

Cochise County School
Superintendent's Office



Trudy Berry
Superintendent

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www.cochise.az.gov/schools/home

“The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.”

~ Dr. Seuss



The County School Connection

FEBRUARY 2015

Hi All,

Well it's a new year and with every new year comes a new set of elected officials and new proposed legislation. The budget proposals are interesting especially since we were hoping for some remuneration from the 2% inflationary funding lawsuit, which would provide money from past years, but nothing has been decided....and the state is not able to fund this. The proposed \$113 million reduction in District Additional Assistance (Capital) and the 5% reduction in non-classroom spending will only add to the already cash-strapped school budgets.

Some of the proposed legislation is interesting because the new bills seek to get funds directly to the schools through tax credit expansion and allowing property sales and donated funds to be used for M&O budget items. House Bill (HB)2260 would decrease the number of school and district audits. It states they are "exempt from the audit and investigatory requirements prescribed... if each of the last three consecutive audits did not contain any significant negative findings." This would definitely provide cost and time savings!

Another finance bill is HB 2479 which "permits county school superintendents to make electronic transfers" (instead of drawing warrants or writing checks), "modifies posting requirements for revised school district budgets and allows student activities and auxiliary operation fund monies to be deposited with the county treasurer."

For school boards, HB2080 is important because it would allow the school boards to appoint new members to the vacant seats on their boards instead of having the County School Superintendent responsible for this. Of course, we believe an objective third party is more likely to consider all aspects of the community and make better decisions. Currently there is an amendment to have each board member submit a name and the County Superintendent would choose a person from their submissions. What happens if it is a three-member board and two seats are vacant?

Besides the state budget crunch, we are also facing decreasing property values in most of our school districts. Based on the latest report, the only increases in assessed valuations were in McNeal and Willcox. What this means is that either school budgets will have to be lower or tax rates will need to be higher.

I think our situation demands creativity and innovation instead of disappointment in not being able to proceed as we have in the past. Webster's dictionary defines "NEW" as "never existing before, fresh, developed". I hope we can make these adjectives apply to this "New" year.

We're here to serve you!
Trudy

Save the Date!
Teacher of the Year Awards Ceremony
April 17, 2015
See page 3 for details



2015 S.M.I.L.E Conference

The 2015 Cochise County S.M.I.L.E Conference, hosted by the Cochise County School Superintendent's Office, the Sierra Vista Unified School District, Arizona Department of Education, and the Southern Arizona Regional Education Center was held on January 30, 2015.



Keynote Speaker, Dave Weber

The conference was a very bright spot, on an otherwise dismal rainy day. Held at Buena High School, over 800 teachers, administrators, and para-professionals, carrying their bright yellow SMILE bags, became students for the day. The, "Stimulating, Motivating, Innovative, Learning for Educators," SMILE conference offered the opportunity to learn about the latest education trends and strategies. A cadre of 60 local and national education experts provided a variety of workshops focused on Professional Development, Career and Technical Education, STEM, Special Education, Early Childhood, English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Technology. Participants were also given the opportunity to attend two workshops utilizing Interactive Television Technology. A Virtual Fieldtrip to the NASA Kennedy Endeavor Space Center in Florida was provided by a presenter videoconferencing from Cottonwood, Arizona.

This conference offered information for all to learn and the opportunity to exchange ideas and network with educators from 21 of Cochise County's 22 school districts. The Arizona Department of Education was present to provide information regarding the new Az MERIT Assessment, which is replacing the AIMS test this year. Aside from the overview session, provided by Leila Williams, ADE Associate Superintendent for Quality Assessment and Adult Education, a mandatory training for local test coordinators was provided. The information was a much-needed update on what educators need to know about the new and evolving statewide assessment.



The days' excitement began with the Keynote Speaker, Dave Weber. His presentation "Sticks and Stones Exposed: The Truth Behind Words and Relationships" is a hilarious presentation which zeros in on the power of our words and the impact they have. His message, and his jokes, will not be forgotten. The day ended with just as many smiles and excitement, at the prize-drawing giveaway. Hakim Mansour, from the Sierra Vista Unified School District, was the big winner of the day receiving an Apple iPad Air. The prize drawing was possible due to the many donors and sponsors, who are committed to supporting teachers and education.



L to R: Ethan Johnson, Trudy Berry, Adnan Aquib

Congratulations to Ethan Johnson, 2015 Cochise County Spelling Bee 1st Place Winner!

Ethan Johnson and Adnan Aquib were the two final spellers out of 26 fellow contestants from across the county, participating in the 2015 Cochise County Spelling Bee. The Bee held at Cochise College, in Sierra Vista, on Feb. 7, 2015, is an annual event sponsored by Cochise County School Superintendent, Trudy Berry.

The two boys went back and forth for the final six rounds, each correctly spelling their designated words. Ethan, a seventh grade student from the Center for Academic Success in Sierra Vista, secured the win by correctly spelling the word "bellicose" and then "langlauf" in the final round. Adnan, a fifth grade student from Bella Vista Elementary School, was a very strong contender. Jeffrey Hyatt, a fifth grade student from Coronado Elementary School, also had a strong run, lasting until the tenth round when he misspelled the word "bezoar".

This is Ethan's second year in a row winning the Cochise County Spelling Bee. He will go on to compete in the Arizona Educational Foundation Spelling Bee in March. We wish him success in the next level of competition.



Teacher of the Year

The 2015 Cochise County Teacher of the Year Awards Banquet will be held on Friday, April 17, 2015, at the Thunder Mountain Activity Center on Ft. Huachuca.

The Cochise Education Foundation raffle and the musical entertainment begins at five o'clock followed by a buffet dinner and awards ceremony. Each district nominee and the finalists will be honored. Everyone wishing to support and recognize the teacher nominees is invited to attend this event.

The Teacher of the Year Banquet admission is \$35.00. We are accepting RSVP's for attendance and the form to submit is accessible on our webpage at www.cochise.az.gov/schools/home. You may RSVP and bring your payment to the Cochise County School Superintendent's Office on the third floor of the old Bisbee High School at 100 Clawson Avenue in Bisbee, or you may mail your RSVP and payment to Cochise County School Superintendent's Office, P.O. Drawer 208, Bisbee, AZ 85603. Checks should be made payable to the Cochise Education Foundation. If you have a group of 7-10 attending, you may request a reserved table. Please RSVP no later than Friday, April 3, 2015.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Karen Enriquez at (520) 432-8952, or by email at kenriquez@cochise.az.gov.

Upcoming Business Finance Classes

Procurement Rules Panel March 16, 9:00-12:00

Auditor General's Class TBA
on Budgets/AFRs

Are there any classes that you would like to see hosted? Please email Martha Mauldin at mmauldin@cochise.az.gov or Susan Arndt at sarndt@cochise.az.gov.



Dates to Remember

February 16 Presidents Day
March 3 CASA Meeting
 CEF Meeting

Law Day 2015 MAGNA CARTA: SYMBOL OF FREEDOM UNDER LAW

The Law Day 2015 Celebration will be held Friday, May 1, 2015 at 9:30 a.m., at Bisbee High School. Contest winners, their parents, teachers and school administrators will be invited to attend. In addition to receiving an award, contest winners will be given the opportunity to read their entries or comment on their artwork at the event. As in the past, attorneys and probation officers are available to give presentations to your schools on the theme and related contest topics. Please feel free to contact Sepp Sprietsma-Juvenile Court Services at 520-586-8126, email: jspriets@courts.az.gov or Nancy Galey-Deputy Cochise County Attorney at 520-803-3164, email: ngaley@cochise.az.gov, to set up a specific date. General questions may be referred to Eric Silverberg at 520-432-8505. To get a head start, guided curricula is available at www.lawday.org.

LAW DAY CONTEST INFORMATION:

Submission Deadline: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2015

Essay: Categories- 6th through 8th grade students and 9th through 12th grade students.

Topic: Explain what the most important part of the Magna Carta is to you and how has it impacted our lives today?

Criteria: No longer than 3 pages double-spaced. One inch margins and 12 point font. Essays must include full name of student, school, teacher and grade in the top right hand corner. Essays will be judged on grammar/structure, format and content. Students must submit original work and must provide a work sited page if using references to prepare essay.

Graphic Arts/Photography: Categories for 6th through 8th grade students and 9th through 12th grade students.

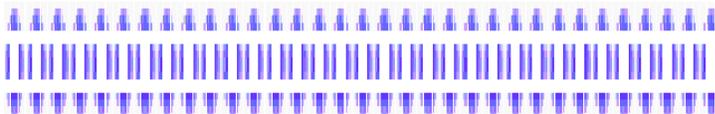
Topic: Depict the Evolution of Freedom and Fairness in America

Criteria: Paper size cannot exceed 11"x14". On the back of the artwork it must include full name of student, school, teacher and grade.

Poster: Students from Kindergarten through 5th grade.

Topic: What does Fairness in America look like?

Criteria: Paper size cannot exceed 11"x14". On the back of the artwork it must include full name of student, school, teacher and grade.





A.L.I.C.E. Training

The Cochise County Sheriff's Office and the Sierra Vista Police Department are now offering training on the A.L.I.C.E. Program. A.L.I.C.E. stands for, Alert- Lockdown- Inform-Counter- Evacuate and is a comprehensive preparedness program utilized in the event of a violent intruder attack. The primary focus of the program is survival for those who find themselves under attack and the actions they can take until police arrive. Several State and Federal agencies, including the United States Department of Education, have stated that "Lockdown" as a single response to an active aggressor situation is no longer recommended. Other options must include Evacuate, Hide or Take Action.

The initial training is given to the entire school staff. The first half of training consists of classroom instruction where the A.L.I.C.E. program is explained and demonstrated. The second half of training is scenario-based where the participants put into practice the concepts learned. The entire training spans three to four hours.

To arrange for this free training, please contact Sgt. Tod Linendoll or Deputy Allison Hadfield from the Cochise County Sheriff's Office at: 520-432-9575 or email Sgt. Linendoll at tlinendoll@cochise.az.gov or Dep. Hadfield at ahadfield@cochise.az.gov.

21st Century Community Learning Center Grant

The purpose of this important after school, before school, Saturday and summer school program is to create community learning centers that provide high-quality, AZ College and Career Ready Standards – based academic learning opportunities leading to increased achievement.

Funding

- Federal Funding from No Child Left Behind, Title IV, Part B with state level program administration.
- Minimum grant award: \$50,000 / year / school site
- Maximum grant award: \$120,000 / year / school site

Eligibility

- Entities eligible to apply for funding include: local education agencies (LEAs), cities, counties, community-based organizations (CBOs), non-profit organizations (NPOs), faith-based organizations (FBOs), other public or private entities.
- Entities must partner with a school that serves students where at least 40% of the students qualify for free and/or reduced meals.

For more information please visit: <http://www.azed.gov/century-learning-centers/application-information/>

Mini-Grants for Public Schools

Ezra Jack Keats Foundation provides mini-grants to eligible organizations to provide creative, innovative programs that support or extend the Common Core Standards in education.

Eligible: Public schools, public libraries and public pre-school programs

Deadline: March 15th

For more information: <http://www.ezra-jack-keats.org/minigrant-program/>

Read Across America Day



Monday, March 2, 2015 is Read Across America Day. The National Education Association's event to celebrate the birthday of Dr. Seuss is in its 17th year. This year's book is the Seuss classic, *Oh, the Places You'll Go*. Educators across the country are encouraged to get in on the fun and create a reading event for the local school community.

A list of activities, Dr. Seuss-related suggestions, songs, oaths, poems, proclamations and more can be found on the NEA website at <http://www.nea.org/grants/886.htm>

Contact Us

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