

The annual Deer Valley Unified School District (DVSUD) State of the District address is designed to mirror the governor's State of the State for Arizona and the presidential State of the Union to keep you informed on the challenges, progress, growth, and accomplishments of DVUSD students and staff. These state and national civic addresses are designed to reflect upon what is going well, what areas need additional focus, and what the future may hold; this document is no different. January is a great window to look forward and reflect back as we finish up one school year and make plans for the next.

DVUSD experienced another banner year of progress for implementing our Vision and Mission of the district – graduating life-long learners and providing #extraordinary educational opportunities for all students. Our physical district size - 34,000 students, 42 schools, and 4,200 employees, makes for a challenging combination in moving forward together. In the education world, slow is fast – deliberately calculated plans are

recognition as a Professional Learning Community (PLC) model district draws other districts from around Arizona and the United States to learn about our educational practices, policies, and programs. DVUSD is also one of a handful of Arizona school districts in Project Momentum, a collection of future-focused districts perfecting the next Arizona's substantive educational programs and reforms.

The positive results continue to pour in, highlighted by the largest number of "A-rated" schools in DVUSD's history (26) and our highest percentage of A+ School of Excellence designations ever (52%). We continue to reach our annual goal of at least 50 state athletic team, individual, Career & Technical Education (CTE), future business professionals (DECA), and future Health Care Professionals (HOSA) state titles a year, and continue to add to the number of National Board Certified Teachers annually. Deer Valley Unified School District also has its very own, state approved, Teacher Prep Program with 70 teachers-in-training in the program.

DVUSD is highly regarded in Arizona's praBT/F3 14.04 Tf1 0 0 14-0(rict)4()4amET@geachproqdT

to seek to learn, such as a *Community Contributor*, an *Effective Communicator*, *Intellectually Curious*, a *Problem Solver*, and a person who can acquire a *Sense of Self and Others*. Educational institutions such as DVSUD value supportive systems, guiding principles, and core values that keep our organization focused on the importance of successful student learning.

Today, the immediate effects of the 2020 world-wide pandemic are in the rearview mirror, but school districts across the nation continue to make up learning losses that impacted various groups of students differently. While DVUSD was one of the first Arizona districts to return to class with in-person learning, enrollment took a dip right away until students felt comfortable returning to class safely. Our enrollment rose in 2022, leveled out in 2023, and will rise again going forward as the integration of the Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC) and its feeder companies weave into our local economy. With the influx of this economic and residential growth in our school zone from these multiple large and small companies, large-scale builders, and state and city agency changes, the future of DVUSD's growth will continue to be positive moving forward.

The potential growth of our area as one of the fastest growing counties in the country made for an interesting November 2023. For the first time in over a decade, DVUSD lost a Bond issue request to prepare for growth on the west side of the I-17 freeway. The Override also lost for the first time since 1991, another unwelcome surprise. DVUSD found itself the victim of organized anti-public school education groups. Since DVUSD is one of the premiere K-12 public school districts in Arizona, the negative vote didn't make sense. The low voter participation, coupled with the organized attack of misinformation, made for the perfect storm for a nonrenewal of both initiatives that were not tax increases to the community, but a continuation of the same tax rates. We anticipate another organized effort of misinformation with the probability of the same proposals being on the ballot in November 2024.

The Bond issue in 2023 was intended for safety, security, technology maintenance, and building maintenance/upgrades in our 41 brick-n-mortar schools, and for future student growth in the next decade. The Bond also was designed to support our bus and white-fleet transportation and energy conservation for our district. The Override, in place for over thirty years, pays for

8% of all 4,000 employee salaries (teachers, staff, and administration), free all-day Kindergarten (including transportation), the maintenance of lower class-size ratios, and support of extra/co-curricular opportunities such as the arts, chorus, band, theater, dance, physical education, and athleti12 3of

The pace of future progress within the DVUSD machine will be directly tied to the decision of the community and parents to pass or reject the Bond and Override in November of 2024. Look to our neighbors such as Cave Creek, Fountain Hills, and Peoria when Bonds and Overrides fail for decades; these school districts all have something in common, slow atrophy in enrollment, building decay, school program closures, and the non-retention of quality staff. In the end, students suffer when public education is starved of financial support such as the inability to adequately train the next workforce, property values decline, and crime increases. The state of Arizona is 49th in the nation for economic support for public schools. Local Bond and Override ballot measures provide an opportunity for community members, local businesses, and parents to provide local economic support that the state legislature