

The Latest from



Laveen
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Fall 2022

LAVEEN CELEBRATES A-RATED, HIGH PERFORMING SCHOOLS

**DISTRICT SCHOOLS ARE THE
HIGHEST ACHIEVING SCHOOLS
IN THE LAVEEN AREA**



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Dr. Jeff Sprout

Message from the Superintendent

The Laveen School District strives to provide the best educational options for pre-K through 8th-grade children in our community. We are committed to ensuring the future success of every student through the use of best practices and innovative strategies.

With those goals in mind, we are thrilled to be recognized by the Arizona Department of Education as having the highest-rated schools in Laveen. Six of our schools earned a rating of 'A' and three schools earned a 'B' rating. In addition, Vista del Sur Accelerated Academy, was one of only six schools in Arizona to receive the National Blue Ribbon School award from the United States Department of Education.

The above successes are the result of a unified vision centered on:

- delivering exceptional educational experiences to all of our students,
- being a great place to work for our employees, and
- developing strong partnerships with parents, community members, and local organizations.

I would therefore like to thank you for your support of the children, families, and employees of the Laveen School District. We do not take this for granted and will continue to find ways to improve ourselves in carrying out our educational role for the betterment of the entire community.

Our theme this year is "Find Greatness Here." I hope that you enjoy reading about the examples of greatness in your local school district.

Happy New Year,

Jeff

District Governing Board Welcomes New Member



Linda Abegg

Mrs. Linda Abegg is the newest member of the Laveen Governing Board, having won a four-year seat in the November election.

Abegg has lived in Laveen for over 15 years and is a Laveen School District parent. She has been a member of the Laveen Village Planning Committee for six years and currently serves as Vice Chair. She also serves on the board of the Laveen District Insurance Trust and is active in the Laveen Community Action Committee.

She joins returning board members Dr. Torrence Watkins and Michele Anderson as well as Jill Barragan and Dr. Ryan Senters whom also won their re-election bids in November.



Laveen District Celebrates A-Rated and Highly Performing Schools

District schools outperform all other local area schools

On October 31, 2022, the Arizona Department of Education released new letter grades for each school based on the latest state assessment data from the 2021-22 school year. All schools in the Laveen School District have received top marks with six schools earning an “A” rating and three schools earning a “B” rating from the Arizona Department of Education for 2022.

Desert Meadows School, Estrella Foothills Global Academy, Laveen School, M.C. Cash School, Rogers Ranch School, and Vista del Sur Accelerated Academy all received “A” labels. Cheatham, Paseo Pointe, and Trailside Point received “B” labels, also considered to be “Highly Performing.” Visit our website, www.LaveenSchools.org/state-accountability for more detailed information about each school’s letter grade.

Laveen attributes this performance to providing quality and rigorous instruction to all students with a focus on academic growth. “Our students and staff have been doing amazing work,” said district superintendent Dr. Jeff Sprout. “We are focused on instructional excellence and have also received incredible support from our parents and community. These latest school letter grades reflect that.”

The most recent letter grades issued by the Arizona Department of Education are based on data collected from the 2021-2022 school year. Each school is awarded a percentage of points earned and then assigned a letter grade based on that overall score. The average percentage of points earned by the schools in the Laveen School District was 86.59%, which places the district in the “Excellent” range.

Notable Accomplishments

Vista del Sur ranks **#3 in the state**, among traditional K-8 Schools for total points earned.

- Vista received 102.33 points.
- Only 13 schools, of 1,348 in the state, received over 100 points.

All nine Laveen District schools are the **highest rated** schools in the Laveen area.

- In the Laveen community, only Laveen District schools received A ratings.

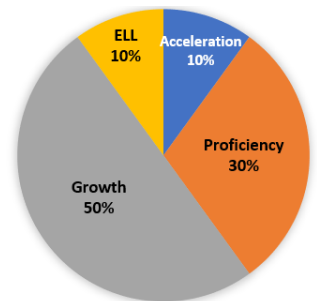
Laveen District Schools rank **#2 in Maricopa County** for having the most A-Rated schools.

Laveen District schools have **more A-Rated schools** than any other elementary school feeding in to the Phoenix Union High School District.

How school grades are determined

The State of Arizona’s A-F Accountability System, is designed to award letter grades to schools based on a range of academic measures. For elementary schools, these measures include the following:

- Proficiency in English Language Arts, Math, and Science on state assessments
- Growth in English Language Arts and Math on state assessments from the prior year
- Proficiency and growth of English Language Learners based on AZELLA testing
- Acceleration and readiness measures, which include such things as improving chronic absenteeism and improvement in sub-group performance on state assessments



Laveen's Award Winning Schools



Estrella Foothills Global Academy Receives International Baccalaureate Authorization

Now an IB World School for the Middle Years Programme

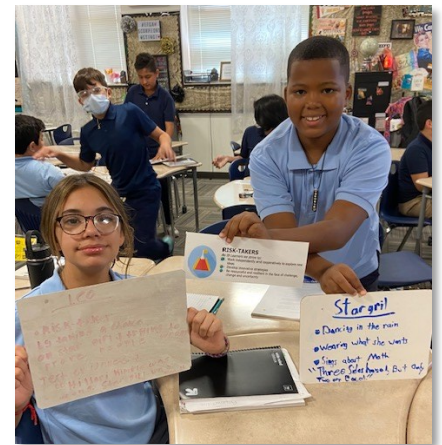
Estrella Foothills Global Academy has received authorization to become an International Baccalaureate World School for the Middle Years Programme.

IB World Schools are part of a global community of schools committed to developing knowledgeable, caring young people who will be ready to negotiate their futures successfully and make contributions resulting in a more harmonious and peaceful world.

"We commend your school's educators, administrators, students, and families for their active roles in choosing to offer the Middle Years Programme (MYP). The positive results of this choice will become evident in your community as classes of MYP students graduate and undertake activities that enhance social, cultural, and economic environments locally, nationally, and, perhaps, internationally," wrote Director General of In-

ternational Baccalaureate Olli-Pekka Heinonen in his letter to the school.

EFGA has been an IB Candidate School for the last few years while it sought full authorization. IB team members conducted their verification visit to the school in October which was the final step of the authorization process.



Students present their inquiry-based unit project to the International Baccalaureate judges.

Laveen School Recognized as a School of Distinction

Laveen School has been recognized as a School of Distinction by the Association for Middle Level Education.

AMLE Schools of Distinction is both a recognition and continuous improvement program. Schools are celebrated for their commitment to the middle grades best practices while also being guided through a process of self-assessment and strategic vision setting to help foster ongoing growth and success.

The program aims to recognize and celebrate schools that are committed to implementing the essential attributes and characteristics of successful middle grades schools, provide all schools that support young adolescents with the resources to support their continuous improvement journeys, create a network of schools that can learn from and support each other, and highlight for our communities the exceptional work that takes place every day in middle level education.

The school was recognized at a conference in Florida.





Vista del Sur Accelerated Academy is a 2022 National Blue Ribbon School

Vista is one of six schools in Arizona to receive this honor.

Vista del Sur Accelerated Academy has once again been named a 2022 National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education. Secretary Miguel Cardona made the announcement on September 16, 2022. “I applaud all the honorees for the 2022 National Blue Ribbon Schools Award for creating vibrant, welcoming, and affirming school communities where students can learn, grow, reach their potential, and achieve their dreams. These schools show what is possible to make an enduring, positive difference in students’ lives,” Cardona said.

The National Blue Ribbon School program recognizes overall academic excellence. Blue Ribbon Schools show outstanding results for all students. The National Blue Ribbon School award affirms and validates the hard work of students, educators, families, and communities in striving for – and attaining – exemplary achievement. National Blue Ribbon Schools serve as models of effective school practices for state and district educators and other schools throughout the nation.

Vista del Sur was one of only six schools in Arizona to join this esteemed community. They were nominated as an Exemplary High Performing School, receiving this distinction for the performance of all students on state assessments in both math and English language arts in addition to other state performance targets.

Vista principal, Jessica Epacs attributed Vista’s success to the partnership and hard work of staff, students and parents. In addition, cooperative learning or Kagan structures are used throughout the school and in each lesson. Each Kagan structure has a purpose and guides students to work together while also holding every child individually accountable for their knowledge. For example, Rally Coaching allows students to be peer instructors to each other. “Because the student is being the

instructor it requires students to be actively engaged during the lesson since they know they will need to teach another person,” explained Mrs. Epacs.

Vista del Sur was recognized at an award ceremony in November in Washington, D.C. Here, they received the coveted National Blue Ribbon flag that will fly at their school as a reminder of their exemplary teaching and learning. “All of us at Vista are honored to serve as an example of quality instruction and learning for schools across the nation,” said Principal Epacs. “This honor affirms the dedication of our students, staff, and parents in making Vista a community of excellence.”

As an accelerated school, students work a grade level ahead in math and English language arts. It is a school of choice and, as such, does not have attendance boundaries.

Vista was also named a 2016 National Blue Ribbon School. They were recognized as a Top Elementary and Middle School by U.S. News and World Report last year.



From left: Teacher Robert Dolecki, Principal Jessica Epacs, and Superintendent Jeff Sprout accept Vista del Sur’s National Blue Ribbon Award in Washington D.C.



Early Childhood Center at Desert Meadows School Opens

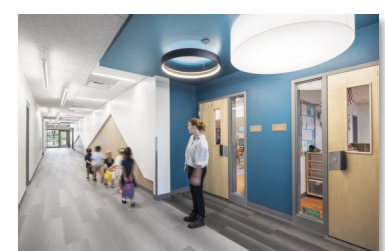
Desert Meadows School celebrated the opening of its new Early Childhood Center in October. The new building was constructed adjacent to the Desert Meadows School campus. This is the district's first stand-alone building dedicated to preschool-aged children.

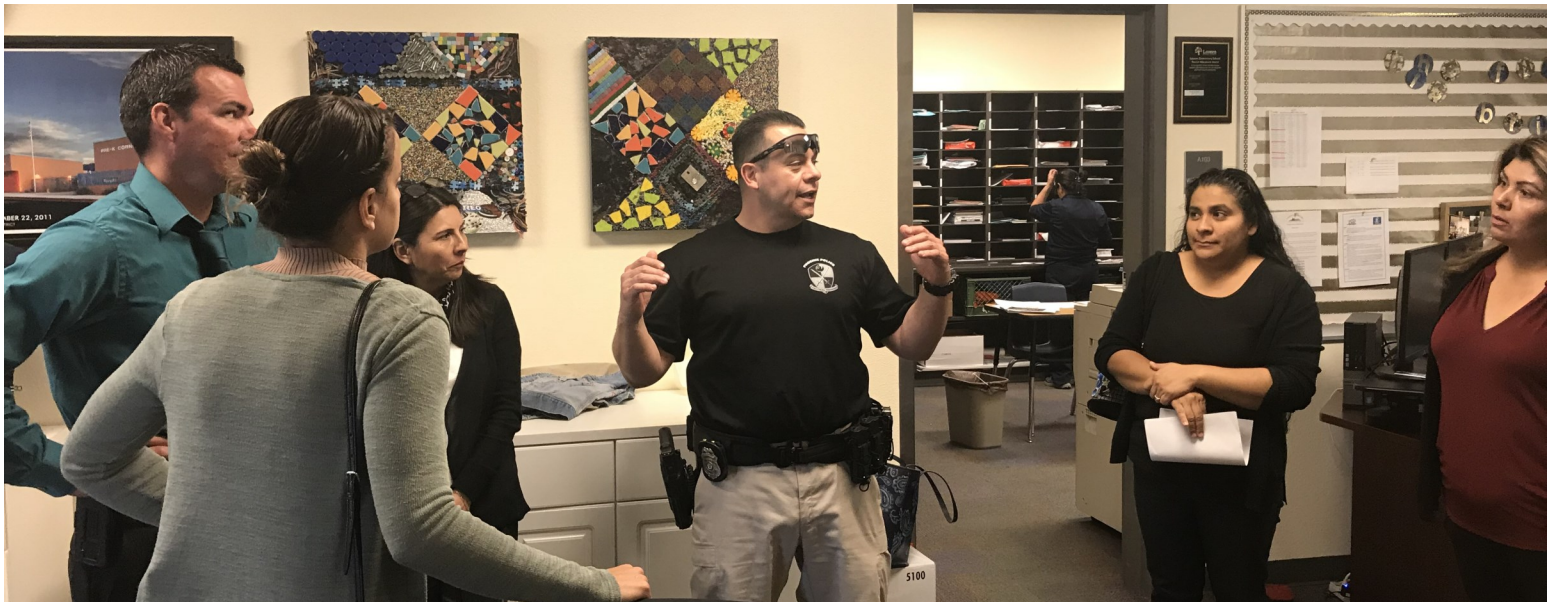
The 9,000 square foot building features four large preschool classrooms, which house two developmental preschool classes for children with special needs and two general education preschool classes; a separate playground; reception area; and conference room. It is also now home to the district's Kids Club and preschool offices.

Designed by BWS Architects and constructed by Chasse Building Team, the large classrooms provide ample space for reading, dramatic play, and craft centers as well as naptime and circle-time. High windows allow for natural light while automatic shades prepare the room for napping at the touch of a button. Dimmers allow teachers to adjust lighting for instructional needs. Each classroom has its own interactive Promethean board, sink, water fountain, and bathroom with pint-sized fixtures and Dutch doors. Brightly colored non-skid flooring and modern cabinetry add to the functional space.

All classrooms exit to the playground in which learning tools have been incorporated into the play structures. The exterior is comprised of glass, metal, and concrete wood-look materials that create a bright and inviting space for families. An outside seating area and desert landscaping allow for informal gathering. The building is energy efficient with LED lighting inside and out, highly-rated windows, and the latest in energy management controls.

The cost of the building was \$3,962,668 and was funded entirely through bond proceeds approved by Laveen voters in 2015.





District Reminds Families of Safety Protocol

The safety of Laveen students and staff has been, and continues to be, Laveen's top priority. Staff, students, and families must all work in partnership to ensure the safety of every member of our school community.

Laveen schools practice for a variety of emergencies multiple times a year. The procedures they follow were developed in partnership with law enforcement and crisis experts and are based on best practices in emergency response. School safety committees evaluate the success of every drill and practices are continuously reviewed and refined.

Laveen's schools routinely conduct lockdown drills to practice for situations in which students and staff should stay behind locked doors for safety reasons. Most often these occur due to active police investigations, in which a suspect is being pursued, occurring in close proximity to a school.

Parents and guardians should follow these tips for when their child's school is in lockdown:

- **Do not call the school.** Office staff cannot answer phones during a lockdown. Once the school is secure and information is verified, a robocall and text message will be sent to families. Oftentimes, the situation is resolved before communication can be sent. In this case, parents will receive a message informing them of the lockdown event (please make sure your child's school has your current phone number on file).
- **Do not come to the school.** Once a school is in lockdown, they are unable to open the doors for anyone, including parents. Persons gathering outside a school put themselves at risk while police work to apprehend a suspect. Driving to a school during a lockdown can create a traffic jam preventing first responders from reaching the school in a timely manner. In a serious emergency situation, students will be relocated to an alternate site for parent reunification.
- **Check district homepage.** An alert message will be posted on the district web page, www.LaveenSchools.org, along with details and instructions. Messages will also be sent via the robocall system.

This information can be found on the "School Safety" section of Laveen's website, located under the Parents tab or at www.laveenschools.org/school-safety

3rd and 4th Graders Join Superintendent's Math All Stars Club

All third and fourth-grade students have been invited to join to the Superintendent's Math All Stars Club.

The club challenges students to spend 15 minutes a day practicing math skills. Students who join the club will be given a Chromebook to use at home for the duration of the school year. Students will participate in the ALEKS online math program, a companion product to the district's math curriculum. ALEKS uses adaptive tools to tailor students' math practice to their identified needs.

An assembly was held at each school site to introduce students to the program. Dr. Sprout will appear in Google Classroom videos monthly to congratulate students and introduce the month's challenges and monthly prizes.



Students District-Wide Participate in Special Olympics Field Day

Laveen's Special Olympics Field Day was held on November 16.

Students from across the district participated in various activities such as soccer, bocce ball, Connect 4, bowling, and giant Jenga.

Cesar Chavez High School students volunteered their time to assist staff and students with this exciting annual event.

Mission: Kindergarten 2023

Visit the Laveen school of your choice for an exploration of kindergarten.

01.31.2023
5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

**Launch your child into a
successful academic
career.**

www.LaveenSchools.org/kindergarten

creating bright futures

Free full-day kindergarten offered at all Laveen schools. Enrollment requirements apply.



Arizona Cardinals Bring Milk & Cookies to Cheatham School

The Arizona Cardinals stopped by Cheatham School last week to enjoy milk and cookies with a few classes.

The Milk & Cookies Reading Program selects one school across the state each week during the football season to visit and encourage students to read. Mrs. Mendez's 3rd grade class and Ms. Hermann's first grade class were beyond excited to be selected this year.

Big Red, Arizona Cardinals cheerleaders, and Arizona Cardinals player Koda Martin stressed the importance of reading before sitting down to read some of their own favorite books with the students. After the stories, Martin played a fun game of Heads Up, answered kid-approved questions, and signed a backpack for each student. The session ended with students enjoying milk and cookies.

Thanks to the Cardinals, it was definitely a day students will remember for a lifetime. The Arizona Cardinals, SRP, and Albertsons-Safeway have been teaming up for 20 years to offer the "Milk & Cookies" Reading Program.

Chef Kent Visits Laveen Cafeterias

Chef Kent Getzin has been paired with Laveen's Child Nutrition Department by the Life Time Foundation to provide culinary training and create scratch recipes.

Chef Kent visited Laveen's schools during the week of October 31. He met with cafe staff to revisit some of the recipes they have already learned and prepared a new recipe for cinnamon bread pudding with cream cheese icing.

Students had the opportunity to taste test this dessert. New staff also received training on equipment and knife skills.



In Our Community

Stretch of 38th Ave to be named in honor of late M.C. Cash Principal Lisa Sandomir



Lisa Sandomir

The stretch of 38th Avenue, between Wier Ave. and Roeser Rd., will be renamed “Sandomir Way” in honor of the late M.C. Cash School Principal, Lisa Sandomir.

The Phoenix City Council approved the Laveen School District’s request to rename the street at their October 12, 2022 meeting. The request was previously reviewed by the Laveen Village Planning Committee.

Sandomir passed away October 27, 2021 after sustaining injuries in a car accident the day before. Sandomir was the principal of M.C. Cash Elementary for 15 years and had a tremendous impact on the M.C. Cash neighborhood and community. Thousands of local residents were educated under her and she saw multiple generations of families go through her school.

M.C. Cash school faces this street and is the only property affected by the name change.

The district plans to have an unveiling celebration once the new signs are installed.



Dozens of trees planted in M.C. Cash Community

Local non-profit organization, Trees Matter, planted 40 trees at MC Cash School and 25 trees in the surrounding Cash neighborhood last weekend.

The beautification project was held in partnership with the Shining Light Foundation and Councilwoman Yassamin Ansari’s office.

Inaugural Partnership Summit Brings Community and Schools Together

Members from local non-profits, for-profits, faith-based groups, advocacy organizations, and elected officials joined Laveen school leaders at the district’s inaugural Partnership Summit held at Estrella Foothills Global Academy in November.

Attendees had the opportunity to hear from district and elected officials about the Laveen community before meeting with individual schools to assess their partnership needs.

Over 45 organizations were represented at the event that was sponsored by SchoolConnect.





Donate to the Laveen School District and receive a dollar-for-dollar credit on your taxes when you file.

Reduce Your Taxes by supporting Laveen's schools

Tax credit contributions may only be used to support character education and fee-based extracurricular activities.

www.laveenschools.org/tax-credit

For every dollar you donate, the amount you owe in state taxes will be that much less. Couples filing jointly may donate up to \$400. Individuals may contribute up to \$200. Allowable per ARS § 43-1089.01

Tax credit contributions may only be used to support character education and fee-based extracurricular activities such as after-school tutoring and clubs, academic enrichment, field trips, fine art programs, and athletics.

CHILD FIND NOTICE

Child Find is a comprehensive developmental screening assessment process which identifies children, 3 to 21 years of age who have disabilities that may hinder their learning. If you live in the Laveen Elementary School District boundaries and are parents or guardians of a student enrolled in private school within the district, home-schooled, or if you know of a child who might be in need of services for a disabling condition such as speech, learning disability, etc., please call the Special Education Department at 602-237-9100 ext. 3058. Free special education services are available to eligible students. For more information, visit the Child Find website at <http://www.azed.gov/specialeducation/az-find/> or call Child Find at (602) 364-4015.

MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT

Are you currently experiencing temporary living arrangements due to eviction, job loss, or a traumatic event? Laveen Elementary School District offers services to families through the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. The act requires that children and families who are in a temporary living situation be offered services and supports. Services provided may include enrollment assistance, nutrition services, clothing or school supplies, community referrals, and in some cases transportation. If you are living in any of the following temporary circumstances: with another family or friend due to financial hardship, living in a shelter, transitional housing, in a hotel/motel, or an unaccompanied youth waiting for foster care, you may fit the criteria for assistance under this act. Please call 602-237-9100, ext. 3051 to inquire further about qualifying for this program.



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The Latest from Laveen is published by the Laveen Communications Department.
Kristen Landry • 602-237-9100 • klandry@laveeneld.org

Enroll Your Child in a Laveen School

Parents wishing to register their incoming child(ren) should visit the school of their choice to complete the registration process.

You may register online or complete a packet available on our website, www.LaveenSchools.org, or in our schools' front offices. You will need to bring the following documents to complete your child's registration:

- Child's original birth certificate
- Child's immunization record
- Proof of Residence, such as utility receipt or lease agreement (refer to Arizona Residency Guidelines)
- Legal papers, if applicable, for custody
- Withdrawal form/report card from previous school
- Photo identification for parent/guardian

Vista del Sur is an accelerated school and students must take an assessment prior to enrolling. Paseo Pointe is a dual language immersion (DLI) school. Incoming students in Grades PK-5, for 2022-23, must enroll in the DLI program (DLI will expand a grade level each year).

Laveen schools also accept open enrollment of non-resident (out-of-district) students on a space available basis.

Bus transportation is only provided to those students who live within designated transportation zones.

Visit us online at www.LaveenSchools.org

M.C. Cash School
3851 W. Roeser
Phoenix, AZ 85041
602-237-9120

Estrella Foothills
Global Academy
5400 W. Carver
Laveen, AZ 85339
602-304-2050

Rogers Ranch School
6735 S. 47th Avenue
Laveen, AZ 85339
602-304-2030

Laveen Education Center
5001 W. Dobbins
Laveen, AZ 85339
602-237-9100

Cheatham Elementary
4725 W. South Mountain
Laveen, AZ 85339
602-237-7040

Laveen Elementary
4141 W. McNeil
Laveen, AZ 85339
602-237-9110

Trailside Point
Performing Arts Academy
7275 W. Vineyard
Laveen, AZ 85339
602-605-8540

Desert Meadows School
6855 W. Meadows Loop East
Laveen, AZ 85339
602-304-2020

Paseo Pointe School
8800 S. 55th Avenue
Laveen, AZ 85339
602-304-2040

Vista del Sur
Accelerated Academy
3908 W. South Mountain
Laveen, AZ 85339
602-237-3046

