

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Joseph City Unified School District No. 2
Regular Governing Board Meeting, Tuesday, September 15, 2026
Shannon Harvilla, Superintendent

Enrollment

We opened the year at 387 students. Five weeks in, we are at **389**, and the number that drives the budget has held.

Enrollment as reconciled by Julie Mills, September 9	August 11	September 9
Fundable, the count that generates state aid	360	361
Non-fundable, our ESA and tuition families	27	28
Total district enrollment	387	389
Budget projection this Board adopted (fundable)	360.6	360.6

We are at **361 fundable students against the 360.6 the budget was built on**, four-tenths of a student above our own projection. In August I told you I would rather give you one honest number in October than an optimistic one early, and that has not changed. The state takes its official count on October 1. Between now and then Julie Mills and Jason Gardner are working a numbered punch list on the handful of student records that are not yet generating average daily membership in the state system, because a student who is in our classroom but not in the state's count is worth nothing to the budget until the record is fixed. I pulled the state's data verification reports myself in August to find them. October 13 is when you get the audited count with the dollars attached.

ESA participation continues to grow. Since my last report the elementary is enrolling its first ESA family for individual classes, using the invoice process the junior high and high school built in July. I will bring you the updated ESA totals with the October count so you see the whole picture at once.

Our Students

Tonight you will recognize the first Wildcat Way Students of the Month, Ryslyn Fischer, Grace Birk, Charles Gardner and Kylie Hansen, nominated by staff for pride, courage, character and community. Their families were invited to sit near the front of the agenda so the kids do not wait through business items. Thank you to Lexi for suggesting it and to Mr. Miller for building the program.

Homecoming week ran September 8 through 12 with the theme All American Homecoming. There was no parade this year because the county paperwork did not clear in time, so the students held a community pool party festival on Thursday instead, with free swimming and games and cashless food sales. Powder Puff and Macho Volleyball were Wednesday, the junior high held its first dance of the year with the student council running it, volleyball hosted Round Valley on Friday with a September 11 remembrance before the matches, football hosted San Manuel that

night, and the dance was Saturday. The elementary ran its own dress days all week thanks to Mrs. A. Bushman and Mrs. L. Gayer.

Tori Beatty was named to the All-Tournament Team at the Payson volleyball tournament, chosen by the opposing coaches. Chess opened its season at Alchesay with Bryce and Synali representing us, and the team is at the Northland Prep tournament in Flagstaff this weekend. When the football home opener fell through, Tyler Murphy found a game in Bullhead City on short notice and Gina Spurlock drove the team.

The classroom posts keep coming and they are the best thing on our feed. Kindergarten made slime to learn the letter i. First graders spelled words with magic e and found every way to make ten with bowling pins. Third and fourth graders ask every day to play Smash to practice multiplication. Kay Rush's math students scaled recipes and made cookie dough with Mrs. Isaacson, which turned into the opening of a chemistry unit. Jess Bushman's Earth and Space students built towers that had to survive an earthquake on a vibration plate, and her biology students discovered that a food web is a tangle, not a pyramid. Photography students built pinhole cameras out of cardboard boxes. Junior high CAD students modeled their own Lego bricks and printed them to test the fit. Seventh graders debated the road to the Revolution. Elementary families can now see this work every week, and I want to thank every teacher who has taken the time to post it.

Our People

The 2026-27 Performance Pay Plan was ratified by the eligible staff with **26 of 28 votes in favor**, and it is on tonight's agenda with the Classroom Site Fund allocation of **\$717,053**, which matches the budget you adopted to the dollar.

APS came to both campuses Monday morning. Through its Supply My Class program, an APS vice president who lives in Joseph City delivered \$500 gift cards to four of our teachers, Kristen Beatty, Kay Rush, Daniel Hutchens and Taura Isaacson, for classroom supplies. That is \$2,000 that goes straight to students, and it came to us because of the relationship this district has built with APS over the last year.

Invenergy's KidWind workshop on September 12 drew a large contingent from Joseph City, with Jess Bushman attending for the district. Jess was also accepted into the Algae Academy and is running it in two classes both semesters. Pamela Dean completed hearing and vision screener training in August, and Jori Mosier finished our first ever in-house hearing and vision screening before anyone asked twice. That decision ends a \$3,000 annual vendor bill. Pamela and Ruth Hansen built the universal reading screening plan, and third, fourth and fifth grade screening is nearly complete. Pamela also named the district's literacy leadership team, which the state now requires, and the elementary ELA materials that were believed ordered last spring have now actually been ordered, with fourth and fifth grade added because the materials in use were out of date.

Staff Compass, our policy and ethics training, continues with completions coming in without anyone chasing people, and Julie Strong is tracking the last stragglers. Eric Miller's restorative discipline framework is in use district wide. We have joined the

state's principal evaluation pilot study, which lets us use the new observation system developmentally this year, and it answers a question I put to myself in August: our principals deserve a real evaluation, and this year they will get one. I completed the first session of the Supervisors of Principals Academy at the Department of Education in August, and the next is Thursday in Gilbert.

Tonight's consent agenda carries the appointment of Daniel Hutchens III as custodial manager and two resignations. I appreciate the service of everyone leaving us.

Safety and Operations

On September 4 I told you about a dismissal incident on September 2 at the elementary in which a fourth grader walked off campus after school and was found safe on the road within about twenty minutes by a teacher on his way home. I promised you the changes in writing. They have been in place since Tuesday, September 8:

- A written list at every release point. No child leaves until an adult crosses the name off and initials it.
- A required check at 3:45 confirming every student is accounted for, with the office calling parents immediately if anyone is not.
- Dismissal information travels with the last period class, not homeroom.
- Substitutes receive a written packet for every class they cover, and they sign for it.
- Third, fourth and fifth grade take attendance every rotation instead of at homeroom only.

Fourteen staff members wrote statements that evening, most after they had gone home, and eleven cleared the building in about six minutes on a badly short-staffed day. The gap was in our accounting, not in our people, and it is closed.

Separately, Mrs. Dean and Spencer Johnstun have worked out the morning bus arrival problem at the elementary. Students were coming off buses before duty staff were in the bus bay at 7:45. Drivers have adjusted their timing and staff are at their posts earlier, and we are reviewing camera footage this week to confirm it is holding.

Meal accounts changed this year. Every family started at zero thanks to 1GPA, and a student may now charge up to \$100 before an alternate meal is offered, which is written into our Free and Reduced Price Meal Policy as approved by the Department of Education. Concessions and gate tickets went cashless through GoFan on September 4. Students and senior citizens are admitted free, and passes are at the high school front office.

We are working with Stantec on an asbestos assessment of both campuses, and on Monday I gave them the district's complete asbestos and AHERA records in one organized folder. In assembling those records I found that our most recent full AHERA re-inspection on file dates to **September 2017**. The law calls for one every three years. I would rather tell you that plainly and fix it than have you learn it from a consultant, and the assessment is the first step.

Facilities and the State Facilities Division

On tonight's agenda are three resolutions I asked to have under action rather than consent so you see them: the FY27 Capital Plan, the Building Inventory, and the Preventive Maintenance Plan that Brad Neal and I built from scratch, system by system. As I told you on August 28, this district filed only one of its four required annual reports to the Division in 2024 and 2025, and three of the four are prerequisites for the Building Renewal Grant money that is paying for our boilers and chiller. Building inventory and renovation expenditures are filed. Tonight's resolutions finish the set, and I told our liaison in writing ahead of the deadline why the last one had to wait for you.

The elementary boiler replacement grant is active and the purchase order is with Pueblo Mechanical. Annual boiler maintenance at both campuses is locked at \$21,000 with the scope in writing. The elementary chiller grant is active. The Division approved our activity report on the junior high and high school HVAC project on September 11, and at 1:00 today I met with Ken Poocha of the Division, Karuna Brewer, our grant consultant, and Trane on the pre-design for that project. This is a multi-year, multi-million dollar replacement of the heating and cooling at the junior high and high school, and the question in front of us is how to sequence it against the boiler work already funded so we do not pay for equipment twice. We also submitted an emergency grant request for the elementary walk-in refrigerator, which is being finalized with the Division, and the documentation the Division asked for on the high school public announcement and telecommunications system is being assembled this week.

Money

A few items, all of them cleaner than they were a month ago.

The 1GPA gift of **\$12,088.96** that paid every family's cafeteria balance is on tonight's agenda for formal acceptance. It cost the district nothing but a thank you note.

The county discrepancy that briefly made our budget balance look negative is resolved. It was never a cash problem. Our cash position was over \$400,000 the entire time; a journal entry posted on our books had not been processed on the Treasurer's books. Victoria Farrar confirmed the county processed it and the warrants are released.

The state closed our prior year fully paid at **\$1,525,097.72** with nothing pending, confirmed in writing to Caleb. The roughly \$224,000 second payment our old records were counting on never existed, and it is better to know that now than to build on it. The state aid advance request and the county line of credit request, both under the resolution you passed, are filed.

Caleb and Selena have been delivering every document the Auditor General's office has asked for, and their card sample is due Thursday. My rule with them has not changed: hand them everything, explain everything, hide nothing.

Two items for budget season. Substitute pay last year was just under \$170,000 across thirty-six people, and this year's budget carries about \$70,000; Caleb and

Victoria have it. And our ESEA Consolidated application, which carries Title I-A and Title II-A, needed revisions from the state reviewer; those are in progress ahead of the September 29 approval date.

August vouchers on tonight's consent agenda total \$217,973.05, and they tie to the ledger to the cent.

Policy and Governance

We now hold a complete, verified copy of the policy manual, all 612 documents checked one at a time against ASBA PolicyBridge on August 13, and we have organized the ASBA advisories back to 2020 alongside it. Tonight you adopt the eighteen documents from ASBA Advisories 1047 through 1064, which reflect this year's legislative session, and that adoption also fills the seven admissions and residency regulations the manual was missing. Two August advisories, on board member conflict of interest and the new purchasing ethics regulation, are being introduced this month for adoption October 13. Two more from August, on employee conflict of interest and the credit card policy family, will get first read October 13 and adoption November 10.

Friday at 1:00 is the first monthly policy workshop, a noticed public meeting, discussion only. You will have the packet Thursday. The plan I will ask you to agree to works all 324 board policies by section between now and April, with each section adopted two meetings after it is reviewed, so that the whole manual is current by June 8. I have designated myself Title IX Coordinator and will update the regulation and the public notices in October. And I read our restraint and seclusion policy against the current statute this week; the policy is current, and I am issuing the documentation procedures it requires, with a training plan, in October.

Partnerships and Career Pathways

Career pathways remain the through line of this year. On August 27 I represented the district at the Governor's Office Northeast Arizona Energy Infrastructure Roundtable in Holbrook, and on September 1 Kelly Zagrzebski of Invenergy and Jack Callahan of Navajo County met with me here to build the energy career pathways matrix; Dan Bushman and Mari Hansen are writing our program language for it this week. On August 25 I met with Northland Pioneer College President Lawson and Richard Chanick on dual enrollment and pathways, which is what drove the calendar change you approved on August 25 to align our spring break with NPC and NAVIT. Our data sharing agreement with Grand Canyon University for seniors is final, with Dan Bushman as our contact. I attended the ASBA Law Conference and Delegate Assembly in Scottsdale last week, where Lexi served as our delegate.

Two new community pieces. This afternoon I met with Alicia Shugart, Navajo County Public Health's teen health program manager, about the county's free life skills programming; anything in that program that touches sensitive subjects would come to you first under the process state law requires, and nothing was committed. And Parents Supporting Wildcats now has an online request portal, built by Jason Gardner, so the group can take and track requests from staff for the first time.

Looking Ahead

- Friday, September 18: policy workshop at 1:00, and Enrichment Day at the elementary.
- September 22: Grand Canyon University Superintendents Collaborative Network, session two.
- September 23: our dry run for the October 1 count.
- September 24 to 26: Arizona Rural Schools Association conference in Flagstaff. I will commute.
- September 26: Family History Festival.
- October 1: the state's official enrollment count.
- October 13: regular meeting, with the audited count and the funding consequence in dollars, as promised.
- December 8: Beyond Textbooks visits the board.

Come to the games. This town shows up for its kids, and that is an advantage no other option can offer.

Respectfully submitted,
Shannon Harvilla, Superintendent