



Tom Horne Reports to Educators

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A Message from the Superintendent

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Congratulations!

Testing period again successfully completed.

Prior to last year, students in grades 3-8 were tested for two weeks. That was too much time away from learning, and some students were so exhausted from testing that it was hard to get them back on task for the rest of the spring period. Many teachers stated that the students were being over tested.

So we compressed two weeks of testing into one, with the dual-purpose assessment. With more efficient use of test questions, we obtained the same amount of data from a little over half the number of questions.

Some strongly urged that this be done on a pilot basis because of the danger of errors in changing tests. But we thought it is better for us to work hard, and make sure everything runs smoothly, than to make almost a million students take an extra week of tests. With your help, everything did run smoothly.

Meanwhile, based on last year's reported results, proficiency rates have gone from 54% to 70% in fifth grade, 40% to 70% in eighth grade, and 55% to 71% in high school. Arizona students perform above the national average on the Terra Nova, the only nationally normed test that almost all students take, and on the SAT and ACT tests. These results are a tribute to you.

While the naysayers make unfounded derogatory comments about Arizona public education, you have been diligently teaching the standards. The above average test scores of the students, and the fact that they are improving, show that Arizona public education is in good shape, and improving!

Sincerely,

Tom Horne
Superintendent of Public Instruction

Tribulations and Triumphs

Title I Distinguished Schools Recognition Program
Yavapai Elementary School
Mrs. Wendy E. Cohen, Principal

Yavapai Elementary School, with a staff of 28 certified classroom teachers, 21 non-classroom certified teachers, and 18 support staff serves approximately 750 students in a pre-K through sixth grade setting. It has a diverse, though largely Hispanic population (fifty-four percent), and an ELL (English Language Learner) population of about thirty-three percent. Additionally, the school serves a population of Special Education students of nine percent, and a Native American population of seven percent. Seventy nine percent of students are eligible for free or reduced lunch services. As well as being diverse, with a high percentage of low income families, Yavapai has moderately high transient population, with a mobility rate of 41%. These combined factors have presented a challenge and unique opportunity for the school to provide the environment and structure in which all students achieve.

A major district focus in recent years has been data collection and disaggregation to inform instructional practice, student achievement, and to foster communication within the community at large, as well as within the school itself. Yavapai has taken this focus and applied it to creating the structure and environment to foster student success and provide a setting where all students have the support they need to achieve, and all teachers have the strategies and the tools required to support instruction. Superimposed on this formative backbone is the research of Larry Lazotte (Effective Schools) and Dr. Robert Marzano (What Works in Schools) which focus on creating an environment for effective change.

Using the research of Marzano and Lazotte, Yavapai staff participated in a joint effort to "...study, set measurable goals, reflect, plan, do and evaluate..." (Lazotte), the result of which was a Site Improvement Plan – a blueprint to address instruction, student achievement, and professional development, using research-based strategies to meet academic standards in innovative and collaborative ways. Highlights of the plan include instructional delivery that focuses differentiated instruction to meet individual student needs, learning styles and abilities, professional development to meet the needs of students and teachers alike, and a component to address the needs and concerns of the parent community and encourage positive involvement in the school.

To positively impact instruction, students are assessed at the beginning of the year by teachers to identify individual strengths and weaknesses and reflect how to best serve both. Students requiring further support or enrichment have needs met by tutors, specialists, student support teams, and extra-curricular enrichment opportunities. Further, students benefit from a peer coaching instructional model that includes a reading specialist/coach, and a collaborative peer teacher, from a "looping model" of instruction that provides cohesive longitudinal instructional delivery, and a common tool for learning and instruction (Thinking Maps) in which all teachers and all students have been trained.

Students also benefit from coordination with other programs including English Immersion Studies which provides services to ELL students, act as resources for teachers, and fund ESL endorsements. Special education provides resources for students and makes professional development opportunities available to all teachers in classroom management and other areas of interest. Title V collaborates with Title I funding to support the Pre-K program which is instructionally aligned with district curriculum, affords research-based, standards-aligned professional development for preschool teachers, and has an exceptional Parent Involvement component.

Yavapai understands the value of being a good neighbor and involving the community as stakeholders. Through facilitating all communications in a bilingual setting, seeking parental input through surveys, partnering with parents on the P.T.A. and Site Council, providing extensive outreach through the Community Specialist and home visits, providing numerous opportunities for involvement on campus, and through classes designed to support community needs for language, literacy, and parenting skills, Yavapai has created a strong parent involvement component to foster the well-being of the total school.

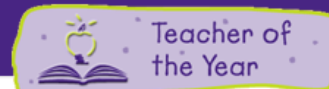
Congratulations Yavapai Elementary School!

Got a **Tribulations and Triumphs** story? We want to hear from you! Email us at ADENews@ade.az.gov

2007 Teacher of the Year Applications are now available online at www.azedfoundation.org!

The Arizona Educational Foundation will award \$45,000 in prize money to the 10 finalists -- \$20,000 and a laptop to the winner, \$5,000 and a laptop to each of the first four runners-up, and \$1,000 to each of the next five runners-up. The winner becomes Arizona's candidate for the honor of National Teacher of the Year. Completed applications are due on September 1, 2006. A teacher must complete and submit the application him/herself.

For more information about the Teacher of the Year Program, visit the Arizona Educational Foundation's website: www.azedfoundation.org or call 480-421-9376. Please promote this distinguished award in your school and your district by encouraging an exemplary teacher who deserves recognition for his/her dedication and commitment to excellence in the teaching profession.





Celebrating Education

In golf legend Jack Nicklaus' autobiography "My Story" he says "Achievement is largely the product of steadily raising one's levels of aspiration and expectation". Paradise Valley High School Senior Bryan Grossman lives his life in similar stride.



Superintendent Horne received an email from Phoenix residents Ernie and Kay Parrish commending Bryan for his flexibility, communication and tutoring skills. Bryan began tutoring their 4th grade daughter in math, helping her raise her grade from a D to a B in two months. They are extremely proud of their daughter and wanted to acknowledge this remarkable young man.

Success stories, pride, and gratitude for Bryan Grossman do not end here. Paradise Valley High School Principal Cara Herkamp echoed the sentiments expressed by the Parrish's. Bryan's involvement with the PVHS National Honor Society tutoring program, student government, and music programs (marching band, pit orchestra, and jazz band) are also valued. Special Education, Community Based Instruction (CBI) teacher Dr. Karen Hudson also shared an immeasurable achievement made by one of her students who worked with Bryan. A non verbal student struggling to communicate and control behavioral outbursts found a comforting connection with the bongo drums and learned to play thanks to Bryan's patience and commitment. This spontaneous music therapy has provided the student with a connection to others, enriched his instructional day and fostered his love for drums.

Bryan admits it is gratifying to know he has helped others. He attributes his own success and desire to tutor on a strong foundation provided by his parents, Stuart and Barbara Grossman, who are both educators. Bryan feels family support is so important to a student's success. While he has thought about becoming a teacher himself, he will pursue medical school at the University of Arizona with hopes of becoming a doctor.

Bryan says he looks up to a teacher he has had all four years of high school, Mrs. Kate Ramirez. Her dynamic personality and classroom environment kept him enrolling in her classes year after year including a study period which he was her aide.

The many achievements are a sweet reward for high aspirations and expectations set by this exceptional Paradise Valley student. Supportive parents, inspiring teachers, and the motivation to get involved helped make Bryan Grossman a well deserving Arizona student to celebrate.

The Governor's Youth Commission Seeks New Members!!!

The Governor's Youth Commission has openings for new memberships and is encouraging youth who will be high school sophomores or juniors in the 2006-2007 school year to apply!! Please forward this information on to candidates who may be interested. You are welcome to visit our website at: www.volunteerarizona.org for more information or to download the application. Applications must be submitted no later than May 15, 2006 at 3:00pm.

The Governor's Youth Commission (GYC) is a body of 40 high school students from throughout the state and was founded in 1989. The primary purpose of the GYC is to advise the Governor and the Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families on issues affecting youth in Arizona. The GYC holds meetings on a quarterly basis and coordinates special projects that engages youth in educational and volunteer activities related to substance abuse and violence prevention.



2006 History Teacher of the Year Award

The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History and Preserve America announce the third annual Preserve America History Teacher of the Year Award, which honors outstanding teachers of American history across the country. The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, founded in 1994, promotes the study and love of American history. Increasingly national and international in scope, the Institute's programs and initiatives serve audiences ranging from students to scholars to the general public. Preserve America is a White House initiative that encourages and supports community efforts to preserve America's cultural and natural heritage.



The History Teacher of the Year Award, under the rubric of Preserve America, recognizes outstanding American history teachers from elementary school through high school, and the crucial importance of American history education. Finalists are selected from each of the fifty states, the District of Columbia, Department of Defense schools, and U.S. Territories. From these local winners, a national honoree is recognized as the National Preserve America History Teacher of the Year.

Teachers of American history at every level, from elementary through high school, are eligible for nomination. Winners will be chosen based on several criteria:

- At least three years of experience in teaching American history
- A deep career commitment to teaching American history
- Evidence of creativity and imagination in the classroom that address literacy and content beyond state standards
- Close attention to documents, artifacts, historic sites, and the other primary materials of history

[Click Here for Details!](#)

THE GILDER LEHRMAN
INSTITUTE of AMERICAN HISTORY

Missed an issue?

You can find all issues of Tom Horne Reports, including printable versions on our website at: www.ade.az.gov/newsletters. You may be particularly interested in February's issue which talks about [Higher Teacher Compensation](#), and March's issue which focuses on the [Positive in Arizona Education](#).



ING DIRECT's Planet Orange Financial Literacy Awards (orangekids.com/awards), will recognize teachers in Arizona (as well as in Pennsylvania and Delaware) who are committed to financial education in grades 1-8. Winning teachers each will receive \$1,500 to further their professional development, while their respective schools each will be awarded \$1,000 to support school financial literacy programs.

- The program is open to 1st - 8th-grade teachers in Arizona, Pennsylvania, or Delaware
- Applying is simple: teachers only need to provide some information about themselves and their school, answer a few questions and write a short essay
- Applications will be accepted on the Planet Orange Financial Literacy Awards website - orangekids.com/awards
- Deadline for applications is **May 31, 2006**

By clicking the "Tell a Friend" link on the site, visitors can easily encourage their favorite financial literacy teachers to apply for the awards. Two teacher awards and two corresponding school awards will be awarded per state. Winners will be announced in September 2006.

The awards are named for Planet Orange, the educational web site launched by ING DIRECT to teach kids the basics of money management: www.orangekids.com. Recognized as a top pick by USA TODAY and Forbes.com, Planet Orange also includes a Teachers Resource Center that features free, downloadable lesson plans and quizzes that teachers can incorporate into the classroom.



Got a story idea, picture or celebration?
We'd love to hear from you!
Email us at:
ADENews@ade.az.gov