

FLAGSTAFF UNIFIED School District NEWSLETTER

January 2023

Thomas Elementary students visit Mexico, Chicago, and Tucson virtually

January 18, 2023

Fifth-grade students at Thomas Elementary School traveled to Mexico, Chicago, and Tucson in one class period, thanks to a virtual reality field trip provided by Act One.

Christina N. Bowen, an instructional specialist at Thomas, explained Act One provided the virtual reality trips, and they came to the school and facilitated the process for three 5th Grade classes.

"Act One provided the VR goggles, and [they] led the whole trip," said Bowen. "The field trip had three chapters or trips. The first trip was to see mural art in Mexico, then [the] students got to visit Chicago and meet an artist that created public street art and also worked with an art curator. Finally, students traveled to Tucson to listen and learn about an



all-female mariachi band."

Bowen explained that between each chapter, Act One facilitated a discussion with students about their experience, and they helped engage students to make it a powerful learning trip.

The students enjoyed their VR experience.

"The experience was interesting

because [we] got to learn about people's culture and art style," said Liliana Nichols, a fifth-grader in Mrs. Ruiz's class. "My favorite part was the mariachi band because the music told a story."

"The VR was fun, and the artist's name was Sentrock. It was cool because he made a boy wearing a bird mask," said Tehyazbah

Manygoats, another fifth-grader in Mrs. Ruiz's class. "The mariachi band was a lot of singing, and I liked the girls' costumes. It was a really cool field trip, and I hope other kids will get to enjoy it."

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Virtual Trip*

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A message from our **SUPERINTENDENT**

Record snowfall, Make-up Days



January 30, 2023

This month has brought us plenty of snow—in fact, the over 60 inches received this month places January 2023 in the top three for recorded snowfall during the month of January. I understand the significant snowfall we've experienced this month has been disruptive to our schools and communities and resulted in several school cancellations this month.

Each winter storm is unique in its timing of hazardous conditions, forecast certainty, and impact across the vast areas of the district. FUSD aims to provide as much notice to families and staff as possible when

decisions are made to delay or cancel school. As was communicated to all FUSD families last October, notifications (phone/email/text) will be made no later than 6:00 a.m. on the day of the delay or cancellation. Before that time, FUSD posts weather information on its website (typically around 5:00 a.m.), followed by posts on social media and to our media (TV, radio) contacts.

The Flagstaff Unified School District will utilize its Make-Up Days on the 2022-2023 calendar, April 24 and May 5, to account for the first two school days canceled due to winter weather. The district's instructional model allows the Superintendent to evaluate the instructional hours in excess of state requirements to determine if students need to make up additional missed instructional days. It has been decided that FUSD students will not need to make up school days for the cancellations on January 17, 18, and 20. I will continue to evaluate instructional time in the event of more delays or cancellations this winter. ❄️



Photos, top: Coconino County Superintendent of Schools, Cheryl Mango-Paget, conducts the oath of office to Kristine Pavlik, new Flagstaff Unified School District (FUSD) governing board member, on January 5, 2023. Bottom: New FUSD governing board member, Eric Sather, takes his oath of office, administered by Cheryl Mango-Paget, on January 10, 2023.

ADMINISTRATION

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Superintendent

LANCE HUFFMAN
*Assistant Superintendent of
Curriculum & Instruction*

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Kristine Pavlik
Member

CAROLE GILMORE
Member

Eric Sather
Member

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New FUSD governing board members take their oath of office

January 12, 2023

Kristine Pavlik, new FUSD governing board member

Kristine Pavlik is one of the two newest governing board members at Flagstaff Unified School District (FUSD). She was sworn into office on January 5, 2023, by Cheryl Mango-Paget, the Coconino County Superintendent of Schools.

Pavlik was born in Omaha, Nebraska, and moved to Flagstaff with her family in 1996. She started going to school at FUSD in 4th Grade at DeMiguel Elementary School and attended Weitzel Elementary when her family moved from Kachina Village into town. She also attended the Renaissance Magnet Middle School program at Mount Elden Middle School, now retired. She graduated in 2004 from Coconino High School, where she was an active participant in the theatre program and many peer support group programs.

As an adult, she has devoted herself to making our community a better place through civic engagement, foster parenting, volunteer work, political activism, being a good neighbor, helping those

in need, showing compassion, and through her day job as the Housing and Grants Administrator at the City of Flagstaff. At the City of Flagstaff, she manages federal grant funds to create affordable housing, providing shelter and other public services to low- and moderate-income families.

She explained that she has a son attending Coconino High School in the Coconino Institute of Technology (CIT) program. Her youngest two children will be attending Killip

Elementary— one is starting next year.

"We love living in Flagstaff," she said. "[We] feel lucky to have been able to settle down here."

"As an FUSD alumna, a CHS graduate... go Panthers... and as a parent of students in the [school] district, [we] have been fortunate to have had many positive educational experiences, thanks to FUSD and the amazing educators, leadership, and

staff that devote themselves wholeheartedly to our students," she added. "I ran for the governing board because I want to see that legacy continue and touch the lives of every child in our community. I am a passionate advocate for public education, robust social services, and child and family welfare."

Pavlik said in the next four years of her term, she plans to be available to parents, teachers, staff, and other community stakeholders to listen to

I also want to ensure that we continue to work to meet the needs of every student.

— Kristine Pavlik

their concerns, especially concerns of individuals and families that are often unheard.

"I would like to create partnerships with community organizations that bring more opportunities to our students and their families. I hope parents will feel they have access to a seat at the table in order to become active participants in their children's education," she said. "I hope to improve teacher retention and find ways to see our teachers are fairly compensated and respected."

"I also want to ensure that we continue to work to meet the needs of every student, including our minority and LGBTQ+ students. I think making sure students feel safe at school is a top priority," she added. "Mostly, I hope to be responsive to the needs brought to my attention and effective in creating change where it is needed. The most important thing is that I listen, learn, and make decisions that consider the needs of all students while respecting educators and prioritizing our students' rights to a safe and inclusive learning environment. I strongly believe in our student's rights to an accurate and truthful education that will prepare them to be members of our democracy and for future success."

Pavlik explained that public education is the base upon which we build our democracy.

"I wholeheartedly believe in the right of every child to a fully funded, well-supported, inclusive, and accessible education," she said. "Education is also community, and we all need community to thrive. We need one another, which means we need to work to understand one another and the world we [all] live in. An enriching, safe, and inclusive educational environment is the most effective way to create compassionate individuals that will grow up to invest in their communities and create a just and compassionate society."

Eric Sather

Eric Sather is one of the new FUSD governing board members, and he took his oath of office on January 10, 2023. Sather is an Emmy-award-winning filmmaker originally from Salt Lake City, Utah, where he graduated from the University of Utah with a B.A. in Film Studies.

Sather currently works for Northern Arizona University's President's Office producing and editing short films highlighting the work of scholars, artists, and researchers. Sather and his partner have lived in Flagstaff since 2008. He is a proud parent of two kids that attend FUSD schools.

Sather believes education is the primary means to build a thriving and strong community.

"Flagstaff's community deserves a champion for all its young learners, their parents, its teachers, and our neighbors. [I] will work hard to establish good communication between everyone invested in public education, and that truly includes everyone," he said. "FUSD does a tremendous job working with students from every kind of background and dynamically supporting individual needs. My main goal is to listen, highlight FUSD successes, and guide the district to make informed, data-based decisions to help ensure all students receive the best education possible."

In the next four years, Sather wants all students in FUSD to be supported and to find a community in which they feel they belong.

"FUSD is central to Flagstaff's community. I look forward to making both stronger together," he said. "Education is the tide that rises all boats. [I] believe that education helps both the individual and the community at large. To live and work in the best community possible requires an informed electorate that demonstrates empathy and treats all citizens with respect."





...Virtual Trip/ From Page 1

Angel Martinez also enjoyed the VR experience. He especially liked the one that featured the artist, Sentrock.

"[Sentrock] showed us all the stuff that he did and how he told us his inspiration of who he liked," said Angel. "I also like the one where he described how he felt about his tagline, 'Free as a bird.'"

Olivia Calahan especially liked the street artists.

"I loved the VR field trip... it was cool to learn about why street artists paint on the streets for freedom of expression,"

said Olivia. "The mariachi band was great... [it] was great to see Spanish musicians. Thank you, Act One, for all the fun!"

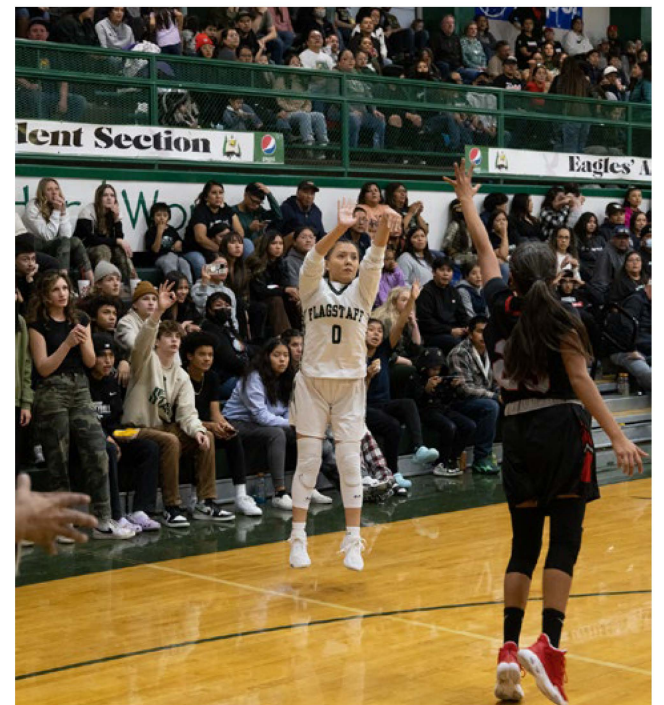
Bowen explained that Troy Harris, FUSD technology director, provided the idea for the virtual tour. She said Harris provided information to schools about the virtual reality trips provided by Act One.

**I loved the
VR field
trip.**

— Olivia Calahan, 5th Grader

**SEE MORE
PHOTOS ON
FLICKR.**





Photos by Karl Mullings (KFM Designs Photography, LLC)

**Flagstaff High School and Coconino High School
play rivalry games on January 21, 2023**



Photos, left to right, top: Diane Immethun poses with Cromer Elementary School Principal, Traci Gordon, and her class. Katie Krause of Marshall Elementary School poses with Janelle Reasor, principal of Marshall Elementary School, and some members of her class; Amy Begay, Navajo language teacher at Puente de Hozho, poses with Jillian Hernandez. Second row, left to right: Linda Stamer, music teacher at Marshall Elementary School poses with Principal Janelle Reasor and members of her class; Sherry Swelnis of Coconino High School poses with members of her Transitions School-to-Work (TSW) team. L-R: Principal Stacie Zanzucchi; Eduardo Zepeda, TSW mentor; Nicole Taylor, TSW mentor; Jesse Cornett, and Sherry Swelniss, TSW Coordinator; Erin Celona of Summit High School poses with Principal Chris Koenker; Third row, left to right: Pam Lowie of Kinsey Elementary School poses with Principal Ellen Herman; Ann Rossi of Kinsely Elementary School poses with Principal Ellen Herman; Jessica Sargent poses with Flagstaff High School teacher, Kellen Brandel, and Principal Libby Miller. Bottom row: Michelle Weidinger of DeMiguel Elementary School poses with members of her class and Principal Ninon Wilson.



FUSD teachers receive another round of funds from the Debbi Grogan Memorial grant, Micro-Grant grant

January 20, 2023

The FUSD Foundation recently awarded another round of grant recipients for the Debbi Grogan Memorial and Micro-Grant fund.

The Debbi Grogan grant recipients include Karen Whitaker of Coconino High School, Linda Stamer of Marshall Elementary, and Diane Immethun of Cromer Elementary School.

Recipients of the Micro-Grant fund include Wesley Roche-Baron of Flagstaff High School; Ann Rossi of Kinsey Elementary School; Amy Begay of Puente de Hózhó; Jessica Sargent for Flagstaff High School; Katie Krause of Marshall Elementary School; Erin Celona of Summit High School; Michelle Weidinger of DeMiguel Elementary School; Sherry Swelnis of Coconino High School; and Pam Lowie of Kinsey Elementary School.

Karen Whitaker, the band and orchestra director at Coconino High School, plans to purchase a new flute and saxophone.

"Most of the equipment I am purchasing is to replace what we have," said Whitaker. "Our current drum stands and carriers are barely hanging on, and many are not functional. I am super excited that we are getting this opportunity to make our students' music education experience better."

"Flutes and saxophones are the largest sections of the [Coconino High School] band, and we really need a more intermediate student quality instrument for both sections,"

said Whitaker. "Students don't deserve to play instruments that are past the point of being able to get fixed. I have taken all the flutes and saxophones to get fixed at AZMP, and as a music educator and woodwind player myself, these instruments are still not what the students need to excel in class."

Linda Stamer, music teacher at Marshall Elementary Schools, said she plans to use the Debbi Grogan grant funds to purchase 14 Baritone Ukuleles and complete the class set they have.

"The fourth-grade students will learn how to play chords and melodies on the [Ukuleles] after Spring Break," said Stamer. "We will culminate the unit by learning the Blues Progression and writing our own blues lyrics."

Diane Immethun, third-grade teacher in the Elementary Preparatory Academy at Cromer Elementary School, explained that the Grogan grant funds were used to purchase 25 tickets for family members for a Flagstaff Symphony Orchestra performance they assisted with.

"My students collaborated with composers Henry and Maria Flurry to create a piece of orchestral music that the Flagstaff Symphony Orchestra performed on January 20, 2023," said Immethun. "The children and their parents' tickets were provided by the Flagstaff Symphony Orchestra, and the Debbie Grogan Grant of \$500 [was] used to purchase 25 tickets for additional family members, such as grandparents and older siblings, and

special guests who have contributed to the lives of the students."

Ann Rossi, the library media specialist at Kinsey Elementary School, explained that the Micro-Grant funds would be used to enhance the Career Development project at Kinsey with the purchase of uniforms.

"Working with the Department of Education, we have come up with some really fun ideas on how to get the conversation about careers started at an early age... to spark interest and awareness of what careers are out there," Rossi said.

Kinsey will have local community service helpers, hotshots, fire department, TGen, police department, and others come to the school to discuss how they got started in their careers and what it entails.

"While exploring different ideas, I came upon a set of professional-looking uniforms for children at Lakeshore Learning Center," said Rossi. "I know these [uniforms] will be widely used in many different ways, opening up the discussion in the classroom about the duties that the uniforms hold. This is what we happily purchased for our program."

Amy Begay, 1st Grade Navajo Language teacher at Puente de Hózhó Elementary School, explained that the Micro-Grant funds would be used to enhance Native American cultural lessons.

"The [grant] will be used in the areas of Native-Indigenous food preparation, so students will understand what types of food/diet our ancestors [had] that sustained their life and is still being practiced," said Begay.

Begay also plans to use some funding to introduce Diné (Navajo) weaving to students. She plans to get some loom stands and some yarn

and have students make two loom rugs as practice for their hands-on and eye/hand coordination.

With any remaining funds, she plans to take students to the Museum of Northern Arizona or perhaps have a presenter come to the class for a lesson.

Katie Krause, a 5th Grade teacher at Marshall Elementary School, said she plans to use the funds to write their fourth story for their Hero Project, which involves recording veterans' stories through interviews and publishing a book which is all done by the students.

"In the past, we've interviewed WWII Veterans, but due to having a hard time locating WWII veterans, we are now including Vietnam Veterans," said Krause. "We plan to use the funds to write about Billy Weldon, who is our crossing guard, and so much more to our Marshall community. We have already interviewed him, and the students will begin listening to his story, writing a biography, and illustrating his experience." ❄️



THE
COCONINO COUNTY
AFRICAN DIASPORA
ADVISORY COUNCIL
PRESENTS

THEME:
BLACK
EXAMPLES
OF
COURAGE
AND
RESILIENCE

BLACK
HISTORY
MONTH
2023
CONTEST

SUBMISSION
DEADLINE:
FRI. 2/10

All written entries must be 500 words or less and typed or legibly hand written. Art entries may be submitted in physical form* or as high resolution photographs. All entries will be judged based on rubrics that have been provided to your school. Each entry must have a cover sheet that includes title/topic, student name, address and phone number along with the name of your school (if applicable) and grade.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT



*Schedule for drop-off and/or pick-up at the
Historic Murdoch Center

Khara House - khara.house@gmail.com

FEBRUARY 2023



2/8: Kindergarten Open
Houses

2/14: Governing Board
Meeting

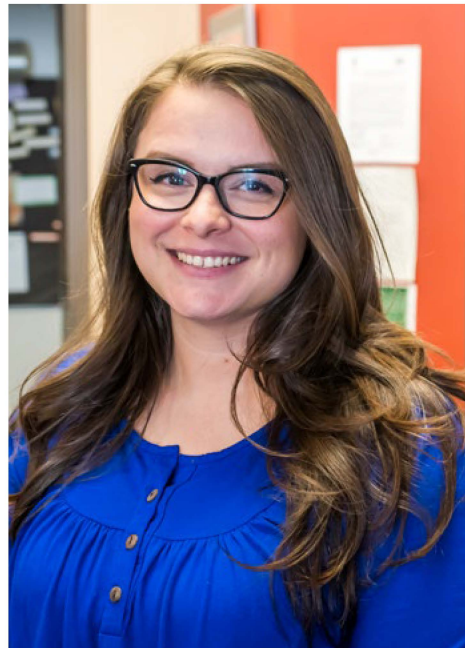
2/20: Presidents' Day
- No School

2/29: Governing Board
Meeting





Sierra Freeman



Rosanna Lopez



Jessica Rusconi



Ryan Almaraz

Meet some of our great FUSD staff members

January 24, 2023

Sierra Freeman is the new music teacher at Knoles Elementary School and has been there for three weeks. Sierra is from Cameron, Arizona, and she obtained her teaching credentials from Northern Arizona University's School of Music.

As we complete the second half of the school year, she is looking forward to becoming more familiar with the school culture, the teachers, and especially the students.

"Bringing joy about how music works and showing the endless possibilities of music" motivates Freeman.

Freeman enjoys running, drawing, and taking care of her plants in her free time. An interesting fact, Freeman climbed to the top of Mt. Fuji during a three-month stay in Japan.

Rosanna Lopez is the new administrative assistant at Knoles Elementary school, replacing Belinda Shaffer, who retired last month. Lopez is originally from Phoenix, Arizona, and she has been working at Knoles since April 2021 as a paraprofessional in the special education preschool.

She is looking forward to growing and learning with her Knoles students and staff, and she is looking forward to the new experiences.

"New experiences keep me moving forward," she said. "[It is] something to look forward to, [it's] always a great motivator."

She has two children at Knoles, one in 4th Grade and the other in 2nd Grade.

"They love being Knoles Knights!" she said about her two children.

In her spare time, she enjoys her hobbies of cooking and photography, and she loves martial arts.

"I am looking forward to my future in my new role here at Knoles," she added. "I absolutely love this school, and I have been welcomed into my new position with open arms and smiling faces."

Jessica Rusconi is the new accountant in the Finance and Business Services Department at Flagstaff Unified School District (FUSD). Rusconi is originally from Benson, Arizona, and now lives in Flagstaff. She has been at FUSD since January, and she previously worked at Wallick & Volk Mortgage for three years and at Chase Bank for two years.

As we complete the second half of the school year, she is looking forward to the opportunities to work with many FUSD staff members and contribute to the success of FUSD.

She is looking forward to developing and growing in her new

role, and she is excited to be part of a fantastic team, and she looks forward to her future at FUSD.

She has two kids who attend Knoles Elementary School. As for hobbies and special interests, she enjoys lake trips with her family, skiing, hiking, and watching her kids play sports.

Ryan Almaraz works as a materials handler in the Materials and Property Management Department at Flagstaff Unified School District (FUSD). Ryan is from Flagstaff, Arizona, and has been working for FUSD since November 2016.

"I love working for my department because we are very team-oriented, and we always support each other," he said. "[I'm] looking forward to big projects this next school year."

Ryan is an alumnus of Flagstaff High School. 🌲



2023-2024 Academic Calendar

The Flagstaff Unified School District Governing Board approved the academic calendar for the 2023-2024 school year on December 13, 2022.

FLAGSTAFF UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT 2023-2024

Board Approved: 12/13/2022

July '23	August '23	September '23	October '23	November '23	December '23	January '24	February '24	March '24	April '24	May '24	June '24
1	1	1	1 Sat	1	1	1 Winter Break	1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2	2 Winter Break	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3	3 Winter Break	3	3	3	3	3
4 July 4th	4	4 Labor Day	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5 Q3 END	5	5	5
6	6	6	6 Q1 - END	6	6	6	6	6 ½ day-PT Conf.	6	6	6
7	7 In Service Day	7	7	7	7	7	7	7 ½ day-PT Conf.	7	7	7
8	8 In Service Day	8	8	8	8	8	8	8 ½ day-PT Conf.	8	8	8
9	9 First Day	9	9 ½ day-PT Conf	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
10	10	10	10 ½ day-PT Conf	10 Veterans Day	10	10	10	10	10	10 Make Up #2	10
11	11	11	11 ½ day-PT Conf.	11	11	11	11	11 Spring Break	11	11	11
12	12	12	12 Fall Break	12	12	12	12	12 Spring Break	12	12	12
13	13	13	13 Fall Break	13	13	13	13	13 Spring Break	13	13	13
14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14 Spring Break	14	14	14
15	15	15	15	15	15	15 MLK Day	15	15 Spring Break	15	15	15
16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17
18	18	18 In Service Day	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19 President's Day	19	19	19	19 Juneteenth
20	20	20	20	20	20 Q2/S1 - END	20	20	20	20	20	20
21	21	21	21	21	21 Winter Break	21	21	21	21	21	21
22	22	22	22	22 Thanksgiving	22 Winter Break	22	22	22	22 Make Up #1	22	22
23	23	23	23	23 Thanksgiving	23	23	23	23	23	23 Last Day	23
24	24	24	24	24 Thanksgiving	24	24	24	24	24	24 Graduation Day	24
25	25	25	25	25	25 Winter Break	25	25	25	25	25	25
26	26	26	26	26	26 Winter Break	26	26	26	26	26	26
27	27	27	27	27	27 Winter Break	27	27	27	27	27 Memorial Day	27
28	28	28	28	28	28 Winter Break	28	28	28	28	28	28
29	29	29	29	29	29 Winter Break	29	29	29	29	29	29
30	30	30	30	30	30	30	(leap year)	30	30	30	30
31	31		31		31	31		31		31	
TOTAL 180 Days	M-17 / Q1-17	M-19 / Q1-19	Q1-5 / M-20 Q1=41 / Q2-15	M-18 / Q2-18	M-14 / Q2-14 Q2=47	M-19 / Q3-19	M-20 / Q3 -20	Q3-3 / M-16 Q3=42 / Q4-13	M-21 / Q4-21	Q4-16 / M-16 Q4=50	



FUSD FOOD SERVICE

What's eating you?

By Barbara Ann Heerkens MPH, RDN

Food is Fantastic! Whether you are eating it for taste, nutrition, or a combination of both, we want to encourage those around us to enjoy the food that makes us feel good.

Some foods can make us feel sluggish, give us inconsistent energy throughout the day, and cause abdominal discomfort. Although each person is different, many times, the culprit is added sugar.

But what is added sugar? How is it different? It can be very complicated. First, sugars are carbohydrates and are essential for our health and the preferred fuel for our brains. Many whole foods like fruits and vegetables contain sugars/ carbohydrates, fiber, vitamins, and minerals. These foods are in balance and are very important to our health, digestion, and being regular.

Foods that have "added sugar" are those that have been changed during manufacturing. Fibers, vitamins, and minerals have not only been lost during processing but sugar has been added to encourage the taste and bulk the food. A high consumption of these foods throughout a lifetime can increase the risk of diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and kidney disease due to the lack of essential nutrients taken out and the added sugar.

So, sugar is not the bad guy! However, the added sugar in packaged products should be closely examined when making your food choice.

For example, sweeter fruits like mangos and kiwi have been attacked because of their sugar content, but

Nutrition Facts

8 servings per container	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	

these foods are wonderful options to fuel our brains, and give us fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Jarred peanut butter options can sometimes have added sugars, while other options just contain peanuts as the only ingredient.

Looking at nutrition labels in the added sugar section under carbohydrates (shown above) as well as the ingredient list is good practice to add to your grocery shopping routine. Ingredient lists are listed with the ingredients used in the greatest amounts first.

It is important to remember that food that is high in added sugar — sweets, soda, premade options, etc. is part of a healthy diet in moderation. These foods can be eaten to enjoy their taste; however, they do not provide many nutrients we need to stay healthy.

Teaching kids to read nutrient labels, eat sweets in moderation, and notice when foods affect their bodies and moods are great ways to support their current and future health.

Arizona Tax Credit

Make a difference today!

Arizona tax law (ARS 43-1089.01) allows taxpayers a credit for contributions made or fees paid to a public school for support of extracurricular activities. The credit is a dollar for dollar credit that is equal to the amount contributed or the amount of fees paid. However, the credit cannot exceed \$200 for single taxpayers or heads of household. For married taxpayers who file a joint return, the credit cannot exceed \$400. You do not need to have a student enrolled in school to

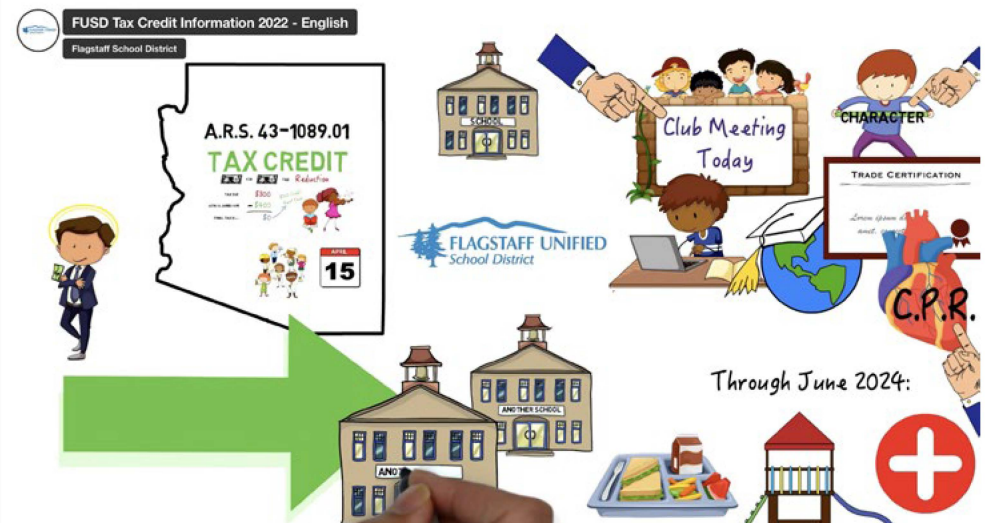
contribute!

For a tax credit to be claimed for 2022, the donation must be postmarked or delivered by April 15, 2023. Credit card transactions must also be done by April 15, 2023.

You have a choice. You can send all your tax dollars to the State or have some of them used directly to improve education in Flagstaff. Tax credit donations are non-refundable. To make a donation to the school and/or program of your choice, please donate online here.

For more information, watch the videos, read the brochure, or view the presentation below. Make a donation online today!

Need more information? Watch this video



In English



En español

The Deeper Soul of Picture Canyon — A Reflection

Submitted by Diane Immethun

January 18, 2023

Third-graders in Diane Immethun's Elementary Preparatory Academy at Cromer Elementary School attended a Flagstaff Symphony Orchestra (FSO) concert on January 20, 2023, at Ardrey Auditorium. The students collaborated with the FSO on an orchestral piece that was performed.

Immethun explained the background and the key people who participated in this project, included their connection, Mary Nebel; the guides and composers were Maria and Henry Flurry; the conductor was Charles Latshaw; the archeologist was Neil Weintraub; and the student teachers were Wyatt Arbaugh and Sara Butler.

The background

When Mary Nebel approached me in September to gauge my interest in collaborating with my students and the Flurrys to compose a piece of orchestral music, my immediate answer was yes. Having worked with Mary for five years with the San Francisco Symphony's Keeping Score program, teaching arts integration to classroom teachers, this seemed a perfect fit for the students and my educational philosophy.

Mary indicated that the students' background for the composition should be relevant to studies that they and we were expected to acquire and teach in third grade. We had a conversation that led to me thinking about Picture Canyon. This idea grew from prior experience



Third-graders in Diane Immethun's class at Cromer Elementary School attended a concert by the Flagstaff Symphony Orchestra on January 20, 2023, at Ardrey Auditorium. FUSD Assistant Superintendent, Lance Huffman, and Cromer Principal, Traci Gordon, also attended the concert with the students.

with children but aligned beautifully with the January orchestral program related to the west. I can think of no better way to define the west than to score a piece relevant to the First People of Flagstaff, the Sinagua. Having taken a dozen classes to Picture Canyon to investigate the area, it seemed a portal for deep thinking and a place to get the creative juices flowing.

When I met with Maria, I pitched the idea of bringing a place and its people into the story told through music. With a few hours of brainstorming and strong connections, Maria and I agreed to develop the piece around Picture Canyon as it is a treasure trove of inspiration to imagine the lives of the

Sinagua—a rich place to conjure up a thorough understanding of life from a thousand years ago and to offer a voice to the music.

We began our classroom studies in two distinct and separate subjects. We studied the basics of musical notation, including mathematical meter, orchestral music via powerful pieces, the typical seating arrangement of the orchestra, the instruments, and their voices. We explored the physics of sound relating to how the instruments are played and how we receive the aural experiences.

Then we dove into the historical shifts from the pre-historic movement of peoples across this continent, narrowing it down to the

ancient people of Arizona and finally to Sinagua. We studied the habitat, buildings, rock art, biomes, creatures, and geology of Picture Canyon. We read stories of the Ancestral Puebloans and their connection to Hopi, including depictions of spirits in Kachinas and their importance in contemporary culture. Winter Solstice through Summer Solstice is a time when the Kachinas are called upon - which will be an appropriate time to perform a piece of music that speaks to the place and the cultural and spiritual significance of winter.

Next, we built a connection between the two ideas —

*Continued on page 13 /
Picture Canyon*

...Picture Canyon/ From Page 12

anthropology, archeology, and music. Some areas where we looked for connections were between petroglyphs and musical notation. We studied Guido d'Arezzo's contribution to modern staff notation and Sinagua's rock art depictions as ways to convey stories made around the same era of 1000 AD. Rock art might have been visual music, too, with people rhythmically pecking or scraping while making geometric designs. We imagined how vastly different life was between the European cultural experiences and that of Sinagua. This led to a powerful discussion about the sophistication of buildings, clothing, lifestyle, and music and why those differences were present in these varied cultural experiences.

When we took our field trip to Picture Canyon, our guide, Neil Weintraub, gave us a lot to ponder and took great care to show us every secret this beautiful place has to offer. The children clambered to offer information and ask deep questions to further their understanding. With Neil's thorough teachings, we learned that there was a pine forest 1,000 years ago via dendrochronology of logged stumps that litter the forest floor. This science suggests that some of those stumps would have put the trees there at the time of Sinagua habitation. Plants such as banana yucca, wild grape, and sumac exist today as they did then. These would have supplied food. Yucca was also used for constructing sandals and making dye. The cattail reeds found along the river were used for arrow making. We visited the pit house, which was excavated illegally. There are many more unexcavated pit houses along the south-facing side of the canyon, giving us an idea of how Sinagua chose the sunny side for dwelling and that it must have been a sizable community. Porcupines lived then, too, as ancient quills were found in a cliffside cave,

and Neil indicated that the quills had varied uses. We looked at pot shards, learned about how pottery was constructed and learned that the people of Picture Canyon traded with other tribes, which was evident because white pottery would not have been local. We imagined a world where trade happened and why. We listened to the sounds around us, developing a sense of the place then and now. Overall, in a few short weeks, we managed to cover a vast amount of information, and the children were prepared for Maria and Henry.

The outcome was overwhelmingly positive. When the Flurrys came to work with the children, they were ready to convey meaningful ideas. Henry and Maria interacted with the students' musical understanding, engaging their prior knowledge and giving room for the children to articulate how they wanted the music to sound and feel. The children offered original ideas and made informed suggestions on compositional nuances such as rhythm, melody, modality, and instrumentation. While Henry developed the structure, Maria guided the group's thinking. Each child was given an opportunity to agree or disagree with the

development of the piece, and each felt heard and respected for their ideas. The creativity and enthusiasm for this project were profound. It was, in many ways, an emotional journey as the children were

challenged to find the voice that echoed their interpretations of this sacred and significant place. They wanted it to be meaningful.

In December, Charles Latshaw came to visit. His presentation was engaging and lively. The children took part in conversations that connected their prior learning of the orchestra and instruments. They were completely absorbed in the art

of conducting, and many tried conducting with his humorous and kind direction. It was a true joy to have him visit as it gave the students a more concise understanding of what was to come from their own composition.

When we finally heard the piece in its entirety, we could hear the wind blowing from the trumpets, horns, and trombones. We could hear the waterfall and our class on the field trip with the harp, and we could hear the woodpeckers in the temple blocks, and the ancient land in the concert bass drum. The tam-tam player represented the Sinagua carving the petroglyphs by tapping on the rim of the instrument and then tracing spirals around the face

of the tam to represent the ancient spirals we saw in the rock art. There are places in the piece where we can sense the present and the past, which is exactly what the children wanted to convey — respect for the Sinagua and a desire to preserve and share the deeper soul of Picture Canyon.

After the concert, there was a satisfying sense of great accomplishment. The children are very fond of Henry and Maria, and Charles too. Many reflected today with gratitude and were able to discuss the varied and ample educational opportunities within learning about music, mathematics, social studies, and ecosystems. We are humbled that we were allowed to take part in this life-changing experience. ❄️

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— Diane Immethun



Construction projects at FUSD

January 31, 2023

There are several construction projects within the school district, the playgrounds at Knoles Elementary School, Sechrist Elementary School, and Thomas Elementary School, the mini-auditorium at Coconino High School, and the elevator at Sinagua Middle School.

Three playgrounds have undergone construction at Knoles Elementary School, Sechrist Elementary School, and Thomas Elementary School. According to Rosanna Jumbo-Fitch, project manager at Flagstaff Unified School District (FUSD), the Knoles playground is completed, and the drainage is planned for later this summer. The Sechrist playground is still in construction and still needs to be completed. Dave Bang, Inc is constructing the playgrounds.

According to Superintendent

Michael Penca, the playgrounds are being paid for with federal ESSER dollars.

The DLR Group is working on the remodel projects at Coconino High School. According to a booklet provided by the DLR Group, this project's latest schematic design of focus points includes the mini-auditorium, the plaza, the south commons area, the bookstore, and outside drainage.

Jumbo-Fitch explained that the project is expected to have the design completed by Spring 2023 and construction documents following that shortly after.

"The construction is expected to start [by] Summer 2023," Jumbo-Fitch stated.

The 2018 Bond dollars are funding this project.

The elevator at Sinagua Middle School is still in progress. According to Rosanna Jumbo-Fitch, Core



Left photo: Construction workers from Dave Bank, Inc., work on the new playground at Knoles Elementary School. Right: Construction workers from Core Construction work on the new elevator at Sinagua Middle School.

Construction is the contractor on site, and they have been working through the winter months since the Winter Break.

"[Core has] installed mechanical, electrical, plumbing, fire sprinkler connections, concrete for [the] stairways, ramp caps, handrails, roofing, [and] the elevator cab installation," stated Jumbo-Fitch. "The project is expected to be completed in mid-February 2023."

Jumbo-Fitch explained that an elevator was needed at Sinagua Middle School because the front entrance needed ADA access to the building beyond the front entrance ramp.

According to Superintendent Michael Penca, the remodel projects are funded by the 2018 Bond dollars.





Yvonne Parent renews National Board Certification

Congratulations to Yvonne Parent, a 2nd-grade teacher at Knoles Elementary School, who was honored on January 26, 2023, for renewing her National Board Certification this year. As part of the recognition, she was presented with a golden balloon from the AZK12 Center



Spelling bee winners pose with their ribbons. Back row, left to right: Tammy Rauschenbach, SEI teacher at MEMS, and Principal Tammy Nelson. Front row, left to right: James Janik, Leo Biggs, and Astrid Purcell.

MEMS spelling bee winners

Congratulations to the spelling bee winners at Mount Elden Middle School (MEMS). The winner was James Janik, an 8th Grader, who spelled "embossed" correctly for the win. The runner-up was Leo Biggs, a 6th Grader, and third place was Astrid Purcell, a 6th Grader.

Tammy Rauschenbach, SEI teacher at MEMS, explained the county spelling bee is next on the schedule for James, which is on February 11, 2023, at the Flagstaff High School auditorium.



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