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Arizona Department of Education  
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction John Huppenthal

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## **Superintendent of Public Instruction John Huppenthal Announces Initiative to Promote Civic Literacy for Arizona Students**

### ***ADE to Spearhead New “American Heritage – Arizona Centennial Initiative”***

**Phoenix, AZ, December 7, 2011**– Today, on the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the attack on the United States Naval Base at Pearl Harbor, Superintendent of Public Instruction John Huppenthal announced a new Arizona Department of Education Initiative designed to help Arizona’s children learn about their rights, roles and responsibilities as American citizens. The new “American Heritage – Arizona Centennial Initiative” will help strengthen our students’ civic literacy as American citizens and learn about Arizona’s unique heritage and the important role that our veterans have played in securing our precious freedoms.

“As Americans, we enjoy our freedom and the rule of law through the visionary documents that our Founding Fathers created,” said Superintendent of Public Instruction John Huppenthal. “As educators, we play a special role in helping our children learn about their rights, roles and responsibilities as American citizens. This is critical to helping each generation sustain and strengthen these values that define the United States.”

This new initiative of the Superintendent’s Office will launch in 2012 in conjunction with Arizona’s Centennial and will bring the tools and resources together for our state’s teachers and schools to highlight important historical and civic concepts during their normal course lessons and will help bring the unique perspectives of our nation’s veterans into the classroom.

In support of the Superintendent’s “American Heritage – Arizona Centennial Initiative,” the Arizona Department of Education will:

- Create a dedicated page on its website to host partner information and resources that schools can use for lesson plans, curriculum and veteran classroom or assembly visits
- Design and distribute via electronic media materials for schools to use in conjunction with the Centennial celebration
- Produce and host on the website video messages from the Superintendent, veterans and historians that can be shown in schools and classrooms
- Identify opportunities for veterans to be brought into schools and classrooms to speak to students

## **Opportunities to Participate in the American Heritage – Arizona Centennial Initiative:**

February 14 – Arizona’s Centennial

February 20 – Presidents Day

May 1 – Loyalty Day

May 28 – Memorial Day

September 17 – Constitution Day

November 11 – Veterans Day

December 7 – Pearl Harbor Day

December 15 – Bill of Rights Day

“The Joe Foss Institute is proud to be a part of this initiative,” declared Arizona based Joe Foss Institute (JFI) CEO Lucian Spataro, Jr., Ph. D. “JFI offers a living ‘history’ experience by sending Veterans into schools to interact with students, share their stories, teach about public service and each students’ responsibility to be good citizens. Our goal through this program and our online curriculum is to assist educators in teaching the basic foundation of how our government works and an appreciation for the uniqueness of our freedoms.”

“One of the primary reasons for Arizonans to commemorate our state’s centennial is to provide an opportunity for all to reflect on those who tirelessly gave of their time and service to help Arizona become the 48<sup>th</sup> state,” said Karen Churchard, executive director of the Arizona Centennial 2012 Foundation. “This exciting *American Heritage – Arizona Centennial Initiative* is a tremendous opportunity to create civic pride in our young people – and teach them the valuable lesson of giving back since they are the future! I applaud Superintendent Huppenthal for this initiative, which furthers our educational efforts for the Arizona Centennial.”

“I strongly encourage all Arizona schools to view 2012, and those days identified, as an opportunity for their students to learn more about the United State’s great heritage, Arizona’s wonderful history, and the brave legacy of the men and women who have served in our military,” concluded Superintendent Huppenthal.

*John Huppenthal was sworn in as Arizona’s 19<sup>th</sup> Superintendent of Public Instruction on January 4, 2011. During his 26 years in public service, he has established himself as one of Arizona’s leading education reformers. As a state legislator, he successfully authored and passed over 200 bills, more bills than any other legislator in state history. A substantial number of those bills focused on improving education. For each of his 18 years in the state legislature, Huppenthal either served on or chaired education committees, most recently as the Chairman of the Senate Education Committee.*

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