

**October 1, 2018**

**For Immediate Release**

**Buckeye Elementary School District to Name Newest School John S. McCain III Elementary**

At the District's regular Board Meeting on October 1, 2018, members of the BESD Governing Board voted to name its next school after state and national icon, John S. McCain III.

After seeking and receiving the blessing of Cindy McCain in a September meeting, BESD Superintendent Dr. Kristi Sandvik made the official recommendation to the Board as part of an effort to honor the late Senator's service to our country. Mrs. McCain also noted that she found several elements of this proposal appealing. This included that Senator McCain's name would be associated with an elementary school, that it was in a growing community, and that the District had contacted her to seek approval. Mrs. McCain expressed her excitement and that she looks forward to being involved.

*John S. McCain III Elementary School* will be the growing West Valley district's eighth school.

"The planning process timeline for building and designing John McCain's namesake has provided the district with a unique opportunity to create a permanent tribute to the late Senator's legacy in the City of Buckeye," said Dr. Sandvik after the Board Meeting.

Dr. Sandvik also indicated to the Board that, "The qualities that Senator McCain so passionately and effectively represented are what we wish to enshrine as a model for the children of our community. Since we opened our first school in 1889, Buckeye has developed a uniquely Arizonan identity, one that values family, tradition, integrity, honesty, community, country, and service. Buckeye is the proud home to numerous veterans and has close affiliations with nearby Luke Air Force Base, and the community is proud of these connections. Much like the Senator, the story of Buckeye is one of service to others."

District officials and Board Members have noted that initial conversations around the proposal had generated productive dialogue about how the themes of the Senator's life should be meaningfully integrated into the fabric of the school. Opportunities to explore and demonstrate the character traits exemplified by Senator McCain will transcend subjects and manifest through traditionalized celebrations, exercises, or challenges for students.

"The possibilities are limitless, as it is our belief that his legacy would provide an incredible foundation on which to build both academic and character-development focused experiences. We believe we are the first in the nation to have this opportunity, and we are committed to getting it right in every conceivable way," added Dr. Mike Lee, Assistant Superintendent.

Dr. Sandvik summarized the District's thoughts on this historic opportunity by stating, "Our residents, including students and staff, continue to mourn the loss of Senator McCain, yet we now have a rare opportunity to honor him in a lasting and meaningful way." We want to thank Mrs. McCain for her endorsement and support of the building and naming of our newest school,

John S McCain III, as well as Clint Hickman of the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors for his work with the district. Mr. Hickman was instrumental in facilitating the relationship between the district and Mrs. McCain.