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ARKANSAS SECURITIES DEPARTMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ARKANSAS SECURITIES DEPARTMENT PROVIDES GRANTS TO SCHOOLS

A. Heath Abshure, Arkansas Securities Commissioner, announced that the Arkansas Securities Department has awarded grants to twenty-five schools and one non-profit organization for the 2009-2010 school year. The number of grants awarded this year reflects an increase in the number of valid requests received from schools around Arkansas. Mr. Abshure stated that he is excited that word is getting out and more schools are embracing economic education. The grants are provided to schools for grades 5 through 12, who want to teach their students about the securities industry, the stock market, and investment decision-making. The program, which began in 2003, has enabled numerous schools in the state to provide financial and investor education for their students. Approximately \$50,000 in grant money was awarded this year.

The schools awarded grants this year included: Bayyari Middle School, Elmdale Elementary, John Tyson Elementary, and Har-Ber High School in Springdale; Bearden Public Schools; Benton High School; Bethel Middle School, Alexander; Camden Fairview High School; Cedar Ridge High School in Newark; e-Stem Charter School in Little Rock; Genoa Central Schools, Texarkana; Glen Rose High School, Malvern; Greenland Schools; Hampton Public Schools; Harmony Grove Public Schools; Huntsville Middle School; Ledbetter Middle School in Farmington; Marion High School; Nashville High School; Omaha School District; Jack Robey Junior High School, Pine Bluff; Searcy Public Schools and Westfork Middle School. The grants will be used to purchase educational materials, software, and equipment for the classrooms that are used to further investor education.

A grant was also awarded to Economics Arkansas. The grant will be used to train teachers about securities and to assist with sponsoring and conducting the Stock Market Game.

In addition to the grant program, the Department also provides investor education to teachers and students throughout the state. Programs for teachers and students cover such topics as financial markets, terminology, and methods to research and evaluate particular investments.

Mr. Abshire stated that learning about investing is invaluable to Arkansas students who will be future investors. "It is vitally important that young people learn about the financial markets and how to invest wisely," said Abshire. "Early financial and investor education will prevent these future investors from falling victim to securities scams and frauds as adults."