



DR. JOSEPH TAFOYA

Dr. Joseph Tafoya served as Director of the Department of Defense Education Activity from 2000 – 2008

Dr. Tafoya, a Native American born in San Diego, CA, began his educational career in 1969. Over the course of 21 years, he served as a teacher, resource teacher, assistant principal and principal at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

In 1990, Dr. Tafoya became Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Schools in Santa Ana, California. During this time he worked closely with the business community to establish school-to-work programs and to involve business in school partnerships and in fundraising for college scholarships. In 1994, Dr. Tafoya was promoted to Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum. During this time he worked extensively with schools on the analysis of test scores as they relate to curricular improvement; as well as analyzing reading needs and developing site and district strategies to improve the reading level of students.

Dr. Tafoya earned his bachelor of arts and master of arts degrees from San Diego State University in 1968 and 1974 respectively, and received his doctorate in Educational Administration from Northern Arizona University in 1983. In January 2001 he received an Exceptional Civilian Service Award from the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Memberships in professional organizations include: Council of Chief State School Officers; Advisory Council for Dependent's Education; Dependents Education Council; Military Impacted Schools Association; Military Child Education Coalition; and Chairman, National High School Association. Dr. Tafoya and his wife have three children.