



25555 W. Durango Street
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www.BESD33.org

A Community Passionate About Student Success

October 6, 2017

In accordance with A.R.S. 15-241, the State of Arizona has instituted a new school accountability system, primarily based upon overall school performance on the AzMerit state test. The system uses an A-F letter grade model to rank schools, and is considerably different than the model the state used in prior years. More detailed information can be found on the State Board of Education website, www.azsbe.az.gov. The Buckeye Elementary School District is currently appealing several grades assigned to our schools, however, it is unclear when final grades will be assigned. We will share more information when it becomes available from the State Board of Education.

These school rankings - and the tests on which they are based - are extremely limited in terms of what they actually measure, and the letter grade assigned to a given school is not necessarily reflective of *your child's individual performance*. Further, data from every tested grade level is included in the overall score, so performance by a *particular* grade or class may - or may not - correlate with overall school rankings. We are dedicated to continuously monitoring and improving our scores on these tests, however, BESD is proactively developing a more complete reporting model to supplement that provided by the state. By reading on, you can better understand the district's stance, the rationale behind this initiative, and what to expect from BESD in the coming years.

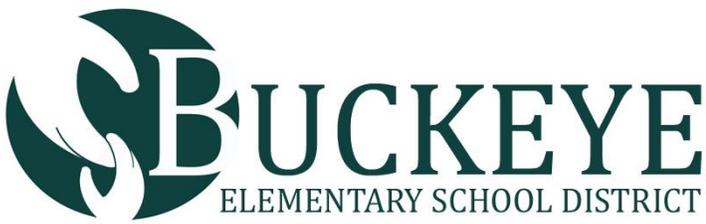
The Report Our Local Communities Deserve

Learning is a complex process, and the challenge posed by attempts at large-scale measurement of student learning continues to confound even the best assessment experts. Many agree that state-level mandated student achievement tests are well-intentioned, but provide an incomplete representation of student learning. Testing students over the course of several days - with questions that represent a fraction of content taught during an entire school year - does not provide parents and educators with data that can truly measure a school's complete performance, or represent the entirety of the student learning process. More importantly, identifying a school's success, or areas for improvement, through this limited perspective is problematic, and it does not provide staff and parents all of the information that they value.

In the Buckeye Elementary School District, we embrace this challenge and value the state's efforts to provide a reporting mechanism about student and school performance, but also recognize that our community has its own priorities regarding its local schools. Over the many years that the district has served its community, Buckeye stakeholders have made it clear they value the development of the whole child, not only the portions measured on mandatory state assessments. We continue to honor these beliefs and are developing ways to expand our efforts to embrace the whole child and transparently share our progress.

Bales Elementary..... 623.847.8503
Buckeye Elementary.....623.386.4487
Inca Elementary.....623.925.3500
WestPark Elementary.....623.435.3282

Jasinski Elementary..... 623.925.3100
Marionneaux Elementary623.866.6100
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As we look forward to the development of a more complete report of school performance, BESD will be releasing current information about each school that its community has traditionally found important, along with standard state assessment data. However, we are excited to announce that each school will begin to collaboratively develop a more precise, localized, and complete report for future years.

Beginning in 2018-2019, all BESD schools will begin to report not only state assessment scores, but also data deemed valuable by each school's community. This may include information about safety, social-skill development, fiscal efficiency, discipline, staff-student relationships, or even levels of student-engagement or challenge. Or, schools may determine other areas of value to the community. Schools will work with stakeholders to identify data that should be monitored and reported, and we will transparently report progress. We owe it to our Buckeye community to provide a more complete picture of its schools than that provided by assessments measuring only a small fraction of the academic curriculum.

The Buckeye Elementary School district takes its responsibility to deliver a world-class education seriously and truly is a district passionate about student success. BESD will be working diligently to strengthen performance on state assessments, and we are confident that the efforts currently underway will produce dramatic and positive results in student achievement. With efforts like our curriculum alignment project and strategic teacher training, we believe in a bright future for our Buckeye Elementary students. Improving student achievement on state assessment is a responsibility that we embrace and we *expect* the success our students deserve. However, we can do more than simply report state-mandated information. Our schools represent much more than what is measured on these tests.

We look forward to engaging the community in the development of this authentic and localized school report card that will empower communities to focus on what they value most, and we will want to hear from you throughout the development process. Further, we are eager to share our aspirations and progress towards our collaboratively developed goals. The Buckeye community understands the unique needs and opportunities that our students share, and BESD is confident the collaborative development of this new reporting tool will benefit Buckeye stakeholders for years to come.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kristi Sandvik, Superintendent

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