



**Arizona Department of Education
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction Diane M. Douglas**

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Superintendent Diane Douglas Supports Anti-Bullying Efforts

(Phoenix, Ariz., Feb. 15, 2016) – Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction Diane Douglas on Friday visited Verrado High School in Buckeye to participate in an anti-bullying presentation by undefeated mixed martial arts fighter Daniel Puder.

“Mr. Puder was a very captivating speaker and the students really seemed to enjoy and absorb what he had to say,” said Superintendent Douglas. “School bullying is a concerning topic and it impacts students across our state. I commend Mr. Puder for being a positive role-model for children and for his steadfast commitment to such a great cause.”

Daniel Puder is widely recognized as an undefeated Mixed Martial Arts Fighter and the Champion of World Wrestling Entertainment’s (WWE’s) Tough Enough Competition.

Prior to Puder’s career as a professional athlete, he was a target of bullying. Recognizing the mental, emotional and physical toll he suffered as a result, he turned that damaging experience into a positive force by creating the national anti-bullying non-profit organization, My Life My Power! The organization’s stated mission is “to add value within communities by inspiring our future generations.”

“School bullying is a serious problem that is often linked to teen suicides and other bullying related deaths,” said Sen. Steve Smith, R-Maricopa. “I applaud Daniel Puder for his continued efforts to empower students, and thank Superintendent Douglas for taking the time to hear his message.”

On Oct. 14, 2015, My Life My Power! received a proclamation from the State of Arizona for making communities safer and enhancing the lives of children. The proclamation was signed by Sen. Smith and Sen. Don Shooter, R-Yuma.

In Arizona, policies and procedures for harassing, intimidating and bullying on school grounds are maintained by local governing boards. The Arizona Department of Education provides training and technical assistance to schools in their efforts to develop safe and supportive learning environments that meet the continuum of school safety, prevention, intervention and response.

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