



March 2019

Parents,

## PRINCIPAL'S LETTER

It is somewhat rare that I take to ANN to deliver a message targeted at the entire student population. It is more rare that I do so to deliver an in depth message several minutes in length. I did so today, and a copy of the complete script of my message can be found in the in-touch email through which this newsletter was delivered to you. In short, I praised Arcadia for what it is – talented and giving educators, wonderful students anxious to learn and grow, and a place where academics, arts, and athletics all allow students to flourish. I shared with students that I believe that we are at a crossroads of where we are and where we could go. I shared two recent events (one negative and one positive) which illustrate that fact. The negative was the assault on campus prior to spring break that I have previously addressed in our parent community. The second was the Signs of Suicide and adolescent depression training last week which resulted in numerous instances of Arcadia students reaching out to support their friends and classmates. I encourage you to read the script of my speech, and discuss it with your students. Some students may not have seen ANN today. If in talking to your student you discover that they did not, please share my script with them and engage them in conversation about it. The feedback I have received from students and staff has been positive. I hope that you will find my remarks to the Arcadia student body to be appropriate, sincere, and straightforward.

I also talked with students today about the start of AzMERIT next week. I emphasized the importance of the testing and challenged our students to do their best. Though it is but one measure of a school's performance, it is one that comes with ramifications from the State of Arizona and one that impacts our reputation. I ask that you take a moment to discuss with your student(s) the importance of doing their best on their AzMERIT assessments (and everything they do for that matter). Our testing window opens on Monday, April 1 (no fooling), and continues through Tuesday, April 16. Makeup testing will conclude on April 24. Our testing calendar can be found as an attachment to the in-touch email that delivered this newsletter to you.

I'd like to conclude this email with three brief thoughts: 1) Last night we held our Agora Arts Festival. What an excellent event that highlighted the fine and performing arts abilities of our students. 2) As the weather warms up I'd like to remind you all of the SUSD dress code. The most common infraction we are seeing at this time is midriff length tops exposing the abdomen. 3) Attendance excusals can now be completed through ParentVUE and initial results have been positive.

Professionally,

Todd Stevens - Principal Arcadia



## EDUCATION CORNER

It's annual testing time in SUSD and around the state of Arizona. For the next several weeks, your 3<sup>rd</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> grade students will be taking state assessments. The AIMS Science Test was given March 25-29 in grades 4, 8, 9 and 10. Throughout the month of April, AzMERIT testing in Reading, Writing and Mathematics will take place in grades 3 – 11. These standardized tests are required by state law and, in conjunction with benchmark testing conducted throughout the school year, allow us to assess the effectiveness of our instruction and how your student, school and the District are progressing toward meeting Arizona standards. Please be sure your students get enough sleep, eat a good breakfast and arrive at school on time on test days ... and all days. ~ SUSD Curriculum



Scottsdale *Unified* School District

## DISTRICT CORNER

We are very proud of Desert Canyon Middle School sixth grade student Omkar Bharath. The four-time, SUSD Spelling Bee champion spelled his way to the title of the state's best speller at the 2019 Arizona State Spelling Bee last weekend, besting 26 other competitors from around the state! Omkar correctly spelled the word *breviary* in the Bee's 24<sup>th</sup> round to win. Omkar will represent Arizona in the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C. May 27 – 30.

SUSD students in grades 3 – 8 are eligible to take part in classroom and school bees late each year, leading to the January District Bee. In these days of automatic spellcheckers, good spellers are proof that students are reading, writing and expanding their vocabularies, so please encourage your student to read every day!