

PUSD Growing Their Own Educators

The PUSD Keystone Educator Preparation Program was created as an alternative path to teacher certification outside of traditional four-year university programs allowing school districts to “grow their own” educators through a classroom-based alternative preparation program. The program is in its second year with 6 teachers graduating this year and 3 in their first year.

This two year program requires that the teachers report for work a week earlier than the other PUSD teachers, attend a 2-hour class a week outside their contract time, and complete extra class work without additional compensation. Each teacher works extensively with an instructional coach who observes them and meets with them weekly. While working through Keystone, the participants must hold an AZ Alternative Teacher Certificate and have a current IVP fingerprint card.

The Curriculum units created for this program are directly related to skills and knowledge teachers need to effectively function in the classroom and ensure students are successful: Classroom Management, Relationships, Lesson Planning and Instructional Delivery, Standards and Curriculum, Professional Responsibilities, Assessment, Technology, and Learner Development.

Keystone has been extremely beneficial for both the district and the enrolled teachers. Nine teaching positions were filled with highly skilled, conscientious, hardworking individuals with bachelors’ degrees. The teachers are receiving a tuition free, job-embedded training program that will allow them to earn a teacher’s certificate in the State of Arizona.

After completing the 1st year of this program the students’ feedback is demonstrating that the program is on track: “I would be going totally blind without this course” “I am more mentally prepared for my lessons and feel confident in my delivery of the content” “Amazing program. Experienced teachers, thoughtful curriculum. Overall fantastic. We

are lucky to have this program. First year is tough and I can't imagine people who do this without a team of support behind them. "I've gained so much from this program. Thank you to all who put it together and spared me having to pay so much in out-of-work time and personal resources to pursue this profession."

PUSD hopes to continue attracting individuals who have a bachelor's degree in another area but who have a desire to become a teacher. If you or someone you know might be interested, please contact Andy Binder, our HR Director at 928-445-5400.