



Tom Horne Reports to Educators

October 2008

A Message from the Superintendent

In This Issue

Page 1

A Message from the
Superintendent

Page 2

2008 Mega Conference
APS Mini-Grants
C-Span's StudentCam

Page 3

The Role of "Coaching" in
Education

Page 4

National Teacher Hall of Fame
2009 President's Environmen-
tal Youth Awards

Page 5

Prizes for Excellence in Inter-
national Education
Arizona Mining Museum
School Tours
METRO Light Rail Safety

Making Teachers' Salaries the Priority

Last Saturday there was a story in the *Arizona Republic* about proposals from the legislature to have the state pay for all high school students to take the ACT test. [Click here](#) to read the story. My comments in that newspaper story are quoted below:

"Detractors include state schools chief Tom Horne, who said adding a mandatory college-entrance exam would be a poor use of education money, which should be going to teacher salaries, instead.

'In the long term, the most important way to raise education performance is by attracting and retaining highly qualified people,' Horne said."

Sincerely,

Tom Horne
Superintendent of Public Instruction



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\$350.00



APS and the Phoenix Suns are once again proud to be offering their education mini-grants of up to \$500 to K-12 educators statewide who teach in public schools within the APS service territory. Our objective is to improve student achievement in the areas of energy, the environment, reading, mathematics or character education. The application is short and concise and will be accepted on an ongoing basis through Friday, January 31, 2009 for programs/projects to be completed during the 2008-2009 academic year. A total of up to \$50,000 may be awarded. You can access additional information by visiting www.aps.com/images/pdf/minigrant2.pdf.

If you need a hard copy, you can pick them up at any APS customer office, by calling Louise Moskowitz at 602-250-2291 or emailing her at Louise.Moskowitz@aps.com.

C-SPAN'S STUDENTCAM 2009

C-SPAN ANNOUNCES THE 2009 STUDENTCAM DOCUMENTARY COMPETITION

C-SPAN has announced the launch of its 2009 StudentCam video documentary competition. A total of \$50,000 will be awarded in prizes, which includes 75 student awards and 11 teacher awards.

The national competition, now in its fifth year, invites all middle school students (grades 6-8) and high school students (grades 9-12) to produce a five to eight minute documentary focusing on the topic: "A message to the new president: What is the most urgent issue for the new president to address after taking office, and why?"

The deadline for entries is 5:00 pm (ET), Inauguration Day, Tuesday, January 20, 2009. Winners will be announced on March 10, 2009.

For details visit: www.studentcam.org.

The Role of "Coaching" in Education

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

Michael Jordan and Tiger Woods, although on top of their profession, employ coaches to improve their success rate. Professional development is an important concept in educational success. Unfortunately, whether the professional development opportunity is a one-day workshop or an academy offered over several months, the practices and strategies are not likely to be implemented without accountability or coaching. Good teachers and administrators always strive for improvement. Different studies show that educators are more likely to implement new strategies when they have coaching and feedback accompanying their professional development. Teachers and administrators whose professional development includes coaching are more likely to apply new ideas and concepts in their practice (Neufeld and Roper, 2003, Joyce and Showers, 1996).

Bloom, Castagna, Moir, and Warren (2005) use this definition of coaching from Robert Hargrove's *Masterful Coaching*.

A coach is someone who (1) sees what others may not see through the high quality of his or her attention or listening, (2) is in the position to step back (or invite participants to step back) from the situation so that they have enough distance from it to get some perspective, (3) helps people see the difference between their intentions and their thinking or actions, and (4) helps people cut through patterns of illusion and self-deception caused by defensive thinking and behavior.

Recently published descriptions show coaches fulfill a wide range of roles, including the following:

- Help teachers implement new curricular programs
- Consult with and mentor teachers and administrators
- Support educators as they embed knowledge, skills, and techniques into their daily practice
- Plan and research
- Lead discussion groups
- Facilitate study or book groups

Basic skills associated with most successful coaching programs (Boom, Castagna, Moir, Warren, 2005) in education include:

- trust building
- listening
- observing
- questioning
- giving feedback

Current research points to coaching as a successful way to increase teacher and student achievement. Joyce and Showers (2002) found that teachers who work with coaches demonstrated an unambiguous understanding of the purposes and uses of the new strategies more than teachers who were not coached, and other studies have found coaching increases teacher motivation and decreases burn-out (Menges 1987).

Many coaching models are available. The Arizona Department of Education is offering a December 2008 Cohort and February 2009 Cohort coaching/teacher observation program, Teach For Success/Coach For Success. For more information, please contact Shelly Pollnow at 602-364-2182 or visit: [www.ade.az.gov/onlineregistration/SelectEvent.asp?viewall="yes"&GroupID=49](http://www.ade.az.gov/onlineregistration/SelectEvent.asp?viewall=).

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THE NATIONAL TEACHERS
Hall of Fame
Preserving a Heritage . . . Building a Legacy



The National Teachers Hall of Fame annually honors five teachers who have demonstrated commitment and dedication to teaching our nation's children. Anyone may nominate a teacher by completing a nomination packet. Candidates must be certified public or nonpublic classroom teachers with at least 20 years experience teaching in grades preK-12.

For more information about this program, including the nomination process and forms, please visit: www.nthf.org.



2009 President's Environmental Youth Awards

Since 1971, the President of the United States has joined with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to recognize young Americans for protecting our nation's air, water, land, and ecology. The President's Environmental Youth Awards (PEYA) program promotes awareness of our nation's natural resources and encourages positive community involvement. Each year the PEYA program honors a wide variety of environmental projects developed by young individuals, school classes (kindergarten through high school), summer camps, public interest groups, and youth organizations.

In 2006, four high school sophomore students from Arizona, inspired to raise money for underprivileged children in India, won the Region 9 PEYA Award. Smitha Ramakrishna, Pooja Ramesh, Amol Lingnurkar, and Akash Khare formed their own Asha Kid's Chapter in conjunction with Asha for Education, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping children in India.

Thinking and acting locally and globally, part of their project focused on organizing three walk-a-thons and raised \$5,400 to promote basic education for underprivileged children and build reverse osmosis systems for schools and neighborhoods in India. As a result, more than 3,000 children in the area have clean, portable water to drink and use. "Be the change you wish to see," is the quote from Mahatma Gandhi these Arizona PEYA winners follow.



Arizona Water Activists Karing for the Environment (AWAKE)

Young people from all 50 states and U.S. territories are invited to participate in the PEYA program. Each application is reviewed and evaluated by a regional awards panel and winners are selected based on specific criteria, including positive environmental impact on the local community and society and environmental need for the project.

Every youth who submits an application will receive a signed certificate from the President of the United States. One outstanding project in each of the 10 EPA regions will be selected and honored at a National Awards Ceremony at the White House in Washington, D.C.

To learn more about PEYA, view photographs of previous winners, and find the application form, visit the following webpage: www.epa.gov/enviroed/peya/index.html

To prepare elementary school students for good stewardship of the environment, interest in environmental issues and projects, and potential career paths, as well as PEYA, visit our interactive Environmental Kids Club website: www.epa.gov/kids/

The deadline for submitting a PEYA application is **December 31, 2008**.



The Goldman Sachs Foundation and Asia Society are seeking applications for the 2008 Goldman Sachs Foundation Prizes for Excellence in International Education. The prize program was created in 2003 to raise awareness of the growing importance of international knowledge and skills for U.S. students and annually awards prizes totaling \$150,000 in five different categories.

Applications for the elementary/middle school, high school, district/state, and media/technology prizes are due Monday, December 1st, 2008. For more information and to access the online application, please visit www.asiasociety.org/gsfprizes.

The 2008 Prizes will be awarded in the following categories:

Elementary/Middle School (\$25,000)

An elementary or middle school that engages all or most of its students in learning about other world regions, cultures and languages.

High School (\$25,000)

A secondary school that engages all or most of its students in learning about Asia, Africa, Latin America or the Middle East, or about international affairs through its curriculum and through partnerships with other countries or local organizations.

District/State (\$25,000)

A state or one of the 100 largest school districts that is actively promoting the development of international knowledge and skills on a wide scale through the creation of robust policies and specific programming initiatives.

Media/Technology (\$25,000)

A program within a U.S. based public or private for-profit or non-profit organization that has developed outstanding programs that use media/technology to educate students or teachers about other world regions and cultures, or international issues.

Youth (Up to \$10,000)*

Five high school students who demonstrate an in-depth understanding of key issues in international affairs and the global economy.

Don't miss this incredible opportunity!

Arizona Mining and Mineral Museum School Tours

Experience the magic of an Arizona Mining and Museum Field Trip! Take your class on a fun and interactive Treasure Hunt.

Outside Maricopa County? No problem. The museum's very popular Outreach Program: Have Rocks - Will Travel, is offered without charge to classrooms outside of Maricopa County. Funding for all expenses has been granted by the Freeport-McMoran Copper Company.

For more information, please visit: www.mines.az.gov and click on Tours, Outreach, Services in the right hand column for detailed information about the program.

METRO Light Rail

Expect a train any time, from either direction as METRO light rail vehicle testing is underway on Valley roadways.

Trains are currently being tested on the tracks in east Phoenix, Tempe and Mesa. Testing will gradually expand throughout the 20-mile system during the rest of the fall. Testing will run right up until METRO's grand opening weekend of December 27 - 28, 2008; official passenger service begins December 29.

METRO wants to remind you to stay aware and stay safe. So as you drive, bike or walk around the METRO system, please follow these simple guidelines:

- Light rail is quiet; look and listen for the train.
- Obey the traffic signals; turn only with a green arrow.
- Pedestrians: use the crosswalk and obey all signals.
- Never drive, bike, walk or skateboard in the trackway.
- Stay clear of the overhead wires; they are energized.

METRO light rail is a 20-mile system that connects the cities of Phoenix, Tempe and Mesa.

For more information on how to ride and ways to be safe around METRO light rail, visit www.metrolightrail.org.