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May 11, 2010

Race to the Top Review Committee
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

President:
Dr. Vicki Balentine

Vice President:
Jacob Moore

**Superintendent of
Public Instruction:**
Tom Horne

Members:
Dr. John Haeger

Eileen Klein

Gregory Miller

Jaime Molera

Dr. Karen Nicodemus

Diane Ortiz-Parsons

Thomas Tyree

Dear Committee Members:

As a member of the Arizona State Board of Education, I am writing this letter to express my strong support for Arizona's Race to the Top application for Round Two.

Arizona's application sets forth aggressive reforms in each of the four assurance areas. Each of these reforms focuses on how Arizona can enhance student achievement and ultimately produce high school graduates that are well-prepared for the challenges of higher education and the workforce.

Receiving funds through this competition will accelerate this important work, but stakeholders across Arizona are committed to moving forward with this agenda regardless of whether our application is successful. This is evidenced by the passage of new legislation and State Board policies pertaining to student assessment, school accountability, alternative teacher certification, school interventions and enhanced data capabilities. We understand the importance of this work and are eager to see the plan through.

I believe Arizona has put forth a solid, integrated reform agenda that will realize needed gains in student achievement.

I appreciate your consideration of Arizona's Race to the Top application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Vicki Balentine".

Vicki Balentine
President, Arizona State Board of Education