



Notes from the
Washington Elementary School District
Business Advisory Team
October 16, 2013 Meeting

Washington Elementary School District Superintendent Dr. Susie Cook welcomed attendees to the first Business Advisory Team (BAT) of the school year and thanked attendees for their “gift of time” in supporting the WESD and BAT. She thanked Phoenix Councilwoman Thelda Williams and WESD Governing Board members Clorinda Graziano and Bill Adams for attending.

Dr. Cook introduced Dr. Paul Koehler, Director of the Policy Center at WestEd, past education advisory to former Governor Janet Napolitano and former superintendent of the Peoria Unified School District.

Dr. Koehler presented the findings of the of Brookings Institute, a private nonprofit think tank based in Washington D.C. devoted to independent research and innovative policy solutions. The study titled, “Pathways to the Middle Class: Balancing Personal and Public Responsibilities,” shows a direct link between education beginning in early childhood and success as adults. The link to adult success starts at an early age both at home and in school. Some 66% of children are likely to reach the middle class as adults if they achieve prereading and math skills and learn appropriate behavior in their preschool years. Children who learn basic reading and math skills and social-emotional skills at the primary level are 70% more likely to reach the middle class. Of adolescents who graduate from high school with a 2.5 GPA or above and have not been convicted of a crime or become a parent, 57% will achieve middle class. Similar trends continue through early adulthood into adulthood. If children fall “off track” along the way, interventions, social services support, opportunities to improve the family structure and schools must be available to get them back on track.

Recommendations from the study, according to Dr. Koehler, include:

- Better policy and individual responsibility
- Funding should be tied to effectiveness, e.g., full-day kindergarten should be funded as it has shown its effectiveness
- Better education from pre-K through grade 12
- More access to college or technical training (everyone needs a post-high school education)
- Stronger starts for more children

More info at:

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/events/2012/9/20%20middle%20class%20pathways/pathways_middle_class_presentation.pdf

WESD Community Outreach Specialist Jill Hicks welcomed attendees. She thanked Rob Kelly of Nothing Bundt Cakes for providing delicious treats for everyone. www.nothingbundtcakes.com

In addition, she acknowledged Congresswoman Kyrsten Sinema for sponsoring Kyrsten’s Kids Back to School Drive in August and thanked BAT members who supported the drive. Chip Kessler from Edward Jones was also thanked for his school supply donation at the beginning of the school year. Later in the meeting, she acknowledged the support of McDonald’s during their Day of Service that supported several schools in the WESD.

Kathleen McKeever and Dierdre Mai, from Academic Support Programs, shared information on the District’s new collaboration with Glendale Community College, ASU, NAU and Grand Canyon University to provide after-school educational enrichment support to the eight schools no longer served by 21st Century grants. Janet Humphrey of Credit Union West was thanked for support in funding needed items for the program. Janet also mentioned that Credit Union’s Money Island will now be offered in the District’s after school programs. Heather Merrill of GCC said the partnership is

of benefit to college students, who are local residents, who get their first teaching experience and strengthen their content knowledge. This is a wonderful collaboration!

A big thank you was given to all the businesses and organizations that supported last year's Best of WESD After-school Challenge! These programs are educational and make a big difference in student learning and growth.

- Metrocenter
- Radio Disney
- Sheraton Crescent
- Infinite Green
- Crown Trophies
- Peter Piper Pizza
- Credit Union West
- Expect More AZ
- M&J Trophies
- SOSAz

Richard E. Miller Elementary School earned second place in the challenge, and Principal Shannon Bonnette and After-school Coordinator Ted Scott presented a brief video and description of their success. The school's theme, "We Believe," led to an improvement from a "D" to a "B" by the Arizona Department of Education. The REM theme for this year is "From a "D" to an "A" – we're going all the way!" Check out the video <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aj46fBMmOw0&feature=c4-overview-vl&list=PLrhH4s253oDNfpHSBkhRO9o5igjplBM3o>

Cholla Middle School Principal, Phil Garitson, and teachers, Ashanti Givens and Paul Vachon, spoke about their school's improvement, which led them to being one point from a "B" grade. Their theme is "Cholla – "A" Great Place to be." Check out the video <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K60pdQy-g1A>

Several WESD principals and assistant principals came forward to thank BAT members for their support of schools and their programs. Our principals and schools appreciate and value all our community partners!

Howard Kropp, Director of Purchasing, and the Washington Resource Information Center were recognized.

Carla Kahn and other representatives of Valley Metro, Luis Fernando, local business owner and co-chair of B2D, and Jeff Spellman, PTA president of Orangewood School, spoke about progress of the Light Rail along 19th Avenue. Valley Metro, local businesses and residents have established a strong working relationship in order to make certain that the needs of all are met with special emphasis on safety and supporting the local businesses affected by the light rail construction. www.valleymetro.org For info on the Metro Max Reward program to support local business http://www.valleymetro.org/getting_on_board/metro_max

Jordan Blair, Tumbleweed Elementary School teacher, spoke about the Wednesday Tiger Talks he established this year and thanked many business leaders for taking the time to talk to his students about what they do. He cited three "Rooted in Community" standards that the program addresses:

- Plant a seed of understanding
- Nurse the roots of service
- Grow the branches of commitment

If you would like to participate, please contact Jordan at Jordan.blair@wesdschools.org

Josiah Vasquez and Tracey Beal of Pure Heart Christian Fellowship were thanked for their service to eight schools on September 28. Some 520 members of the Pure Heart congregation performed painting, clean up and outdoor projects. Pure Heart is a beautiful example of continued positive involvement in the community! Councilwoman Williams also recognized Pure Heart as an Outstanding Community Service Leader in District 1!

Billy Thrall and Terrilyn Miller invited BAT members who provide a service to the working poor to get involved with Hope Fest 2014 (April 5, 2014). The event, which attracts 20,000 people and 150 service organizations each year, will be held at Chase Field. You can get involved by promoting the event, volunteering at the event, providing a service at the event or donating to the event! www.cityserveaz.org

John Shikany, WESD Director of Safety and Security, spoke about the functions of the department and the goal of working with the community to keep children in school and safe.

LeAnn Hull from Liberty Mutual introduced Andy Hull's Sunshine Foundation, which she formed to honor her 16 year old son who died by suicide last year. The foundation was formed to fund educational activities to identify and prevent suicide and teach young people "You Matter." www.andyhullsunshinefoundation.weebly.com

Tracey Benson, Director of Communications for Arizona School Board Association, spoke of the upcoming Arizona Education News Service (www.AZEdNews.com) that will launch in January 2014. The Web site will focus on student achievement, funding and educational reform. Community members may subscribe and share stories through the site.

The BAT recognized two of our local papers that work hard to share community news – The Moon Valley Tattler www.moonvalleytattler.com and the North Central News www.northcentralnews.net

Thank you for attending!

The next WESD Business Advisory Team meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 29, 2014.