



Volume I, Issue I

March 2004

A Message from the Superintendent

You make the difference. If we are going to achieve our goal of having students learn substantially more, and be able to demonstrate that in test scores, it is the educators – teachers, principals, administrators, and superintendents – who will achieve this. It is primarily by helping you that we can achieve our goals.

This publication, "Tom Horne Reports to Educators," is one of the tools in that effort. It is narrowly focused and designed to furnish information that is practical and relevant to you: Opportunities for professional development; services and support at the Department of Education; what is making news in Arizona education; free education materials; upcoming grants; competitions for your students; links to research results that will help in specific, practical ways; etc.

Please email us at, ADENEWS@ade.az.gov, with ideas as to what subjects you would like to see covered in future editions of this newsletter...or anything else. We want to hear from you, because one of my fundamental principles is that to be a good leader, one must be a good listener.

Sincerely,

Tom Horne, Superintendent of Public Instruction

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Rural Outreach

Rural Outreach - Superintendent Tom Horne is scheduled to visit:

March 4, 12 noon - Safford Arizona
Graham Greenlee County
Superintendent meeting

March 24, 7:30 am - Flagstaff, Arizona
Coconino Center for the Arts

March 5, 1:00 pm - Sahuarita, Arizona
Sahuarita Middle School
Title I Highly Performing School

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...

Educational Services & Resources

Associate Superintendent: Lillie Sly

The mission of the Educational Services and Resources division is to provide high quality services and resources to schools, agencies, community groups, and staff to enable them to achieve their goals. The division encompasses five units, each committed to providing reliable, timely assistance to the educational community. Additionally, this division is responsible for Superintendent Tom Horne's Discipline Initiative.

HEALTH & NUTRITION

(602) 542-8700

- Child and Adult-Care Food Services
- The National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs
- Parent education programs
- Instruction in law-related education

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT SERVICES (ESS)

(602) 364-4000

ESS ensures that:

- Child Find activities are implemented
- Students are educated in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
- Eligible students are provided Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
- Students participate in statewide assessments
- The rights of students are protected
- Confidentiality of educational records is maintained

ADULT EDUCATION

(602) 258-2410

- Basic education in reading, writing, and math through 8th grade level
- Adult secondary education and general educational development (GED) testing
- Citizenship test preparation
- English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)
- Workplace literacy classes customized to meet specific needs
- Instruction in parenting, civics, finance, and health
- Statewide services delivered by thirty-six providers

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

(602) 542-5282

- Serves students in grades 9-12
- Provides thirty career programs
- Expands student options
- Tests career interests before college
- Provides college preparation and career preparation
- Offers a pathway to success
- Challenges students to think!

EARLY CHILDHOOD

(602) 542-1530

Early Childhood Block Grant provides:

- Preschool programs for economically disadvantaged children
- Full-day kindergarten programs
- Additional support for K - 3 three students

Family Literacy Program provides:

- Early childhood education – programs for children to help them reach their full potential as learners
- Adult education – literacy training for their parents
- Parental involvement – encouragement for parents to become full partners in the education of their children

Preschool Special Education Provides:

- Services and supports for children with developmental delays from age three to kindergarten entry

SUPERINTENDENT'S DISCIPLINE INITIATIVE

For more information, and to download the discipline brochures, please visit our website at: www.ade.az.gov/DisciplineInitiative/

Solutions Teams...

While several states chose to contract with consulting firms to support their low performing schools, it was Tom Horne's desire to tap Arizona's many outstanding educators to accomplish this important work. To date, nearly 200 teachers, principals, superintendents, district office personnel and recent retirees from across the state have been trained to assist underperforming schools as Solutions Team leaders or members. In addition to being prepared to assist other schools, these individuals bring enhanced leadership skills to their own district, thereby building school improvement capacity within the state. They completed an intensive day and a half training, and learned how to use the Standards and Rubrics for School Improvement as an instrument for examining a school's current improvement plan and the conditions which support its implementation. At the end of a three day visit, the team prepares a Statement of Findings which validates effective practices observed, and also contains evidence-based recommendations to help the school and district focus and redirect its improvement efforts. Following the visit, the school receives support from ADE staff in applying research based best practices to the recommendations.

The Solutions Team visit has been completed at five schools, and the process has been initiated at an additional 45 sites. Applications are still being accepted for Solutions Teams. The required qualifications, frequently asked questions, the application itself, and the Standards and Rubrics for School Improvement can be found at www.ade.az.gov/schooleffectiveness. Among our trainees we have many high school teachers, but have a need for additional elementary, and to a lesser extent middle school teachers. We are seeking National Board Certified teachers or others with a strong background and demonstrated experience in school-wide improvement initiatives, curriculum development, and data-driven decision making.



For Your Consideration...

2003 - 2004 Academic Contests

The Arizona Department of Education is now accepting applications for the 2003 - 2004 Academic Contest Funds. The purpose of this funding is to help send state level winners of academic contests and their chaperons to the national levels as representation of our state. All school districts are welcome to apply. Schools/Districts can apply by visiting our website at: www.ade.as.gov.
website at: www.ade.as.gov.

2004 - 2005 Robert C. Byrd Scholarship

The Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program is a federally funded program for high school graduates who show academic excellence and the promise of continued postsecondary education. A Byrd Scholar receives \$1,500 for each academic year for a maximum of four years to be applied toward undergraduate study at any accredited college or university in the United States. The number of scholarships awarded each year is subject to change due to funding. Interested students must contact the principal or their high school counselor regarding possible nomination to the program.

Did You Know...

NAEP Assessments: What types of questions are on NAEP?

NAEP assessments contain both multiple-choice and open-ended questions, which require students to write an answer. Thousands of released assessment questions, along with scoring guides, sample student responses, and performance data, can be accessed using the online NAEP Questions Tool at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationasreportcard/itmrls>.

A tutorial is available at this address, to assist you in using the NAEP Question Tool.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact
Dr. Cindy Paredes, Arizona NAEP Coordinator at
(602)542-1653 or by e-mail at cparedes@ade.az.gov.

Leadership Makes a Difference In Student Achievement

Most of us can recall as children breathing a sigh of relief as we completed an end-of-year exam. However, we likely never reflected on all the factors that aided our performance that day. Of course, there were our own study habits, the ability of the teacher to make the curriculum understandable, and our parents' enthusiasm that we do well in school. A key element, sometimes disregarded, that contributes to student success is that of school leadership. As a student you may have rarely encountered the school principal; you likely didn't know that your English teacher mentored new teachers and you were the rare child if you knew even one member of the local school board. Yet, these individuals who comprised the school leadership had an influence on how well you did on your exam. We know from research studies conducted over the past three decades that there is a substantial relationship between leadership and student achievement (Hallinger, 1990; Hughes, 1995; Waters, Marzano, and McNulty, 2003).

Teacher practices that impact student achievement are critical, but "without effective leadership, there is less of a possibility that schools and districts will address these variables in a coherent and meaningful way" (Miller, 2003). School leadership is best examined by looking at the direct consequences of leadership. Specifically, leaders can directly promote improvements in teachers' willingness to change classroom practices and work collaboratively with fellow staff members to improve students' achievement and attitudes (March, 1992). The instructional climate shaped by leadership cannot be underestimated as to its effect on student learning outcomes. In a study of 9,415 elementary students from 112 schools, findings demonstrated a significantly positive correlation between ratings of leadership and student achievement (Krug, 1992). Similarly, an examination of Texas school districts showed that superintendent leadership style defined as "strong and purposeful" contributed to academic success particularly among districts with large populations of economically disadvantaged students (Wooderson-Perzan and Lunenburg, 2001). The Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) organization examined 70 scientific studies involving 1.1 million students to identify 21 leadership responsibilities that are significantly associated with student achievement (Waters, Marzano, McNulty, 2003). The dramatic effect that leadership can have on student achievement is explained by the McREL researchers as follows:

Consider two schools (school A & school B) with similar student and teacher populations. Both demonstrate achievement on a standardized, norm-referenced test at the 50th percentile. Principals in both schools are also average – that is, their abilities in the 21 key leadership responsibilities are ranked at the 50th percentile. Now assume that the principal of school B improves her demonstrated abilities in all 21 responsibilities by exactly one standard deviation. . . . Our research findings indicate that this increase in leadership ability would translate into mean student achievement at school B that is 10 percentile points higher than school A.

Emphasis on specific leadership qualities can improve student achievement even more than these 10 percentile points. Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) discovered variables that determine whether or not leadership will have a positive or negative impact on achievement. Primary is the focus of change. Simply stated, focus of change means that leaders have properly identified and are focusing on improving school and classroom practices that are most likely to have a positive impact on student achievement. In other words, knowing the right thing to do is the crux of school improvement. Effective leaders know more than what to do or even how to do it, they understand why an action is important and they know when implementation is necessary. This implies that successful administrators use data as part of school planning needs, ensure time is allocated to focus on curricular and instructional issues, and demonstrate skills necessary to lead a school improvement process focused on increasing student achievement.

It is sometimes said that leadership is largely the ability to communicate something people want. Certainly all involved in education want our students to attain the highest possible level of academic achievement. It is the responsibility of school leaders to envision how best to accomplish this goal and to then generate, communicate and support feasible plans.

DATES TO REMEMBER...

March 2004 - Ed Tech Orientation Workshops

March 15, 2004 - Online Registration Open
"English Immersion for Education Professionals"

March 29, 2004 - Due date for:
Applications for Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship

April 7th & 8th, 2004 - Arizona SkillsUSA
Hyatt Hotel & Arizona State Fairgrounds

April 30, 2004 - Due date for:
Academic Contest Applications

For more information and to register,
please visit:

www.ade.az.gov/onlineregistration/calendar/RenderCalendar.asp

For Educators...

Free Educational Worksheets -
www.educationalpress.org/educationalpress/

Free Seeds -
www.america-the-beautiful.org/FreeSeeds_order_form.htm

Free Publications -
geology.er.usgs.gov/eastern/fossils.html

Latin: On the Move in Arizona

In K-16 education throughout the United States the growing trend is to study Latin, and that trend is beginning to be seen in Arizona. Currently, there are thirteen public high schools, 10 private schools, and four charter schools in Arizona that offer a Latin curriculum, as do several home-schooling groups.

The benefits of studying Latin are many and diverse. As Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom Horne has emphasized, the study of Latin allows students to understand the ancient Mediterranean culture that has given rise to our own. Students who study Latin gain access to the great classical texts and cultural heritage that are at the root of all academic disciplines, including literature, philosophy, art, culture, and history. Knowledge of the classical world through the study of Latin gives a broad perspective to students, promotes a sense of civic responsibility and respect for diversity, and helps them to understand themselves and each other.

Latin helps to prepare students for any profession that demands literacy, critical thinking, or a technical vocabulary. Latin learners consistently out-perform all other students on the SAT Test. In 1997 their nationwide mean score on the verbal portion of the SAT was 647, 142 points higher than the national average of 505.

The study of Latin is also the best foundation for learning another language. Since Latin is the basis for 75 to 80 percent of all Spanish, French, Italian, and Portuguese words, and since Latin grammar and syntax are very similar to those of the Germanic and Slavic languages, studying Latin provides the means for excelling in these languages. At the University of Arizona, young teachers are being trained to take appointments at schools offering Latin. Graduate and undergraduate students earn the Latin Teaching Certificate by studying Latin and Ancient Greek in the Department of Classics and by studying teaching methodology in the College of Education. The Department of Classics at the U of A maintains a placement service to match candidates with schools in Arizona that need Latin teachers. To date, all graduates of the program have found teaching positions. (<http://www.coh.arizona.edu/classics/default.html>)

Some of the most successful Latin programs in Arizona participate in the Arizona Junior Classical League, which strives to inculcate the love of classics in all of Arizona's middle and high school students. Latin teachers and students gather monthly to share their ideas and to plan a statewide Latin convention, where students participate in academic, creative, athletic, and graphic competitions. Members of the Arizona Junior Classical League also have the opportunity to attend the National Junior Classical League Convention, held on a different college campus around the country every year. Members of these organizations may also join the National Latin Honor Society and apply for a number of scholarships offered by these organizations. (For more information on these organizations, visit www.azjcl.org or www.njcl.org.)

The study of Latin is clearly on the move in Arizona. As Superintendent Horne's goal to see Latin in the curriculum in all schools in Arizona is implemented, there will be corresponding quantitative and qualitative changes, dramatically improved test scores and a richer appreciation of our common heritage. May this excellent academic tradition continue to flourish in Arizona! *Latinitas floreat in Arizona!*

Cynthia White, Associate Professor at the University of Arizona Department of Classics
Sarah Knapp, Seton Catholic High School, AZJCL State Chair

Open Minds Through The Arts

The Opening Minds through the Arts (OMA) program is one of Superintendent Horne's newly announced initiatives. It provides an emphasis on content-rich curriculum, which includes the importance of student education in the arts. Through Title I and Title V funding, OMA, the research-based arts education program that integrates music, dance and drama learning into classrooms, will be piloted over the next three years in approximately five Arizona Title I schools. ADE will also research obtaining additional support for the program from business and philanthropic organizations in order to increase the number of schools that can participate in this program.

OMA has a proven track record of enhancing both student academic and arts achievement during its implementation in Tucson Unified School District schools. Research conducted by WestEd demonstrated that students who received the OMA instruction outscored similar students not receiving OMA in language, reading and math. Of particular interest is the fact that Latino students involved with the program scored 55% higher in language.

The goal of OMA is to help at-risk students succeed by actively supporting and positively engaging students in all subjects through the arts. The Superintendent's OMA initiative will foster the importance of the arts in the education of Arizona's children, while also infusing researched-based methodologies that will enhance student achievement. If you can recommend schools that might be interested in this program, or if you would like additional information, please contact the Department's arts specialist, Lynn Tuttle at ltuttle@ade.az.gov.



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