



# Tom Horne Reports to Educators

Volume III, Issue I January 2006

## A Message from the Superintendent

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### Third Annual State of Education Speech

[You can view my 2006 State of Education speech by clicking here.](#) Each year, I give a State of Education speech on the theme "Promises Made Promises Kept." I review the promises for the previous year and what we have done to keep them and announce new initiatives for this year. [All of the prior speeches are available by clicking here.](#) The initiative for next year that I expect will be of most interest to you is that concerning teacher compensation. Here is what I said in the State of Education speech on that subject:

*Initiative No. 2: Higher compensation for our teachers.*

*The second initiative comes under the heading "Better Teachers." The initiative for this coming year is to work hard to achieve higher compensation for our teachers. Nothing is more important than the quality of our teachers. We have worked hard on the accountability side. We are holding our schools and our teachers accountable for results.*

*But none of this can succeed unless we do a better job of retaining the highly qualified teachers that we have, and attracting a much greater number of talented people into teaching. The time has come to increase teacher compensation. I*

*proposed a \$2,500 tax credit which, in after tax dollars, would be the equivalent of a \$3,500 raise in gross pay. This would close two-thirds of the gap between the average teacher salary in Arizona and the national average, and set the stage for us to close the remainder of the gap in future years. If the legislature prefers to increase compensation by budgeting more money to the districts, so they can give a raise in the pretax salary, that is all right with me. What ultimately matters is that we increase teacher compensation, so that we can do a better job of retaining our highly qualified teachers, and attracting more new highly qualified teachers.*

### The Dog that Didn't Bark

Sherlock Holmes once solved a crime based on the dog that didn't bark.

When I first took office, I heard from a number of teachers that our students were being over tested. Two full weeks of testing were exhausting students. Not only was that time unavailable for instruction, but it was hard to get the students back on task for the rest of the year.

One week was for the standards-based test, and the second week was for the norm-referenced test. I proposed that we combine the two tests into one, the Dual Purpose Assessment. It combined two weeks of testing into one week, but still provided as detailed reports. We were able to do this by being more efficient: some normed questions could also reflect our standards, and therefore one question would serve the same function as two questions.

When we proposed this, there was considerable opposition. For example, the Arizona Business and Education Coalition passed a formal resolution stating that this should be a pilot program, to guard against major problems developing with a new test. I took the opposite point of view. We should implement immediately, because a million students shouldn't have to take an extra week of testing just because we don't work hard enough to be sure the new test is implemented smoothly.

The State Board was persuaded to proceed with full implementation, though it was by a non-unanimous vote because of these controversies. I recognized that this was a major risk for me. If there were major problems with the new test, it would be fair to blame me, because I fought the idea of a pilot program. On the other hand, if it proceeded smoothly, no one would notice; the controversy would be forgotten, and the lack of a problem (the dog that didn't bark) would not be noticeable enough for anyone to get credit.

We now have enough experience with the new test to know that it did proceed smoothly and that the right decision was made. Associate Superintendent Ruth Solomon, Deputy Associate Superintendent Roberta Alley, and the entire Assessment section deserve credit for working hard to be sure that there would be no problems.

Further, the assessment section brought together classroom teachers from all over the state to write AIMS questions that align to Arizona state standards. I also created the new position of Director of Formative Assessment. Teachers have written questions in reading, writing and mathematics that will populate the IDEAL item bank. These items will provide a resource to identify individual student needs.

### Spotlight on Success

Those of you who read my State of Education speech know that I spoke about the successes of Jaime Escalante, the teacher on whom the movie Stand and Deliver was based. In future issues of Tom Horne Reports to Educators, I would like to speak about successes of individual Arizona teachers. We can get some of these examples from our Spotlight on Success and similar programs. I would also like to hear from you: stories about yourself, or others that you know, about tribulations and triumphs of Arizona teachers. Some of the submissions could then be distributed throughout the state through this periodical.

Sincerely,

Tom Horne  
Superintendent of Public Instruction

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, in cooperation with the College of Education, Arizona State University, the Bureau of Jewish Education of Greater Phoenix, and the Anti-Defamation League presents "Teaching About the Holocaust", March 16 - 18, 2006 from 9:00 to 4:00 at Arizona State University, Education Lecture Hall.

The forum, designed specifically for secondary teachers and pre-service teachers, will explore the content, methodologies, and rationales for teaching the history of the Holocaust, increase teachers' knowledge of the Holocaust, and examine a variety of issues associated with this history.

Special emphasis is placed on literature and the teaching of the Holocaust as well as the use of technology to teach about the Holocaust.

For more information, and an online application, please visit the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum website at: [www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org).

*"I would encourage every educator to take advantage of this opportunity. I personally lost nearly my entire family to this tragedy, with both my parents narrowly escaping. I firmly believe in the importance of teaching this historical event."*

~Superintendent Tom Horne



#### 2006 Arizona Forensic Science Competition

The Arizona Foundation for Legal Services & Education, in partnership with the ADE and the Phoenix Police Department, is hosting the first Middle/High School State Forensic Science Competition on April 29, 2006. This competition combines science and law providing students the opportunity to develop skills in both fields through the application of crime scene analysis, evidence gathering, critical thinking, communication and presentation skills, and the practical experience of applying the law and science to a real life scenario. All Arizona public, private and charter schools educating grades 6-12, are eligible to participate.

[For more information, Click Here!](#)

#### 2006 Law Day Essay Contest

Continuing the Arizona Judiciary's commitment to educate youth about our justice system, the Administrative Office of the Courts, Superior Court Presiding Judges and the Arizona Foundation for Legal Services and Education have teamed up to announce the 2006 Law Day High School Essay Contest. This contest will increase youth understanding of the rule of law by asking students, "Why are fair and impartial courts important to maintain the rule of law?" The contest is open to all Arizona students in grades 10 through 12. Essays should be 250 to 1,000 words and will be judged by Arizona Attorneys, Judges and other members of Arizona's legal community. Due March 15.

[For more information, Click Here!](#)

#### 2006 Arizona State Spelling Bee

Students across Arizona are preparing for District, Regional and County Spelling Bees in order to qualify for the 2006 Arizona State Spelling Bee, which will take place on Saturday, April 1, 2006, at 1:00 p.m. at KAET - Channel 8 on the ASU campus in Tempe. The Arizona State Spelling Bee, administered by the Arizona Educational Foundation and presented by Harrison Middleton University with broadcast underwriting by First National Bank of Arizona, provides Kindergarten through 8th Grade students with the opportunity to utilize their spelling and phonetic skills in a competitive environment. The top 27 spellers from every corner of Arizona compete in the State Spelling Bee to determine who will represent Arizona in the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C. in June 2006. The winner and an escort receive an all-expenses paid trip to Washington, D.C. to compete with spellers from across the nation. An hour-long edited version of the State Bee will be broadcast by KAET in April. The Bee itself is open to the public.

For more information, contact the Arizona Educational Foundation at 480-421-9376 or [bobbie@azedfoundation.org](mailto:bobbie@azedfoundation.org).

Good luck to all Arizona participants!



## The Power of Having High Expectations for Students

By Oran Tkatchov, Program Administrator, Best Practices Division

Henry Ford, the Founder of the Ford Motor Company, once said "Whether you think you can or think you can't- you are right." This also applies to teacher expectations toward student success. Teacher beliefs tend to create a self-fulfilling prophecy: teachers will get the outcomes that they expect from students.

Consciously or unconsciously, teachers often act differently toward students based on the assumptions they have about the individual learner's capabilities. Jerry Bamberg, professor and director of the Center of Effective Schools at the University of Washington, notes that teachers tend to use more verifying non-verbal mannerisms like smiling, creating eye contact, and positive body language toward students who they believe are high-achievers, and less verifying mannerisms toward students who they believe are low-level learners (Bamberg, 1994).

Studies show that the lack of high expectations tends to go hand-in-hand with low achieving classrooms (Cotton, 2001). In these classrooms, teachers generally view their students as limited in their ability to learn, and this view tends to create an atmosphere of failure. Adversely, research also shows that when teachers increase their expectations of student success, academic gains are made (Good, 1987).

There are strategies that teachers can apply to their daily activities to ensure that all students are being held to high expectations, especially for those who are thought to be at risk of failure:

- Concentrate on offering encouragement and support to all students.
- Monitor student achievement closely, and make certain that interventions are in place for students who are at risk of falling behind.
- Provide useful feedback. When assessing student work, make sure that your feedback explains what they did right as well as wrong, and give suggestions as to how they can improve.
- Stay away from unreliable "hearsay" about students and their ability to learn.
- Group students heterogeneously, therefore profiting from students' weaknesses and strengths.
- Differentiate instruction. Use the old analogy of getting into a house when teaching students: the easiest way into a house is through the front and back door, but you can also get into a house by using a window, crawlspace, or chimney. Be prepared to offer alternative teaching methods for children who don't learn in a conservative manner.
- Communicate to students that they have the ability to meet the standards that you hold for your class. The more often you affirm their ability to learn, the more likely they will try to meet your goals.
- Allow a decent amount of wait-time for student answers. This will increase the quality of answers as well as increase class participation.

### Attention CHARACTER SUPPORTERS!

Be part of the inaugural event!

1st Annual Character Challenge 6K Run/Walk and  
One Mile Fun Run!

When: February 12, 2006, 8 a.m.

Where: Wesley Bolin Plaza (State Capitol)

Why: To benefit proven and effective character education programs in Arizona!

Register online at: [www.azcharacteredfoundation.org](http://www.azcharacteredfoundation.org)

#### Honorary Chairmen:

State Superintendent Tom Horne

Greg O'Brien, YMCA

Michelle Robson, Robson Communities

Erik Widmark, Grand Canyon State Games

#### Foundation Presenting Sponsor:

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KTVK TV - Arizona's Family

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### Title XV Education Legislation

We have put together a summary of the 2005 bills, passed to legislation. To access the Legislative Review Issue, [CLICK HERE!](#)

Got a Story Idea?  
We would love to hear it!

Email us at:  
[ADENews@ade.az.gov](mailto:ADENews@ade.az.gov)

