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SUPERINTENDENT
Nora Gutierrez

Superintendent Special Update to the Board

DATE: September 21, 2021
TO: Governing Board Members
FROM: Nora Gutierrez, Superintendent

U.S. Department of Education Announces 2021 National Blue Ribbon Schools

U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona today recognized 325 schools as National Blue Ribbon Schools for 2021. The recognition is based on a school's overall academic performance or progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups.

I am proud to share with you that University High School is the only National Blue Ribbon School in Arizona for 2021. UHS is known as a place where students grow socially, emotionally, and intellectually in order to become their best self and achieve their maximum potential.

University High School is a selective enrollment college prep high school where students of demonstrated motivation and ability engage in a rigorous education. A focus on integrity, an honor code, and self-awareness is evident. As a Title I school, University High School serves traditionally under-represented students and families. One hundred percent of our students are accepted into a college or university, with some of our students choosing military enlistment.

Students begin advanced and AP level classes upon enrollment. Our freshmen are introduced to the concepts of grit and growth mindset that remains a constant for all four years. "Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens" is embedded into our Advanced Freshman English curriculum, and the habits are reinforced at each grade level. All core classes at University High School are at the Advanced, Pre-AP, or AP level. AP electives, with the exception of Computer Science, are all offered through Tolleson Union High School (TUHS) and taught by TUHS staff in Spanish, Psychology, and Music.

As a school within a school, University High School students enjoy the benefits of being a member of an academically focused small learning community along with all the opportunities that a comprehensive school provides. Our students engage in world language, fine arts, and Career and Technical Education courses alongside their peers at our host school, Tolleson High School. Athletics, clubs, and student government are also integrated between the two schools.

I would like to acknowledge the important role that TUHS plays in the success of UHS students. TUHS provides the social opportunities for UHS students, including diverse electives and extra-curricular opportunities that supports a healthy, well-rounded student. They work together for the success of all students.

We will be celebrating this recognition in many ways, including social media, as well as highlighting this story in television and printed news sources.

TUHSD does iT with pride once again!