

Message from the Superintendent



Dear Families:

Two years ago, the Governing Board of Sahuarita Unified School District approved the SUSD 2020 Plan of Excellence.

Different from traditional strategic plans, it was

designed to provide flexible direction and focus to decisions, program development, and objectives.

As we prepare to launch the 2016-17 school year, I am proud to report that there are multiple indicators of success and progress. These are just a few recent highlights under each focus area:

Safe and Supportive Environments

- Development and implementation of a comprehensive Concussion Management Protocol, called CORTEX. This process has supported the safety of over 60 students, thus far.
- 100% pass rate in Dept. of Public Safety school bus inspection protocol



- Strong school culture initiatives, such as Do Something Club and Service Learning
- Continued investment in School Resource Officer (SRO) program

21st Century College & Career Readiness

- Over \$6,000,000 earned in scholarships by the senior class of 2016 at Sahuarita HS and Walden Grove HS.
- Three University level dual enrollment courses, in partnership with the University of Arizona. The classes are Engineering 102, Philosophy, and German
- Admission to over 40 institutions of higher education by the Class of 2016, including Johns Hopkins University, Tufts University, Rice University, Annapolis, West Point, the U.S. Air Force Academy, and our great Arizona universities

Highly Qualified Staff

- Professional recruitment and retention initiative with the University of Arizona, called Sahuarita Teaching Fellows (STF)
- Lowest faculty turnover rate in the last ten years!

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- Culture and environment initiatives to advance supportive professional environments and staff retention
- Continuous increase in growth and participation in Sahuarita Professional Learning Institute, with over 61 program offerings and 80% of certified faculty taking at least one professional development workshop.

Strong School and Community Linkages

- Sahuarita WINS! strategic partnership receives MPA Common Ground Award as a model program for building collective impact.
- Continuation of Public Art partnership with Town of Sahuarita
- Cooperative efforts with Town of Sahuarita in community branding initiative, and Mayor's Education Roundtable
- Development of new senior internship course elective in cooperation with area businesses and organizations
- Development of new Career and Technical Education program in Heavy Equipment



Operations. This was a partnership with Pima JTED, Pima Community College, Town of Sahuarita, and many area businesses.

Accountability

- Over 78% of parents rated our schools as (good or great/A or B).
- Faculty members earned high honors such as Teacher of Year Finalist, Circle K High School Award Finalist.
- Students were recognized at State and National levels in academics competitions, fine arts festivals, and interscholastic athletics. This includes State band festivals, NJROTC Brain Brawl, and athletic and fine arts State Championships.
- State honors and recognition of District leadership
- Sahuarita HS became the 4th recognized Arizona A+ School of Excellence from Sahuarita USD.

Personalized Experience for Every Student

- Expansion of Summer programs, with over 300 students taking at least one course for acceleration, remediation, or for educational enrichment
- Expansion of online and blended learning opportunities



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- Growth of Alternative Pathways program, with program relocation to the Swetland Center Facility adjacent to Walden Grove HS
- Engagement with Arizona Association for Economic Development (AAED), Town of Sahuarita, Pima College and Pima JTED to further support integrated program development to support high skill certification programs to meet business sector needs and higher education opportunities.
- Application for expansion of 21st Century Learning Center programs to Sahuarita Middle School



As a team, we can take great pride in the progress that we are making in our mission of working as a team to help every student succeed. Yet, the quest for excellence is never ending, and we must keep pushing to get better and better, and meet the challenges facing us. Recently, the Governing Board called for an election this fall, specifically as an option to meet critical needs in regards to critical capacity demands for a new school, replacement of very old, inadequate facilities, and



basic capital needs. We will be providing factual information about these proposals, and related impacts, so that each member of our community can make an informed decision about this measure.

I believe that our past, and future, success is deeply rooted in the spirit of community, that binds us together in a shared commitment to invest in excellence for the youngsters who come to our schools every day, and for their families, residents, businesses and all associated with our special community. Together, we will continue to make a difference!

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Manuel O. Valenzuela

Manuel O. Valenzuela, Ed.D.
Superintendent

