



BESDBUZZ

A COMMUNITY PASSIONATE ABOUT STUDENT SUCCESS SUMMER 2023

BEST
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL
in the west valley

**MILKEN
EDUCATOR AWARD**
the Oscars of Teaching

+
PLUS

As Seen On T.V.
Fox10 Visits JSM



BUCKEYE PRINCIPAL RECEIVES MILKEN EDUCATOR AWARD

Superintendent Horne joined Milken Educator Awards Senior Vice President Dr. Jane Foley to bestow the honor Principal Megan Brown from Buckeye Elementary School. Brown is among up to 40 elementary educators to be awarded by the Milken Family Foundation this school year and the very first from the Buckeye Elementary School District. In addition to the unrestricted \$25,000 Award, she will receive lifelong membership to a network of more than 2,900 Milken Educator Award recipients and other leaders dedicated to strengthening K-12 education.

Hailed as the “Oscars of Teaching,” Milken Educator Awards inspire and uplift with the unique stories of educators making a profound difference for students, colleagues and communities. The specific states and schools on this year’s winners’ list remain a closely guarded secret until each Award is announced.

“It’s great to recognize outstanding educators who should be the heroes of our society,” said Superintendent Horne. “At the Arizona Department of Education we will do our best to elevate them to hero status.”



“Buckeye Elementary’s positive trajectory is nothing short of extraordinary, and Megan Brown is a guiding force for empowering teachers and students to reach their greatest potential,” said Dr. Foley, who is herself a 1994 Indiana Milken Educator. “Her leadership is dynamic, collaborative and hands-on, making Buckeye a place where effective teachers want to stay and thrive.”

[READ MORE ABOUT THE MILKEN AWARD HERE](#)

[WATCH THE AZ FAMILY STORY HERE](#)

[WATCH THE ABC15 STORY HERE](#)

Photos by **Milken Family Foundation**



BUCKEYE NAMED BEST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Buckeye Elementary School has been voted the best kindergarten through 8th grade school in the entire west valley.

The Best of the West awards named the B rated school as the top choice for families across numerous cities. More than 10 schools were in the running for the title from neighboring districts.

Once a failing school, Buckeye Elementary School has undergone a complete transformation, increasing school attendance rates and academic results on a variety of measures.

Recent success comes from the district's implementation of Project Momentum and districtwide efforts to transform its schools. The results from Arizona's 2022 AASA state assessments showed BESD to have far exceeded the state's growth rate in student achievement. The average growth for mathematics in Arizona was 2%, however BESD reached 9%. In English Language Arts, BESD posted eight times the growth rate of the state, with Arizona having 1% growth and BESD achieving 8%.

Currently rated as a high-performing school by the state, Buckeye Elementary School is a staple of public education in the entire west valley.

AS SEEN ON TV ...



Fox10 stopped by and participated in John S. McCain's field day during their live segment!

3rd and 4th graders were able to show the valley how they celebrate the end of the school year and showcase their skills on the field!

BESD students know how to work hard and play hard!

#BESDISTHEBEST

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$-10 = -5x$

#BESDgrowstogether #BESDistheBEST

a new way to interact with us on social media ... use our hashtag and share how we grow together!

BESD LEADS EDUCATION IN AZ

with school improvement program



Buckeye Elementary School District's Project Momentum has become an influential example in the state of how the school improvement program increases student academic success.

BESD was selected to receive Project Momentum funding by the Governor's Office and the district showed unparalleled first year growth following implementation.

Project Momentum focuses on creating the best instructional methods that achieve academic

results, on providing additional professional development time for staff, reevaluating standards and goals for students and observing the progress along the way for effective growth.

The recent achievement and proof of the results of the program come after the state announced that all schools in the preschool through eighth grade district were highly performing. Once D rated schools have now become A and B rated schools, as identified by the state.

Photograph by **Gradient Learning**

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These achievements came after having only completed the first year of the powerful model, and strong indications of year two success can be found within the district's internal data. All signs suggest that the trajectory of growth remains excellent.

"Project Momentum has been integral to the increasing success we have seen in BESD," said Dr. Kristi Wilson, superintendent. "We are appreciative to have received the much needed supplemental funding and support to provide staff the tools that they need to best help our learners."

The Arizona Department of Education will now continue to fund the program, in an effort to expand to more schools in the state.



DID YOU KNOW?

Buckeye ESD's first school opened in 1889 ... that's 134 years ago!

BESD grows together!

VOTED BEST PLACE TO WORK

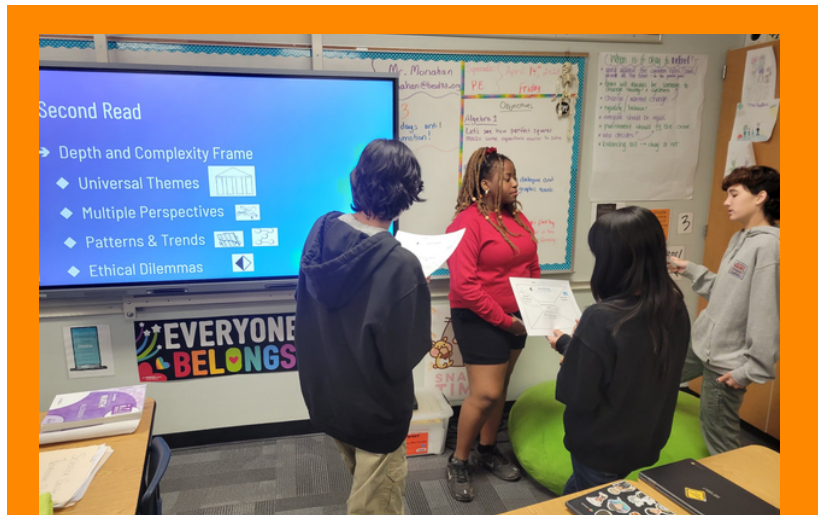
Buckeye Elementary School District has been named one of the top three best places to work in the west valley.

With more than 700 employees, the district is the largest employer in the city of Buckeye, a suburb that has been identified as the fastest growing city, by percentage, in the nation.

In addition, the district has had an impressive retention rate of staff returning for the 2023-2024 school year with 85% of current employees returning.

The district has had an incredible year. It has improved all of its school's letter grades, and it was labeled a "highly-performing district" by the state of Arizona. All schools are currently rated A or B, and being a part of this incredible turnaround effort has helped make BESD a wonderful place to work.

In addition to the strong recruitment and retention rates, BESD's Governing Board approved a 10% increase to the base salary for certified teachers for the upcoming school year. Additionally, all other staff were approved salary increases ranging from 3% to 15% in order to adjust for current market conditions.



LEARNING UNLIMITED

Buckeye ESD's gifted program, Learning Unlimited, continues to grow. 23 teachers received gifted endorsement this school year. This is an increase from any other school year in BESD history. Staff went through 90 hours of gifted professional development, based on the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) professional development parameters.

BESD is proud to offer a gifted program to its students.



BALES ADOPTS A ROAD

Bales Elementary School in Buckeye, through the work of its National Junior Honors Society, adopted a mile of Maricopa Road to call its own.

In working with the city of Buckeye, the road is marked by a sign to represent Bales' commitment to its community.

[READ THE ARTICLE HERE](#)