



ARSA REPORTS

Official Publication of the **Arizona Rural Schools Association**



FALL 2019

in this issue...



“Stronger Together” for 25 Years!

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Page 1 • From the Director

Page 3 • Hyper Automation, Data Visualization and Artificial Intelligence by Jeremy Calles

Page 7 • Roof Maintenance and the SFB by Jerry Brown, Roof Consultant PRO, WRECORP

Page 11 • Arizona Student Opportunity Collaborative by Glen Lineberry, Miami High School

Page 13 • ARSA Executive Board Members

Page 16 • ASU Works with Arizona Districts to Augment Opportunities and Address Student Needs

Page 23 • Rural School are the Heart of Rural Communities by Sean Rickert, ARSA Executive Board, Superintendent Pima USD

The year’s conference will be our 25th conference anniversary. Our theme is “Stronger Together for 25 Years”. This sums up who we are and why we are still around.

The ARSA Board and I hope to see you at the conference, September 12, 13, and 14th, again at Little America in Flagstaff. In addition to celebrating our 25th conference, we will again offer a wide range of professional development for teachers and administrators.

Superintendent of Public Instruction, Kathy Hoffman and Brad Mitchell from Battelle for Kids will be our keynote speakers this year. These promise to be very informative and enjoyable keynotes.

As usual, we will celebrate our Hall of Fame inductees, Magnolia Award, and Teacher of The Year finalists, culminating with the announcement of the ARSA State Teacher of The Year for 2019.

We will also award our second Rosy Rubio Scholarship Friday evening. The response to our call for scholarship nominations has been enthusiastic, and we are anxious to announce this year’s winner.

We will also have a special guest Friday evening. Mary Lou Gammon, retired superintendent (Bonita), and founding member of ARSA will present a brief history of our association from its beginning in 1986. Mary Lou was our first president back when we were known as the Arizona Small and/or Rural Schools Association. She was instrumental in our early association with the National Rural Education Association and the first ARSA Teacher of the Year Award.

ARSA is indeed fortunate to have someone with Mary Lou’s institutional memory to help us celebrate how far we’ve come and where we are today.

And, of course we will have the usual superb Little America meals and hospitality. We have a surprise Thursday evening during our reception with exhibitors...something to enhance the celebratory theme.

Golf will be at Flagstaff Ranch again this year. We will serve breakfast and the tournament will begin with a shotgun start at 9:00. Anyone who has played the Ranch knows how fortunate we are to have the opportunity to play there. In this edition you will find informative articles on topics from the SFB and roofing maintenance to the work Local First Arizona is doing to support rural communities.

I hope to see you at the conference.

Wes Brownfield
“Stronger Together!”



Competitive · Compliant · Collaborative



1Government Procurement Alliance

Because Not All Cooperatives are Created Equal.

WHY JOIN?

- ✔ Compliant with Bid Laws
- ✔ Simplify the Purchasing Process
- ✔ 40+ Years of Cooperative Contract Management
- ✔ Save Staff Time
- ✔ Obtain Quality Products at National Pricing
- ✔ Process Orders Quickly and Easily
- ✔ Choose from High Quality Vendors
- ✔ No Fees to Participate
- ✔ Non-Profit, National Cooperative

Take advantage of the **savings & benefits** our contracts bring.

Christy Knorr
Director of Operations

(480) 399-6366

Mike Chouteau
Chief Executive Officer

(602) 327-3735

1Government Procurement Alliance
1910 W. Washington St., Phoenix, AZ 85009

(866) 306-3893

See What's New @ www.1GPA.org

Hyper Automation, Data Visualization and Artificial Intelligence

By Jeremy Calles

What Superintendents, CFOs and Business Managers should know about Hyper Automation, Data Visualization and Artificial Intelligence

That's right, this article isn't written with IT Directors in mind and it isn't written as a futuristic possibility. The products are available now and if you aren't using them then your District is falling behind the trend. So let's talk about what they do and one of the most powerful and affordable tools that is available – Next Gen AFR.

Hyper Automation - Finish Your AFR in 2 Minutes!!!

If you're a seasoned Business Manager or CFO then you probably have the process for completing your Annual Financial Report (AFR) down to a science. You have your Pivot Tables, Crystal Reports, Vision Reports or any other method cued up and ready to go. It gives you all of your numbers and then you manually key them in and everything runs like clockwork – except when it doesn't. That last minute journal entry or that accidental transposing of 96 instead of 69. It happens to the best of us and even when nothing goes wrong, how long does it take to complete your AFR?

The process of completing an AFR is a series of logical steps that are followed after a data source is applied. The only thing important about that statement is that the AFR process is perfect for Hyper Automation. We aren't going to talk about "in theory", the process can be automated. Right now, as you read this article, one of the largest Districts in the State is completing their AFR, Food Service AFR, Desegregation AFR, School Level AFR, USFR Coding Compliance Checks and their Classroom Spending Analysis all in less than 2 minutes. The entire process takes just one click

of a button and at some point there will be a zero click solution. All of these files will show up in your email and a computer voice will ask you if you are ready to submit the data to ADE. Yes, we are living in the beginning stages of the George Jetson era. Over 30 Districts across the State have joined the Next Gen AFR as it enters its second year of existence. The hyper automation tools are saving time but that's just the beginning.

Data Visualization – How quickly can you discuss budget and compensation scenarios?

Has this ever happened to you? You walk into Meet and Confer and the CFO says he has priced out three different compensation packages. One is a flat percent for everyone, the second is a flat dollar and the third is a combination of the two. He has everything priced to the penny. Then someone says, well that second option looks good but what if we tweak the variables a little bit. The CFO responds, "OK, I can price that out and bring it back to the group when we meet again in two weeks." Unfortunately, I've been that CFO. I was there almost a decade ago when I was working with three different Meet and Confer teams and constantly looking at options for pay increases while trying to keep the budget balanced. I tried bringing in my summary results but that information wasn't dynamic. I tried bringing in my Excel spreadsheets but that had some people breaking out in a cold sweat while others wanted to talk more about each formula instead of discussing the main topic. Then I turned to dashboards.

(continued on page 4)

Dashboards help you analyze an infinite number of possibilities instantly. More importantly, they can use visualizations to help make the information easy to digest. You can look at the big picture or zoom in to see the impact on one specific employee, all with the click of a button. Dozens of Districts in Arizona rely on dashboards every year to help them make some of their biggest decisions.

OK Google, what is artificial intelligence?

Ironically, if you just asked that question then you have essentially answered your own question. Arizona Education is unfortunately behind the curve on this one but new tools are coming soon. Soon, you will be able to ask questions like:

- "Ok Google, how much would it cost to give a 3% raise out to all of our employees?"
- "Ok Google, how much did we spend on textbooks last year at West Point High School?"
- "Ok Google, when do we need to replace the roof at Copper Canyon High School?"
- "Ok Google, where do I code lawn mower repair parts?"

Artificial Intelligence spread rapidly in the commercial sector and it is now hitting every industry, including education. People want instant answers to all of their questions. Just try to imagine all of the practical applications for AI at your District. The AI companies are already emailing Superintendents and CFOs across the State. However, the current offerings are expensive and require a significant investment of your time in order to get them implemented. A new option is on the way. It will be affordable and will require little to no time from you to get it implemented.

What's the Bottom Line?!!!

As little as \$1,500 a year can get you all of these tools if you have less than 1,000 students. That's right, these tools are being designed to help all Districts. The Next Gen AFR package is only \$1,000 for Districts under 1,000 students. A standard budget dashboard for Next Gen Districts is only \$500. The tools that are currently prototypes are being provided as a free trial to Next Gen Districts. Tools like the One-Click Cash Reconciliation or the soon-to-be-released Next Gen AI.

About: Calles Consulting Jeremy Calles Next Gen AFR

I am currently the CFO for the Tolleson Union High School District. I was previously the CFO at the Kyrene Elementary School District and I was there for 7 years. Prior to that, I was in the School Finance Unit at the Arizona Department of Education for 5 years and I served in the U.S. Army for 6 years as an Accounting Specialist. Many people are surprised to hear that despite all of my years in finance, my degree is actually in Information Technology. I began consulting just over 3 years ago. The passion for Finance and IT has come together in the Calles Consulting product line which includes the Next Gen AFR, Budget Dashboards, Compensation Dashboards and the latest release, the One-Click Cash Reconciliation tool. I can be contacted at JeremyCalles76@gmail.com or at 602-687-3656. Every piece of data is like a piece of coal and these tools will help that diamond of information shine.

ASBA

Insurance Trust



Celebrating 37 Years!

Since 1981, ASBAIT has successfully provided comprehensive and affordable employee healthcare benefit programs to participating Arizona public educational entities.

- *As specified in A.R.S.15-382, schools are not required to competitively bid the decision to participate in programs for health, accident and related employee benefits*
- Comprehensive network access—Aetna Choice® Point of Service (POS) II and the Banner|Aetna Performance Network (Maricopa and Pinal Counties 2018-19 with expected expansion into Pima County)
- Full suite of employee benefit options
- Retiree plan (GASB 45 exempt)

ASBAIT believes we should do more for our members than just pay medical bills. Our desire to help provide members access to quality care and achieve their health ambitions through managing chronic disease are two more reasons you should ***trust the people who care for you.***

To learn about these offerings and more, visit www.asbait.org.

Let us show you!

For more information, contact:

Ralph Epifanio
Meritain Health
Regional Vice President—Sales

Representing the **Arizona School Boards Association Insurance Trust**

1.480.299.2643 or ralph.epifanio@meritain.com

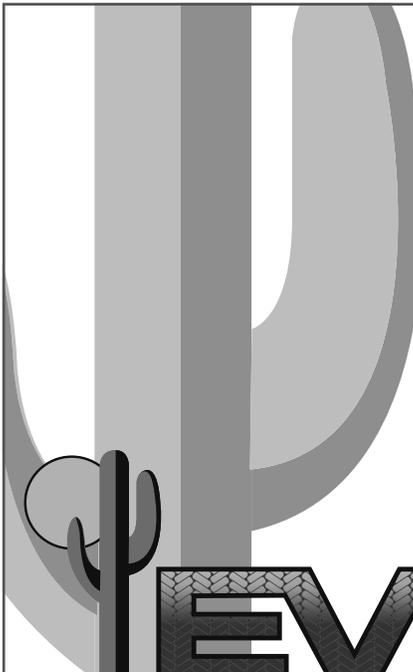
Water, Fire & Vandalism Restoration

**24 HOUR
EMERGENCY SERVICE**

Mold, Asbestos & Lead Abatement

Complete Content Processing & 20,000 ft Storage Facility

Licensed In-House Construction Restoration-Remodeling Division



EVDS



ROC #250660, #097838



Contract # #17-15P-02



Contract #ADEQ18-186321

480.833.4538

www.eastvalleydisaster.com

GET A CLEAR PICTURE OF STUDENT LEARNING



map SUITE

The MAP® Suite is all about measuring what matters—so you can support growth, skills mastery, and reading fluency for every student. This cohesive assessment system from NWEA® illuminates every student’s learning needs, helps teachers target instruction, and gives administrators what they need to help their districts thrive.

Start measuring what matters at NWEA.org

© 2018 NWEA. NWEA and MAP are registered trademarks of NWEA in the US and in other countries.

Roof Maintenance and the SFB

by Jerry Brown, Roof Consultant PRO, WRECORP

An ongoing issue with the rural districts is maintenance. The key issue is lack of manpower, time and education to perform that maintenance. For the purpose of this article we will be discussing roof maintenance.

How many rural school districts have the manpower to perform regular routine preventative roof maintenance? Within that manpower how many have the education and knowledge to understand how to perform the roof maintenance on the types of roofing systems that are being used today? How do you track the roof maintenance that you have performed?

Arizona Revised Statue §15-2032 requires each district to perform routine preventative maintenance. The following sections of that statue outlines what is expected of school districts to obtain BRG (Building Renewal Grants) to fund the roofing projects that may be needed.

§15-2032 B. The school facilities board shall distribute monies from the fund based on grant requests from school districts to fund primary building renewal projects. Project requests shall be prioritized by the school facilities board, with priority given to school districts that have provided routine preventive maintenance on the facility. The school facilities board shall approve only projects that will be completed within twelve months, unless similar projects on average take longer to complete.

§15-2032 D. Monies received from the fund shall not be used for any of the following purposes:
5. Routine preventive maintenance.

§15-2032 J. 2. "Routine preventive maintenance" means services that are performed on a regular schedule at intervals ranging from four times a year to once every three years, or on the schedule of services recommended by the manufacturer of the specific building system or equipment, and that are intended to extend the useful life of a building system and reduce the need for major repairs.

The SFB has spreadsheets for tracking preventative maintenance on their website. But, do you actually know how to use them? Do you know how to perform the maintenance? WRECORP is a roof consulting company that specializes in schools. Our team knows how to address the requirements of the SFB. We can assist you by showing you what needs maintenance and how to fill out the SFB forms. We can also assess or design along with providing quality assurance on your roofing projects. We can place all of your roofs into a database (Roof Logic) that is supported on the Internet, with free access secured with a use name and password.

The program will provide:

Assessment/Conditions

- Provides detailed assessment information including the roof system and conditions as of the date assessed.

Budget Forecasting

- Roof Logic has comprehensive budget forecasting features that allow you to quickly setup budgets for any number of years then push budgets forward at year end.

Roof History Tracking (Preventative Maintenance)

- Know what happened and when on every roof. RoofLogic keeps a complete history so if you need to go back and see what happened on a roof in the past you can do so.

Warranty Tracking

- Keep track of every warranty on every roof. Maintain multiple warranties on a single roof, know which roofs are covered by a single warranty, produce warranty lists showing expiration date. You can also store a copy of the warranty document right in the system.

(continued on page 8)

(continued from page 7)

The SFB only has 5 liaisons to cover 217 school districts. Arizona is 114,000 square miles and these liaisons cannot be everywhere at all times. As a school district you have to do your part to assist the SFB in providing funds for your needs. WRECOP can provide you with that needed assistance:

623-878-7117
www.wrecorp.com

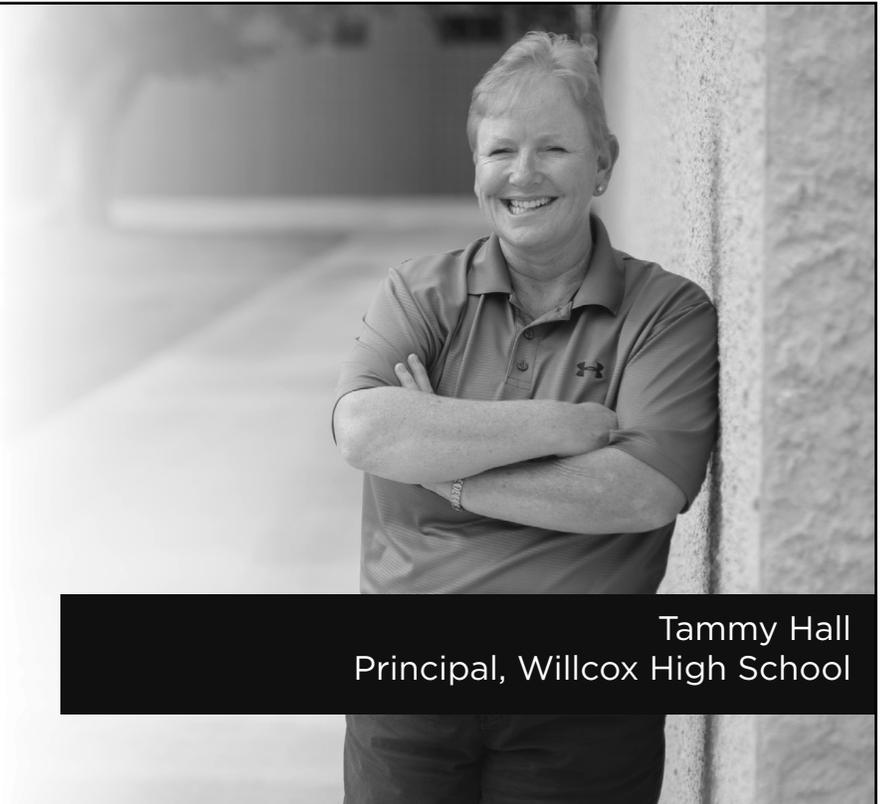
The following photographs were taken from schools that are in desperate need of preventative maintenance.



“Without the Alliance, I would not have been able to make the recovery I did. The adjusters were extremely professional, easy to talk to, and always there to answer all of my questions.”

OVER 30 YEARS SERVING
ARIZONA SCHOOL DISTRICTS
AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES

800.266.4911 | THE-TRUST.ORG



Tammy Hall
Principal, Willcox High School

TRUST IS EARNED, NOT GIVEN.



Together, we will ensure your school leaves
a brilliant impression.

Program Management | Project Management | Construction Management | Condition Assessment
Master Planning | Design Services | Cost Estimating | Scheduling | Constructability Review | Sustainability

vanir.com | 888.912.1201 Solutions for Success





“Stronger Together!”

25 Years Strong!



Arizona Student Opportunity Collaborative

by Glen Lineberry, Miami High School

Arizona schools face a growing shortage of certified teachers, particularly for upper-level mathematics, advanced science including physics, and advanced courses in the humanities.

Facts on the ground are actually worse than the data indicate, as small rural schools are forced to assign all classes in a content area to one or two teachers, and not every “highly qualified” teacher is truly prepared to teach the more rigorous upper-division courses.

Teaching high school courses for college credit – which is now expected by parents and a significant part of the College & Career Readiness Index in Arizona’s A-F School Grades – poses a further problem. The credential requirement of at least eighteen graduate hours in the subject area makes for a parallel shortage of teachers available to teach for dual or concurrent credit through community colleges or the universities.

Add in the looming retirement bulge among Arizona teachers, and the drop in enrollment in the teacher colleges, and the problem is both dire and alarming.

The Arizona Student Opportunity Collaborative is designed to address these issues by:

1. Utilizing existing technology and proven business methods to provide rural students with the curricular and instructional opportunities they need to succeed in the new economy, via rigorous online course offerings taught by highly qualified teachers.
2. Eliminating geography as an instructional barrier, and create a comprehensive, rigorous and relevant learning environment for rural students.
3. Significantly mitigating the impact of Arizona’s various teacher shortages on course offerings for rural high school students.

Thanks to generous funding from the Helios Foundation, along with significant organizational support from State Superintendent Kathy Hoffman, Yavapai County Superintendent Tim Carter, Wes Brownfield of ARSA, and Dean Carole Basile of ASU’s Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College, AzSOC is now piloting the project. During this pilot year, AzSOC will:

1. Offer a handful of synchronous online courses during the fall semester;
2. Finalize online course design and processes, in a joint effort with ASU’s Office of Scholarship & Innovation and the Office of Digital Learning;
3. Offer more than a dozen asynchronous courses during the spring semester;
4. Collaborate with the community colleges to connect network courses with college credits;
5. Collaborate with the universities to improve the opportunities available to rural teachers seeking college-level credentials; and,
6. Develop and deploy stand-alone online courses in the areas of English and Anthropology, that can be delivered by any certified educator.

AzSOC is seeking students needing these courses, and teachers willing to extend their expertise.

Questions can be addressed to Glen Lineberry (glen.lineberry@azsoc.org) or Brian Taylor (brian.taylor@azsoc.org).

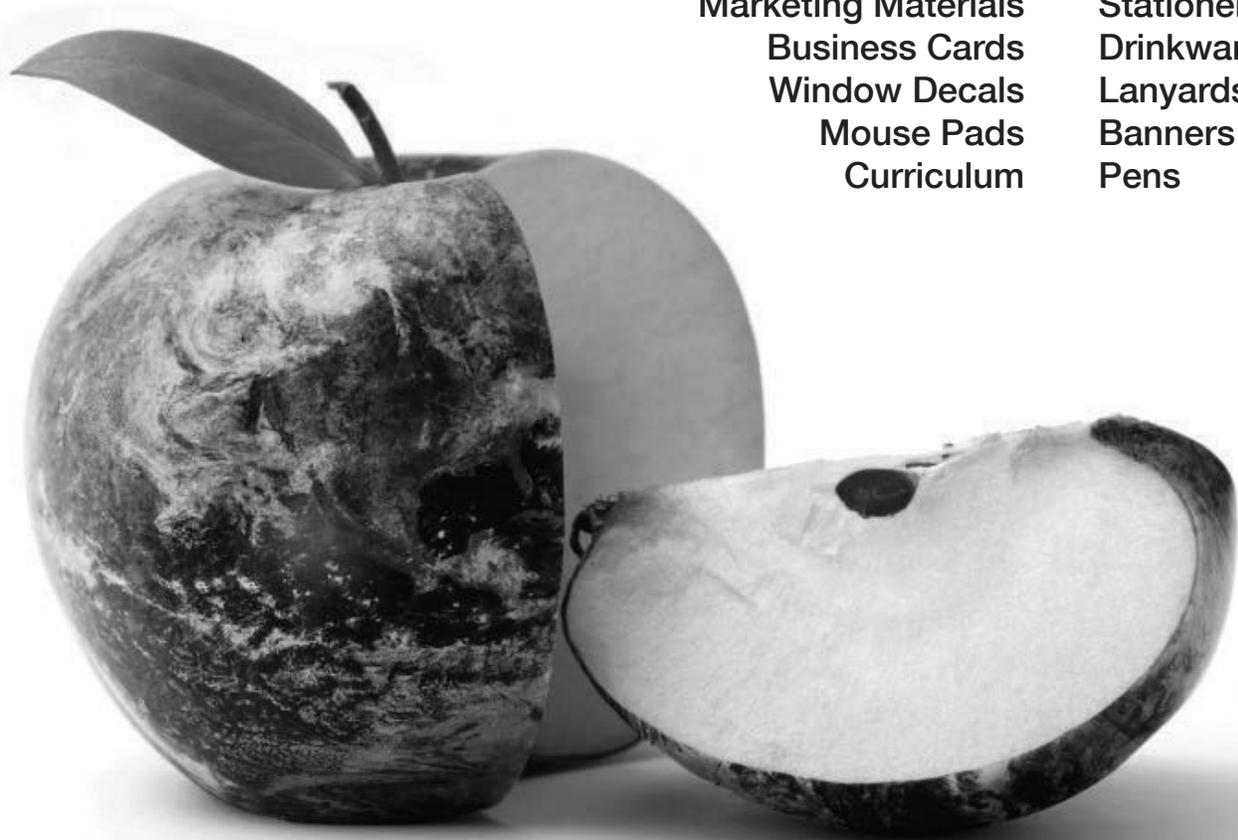
Carve out your own slice of the world.

You have goals. We can help you meet them.

Custom Printing and Promotional Products

Employee Recognition Awards
Student and Teacher Planners
Marketing Materials
Business Cards
Window Decals
Mouse Pads
Curriculum

Brochures
Envelopes
Stationery
Drinkware
Lanyards
Banners
Pens



Graphic  **DEER VALLEY**
Unified School District
Communications
Design • Print • Copy • Promotional Products
printme@dvusd.org • 623-445-5111

Call to schedule a meeting today!

We are happy to come discuss how we can help you achieve your goals.

Your ARSA Executive Board

Past-President
Karl Uterhardt
Cochise Elementary School District

President
John Warren
Topock Elementary School District

President Elect
Kristen Turner
Paloma Elementary School District

Secretary-Treasurer
Melissa Sadorf
Stanfield Unified School District

Treasurer
Kevin Imes
STEDY

County Superintendent
Representative
Jacqueline Price
LaPaz County School Superintendent

Higher Education Representative
Patty Horn
Northern Arizona University

Business Partner Representative Ex-Officio
Mike Chouteau

Regional Representatives

NE - **Robbie Koerperich**
Holbrook Unified School District

NW - **Jaime Festa-Daigle**
Lake Havasu Unified School District

SE - **Sean Rickert**
Advocacy Representative
Pima Unified School District

Central - **Dan Streeter**
Humboldt Unified School District

SW - **Kevin Imes**
STEDY

Executive Director
Wes Brownfield
ARSA



"Stronger Together!"



GRAND CANYON
UNIVERSITY™

Achieve Your Academic and Professional Goals *Up to 10% Scholarship Off Tuition* for GCU PLLS Participants*

Earning your degree from Grand Canyon University represents a positive next step in achieving your career goals. Founded in 1949, GCU offers more than 200 academic programs, of which 150 are available online, for bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs in some of the fastest-growing career fields.

gcu.edu/ARSA

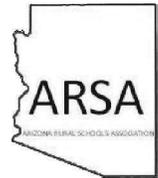
*MOU#3059 - The "Participants in Learning, Leading and Serving" Staff Scholarship (Arizona). This scholarship is only valid for applicants who are staff members of a "Participants in Learning, Leading and Serving" member district within the state of Arizona and submit a complete application. To remain eligible for this scholarship, additional requirements need to be met.

For more information about our graduation rates, the median debt of students who completed the program, and other important information, please visit our website at gcu.edu/disclosures. Please note, not all GCU programs are available in all states and in all learning modalities. Program availability is contingent on student enrollment. Grand Canyon University is regionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission 800-621-7440; <http://hlcommission.org/>. Important policy information is available in the University Policy Handbook at <https://www.gcu.edu/academics/academic-policies.php>. GCU, while reserving its lawful rights in light of its Christian mission, is committed to maintaining an academic environment that is free from unlawful discrimination. Further detail on GCU's Non-Discrimination policies can be found at gcu.edu/titleIX. The information printed in this material is accurate as of NOVEMBER 2017. For the most up-to-date information about admission requirements, tuition, scholarships and more, visit gcu.edu ©2017 Grand Canyon University 17SEA0298



Cafeteria Tables Stages and Risers Educational Furnishings

ARIZONA RURAL
Schools Association



AmTab creates inspiring and engaging educational environments

with our innovative products. We are a premier manufacturer of mobile cafeteria tables, mobile booths, markerboard tables, folding tables, classroom tables, technology tables, conference tables, portable stages and risers, activity tables and custom logo tables.

All of our products are made in the USA, UL certified, MAS Green certified, and carry a 15 year bumper-to-bumper warranty. Please contact us with your next project. We look forward to working together and creating inspiring spaces.

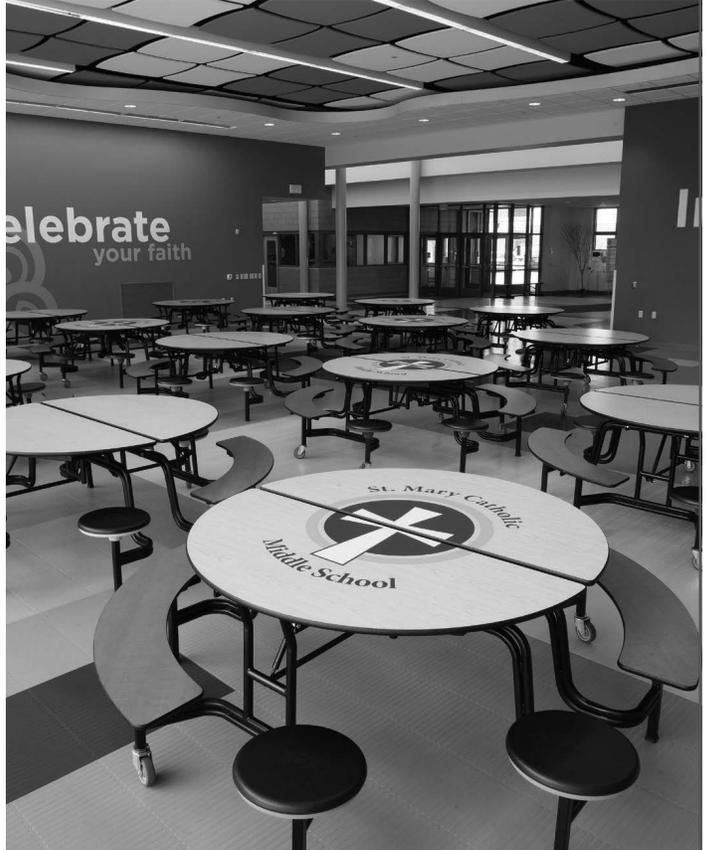
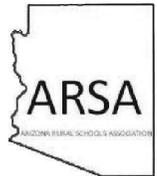


AmTab.com • info@amtab.com • 630.301.7600 • 652 N. Highland Ave. Aurora, IL 60506



**Cafeteria Tables
Stages and Risers
Educational Furnishings**

ARIZONA RURAL
Schools Association



ASU works with Arizona districts to augment opportunities and address student needs



Rural student, Gabriela, took advantage of the opportunity to take a concurrent course through ASU Prep Digital, "It inspires me to know I'm doing college work."

When the 2018 school year began, students in Miami enjoyed a visit from ASU Prep Digital Principal Mike Kasper and Executive Director Jill Rogier. Rogier and Kasper spent the day walking students through a new offering of courses available through the university's affiliate digital college prep program.

ASU Prep Digital is an online program that collaborates with local schools and districts to design blended learning solutions specific to local needs. Besides generating new learning pathways, ASU Prep digital seeks out and harnesses ASU's vast resources on behalf of K-12 programs. It also turns the university into a place that feels familiar and approachable.

"We essentially bring the university to the local school," said Rogier. "Besides giving students access to high quality online and blended learning opportunities, we want students to see themselves as part of the ASU community."

Rogier added that the goal behind both bringing the university to the student and welcoming students as part of the ASU community is simple: help students see themselves as "college material."

Besides offering a line-up of core and elective high school courses, ASU Prep Digital also provides pathways into college majors. Students can take university courses from ASU professors, right alongside matriculated ASU students.

ASU Prep Digital utilizes Learning Success Coaches to assist students with appropriate placement in the university courses. In addition, Blended Learning Success Coaches work directly with local districts to provide high-touch support and training.

Obreana Horton, one rural student who took a concurrent college course through ASU Prep Digital, was excited when she heard about the opportunity.

"I just love it. I feel like I've learned more," remarked Obreana Horton. "It inspires me to know I'm doing college work."

Katelin, another Miami student, took an online biology course through ASU Prep Digital. Though she worked on the course in her local classroom, her online instructor was available through proactive appointments, lessons, and on an as-needed basis if Katelin needed further help.

The ASU Prep Collaboration Team works closely with local leaders to identify needs and determine how blended or online instruction can be combined with onsite instruction and support to meet any number of needs or to pilot innovative programs.

(continued on page 21)



canyonstatebus.com
(602) 230-1515 | (877) 230-1515

The Professional Group

PUBLIC CONSULTING, INC.

“To Assist, Train and Educate”

Need HELP with Budget Revisions or SFB Projects?

“PGPC’s professionals provide tools for you and your team to succeed.”

Mohave Cooperative Contract
17M-PGPC-1215

Orders@pgpc.org
480.699.4458 www.pgpc.org

KAIROS

HEALTH ARIZONA, INC.

In cooperation with the Trust

WE'VE GOT
YOU COVERED.

602.845.6158



EMPLOYEE
BENEFITS
Made Better.

WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED | KAIROSHALTHAZ.ORG | 888.331.0222



infiNET

Experience the infinite

possibilities for play

A child's imagination is limitless—their playground should be too. infiNET is a hybrid “netform” solution with dynamic climbing challenges and barrier-free platform nets. It welcomes kids of all ages and skill levels to explore and conquer new territories together.



Since 1979
dave bang
 associates, inc.

PLAYWORLD
 The world needs play.

ROC #157246

info@davebang.com

www.davebang.com

480-892-2266



We are a part of 1GPA cooperative purchasing for the State of Arizona and the Rapid Response Team (RRT) for the Arizona School Risk Retention Trust (The Trust).

CRS operates out of (3) warehouse locations in Arizona: Phoenix, Tucson, and Show Low and provides 24/7 response 365 days a year throughout the State of Arizona.

What makes CRS different?

1. We have extensive experience working in operational school buildings and know the importance of safety, professionalism and timeliness!
2. We employ full time technicians with background checks and FBI clearance cards.
3. We want to partner with our clients and provide whatever they need at any moment.

CRS is a One-Stop-Shop List of In-House Services:

- Water Removal and Structural Drying
- Environmental Services: Asbestos, Mercury, Mold and Lead Abatement
- Sewage Clean-up
- Smoke and Odor Removal
- Build Back Services
- Firestop Inspections, Surveys and Repairs
- Project Management Consulting

24/7 Phone Line: 855-665-3345

For example, the Yuma Union High School District has been working with ASU Prep Digital to offer adaptive math courses and to grow instructional

staff in blended learning instructional strategies. San Luis High School will also use ASUPD's forensic science course this year to encourage increased enrollment in STEM courses and to support their CTE programming in criminal justice. Three Arizona districts, Chandler, Camp Verde, and Yuma Union will offer a blended learning STEM pilot through ASU collaboratives during the 2019-20 school year.

Other Arizona districts collaborate with ASU to offer accelerated learning opportunities, such as the 12 schools in the Pendergast Elementary School District that offer students an opportunity to take Algebra 1 and Geometry. ASU collaborates with Santa Cruz Valley Union High School to provide Spanish and science teachers, along with college preparatory curriculum, where students receive a 21st century learning experience.

"It really is about understanding the needs and desired outcomes of each district, down to the individual school," said Dana Van Deirse, Executive Director of Arizona Partnerships for ASU Prep Digital. "We collaborate as a team with local educators and by determining the desired outcomes, instructional model and resources needed, we build customized educational models with our partners."

At the same time, Van Deirse notes that helping teachers grow in their ability to leverage all that technology has to offer on behalf of their students is a big part of ASU Prep Digital's purpose. "Our hope is to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills they need to harness the data and resources that technology provides. It really allows them to offer that individualized, one-to-one instruction and to do what teachers love most – teach!"

To learn more about how ASU can work with you to collaborate and create tech-supported innovation and to fill critical gaps, contact Dana Van Deirse at dana.vandeirse@asu.edu.



"Stronger Together!"

25 Years Strong!



PHOENIX

600 N 75TH AVE, PHOENIX, AZ /602-307-1050

2202 S CENTRAL AVE, PHOENIX, AZ / 602-254-9241

TUCSON:

3220 E Irvington Rd. Tucson AZ, 85714 / 520-622-6767

FLAGSTAFF

3901 E Huntington Dr. Flagstaff, AZ 86004 / 928-522-7035

WWW.RWCGROUP.COM

IC CE SERIES



**CUMMINS 6.7L DIESEL
PSI PROPANE**

IC RE SERIES



**CUMMINS L9 DIESEL
UP TO 90 PASSENGERS**

COLLINS BUS



Chevy or Ford Chassis
Gas or Diesel
Single & Dual Rear Wheels
Non-CDL 14 Passengers

**USED BUSES AVAILABLE..ALL MAKES & MODELS
MOBILE SERVICE AVAILABLE...ALL MAKES & MODELS**

Rural schools are the heart of rural communities.

By Sean Rickert, ARSA Executive Board, Superintendent Pima USD

Rural schools are the heart of rural communities. Sure, it's been said before, and it's trite and folksy. But, it's true. We can get sucked into the awful negativity vortex where all the shoulda-coulda-wouldas conflate into an oppressive sense of hopelessness and outrage. Rural communities in Arizona and across the nation are struggling. Professional opportunities found in the metropolitan areas are not as plentiful in rural areas. Entrepreneurship is a riskier venture in the far-flung parts of the state. But, rural communities have many impalpable strengths. Visit with people who live in any rural community and they will tell you why they love their hometown. It is up to us to enhance our student's abilities to recognize those valuable uniquely rural characteristics. Cultivating their love of their place will not only encourage them to stay and grow the place where they live, but it is an essential part of developing their self-image and fostering their self-esteem.

American culture over the past two hundred years has been about the pursuit of Horatio Alger's mythic happy ending. Rags to riches stories span historical, racial and economic divides. From "Little Orphan Annie" to "The Jeffersons" the cultural goal is inescapably linked to life in the city. Rural life is portrayed as anywhere from quaint and folksy (remember "The Waltons") to reckless and irresponsible ("Dukes of Hazzard" anybody) to down right scary (ever seen "Justified"?). The New York Times bestseller Hillbilly Elegy portrays rural America in an awful light. How does all this affect our students? Does it contribute to the challenges we face attracting teachers to rural districts? We need to recognize there are steps we can take, and we need to pull together to find ways to share the successes found especially in rural

places. For example, there is much talk in metropolitan Arizona about the panacea of consolidation. In the Gila Valley, home to Safford, Thatcher, Pima and Fort Thomas unified districts, this conversation comes up as well. What people don't think about is, we have four high schools serving a student population of roughly 2,300 high school students. In the valley we would have one high school, but our students have more four times the opportunities for achieving greatness through leadership and athletics. We regularly send multiple teams to championship tournaments in every sport, where a large school could at most send only one. We do all this while maintaining high commitments to dollars in the classroom, which rival the operational efficiency of any schools in the state. The way we do things breeds a level of success which students would not have access to elsewhere. Those students may go on to pursue leadership in other ventures and achieve success throughout their lives. As we reflect, there are chronic problematic realities which shouldn't be ignored. But, our adversities ought not to become our masters. We are the stewards of the heartbeat of our community. Friday night lights, hoop dreams and dreams of stardom all originate in our halls, gymnasiums and cafeterias. Excitement about science, art, music, or engineering begins in our classrooms. It is developed by our teachers. We have the opportunity to bring light and knowledge to children who would otherwise live their whole lives unaware of the world beyond their own horizons. The problem is we are struggling to find the resources to support the basic functions of schools. Our communities and our children deserve better, but annual funding for education in Arizona continues the laggard tendency put in place decades ago.

(continued on page 24)

Every year statistics are compiled on education spending, and the relative position of Arizona is illustrated. Per pupil spending from state and local revenue, elementary school teacher pay and school counselors per pupil come to mind as perennial indicators of the situation. Arizona is always towards the end of the line on those measures. The one that troubles me the most is not often discussed, but shows the root of the problem. When you look at the rate of increase in per pupil expenditures year over year, the depth of the financial abyss rural schools operate within is apparent. Between 1980 and 1990 per pupil expenditures in Arizona increased by 90%. At the same time some states increased spending by 200% and the national average was 114% growth. Arizona fell from 12th in per pupil expenditures to 25th. The nineties saw a difficult to explain drop in the rate of investment. The nationwide average went from 114% to 37%, but Arizona took the trend even further. Where we had increased education spending by 78% of the national average during the 80's, we fell farther off the pace only increasing education spending by 62% of the much lower rate seen in the 90's. During the first decade of the new century things continued to get worse. Arizona increased education spending at almost twice the rate it had in the prior decade; 39%, while the national average surged to 64%. Arizona's relative position continued to decline as we saw education spending increase by 57% of the national average. At this point 48 states were increasing spending at faster rates than Arizona. And, Arizona achieved the notorious position at the bottom of the list for per pupil spending. It has been almost a decade since and the pattern continues. Other parts of the country invest in education at much higher rates than Arizona. This is important as we consider the question, "Isn't it great that we are spending more on public education than we did before?" Somebody once said that it was the leftists

who argued that Arizona public schools need more money. The time has come for educators move the issue of funding for schools above the political fray. Maybe we should force candidates to sign a pledge to support education funding increases above the national average rate. Finding the revenue would be a challenge, but a challenge we need to address.

A time is on the horizon when the need to live in an urban place to access to trappings of success will disappear. Tools exist that enable global citizens to produce and contribute in meaningful ways regardless of location. Many envision this untethering of the city and success as an opportunity for rural places to be reinvigorated. Schools have a part to play in making this happen. While it would be great if the money came first, I believe there needs to be a greater value placed on the strengths of rural life. Schools are not known for getting out in front of trends. This is odd given that educators are some of the hardest thinking and working people you will find. I'm not going to speak of branding, but everything you've ever heard (or ignored) about the importance of effective branding applies here. Arizona's rural schools have many essential duties which we must perform. We are responsible for ensuring that every adult has the opportunity to be successful because they've achieved a level of literacy and numeracy necessary to build a prosperous life. We are also the stewards of whole communities. We work with great community leaders - parents, board members, and staff, who are desperate for us to be successful. We have the opportunity to guide them in this work. As we reflect on what matters most, I hope we will consider the importance of this role. Schools need to focus on children, but we must keep our eyes on the prize that is their future. A future where thriving in a rural place ensures accessing the prosperity made available by tomorrow.

How are you
MARKETING
your school this year?



Get a **YEAR'S WORTH** of
practical school marketing
strategies in an easy to use **CALENDAR** and
TOOLKIT.

This comprehensive resource, along with website access to dozens of templates and resources, is designed for school principals, secretaries, or anyone else who wants to help improve their school's reputation for only \$279.

No marketing or public relations experience required.

ORDER YOURS TODAY!!

Use Coupon code "SUCCESS" and get \$100 off

SCHOOL
WEBMASTERS

www.SchoolWebmasters.com

Phone: 888.750.4556

For more information visit

www.MarketingYourSchool.org



Professional Learning Reimagined for Rural Schools

BetterLesson Professional Learning brings research-based instructional strategies directly into classrooms through one-on-one coaching and Design Workshops.

For free research-based strategies contact
nivia.claussen@betterlesson.com

www.betterlesson.com



MOHAVE
COOPERATIVE

After forty years of service, Mohave Educational Services Cooperative, Inc., has come to be known and trusted as the most service oriented public purchasing cooperative in Arizona. Our dedication to public procurement excellence and exemplary member service keeps us focused on becoming your cooperative purchasing partner of choice.

Dedicated to enhancing procurement in rural schools throughout Arizona, one cooperative contract at a time.

Kingman 928-753-6945 | Phoenix 602-277-4290 | Tucson 520-888-9664 | www.mesc.org

Carve out your own slice of the world.



You have goals. We can help you meet them.



Custom Printing and Promotional Products

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------|
| Employee Recognition Awards | Brochures |
| Student and Teacher Planners | Envelopes |
| Marketing Materials | Stationery |
| Business Cards | Drinkware |
| Window Decals | Lanyards |
| Mouse Pads | Banners |
| Curriculum | Pens |



Call to schedule a meeting today!

We are happy to come discuss how we can help you achieve your goals.

Graphic Communications  **DEER VALLEY**
Unified School District
Design • Print • Copy • Promotional Products
printme@dvusd.org • 623-445-5111

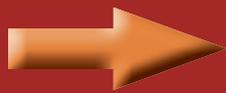




Arizona Rural Schools Association
2041 W. Orange Drive
Phoenix, AZ 85105

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PHOENIX, AZ
PERMIT NO.750

REMINDERS:



Don't forget ARSA Membership Meeting
Saturday, September 14th
Little America, Flagstaff, AZ



“Stronger Together!”

