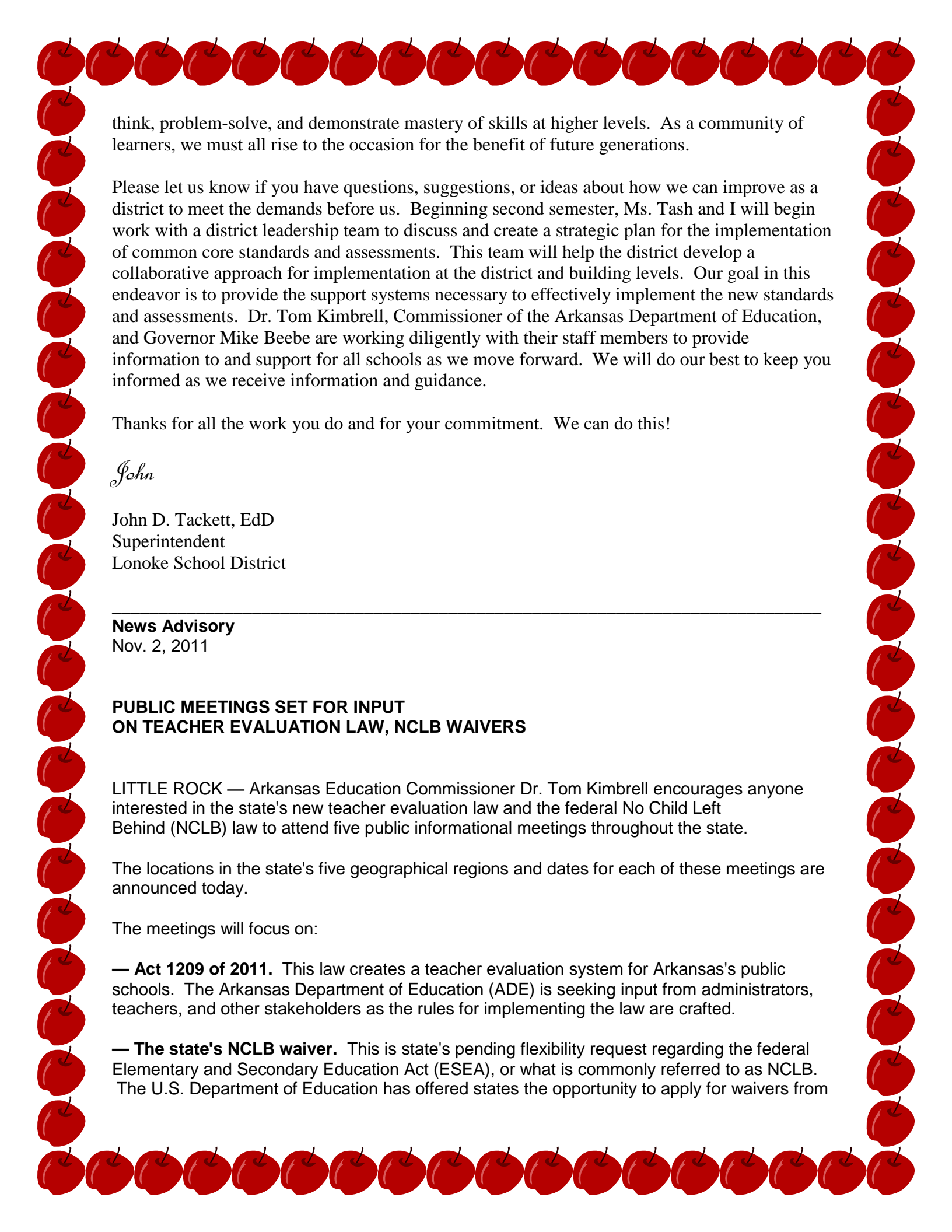
Superintendent's Message to Stakeholders

On behalf of the faculty, staff, and school board, I would like to express my sincere thanks for your work and support to help us build an environment for success for all students and to help us improve the quality and delivery of the programs and services we offer. We need your on-going assistance and support as we all work together to prepare our students for future challenges and competitive markets. To that end, I ask you to become involved in your schools through parent advisory groups, volunteer activities, partnerships, or other available stakeholder forums provided in each school. We have many wonderful challenges before us and need to work together for the benefit of the children to meet those challenges. Thank you for your commitment in that endeavor.

As you are aware, education in Arkansas is continually changing as a response to growing demands for improvement at national and international levels. In addition to the requirement for implementation of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and a common assessment system (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers or PARCC), we will soon see the development and implementation of a common set of rigorous science standards (see the ADE Brief below and visit the NGSS Web site at www.nextgenscience.org). It seems that everything we have heard over the past several years about the changing face of education is rapidly coming to fruition. It is imperative that we all stay abreast of changes on the horizon. You will find a link on our Web site identified as "Message from Commissioner Kimbrell and Governor Beebe." Please click on that link to see a DVD that explains the national standards and assessment system soon to be implemented.

On November 2, 2011, the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) announced dates and locations of informational meetings designed to gain input from and to inform the public about the new teacher evaluation system and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) waivers (see the News Advisory below). The emphasis will continue to be on raising student achievement. Leadership in your schools will continue to keep you apprised of future developments. Please visit the Arkansas Department of Education Web site at <http://arkansased.org/> to stay abreast of changes.

Our resolve to prepare Lonoke students for college and career readiness at national and international levels will ensure our district's place as a viable and competitive educational institution for future generations. Reflection about effective practice at the organizational level is becoming the standard. Many institutions of higher education are, by necessity, taking a closer look at their own practices as measured by student performance, graduation rates, and standards for accreditation (i.e. NCATE). In several cases, a growing number of Colleges are making concerted efforts to reduce passive learning experiences and to dramatically increase active learning experiences in which students are engaged in rigorous learning activities requiring real-world experiences, problem solving, critical thinking, and application of skill sets reflecting mastery of specific content knowledge as well as mastery of skills which can be generalized across disciplines. The Lonoke School District is committed to providing our students with rigorous learning experiences that will ensure college and career readiness. As the expectations for our professional practice have increased, we are asking you to support increased expectations for all students. As we approach the implementation of national standards as well as a national system to measure student mastery and performance, all students will be challenged to critically



think, problem-solve, and demonstrate mastery of skills at higher levels. As a community of learners, we must all rise to the occasion for the benefit of future generations.

Please let us know if you have questions, suggestions, or ideas about how we can improve as a district to meet the demands before us. Beginning second semester, Ms. Tash and I will begin work with a district leadership team to discuss and create a strategic plan for the implementation of common core standards and assessments. This team will help the district develop a collaborative approach for implementation at the district and building levels. Our goal in this endeavor is to provide the support systems necessary to effectively implement the new standards and assessments. Dr. Tom Kimbrell, Commissioner of the Arkansas Department of Education, and Governor Mike Beebe are working diligently with their staff members to provide information to and support for all schools as we move forward. We will do our best to keep you informed as we receive information and guidance.

Thanks for all the work you do and for your commitment. We can do this!

John

John D. Tackett, EdD
Superintendent
Lonoke School District

News Advisory
Nov. 2, 2011

**PUBLIC MEETINGS SET FOR INPUT
ON TEACHER EVALUATION LAW, NCLB WAIVERS**

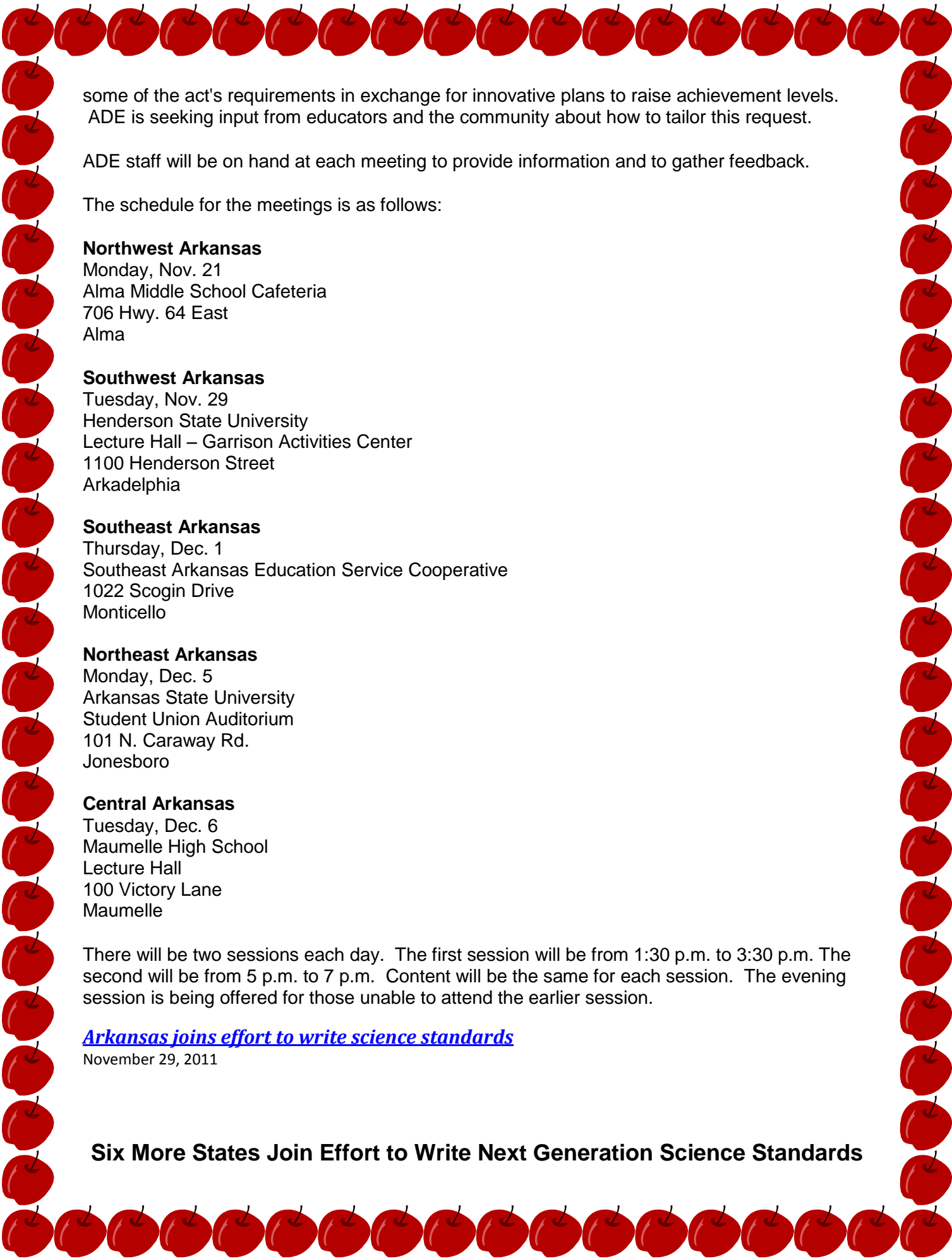
LITTLE ROCK — Arkansas Education Commissioner Dr. Tom Kimbrell encourages anyone interested in the state's new teacher evaluation law and the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law to attend five public informational meetings throughout the state.

The locations in the state's five geographical regions and dates for each of these meetings are announced today.

The meetings will focus on:

— **Act 1209 of 2011.** This law creates a teacher evaluation system for Arkansas's public schools. The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) is seeking input from administrators, teachers, and other stakeholders as the rules for implementing the law are crafted.

— **The state's NCLB waiver.** This is state's pending flexibility request regarding the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), or what is commonly referred to as NCLB. The U.S. Department of Education has offered states the opportunity to apply for waivers from



some of the act's requirements in exchange for innovative plans to raise achievement levels. ADE is seeking input from educators and the community about how to tailor this request.

ADE staff will be on hand at each meeting to provide information and to gather feedback.

The schedule for the meetings is as follows:

Northwest Arkansas

Monday, Nov. 21
Alma Middle School Cafeteria
706 Hwy. 64 East
Alma

Southwest Arkansas

Tuesday, Nov. 29
Henderson State University
Lecture Hall – Garrison Activities Center
1100 Henderson Street
Arkadelphia

Southeast Arkansas

Thursday, Dec. 1
Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative
1022 Scogin Drive
Monticello

Northeast Arkansas

Monday, Dec. 5
Arkansas State University
Student Union Auditorium
101 N. Caraway Rd.
Jonesboro

Central Arkansas

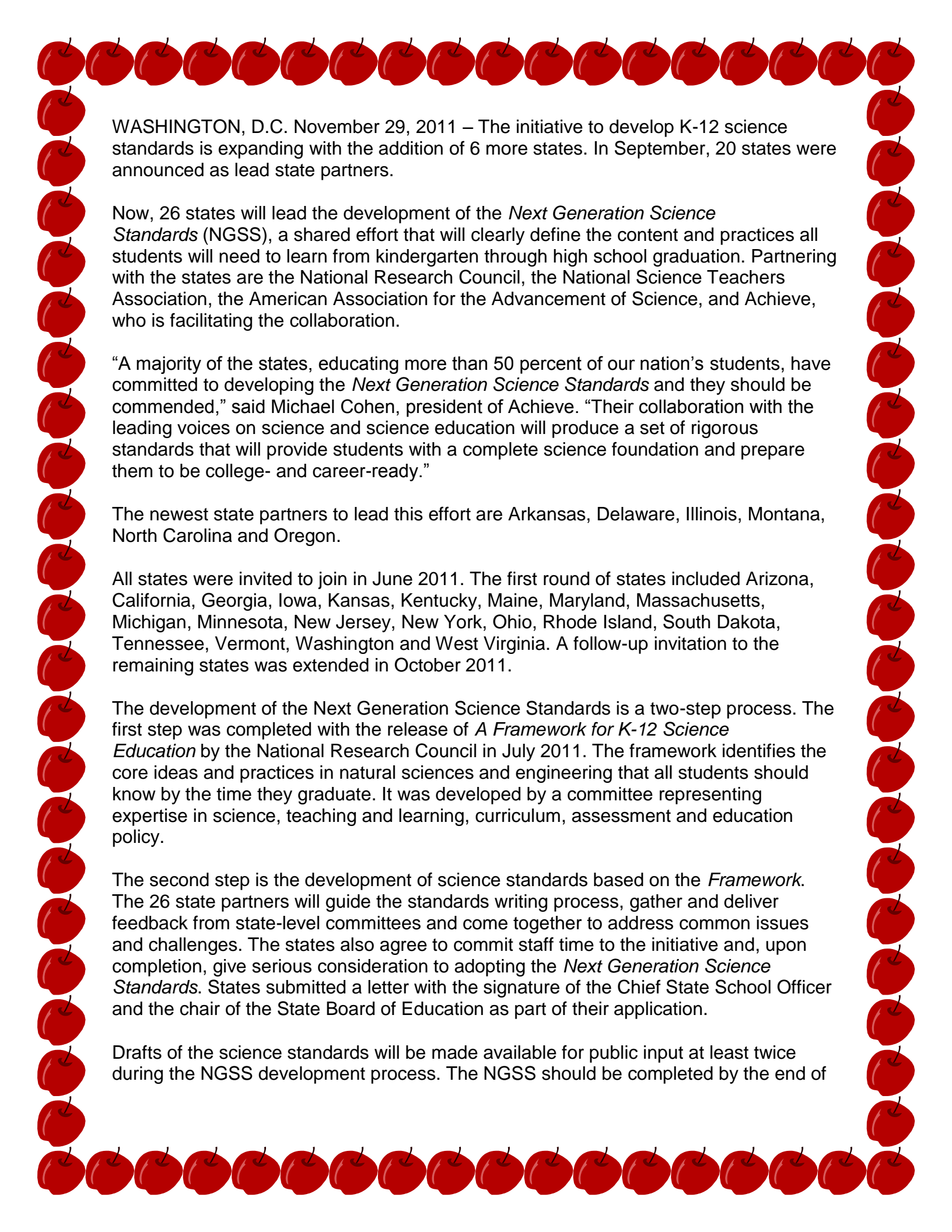
Tuesday, Dec. 6
Maumelle High School
Lecture Hall
100 Victory Lane
Maumelle

There will be two sessions each day. The first session will be from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. The second will be from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Content will be the same for each session. The evening session is being offered for those unable to attend the earlier session.

[*Arkansas joins effort to write science standards*](#)

November 29, 2011

Six More States Join Effort to Write Next Generation Science Standards



WASHINGTON, D.C. November 29, 2011 – The initiative to develop K-12 science standards is expanding with the addition of 6 more states. In September, 20 states were announced as lead state partners.

Now, 26 states will lead the development of the *Next Generation Science Standards* (NGSS), a shared effort that will clearly define the content and practices all students will need to learn from kindergarten through high school graduation. Partnering with the states are the National Research Council, the National Science Teachers Association, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and Achieve, who is facilitating the collaboration.

“A majority of the states, educating more than 50 percent of our nation’s students, have committed to developing the *Next Generation Science Standards* and they should be commended,” said Michael Cohen, president of Achieve. “Their collaboration with the leading voices on science and science education will produce a set of rigorous standards that will provide students with a complete science foundation and prepare them to be college- and career-ready.”

The newest state partners to lead this effort are Arkansas, Delaware, Illinois, Montana, North Carolina and Oregon.

All states were invited to join in June 2011. The first round of states included Arizona, California, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, Washington and West Virginia. A follow-up invitation to the remaining states was extended in October 2011.

The development of the Next Generation Science Standards is a two-step process. The first step was completed with the release of *A Framework for K-12 Science Education* by the National Research Council in July 2011. The framework identifies the core ideas and practices in natural sciences and engineering that all students should know by the time they graduate. It was developed by a committee representing expertise in science, teaching and learning, curriculum, assessment and education policy.

The second step is the development of science standards based on the *Framework*. The 26 state partners will guide the standards writing process, gather and deliver feedback from state-level committees and come together to address common issues and challenges. The states also agree to commit staff time to the initiative and, upon completion, give serious consideration to adopting the *Next Generation Science Standards*. States submitted a letter with the signature of the Chief State School Officer and the chair of the State Board of Education as part of their application.

Drafts of the science standards will be made available for public input at least twice during the NGSS development process. The NGSS should be completed by the end of



2012.

American students continue to lag internationally in science education, making them less competitive for the jobs of the present and the future. A recent U.S. Department of Commerce study shows that over the past 10 years, growth in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) jobs was three times greater than that of non-STEM jobs. The report also shows that STEM jobs are expected to continue to grow at a faster rate than other jobs in the coming decade.

“We must provide our students a strong science education so they have the necessary knowledge to compete in a global economy,” said Stephen Pruitt, Vice President of Content, Research and Development at Achieve, who is coordinating the NGSS effort. “A strong understanding of science is crucial not only to our success as a nation, but to living in the 21st century.”

For more information, visit the Next Generation Science Standards website at www.nextgenscience.org.

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ABOUT ACHIEVE

Created in 1996 by the nation’s governors and corporate leaders, Achieve is an independent, bipartisan, nonprofit education reform organization based in Washington D.C. that helps states raise academic standards and graduation requirements, improve assessments, and strengthen accountability. Achieve is leading the effort to make college and career readiness a national priority so that the transition from high school graduation to postsecondary education and careers is seamless. In 2005 Achieve launched the American Diploma Project Network. Starting with 13 original states, the Network has now grown to include 35 states educating nearly 85 percent of all U.S. public school students. Through the ADP Network, governors, state education officials, postsecondary leaders and business executives work together to improve postsecondary preparation by aligning high school standards, assessments, graduation requirements and accountability systems with the demands of college and careers. In addition, Achieve partnered with NGA and CCSSO on the Common Core State Standards Initiative; was selected by the states to manage the PARCC assessment consortia creating tests in math and English aligned to the CCSS and is managing the development of the Next Generation Science Standards. For more information about the work of Achieve, visit www.achieve.org.