MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Pendergast Staff and Community,

We are so proud of our students, and the progress and growth in their achievement during the first semester of the 2019-20 school year. Due to the hard work put forth by Dr. Jennifer Cruz, Chief Academic Officer, and her team of experts, staff and students are receiving the outstanding classroom curriculum, instruction, and support needed to excel.

The Governing Board of PESD has made it a priority to enable teachers to learn and grow in their skills in order to help students reach their potential. That is why we have Early Release on Wednesdays. This time is to enable teachers to participate in collaborative professional development to benefit all students. Staff sets high expectations for students as they analyze data, and work on research-based methods to make teaching and learning relevant, meaningful, and productive. When they do so, students have the knowledge, skills and opportunities to prepare them for the future.

In this issue of our newsletter, you will learn about our bond updates, the Eighth Grade Superintendent's Student Council's upcoming trip to China in May, the Speak Up, Stand Up, Save a Life Conference in January, recognition of staff and community members and more. We are deeply appreciative of your continued support and look forward to the continuation of learning and growing for our students. We would love to connect with you through our website, social media, or amazing events at our schools, and in the District.

Remember, Pendergast is the District that bee-lieves in YOU!

Dr. Lily Matos DeBlieux
Pendergast Superintendent
MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Dear Pendergast Staff and Community,

Our students learn in so many ways when they come to the Pendergast Elementary School District. There are many opportunities to explore and expand their knowledge in places in addition to the classroom setting. Here are a few ways our students can expand their learning experiences:

Chartwells, our food service vendor, has started a Master Chef program. Students can participate in different competitions including salsa and taco contests. Students are able to talk with Chartwell chefs for different ideas for their recipes. Our students learn to measure, mix and combine ingredients for a healthy and tasty recipe to share with their families.

Our Pillows for Kiddos is a sewing project our Eighth Grade Superintendent’s Student Council participate in during the school year. Over one thousand pillows with a pocket are sewn by students and volunteers. The pillows, with a book inserted in the pocket, are then given out by the Eighth Grade Superintendent's Council at the Kindergarten promotion ceremonies. Our students not only learn how to cut, sew, and iron, they also learn the value of giving back to the community.

Veteran’s Day celebrations occur at all of our schools. Our students are able to talk to veterans and hear their stories. This is a time where our students can learn about what these individuals experienced as they defended our country. Our students come away with a piece of living history, and they have a new respect for those protecting our country.

Our fifth grade ballroom dancing is an exciting event that takes place during the school year. Our students learn three dances to perform in school and districtwide competitions. Dancing takes practice, skill, timing, rhythm, and the ability to coordinate steps with their partner. The competition between schools is exciting and fun for all.

The Be Kind initiative teaches our students to be kind, respectful, courteous, to be a friend, and much more. Our children are taught the values of good citizenship, to understand, care, and respect everyone in our schools. They do this by reciting the Be Kind Pledge and fully participating in the program.

The Speak Up, Stand Up, Save a Life program has impacted the lives of all of our children. Ambassadors at each school visit classrooms and talk to their fellow students about issues facing our students today. Students learn how to go to a trusted adult to help them, or a fellow student or community member in need. Our students write and produce plays depicting situations that impact families and how to address those situations. The Speak Up, Stand Up, Save a Life program has been instrumental in helping our young adults through many difficult situations and helped them to lead happy, productive lives.

You have heard about Escape the Room, and now the Pendergast District has an Escape Bus for our students to experience. One of our buses was retired and transformed into an old fashioned class/escape room. The outside of the bus is disguised as a giant bee! The bus visits schools and students are able to enjoy an adventure that teaches our students to research, explore, and figure out clues that will lead to their escape from the room!

This is just a small sampling of the learning activities the schools in the District offer outside of the classroom. There are numerous opportunities for children to explore and grow. We encourage you to see all the events going on at your child’s school and across the District.

Enjoy!

Susan Serin
Pendergast Governing Board President
BOND UPDATE

On November 8, 2016, voters passed a renewal of the Bond Election for $59,950,000 that benefits students, staff, families and the community in the following ways: improvements to the learning environment that have been implemented at every school site. The bond is addressing areas to help the District create a user friendly technology system. Safety upgrades have been addressed at all twelve sites with front office renovations, maintenance and refurbishing of schools. The Pendergast District is grateful for its community support, and is committed to using the Bond funds wisely and with complete transparency as an investment in the future for the students, staff, families and communities.

Front Office Renovations

As part of the safety and security front office renovations, the remaining six sites were completed including: Desert Mirage, Garden Lakes, Copper King, Desert Horizon, Pendergast, and Westwind Elementary Schools.

Renovations

Desert Mirage Elementary and Copper King Elementary were part of the 2019 Bond work to renovate and upgrade school restrooms.

The Desert Mirage Elementary classroom renovations are underway and are expected to be completed by April 2020.

Transportation

As a result of the outcome of the Volkswagen lawsuit, the Pendergast Elementary School District was able to purchase three (3) special education buses. The buses are able to accommodate up to five (5) wheelchairs.

Pendergast Elementary Exterior and Interior Painting

During the past summer, exterior and interior painting was completed at Pendergast Elementary School, and the exterior railing and the interior hallways were completed at Westwind, Amberlea, Canyon Breeze, Rio Vista and Sonoran Sky Elementary Schools.

According to Superintendent, Dr. Lily Matos DeBlieux, “We are grateful to our community for its support. Students will benefit from the programs and services offered, and we will be able to continue to make their educational experiences the very best. We know that many people believe in Pendergast, and our communities value the education we are providing daily for our students and families. We pride ourselves in being accountable to all, and will continue to use these funds that have been entrusted to us in the most effective and efficient manner possible.”
BOND UPDATE (Continued)

Flooring Projects
Flooring projects were completed at Canyon Breeze, Rio Vista, Sonoran Sky and Amberlea Elementary Schools.

Roofing Projects
Foam roof and coating was completed at Canyon Breeze, Sonoran Sky, Sunset Ridge, and Westwind Elementary Schools. Additional roofing projects included the recoating of all buildings at Pendergast, roof structure repairs at the transportation bus bays, roofing work for the five portables at Desert Horizon Elementary, and gutter replacement at Garden Lakes Elementary.

Playground and Landscape Improvements
Playground and landscape improvement projects were completed at Rio Vista, Garden Lakes and Sunset Ridge Elementary Schools.

Technology
The District purchased over 10,000 Chromebooks for all grades, and Lenovo Laptops for all site administrators. 150 Classroom projectors were replaced, as well as 100+ classroom document cameras. The installation of intercom systems was accomplished at Desert Mirage, Copper King, and Garden Lakes Elementary Schools. The Cisco phones were replaced districtwide. The installation and repair of security camera systems at Sonoran Sky, Sunset Ridge and Desert Mirage Elementary Schools was also part of the Bond work completed. The Data Center upgrades were completed, with the installation of several systems including Tools4Ever, GoGuardian, and Spark to enhance safety features.

For more information, visit www.pbis.org/pbis/tier-1 or koi-education.com.

For questions about the Bond, contact Joanne Fimbres, Chief Financial Officer, at 623-772-2220.
SCHOOL LETTER GRADES 2018-19

The Arizona Department of Education has released its school labels for the 2018-19 school year. PESD is happy to report that all schools had growth in student achievement with a tremendous 84.46 total percentage increase. According to the Arizona Republic newspaper, about 90% of a K-8 school's grade relies on state testing: 30% is based on the number of students at schools with proficient scores on AzMERIT tests, 50% is based on students' testing improvement from year to year and 10% is based on English-language learner growth and proficiency. The last 10% is based on a variety of factors, including chronic absenteeism rates and inclusion rates of students with disabilities. Pendergast schools received the following letter grades:

- Amberlea Elementary C
- Canyon Breeze Elementary C
- Copper King Elementary B
- Desert Horizon Elementary C
- Desert Mirage Elementary C
- Garden Lakes Elementary A
- Pendergast Elementary C
- Rio Vista Elementary B
- Sonoran Sky Elementary C
- Sunset Ridge Elementary B
- Villa de Paz Elementary B
- Westwind Elementary B

Our deepest thanks to the students and staff for their laser focus on teaching and learning. We know they will continue to grow, learn and live our mission of “Empowering Excellence and Success,” everyday.

SPEAK UP, STAND UP, SAVE A LIFE CONFERENCE - JANUARY 21, 2020 AT GRAND CANYON UNIVERSITY

Pendergast District students in grades 6-8 will join students from across Arizona for the annual Speak Up, Stand Up, Save a Life Conference at Grand Canyon University to learn how to Speak Up, Stand Up, and Save a Life. Now in its fourth year, the event will run from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and will inspire students to create lasting ways to combat bullying, depression and suicide at their schools. The conference is free of charge thanks to partnerships and donations, and is open to all schools in Arizona.

“We value and treasure our youth in Arizona, but the statistics are startling,” said conference co-founder Gina Godbehere. A sentiment echoed by fellow conference co-founder Dr. Lily Matos DeBlieux, adding “We’re losing too many students and we realize that speaking up to save lives should be a statewide mission.” This year, the initiative is proud to announce its nonprofit status and a partnership with United Healthcare, serving as the Title Sponsor for this conference. Their mission, to help people live healthier lives, is the perfect alignment with the goals of the conference and is vital in this important effort to save lives. The conference offers students a chance to hear from local and national speakers on difficult issues they face on a daily basis, inside and outside of school, including self-harm, substance abuse and how to handle social media. Breakout sessions will also allow them to brainstorm ideas on how to help their own schools increase each student’s ability to speak up when they see harmful behavior. Schools will implement follow-up plans at their campuses. If you would like to volunteer, please visit www.speakstandsaves.com for more information.
ACHIEVEMENTS

Pendergast District is proud to share great news about students, staff, and volunteers who have been recognized for their contributions to the betterment of their schools, districts and communities. We congratulate the following extraordinary people and programs for making a difference and being change makers!

The Western Maricopa Coalition is a public-private partnership of the 15 communities, the business community and the educational sector in the West Valley. WESTMARC’s Best of the West Award is the premier award in the West Valley. Pendergast received the award in November for the Speak Up, Stand Up, Save a Life Conference in the Quality of Life Education category.

Tim Ramsey, 7th Grade Writing Teacher at Westwind Elementary School won the Arizona English Teachers, Teachers at Writers Award for his published piece Forgiven, in September.

Matt Williams, Principal of Desert Mirage Elementary was presented with the Grand Canyon University STEM Principal of the Month for October for his work in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math at his campus.

Joanne Fimbres, Pendergast CFO, was a finalist in the Education Category, for the Chief Financial Officer of the Year Award from the Financial Executives International.

The Arizona School Board Association bestowed the prestigious Golden Bell Award to the Pendergast District in the Collaboration Category, for its work on the Speak Up, Stand Up, Save a Life movement, for anti-bullying and suicide awareness.

Members of the 8th Grade Superintendent’s Student Council presented on Student Leadership at the 2019 AZALAS Conference in Tucson and received a standing ovation from the audience.

Evelyn Kelly from Westwind Elementary was one of eight teachers across the state, who won a classroom set of the inspiring and award-winning book, “Before She Was Harriet,” about the life and times of Harriet Tubman from the ASBA Black Caucus.

Claudia Vega, Records Clerk, for the Exceptional Student Services Department, received the first Elite Honors for Exceptional Student Service Award.

CAFR RECOGNITION

The Pendergast Elementary School District has been awarded the Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Association of School Business Officials International for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2018.

The District continues to work on receiving this prestigious award each year that focuses on efficiency in reporting, accountability and transparency.

8TH GRADE SUPERINTENDENT’S STUDENT COUNCIL

Dr. DeBlieux’s 8th Grade Superintendent’s Student Council has been hard at work this year with many projects and opportunities including a visit to Northern Arizona University and having the chance to hear astronaut Mark Kelly speak at the Glendale Chamber of Commerce.
NEW MUSIC ACADEMY AT AMBERLEA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

This year marks the start of the Amberlea Music Academy with the theme, “Redefining Academics Through Music.”

In our commitment to provide quality and holistic education to the young learners in the Pendergast Elementary School District, Amberlea Elementary School spearheaded an academy that will raise the bar in student learning and experiences at school.

The Amberlea Music Academy is a special hybrid classroom that uses interdisciplinary, multi-cultural and creative strategies in the delivery of academic learning, such as language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. Headed by Mr. John Carlo Tulino, the music academy is offered to students through the Amberlea Performing Arts Afterschool Program. Redefining academics as its core philosophy, the academy uses music and other allied arts to make learning more engaging and exciting for students.

The academy is partnering with Restore Arts Arizona, a non-profit organization, that aims to promote music learning to young learners. The organization has generously donated instruments including violins, hand drums, bells and guitars to allow students more options in selecting the instrument they would like to play.

Future goals of the Amberea Music Academy is to connect to more arts related organizations throughout Arizona and to make learning even more exciting for students. The vision is to create higher benchmark scores, while developing students who are well-rounded both academically and artistically.

SONORAN SKY ELEMENTARY RECEIVES PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT DONATION FROM BANNER THUNDERBIRD MEDICAL CENTER

Sonoran Sky Elementary School in Glendale was thrilled to receive a donation valued at $18,000, for seven pieces of primary playground equipment from Banner Thunderbird Medical Center. The equipment was installed in November and is in use by the preschool, kindergarten and first grade classes.

According to Joseph Jacobo, Sonoran Sky principal, “Our students love the new playground equipment we received from Banner Thunderbird Medical Center. The colorful and dynamic structures help our students to use their imagination during their recess time, as well as, encouraging them to be active. This helps us to set a positive tone for a lifetime of physical fitness. Parents have also commented on how wonderful this is for their children and how happy they are. We are grateful for the donation that will be enjoyed by students in our school for years to come.”

A ribbon cutting ceremony is slated for Friday, January 17, 2020 at Sonoran Sky Elementary School located at 10150 W. Missouri Avenue, Glendale, AZ 85307 at 9:00 am. The event is open to the public.
COPPER KING ELEMENTARY STEAM PROGRAM FEATURED IN THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

Copper King Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) Academy was recently featured in an article by Cronkite News in the Arizona Republic newspaper on November 11, 2019. According to the article, “A partnership with the Scottsdale startup Zero Mass Water allows these West Phoenix students to explore the off-grid technology behind the company’s “hydropanels,” which use sunlight to pull water from the air. The students also get to drink the water produced by hydro panels on campus.”

“It’s important that every single person knows not only what’s in their water, but also where their water comes from and the impact their water has on the local community and on our world as a whole,” said Kaitlyn Fitzgerald, Zero Mass Water’s brand director.

Copper King Principal, Janine Ambrose, shares, “We’re really trying to teach them to be more aware of how they’re using resources on the planet because they might not be here for their future.

The Pendergast Elementary School District is proud of the students, and all they are learning about sustainability and preserving the environment. To tour the Copper King STEAM Academy, please contact Principal Janine Ambrose at jambrose@pesd92.org.

DESSERT HORIZON DEDICATES LIBRARY TO PHOENIX POLICE OFFICER PAUL RUTHERFORD

Officer Paul Rutherford passed away on March 21, 2019, but his legacy lives on with the dedication of the Desert Horizon Elementary School library in his memory. The dedication took place on Tuesday, November 12, 2019 and included the Presentation of the Colors and Honor Guard, student musicians, remarks by Dr. Lily Matos DeBlieux, Principal Debby Cruz, and Police Commander Edward DeCastro.

In addition to the dedication, there was a special library corner introduced with books about police officers, library signage, and a display case with memorabilia from Officer Rutherford’s life and distinguished career.

When asked to describe officer Rutherford, and the connection he had to Desert Horizon Elementary, Principal Debby Cruz shared, “The moment we heard about his passing, we knew it was the right thing to do to honor his memory. He worked closely with Desert Horizon, and offered his full support whenever we needed it. He had a special connection to our students, and shared all of his goodness and values with them. Whenever he was called to our school, he took an interest in the students, and shared with them about the importance of making the right life choices. They respected him because they could see how much he cared about them. Students and staff alike looked to him as a hero and role model. We are fortunate to honor his memory and show his caring heart and soul for the students, staff, families and the communities he served.”

Superintendent Dr. Lily Matos DeBlieux echoed Debbie Cruz’ sentiments, “We are so grateful to Officer Rutherford, and all he did for Desert Horizon Elementary, and the Pendergast community. He was a true servant leader.”
PENDERGAST FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO RECOGNIZE TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION EFFORTS ACROSS THE DISTRICT.

CENTER GYM
3841 N. 91ST AVE
PHX, AZ 85037

THURSDAY
1.23.2020
5pm - 7pm
The event is **FREE** to all families both in the Pendergast District and for others who would like to find out more about our amazing kindergarten program. You will have the opportunity to meet the principals and kindergarten teachers from our twelve schools.

You will also be able to register your child for the 2020-21 school year. It is quick and easy and we’ll have registration staff available to assist you.

**Oh, the Places You’ll Go**

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY DR. SEUSS**

We will also be celebrating Read Across America and Dr. Seuss’ birthday in style. There will be activities, free immunizations, community resources, information on before and after school programs (PRIDE Club) and so much more!

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**THURSDAY**

February 20, 2020

5:00 pm to 6:30 pm

**PENDERGAST COMMUNITY CENTER**

10550 W. Mariposa St.
Phoenix, AZ 85037

Staff will be on site to **REGISTER** your child.

**WHAT YOU’LL NEED TO REGISTER**

1. Original Birth Certificate
2. Immunization Record
3. Two proofs of residency, such as:
   - **ONE of the following:** Telephone Bill, Credit Card Bill, Bank Statement, Car Insurance
   - **and, ONE of the following:** Lease Agreement, Electric/Gas Bill, Water Bill, Rental/Mortgage Agreement

   (must be current within the last 30 days)