



Buckeye Elementary School District

Buckeye Elementary School District (BESD) is located in Buckeye, Arizona. It serves two preschools and eight K-8 elementary schools. Currently, 5,893 students are enrolled, with 100% of schools identified as Title 1 sites. Its staff is comprised of 693 professionals with an average of 10 years experience. BESD has demonstrated a clear commitment to redesigning and rethinking the learning experience through the lens of the learner. This process has included active community engagement emphasizing a shared vision for how schools can facilitate development of thinkers and designers with adaptive cognitive abilities. It is also committed to ensuring that all learners are well educated in managing change and identifying possibilities.

A major component of BESD's transformation process involves each school engaging in school redesign sessions using a newly reformatted Portrait of a Graduate. Community members and staff have partnered in reimagining learning and learning spaces, creating a wish list of physical redesigns to support modern learning environments. The system also strongly encourages integrated instruction, using a staffing model emphasizing flexibility of thought, level of commitment to work, and professional expertise necessary to realize the district's and school's vision for learners. A key example of its commitment to personalized learning involves BESD's adoption of the Summit Personalized Learning Platform in three schools in 2018. This approach focuses on projects and concept units, personalized learning time for self-directed learning of content, and a deep commitment to mentoring for all learners.

Cross-institutional partnerships also reinforce BESD's achievement of its vision. For example, the district partners with the city planning and development committee, resulting in engagement with future growth, development, and big picture needs from education providers in the area. They partner with local and regional organizations, including the Chamber of Commerce and ABEC to provide context for district strategic planning. The Orcutt-Winslow Architect Firm is also actively involved in school design and project development, reinforcing the firm's dedication to helping districts create future and student-driven learning spaces.

The district's commitment to being future-driven is evident in its deep commitment to preparing students for a change-dominated and technology-driven world. Part of that process involves continuous monitoring of gaps related to the social, emotional and cognitive skills students will need for future success and present reality. BESD consistently seeks ways to close identified gaps, including its nationally recognized collaborative partnership with Northern Arizona and the University of Northern Arizona with Project "GEAR UP" (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs). Additionally, the district takes great pride in its involvement with "Summit Learning," a research-based approach to education designed to drive student engagement, meaningful learning, and strong student-teacher relationships.

Professional development within the district is extensive and ongoing. It includes GEAR UP professional learning for middle school math teachers led by the Arizona K-12 Center, online professional

development related to career and college planning in middle grades, extensive training in facilitating career exploration, and a comprehensive Career Pathways Curriculum through the Center for the Future of Arizona (provided by Arizona Pathways to Prosperity). In addition, the district is currently completing its first year of the Project Momentum initiative, with funding from the Arizona Governor's Office to embrace an aggressive improvement in academics using an enhanced Professional Learning Community approach.

Finally, BESD has exemplified a district that supports innovation, idea fostering, and a commitment to empowering sites and departments to take strategic risks. This process includes unique and innovative program development, including a highly successful gifted program, "Learning Unlimited," that allows identified learners to move as a cohort across grade levels together. Similarly, its "Summit Schools" model reinforces students' study of critical dispositions for success (i.e., Habits of Success) described by the district as "future proofing our learners." These 16 habits include independence and sustainability, perseverance, mindsets for self and school, school readiness, and health development.