

Cochise County School
Superintendent's Office



Trudy Berry
Superintendent

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[https://
www.cochise.az.gov
/schools/home](https://www.cochise.az.gov/schools/home)

"Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood."

— Fred Rogers



The County School Connection

JANUARY 2016

Happy New Year!

Let's make 2016 a turning-point year for education in the state and in our communities. So much can be accomplished if we all work together. People say that you can't solve our education problem by throwing money at it, but I think we should give it a try. We can't expect to keep good teachers if we don't pay them a decent wage.

The upcoming election on May 17 should definitely be a priority for anyone interested in the future of our students, and we should all be promoting the passage of Prop 123. Despite the questions raised, the Governor's proposal is to let voters decide whether to change the state constitution to take more money from the State Trust Land account. This does not mean that we sell any of the state trust lands. It means that we are going to increase the percent taken out from 2.4% to 6.9%. Over ten years, this amounts to \$3.5 billion which goes to fund education and it does not require any tax increase.

On Thursday, Dec. 10, President Obama signed into law the **Every Student Succeeds Act**, which replaces 2002's No Child Left Behind legislation. The new Act reduces the Federal Government's role in setting standards and makes states responsible for fixing underperforming schools. The new Act will still require annual testing in some grades, but the tests will be measuring performance against locally designed standards. It also prevents the U.S. Department of Education from mandating or enticing any state to adopt the Common Core academic standards. "It rejects the overuse of standardized tests and one-size-fits-all mandates on our schools, ensures that our education system will prepare every child to graduate from high school ready for college and careers, and provides more children access to high-quality state preschool programs."

A Gallup (yes, the polling company) presentation at the recent AESA Conference suggested that students need 1. A mentor 2. A long-term project that has application to real life and 3. A job or internship that prepares them for a career or the workforce. With this in mind, we need to continue pushing for the reinstatement of funds for our Joint Technology Education Districts (JTEDs). Legislation passed at the end of the last session will reduce JTED funding this next fiscal year unless it is withdrawn or rescinded. If you value the skills and programs provided by our JTED in all ten county high schools, then please contact legislators and let them know that we need to maintain the funding.

We may also have a change in our traditional public school funding formula which uses the past year's student count to determine the current year's budget. The recently-passed legislation establishes "current year funding" which will be based on the 100th day count, so we will not know our budget amount until January when we count our students for the year. If a district declines in student enrollment, their budget may be drastically reduced during the year, but how would a district be able to do this? Salaries and benefits are difficult to change mid-year as are all the fixed costs for operating and maintaining the buildings. This enactment may be difficult to change since it saves the state \$24 million if we have declining enrollments. (Some students from last year won't be funded this year.) However, it would be much easier for us to budget if we could continue using past numbers.

So much to do this year... Let's make it a good one!

Trudy

Teacher of the Year

The Teacher of the Year (TOY) Awards and Banquet has been one of the favorite events coordinated by the superintendent's office over the last thirteen years. It has been a very rewarding experience for us to recognize teachers from all over Cochise County for their wonderful contributions to teaching and to their students. It is always remarkable to read the applications and realize that we are blessed with so many amazing teachers. This year, we would like to encourage every public and private school or district in Cochise County to participate by nominating a teacher for our county awards.

For any school or district that would like to have a presentation made by Trudy Berry, the Cochise County School Superintendent, we would be happy to schedule this for your teachers and staff and help coordinate an application for your school. Please let us know if you are interested. The applications are due to our office by February 5th.

Past Teachers of the Year are:

2003-Velma Jean Fields, Pearce Elementary
 2004- John Kugler, CAS Charter
 2005-Penelope Levario, Bisbee USD
 2006- Veronica Howe, St. David USD
 2007- Diane Feacher-Smith, Sierra Vista USD
 2008- Janna Riggs, Willcox USD
 2009- Lisa Graeme, Ft. Huachuca Accommodation
 2010- Laurie Davis, Valley Union HS
 2011- Jeff Ofstedahl, CAS Charter
 2012- Barbara Williams, Sierra Vista USD
 2013- TOY: Deborah Garrett, Sierra Vista USD
 2014- Margaret Looney, Willcox USD
 2015- Nidhi Mehta, Willcox USD



Trudy swears in her new Chief Deputy, Travis Bishop.



Cochise County Legacy Project

All Cochise County Government departments have been researching the history of their offices as part of the Cochise County Legacy Project. As a result, we welcome input from past employees or the public which will enable us to more completely chronicle the past superintendents and events of this office.

The office was originally overseen by county probate judges who used judicial and educational influence to shape, mold, develop, and govern education in Cochise County. The Arizona Constitution later established county elected offices making the county school superintendent an elected official. In the years from 1881 to the present, we have had 25 county school superintendents. The office has a history that includes an OK Corral gunfight witness, an Earp trial judge, cattle ranchers, a traveling librarian, miners, surveyors, teachers, college professors, high school coaches, a University of Arizona Regency board member, a secretary to the governor of Arizona, a state Superintendent of Public Instruction, and much more.

Please join us in April 2016, for an open house revealing the history, the legacy, and the stories of the Cochise County School Superintendent's Office.



2016 Teacher of the Year Awards Banquet

Friday, April 8, 2016- 5:00 pm
 Thunder Mountain Activity Center
 Ft. Huachuca

We are accepting RSVP's for attendance by completing the RSVP form available at www.cochise.az.gov/schools/home.

Ticket price: \$35.00 per person.

RSVP submission deadline: March 30, 2016

Teacher of the Year (TOY) nomination packets and submission information will be emailed to each District Superintendent. Cochise County School Districts are encouraged to submit one Teacher of the Year nominee application. Due to the size of Douglas and Sierra Vista's Districts, they are allowed three nominees. In addition, each school district is allowed to nominate one Education Special Project. **The deadline for application submission is February 5, 2016.**

Information for Business Managers on Affordable Care Act (ACA) Reporting

IRS.gov states, “Self-insured employers – that is, employers who sponsor self-insured group health plans – are subject to the information reporting requirements for providers of minimum essential coverage whether or not they are applicable large employers under the employer shared responsibility provisions. **This means employers of any workforce size that self-insure must comply with these information reporting requirements.**”

Districts that use ASBAIT/Meritain are considered self-insured. If you do not provide through ASBAIT/Meritain, please contact your insurance representative to find out how your district is classified. If you are NOT considered self – insured then you need not do anything more.

If you are self-insured, Debbie Craig, our office accountant, will need information to input your district’s offering groups. It will then be your responsibility to assign every employee (even if they do not accept or are not eligible for insurance) to one of the offering groups. Using this information, she will be able to generate 1095 forms to be distributed to your employees on or before March 31, 2016. **The due date for filing all forms (1094-C, 1095-C, 1094-B, and 1095-B) to the IRS is May 31, 2016, if filing by paper. If filing electronically, the due date is June 30, 2016.**

Please be aware that the IRS will allot a “failure to file” penalty of \$100 per return. This penalty would be an added expense that most districts cannot afford and a penalty that can be easily avoided by your actions.

Please contact Debbie Craig with any questions that you may have: dcraig@cochise.az.gov, or 520-432-8953.

Bee Ready!



The 2016 Cochise County Spelling Bee is scheduled for Saturday, February 20, 2016 and will be held at the Cochise College Student Union, Community Room in Sierra Vista at 10:00 AM.

School bees must be completed on or before January 15, 2016. (If applicable, District Bees must be held prior to January 29, 2016). In order to be included in the Cochise County Spelling Bee, school coordinators must submit a completed Champion form to kenriquez@cochise.az.gov no later than February 1st, 2016. Complete instructions and the Champion form are available at www.cochise.az.gov/schools/home.

Teacher of the Year Selection Process



The Cochise Education Foundation Board is composed of persons interested in the education of our children, and in attracting and retaining quality teachers for our schools. They are business representatives, active and retired teachers, administrators, and college/university personnel. Board membership is open to any resident of Cochise County.

Since 2003, over 240 Cochise County teachers have been recognized for their teaching excellence as the top category nominees of the Teacher of the Year Program, co-sponsored by the Cochise Education Foundation.

The Teacher of the Year is a process that promotes four major outcomes. First, is the intention to select teachers who are representative of the finest teachers in Cochise County and Arizona. Second, the application process provides an opportunity for educators to reflect on their practice and, in so doing, promote continued personal growth. Third, the Teacher of the Year program provides outstanding recognition for the chosen teachers and their respective schools. Finally, the Teacher of the Year program serves to inspire others.

The TOY review committee has the overwhelming task of reviewing applications of many truly outstanding teachers. No current teaching personnel or school administrator from any school or district in Cochise County may serve on the selection committee, including Trudy Berry, the Cochise County School Superintendent. The committee review all Teacher of the Year nominations, score and select the top nominees in each category. These individuals receive a personal interview. The Elementary, Middle, and High School category winners are chosen from among this group. The overall Teacher of the Year is the top candidate from among the three category winners. The Cochise County Teacher of the Year will receive an award of \$1,000. Each category winner will receive an award of \$500. All Teachers of the Year nominees will be honored with a medallion and will receive \$100. Education Special Project nominees receive a medallion and the winner will receive \$250. Join us April 8 to see who wins.

Dates to Remember

January 18	MLK Day
January 20	Cochise Education Foundation Meeting
February 5	TOY Applications Due
February 7	Cochise County Spelling Bee



ADE is offering the following webinars for English Language Acquisition professional development this month. Click on the links for more information.

[Grades 3-5 Writing Standards Implementation Part I: Overview, Perspectives, and Daily Writing](#)

[Grades 3-5 Writing Standards Implementation Part II: Task, Audience, and Purpose](#)

[Reading for the Rhetorical Situation](#)

[Grades 3-5 Writing Standards Implementation Part III: Writing Fluency Argument Literacy](#)

[Research and Information Fluency](#)

[Grades 3-5 Writing Standards Implementation Part IV: A Community of Engaged Writers](#)

2016 YES Fair Dates

Tuesday, February 23rd-Thursday, February 25th



Fair Location

The Windemere Hotel & Conference Center
2047 South Highway 92
Sierra Vista, Arizona 85635

For more information: <http://www.yesfair.com/>

**Arizona Renaissance Festival Student Days
Immerse your students into the 16th century!**

2016 Student Day Dates
Tuesday, March 1st – Elementary Schools
Thursday, March 3rd – Jr. /Sr. High Schools
Hours: 9am – 2:30 pm

The annual Arizona Renaissance Festival, with its 30-acre theatrical European market village offers a unique opportunity to bring an important era in history to life. Student Days were created to highlight the educational aspects of the Renaissance; language, science, exploration, manners, customs, commedia theatre, jousting tournaments, artisan demonstrations and music are just some of the learning opportunities that await your students.

<http://www.royalfaires.com/arizona/>

If you would like to receive *The County School Connection* by email, contact Nikki Madden at kmad-den@cochise.az.gov or 432-8950.

iTV News:



Read Around the Planet for PreK-12 grades in English, Spanish, ESL and Special Ed takes place February 22-March 4, 2016.

- Verification of equipment for Read Around the Planet must be done by January 8th
- Registration **CLOSES** January 15th
Materials available here - <http://www.twice.cc/read>
Registration in CAPspace - <https://projects.twice.cc/index.php?l=event&eventid=820>

Polycom Special Events

Open now for registration - check the program schedule <http://polycomspecialevents.pbworks.com/w/page/17626380/FrontPage>

TWICE ASK Programs

Open for registration - check the program schedule <http://capspaceinfo.pbworks.com/w/page/54981090/TWICE%20ASK>



Pinterest has become particularly popular among educators. The link below will take you to their profile and boards. This list covers just about every grade level, subject area and plenty of educational technology! There is something in this list for just about everyone.

<http://www.shakeuplearning.com/blog/35-educators-you-should-follow-on-pinterest/>

Contact Us

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