



Tom Horne Reports to Educators

April 2009

A Message from the Superintendent

Dear Arizona educators,

Volunteers from throughout Arizona and beyond are involved in an effort to build a one-of-a-kind memorial in honor of our nation's Veterans – past and present. Now, the Freedom Bridge Foundation is asking all Arizona students to lend their insight and creativity in an essay contest like no other.

As many of you know, Lake Havasu City is already home to one of the state's biggest tourist attractions – the world famous London Bridge. In a few years, thanks to these dedicated volunteers, Lake Havasu City will have a second signature bridge – the Freedom Bridge.



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Announcements

These two bridges will be connected by the Memorial Walkway and the "76 Moments of Freedom," which will tell the story of America's ongoing pursuit of freedom. Arizona State University's nationally-recognized public history department has assisted with the selection of these 76 moments -- ranging from the Jamestown Settlement to Operation Enduring Freedom.

Now, the Freedom Bridge Foundation wants input from students from throughout the state. Every large historical tablet, which will forever be displayed along the Memorial Walkway, will include a short student essay on how each moment advanced the cause of America's freedom. The essay contest, now underway at www.havasufreedombridge.com, challenges students to provide meaningful insight in a limited amount of text.

The contest winners and their schools will be forever famously displayed along this beautiful walkway between two remarkable bridges. The winning students also could be eligible for future scholarship awards.

The Freedom Bridge project has been endorsed by Gov. Jan Brewer, former Gov. Janet Napolitano, myself, Arizona Veterans Services Director Joey Strickland, the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame Society and many others. Please encourage your students to visit www.havasufreedombridge.com today so they, as well as your school, can truly become a part of history.

Sincerely,

Tom Horne
Superintendent of Public Instruction

Closing a Lesson

By

Shelly Pollnow, M.Ed. and Oran Tkatchov, M.Ed.

Academic and Instructional Support Unit

Many teachers craft their lessons by stating the learning objectives, hooking students through an anticipatory set, and then teaching meaningful and engaging content. But how does the lesson end? Does the bell ring while the teacher shouts kernels of knowledge in the direction of the exiting student mob? Or does the teacher take the time to provide closure, ensuring that the students have time to absorb the information that was taught?

Research states that a good closure summarizes the lesson objectives that were taught. This does not need to be provided only by the teacher, but can also be accomplished by students or pairs of students writing a brief summary of what was learned during the class. When applicable, this summary should be collected by the teacher and used to formatively assess the learning (Alsopp and Hicks, 2008).

Effective closures help students connect new knowledge in relation to background knowledge, therefore creating a meaningful end to the lesson. Closure that pulls together the key points that were covered in the learning and provides reflection is a logical extension of that lesson (Moore, 2005).

When creating a closure, the teacher should ask themselves, "What do I expect the students to be able to do? How can I check that students understand the big ideas, can answer the essential questions, or demonstrate achievement of objectives?"

Effective closures:

- Summarize the work for the day
- Illustrate the central or important ideas with work samples
- Return to the purpose of the lesson
- Restate the learning objective that was covered
- Raise possibilities for future thinking

Examples of Best Practice Closing Strategies:

- "3-2-1" - Have students write and/or partner share three items that they discovered during the lesson, two items of great interest to them, and one question that still lingers. Students may record these responses in a student assignment book as well as the assignment for the following day. This strategy allows students to reflect on the day as well as prepare for tomorrow's class.
- "Ticket out the Door" - Students jot down a response to an essential or divergent question that helps them to synthesize information from the lesson. Students present the written response "ticket" to the teacher as they exit the class. The teacher can use the "tickets" as formative assessment to develop the following day's lesson.
- Students journal and reflect in their Learning Logs on the lesson's big idea or essential questions.
- "STOP Strategy" -
 - S - Describe how the lesson was Started
 - T - Remind students of the Topic or Theme of the lesson
 - O - Remind students about the Opportunities they had to practice or apply learning
 - P - Remind students of the Purpose for the learning

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Phoenix Rising Through Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships

The scientific community is shining the national spotlight on science in 2009, by celebrating a 12-month event: the Year of Science 2009 (YoS09). The goal of this national celebration is to engage the public in science, improve public understanding about how science works, why it matters, and who scientists are.

Help celebrate the year of science and explore excellence in science education at the National Science Teachers Association's Area Conference. Plan now to attend Phoenix Rising Through Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships on December 3-5, 2009 in Phoenix, Arizona. Registration information will be available on the NSTA website in May.

For registration information for Phoenix Rising Through Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships, please visit the website at: www.nsta.org/conferences/2009pho.

For more information on the Year of Science 2009, please visit www.yearofscience2009.org.



PHOENIX
RISING THROUGH
RIGOR, RELEVANCE,
AND RELATIONSHIPS

NSTA Phoenix Area Conference
on Science Education
DECEMBER 3-5, 2009
PHOENIX, ARIZONA



In Recognition of
TEACHER/PTA
APPRECIATION WEEK

i'm lovin' it

The Arizona McDonald's® Owner / Operators would like to recognize you during Teacher/PTA Appreciation Week.

We invite you to enjoy a FREE Southwest Salad, with our compliments.

Beginning in May, coupons entitling teachers and PTA members to a free McDonald's Southwest Salad will be distributed via County and District School offices and the Arizona PTA.

Attention Arizona Educators WE NEED YOUR HELP!

President Obama recently signed the Serve America Act - supporting the largest expansion of national service since passage of the Civilian Conservation Corps during the New Deal. The Service America Act will tap into the energy and idealism of American citizens to address our nation's most critical needs. Building on the success of AmeriCorps, the Act will triple the number of national service opportunities to 250,000, launch a social innovation fund to scale effective programs and engage hundreds of thousands of Americans in new service and volunteer opportunities.

Arizona has an amazing opportunity to be the leader in this initiative. We are looking for educators to help finalize our model for an Arizona Service Leadership initiative that will recognize the finest high schools in the region for their Service Leadership.

Our goal is to develop a program which will provide a new energy for our students and their parents by recognizing their work and those of the many outstanding teachers and administrators who create a culture of leadership through service. We will integrate the top professional sports teams and their stars in events that celebrate what is best in our state.

Leading this exciting initiative is NFL Hall of Fame nominee and national leader in community and youth program development, Mr. Nick Lowery. If you are interested in being a part of this historical opportunity, please email us at ADEInbox@azed.gov.

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