

What is West-MEC?

Over the past few weeks you have likely seen yard signs posted throughout the community in support of the West-MEC bond election. As these signs have gone up I have been asked on occasion to describe what West-MEC is and what it does for WUSD students. I thought I would take a moment today to answer that question for WUSD residents.

West-MEC is a “Joint Technological Education School District”, which provides funding for Wickenburg High School technical programs, such as engineering, culinary arts, technical theatre and business classes. In addition, West-MEC has established what are called “central programs”, such as aviation technology, cosmetology, diesel mechanics, dental assistant...etc, which are located in various parts of the West Valley and are open for Wickenburg High School students to attend. On an annual basis the Wickenburg High School program serves approximately 350 students and we send around 10 students to central programs.

Our student enrollment in central programs has grown over time in large part due to the fact that students can take their academic courses through the Wickenburg Digital Learning Program (WDLP). Students and their families tend to enjoy central programs because they can obtain industry standard training at a fraction of the cost they will pay once they leave high school. As an example, a cosmetology student attending the West-MEC central program pays approximately \$1,250 for their supplies and testing. At the end of the program, this student will be prepared to take the state cosmetology test and earn licensure. If this same student waited until after high school, they would still pay the \$1,250 but would also be charged \$12,000 to \$14,000 for tuition to attend a technical school program.

I hope this sheds light on what West-MEC is and what it provides for Wickenburg High School students. If you have additional questions about West-MEC please feel free to contact WUSD Career and Technical Education Director, Marcia Hespen at 928-664-6700.