

EDUCATION MATTERS

in Tempe

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Fall 2011

Welcome!

This is the inaugural issue of *Education Matters*, a quarterly e-newsletter designed to inform and engage the Tempe community about key educational programs and issues, as well as provide resources available to promote educational success.

As a Tempe native and a mother of two elementary school boys, I am honored to be the chair of the Education Partnerships Council Committee. We are dedicated to providing a platform for the community to work together. This type of collaboration will allow us to efficiently and effectively use our resources, foster the development of new ideas and maintain the high standard established by Tempe's educational system.

To help ensure we enhance quality education, the committee is made up of representatives from each of the educational institutions serving the Tempe area, along with education-minded partners from the community.

We are fortunate to have many wonderful learning opportunities available in Tempe. Read about many of them in this issue of *Education Matters*.



City of Tempe Councilmember
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Tips for Parents of Kindergartners

On behalf of First Things First, we'd like to congratulate your child on reaching kindergarten! He is going to have a lot of fun and discover the joy of learning.

We understand that the transition from home or childcare can be daunting for both of you. Remember that children can sense how we're feeling from what we say and do. Your enthusiasm and your anxieties will most likely carry over to your child. Showing a positive, excited approach can reassure your child and give him confidence about his new school.

First Things First is dedicated to helping kids reach kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed. Here are a few suggestions to ensure that your child is ready for his big day:

1. Maintain a regular bedtime that prepares your child to wake up on time. Kindergartners need approximately 8-10 hours of sleep per night.
2. Make sure your child's immunizations and health records are up to date.
3. Talk with your child about what to expect during a typical school day. This includes lunches, snacks and bathroom breaks.
4. Rehearse for the big day by practicing all the activities that will happen at school. Here are some suggestions:
 - a. Practice waking up in time for school. Allow your child plenty of time to get ready.
 - b. Lay out clothes the night before. Make sure zippers, buttons and ties can be easily fastened.
 - c. If your child will take the bus, walk to the bus stop and talk about boarding and where to sit.
 - d. Pack a lunch for both of you, sit down with your child and practice opening things together. Make sure you pack nutritious food your child likes and can open easily. Remind your child to ask for help if needed.
5. It is a reality that kindergartners sometimes have accidents. Pack an extra pair of clothes in your child's backpack.
6. Give your child a family picture to keep in his pocket.
7. Get involved in your child's school activities. Speak with your child's teacher regularly. Consider participating in your school's PTO/PTA. These things send a message—to your child, teachers and the community—that your child's education is important.
8. Most importantly, celebrate and enjoy this milestone with your child!



www.azfff.gov • 602-771-4984

 **FIRST THINGS FIRST**
Ready for School. Set for Life.
Central Maricopa Regional Partnerships Council

Kyrene School District Has Excelling Schools in Tempe

All Kyrene schools provide a variety of programs and learning choices to match the unique talents and needs of students. Our six Tempe K-8 schools offer Art, Music, P.E., Library and a nationally recognized technology-enriched curriculum.

At **Kyrene de los Niños**: A College Bound Dual Language Academy, 1330 E. Dava Drive in Tempe, students from across the Valley will be participating in an innovative dual language program available for kindergarten and first grade students. Children in dual language classrooms take part in 50/50 daily instruction of all subjects in both English and Spanish. Early dual language learning promotes bilingualism, academic achievement and multicultural competence. Students benefit both socially and cognitively and develop greater non-verbal problem solving abilities and more flexible thinking. The program is designed for children already proficient in English.

What are parents saying about the Dual Language Academy?

"For us, the Dual Language program supports exactly what we encourage in our home and emphasizes the importance of developing skills for a second language in conjunction with education. We are very excited that this type of learning environment is not short term but will continue on for six years!"

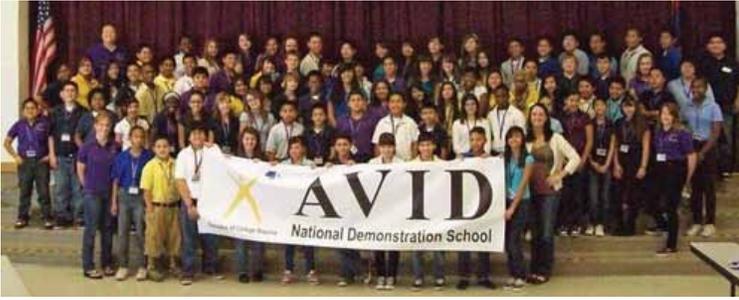
Principal Dr. Ana Gomez del Castillo will hold tours and parent information meetings. Please call Kyrene's enrollment specialist at 480-783-4175 for upcoming dates and times.

For those with children not yet in kindergarten, Kyrene offers an early learning center with program staff who are bilingual in English and Spanish to introduce children ages three to five to the Spanish language using immersion techniques. The Bienvenidos "A foreign language immersion program" supports the individual discovery and learning styles of young students through hands-on activities in multi-age classrooms. For more information, call Kyrene Customer Service at 480-783-4040.

 **KyreneSchoolDistrict**

www.kyrene.org • 480-783-4000

Tempe Elementary Middle School Program Receives National Honor



Connolly Middle School has been named an AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) National Demonstration School for 2011 through 2013 following a visit from AVID directors.

AVID students start middle school in regular, grade-level classes, but once accepted to the program, are required to take at least one honors class.

During the visit, AVID Center staff: spent time in Connolly classrooms; reviewed data; interviewed students, parents and teachers; and evaluated all components of the AVID program at Connolly.

The AVID evaluators found that "Connolly Middle School has a clear vision of college readiness for all students. Teachers' expectations are high, students respond to

those expectations and support structures are in place to ensure student success. The culture of college readiness is exemplified by student work in the classroom and hallways, campus corners in every classroom and rigorous lesson plans across all content areas and grade levels."

Principal Kathy Mullery said, "Achieving AVID National Demonstration status validates that Connolly is successfully implementing the AVID academic elective courses, taking the AVID strategies school-wide to affect all students and increasing rigor and levels of inquiry within each and every class."

Added Connolly AVID Coordinator Denise Dorn: "Connolly AVID students demonstrate their determination to be prepared for college by taking more than the minimum of honors classes. This past year, 83 percent of these young people were enrolled in three or more advanced or honors classes."

Students in the AVID program work each week with college tutors, spend countless hours completing learning logs and other required AVID materials and complete 50 hours of community service each school year.

"This achievement is an outstanding example of the tremendous work that is being done at Connolly. We are so very proud!" said Mullery.

www.tempeschools.org • 480-730-7100



Sustainability Takes Center Stage at TUHSD

Tempe Union High School District has launched a district-wide sustainability program under the district's "Go Green" initiative. The goal of this initiative is to create a more sustainable district while introducing a sustainability curriculum to our students. Thanks to a generous donation from Intel, a district-wide teacher-training workshop was held this summer, allowing 47 teachers to learn about sustainability from a team of experts. These teachers have developed school-based sustainability projects that will be implemented at all district sites during the school year.

The district continues its work with Chevron Energy Solutions to identify new and existing technologies that can improve energy efficiency and decrease water usage throughout the district. Several initial projects will be identified within the next few months and implemented throughout the 2011-2012 school year. You may view the district's sustainability implementation plan and follow its progress by logging on to the district website at www.tuhsd.k12.az.us and clicking on "Sustainability."

Tempe Union High School District is Leading the Way in 21st Century Education
The accomplishments of our graduating class of 2011 tell the story:

- Approximately \$58.5 million in scholarships awarded
- Of the 20 Arizona Flinn Scholars, four are Tempe Union graduates (19 in the past five years)
- Two appointments to the prestigious West Point Academy
- Two Presidential and one Coca-Cola Scholars
- 51 National Merit Finalists (236 in the last six years)
- Approximately 85% of our graduating seniors will attend a four-year university or community college



www.tuhsd.k12.az.us • 480-839-0292

East Valley Veterans Education Center: A One-Stop Shop for Vets

Veterans and their families have a new resource in the East Valley. Earlier this year, the East Valley Veterans Education Center (EVVEC) opened its doors to provide educational, employment and workforce development resources in one location near Broadway and Price roads in Tempe.

"Our center is a one-stop shop," said Manrico Lollie, coordinator for the EVVEC. "Our services range from helping veterans navigate the college enrollment process to employment help, such as interview skills and resume writing."

The center is a collaborative effort of five of the Maricopa Community Colleges: Rio Salado, GateWay, Mesa, Scottsdale and Chandler-Gilbert. Community partners include the Arizona Department of Economic Security, Arizona Department of Veterans' Services, Phoenix VA Healthcare System, Phoenix VA Regional Office and the Maricopa Workforce Connection.

"Our goal is to create an easily accessible place where veterans can obtain the information they need to quickly access the educational benefits they deserve at the college of their choice," said Dr. Chris Bustamante, president of Rio Salado College, the lead institution of the five Maricopa Community Colleges participating in the center. "The center also will provide a place where veterans can meet, share their experiences and help each other transition to civilian life."

At the center, veterans can receive assistance in applying for VA educational benefits such as the 911 GI Bill and receive information regarding community

resources. Skype access is also available for the families of deployed military personnel. A dedicated room and large flat screen are available to accommodate families and afford a measure of privacy.

"The services at the veterans' center are great for those veterans and their families with limited or no internet access," said Jason Savage, an Army veteran who served a tour of duty in Afghanistan in 2003 and in Iraq in 2006. "Having reliable facilities available to use would definitely have improved the quality of life and morale for us and for our loved ones at home. It will certainly make getting in touch easier."

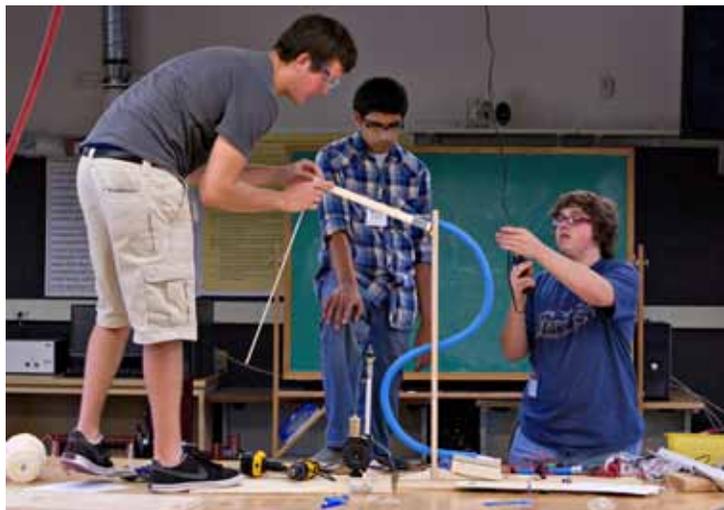
According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, there are more than 560,000 veterans in Arizona. More than 3,000 vets are enrolled at Rio Salado College and more than 1,000 are enrolled at Mesa Community College.

"It is an honor and a privilege to serve the Service members, veterans and their families," said Lollie. "It provides me with a feeling of fulfillment to have us serve them as they have served us."

The center is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and is located at 2055 S. Cottonwood Drive, Tempe. For more information, visit www.evvec.org or call 480-384-9850.

www.riosalado.edu • 480-517-8000

Providing Access, Excellence and Impact in the Tempe Community



Arizona State University, located in the heart of Tempe, is proud to offer educational programs for every student in the community and within the state of Arizona.

Access ASU is a catalyst for change, transforming Arizona's college-going culture by empowering students to invest in their future and attain a university degree. Access ASU encourages academic readiness, increases college exposure, builds student self-confidence, provides adult role models, fosters parent support and promotes financial aid literacy.

At ASU we are dedicated to providing students, parents and K-12 teachers and administrators with essential college readiness resources. Through our strategic partnerships with districts, individual schools and community groups, Access ASU

provides a variety of options for bringing groups of students to campus. Capitalizing on each school and community's unique strengths, ASU tailors its support by leveraging the relevant assets of the university in these settings. Results to date are significant and best measured by rapidly increasing post-secondary enrollment from all targeted school districts.

Access ASU will continue to expand outreach through innovative efforts as relationships evolve and opportunities arise. Here is a glimpse of a couple of the education outreach programs:

Collegiate Scholars program –Through the Collegiate Scholars program, students get a head-start on college by earning university credit while concurrently enrolled in high school. They are able to challenge themselves by taking ASU courses taught by ASU professors and gain exclusive access to internships and fellowships, mentoring programs and research opportunities.

My Futures Week –Freshmen at **Tempe High School** recently had the opportunity to participate in a college preparation activity. The program was developed and implemented in collaboration with Tempe High administrators and ASU counselors and department chairs. Students were given the Kuder Career Interest Inventory, participated in the post-secondary preview activity and attended four presentations, including an Access ASU - Prepare for College information session.

Students were also given an opportunity to speak to college and university admissions representatives at a college fair. Following the week-long exercise, students wrote a four-year plan featuring the information gained throughout the exercise.

For more information about Access ASU please e-mail accessasu@asu.edu.

www.asu.edu • 480-965-9011



Tools for Success

Have Library Card, Will Succeed

Do you know how powerful your Tempe Public Library card can be? With that small rectangle of laminated paper, you can unlock all of Tempe's resources to help students succeed. From computers to homework assistance, make sure you and your children use your library card to take advantage of the following free resources and services this school year and beyond:

COMPUTERS

The Tempe Public Library has more than 100 public-access computers available for youth, teens and adults to navigate the web and complete homework assignments. Computers are conveniently located throughout the library and are available during regular business hours, seven days a week.

HOMEWORK AIDS

Whether for research projects or casual study, K-12 students can search digital databases, encyclopedias and a variety of other useful reference material, simply by visiting the Homework Help section of the Library's website. With a library card and PIN number, students can even access these resources from home.

RECOMMENDED READING LISTS

To encourage your child's love for literacy or to help keep him on top of classic literature, the Library provides recommended book lists by age group. A few clicks

of the mouse will bring you to lists for toddlers, preschoolers, K-5, middle schoolers and high school students.

GED ASSISTANCE AND MORE

The Library subscribes to a database service called LearningExpress Library, where all ages can gain access to practice tests for the GED exam, college prep tests and information on jobs, skills and U.S. citizenship. All you need is a library card and PIN number!

ADULT LANGUAGE PROGRAM

Another digital service the Library provides is Tell Me More Language Learning. With this digital resource, you can practice speaking, comprehension, reading and writing in the following languages: English (ESL/ESOL), Spanish, French, German, Italian, Dutch, Arabic, Chinese and Japanese.

www.tempe.gov/library • 480-350-5500



Resource Centers Offer Aid to Tempe Students and Families

In addition to providing children and teens with a quality education, Tempe and Kyrene school districts also want students to succeed outside the classroom. To ensure that all students and their families have access to resources to meet their basic needs, several resource centers are open on the campuses of Tempe schools. These centers are made possible through various community programs, and offer families seeking assistance with a variety of necessities and vital services. Find out more about these resource centers by reading below:

Thrive to Five Family Resource Centers of the Tempe Elementary and Kyrene School Districts

A project of Communities In Schools of Tempe and Kyrene – a program of Tempe Community Council – and funded by First Things First, these resource centers provide family support services to parents and/or caregivers of children aged birth to five years old. Parent liaisons work within the resource centers as a direct contact for parents in their community. Available services include free parent/caregiver classes, family counseling services, medical insurance and state programs application assistance and a monthly dental clinic. All Thrive to Five services are offered free.

- **Aguilar Family Resource Center:** 5800 S. Forest Ave., Tempe 480-897-2544
- **Frank Family Resource Center:** 8409 S. Avenida del Yaqui, Guadalupe 480-897-6202
- **Fuller Family Resource Center:** 1975 E. Cornell Dr., Tempe 480-897-6228
- **Hudson Family Resource Center:** 1325 E. Malibu Dr., Tempe 480-897-6608

- **Holdeman Family Resource Center:** 1326 W. 18th St., Tempe 480-966-9934
- **Kyrene Family Resource Center:** 1330 East Dava Dr., Tempe 480-783-3172
- **Lagos Family Resource Center:** 17001 S. 34th Way, Phoenix 480-783-1400
- **Wood Family Resource Center:** 727 W. Cornell Dr., Tempe 480-838-0711

Teen Resource Center

Located on the campus of Evans-Compadre Academy, 4525 S. College Avenue, Tempe, the Teen Resource Center is another project of Communities in Schools of Tempe and Kyrene. This resource center provides free clothing, shoes, hygiene products and school supplies for teens ages 12-18. Hours of operation are Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1-4 p.m. Call Lynette Stonefeld at 480-858-2300 for more information.

Kyrene Family Resource Center

In addition to being a Thrive to Five Resource Center, the Kyrene Family Resource Center, located on the campus of Kyrene de los Niños Elementary School, 1330 E. Dava Dr., Tempe, also provides access to food, clothing, shelter resources, legal support, resource referral, scholarships and after school programs for families in need. Kyrene families experiencing homelessness or needing assistance are welcome to drop in at the resource center on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 2-6 p.m. Call Khalid Jenkins at 480-783-3172 for more information.

City of Tempe Middle School Club Encourages Leadership, Healthy Lifestyle

The City of Tempe is providing the All Stars Middle School Peer Leadership Club directly after school at **Gilliland** and **Connolly** middle schools during the school year. In addition, a year-round Community Peer Leadership Club is provided for middle and high school-aged youth at the Tempe Public Library on Mondays from 5-7 p.m.

The All Stars Middle School and Community Peer Leadership Clubs are designed to help build healthy relationships by reinforcing positive peer group norms through fun, creative activities and experiences. The clubs incorporate the nationally recognized All Stars Program curriculum, which is designed to prevent and/or delay alcohol use, reduce violence and emphasize the advantages of choosing a

healthy lifestyle. The clubs also give youth the opportunity to develop leadership skills through their involvement in activities that educate their peers and younger children on the harms of underage drinking and through strategies that encourage parents and other adults to support efforts to prevent underage alcohol consumption. Funding is provided by Magellan Health Services of Arizona.

For more information on the programs, contact Tricia Andrews-Gilman, LMSW at 480-858-2463 (office), 480-262-1012 (cell) or at tricia_gilman@tempe.gov.

www.tempe.gov • 480-858-2463



Retirees Help First – Third Graders with Reading Skills

Experience Corps provides one-on-one tutoring to children in first through third grades in select Tempe Elementary and Kyrene District schools in Tempe. Volunteers age 50+ are matched with four students who they tutor twice a week for a full school year. The program's goal is to improve students' reading proficiency



and to help them develop confidence and skills to succeed in school and in life.

Experience Corps is a nationally recognized literacy program comprised of 2,000 volunteers in 21 cities nationwide, providing more than 20,000 students with literacy coaching, homework help, consistent role models and committed, caring attention.

John Pompay, a resident of Sun Lakes who travels to Tempe to tutor, said of his experience with the program: "I have had few moments in the last three years since I retired that have been as rewarding as watching the light of progress and achievement go on in these children. When they look at you and they know that they are making real progress, the reward for me is as positive as anything I did in the commercial world."

If you'd like more information, please contact Peggy Goldberg at 480-858-2465 or peggy_goldberg@tempe.gov.

www.tempe.gov/volunteer/experiencecorps2.htm



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