



Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Horne Reports To Educators

Volume I, Issue VI

A Message from the Superintendent

I was shocked to receive a letter from the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, that stated in part: "As a new school year begins, we write to advise you of a recurrent issue that we have encountered with extra-curricular activities: the allocating of awards or honors on the basis of race. We have found, for example, that some school districts have racially separate Homecoming Queens and Kings, Most Popular Student, Most Friendly, as well as other superlatives. We have also found that school districts have assisted in facilitating racially-separate proms. Indeed, our attorneys have been made aware of several examples of these types of activities as recently as last year.

"These practices are inconsistent with federal law..."

If we are to be sure that we teach all of our students one thing, it is this: what is important about people is what is inside of them - their knowledge, their skills, their ability to understand and appreciate beauty, their kindness, and their character. None of this has anything to do with ethnicity or gender. To treat an individual differently on the basis of ethnicity or gender is totally contrary to what this country stands for and what its public schools should be teaching.

It should be considered utterly unthinkable that any Arizona school would conspire, under any circumstances, in racially separate honors or proms.

Sincerely,

Tom Horne, Superintendent of Public Instruction

In This Issue:

Page 1

Message from the Superintendent

Department Spotlight
ESS

911 Memorial

Character Ed. Tools

Page 2

Assessment Update

Good News In Education

Dates to Remember

Page 3

Best Practices

Discipline Initiative

Page 4

Honors Tuition Waivers

US Senate Youth Scholarship Program

Department Spotlight

The Arizona Department of Education is committed to providing the best possible customer service. In an effort to accomplish this, we will be spotlighting a unit every issue to help introduce ourselves to you, and give you a better understanding of what we do. With that, we would like to introduce you to...

Exceptional Student Services

Deputy Associate Superintendent- Joanne C. Phillips

To promote the development and implementation of quality education for students with disabilities.

Arizona 9-11 Memorial

The Governor's September 11th Memorial Commission is asking schools to help collect old cellular phones to raise funds that will build a monument to stand through the ages. At the same time, it will help our environment by keeping these used phones out of our over-burdened waste stream. The donation of cell phones is especially relevant to this cause considering how instrumental cell phones were September 11, 2001.

Schools will be a part of the permanent record sighted at the memorial itself. Five schools with the highest collection numbers proportionate to their student population will have their organizers invited to represent their school at the Governor's unveiling of the memorial at the Capitol on September 11th 2005.

The best way to kick off your program is to ask every member of your Student Council, Parent Associations and Booster Clubs for their help in collecting used cell phones. Used cell phones are everywhere, so ask your family, friends, and neighbors to join us in helping to build the AZ 9-11 Memorial!

For more information please call: 1-800-868-8109 or visit the memorial web site.

Exceptional Student Services (ESS) provides technical assistance, monitoring and support for special education programs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Students with disabilities comprise approximately 10-12% of the general population, and encompass categories of disability that include learning disabilities, emotional disabilities, speech-language disorders, mental retardation, autism, traumatic brain injury, orthopedic impairments, other health impairments, hearing impairments or deafness, visual impairments or blindness, and multiple disabilities. Preschoolers with disabilities are served by the Early Childhood Education division.

Continuous System of Personnel Development (CSPD)- provides inservice training opportunities for special education and related service staff covering a broad spectrum of topics, such as Autism, Transition, Evaluation, Program Improvement, Assistive Technology, etc. In addition, CSPD partners with universities and colleges to provide pre-service training in shortage areas (visual impairment, low incidence/severe disabilities, speech pathology, interpreters, etc. Training may be in traditional formats or using distance learning/on-line.

Special Projects- provides program assistance in identified statewide need areas, such as private day school and residential treatment center approvals, vouchers, traumatic brain injury teams, surrogate parents, secure care (jails and detention centers), assistive technology, transition, Child Find, and the Parent Information Network.

Program Support- provides technical assistance and compliance monitoring to public education agencies including Outreach training throughout Arizona. Each school district and charter school is assigned a program specialist to provide guidance, assistance and support in implementing special education programs.

Dispute Resolution- provides systems for dispute resolution between parents and their schools for disagreements dealing with identification, evaluation, Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), and parents rights. Resolution systems include Complaint Investigation, Mediation, Early Complaint Resolution and Due Process Hearings.

Funding- provides grants management funding support for public education agencies awarded IDEA entitlement or grant funds, manages contacts with other agencies and vendors, manages data collection, and monitors ESS budgets.

Contact Exceptional Student Services:
1535 West Jefferson Street, Bin 24
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
Tel: (602) 364-4000
Fax: (602) 542-5404
essdesk@ade.az.gov

For Educators: Character Education Tools

NOVEMBER 1, DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

Educators, parents, and anyone interested in learning about Character Ed are invited. Training segments for a variety of levels are offered, including a session on parent involvement, and opening remarks by Superintendent Tom Horne. Participants will select 5 sessions given by best practices experts from throughout the state.

For details, [click here!](#)

CHARACTER ED. ALIGNS WITH STANDARDS

The ADE has made it easier to incorporate character development into your day-to-day lessons. Character Ed. has been aligned to family and consumer science, civics and government, reading K-3, physical education and health, writing and math!

For details, [click here!](#) or visit www.azcharactereducation.org

Assessment Update...

ADE Prepares for October AIMS testing, Develops Dual Purpose Assessment

The Assessment Division at the ADE has been busy wrapping up the annual item writing and field testing season. Committees of teachers wrote and reviewed hundreds of test items for the math and reading portions of the AIMS test, to ensure that the questions accurately test the standards being taught in Arizona schools.

In October, Dr. Charles Bruen, Data Analysis, Budget & Technology Director, will accompany a group of teachers to San Antonio, Texas to select the anchor papers for the spring writing test. The goal will be to identify the papers that will guide the scoring for the writing tests in Grades 4, 6, and 7. Approximately 90% of the items written by Arizona teachers in 2003 were field tested and approved for use on the AIMS tests, completing a 2-year development process.

The ADE is preparing for the high school AIMS re-testing in October, and will be available to help schools every step of the way. Roberta Alley, Director of Assessment, will be training test coordinators around the state on how to administer and score the tests. [Contact the Assessment Division](#)

Stanford 9 (SAT9) - Arizona students scored at or above the national average in reading, language, and math.

AIMS - Over 60 percent of Arizona 10th graders passed reading and writing, but only 39 percent passed math. However, the overall percentage of high school students passing math increased from 36 percent to 39 percent from last year.

Annual Yearly Progress - 82 percent (1,435) of Arizona schools made AYP in 2004, up from 76 percent (1,294) in 2003.

Coming Up- The Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) and AZ LEARNS Achievement Profiles, used to designate all public schools as Excelling, Highly Performing, Performing or Underperforming, will be released October 15th.

Good News in Education...

United States Education Secretary Honors Phoenix Blue Ribbon School

PHOENIX - U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige on Friday visited Phoenix's Madison Heights Elementary School where students honored him with patriotic songs and their rapt attention and he honored the school with the 2004 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon.

Paige, a trim, grandfatherly figure in a gray suit and black cowboy boots, visited classrooms and quietly asked the children about words they were writing or about their missing front teeth. A child in the hallway greeted him with a "Hi, President."

The award, given to private and public schools, is named after the Bush administration's cornerstone education law that pushes schools to improve learning, especially among students who live in poverty and traditionally lag behind.

He congratulated the teachers and parents and students during an assembly, even praising the maintenance crew for the immaculate rooms and floors.

Madison Heights was one of five Arizona schools to be named model schools by the U.S. Department of Education. They include Gilbert's Highland High School, Mesa's Longfellow Elementary, and Tucson's Ocotillo Elementary in the Sunnyside District and St. Cyril Catholic School.



"Madison Heights demonstrates what we have as a national vision," Paige told the assembly. "We want to point this out as a model."

Although the award comes with no money, the recognition was enough to draw a gasp from Madison's assembled children and give a boost to the school's teachers. Kindergarten teacher Monae Jensen found out on Tuesday that Paige was visiting the school and would stop in her classroom.

Madison Heights Principal Denise Donovan said the school earned the recognition by dramatically improving student standardized test scores during the past three years. At Madison Heights, nearly half of the 410 students live in poverty and 16 percent are just learning English.

"It makes me so proud to work here," Jensen said, as teachers, parents, staff members and children filed into the school's auditorium to hear the announcement.

Donovan explained the honor to her kindergartners through fourth-graders this way: "We hiked and hiked and hiked and we've reached the peak. And now someone who reports directly to the president is coming to see how the students at our school learn."

"We are all a team," Jensen said. "It's not only us. It's the students and the parents. I get goose bumps."

~Pat Kossan, The Arizona Republic Sept. 18, 2004

Dates To Remember...

Oct. 6-7, Solutions Team Training	Oct. 20, Emergency Planning	Outreach	
Oct. 7, 19, 20, Science and Writing Standards	Oct. 22, Free Pathways to	Using Data to Write IEP Goals	
Oct. 7-8, Site-Based Reading Coaches Meetings	Education Conference	Oct. 4, Tucson	Oct. 12, Flagstaff
Oct. 12, 14, Classroom Observation Protocol	Oct. 26, Reading First	Oct. 5, Sierra Vista	Oct. 14, Kingman
Oct. 13, 15, 22, E-Rate Orientation Workshops	Principals' Meetings	Oct. 7, Safford	Oct. 27, Ganado

Best Practices...**Teacher Training in Early Literacy Improves Long Term Achievement**

Arizona State University researchers have been awarded a \$2.5 million, three-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Early Reading First program to develop a project aimed at fostering early acquisition of reading skills by pre-school children. Combining research, professional development and community outreach, the program will collaborate with elementary schools and pre-school programs to prepare more than 150 pre-kindergarten children for success in reading and to establish a proven model that other schools and districts can use.

Entitled "The Tempe Early Reading First Partnership," the project involves an ASU research team headed by Shelley Gray from ASU's Department of Speech and Hearing Science working in collaboration with personnel from the Tempe Elementary School District, Maricopa County Headstart, the Arizona Literacy and Learning Center, and Tots Unlimited, a private preschool.

The program aims to accelerate preschoolers' level of spoken language, as well as awareness of the alphabet and print. Also built into the teaching, are methods for assessing learning progress, screening for early literacy problems and creating a language and print-rich classroom environment.

The project, however, goes beyond just teaching the kids. Since many preschool teachers are not trained to teach early reading, a key part of the program is intensive teacher

training in early literacy, including coursework that provides college credit and in-classroom mentoring by an experienced early childhood teacher and a certified speech-language pathology team.

"Early literacy programs are really important for ensuring the success of students in elementary school, and in easing the transition from preschool to kindergarten, particularly for kids from low income neighborhoods and from families where English is a second language," said Gray. "But it is not common for pre-school teachers to have much of the training in the teaching, screening and assessment required to implement early literacy programs for children with a wide range of abilities."

Another critical issue the project will address, is how to ensure a smooth educational transition between preschool and elementary school classrooms.

"It's often hard to establish connections between schools so that there is a continuity of instruction," Gray said. "Families also need to be part of the team to help their children make the transition. This makes perfect sense, but it doesn't often happen."

The grant grew out of a professional collaboration that began during an ASU/Motorola Great Communities Partnership project. "The Motorola grant really provided the seed money and experience we needed to get this project started," Gray said.

~James Hathaway

Discipline Initiative...**Behavior is Basic to School Success - What the Best Schools Do**

It is hard to find a successful school that lacks firm discipline. Numerous studies show that good behavior and academic success go hand in hand. When schools are places of proper conduct, regular attendance, and respect for teachers, students are more likely to learn effectively and get better grades.

Good schools set high standards. They recognize that proper conduct is a habit molded through rules, routines, and examples. Students understand that they are there to learn. To preserve order, the teachers and principal must act with authority. These are things we have always known, if not heeded. A book called *Classroom Management* published in 1907, says: "There is no explicit formula that will cover each specific case, but one general suggestion may be given: Get Order. Drop everything else, if necessary, until order is secured." That advice is no less true today. We are not talking about repression or mindless authoritarianism. We are talking about nurturing authority, and letting children know you care. We are talking about a place where adults understand that there can be little learning without discipline.

The origins of the word "discipline" lie in the Latin word *disciplina*, which means "teaching" or "learning." In other words, to discipline is to instruct. Good schools are places where teachers and administrators know that discipline is necessary for, moral growth.

It is an indispensable tool in teaching virtues such as responsibility, hard work, perseverance, and honesty. It is central in learning how to succeed at everyday behavior and how to live a good life

Strong Discipline is necessary for academic achievement. Superintendent Tom Horne stressed the importance of classroom discipline as "a necessary precondition to academic excellence". We believe that when parents take part in the life of the school, good things follow. Students tend to get better grades and have fewer behavior problems. Thus, having the ongoing support of all parents will help administrators and teachers to develop a healthy balance to school learning.

The Department has prepared brochures, intended to be distributed to all parents, emphasizing their need to support the schools in discipline. Additional pamphlets, prepared for educators, and school boards, emphasize the need for school boards to support educators in maintaining effective discipline. [Click Here!](#) to view these documents. Additional supplies of copies can be obtained by calling 602-364-1971.

"There may be no trumpet or loud applause when we make a right decision, just a calm sense of resolution and peace."

- Gloria Gaither

~Ann Hart, State-wide Discipline Initiative Division



Full Tuition Scholarships Guaranteed to Students Who Exceed on AIMS!



The Board of Regents has approved Superintendent Horne's proposal for full tuition scholarships to students who exceed on AIMS! The statewide Arizona Department of Education/Arizona Board of Regents Honors Task Force will meet October 6th to work out the details of the Honors Tuition Program. The ADE will begin administering the program in the '05 - '06 school year. This is in addition to, and does not replace, existing scholarship programs.

Students must meet at least one of the following core competency courses by graduation with a B or better in each course:

4 units English, 4 units Math, 3 units Lab Science, 2 units Social Science, 2 units Foreign Language, and 1 unit Fine Arts.

AND

Students must meet at least one of the following academic requirements:

Option 1: Obtain a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or better on a 4.0 scale

Option 2: Rank in the top 5 percent of students graduating class upon graduation.

AND

Students must meet at least one of the following:

Option 1: Exceed the standards on 3 out of the 3 AIMS tests.

Option 2: Exceed the standards on 2 out of the 3 AIMS tests, meet the standards on the third, and receive at least 3's on 2 of the AP/IB tests.

United States Senate Youth Scholarship

Sponsored by the US Senate and the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, this program sends two outstanding students from each state to Washington DC for a week, to meet public officials and get to know our nation's capitol. Each student is also awarded \$5,000 for college expenses.

High school juniors and seniors who have participated in student government or served in a student elected position may apply. The process includes a detailed civics exam, and an interview and speech before a panel of professionals.

Applications are currently available through schools and on the Web and are due by Oct. 8, 2004.

For more information about the US Senate Youth Scholarship, visit: the [Hearst Foundation Web Site](#), and for applications or time lines, [click here!](#)

You can also contact the program coordinator, Amy Koenig, directly at 602-364-1555

Last Chance Educators Appreciation Weekend

October 29th – 31st
Bring In Your Teacher's I.D.
Receive 10% Off Your Purchase

Last Chance
1919 E. Camelback Rd.
602-248-2843

To subscribe to this monthly on-line newsletter, [click here](#).
If you have questions, comments, or story ideas, contact Constituent Services at: adenews@ade.az.gov or call 602-542-3710.
Adria Martinez, Director of Special Projects & Constituent Services
Designed and edited by Amy Koenig