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

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## **For Immediate Release**

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### **Superintendent Huppenthal Recognizes Anti-Bullying Awareness Month**

(Phoenix, Ariz.- October 4, 2012) In 2010-11, over 18,000 safety incidents ranging from bullying to threats of intimidation were reported by Arizona schools. This sobering statistic gives Superintendent John Huppenthal good reason to call attention to National Anti-Bullying Awareness Month.

This month, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE), in partnership with the University of Arizona, is working to raise awareness about bullying in schools and to draw attention to available resources and information for parents and educators.

“Children need to feel safe in schools in order for them to be productive and learn in the classroom,” stated Superintendent John Huppenthal. “No child should feel threatened or intimidated.”

According to the Arizona Youth Risk Behavior Survey (high school students), conducted in 2009 and 2011, students who reported having been bullied or harassed on school grounds increased from 25% to 31%.

Bullying behavior is often meant to hurt and is carried out by someone who is seeking power or control over another person. There are three forms of bullying – physical, emotional, and social. No matter what form it takes, bullying needs to be effectively addressed and prevented. It has a direct relationship to student depression and suicide, revenge behavior, and absenteeism.

If a parent knows or suspects their child is being bullied, and they have not had any communication with their school about it, the parent should contact his/her child's teacher immediately. Parents should be informed about what resources are available to them, including those for school staff, administrators, and community members in order to actively engage in the prevention of bullying.

Below is a list of resources available to you through the Department of Education:

- The Arizona Department of Education’s School Safety and Prevention Unit provide training and assistance to educators and constituents;
- Training is also provided on broader-based prevention strategies, e.g., Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS);

- Facilitated parent meetings are offered that assist parents in talking with their kids about sensitive issues, including bullying;
- Guidance is provided to parents who contact ADE with unresolved concerns of bullying or other safety issues;
- Visit the Arizona Department of Education's School Safety and Prevention website for helpful information and resources.

"By reducing bullying in our schools, children can be comfortable spending their days learning, growing, building friendships, and preparing for their futures," stated Superintendent Huppenthal. "We must all work together to put an end to bullying and provide a safe learning environment for all Arizona's children."

For more information about the Department of Education's anti-bullying programs and helpful resources, please visit <http://www.azed.gov/prevention-programs/resources/>.

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