



October 29, 2021

Hello again, SUSD Parents and Guardians,

While much of our school year's first quarter centered around establishing new expectations and routines, this second quarter is already a flurry of student activity and achievement. From the classroom, science labs and art studios to cross country courses, stages and swimming pools, your students have been engaged in all sorts of amazing activities these past two weeks.

Elementary, K-8 and middle school parents had the opportunity this week to check in with their students' teachers and receive student progress reports at biannual conferences. While these are calendared events, please know that you are always welcome and encouraged to reach out to teachers with specific concerns and questions about your students' learning.

This week, our sophomores got a taste of what a college entrance test looks like when they took the PSAT, or Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test. The test covers reading, writing and language, and math. This College Board exam helps students, as well as guidance counselors and parents, get a first look at college-readiness levels and subject areas that may require some particular attention.

IB Information Night

There was a great turnout last night at Desert Mountain High School at the information night held for 8th grade families on the school's International Baccalaureate Middle Years (MYP) and Diploma programmes. If you missed the session or want to learn more anytime about this internationally recognized academic program, go to www.susd.org/IB. All Mountainside Middle School students are already part of the MYP. They can choose to continue with it at Desert Mountain, next door, as 9th graders. The Diploma Programme begins in 11th grade. SUSD's IB program, headquartered in the Desert Mountain Learning Community, is open to all SUSD and non-SUSD students. Anasazi Elementary School, located nearby, is in the process of becoming an IB Primary Years Programme.

Mayor's We the People Constitution Day Contest

Social studies knowledge, creative writing and art skills were on display last week at the awards ceremony for the annual Scottsdale Mayor's Constitution Day essay and art competition. SUSD students were grand prize winners and finalists in nearly all of the grade-level categories. The contest provided cross-curricular opportunities for more than 300 of our 1st–12th grade students to learn and reflect on the Constitution's Bill of Rights and other Amendments. Photos of the ceremony at the Via Linda Senior Center can be viewed [here](#).

Economics in Art

The artistic talents of SUSD students are also on display in the results of the Arizona Council on Economic Education's recent [Economics Concepts Poster Contest](#). This non-profit organization helps educators prepare and students learn about personal finance, economics and entrepreneurship. We are especially proud that two of Scottsdale Online teacher Erin Hansen's 3rd grade students are among those recognized this year!

Performing Arts

It has been an amazing few weeks for our band and strings programs in SUSD. Last weekend, the Arcadia, Desert Mountain and Saguaro High School marching bands placed first in 3 different competitions around the Valley, marching away with all of the caption awards for Outstanding Music, Outstanding Visual, Outstanding General Effect, Outstanding Percussion, and Outstanding Auxiliary. All five of our high school marching bands will take part in the annual SUSD Marching Band Exhibition on November 10 at 6 p.m. at Arcadia High School. The evening kicks off with all five bands' trumpet sections performing the National Anthem, which should be stirring. Join us for this terrific, annual celebration of SUSD's marching bands.

The success of our performing arts programs continued at the ABODA Fall Orchestra Festival, also last weekend. The Saguaro High School Orchestra program received top honors, with all three ensembles - Concert, Symphonic and Advanced – receiving Superior Ratings. The Symphonic and Advanced Orchestra was awarded with the label of “Superior with Distinction,” the highest competition rating possible. This is an outstanding achievement for Saguaro's musicians and their new instructor, Robert Reyes, who previously directed Mohave Middle School music students.

If you are theatrically inclined, tomorrow night is closing night for the Saguaro High School Theatre production of *She Kills Monsters*, an entertaining tale of the secret “Dungeons and Dragons”-playing life of the main character's late sister. The curtain goes up at 7 p.m. Tickets are available [here](#) or at the door.

Athletics

Over the next few weeks, high school sports begin state tournament competition in cross country, swim and dive, volleyball and football. Please go to azpreps365.com for specific information on dates and times of your team's events. Also, the SUSD 2nd Quarter Middle School Sports Festival will take place November 13. Sports include boys basketball, girls softball, boys soccer, and girls soccer. The Festival takes place district-wide at 8am at Coronado, Saguaro, Chaparral Park, Desert Mountain and Mountainside. Schedules will be distributed to schools at the end of next week.

This week's Governing Board meeting

We want to bring your attention to the heroic actions of three Cocopah Middle school students who came to their bus driver's aid earlier this month. The boys received [commemorative SUSD Recognition coins](#), as well as plaques from the Scottsdale Fire and Police departments [at Tuesday's meeting](#). They acted bravely and compassionately, and we are so grateful.

Mask Update

At this time, there is no change to the mask requirement at SUSD schools, offices and ancillary locations. For now, masks will continue to be required indoors. Neither of the measures we continue to track – community COVID transmission levels or the ability of elementary school students to be vaccinated – has changed since last week. We continue to review our mitigation protocols and will notify you of any changes.

Lastly, [Open Enrollment for the 2022-2023 school year](#) gets underway Monday, November 1. Also, if you have a little learner joining us next school year for kindergarten, you are invited to information events being hosted by our elementary and K-8 schools November 4-29. Find the complete schedule [here](#).

Thank you,
Scottsdale Unified School District [Cabinet](#) and [Leadership Team](#)