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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Excellence Recognition Coin Helps SUSD Celebrate 125 Years of Educational Excellence in Scottsdale**

**SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (Aug. 26, 2020)** – To help mark its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary this school year, the Scottsdale Unified School District (SUSD) has designed a coin that will be used to recognize the special achievements of SUSD students, teachers and staff. The newly minted Excellence Recognition Coin features a raised, five-point gold star on one side, symbolizing the unity of SUSD’s five [Learning Communities](#), and a state flag-like map of Arizona with a heart, to reflect the District’s location, on the other. Both sides feature a braided cord, representing how the Learning Communities are interwoven with each other and the District, as well as the District’s connection to the state of Arizona.

The [SUSD Recognition Coin program](#) began last school year as a unique way for the District’s superintendent to offer public appreciation and a token of recognition to students and employees for exemplary contributions to their school, department and the greater SUSD community. The coins are part of the student and staff celebrations portion of monthly Governing Board meetings.

This year’s 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition coin focuses on the achievements and core activities that bring the District together as a large, diverse and unified family – Academics, Arts and Athletics. Last year’s coin centered around the District’s Core Values – that of being Student-Focused, Responsive, Growth-Minded and Humble.

In addition to the superintendent, the principals of SUSD’s 29 schools and SUSD department leaders receive their own coveted supply of Recognition Coins to distribute as a way to celebrate the accomplishments of those who go ‘above and beyond’ on a more local scale.

Desert Mountain High School Principal Dr. Lisa Hirsch says the keepsake coin is different from any other kind of award the school gives. “For me, being able to deliver a Recognition Coin in the classroom, with the people present who know a teacher or student best, is an impactful, memorable and personal way of recognizing their outstanding actions.” Hirsch says she intends to hand out Recognition Coins to more students this school year. “Narrowing down the list of worthy recipients is a good challenge to have!”

Using a coin to commemorate heroic actions dates back to World War II, during which U.S. military officers presented coins to recognize soldiers' remarkable acts of bravery. Recent SUSD Recognition Coin recipients include two high school juniors who rescued a pair of swimmers in the waters off a San Diego beach this summer, the District's English Language Development coaching team and the five U.S. military academy appointees from SUSD's Class of 2020.

Read more about the SUSD Recognition Coin program in the latest edition of SUSD's *Showcase* magazine, available at [www.susd.org/Showcase](http://www.susd.org/Showcase).

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### **About the Scottsdale Unified School District**

Located northeast of metropolitan Phoenix, the District serves the educational needs of students and families of 23,000 students across 29 campuses. Approximately 240,476 people reside within its boundaries. The District's award-winning academic, arts and athletic programs draw students from Phoenix, Paradise Valley, Fountain Hills, Tempe and Scottsdale. A highly experienced, professionally certified teaching staff fosters a diverse and rigorous educational environment to develop the potential in every individual learner. Offering gifted learning, special education, career and technical education, and a variety of athletics, arts and enrichment programs and clubs, SUSD provides the rich environment today's students need to explore their interests, develop important social skills and grow into tomorrow's leaders. For more information, visit [www.susd.org](http://www.susd.org) and follow along on social media: [Facebook](#): @ScottsdaleUSD, [Twitter](#): @ScottsdaleUSD, [Instagram](#): @ScottsdaleUnifiedSD, [Nextdoor](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).