

## Wickenburg High School Receives "Top 50" Honor

The Wickenburg Unified School District (WUSD) was recently was informed that Wickenburg High School (WHS) has been named by the Arizona Department of Education as one of Arizona's "Top 50" high schools when comparing student SAT scores. This is a great honor and we are extremely proud of our students and staff. As you will recall, WHS was also identified as a "bronze" high school by U.S. News and World Report and is a leader in the state of Arizona related to its implementation of the ACT Quality Core curriculum and its use of digital Flexbooks to provide instruction in the areas of math and science.

Over the past few years WHS as well as all Wickenburg Unified School District schools have established a "laser-like focus" on classroom instructional techniques, known to educators as the Essential Elements of Instruction (EEI). WHS has also established systems to move each student to the next academic level through monitoring and intervention programs both during the day and after school through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Program. This effort represents a lot of work by our students and staff, but will pay tremendous dividends as time progresses.

Annually somewhere between 40-60 WHS students take the SAT in their junior or senior year and do so to prepare for college entrance. The counselors at WHS work diligently to make sure our students are aware of these testing opportunities as well as scholarship programs which might assist them once they move on to the post-secondary (college or technical school) level.

Implementation of the Move on When Ready program and the ACT Quality Core curriculum will ensure that our students are even better prepared as they progress through their high school careers. In the short term students will struggle with these new, more rigorous requirements, but ultimately they will be better prepared for college and/or career than ever before. In a recent speech given by ASU President Dr. Michael Crow I learned that during this most recent national recession, high school dropouts suffered a jobless rate of between 20-30%. Alternatively, individuals with a college degree, at the height of the recession, experienced a 4% jobless rate. Clearly these statistics provide strong evidence for the fact that we must do all we can to prepare our students for their post high school years.

We are proud of this "Top 50" recognition which our students and staff have achieved and trust that the best is yet to come as we continue our focus on moving each student to the next academic level. As a community I hope you will help me in congratulating WHS and continue to support them as they raise the academic bar for all of the students they serve.