

Superintendent's Letter
April 2008



The Face of the Future

Dear Parents, Staff and Community Members,

As Superintendent, a vital part of my job is to model lifelong learning. Since our students focus daily on growing in their knowledge, I must be willing to do the same. In my position as Superintendent, as well as in my personal life, I am constantly reading, learning and encouraging others to do the same. Two of the areas I find most fascinating are change and connectivity. It is a critical aspect of a global society that we stay connected to both our internal and external communities. One of the ways I am able to do this is through a local educational consortium our District belongs to entitled *Learning Connections*. *Learning Connections* is an organized group of people who are committed to maximizing learning opportunities for all residents of our communities. The consortium identifies shared interests, anticipates and responds to needs and explores opportunities to integrate and coordinate plans, resources and activities. Implicit in the consortium's mission is the importance of enhancing student, staff and organizational learning.

Rather than a "think tank" where ideas are brainstormed, *Learning Connections* is a "do tank" focusing on how our actions lead to solutions. With a focus on teaching and learning, *Learning Connections* has been designed to encourage innovation and continuous improvement. It was started in 1999 and is currently facilitated by faculty at Paradise Valley Community College. Member institutions consist of *Arizona State University West, Deer Valley Unified School District, Northern Arizona University, Paradise Valley Unified School District, Rio Salado College and Cave Creek Unified School District*.

As members of *Learning Connections*, the members of our Executive Team attended a webcast sponsored by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), the Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS), The New York Times Knowledge Network and the Society for College and University Planning (SCUP) entitled: "*The Seven Revolutions: Scanning the World Out to 2025.*" Erik R. Peterson, senior vice president at CSIS and holding the William A. Schreyer Chair in Global Analysis presented the following as the seven challenges we are/will be facing:

Revolution 1 – Population - "8,700 people every hour, 145 people every minute, and 2.4 people every second are now being added to our global population ..."

Revolution 2 – Resources - "The combined effects of population growth and income growth are expected to double global food consumption in the next 30 years ..."

Revolution 3 – Technology - "There is always likely to be anxiety about the jobs of the future, because in the long run most of them will involve producing goods and services that have not yet been invented." Alan Greenspan

Revolution 4 – Information - "M.I.T. is now developing a durable wireless laptop computer made for use in the developing world. This laptop will be sold for \$100 each to nations around the world for free distribution for students."

Revolution 5 – Integration - "According to the UN Development Program, the accumulated wealth of the 225 richest individuals in the world is equivalent to the combined annual earnings of the 2.7 billion people at the bottom of the global income ladder."

Revolution 6 – Conflict - "In 2000, there were more than 500 incidents of illegal transportation of nuclear and radioactive materials across the Russian border."

Revolution 7 – Governance - "Ninety-one percent of surveyed business executives in large companies believe that the public has a right to expect good corporate citizenship."

To view the information in its entirety, please visit the Seven Revolutions website at www.7revs.org/sevenrevscontent.html.

Given the **Seven Revolutions** we are facing, I am looking forward to working with you as we prepare our students for the future. 2025 is only seventeen short years away so we have no time to lose and everything to gain for our students.

Tacy C. Ashby, Ed.D.
Superintendent