



AmeriSchools Perspectives

VOLUME ONE NUMBER THREE
SPRING QUARTER 2020 ISSUE
AMERISCHOOLS ACADEMY

Our parents say...

“Honestly, you guys are the best teachers and school! You were all on top of this, and now ahead of the game!”

“I think the main takeaway from ‘forced home-schooling’ is that teachers are superheroes!”

For more praise and comments from parents, please see page 6.

“AmeriSchools is keeping everyone informed and making sure home schooling leaves no kid behind.”

“I’ve heard other schools were not equipped and not accommodating for these difficult times. But not at AmeriSchools—YOU ROCK!”

For information and tips to help your child succeed in this new environment, see pages 4-6.



and our kids agree!

From our CEO's Notebook



In lieu of my regular column, we are reprinting a recent letter to parents authored by Mrs. Helen Bradford, Assistant Principal of the Central Avenue Campus in Phoenix. The message is that we must extend extreme support to our children and listen ever so carefully to their questions. We are grateful that thoughtful leadership of all staff members helps everyone rise to the occasion in such perilous times. —Dr. Reginald Barr

September 11, 2001

September has been an incredible month. Our hearts have been broken as we watched our beloved country, our home, our fellow citizens, attacked by those who do not share the same affection. We mourned with the victims' families and friends. We quietly cheered the heroes and stood in awe, as we heard the stories of their heroism.

We had an abrupt reality check that snapped us back into awareness of patriotism and love of country. "What can I do to help?" We hung flags and cried as we heard the anthem "God Bless America."

We couldn't believe our eyes. Our disbelief turned to realism, then to horror as the scenes unfolded on television. As adults, we were horrified.

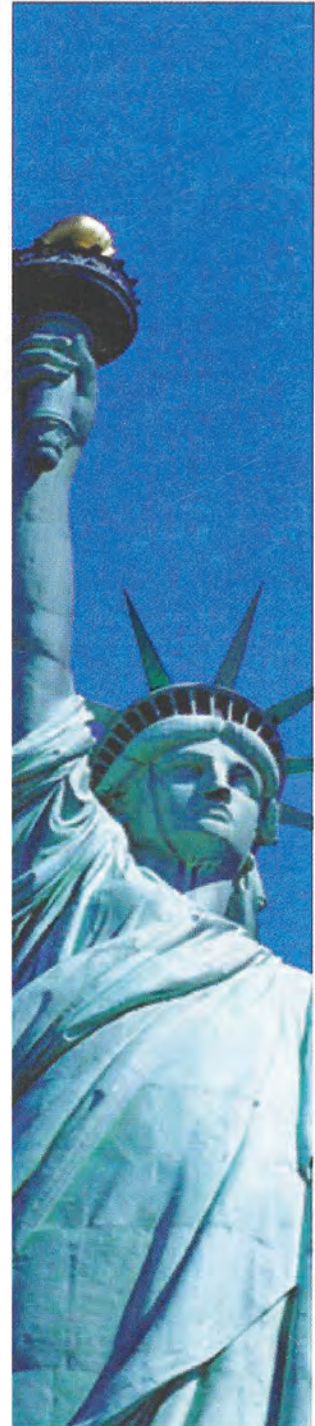
Your children watched, too. They saw what you saw and heard what you heard. What are they feeling? Do they even know? Most children were not sheltered from this disaster and will need time to better understand. They will hear words like war, body parts, death certificates and crashing airplanes, not knowing what it all means.

Reassure your children that they are safe, that you will protect them at all costs. *Listen! Listen! Listen!* Tell them that they can ask you questions and that you will be honest with your answers. It is time to turn to happy, positive subjects.

I am touched each time I see your children. Do we really recognize the potential and promise each child holds? We must continue to focus on developing these unique individuals. The responsibility that we share to educate them in goodness and love is immense, but we accept it gladly. They are our country's future. We thank you for entrusting them to our care, giving us stewardship during the school day,

May our country continue to be blessed as it has been. And may we all continue to be thankful for everything this country stands for.

—Mrs. Helen Bradford





**“IN THE AFTERMATH OF 9-11,
WE PUBLISHED AN IMPORTANT
MESSAGE TO PARENTS.
THE WORDS ARE JUST AS TIMELY
AND APPROPRIATE TODAY.”**

**— Dr. Reginald Barr, CEO of AmeriSchools
www.AmeriSchools.org**

Onward with Online Learning



Congratulations to our AmeriSchools' parents! You are pioneers, along with your "connected" children, in the wonderful new world of online learning.



While we are teaching from a distance (including **online virtual classes**) to comply with state requirements to reduce the transmission of the virus, we do *not* want to reduce the transmission of learning to your child.

We are grateful for the recent positive feedback received from many parents and wish to continue to earn your support. Our teachers and staff will carry on the work of reaching and teaching your children in a new way as we complete the current academic year together. But we know that we are not the only ones working harder. Parents' concerns have expanded in many ways, with many areas of increased responsibility. You have assumed an extra role (at-home teacher) due to your children's new learning environment.

With this in mind, AmeriSchools would like to further support you with the following collection of time-tested practices for helping your children succeed as we move onward with online learning:

ENVIRONMENT (Minimize Distraction)

When learning at home, students do best when they have a dedicated (or semi-dedicated) study space. Work to eliminate distractions in the study area. Ensure it is as noise-free as possible with no television viewing nearby. Your child should sit at a table or desk with good lighting; avoid the sofa, bed, or floor. The type and positioning of their chair should be chosen to minimize neck and back strain; place pillows on the chair seat for support if needed.

Just as there is a place and time for everything, your at-home learner should not only have a dedicated study space, but also a dedicated study *time*. Experts agree that during this period of studying from home, students should maintain a regular routine, as close as possible to their previous schedule—including not only study time, but *sleep* time as well.



MORE COMPLIMENTS FROM OUR PARENTS:

“Thank you to all staff and teachers for all your efforts in keeping the school going. I appreciate all the lessons being taught everyday, motivation, and encouragements.”

“I truly appreciate you doing all these assignments for our children. It makes me appreciate teachers a lot more. Thank you!”

“Thank you again for all you do for our children, and for your patience and guidance. God bless you for your ability to teach our kids.”

“Thanks for the Zoom meetings. And thank you so much for staying in contact with all of us!”

“AmeriSchools has done great in keeping everyone informed and making sure no one is left behind. It doesn't seem like other schools were ready.”

“It's so impressive to know that my child is surrounded by great teachers and mentors at AmeriSchools. Thank you!”

“I applaud all of you for everything you do to keep the kid's think tanks movin' and groovin'. You are right up there with the doctors and nurses, in my opinion!”

“Thank you for communicating with us, keeping us informed, and for caring about our children. You do a great job!”

“Thank you for hosting the Zoom meetings! Our child was beyond excited to see her classmates! This experience has shown me how valuable and underrated teachers are. Thank you for all you do to make this possible.”

“Wonderful! Thank you for everything you do. I only have one child and I'm exhausted. You are amazing!”

“Even though this pandemic has been stressfull and uncertain for everyone, I'm so glad that AmeriSchools Academy and their teachers have stepped up to handle the situation with urgency and grace, so that our children can finish the rest of the school year. The online learning has also taught us how to use more of our technology. Thank you, it has been a great experience.”

EQUILIBRIUM (Balance)

Even though, in some ways, children may see this time as a “vacation,” it is important for the parent to maintain a *balanced* schedule of educational and *productive non-educational* time for their child. Students should take *short* breaks of 5-10 minutes every 45-50 minutes during their school day. These breaks should be screen and technology free. They can have a quick snack, stretch their legs (possibly outside), and then resume their studies.

ENGAGEMENT (with Child and Teacher)

Especially during this time of at-home learning, parents' engagement with their children's education is essential. Regularly monitor their progress. Observe your child during the regularly scheduled online virtual classes AmeriSchools is providing; ensure that they are attentively focused on the teacher's lesson on the computer screen. As we all well know, just asking your child “how school is going” does not always produce a straight answer. Try asking specific questions about specific subjects. Ask them to tell you something they have learned and then ask follow-up questions to see how well they understand the topic. This is not only a great way to “get inside their heads,” but when your child thinks deeply about a topic and tries to explain it in their own words it helps them to better process and understand what they have learned.

Another way to engage with your child's new educational reality is through supplemental learning activities. Parents can read aloud to their children and encourage them to also read on their own. The subjects of both types of reading should be educational, inspirational, and in addition to anything already assigned in class. Teachers can provide guidance in selecting reading material if needed. Spend some time outdoors with your child, walking and talking, or just appreciating nature. Encourage regular, short creative writing sessions, where your son or daughter becomes the author and teller of an imaginative short story.

Review their schoolwork frequently, both in progress and completed, as well as teacher comments. If you have questions or need advice on how to best support your “student,” please contact your child's teacher. Take advantage of the educational tools that AmeriSchools is providing, especially the online virtual classes where your children can have direct interaction with their teacher. Parents and teachers working together form a powerful partnership that can greatly enrich a child's education.

We, as individuals, as families, and as Americans, are going through a time of challenge. But with challenge comes opportunity. AmeriSchools is committed to providing tools and techniques which will help parents to provide the necessary guidance to their child during their at-home education. Your efforts on your child's behalf during this historic time of online learning can inspire them to reach even greater heights. One day perhaps, when your children have children of their own, you may see and hear them inspire the next generation as you have inspired them. Onward! ♥



Public School Students denied access to Online Learning

Teachers Unions and “Equity Issues” block kids from transferring to online private and charter schools.



According to a couple of recent opinion pieces in the *Wall Street Journal*, several school districts in the nation have cancelled public school classes amid the pandemic, and are blocking hundreds of children from continuing their education at online private and charter schools—but for two entirely different reasons.

More than 14,000 children already attend Oregon’s online public charters and receive the bulk of their education remotely. But when brick-and-mortar schools closed on March 16 to limit the spread of the coronavirus, Oregon parents clamored to transfer their children to the online schools.

Some 300 students successfully transferred in mid-March to one local online charter school, and the teachers unions were alarmed by this mass exodus from the public schools.

So, under pressure from the unions, the Oregon Department of Education stopped allowing transfers on March 27.

It could be worse. The state Department of Education originally contemplated closing down *all* online public charters *along* with the brick-and-mortar schools.

Even during a national crisis, unions would rather deprive students of an education than see their charter-school competitors succeed.

Berkeley Schools Think that *Every Child* Should be Left Behind

In the Bay Area, nearly all private schools went online within two days of the March 17 lockdown. It’s not a problem of resources. The private schools went online in two days with Zoom, a virtual meeting place.

New York, with the country’s biggest school system, is going online. Why not Berkeley? Berkeley isn’t moving online “because of equity issues.” The district’s supervisor of family engagement and equity, confirmed that “there are existing inequities in our educational system in Berkeley that will only be exacerbated by going fully online.” District officials feel that some students may not have computers to access online services, so they’d rather let everyone drown than save as many as possible and fulfill their educational mission.

Berkeley isn’t alone. Districts in Kentucky and Washington state have also chosen not to go online because of “equity issues.” The Philadelphia school system, with enrollment over 200,000, ordered its teachers not to offer “instruction to some students unless all students can access it.”

The Berkeley district already had equity issues. It is one of the worst-performing in America in educating minority students. But leaving all children behind will only make matters worse.

Public-school parents who have the means and resources to educate their kids will do so. The kids who need it most—those who supposedly lack access—will fall further behind.

The federal government can help. It should push districts to go fully online. Teachers union contracts should be modified to permit true online learning. Charter schools, many of which have already gone online, should be expanded.

And parents should demand that their schools live up to state constitutions that guarantee an appropriate public education.

Why I To Teach

by Mr. Joseph Lewis, 4th Level, Country Club Campus



This photo of Mr. Lewis was taken after school closed for the semester due to the coronavirus pandemic. He is holding a picture of his fourth-grade students taken at their 2019 Christmas party.

What do I find most rewarding about teaching? Changed lives! Impacted minds. I often find myself meeting current students and previous ones in all sorts of places outside of the classroom. It is refreshing and a blessing to know that you've made a difference in the lives of the students you've taught, because truth be told it does not always feel like it.

The key to engaging and motivating students to learn is to have fun and use stories to capture attention and to connect with students. Have you ever been in a classroom where the teacher just talks and the words put you to sleep? You wake up and the teacher is still talking. Fun plus stories help you make connections with students. You have to enjoy what you are doing or why are you doing it?

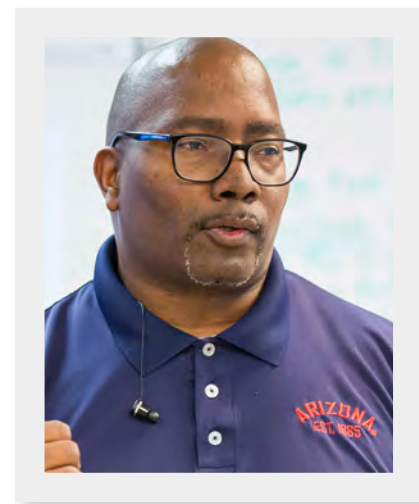
I feel that the biggest challenge to teaching is "RESPECT." Someone once said, "Students don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care." The days of respecting you just because you are a teacher are over! Or because you said so. Students need to be able

to trust you and make connections with you. What does that mean? For teachers it means getting out of your comfort zones and their traditional ways of thinking and doing things.

Learning for me is like a circle, never ending. I feel I am always trying to improve myself and my teaching skills/techniques. I love to read, watch videos and visit other classrooms to learn new things. Keeping up with technology is another way I like to learn, because you know the students are learning faster because of technology.

What motivated me to become a teacher? Mrs. Irwin, she was my high school English teacher. Mrs. Irwin made English fun! She had such a flair to her teaching. Her unconditional love for her students made her in my opinion the best teacher ever!

Why do I love to teach? The students! It's all about the students. Their laughter and tears, the energy and passion, their hopes and dreams, the hugs and smiles, the special handshakes and high fives, the light bulbs turning on and the aha! moments. Teachers impact lives of future leaders. **That is worth more than gold!** ♥



"I was born in Tucson, Arizona, graduated from University of Phoenix and I have been teaching for almost 25 years. My wife works for American Airlines while going to school to become a nurse. I have three kids: two boys and a girl, 23, 21, and 18. My oldest son works for an electrician, my younger son is an evangelist in training and loves the Lord. My daughter is a senior at Empire High School and plans to go to Grand Canyon University after graduation.

Sunday dinners are a big thing at the Lewis's house. We love spending Sundays together and having dinner along with 5-10 other young adults that frequently drop by, announced or unannounced, but that's our life and we love it! As a family, the furthest we have traveled is to Malaysia for about two weeks, which was the best cultural experience we have ever had together.

Three of my favorite quotes are:

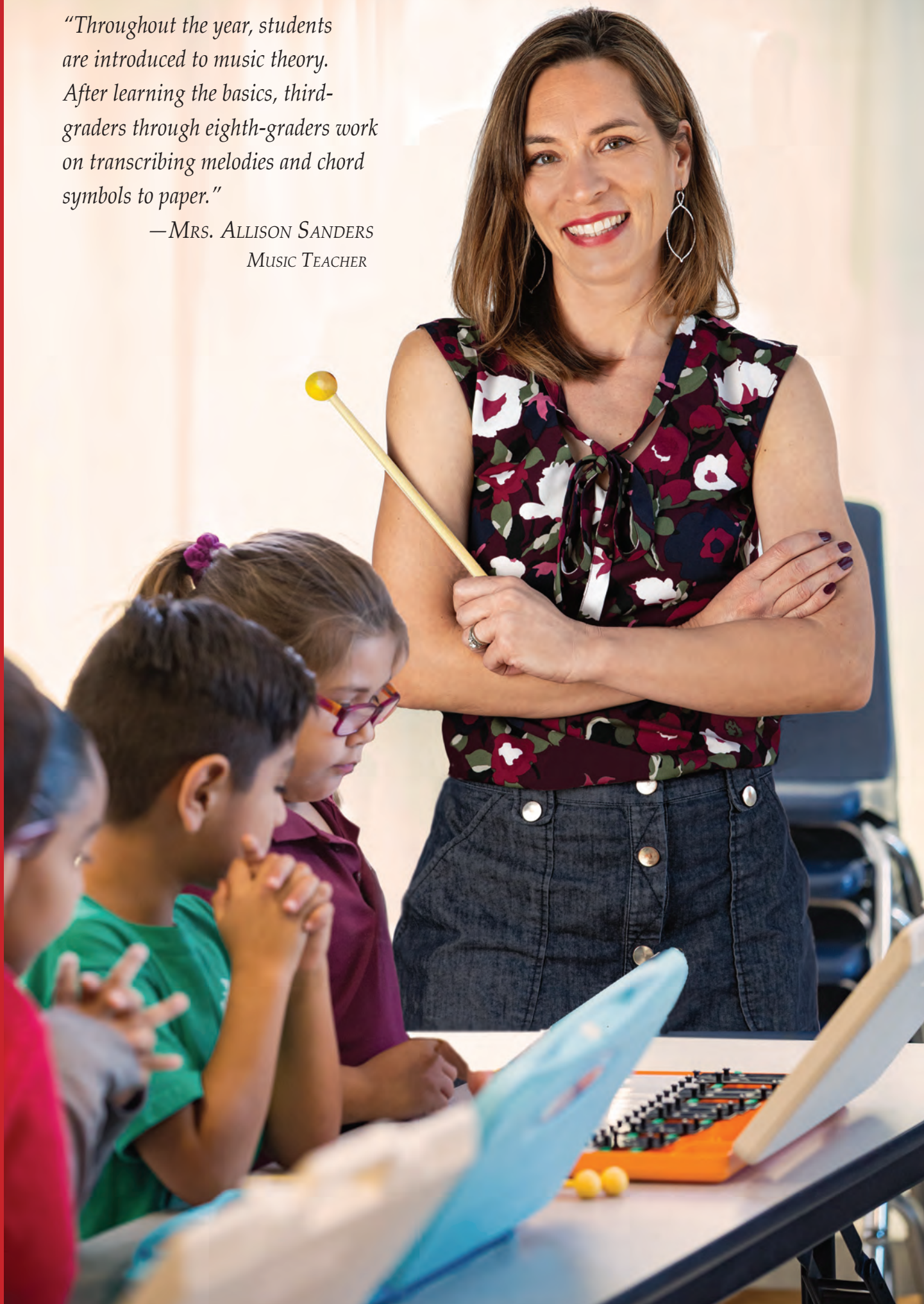
"Imagination is everything, it's the preview to life's coming attractions" — ALBERT EINSTEIN

"The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education." "We may have all come on different ships, but we're in the same boat now." — DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Country Club Campus / Tucson

"Throughout the year, students are introduced to music theory. After learning the basics, third-graders through eighth-graders work on transcribing melodies and chord symbols to paper."

—MRS. ALLISON SANDERS
MUSIC TEACHER



AmeriSchools Kids Got Talent

Our AmeriSchools Country Club music program teaches students to compete gracefully and to collaborate creatively. They participate in creating original music and mini-musical theatre shows. The program has several “seasons.”

“A” is for Autumn and Auditioning

In early autumn, we hold auditions for our AmeriSchools Got Talent Show. First, each act auditions with Mrs. Sanders, our music teacher. Those who move on, go to the finals audition before a panel of 5 to 6 judges, including faculty and staff. The audition results appear the next morning, taped to the Music Room door. Up to three acts from each class, including solo acts and group acts, are invited to perform in the show. Past shows have included singers, dancers, hula hoop stunt artists, comedians, and instrumentalists.

During our Book Fair, there is a yearly tradition to sing “Ghost of John,” an American folk song with a spooky theme—perfect for the end of October.



A Cool Concert in a Cool Season

In winter, we hold our annual Winter Concert. Each class, kindergarten through eighth-grade, performs in front of a large audience of family and friends. For this performance, students learn formal concert etiquette and dress in formal attire.

Learning Goes on All Year

Throughout the year, students are introduced to music theory. After learning the basics, third-graders through eighth-graders work on transcribing melodies and chord symbols to paper. Later in the year, they work together to create an original 32-bar music composition. Our original mini-musical, *Snow White*, featured songs created by the eighth-graders. This year, the student competition was to compose the AmeriSchools Academy Anthem. The winning song was composed by a group of fifth-graders.

Spring Brings it All Together

In spring, we perform our Spring Musicals, mini-musical plays that include drama, music, singing, and dancing. Students audition for specific roles or for the chorus. They wear costumes and masks to transform into their characters. The Set Design Club, made up of middle school students, creates the sets, props, and costumes for the shows.

In middle school FLEX class, Mrs. Sanders’ sixth-grade students learn about early jazz musicians and the Great Depression. The seventh-grade students learn about Romantic Classical musicians and the Industrial Revolution, and the eighth-grade students learn about 1960s musicians, the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam War. They are given the choice to share their knowledge via a Prezi, a written report, a verbal presentation, or a skit. ❤️

Second-graders dancing and singing at the Winter Concert



Third-graders dancing to a Puerto Rican Plena at the Winter Concert



Kindergarten class sings “America, America” at Winter Concert



Eighth-graders present music history behind each performance



Learning about jazz musicians of the Great Depression



Ready. Set. Grow!



Camelback Campus / Phoenix

Growing Your First Vegetable Garden from Seeds

During World War II, the U.S. government encouraged people to plant what became known as “Victory Gardens” to provide their own fresh fruits and vegetables, many of which were being rationed at the time. This year, planting a Victory Garden may provide a healthy distraction from self-quarantine in a confined environment. In addition to socially distancing outdoors, growing your own food can also relieve pressure on the nation’s food supply system, while also passing essential knowledge on to your children, and growing extra to share with others.

For the beginner, here are a few things you need to know about growing vegetables, specifically in a super hot climate like Arizona:

1. SELECTING THE GARDENING SITE

The most important step in creating your garden is finding the perfect spot. Most gardens require at least 6 hours of sun each day, but in hot climates, you can get away with less full sun. Since Arizona is a hot climate zone, consider your own backyard’s microclimate and try to find a location with some shade that offers relief from intense afternoon sun.

2. WHEN TO SOW SEEDS

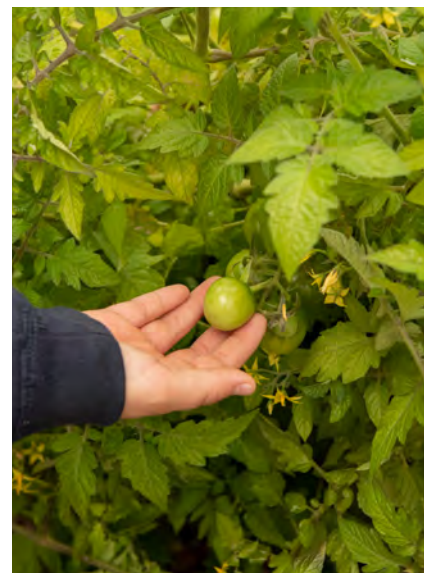
In Arizona you have two growing seasons, but they are short due to the summer heat. Different plants need to be started at different times, depending upon the type of crop. Focus on planting seeds in spring or fall. Hot weather will cause some plants, like lettuce and other greens, to bolt to produce seed, so it’s important to start plants before the heat dries out your plants. You can also start seeds in late summer or fall, once the heat subsides, for a winter harvest. Starting seeds indoors is a great way to get a jump on each growing season, plus you can control the heat, water, and light received.

3. WATER AND VISIBILITY

You’ll need to water more than you realize. Make sure your garden is located in a place where you can monitor your garden’s water needs, especially if you see plants wilting from the heat. Tomato plants require special attention to water early in their growth cycle. If given inadequate water early on, they may lose blossoms. Inconsistent watering can also lead to calcium absorption issues with tomatoes that can be fatal to the plants. Watering in the morning is preferred.

4. CONSIDER RAISED BEDS OR CONTAINERS

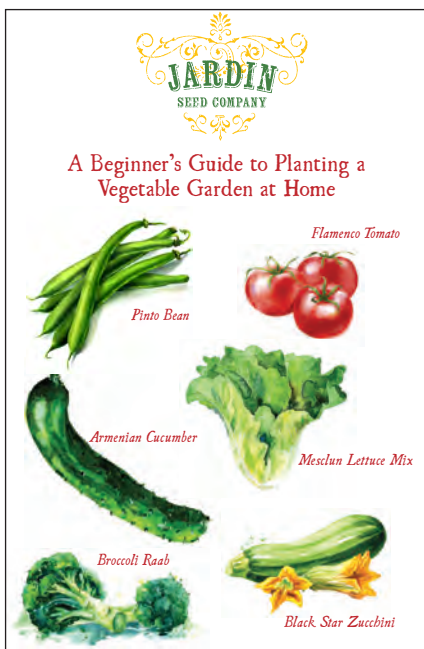
Almost any container can be used to start seeds, including old milk containers or egg cartons. For the home gardener, large pots or containers are a good choice for growing vegetables because you have more control over drainage and soil quality, plus, soil in containers heats up earlier in the spring and is often ready to plant before garden soil.





In our previous issue, we featured Mr. Danny Starkins, Dean of Students at Ameri-Schools' Camelback campus, and his Aquaponics program, teaching students how to grow fish and vegetables in a continuous loop, one feeding the other.

Now, Danny is creating a pilot program to teach students how to grow a vegetable garden at home. Shown below is a 24-page Beginner's Planting Guide, which will accompany the seed packages that will be given to students to help them get started.



5. USE HIGH-QUALITY, ORGANIC SOIL

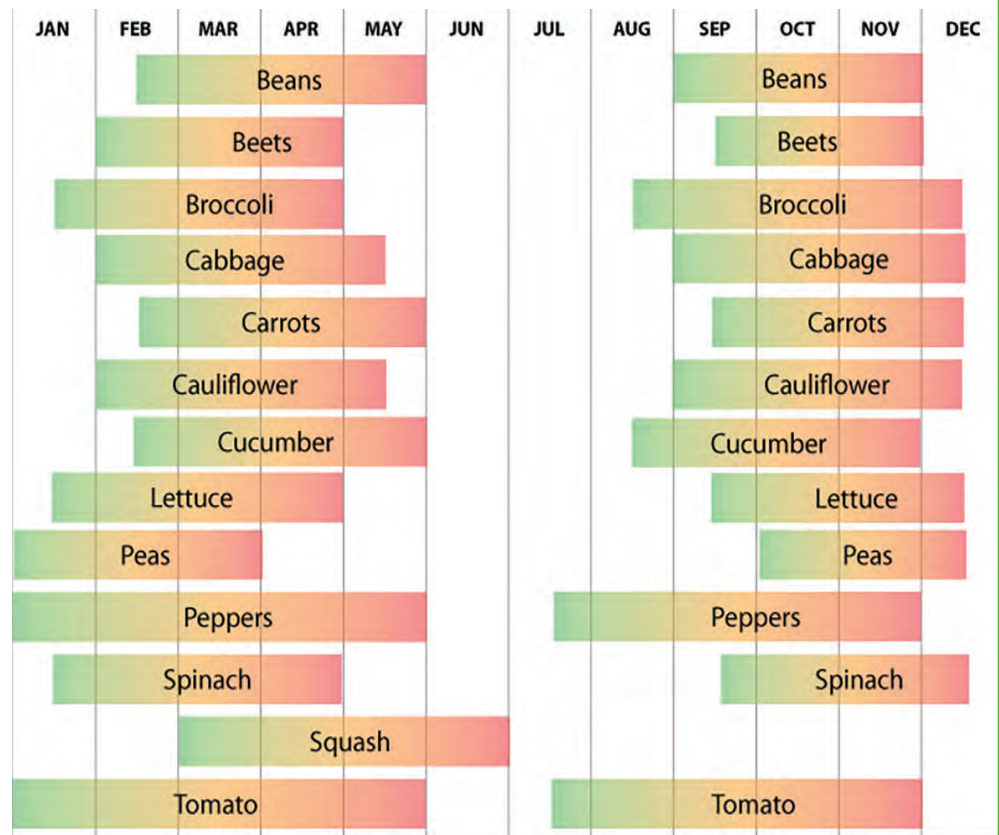
Your soil is very important and will require amendments in order to provide enough nutrients for the plants to grow and produce vegetables. Arizona's native soil is not sufficient to grow most vegetables. A planting soil prepared specifically for growing organic vegetables should be used, or compost should be added to native soil. If you use compost, use a maximum of 50% of your native soil.

6. WHAT TO GROW

Vegetable gardening may test your patience, so it's important to select varieties that will grow best, and fast, in your climate. Plus, kids want to see results!

Choose varieties that have quick gestation times and will produce crops within 60 days. When starting seeds, soak the seeds the night before planting to reduce the seed's germination time. There are many types of lettuce that can be grown throughout the year for endless mixed green salads. Lettuce should be planted directly in the ground because it does not transplant well. The key to lettuce is to plant small amounts at a time and harvest every two to three weeks during the growing season. Cucumbers do well in heat, as do beans, summer squash, and tomatoes. Many of these vegetables grow on vines, so staking will be required. Consider growing bush beans and peppers which don't require staking, take up less growing space and thrive in the Arizona heat.

Seed Planting Calendar for Warm Climates (USDA Zone 9)



The Gift of Gratitude

It's always easy to see the negative, whether you call it worry, stress, anxiety, or fear. What's *wrong*, especially during the current pandemic, is always there. But so is what's *right*! We all have a choice in the way we see our world, and our children need to know this.

Just as the negative has many names, so does the positive: looking on the bright side, thankfulness, appreciation, and gratitude. "Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues," Cicero, the Roman statesman, reminds us, "but the parent of all others."

We, as parents, need to be reminded that a vital skill to have in the middle of a crisis (or any potentially negative situation), for ourselves and our children, is the practice of gratefulness. Let's explore how we can give the gift of gratitude to our children.



5. Combating Negativity with Gratitude—

From their gratitude list, your child can choose their "Top 3" people/things they are grateful for and concentrate on these when confronted with a negative feeling. It is an interesting fact that the human mind cannot simultaneously focus on both a negative and a positive (gratitude) thought. Strong thoughts of gratitude automatically replace your negative thoughts!

6. Helping Others—By demonstrating helping others, in small and large ways (assisting, giving time, volunteering), you encourage your child to do the same. Perhaps make a family project out of helping others. As your children help others, they give them something to be grateful for and continue to spread the benefits of gratitude.

You can never have too much of some things, such as knowledge, friendship, peace of mind, and love. Another important item that we cannot have too much of is gratitude. Can anyone really feel too much gratitude? The answer is no. The only way to truly receive more than we currently have, in all areas of life, is to be grateful for what we currently have. Give the gift of gratitude to your children. They'll be grateful you did. ♥

1. Role Modeling as Parents—To be most effective, the following behaviors should be **modeled by parents for their children**. *Showing* is often more effective than *telling*.

2. Making a Gratitude List—Children should make a long list of *what* (life, health, food, learning, inspirational music, talents/skills, experiences) and *who* (parents, family, friends, teachers) they are most grateful for, concentrating especially on the *who*.

3. Daily Gratitude Journaling—Depending upon the age of your child, this journal can be as simple as listing three things they are grateful for at the end of each day, or a more detailed written expression of thankfulness.

4. Giving Thank You's—Encourage children to always *express* gratefulness to others for large and small things by *sincerely* saying thank you, and by writing (with pen and paper) thank you letters/notes to others.



North Campus / Yuma

1.



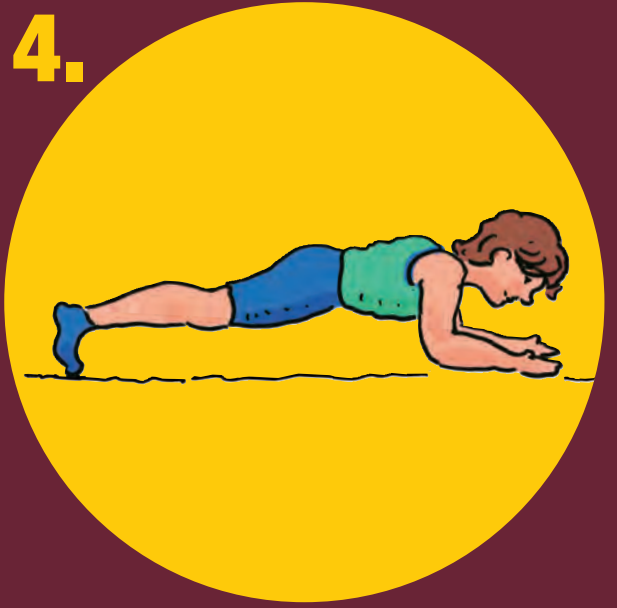
2.



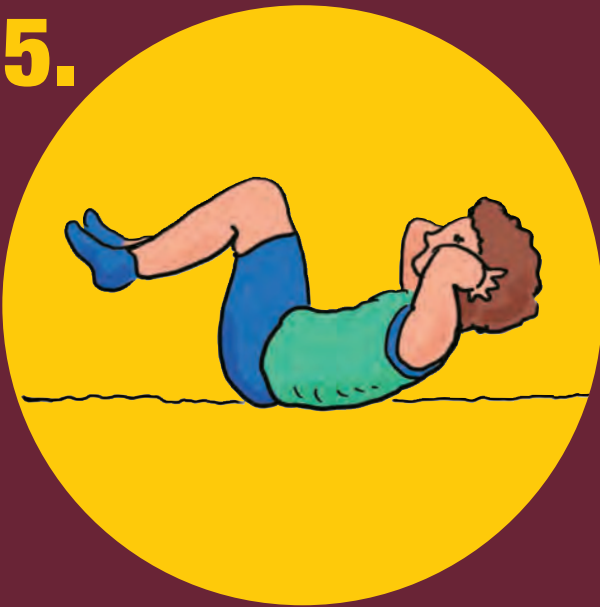
3.



4.



5.



6.



Virus Postpones Youth Sports, *NOT* Healthy Living

by Mr. Joseph Sanchez, Coach



The sports world is very sad right now and feeling the full effects of the virus. With all the closures for social distancing we've seen, sports teams must postpone their season or cancel it altogether. I myself had our girls' volleyball team end just like that. We were at the start of our season and didn't get to play a single game. I will never have a chance to coach those girls again, or even see some of the graduates again.

While this is devastating, it is the right choice and could save countless lives. We need to stay strong, come together, and stay connected in any way we can. With the power of technology, it is easier to stay connected from longer distances without encountering each other.

Even though we no longer have sports, it doesn't mean we still can't work on our craft and our bodies. During these times, physical exercise is just as important as ever, maybe more. While everyone is home, it can get a little depressing and we get bored, so you have a greater chance to eat more and more unhealthily. We need to stay in shape to be healthy and have a better chance to fight off this virus.

So, whether you are a parent, student, or student athlete, here are a few recommendations for simple bodyweight exercises that are beneficial, easily done at home, and fun. **Parents, make sure you supervise your children while they perform these exercises.**

- 1. RUNNING:** Run outside or in-place inside (warm-up for other exercises). Stretch before and after running; gradually build intensity when starting, gradually reduce intensity when finishing. Wear supportive shoes, watch for obstacles/hazards.
- 2. LUNGES:** Stand with back straight, looking straight ahead, feet hip-width apart. Move right leg forward a step as you bend both knees and lower yourself until right leg is at a 90-degree angle (keep back straight). Most of your weight on forward leg. At the bottom of movement, the lower left leg

should be parallel to the ground. Raise to starting position by pushing up with right foot. Alternate movement with both legs.

- 3. PUSH-UPS:** Raise your body by pushing down (try to move the Earth), keep your back straight. Support your weight with arms and balls of feet. Repeat raising and lowering slowly. Breathe in going down and out going up.
- 4. PLANKS:** Support your weight with forearms and toes, the rest of your body parallel to and slightly above the ground. Arms are shoulder width, parallel to body. Keep focused on ground to keep back, neck, and head in line. Maintain position until uncomfortable.
- 5. CRUNCHES:** Lie on floor on back with feet at hip width, knees bent. Interlock hands behind head, chin tilted up. Pull abdomen slowly in and curl your body as you lift your head, neck, and shoulders off the ground. Hold fully curled position, then slowly lower yourself to starting position, repeat movement.
- 6. BRIDGE LIFTS:** Lie on back, knees bent, hands at sides. With feet at shoulder width, lift hips off ground (bracing with heels), keep back straight. Hold position briefly, return to starting position. Breathe in going up and out going down.

Exercise is not only for your body (where you feel it), but also improves your mental and emotional health. We can all really use this triple benefit, especially now. If you have been exercising regularly, congratulations—**keep it up**. If you were physically active, but the pandemic response has interrupted your habit—**restart today**. And if it has been a while since you thought about exercise—**decide to start, today**. Our body is the vehicle we use to live; remember to treat it right!

This will end; and when it does, I can't wait to see the day where we have sports again. I hope everyone is staying safe and staying physically active.

“Parents must be prepared to supervise a child’s pet ownership (especially for children under age 10), and in some cases perhaps step in and assume total responsibility.”



Pets, Pandemics & Parenting

Throughout history the companionship of pets has provided many benefits for the pets' human owners. Certain studies may, at times, dispute it, but just ask a pet owner what role their pet plays in their life. The responses you would receive, from a possible 68% of U.S. families that own pets, would range from (stay-at-home) companion to security guard to exercise buddy to tail-wagging member of the family.

If you have a pet, you are probably very familiar with the rewards of pet ownership. But do these rewards from our furry friends extend to our children as well? Is a child responsible enough to properly care for a pet on their own? And how does the current pandemic affect the relationship between pets and their human owners?

Pet Pandemic?

According to veterinarian Dr. Lucy Otero, DVM, pets can contract the coronavirus from humans, with dogs being less susceptible to infection than cats. Different species get different species of the virus. In both canine and feline systems, the virus produces mostly gastrointestinal symptoms versus the respiratory symptoms experienced by many humans. Distemper shots provided to dogs contain a type of coronavirus vaccine that may supposedly provide a partial immunity to dogs. However, to protect our pets in this current pandemic, "if [you, or] someone [in your household,] gets sick," Dr. Otero cautions, "don't take care of your pets! If you feel sick, give your animals to someone else to take care of for a while." So far, the best data show that domestic pets (dogs, cats) **cannot** pass the virus to humans.

Children and Pets

Can a child properly take care of a pet? Yes. Can a child properly take care of a pet all by themselves? Probably not. Parents must be prepared to supervise a child's pet ownership (especially for children under age 10), and in some cases perhaps step in and assume total responsibility. However, this is not necessarily a reason for a family with young children to forgo pet ownership.

The potential rewards of pet ownership for children are very great (enhanced emotional stability and expression, heightened sense of responsibility and maturity, connection with nature and natural processes), provided, as with everything else, you, as the



UPDATE: HUMANE SOCIETY OF YUMA

In our last issue we reported on "Annie," a special four-legged guest from the Humane Society of Yuma (HSOY), who paid a visit to Ameri-Schools Academy South's kindergarten and first-grade classrooms (with some special friends from the HSOY). We would like to update you on how HSOY has been affected by the current pandemic. Conditions are challenging the HSOY's ability to provide their normal high-level of care for the animals they lovingly aid and shelter. The following (temporary) changes have been recently made:

- *Visitors interested in adoption or looking for lost pets are allowed **by appointment only** (to encourage social distancing within the shelter).*
- *Those who find a missing pet are asked to temporarily take care of it, if possible, instead of bring-*

ing it to the shelter. It is also recommended that they post a notice and photo on social media to potentially alert the owner.

- If you discover kittens (this is “kitten season”) please do not disturb them, and do not bring them to the shelter.
- Some services have been suspended for the time being: vaccination clinic, spay/neuter program, PetSmart adoption center.

Annette Lagunas, Executive Director of the Humane Society of Yuma, assures the always-supportive Yuma community that despite the changes brought about by the virus, “we will never decrease the level of care the animals receive here. They will always be our priority no matter the crisis.”

How can YOU help?

- Volunteer
- Donate
- “Foster” (temporarily adopt) a pet

Contact the Humane Society of Yuma shelter at (928) 782-1621
www.hsoyuma.com



parent, serve as the example to your child and model the appropriate behavior related to your pet. As most of us have learned (more than once), children pay much more attention to what we *do* than what we *say*.

Prospective Pet Owners

The isolation generated by the current stay-at-home conditions may for many, especially children, spark a longing for socializing and companionship. This longing may lead them to consider adding a pet (or additional pet) to the family. At least two questions should be considered: Why? and How?

Is temporary loneliness the only reason you are thinking about a pet? When the pandemic precautions are lifted will the role the pet plays in your family’s life still be as needed? Pet ownership is a long-term responsibility on the part of parents (definitely), and children (hopefully) as well. Speaking of children, the sense of responsibility, character development, and emotional growth required of children for successful pet ownership *can be* life changing. Living space adjustment, expense, training, and regular time commitment are just a few of the other important factors to balance against your reasons for considering pet ownership. How do your reasons stack up against the other factors?

If you have definitely made the decision to add a new four-legged member to your family, how can you best accomplish your goal of pet ownership? Dogs and cats are available from a variety of sources: friends, family, breeders, pet shops, and shelters. If you have not considered a shelter, you should look into it. Shelters, like the **Humane Society of Yuma**, provide many benefits through “pet adoption” and pet fostering (temporary adoption). Among these benefits are cost savings (with bundled-service adoption fees), a better sense of your new pet’s temperament *before* you take them home, and the expert assistance of an adoption counselor to better ensure a good match between you and your new pet.

As parents, we must always weigh the pros and cons of decisions we make regarding our children. We want the best for them, and we will treasure our relationships with them forever. Children can also benefit from relationships with pets, as discussed above. Why not seriously consider whether adding a four-legged companion to your child’s life could be a blessing to them, and to you? To paraphrase Humphrey Bogart’s final line in the movie *Casablanca*, “this could be the beginning of a beautiful relationship,” between your family and a loving pet.

For pet adoption and fostering information, please contact the Humane Society of Yuma (see sidebar update).

Your Child's Success is Our Priority! Let Them Experience The AmeriSchools Difference.



Your child's achievement in reading, language and mathematics is the core of what we do.

AmeriSchools Academy offers quality, child-centered, tuition-free, public education. Instruction is delivered in a multi-age, multi-level environment to enhance student success. Small class size offers your child a personalized education utilizing skill-based instruction and assessment. Please call the campus of your choice, fill in and mail us the form below, or go online to: www.AmeriSchools.org, to enroll your child today.

OUR CORE VALUES

- 1. Multi-Age, Skill-Based Instruction** provides a challenging environment where students promote their own advancement in the time they need to achieve the academic requirements.
- 2. Low Student to Staff Ratio for instruction with minimal turnover of personnel** allows for more direct student instruction for the acceleration of students.
- 3. Nurturing Student Behavior, positive social development and anti-bullying policies** ensure students are receiving the best education possible in a comfortable, consistent environment.
- 4. Community as Laboratory provides creative schooling activities**, provides unlimited access to the community as a means for learning, and also instills the satisfaction of giving back to the community.
- 5. Supporting Classroom Instruction utilizing technology and internet resources.**
- 6. Non-graded, Integrated Curriculum** allows students to express themselves through their creative abilities, and promotes a positive self image.
- 7. Enriched Curricular Content includes varied resources** such as the Grand Canyon, San Diego Wildlife Refuge and Oceanography at Catalina Island.

Please fill out this form and mail it to the school nearest you, at the address below.

PARENTS' NAME(S) _____

CHILD'S NAME _____ AGE & GRADE _____

CHILD'S NAME _____ AGE & GRADE _____

CHILD'S NAME _____ AGE & GRADE _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY/ZIP _____

PHONE (____) _____ EMAIL _____

YUMA NORTH (K-6) 1220 South 4th Avenue Yuma, AZ 85364 (928) 919-7203	YUMA SOUTH (K-6) 2098 South 3rd Avenue Yuma, AZ 85364 (928) 329-1100	COUNTRY CLUB (K-8) 1150 N. Country Club Road Tucson, AZ 85716 (520) 620-1100	CAMELBACK (K-8) 1333 W. Camelback Rd. Phoenix, AZ 85013 (602) 532-0100
--	--	--	--

AmeriSchools Perspectivas en español



ADELANTE CON APRENDER EN LÍNEA

¡Felicitaciones a los padres de nuestros AmeriSchools! Ustedes son pioneros, junto con sus hijos “conectados”, en el maravilloso nuevo mundo del aprendizaje en línea.

Mientras enseñamos desde la distancia (incluso en línea clases virtuales) para cumplir con los requisitos estatales para reducir la transmisión del virus, no queremos reducir la transmisión del aprendizaje a su hijo.

Estamos agradecidos por los comentarios positivos recientes recibidos de muchos padres y deseamos continuar obteniendo su apoyo. Nuestros maestros y personal continuarán el trabajo de llegar y enseñar a sus hijos de una manera nueva a medida que completamos el año académico actual juntos. Pero sabemos que no somos los únicos que trabajamos más duro. Las preocupaciones de los padres se han expandido de muchas maneras, con muchas áreas de mayor responsabilidad. Usted asumió un rol adicional (maestro en el hogar) debido al nuevo entorno de aprendizaje de sus hijos.

Con esto en mente, a AmeriSchools le gustaría seguir brindando apoyo con la siguiente colección de prácticas probadas para ayudar a sus hijos a tener éxito a medida que avanzamos con el aprendizaje en línea:

MEDIO AMBIENTE (minimizar la distracción)

Cuando aprenden en casa, los estudiantes obtienen mejores resultados cuando tienen un espacio de estudio dedicado (o semi-dedi-

cado). Trabaja para eliminar las distracciones en el área de estudio. Asegúrese de que sea lo más silencioso posible sin ver televisión cerca. Su hijo debe sentarse en una mesa o escritorio con buena iluminación; evite el sofá, la cama o el piso. El tipo y posicionamiento de su silla debe elegirse para minimizar la tensión en el cuello y la espalda; coloque almohadas en el asiento de la silla como apoyo si es necesario.

Al igual que hay un lugar y un tiempo para todo, su alumno en el hogar no solo debe tener un espacio de estudio dedicado, sino también un tiempo de estudio dedicado. Los expertos coinciden en que durante este período de estudio desde el hogar, los estudiantes deben mantener una rutina regular, lo más cerca posible de su horario anterior, incluyendo no solo el tiempo de estudio, sino también el tiempo de sueño.

EQUILIBRIO (balance)

Aunque, de alguna manera, los niños pueden ver esta vez como un “Vacaciones”, es importante que los padres mantengan un horario equilibrado de tiempo educativo y productivo no educativo para sus hijos. Los estudiantes deben tomar descansos cortos de 5-10 minutos cada 45-50 minutos durante su día escolar. Estos descansos deben ser libres de pantalla y tecnología. Pueden tomar un refrigerio rápido, estirar las piernas (posiblemente afuera) y luego reanudar sus estudios.

COMPROMISO (con niño y profesor)

Especialmente durante este tiempo de aprendizaje en el hogar, el compromiso de los padres con la educación de sus hijos es esencial. Monitoree regularmente su progreso. Observe a su hijo durante las clases virtuales en línea programadas regularmente que AmeriSchools ofrece; asegúrese de que estén atentamente enfocados en la lección del maestro en la pantalla de la computadora. Como todos sabemos, solo preguntarle a su hijo “cómo va la escuela” no siempre produce una respuesta directa. Intenta hacer preguntas específicas sobre temas específicos. Pídeles que le cuenten algo que hayan aprendido y luego haga preguntas de seguimiento para ver qué tan bien entienden el

tema. Esta no es solo una excelente manera de “meterse dentro de sus cabezas”, sino que cuando su hijo piensa profundamente sobre un tema e intenta explicárselo a otra persona en sus propias palabras, lo ayuda a procesar y comprender mejor lo que ha aprendido.

Otra forma de interactuar con la nueva realidad educativa de su hijo es a través de actividades de aprendizaje complementarias. Los padres pueden leer en voz alta a sus hijos y alentarlos a que también lean por su cuenta. Las asignaturas de ambos tipos de lectura deben ser educativas, inspiradoras y además de cualquier cosa ya asignada en clase. Los maestros pueden proporcionar orientación para seleccionar material de lectura si es necesario. Pase tiempo al aire libre con su hijo, camine y hable, o simplemente aprecie la naturaleza. Fomente sesiones de escritura creativas cortas y regulares, en las que su hijo o hija se convierta en el autor y narrador de un cuento imaginativo.

Revise su trabajo escolar con frecuencia, tanto en progreso como completado, así como los comentarios de los maestros. Si tiene preguntas o necesita consejos sobre cómo apoyar mejor a su “estudiante”, comuníquese con el maestro de su hijo. Aproveche las herramientas educativas que ofrece AmeriSchools, especialmente las clases virtuales en línea donde sus hijos pueden tener una interacción directa con su maestro. Los padres y los maestros que trabajan juntos forman una asociación poderosa que puede enriquecer enormemente la educación de un niño.

Nosotros, como individuos, como familias y como estadounidenses, estamos pasando por un momento de desafío. Pero con el desafío viene la oportunidad. AmeriSchools se compromete a proporcionar herramientas y técnicas que ayudarán a los padres a proporcionar la orientación necesaria a sus hijos durante su educación en el hogar. Sus esfuerzos en nombre de su hijo durante este tiempo histórico de aprendizaje en línea pueden inspirarlo a alcanzar alturas aún mayores. Tal vez algún día, cuando sus hijos tengan sus propios hijos, puede verlos y escucharlos inspirar a la próxima generación como los ha inspirado. ¡Adelante!

AmeriSchools Continues to Make a Big Difference!



In our previous issue we announced our 2020 Vision for AmeriSchools, which was to encourage parents to start saving for their child’s future by opening an Education Savings Account (ESA). Due to the coronavirus threat and the closing of our physical campuses, our schedule has been delayed, but not abandoned, and is now as follows:

Starting this fall, September 2020, AmeriSchools Academy will begin the process of establishing a Government-authorized, Education Savings Account* for every child enrolled in grades 3 through 8.

THE TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

1. Registration of students (**Currently complete**)
2. Orientation of parents concerning Education Savings Accounts. (**Starting July 2020**)
3. Verification of student registrations according to student attendance records. (**August 2020**)
4. Opening of initial Education Savings Accounts* for students in grades 3 through 8 with private funding of \$10.00 for each account. (**September 2020**)
5. Attendance and Academic Growth rewards provided at the end of each semester for each student in grades 3 through 8. (**Future Academic Year 2020-2021**)

*An Education Savings Account with an initial deposit of \$10.00 will be opened in your child’s name with a federally insured financial institution. **(All contributions are from private corporations and individuals—no state assistance.)** AmeriSchools is a non-profit, Pre-Kindergarten thru 8th Grade Charter School, licensed in the State of Arizona, with campuses in Phoenix, Tucson and Yuma.

AmeriSchools Academy

Executive Offices
1150 N. Country Club Road
Tucson, AZ 85716



AmeriSchools Perspectives

is a publication of The Charter Foundation, Inc., a non-profit 501(c)(3) Corporation, doing business as The AmeriSchools Academy, or AmeriSchools.
© Copyright 2020.
All rights reserved.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Message from the CEO / 2-3
- Onward with Online Learning / 4-6
- Charter School News / 7
- Why I Love to Teach / 8-9
- Country Club Campus / 10-11
- Camelback Campus / 12-14
- Gift of Gratitude / 15
- Yuma North Campus / 16-17
- Yuma South Campus / 18-20
- Our Core Values / 21
- AmeriSchools en Español / 22
- Education Savings Accounts / 23
- Contact Information / 24

EDITORIAL STAFF

- Myron Grossman
- Joseph Lewis
- James Lizardi
- Ben Lizardi
- Joseph Sanchez
- Allison Sanders
- Danny Starkins
- David Stern
- Ernest Tamminga
- Christopher Wolfe

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PASADENA, CA
PERMIT #740



Yuma North Campus



Yuma South Campus



Country Club Campus / Tucson



Camelback Campus / Phoenix

AMERISCHOOLS ACADEMY

A system of charter schools for children K-8

To learn more visit:
www.AmeriSchools.org

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

1150 North Country Club
Tucson, AZ 85716
(520) 296-1100

OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Dr. Reginald E. Barr
Chief Executive Officer

Sandra E. Barr
President

Deborah E. LeBlanc
Vice President

Carol A. Towner
Secretary

Courtney Braren
Superintendent for Instruction

Steve Radakovich
Assistant Superintendent for
Support Services

SCHOOL LOCATIONS:

YUMA NORTH (K-6)
1220 South 4th Avenue
Yuma, AZ 85364
(928) 919-7203

YUMA SOUTH (K-6)
2098 South 3rd Avenue
Yuma, AZ 85364
(928) 329-1100

COUNTRY CLUB (K-8)
1150 N. Country Club Road
Tucson, AZ 85716
(520) 620-1100

CAMELBACK (K-8)
1333 W. Camelback Road
Phoenix, AZ 85013
(602) 532-0100