



February 11, 2022

Dear SUSD Families,

It was wonderful to see such a great turnout at last Saturday's Parada del Sol and Trail's End Festival and to be able to share our SUSD spirit with the community! Congratulations to Laguna Elementary, named winner of the Parada's Home Town Favorite Award; Navajo Elementary, recognized as Best School; and the Coronado High School Dons marching band, chosen as Best Band. In case you missed it (or you want to re-live being there!), click [here](#) for our photo album. Those who recall the Scottsdale High senior class prank of 40+ years ago when a VW found its way onto the school's roof got a good chuckle, too! Although no longer drivable, the Bug itself was there, carried along the parade route by some of the "alleged" pranksters. Many thanks to our friends at the Scottsdale Charros, long-time Parada participants and this year, for the first time, official Parada sponsors, for a wonderful celebration through the streets of Old Town.

### ***Academics***

We were pleased to learn earlier this week that Cherokee Elementary School has successfully renewed its status as an Arizona Educational Foundation A+ School of Excellence<sup>®</sup>. Cherokee is one of 21 Arizona public schools to receive the coveted recognition this year. The application preparation and evaluation process is rigorous any time it is undertaken, but for the Cherokee staff, Principal Walt Chantler and the Charger community to dedicate themselves to this task while also managing the impact of a pandemic and moving into a new campus all at the same time is extraordinary. Congratulations, Cherokee! SUSD's other A+ schools are Laguna, Pueblo, Redfield, and Sequoya.

We are also proud of three graduating seniors who are in the running to be named 2022 U.S. Presidential Scholars this spring. To continue in the competition, Ayva Kacir and Jiatian Yin from Desert Mountain High School and Kyle Odden from Chaparral High School must submit applications that detail their leadership and service activities and academic achievements, and write an essay. These outstanding SUSD students were among 4,000 high school seniors from around the nation chosen to apply for this honor. We wish them well!

Kudos, too, to Mohave Middle School 7<sup>th</sup> grader Arrow McGinty, who finished third out of 37 spellers today in the Region 2 Spelling Bee competition at Paradise Valley High School. The regional bee was won by a Deer Valley district student.

### ***Upcoming Parent Opportunities and Events***

#### ***English Language Development Program Task Force***

SUSD is convening an English Language Development Program Task Force to gain perspectives on how to best address the needs of our English Language Learners and to create a unified understanding of the English Language Development program. Our objectives are to increase language proficiency levels of all district English Language Learners, develop understanding of English Language program expectations and outcomes, and identify areas of need to support program delivery and implementation. We are looking for volunteers who have experience with English Learners (ELs) and are able to meet monthly for two hours. If

you are selected, please be prepared to attend our first meeting on February 23 from 4-6 p.m. at the MDA annex, 8500 E. Jackrabbit Rd., Scottsdale. Find the task force application [here](#).

### *Special Education Perceptions Survey*

Next week, you will receive an invitation to take part in a district-commissioned Hanover survey to capture feedback from SUSD Special Education and general education parents, teachers and staff on the support of our special needs students. The district's Special Education Task Force has been working diligently the past two years to identify areas and recommendations for improvement. We look forward to receiving your thoughts.

### *notMYkid Presentation on Teenager Screen Time*

Next Wednesday, February 16, at 6 p.m., Desert Mountain High School hosts local prevention partner notMYkid for a special showing of the documentary, *Screenagers – Growing Up in the Digital Age*. Through poignant and unexpectedly funny stories, and the surprising insights of authors, psychologists, and brain scientists, *Screenagers* reveals how tech time impacts kids' development and offers solutions on how adults can empower kids to best navigate and find balance in the digital world. Register for next week's event [here](#).

### *FBI Presentation on Child and Teenager 'Sextortion'*

The FBI's Phoenix field office will host an adults-only outreach event on Thursday, February 24 to share resources and provide training on how to prevent teens and children from falling victim to sextortion, how it starts and how to identify it. The virtual presentation is for concerned parents, youth organization leaders, faith-based organization leaders and educators. Register for the 10 a.m. event [here](#). The program runs 90 minutes.

### ***COVID Update***

Although community transmission remains [high](#), local cases and [cases on our campuses](#) continue to decline rapidly. Beginning Monday, February 14, SUSD staff will have the option of whether to wear a mask while indoors, the same choice that our families have had for their students this semester. We continue to strongly recommend masks at this time, and our Mitigation Action Teams are still keeping a close eye on school operations and will make site-specific decisions, should cases start to rise again.

### ***Athletics***

The highly anticipated high school basketball post-season begins tonight with the Saguaro girls team and the Arcadia, Chaparral, and Desert Mountain boys teams hitting the hard courts for tournament play-in games. The state soccer tournament gets underway in earnest tomorrow, following a series of play-in matches earlier this week. The Arcadia, Chaparral, Desert Mountain, and Saguaro girls soccer teams see first-round action on Saturday, as do the Chaparral, Coronado, Desert Mountain, and Saguaro and boys soccer teams. The state wrestling tournament is next week. Find all of our teams' post-season schedules [here](#). Go, SUSD!

Last weekend's Middle School Sports Festival was a big success, with more than 600 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade student athletes playing flag football and basketball and running a cross country course through the Desert Mountain area.

Regardless of whether you follow golf, football, or neither, have a wonderful weekend!

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