



# Tom Horne Reports to Educators

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## A Message from the Superintendent

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### Fighting the Goldwater Institute on Behalf of Public Education

As you know from previous Tom Horne Reports to Educators, I am on a crusade to let the public know the good news about public education in Arizona. There has been too much negativity in the media, and I am working hard to let people know about what is right with Arizona public education. An example is that Arizona students perform above the national average on a number of national tests.

The idea that there can be any good news about public education makes the Goldwater Institute dyspeptic, and it has been sending blast emails attacking me personally, including, in its last one, comparing me to Michael Dukakis in a tank. For a copy of my memorandum showing how false and misleading are its studies, [CLICK HERE](#).

In addition, they have sued me on behalf of five charter schools, claiming that the State Board of Education lacks the authority to establish standards for charter schools. Most charter operators that I know embrace the standards, and are proud of meeting and exceeding them. For a copy of my position on this lawsuit, [CLICK HERE](#).

Sincerely,

Tom Horne  
Superintendent of Public Instruction

## Student Scholarships and Contests



The art palette is blank and waiting for students to free their imagination with an array of colors. Bring out crayons, paint, markers, anything you can use to put ideas into art. The Fulton Homes Grand Canyon State Games Art Contest presented by APS and Sponsored by Ottawa University promotes creativity through art as an effective method for youth across the nation to express their dreams and ideas for a successful life and a better community. This contest provides students an opportunity to compete as a means of building self-esteem.

Encourage your students to draw, paint, decoupage, be innovative artistically as the challenge is on to use their creativity and imaginations to put this year's themes into art. Themes range from topics on Character Education, to Inhale Life being Tobacco free, to the importance of taking care of your bodies in a healthy manner and the importance of practicing peace in your everyday life. Click on the picture below to link to our website and view the specific themes and guidelines for this year's contest.



The contest is FREE and begins August 15th. Gold, Silver, and Bronze medals will be awarded to the top winners from each grade. The deadline to submit entries is October 27th.

For more information, visit:  
[www.gcsg.org/events/art\\_contest/](http://www.gcsg.org/events/art_contest/)

### United States Senate Youth Program

It's that time of the year again for the 46th US Senate Youth Program. This program will provide two outstanding Arizona students with an all-expense-paid trip to Washington D.C. to meet their nation's leaders, and a \$5,000 scholarship. Winners will be chosen by a panel of prominent government representatives following a detailed civics exam and an interview with the panel. School coordinators are asked to administer the exam within a tight window of time, not only to ensure the integrity of the exam, but also to prevent the necessity of students' travel to the ADE office in Phoenix.

To learn more about this opportunity, please visit the following web site: [www.ade.az.gov/constituentservices/USYouth/](http://www.ade.az.gov/constituentservices/USYouth/). You may download the application from this site and return it to the address provided.

### Daughters of the American Revolution Good Citizen Award

The DAR Good Citizens program and scholarship contest is intended to encourage and reward the qualities of good citizenship. The program is open to all senior class students enrolled in accredited public or private secondary schools that are in good standing with their State Boards of Education. United States citizenship is not required.

The student selected as the school's DAR Good Citizen must have the qualities of **dependability** (which includes truthfulness, loyalty, and punctuality); **service** (which includes cooperation, courtesy, and consideration of others); **leadership** (which includes personality, self-control, and ability to assume responsibility); and **patriotism** (which includes unselfish interest in family, school, community and nation) to an outstanding degree.

The recommended procedure for selecting a DAR Good Citizen is for the faculty to choose three seniors who have demonstrated, in an outstanding way, these qualities of a good citizen. From these three students, the senior class selects one student. Each school may, however, use a method of its own choice. **Only one student per year may be honored as a school's DAR Good Citizen.**

For more information and to nominate your students, please contact Janet L. Whittington, National Chairman, DAR Good Citizens Committee at (662) 755-2308 or [janetw@dixie-net.com](mailto:janetw@dixie-net.com).



As NASA plans to return to the moon, plant growth will be an important part of space exploration. NASA scientists anticipate that astronauts may be able to grow plants on the moon in specialized plant growth chambers. Come participate and build your own lunar growth chamber in the NASA Engineering Design Challenge!

Through the NASA Engineering Design Challenge, elementary, middle and high school students will:

- Design, build, and evaluate lunar plant growth chambers
- Receive cinnamon basil seeds flown on STS-118
- Test lunar growth chambers by growing and comparing both space-flown and earth-based control seeds

Visit [www.nasa.gov/education/plantchallenge](http://www.nasa.gov/education/plantchallenge) to register and to receive more information about the NASA Engineering Design Challenge. You can also sign up for the NASA Express listserv to receive e-mail updates about the challenge and other NASA education activities.

Join the NASA Engineering Design Challenge and be part of space exploration by growing seeds flown in space!

#### DID YOU KNOW THAT . . . .

- Vehicle Crashes are the # 1 killer of Teenage Students in Arizona?
- Young Drivers (16-24)= 12% of AZ drivers - BUT have 25% of all crashes?
- Distractions are almost certainly involved in over 75% of these crashes?

In conjunction with the Arizona Department of Public Safety and the Arizona Governor's Office of Highway Safety, the Toe Tag Project is making materials available to educate young drivers on the DANGERS of Distracted Driving.

A 29 minute "Toe Tag" video will be provided FREE (automatically) to the Driver Education Department of each Arizona Public High School for use in their courses. For those schools without Driver Ed. Programs, a free video is also available. It will be provided to your assigned Contact Person, who can arrange for showing it to as many of the students as possible through non-elective classes, assemblies, etc. Please respond by E-mail to [toetagproject@hotmail.com](mailto:toetagproject@hotmail.com) as soon as possible. Include the School name and address, name of the contact person, their e-mail address or phone number, and choice of DVD or VHS. The goal is to have these videos "out there" for use during this semester.

#### Arizona Preparedness Month

By Laura Douglas

Public Information Officer, Arizona Division of Emergency Management

Emergencies and disasters can strike at any time. Arizona residents rarely get advance notice of a wildfire, a flood or severe weather from a monsoon storm before they destroy homes and entire communities. Even when a threat is predicted, most of us have not adequately prepared our homes and our families to ride out the effects of a disaster.

September is National Preparedness Month, a time when everyone is encouraged to take a few simple steps to be better prepared, or to reevaluate current plans and make necessary changes. Preparedness Month 2007 is geared towards four target audiences: schools, businesses, multicultural communities, and families. It only takes three simple steps for all of these groups to be better prepared: make a plan that includes details about communicating, evacuating or sheltering in place; build a disaster preparedness kit that includes enough supplies for at least three days; and stay informed of current threats, both natural and man-made. For more information on getting prepared during Arizona Preparedness Month in September, check out the Just in Case Arizona campaign and Arizona 2-1-1. Both can be found by visiting [www.az211.gov](http://www.az211.gov).

#### School Safety: Are you Prepared?

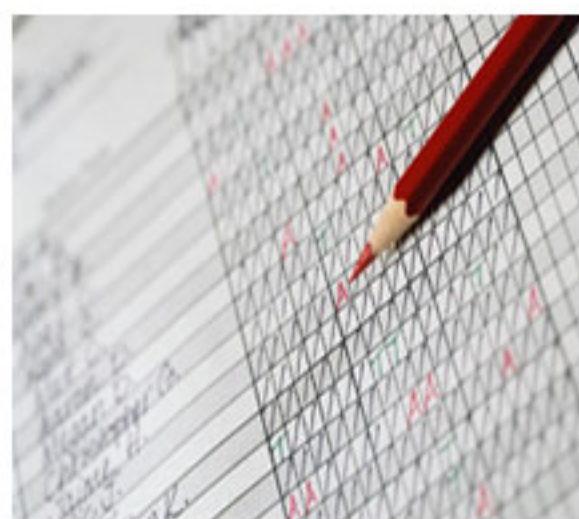
What if one of your students, a co-worker, or a parent visiting your school campus had an injury, sudden illness or showed signs of a heart attack? Are you prepared to respond and provide basic care until advanced medical personnel arrive and take over? American Red Cross first aid, CPR and AED programs are designed to give you the confidence to respond in an emergency situation.

Your development as an education professional can be more than preparing students to meet the challenges of their futures - it's being prepared to respond to emergencies with skills that can help you save a life. Continue your professional development by enrolling in a Red Cross CPR/First Aid course. To register for a class or for more information, visit [www.arizonaredcross.org](http://www.arizonaredcross.org).

Free Online Test Preparation

March 2 Success is a free web based test preparation program for students offered by the Army. However, a student taking this course has no obligation to the Army. It is a service that the Army is providing to all students over the age of 13. The course was developed by Kaplan Inc, Educational Options Inc. and Princeton Review to help students prepare for ACT, SAT and other standardized assessments. The course consists of 30 hours of instruction in approximately 50 separate lessons, drills and tests. It covers basic mathematics, algebra, geometry, reading comprehension, vocabulary, verbal testing, and science. It will help prepare students for standardized tests such as PSAT, SAT, ACT, ASVAB, and state-mandated tests. To enroll or to view a demonstration: [www.march2success.com](http://www.march2success.com).

The U.S. Army is providing this as public service to all students. Please encourage your students to take advantage of this free test preparation support.



Applications are now available for educators interested in joining NASA Explorer Schools during the 2008-2009 school year. Schools from the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands may apply for the NES 2008-2009 school year. NES offers unique opportunities designed to engage and educate the future scientists who may someday advance U.S. scientific interests through space exploration.

Teams composed of full-time teachers and a school administrator develop and implement a three-year action plan to address local challenges in science, technology and mathematics education for grades 4-9. Schools that are selected are eligible to receive funding during the three-year partnership to purchase technology tools. The project also provides educators and students with content-specific activities that can be used within the curricula to excite students about science, technology, engineering, and math.

Applications are due **Jan. 31, 2008**. For more information, visit

<http://explorerschools.nasa.gov/portal/site/nas/menuitem.3a9dc5f6e0302a448258f708c41a5ea0>

New Music Teacher Celebration

The Arizona Music Educators Association (AMEA) will be hosting a one-day professional development workshop on September 15, 2007 at the Scottsdale Center for the Arts. The purpose of this free event is to welcome new colleagues into the music education profession in Arizona and provide them with contacts and resources to help them become successful. The audiences for this meeting are music teachers (band, choral, general, strings) entering their first, second, or third year of teaching as well as those new to Arizona.

Please assist us by identifying music teachers in your school or district that fall into the above categories. We would appreciate receiving contact information on these new colleagues so that AMEA might contact each to personally invite them to this event. Email teacher information or any questions to Dr. Jeffrey Bush ([jeff.bush@asu.edu](mailto:jeff.bush@asu.edu)) anytime during the summer or early fall.

Please help us welcome all new music teachers to the state!

Arts Education Conference - October 8, 2007

Join us for the 2nd annual Arts Education Conference. The day will be packed with lively speakers and progressive discussions about arts assessment. Lend your voice and help direct the future of arts education in Arizona.

For Information:

[www.ade.az.gov/asd/arts/](http://www.ade.az.gov/asd/arts/)

To Register:

[www.ade.az.gov/onlineregistration/EventLocationSelection.asp?EventID=1113](http://www.ade.az.gov/onlineregistration/EventLocationSelection.asp?EventID=1113)

Student Engagement  
Oran Tkatchov and Shelly Pollnow  
Academic and Instructional Support Unit - ADE

All teachers, at one time or another, have experienced a classroom of blank expressions on the faces of their students. At these times, we reach into our bag of tricks, pull out our most charming ditty, and attempt to move our catatonic class to the alert state of **student engagement**.

As experienced teachers many of us can improvise, but it does take up valuable instructional time to react, reflect, choose, and implement a strategy that will eventually save the day. Does it not make more sense to intentionally plan for student engagement from the very beginning?

In a recent survey, 40% of high school students stated they were bored in class due to material they didn't find relevant to their lives, and 60% of potential dropouts stated lack of value in schoolwork as the main reason for possibly leaving high school (Yazzie-Mintz, 2006).

It comes as no surprise that high engagement in learning has consistently been linked to reduced dropout rates and increased levels of student achievement (Blank, 1997; Dev, 1997; Kushman, 2000; Woods, 1995). Even for veteran teachers, keeping students engaged in coursework is quite a task. Below are some suggestions to keep student motivated in class:

- Students who feel their teachers are supportive and care about their success are more engaged in class and have higher success in their learning (Heller et al., 2003; Akey, 2006; Lumsden, 1994). Building a student's confidence is not blindly telling them they are doing a great job everyday. Build student confidence by assessing weaknesses and strengths and delivering critiques in a timely manner so students can increase their skills to complete the task at hand.
- Stay away from extrinsic rewards. Gifts should be related to the task accomplished. Giving a prize for minimal success relays to the student that minimum effort is adequate. (Brooks et al, 1998).
- Ensure that classroom expectations for performance and behavior are clearly posted and consistently applied (Skinner & Belmont, 1991).
- Help students understand the criteria for individual assignments by providing a rubric; explain to them how each piece was graded (Strong et al, 1995). Promote mastery learning whenever possible (Anderman & Midgley, 1998).
- Work to build quality relationships with students (McCombs & Pope, 1994). With at-risk students, try to talk with them for two minutes a day for two weeks about any appropriate topic they find interesting. This will help build a relationship with the child and provide the teacher with a deeper knowledge of the child's interests and background.
- Evaluate students based on the assignment, not in comparison to the rest of the class (Anderman & Midgley, 1998; Dev, 1997; Lumsden, 1994).
- Provide students with the chance to respond to questions and work in groups. The more students respond and discuss their learning the more they increase their understanding of the skills. (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2000). Use techniques such as choral response, peer tutoring, hand signaling and partner-reading to keep students engaged in the assignment.

Students will learn more, retain more, and remain engaged when they actively participate in the learning (Akey, 2006). When **student engagement** is alive and well, **teacher engagement** is also increased and everyone ends each school day with a sense of accomplishment and a feeling of satisfaction.

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# Celebrating Education



Every year, the Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) encourages communities to honor the professionalism and dedication of their teachers. ACEI is preparing for its annual celebration of *Week of the Classroom Teacher* (September 30- October 6, 2007) and UNESCO's *World Teachers' Day* (October 5). These are important celebrations that acknowledge the contributions that teachers make to the field of education. This is an opportunity to communicate the message that teachers are valuable professionals whose hard work and dedication directly affect the future of the world.

ACEI supports recognition, respect, and empowerment for the professional childhood educator. A detailed planning guide filled with tips, sample materials and more to assist with the planning and implementation of WOCT/WTD events/activities, is available at [www.acei.org/wcthp.htm](http://www.acei.org/wcthp.htm). Thank you Educators!



The Super Learning curriculum provides our teachers a unique, cross-curricular approach, bringing the 2008 Arizona Super Bowl experience into our K-12 classrooms at no cost! The program consists of cleverly designed topics ranging from careers to environmental issues.

For more information, visit the Arizona Super Bowl website at [www.azsuperbowl.com](http://www.azsuperbowl.com) and click on the 'Super Learning' link.

Hello & Welcome to the 2007-2008 School Year!  
Dr. Ann Hart

Deputy Associate Superintendent of State-wide Discipline Initiative

This school year has begun with the promise of many great things to come.

Students have returned to school energetic, recharged and excited about continuing on with their school work. Teachers have equipped themselves with renewed energy in hopes of igniting the passion in students which will hopefully lead to more time on task, and student engagement during instructional time. Social Workers, Counselors, Psychologists and Behavior Intervention Specialists continue to mobilize in an effort to provide intervention and support to students and staff.

School Principals and Administrators will look at an array of academic and curricular initiatives formulated by national and local mandates that may focus on smaller Professional Learning Communities, service learning, student achievement, Drop-Out Prevention, Career and Technical Education Programs, graduation and AIMS. Schools in general will be all about the business of performance and assessment.

The Discipline Initiative Program at the Arizona Department of Education will focus primarily on helping teachers with Classroom Management and techniques on how to handle discipline in the classroom. These workshops are designed to assist teachers with skills and techniques that will effectively enhance student learning.

As we continue to look at the big picture, schools must continue to build safe learning environments where kids can learn, grow and experience life. I wish each and every one of you a successful school year.

... Remember "education IS everyone's business".



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