



ACE Charter High School

www.acehs.org (520) 628-8316

How does Arizona measure success?

Arizona's Governor and Legislature has made many changes to how schools are able to measure student academic success. State law requires that school administer a standardized test. The state has replaced the AIMS tests with the **AZMERIT**. The AZMERIT will assess students on their writing, reading and math skills through an end of course exam. Sophomores are still required to take the AIMS Science test, but it is not required for graduation. New requirements for the Class of 2017 will include passing a Civics test to ensure that graduates have the skills needed to actively participate in our government and community.

Many people have heard of the proposed amendment to House Bill 2246 that describes how schools will be evaluated based on standardized testing results. Also proposed in the bill are changes to the rights parents have regarding student participation in standardized testing. The **proposed** HB 2246 would require the state to provide a form to parents to authorize their children to "opt out" of the requirement to take the AZMERIT. If approved the bill will describe how schools will not be penalized for failing to meet participation counts. Finally, if HB2246 is approved schools will need to offer an alternative assessment for students who opt out of AZ MERIT testing if the school requires such testing. HB 2246 contains many other items that relate to parental involvement in schools beyond pupil assessment. These include requiring schools to develop strategies to increase parental involvement in homework, attendance and other issues that impact student academic growth. The proposed changes to HB 2246 have not passed the Senate. The most recent vote on April 1st tied 15 -15. Under the current law parents do not have the legal right to have students decline to test.

Upcoming Events

District Benchmark Testing

April 13th – 17th

AIMS Science for Sophomores

April 20th in ACE MPR

AZMERIT End of Course Exams

April 21st – 23rd & 28th - 29th

Deadline for Graduates to participate in Commencement Ceremony - May 8th

Commencement Ceremony May 18th

Last Day for Students – May 21st

The ACE Eagles qualified for Basketball Tournament Playoffs!

The ACE Eagles basketball team finished the regular season with a record of 5 wins and 2 losses. After losing the first two games of this season, the Eagles got tough and won the next five games! The team played their way into the Gold Division which gives them a chance at winning the league tournament. Tournament play off games begin on April 17th, with the first game at the Lohse Family YMCA. We are very proud of our team and wish them the best of luck in the tournament!

GO ACE EAGLES!

Rain Water Harvesting and ACE Campus Beautification

As part of the Schoolyard Education Program grant, ACE Charter High School received \$4000 dollars through the **Watershed Management Group (WMG)** to construct several water-harvesting basins around the perimeter of the Tucson Youth Development Building. Program Manager Joaquin Murrieta-Saldivar and Co-op Program Assistant and Living Lab Project Manager Emma Stahl-Wert of the WMG supervised construction of the basins with Mr. Kennedy's Earth Science students along with a handful of other volunteer staff and students. The purpose of the basins is to beautify the exterior of the building by helping trap rainwater in order to grow several species of native trees and plants, as well as serve as a pollinator garden for native wildlife. The basins collect rain water run off from the roof and prevents it from just flowing out to Stone Avenue. The water can then soak into the soil to be used by the plants and reduces the need for irrigation. This project created an outdoor "living lab" that will help to engage students in science through hands-on experiences. Stop by and check out the new landscape!

Biosphere Field Trip

On March 20th, 25 students and 5 chaperones went to the Biosphere 2! This was a competitive field trip open to all students who gained permission from all five teachers based on behavior, attendance and academic progress. Many more students qualified than we could take! Students and chaperones took a tour of the Biosphere 2 to learn about the early research, saw the living quarters where people stayed for two years and visited many different biomes, including a rainforest and the ocean!

Everyone LOVED the rainforest with the very moist air and exotic smells so different from our Sonoran desert ecosystem. Students learned about the many different science experiments going on at the Biosphere 2 that focus on water, climate, energy and sustainability issues. The field trip ended with a stop at Dairy Queen for some sweet treats after a fun filled day! We hope to return to Biosphere 2 in the future and participate in hands on science activities and learn more about our amazing planet Earth. **April is Earth Month at Biosphere 2** with special programs every Saturday from 11am to 2pm, more info is at

<http://b2science.org/>

Community and Culture

would like to thank all students, staff and community members who donated to the **Leukemia and Lymphoma Society** during our **Pennies for Patients** fundraiser. The fundraiser will end Friday, and will have raised *almost \$400 dollars* for this great cause!

Our next fundraiser will be for **Joy For All**, a non-profit organization that provides back packs with boxes full of goodies for families with a member in the hospital. In addition to collecting donations, ACE will host a box decorating event open to all members of our community. This event will take place in late April, so watch for the letter!

The **Aquaponics Project** is moving forward! The Big Fish Award from **Deupree Family Foundation** has funded this amazing opportunity for our school! The media beds are nearly constructed, the plumbing is being installed and the seedlings have already been started! TYD/ACE will be hosting an Open House and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony in May to show off all the improvements and progress made at TYD/ACE this year! ACE will hold a contest to name the new space prior to the Open House! **What would you name the new gardens?**