



FOCUS IN SCHOOLS

Override Question Goes to Voters on Nov. 3, '09

The State of Arizona is still using school funding formulas first applied in the early 1980s by which additional funding is dependent upon student growth. For AJUSD, a declining student population and the current economic conditions conspire to create the "perfect financial storm," necessitating the District's call for an Override election. During the past two years, the district has reduced \$5.5 million from the M&O budget.

To accomplish that, it has been necessary for the District to institute both hiring and salary freezes, has reduced the total number of employees by more than 10 percent, has reduced energy and transportation costs, has begun charging fees for student activities, has reduced the athletic program at the middle schools, has eliminated free field trips, and has cut all school and departmental budgets.

If voters approve the District's current request for help, Override dollars would be available to support the following programs:

- Funding for off-duty police officers to provide security on the high school campus
- Possible addition of an SRO (School Resource Officer) on the High School Campus
- Keep class sizes stable
- Strategies to improve student achievement
- Expand Advanced Placement Offerings at AJHS
- Possible addition of a truant officer to the district to ensure attendance
- Lift the salary freeze
- Attract and retain the best and brightest teachers
- Continue support for the fine arts programs (elementary through 12th grade)
- Continue support for the NJROTC Program

- Support the Summer School Programs
- Support Athletic Program at Middle Schools
- No increases in activity fees for athletics and fine arts
- No further reductions to student transportation
- Continue support for technology updates at all grade levels

If the measure is defeated, it will be necessary for the District to further reduce its budget in 2010-11 by an additional \$2.5-\$3 million, representing further reductions in state funding and the final 1/3 phase out of the current Override.

The previous cuts and reductions will remain in place and others will be necessary if the District is to meet state-mandated budget guidelines. These reductions could result in:

- Larger class sizes
- Elimination of courses at AJHS including AP (Advanced Placement) courses
- Higher athletic and activities' fees
- Elimination or reduction of some athletic and fine arts programs
- Salary reduction of 3% for all employees
- Further staff reductions

Past discussions concerning budget reductions and fiscal responsibility have included examination of either a partial or complete closure of a school to reduce expenditures. Budget restrictions are not the only factors that would be considered in make a decision on closure. Further declines in the student population would perhaps warrant the closure of a school despite the passage of an override.

For further information on the M&O Budget Override Election set for November 3, 2009, go to the district's website at www.ajusd.org.

Pick Up Extra School Goods for Project HELP

While out doing your Back-to-School shopping for your family, consider throwing into your shopping cart an extra package of socks or underwear for a child not as fortunate as your own. Project HELP is badly in need of new socks, underwear, shoes, jeans, and shirts and also school supplies for students (K-12) whose families cannot afford to purchase them.

New Back-to-School goods (including new clothes, socks, shoes for children K-12 and school supplies and backpacks) donated by members of the community will be gratefully accepted beginning on Monday, August 3, and continuing throughout the week, 8:30 a.m. until 2 p.m.

After that week, regular donation hours will be Monday,

Wednesday and Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 12 noon.

Needed school supplies include erasers, hand sanitizers, highlighters, colored pencils, rulers, scissors, scotch tape, hard cover two and three ring binders.

Applications for aid to families with children attending AJUSD schools will be taken starting Thursday, August 13 from 8:30 a.m. until 11 a.m. and every Tuesday and Thursday morning thereafter. Qualified students will be eligible to receive Back-to-School clothes and goods after the student has attended school for two full weeks.

The Project HELP facility is located at 195 E. Superstition Dr. The phone number is 480-288-2955. This facility will again begin to accept gently used clothes and hard goods after Labor Day.

Governing Board Meetings

In the upcoming year, the AJUSD Governing Board will conduct its bi-monthly meetings in the District Administrative Center at 1575 W. Southern. Meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month. The first meeting of the month will be held at 6:30 p.m. and the second at 1 p.m. The following is the schedule through December:

Aug. 11 - 6:30 pm	Oct. 27 - 1 pm
Aug. 25 - 1 pm	Nov. 10 - 6:30 pm
Sept. 8 - 6:30 pm	Nov. 24 - 1 pm
Sept. 22 - 1 pm	Dec. 8 - 6:30 pm
Oct. 13 - 6:30 pm	Dec. 22 - 1 pm



Dr. Chad Wilson is New Superintendent

Dr. Chad Wilson assumed the duties of Superintendent of Apache Junction Unified School District on July 1, 2009. Prior to his appointment by the Governing Board, Dr. Wilson had served as the Associate Superintendent of Educational Services for this district since 2005.

As the Associate Superintendent, Dr. Wilson was responsible for directing the educational policy and practices for the district. The departments of Special Education, Curriculum, Career and Technical Education, Testing, Technology, Professional Development and Career Ladder, English Language Learners (ELL), Title I and Nursing Services have been, and will continue to be, under his direct supervision.

"I am fortunate to be the superintendent," he said. "Our district is full of smart students, great teachers and staff, and is supported by an outstanding community. I

recognize that as good as we are, we have room to get better and it is our responsibility to provide all students an educational opportunity that we would expect for our own children or grandchildren."

He originally joined the AJUSD in 1999 as assistant principal at Apache Junction High School, a position he held for two years before being named principal in 2001. He then served as a popular and innovative principal at AJHS for two years, implementing an intensive and individualized "Triage" learning program that helped at-risk students to successfully complete the AIMS testing requirements for graduation.

Dr. Wilson has been described by those who know him as "tireless" in his pursuit of educational excellence for the students in AJUSD schools.

Dr. Wilson is married and he and his wife have two children.

An Early Start to Flu Season?

Don't forget to include those boxes of tissues and the bottles of hand sanitizers in back-to-school supplies. The experts tell us that the new H1N1 influenza virus did not take the summer off. It has continued to spread, with the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) confirming more than 760 cases of H1N1 swine-flu variant.

The federal agencies warn that the H1N1 strain is not going away and, while it has proven to be no more virulent than the seasonal flu, health officials are watching the new virus for signs of mutations.

School nurses will be watching for signs of the flu and custodians will be using products designed to reduce the risk of contracting the illness.

There are a few simple things you and your children

can do to help prevent the spread of not just H1N1, but all influenza strains. Because it is thought that influenza is spread through person-to-person contact by way of the coughing/sneezing of infected people, you should:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hands cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- Stay home if you get sick. ADHS recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

Visit www.ajusd.org

Be sure and familiarize yourself with the Apache Junction Unified School District Web site www.ajusd.org. Everything from November Override Election information to Governing Board Policy to a yearly district Master Calendar can be found at this site. Individual school Web sites, entered through the district Web site, are a wealth of information about what is going on at each particular AJUSD school.

IMPORTANT DATES

- Aug. 3-4 AJHS - Returning Student Registration 7am-3:30pm
- Aug. 4 TMMS - Registration (New Students) 8-11am
- Aug. 5 All Teachers Report
- Aug. 6 PTES - Kindergarten Orientation 6pm
- TMMS - Registration (New Students) 1-6pm
- DVES - Kindergarten Orientation 5-6:30pm
- Aug. 8 AJHS - Freshman Orientation 8am
- Aug. 10 PTES - Meet Your Teacher Night Gds 1-5, 6pm
- DVES - Meet Your Teacher Night 5-7pm
- FPES - Meet Your Teacher Night 5-6:30pm
- GCES - Kindergarten Orientation/Meet Your Teacher Night 6-7:30pm
- SMES - Open House 4-6pm
- Aug. 11 Governing Board Meeting 6:30pm, Admin Center
- TMMS - New Student Orientation 8am-12 noon
- Aug. 12 School Begins
- Aug. 13 SMES - Pre-School Open House 6-7:30pm
- AJHS - Open House 6pm
- Aug. 14 AJHS - Welcome Back Dance/Pool Party
- Aug. 18 SMES - Pre-School Begins
- Aug. 19 TMMS - 6th Grade Open House 7pm
- Aug. 20 TMMS - 7th & 8th Grade Open House 7pm

AJUSD Schools Start August 12

Classes start for all students at all schools in the Apache Junction Unified School District on Wednesday, August 12.

All incoming kindergarten and students new to the AJUSD schools should be registered as soon as possible. Registration is currently ongoing at all schools and will continue until school starts.

Free full day kindergarten is still available at all AJUSD elementary schools. To enroll in kindergarten, children must be five years of age prior to September 1. Registration is simple and fast and no appointment is needed. Parents or guardians must bring a birth certificate, immunization record, and proof of residency (utility bill, rent receipt, etc.), as well as a photo ID of themselves to accomplish student registration.

As in years past, all students must have proof that all of their required immunizations are up-to-date before they will be allowed to begin the new school year. For immunization questions, call the Pinal County Health Department at 1-866-960-0633.

For other questions, contact your school at 480-982-1110, and follow the menu.



There are new signs and speed limits on both Ironwood Dr. and Broadway Ave. slowing traffic from 40 mph to 25 mph on school days between the hours of 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. this year. SMES Principal Kendra Adams said, "While we realize that this will mean a change of habits for some drivers, I want to thank the community for understanding that keeping our children safe is everyone's responsibility." Speed limits will be enforced by local law enforcement.



PTES Teacher Named D.A.R.E. 'Arizona Educator of the Year'

Mrs. Marie Bowers, a fifth grade teacher at PTES who was named Arizona's "Educator of the Year" at the state D.A.R.E. convention, is congratulated by Apache Junction D.A.R.E. Police Officer Bill Virtue who last year was honored as AZ "Officer of the Year." All AJUSD students take the Drug Abuse Resistance Education training in the fifth grade.

Get the Facts about College Athletic Recruiting

If any of your children are athletes, be sure and plan to attend a special free presentation being brought into town by the Apache Junction High School Athletic Department on Thursday, August 20, at 7 p.m.

Former college coach and recruiting expert Jack Renkens helps student-athletes and their families find scholarships through his straightforward, no nonsense 60-minute presentation entitled "The Realities of College Athletic

Recruiting." Renkens is one of the top educational athletic speakers in the country and has been touring with his message for nearly 13 years.

According to Apache Junction High School Athletic Director Dwayne Folsom, "If your son or daughter truly has aspirations to play at the college level, this is a 'can't miss' event."

For more information, go to www.recruitingrealities.com or call (480) 982-1110, ext. 2324.

APACHE JUNCTION CHILD FIND

FREE! SATURDAY • AUG. 8
9:00am - 1:00pm
A.J. Multi-Generational Center
1035 North Idaho Road

- Developmental Screenings for children 0-5 years
- Information on Children's Recreation Opportunities
- Child Development Information
- Safety Information
- Exhibits, Booths, Samples
- Nutrition Information
- Car Seat Inspections

For more info please call: **480-983-2181**