

School Year Start a Success!

The Wickenburg Unified School District started classes on Tuesday, August 5. We are excited to start a new year and look forward to moving each student to the next academic level. At this time I want to take a brief moment to give you an overview regarding a few of our plans for the 2014-2015 school year.

It is our plan to fully implement the new Arizona College and Career Readiness Standards (ACCRS) at the K-8 level this year and to begin providing extensive training in reading instruction for our teachers. As overarching goals we will focus more deeply on individual student growth and using data to make instructional decisions. I believe these efforts will pay dividends and am excited to see how the year progresses.

At the 9-12 grade level we have put in place a new Algebra placement test and have diversified our course offerings to best meet the needs of our incoming freshman students. The class of 2018 will be the first in which all students are expected to earn the Grand Canyon Diploma as their standard diploma. Clearly we are raising the bar at Wickenburg High School, but again, I believe it will enable our students to leave the district ready to succeed in life; regardless of the path they pursue.

In addition to the work mentioned above we are continuing to expand our digital learning options through further development of FlexBooks (digital textbooks) and an Open Educational Resource (OER) digital curriculum. The benefit with both of these initiatives will be that we gain additional local control over our curriculum while at the same time saving money. The typical FlexBook costs us \$5/ea. (minus one time development costs), while commercially produced textbooks run oftentimes close to \$100/ea. Our digital curriculum, once completely converted over to an OER system will save the district approximately \$40,000/year.

As you can see we are ramping up for another great year in the Wickenburg Unified School District and I am excited to see the tremendous opportunities being afforded our students. In addition, it is great to see the amazing effort put forth by our administration, staff and students. I believe the community will see great things from WUSD in the coming year.