



State of Arizona  
Department of Education  
**Educator & School Excellence – Title IV-A**



December 28, 2018

Dear Arizona Educators, Administrators, Community Partners, and Advocates:

Let me begin by congratulating you on a year well spent and join in an eager welcoming of the New Year. We have collectively accomplished so many worthwhile and honorable goals, and I am privileged to continue serving you, your students, and the communities of Arizona. In line with an artful practice, I am consistently reflecting on our program and the services we provide. I would like to take this opportunity to share some achievements and identified opportunities for improvement with you, our valued community of stakeholders.

In the past few months, we have begun solidifying our new [Title IV-A Program Area](#). Our program area consists of three offices and is overseen by a staff of highly effective content experts. The [Office of Arts Education](#) is represented by our Arts Education Specialist, Haley Honeman. The Office of Safe & Healthy Students is represented by our Safe & Healthy Students Specialist, Keri Schoeff. We are currently working to identify the Education Program Specialist who will represent the Office of Digital Literacy, as well as filling a Title IV-A Grant Specialist position who will assist in streamlining the grant review process and representing our program area on several state and national committees. Rounding off our team is the well-known Sandra Skelton who is now serving the Title IV-A area in a greatly increased capacity. We have built our strength in numbers and expertise this year while staying centered in the need to solidify our processes, procedures, interrater reliability, and diverse technical support offerings. I look forward to continued leadership to this effect and to improved service to our LEAs in the coming year.

In 2018, we offered numerous district-specific trainings on everything from Arts Integration and Social & Emotional Literacy to Title IV-A advocacy and Data/Standards informed instruction practices. Taking a prominent lead in the development and implementation of our statewide ESSA Conference, we were thrilled to infuse the Arts and other enrichment activities throughout the conference experience. Our partnerships with the [Arizona Commission on the Arts](#), [Arizona Citizens for the Arts](#), and our Arts Education Professional Service Organizations have led to numerous publications, initiatives, and resources. Of particular interest regarding this work, I would like to note the publication of the [Arizona Arts Education Data Project](#), the most robust look at Arts Education Access and Enrollment to-date. Our [A3C Report](#) serves as an anecdotal composite of the needs and challenges facing the Arts Education community across the state. We look forward to producing similar bodies of work with our newly operational Office of Safe & Healthy Students and our developing Office of Digital Literacy.

I am excited to begin better leveraging the collective knowledge and passion of our interdisciplinary team in 2019. We have heard the need to generate a better communication platform for our diverse constituents. We recognize the need for easy-to-access and readily available trainings and PD. We understand the necessity of clearer communication and a more streamlined grant process and application. All of these are priorities that I am honored to pursue, with solutions on the horizon and the continued participation of our powerful and diverse community.

On behalf of the Title IV-A Program Area, I wish you all a wonderfully fulfilling New Year! I sincerely look forward to creating, innovating, and collaborating with you throughout this next year. I have set my intention to increase the experiences, the celebrations and highlights of the amazing programming you create for our students. Let's make 2019 the year where we strive toward a Well-Rounded education that is artful, in which campus climates and cultures are Safe & Healthy, and students and staff are Digitally Literate. Here's to this, and so much more!

Happy New Year!

Collaboratively yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dustin K. Loehr". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Dustin K. Loehr  
Director of Arts Education and Title IV-A  
Arizona Department of Education