

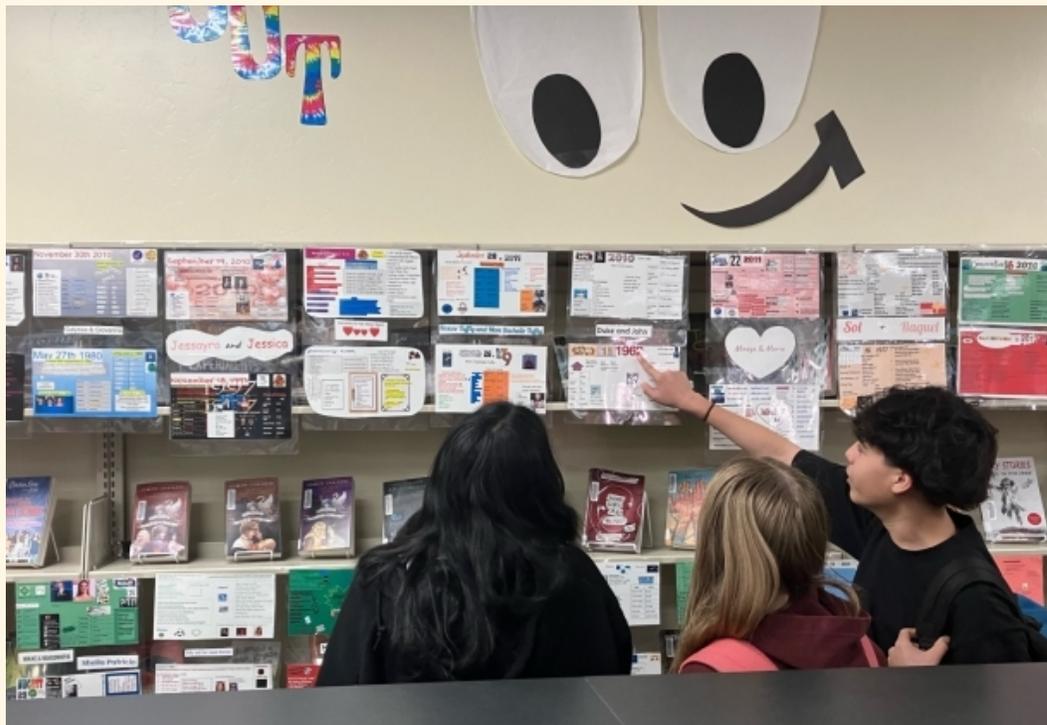
March 5, 2024

Superintendent's Report





Around Our Schools



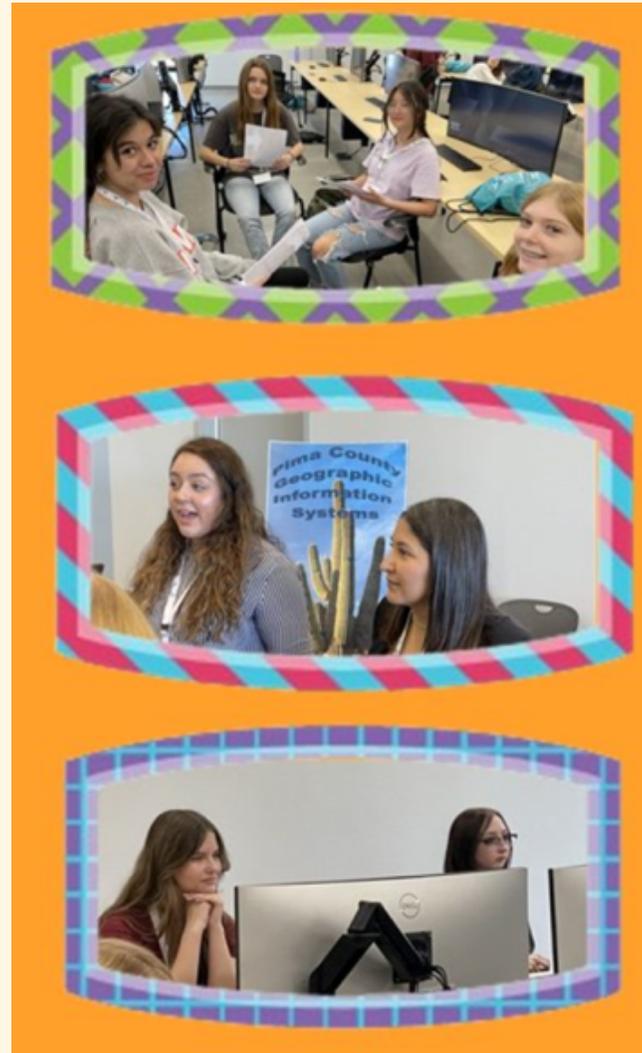
Amphi Middle School students had the chance to showcase their AVID projects in the school library, putting a spotlight on their work for AVID Night at their school.



Life Beyond Books, a program that brings in volunteers to teach children real-world skills and help them explore career opportunities, was back at La Cima Middle School last week.



Around Our Schools



Students from Canyon del Oro High School participated in the 2024 SheTech Explorers Day last week at Pima Community College. This is a one-day STEM event, where students learn about coding and have the opportunity to meet women in industry.



Around Our Schools



CDO and Amphi High hosted a sold-out Diamonds in the Desert car show on Saturday at Oro Valley Marketplace. The car show is organized and operated by the schools' CTE students and their auto clubs as a fundraiser. The show featured a record number of cars and provided a tremendous opportunity for students to learn business skills and all aspects of fundraising and event-planning.



Around Our Schools



Students from schools around the District competed in the Odyssey of the Mind Regionals on Saturday, at CDO. Congrats to seven of our teams that took home first place awards and six teams that came in second place. Next stop: The state competition on March 30th, hosted again by CDO!



Around Our Schools



Our La Cima Wrestling Team competed in the Flowing Wells Invitational over the weekend, bringing home the first-place trophy for the second straight year. Congrats to each member of the team, and a special shoutout to Peter Visconti, who placed first in his match.



Around Our Schools



It's School Social Work Week across the nation, and we want to show special appreciation to our school social workers, who we know are dedicated to serving the needs of our Amphitheater students.



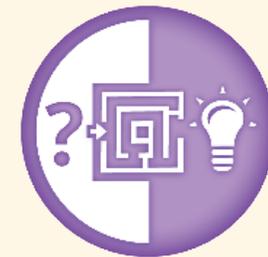
Thank You



Thank you to the Amphi Foundation and their volunteers for helping Donaldson Elementary School and Ironwood Ridge High School students pick out a new pair of shoes through the Shoes for Smiles program.



Around Our Schools



February was Problem Solving month, part of the District's Portrait of a Graduate initiative. At far left, Donaldson Elementary School students are using problem-solving skills to design a device to communicate using light or sound. At left, we see first-graders at Holaway Elementary School using their Sanford Harmony curriculum to plan a party and solve a problem.

For March, we are highlighting Citizenship.





Aggregate Expenditure Limit

- The state has released the school district preliminary Aggregate Expenditure Limit [AEL] for next school year.
- The AEL calculation uses the estimated student count for this school year and an inflation adjustment.
- With a decline in the statewide enrollment this school year, the preliminary AEL is \$6,960,000,616 -- an increase of only \$62.5 million.
- Arizona exceeded the AEL by more than \$1.3 billion this school year. Thus, even without *any* increase in school district budgets for next school year, the AEL limit would be exceeded by over \$1.3 billion again.
- Expected budget increases for FY25 will make the amount over the AEL limit even higher, so the legislature will again need to approve exceeding the AEL or huge budget reductions will be required.



A State of Fraud



- Arizona Attorney General Kris Mayes held a press conference this week to break shocking news: five people were indicted on charges of defrauding Arizona's ESA private school voucher program of at least \$600,000.



- The fraudsters created ghost students with forged birth certificates – children that didn't exist -- and gave them fake disability diagnoses that would make them eligible for larger funding amounts (as much as \$38,000).



- State Superintendent Horne, who has promoted the vouchers through paid TV ads, did not discover the frauds that occurred under his watch. A local credit union saw unusual account activity and alerted the AG's office.



- AG Mayes: "From what our investigators found, there are very few controls and very little accountability in terms of analyzing birth certificates at the [Arizona] Department of Education, and analyzing determinations of disability."





Annual District Spending Report



- The Arizona Auditor General recently released its annual report on school district spending which tracks spending in broad categories and terms.



- It shows, generally, that statewide school district classroom spending is decreasing.



- Amphitheater has increased its total classroom spending per student by nearly 15%.



- Amphitheater has also increased its average teacher pay by approximately \$15,000/yr., or more than 34%, over the last 6 years.



- The Auditor General also compares core academic performance measures between individual school districts and their peer district and state averages. Amphitheater students again outperformed peer district and statewide students on all those measures.



- We will be providing an in-depth analysis of the entirety of the Auditor General report at a future Board Meeting.

