



July 11, 2023

Superintendent's Report





Legislative Session Recap

- Still no sine die adjournment in the 56th Arizona Legislature – anticipated for July 31, when the session resumes.
- 1,671 bills and 109 memorials and resolutions were introduced.
- 346 of those bills made it to the Governor’s desk.
- Governor Hobbs signed 202 of those bills into law and vetoed 143 -- a 41% veto rate and *more than double* the record for the most bills vetoed previously (which was 58 by Governor Janet Napolitano).



Legislative Session Recap

- The politically split government was something new to most legislative members.
- More than a third of the Legislature were brand new legislators, new to the process entirely.
- These factors and the inherent ideological differences of the two caucuses made the goal of a 100-day session unlikely from the start.
- The Republicans sent up several bills dealing with elections, transgender issues, critical race theory, and other political issues which contributed to the record-breaking veto number.



Legislative Budget Review

- The budget process started off with the Republican caucus approving a “skinny” budget in mid-February which was limited to simply continuing the same spending of the state’s FY23 budget.
- This first budget did not include any spending of the state’s \$2+ billion surplus. It passed both houses on party lines.
- Governor Hobbs vetoed that budget stating, “Arizonans deserve a budget that takes the real issues they are facing seriously. This do-nothing budget kicks the can down the road and it’s an insult to Arizonans who need their leaders to address affordable housing, invest in public education, and put money back into their pockets.”



Legislative Budget Review

- After this first budget veto, legislative leadership began meeting to develop a bipartisan budget given the new split government.
- Republican leadership divided up the \$2+ billion surplus -- taking half for themselves and giving the other half to Governor Hobbs and the Democratic caucus to determine spending priorities.
- Republican leadership then divvied up the funds by giving each member a pot of cash to determine how they would like to spend it, with the warning that it could not be used for divisive or controversial items that would be complete dealbreakers for the other side of the aisle.
- In the end, this novel, previously unseen approach was successful.



Legislative Budget Review

- A \$17.8 billion budget package passed both chambers in early May.
- Most of the negotiations were between Governor Hobbs and the Republican leadership, but a portion of the Democratic caucus were supportive of the package due to some investments in education, healthcare, and housing.
- Nonetheless, Democratic leadership criticized the Governor for failing to involve the Democratic caucus earlier in the process, as well as a lack of transparency and a final outcome which they felt fell far short of their key priorities, including accountability measures on the growing ESA program.
- Ultimately, not quite half of the Democratic caucus supported the package.



Anti-democratic Rule Changes?

- The most remarkable rule change for lawmakers and lobbyists alike was the “majority of the majority” rule.
- Any bill that went to the House or Senate floor had to have a majority of the Republican caucus in support or it would not move forward in the opposite chamber. This caused some issues:
 - Some members had to reconsider a bill that had enough votes to pass but didn't get *a majority of the majority*.
 - Democratic members were asked to prove they had a vote count of 16 Republicans before the Republican leadership would even put the bill on the docket for a vote.
 - This caused Democrats to boycott and vote no on every bill that went on the docket, leaving dozens of bills passing with only Republican support.



Aggregate Expenditure Limit

- The aggregate expenditure limit, or AEL, was created nearly 40 years ago to control spending by Arizona school districts.
- The cap restricted the amount of money that schools could spend on operational and capital expenses, including salaries, facilities, and technology upgrades.
- Over the decades, education changed significantly, with the creation of special education, vocational technical training, and the school choice movement.
- When schools found themselves up against the cap in 2022, a “grand bargain” was struck between lawmakers and Governor Ducey to infuse \$1 billion into public education while simultaneously expanding school choice. Part of that deal was the commitment from Governor Ducey to call a special session to lift the AEL and allow schools to spend the funds appropriated in the FY 23 budget.
- Unfortunately, Governor Ducey did not uphold his promise, propelling the issue to the forefront of the 2023 legislative session.
- During the FY 24 budget negotiations, an agreement was made to override the AEL and allow schools the certainty that the dollars appropriated for FY 2024 could be used and avoiding another emergency during the 2024 legislative session.
- There is a growing movement for a permanent elimination of the aggregate expenditure limit or an updated limit that reflects the current educational landscape. Arizonans will need to decide as if a change to the state constitution is needed.



Education Budget Summary

\$300
Million

in one-time
K-12 State Aid
Supplement

\$15
Million

for Dual
Enrollment
Student
Incentives

\$88.6
Million

new, ongoing K-12
funding, including
\$20 million in
District Additional
Assistance

FY24

Aggregate
Expenditure Limit
Override for K-12

\$341.9
Million

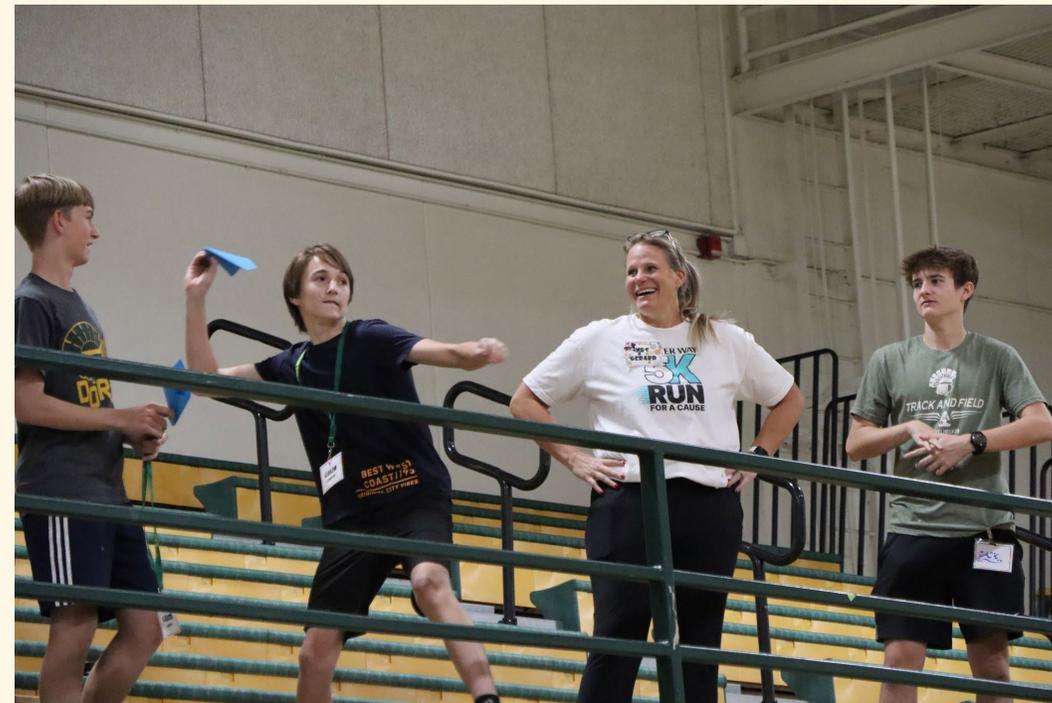
for School
Facilities

New ESA
reporting Metrics

Newly formed House Ad
Hoc Committee on ESA
Governance



Around the Schools



Future Dorados who are moving from middle school to high school got the chance to meet one another last month and learn a bit about what their futures at CDO will look like. Shown here is a paper airplane competition, one of the activities and games at the event. Thank you to our Dorado staff and students who helped bring these incoming freshman together.



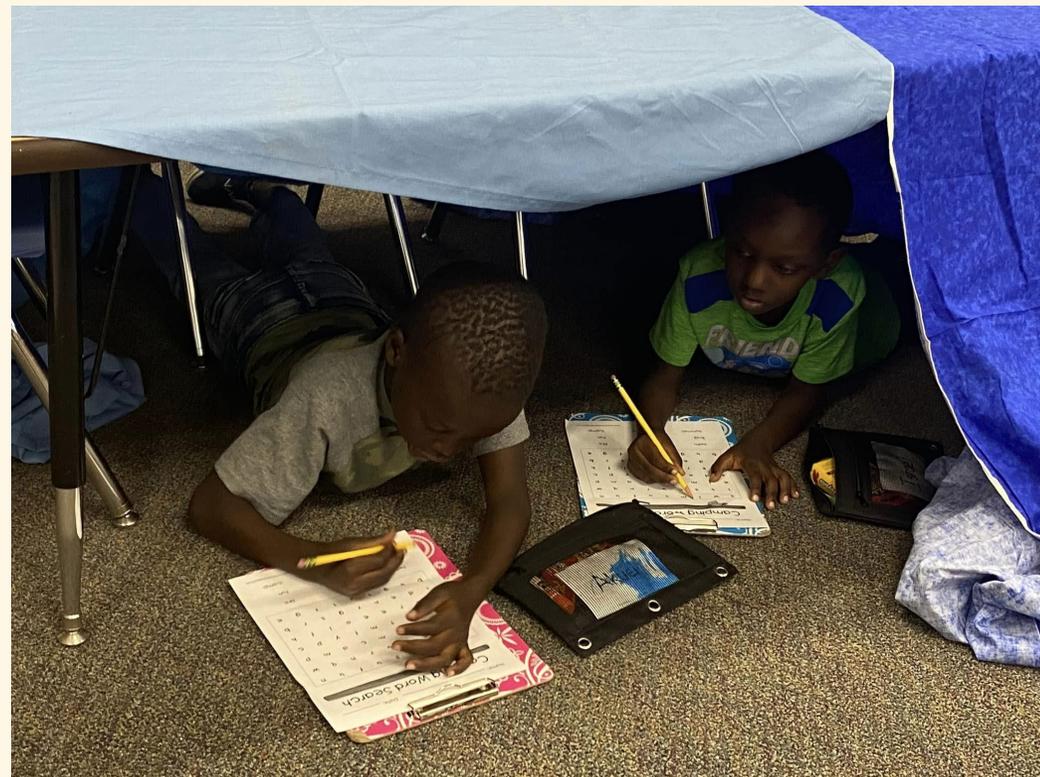
Around the District



In the District's continued commitment to offering training opportunities that have a direct impact on student learning, 120 Amphitheater educators attended an AVID Summer Institute to learn research based instructional strategies that support students. These best practices increase college and career readiness and help ensure students' academic success and future preparedness.



Around the Schools



A couple of highlights from the final weeks of summer school: At left, students at Amphi Middle School had the opportunity to build some amazing benches in their summer wood shop session. And at right, Prince Elementary students had a "camp out" complete with many camping activities, such as building tents and engineering solar ovens (used to make s'mores).



Around the Schools



Imagine Preschool students at Painted Sky Elementary School enjoyed a water fun day on Monday, a great way to spend time outside on a (very) hot summer day. We are proud to offer summer programs for our earliest learners at many of our sites.



Coming Up

- Throughout the Month: Infinite Campus Training Sessions
- July 17: New Leader Orientation (for new district administrators)
- July 21: All-Admin Back-to-School Retreat
- July 24: Training for first- and second-year Principals
- July 25-27: Effective Teacher Conference
- Aug. 1: New Leader Training
- Aug. 1: School Supply Drive with KVOA
- **Aug. 3: First Day of School for Students!**