

Next Steps

After the historic election participation this past November where some Legislative Districts in the Deer Valley Unified School District (DVUSD) played a significant role in the defeat of the DVUSD Override and Bond. We will begin to cut the first \$11 million of the \$33 million required to be reduced in the next three years. The Override funding had been in place for 30 years. The State of Arizona is last in the nation for public school funding already, so this will make the reduction journey even tougher. Some of the elements in the Override were such things as 8% of employee salaries, free All-Day Kindergarten, funds for student activities and sports, and funds for classroom support services such as counselors, social workers, para-educators, etc. My job as Superintendent is to figure out what can be trimmed first without hurting student learning. That means we'll need some "next steps" moving forward.

The initial meetings will be with our employee associations, staff, and leadership teams. Their input regarding the situation will be important. To begin devising the following steps, we will be gathering input from our community through surveying budget priorities. Next, the team of DVUSD staff members, called the Negotiation Solutions Team (NST), will work on what the survey data indicates to garner recommendations. The fourth step is presenting the projected budget package to the DVUSD Governing Board. Once we have the general framework for Year One of cutting, we'll finish the normal budget process in June.

Since school districts' budgets are 85% people, eventually staffing has to be reduced, but hopefully through attrition. With 4,200 employees and 34,000 students, finding the right balance is always tricky of what, when, and where to reduce first. Although the state of Arizona student population is shrinking, and has been for several years, DVUSD has a history of beating our demographer's numbers because of School Choice, Open Enrollment, and local growth. The "wild west" of the voucher, charter, and private school systems in Arizona has an impact on us as we are one of the most over-saturated markets. The students usually return once they figure out that DVUSD has highly-qualified teachers, follows State standards, and is an award-winning district. For example, DVUSD was recently rated an "A," with 27 "A" schools, 35 of 42 are "A" or "B" rated, and we won 70 student academic, athletic, and fine arts team and individual State Titles last year. To see a complete list of the hundreds of #extraordinary awards our student and staff received last year, go to www.dvUSD.org/extraordinary . If you wish to be a part of the DVUSD experience enroll at www.dvUSD.org/enroll.

I believe the final step to the equation is to continue to pursue academic, fine arts, and athletic excellence. DVUSD is one of the top public K-12 school districts in the State, if not the top. Our outstanding students, staff, and community make DVUSD great. To learn more about DVUSD, please read the State of the District 2025 address at www.dvUSD.org/StateoftheDistrict2025.

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