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LOCAL CLASSROOMS HUMMING AGAIN



These first-graders should get gold stars for attentiveness (and posture), as their teacher at C.E. Rose Elementary School, Nydia Harding, gives them instructions on how to behave when entering their classroom. Thursday was the first day of school in Tucson Unified School District.

BENJIE SANDERS / ARIZONA DAILY STAR

Executive loses job after viral video rant

Tucson CFO berates Chick-fil-A employee

By Phil Villarreal
ARIZONA DAILY STAR

An executive at a medical manufacturing firm lost his job after a YouTube video of him verbally ambushing a young employee at a Tucson Chick-fil-A went viral.

Adam Smith, formerly chief financial officer at Vante, stepped down after the video — which Smith shot and uploaded himself — caused embarrassment to the company.

The video was picked up by countless blogs. Before Smith took it off YouTube, others had downloaded it and reposted it.

Both the escapade and its fallout filled Tucson-linked tweets.

Smith, who served as an adjunct lecturer at the University of Arizona last semester, filmed himself berating a drive-thru employee at Chick-fil-A, 3605 E. Broadway, on Wednesday. Conservative commentator Mike Huckabee dubbed that day “Chick-fil-A Appreciation Day” and encouraged customers to eat there to show support for the chain after its president, Dan Cathy, said the company supports efforts to block gay marriage.

In the video, which runs 2 minutes, 21 seconds, Smith enters the drive-thru, explaining that he’s ordered a free cup of water. Once the employee hands him his cup, he lambastes her employer, calling Chick-fil-A “a hateful corporation”

See VIDEO, A7

WATCH THE VIDEO

tinyurl.com/bnz6ovx

Tucson ‘A’ schools growing in number

But most — 124 in all — find themselves in ‘B’ or ‘C’ categories

By Alexis Huicochea
ARIZONA DAILY STAR

The number of Arizona schools that earned “A” grades this year increased, but overall more than half were identified as “B” and “C” performing schools.

This is the second year the Arizona Department of Education has employed the letter-grading system to measure how well schools are performing.

This year, the letter grading system replaced the AZ Learns ac-

countability system, which awarded labels that ranged from underperforming to excelling. The state made the results, which are from the 2011-2012 school year, public Thursday.

Of the nearly 1,300 traditional schools graded across the state, 283 were awarded “A’s” this year, compared to 2011 when 231 schools earned that designation.

More than half — 865 — were awarded “B’s” or “C’s.”

“Our department is dedicated

to providing parents fair yet rigorous evaluations of schools so they can make informed decisions about their child’s education,” said Arizona Schools Chief **John Huppenthal**. “We recognize higher accountability leads to higher aca-

See GRADES, A4

On StarNet: You can check how your school and district did on both letter grades and on AIMS at azstarnet.com/databases

SCHOOL BEGINS

When classes begin for local school districts:

Marana	Aug. 6
Sahuarita	Aug. 6
Sunnyside	Aug. 6
Tanque Verde	Aug. 8
Catalina Foothills	Aug. 9
Flowing Wells	Aug. 9
Amphitheater	Aug. 9
Ajo	Aug. 13
TUSD	In session
Vail	In session

Source: District websites

GOP blocks measure to boost cyber safeguards

By Ken Diliana
MCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

WASHINGTON — Earlier this year, top national security officials held a classified briefing in the Capitol for about half the U.S. Senate, warning that the country’s critical infrastructure was highly vulnerable to a major cyber attack and urging Congress to move swiftly to require new safeguards.

Gen. Keith Alexander, head of the National Security Agency, and Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, were among those who pressed for a White House-backed cyber-security bill to regulate privately owned critical infrastructure, such as electric utilities, chemical plants and water systems.

See CYBER SECURITY, A7

Area AIMS scores about level with 2011

Slight improvement in high-stakes test is posted across AZ

By Alexis Huicochea
ARIZONA DAILY STAR

A slight improvement in AIMS scores was seen this year across the state in all subject matters, according to test results made public Thursday.

The performance of Tucson-area districts was relatively the same as it was in 2011. In fact, most districts had a higher percentage of students passing than the state average.

Each year, Arizona students in grades three through eight and in

10th grade are required to take the high-stakes test to measure their mastery in math, reading, writing and science.

High schoolers are required to pass the test to graduate — a requirement that has resulted in hundreds of students in the Tucson area not being allowed to graduate.

The gains in each subject area were marked by a 1-to-2-percentage-point increase from 2011 statewide.

Sixty percent of students statewide passed the math portion of Arizona’s Instrument to Measure Standards test, compared with 59 percent in 2011 and 57 percent in 2010.

Across the state in the area of

reading, there was a 4-percentage-point increase from 2010 when 73 percent of students passed. That rose to 76 percent in 2011 and 77 percent this year.

After seeing a significant drop statewide in the percentage of students passing writing from 2010 to 2011 — from 71 percent to 56 percent — a slight increase was noted this year with 57 percent of students passing.

The initial decrease in writing scores was attributed to a revision of the test that reflected higher academic standards.

The increase of 1 percentage point in writing suggests that students are now leveling to the new standard, according to the Ari-

zona Department of Education.

A 2-percentage-point increase was achieved across the state on the science test, with 60 percent of students passing that portion.

“We continue to show increases each year with our AIMS scores across the spectrum,” said Arizona schools chief **John Huppenthal**. “Not only have we made progress this year, but anticipate greater progress in coming years.”

All but two of the nine major

See AIMS, A4

On StarNet: Search a database of scores for all Arizona schools and districts at azstarnet.com/databases

COMING SUNDAY

Who’s running where

The Star’s election guide helps navigate Arizona’s jumbled political map.

ELECTION 2012



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