



August 8, 2023

Superintendent's Report





Opening Issues

- Overall: very few glitches/problems. Our schools are positive, child-centered spaces, and our staff warmly welcomed our students and one another.
- As in any year in this hot temperatures, we had some isolated air conditioning issues. Issues were redressed quickly.
- New SIS (Infinite Campus) roll out has been fairly successful. As with any new major software implementation, we have some challenges, but our staff throughout the District has risen to them! Thank you, everyone!
- Enrollment currently at approximately 12,200.



First Day!





First Day!





First Day!





First Day!





Thank You



KVOA-4 News partnered with us again this year to collect items for our annual school supply drive. Special thanks to the station as well as Amphi Middle School for hosting, and to all who donated.

The drive ran from 5 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., and we were fortunate to have participation from community members, businesses and organizations including the Amphi Foundation, Literacy Connects, Tucson Appliance, Tucson Subaru and One-Hour Heating and Cooling.

We appreciate the support and contributions for our students!

The session is over!

- The Arizona Legislature adjourned its 2023 session on July 31.
- The session lasted for 204 days – the longest in our state’s history.
- In my last report, I reviewed the number of bills – passed and/or vetoed.
- In my next report, I will detail those which did pass and affect us.
- Bills passed this year will now not take effect until approximately Halloween, as state law mandates a 90-day “wait period” before effectiveness.



Educational Tête-à-tête

- Last month, State Superintendent Tom Horne threatened to withhold funding from schools using the 50-50 dual language model for ELL students.
- The model is one of four strategies approved by the AZSBOE for ELL students. Under this approach, students are taught in English for half of the school day and in their native language for the other half.
- 110 schools in 26 school districts across Arizona (none in Amphi) use the 50-50 model.
- Several Democratic legislators requested an Attorney General's opinion as to Horne's ability to withhold critical funds.
- AG Mayes issued an opinion last week which states Horne lacks legal authority to withhold state dollars or make any decisions about the model's validity.
- She said that Horne's role is limited to monitoring and referring school districts and charter schools to the Board, and that no state law gives him the authority to take action against schools or decide the fate of certain programs.



Vouchers Update

- Vouchers are the mechanism by which parents obtain tuition/education cost “reimbursement” for private schooling at Arizona taxpayer expense.
- Several days ago, Governor Hobbs reported that the total cost of vouchers may hit \$943.8 million this school year -- \$319 million more than the approved allows for.
- Vouchers pay out up to \$800 more for student in private school (without special needs) than the state pays for a student in a public school.
- The 2022 law allowed more than 40,000 parents, who were already using their own funds to send their children to private schools or teach their children at home, to obtain vouchers at an average new cost of \$7,223 per student.



Teacher Vacancies

- We began the year with 12.
- In January 2023 , there were 2,890 teacher vacancies statewide. That's more than double the level in 2017 of 1,328.
- Moreover, not all teacher jobs are filled by certified teachers in Arizona: in January 2023, more than 5,000 teachers did not meet standard teacher requirements. (Source: AASPA)
- The reason: Arizona's poor education funding and resulting low pay for teachers.
- Elementary school teachers in Arizona earned an average of \$50,134 in 2022 -- the lowest pay in the country, according to a report by the Center for the Future of Arizona.
- The national average for elementary school teachers was \$55,335.
- Colorado – an average of \$57,553; California – an average of \$83,059 (highest in U.S.)



One Time Funding Update

- Legislative allocation of some of the state's budget surplus of more than \$300 million has yet to be apportioned and distributed to school districts.
- These funds will be distributed on the basis of school district enrollment, which is not calculated by the state until the school year is over.
- Thus, we will not know for some time what the impact is for our District or any other.
- We will be approaching the resolution of how to use these funds with input from our constituents, particularly through the meet and confer process, and after final determination by the Governing Board next year.

