

PRESS RELEASE



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Arkansas PBS, Arkansas Department of Education join forces for summer learning program to reinforce, retain academic learning targets for students challenged during pandemic

Six-week series 'Rise and Shine' to combat K-5 summer learning loss with teacher-led lessons, PBS KIDS programming, statewide partners

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (June 14, 2021) - Arkansas PBS and the Arkansas Department of Education have partnered to create "Rise and Shine," an extensive educational program designed to boost summer learning and help K-5 students challenged due to the pandemic retain academic learning targets. The six-week program – featuring lessons led by Arkansas teachers to reinforce learning in key subjects including literacy, math, science and social studies – will air on Arkansas PBS weekdays beginning Tuesday, July 6, from 8 to 11:30 a.m.

"We are thrilled to collaborate with the Arkansas Department of Education and partners across the state to bring an essential summer learning experience to our K-5 students," Arkansas PBS Education Director Sajni Kumpuris said. "Our organization is committed to enriching and empowering Arkansans through relevant, daily content, and this partnership allows us to bring more value to education and provide a new avenue for teachers to connect with students during the summer months."

"Rise and Shine" will consist of more than 90 hours of high-quality programming – much of it locally produced – and resources available at no cost to families. The over-the-air broadcast of "Rise and Shine" will help fill the void for students who do not have internet access outside of school, whether due to availability or associated expense. Arkansas PBS is currently expanding transmitter coverage with funds awarded by the Arkansas CARES Act Steering Committee to ensure educational services are available for all in the future.

Working in congruence with the Arkansas Academic Standards framework crafted by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), Arkansas educators and statewide partners will provide K-5 students with customized content centered on favorite PBS KIDS series. Leading these

engaging lessons will be Arkansas Teachers of The Year, and students will be encouraged to learn with segments from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, the Little Rock Zoo, the Museum of Discovery, Botanical Gardens of the Ozarks, Museum of Native American History, Central Arkansas Library System (CALs), Mid-America Science Museum, Scott Family Amazeum, the Arkansas Travelers and many others.

“We are proud to be partnering with Arkansas PBS and other great community partners to do what we can to help our students reinforce and retain academic milestones during the summer,” Johnny Key, commissioner of education and cabinet secretary at the Arkansas Department of Education, said. “This summer comes at a special time for educators, which is why this community-backed, all-inclusive education initiative is just the type of summer program our state needs to promote student learning during such a critical time.”

“Rise and Shine” will connect students with supplemental remote lessons grounded in curriculum from subject matter experts and Arkansas teachers, while also providing introductory and concluding transitions for national PBS KIDS educational programming to support learning targets put in place by DESE.

“During the pandemic when many students were learning from home, our partnership with Arkansas PBS produced some fantastic educational content that aired on PBS stations, giving students around the state access to high-quality lessons,” Stacy Smith, deputy commissioner for ADE’s Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, said. “We are taking that best practice and replicating it this summer to provide exceptional educational programs to help reduce the effects of learning loss that we know occur each summer. We are excited to offer the ‘Rise and Shine’ program to address this critical issue and help students excel academically.”

In addition to broadcasts, the programming will be available on-demand through streaming devices, the Engage Arkansas PBS app and on the Arkansas PBS website. A robust community outreach component will localize the effort in all counties. More information is available at myarpbs.org/riseandshine.

About Arkansas PBS

Arkansas PBS, Arkansas’s only statewide public media network, enhances lives by providing lifelong learning opportunities for people from all walks of life. Arkansas PBS delivers daily, essential, local, award-winning productions and classic, trusted PBS programs aimed at sharing Arkansas and the world with viewers through multiple digital platforms, including livestreaming at myarkansaspbs.org/watch, on-demand services and YouTube TV, and the distinct channels Arkansas PBS, Arkansas PBS Create, Arkansas PBS KIDS, Arkansas PBS WORLD and Arkansas PBS AIRS on SAP. Members with Arkansas PBS Passport have extended on-demand access to a rich library of public television programming. Arkansas PBS depends on the generosity of Arkansans and the State of Arkansas to continue offering quality programming. Additional information is available at myarkansaspbs.org. Arkansas PBS is broadcast on KETS (Little Rock), KEMV (Mountain View), KETG (Arkadelphia), KAFT (Fayetteville), KTEJ (Jonesboro), KETZ (El Dorado) and KETR (Lee Mountain).

About Arkansas Department of Education

The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is a division of the Arkansas Department of Education which provides leadership, support and service to schools, districts and communities so every student graduates prepared for college, career, and community engagement. For more information, visit dese.ade.arkansas.gov.

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