

AGUA FRIA HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
1481 N Eliseo Felix Jr. Way  
Avondale, AZ 85323

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TO CREATE A STRONGER  
**WORKFORCE,** WE NEED  
THE HELP OF BUSINESSES.



SCAN TO  
LEARN ABOUT  
BECOMING AN  
ACADEMY  
PARTNER

[AGUAFRIA.ORG/ACADEMIES](http://AGUAFRIA.ORG/ACADEMIES)

EXTERNSHIPS  
MENTORING  
INTERNSHIPS  
GUEST SPEAKING  
JOB SHADOWING  
WORKPLACE TOURS

# COMMUNITYCONNECT

## INTRODUCING ... **ACADEMIES** OF THE SOUTHWEST VALLEY

CONNECTING STUDENTS WITH  
THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

AGUA FRIA HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT



AGUA FRIA



CANYON VIEW



DESERT EDGE



GOODYEAR



MILLENNIUM



VERRADO

FALL 2024

# ACADEMIES OF THE SOUTHWEST VALLEY

Agua Fria, Canyon View, Desert Edge, Millennium, and Verrado high schools welcomed 2,500 freshmen for the 2024/2025 school year. We're excited to support the class of 2028, the first to participate in the Academies of the Southwest Valley. Over the next four years, these students will engage in personalized learning, explore career pathways, and prepare for life after high school—whether that means pursuing higher education, starting a career, or enlisting in the military.

## ACADEMIES PROVIDE

### STUDENTS WITH CAREER LITERACY :

- Earn industry-recognized credentials and college credits;
- Learn job-related skills, including communication, collaboration, integrity, responsibility, and critical thinking; and
- Participate in internships, mentoring, and job shadowing.



## TRADES ACADEMY @AGUA FRIA HS

West-MEC and Agua Fria High School District are teaming up to launch a cutting-edge Trades Academy, set to open in Fall 2025. Upon completion, the Academy will offer the following pathways: diesel mechanics, welding, electrical, and HVAC. Students will gain hands-on experience with industry-standard equipment guided by expert professionals. Through **The Academies of the Southwest Valley**, this workforce initiative is connecting students with the business community to prepare them for success after high school graduation.



SCAN HERE TO  
BE INSPIRED!



# OUR BUSINESS PARTNERS

THANK YOU TO NEARLY 100 COMPANIES WHO HAVE STEPPED FORWARD TO SUPPORT THE ACADEMIES IN THE 2024/2025 SCHOOL YEAR!

**\*COMMITTED PARTNERS**

- ADM Group
- ADOT - EIT/Intern Program
- AZ@Work Maricopa County
- AZPRO
- AZYouthforce
- Advanced Technologies Consultants (ATC)
- Arete Financial Solutions, LLC
- Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing
- Arizona Corporation Commission-Securities Division
- Arizona DECA
- Arizona Dance Education Organization
- Arizona Department of Education
- Arizona Department of Transportation
- Arizona Farm and Ranch Museum and Hall of Fame
- Arizona Multihousing Association
- Arizona Registrar of Contractors
- Arizona Society of Fire Protection Engineers
- Arizona State Public Health Laboratory
- Aveda Institute Avondale
- Avondale Fire & Medical
- Babbo Italian Eatery
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of AZ
- Bolays Solution LLC
- Bravo Dance Family
- Briarwood Country Club
- Center for the of Future AZ
- Circle the City
- City of Avondale
- City of Buckeye
- City of Goodyear
- Combs Performing Arts Center
- Conservatory of Recording Arts & Sciences
- Credit Union West
- Dave & Buster's Glendale
- DES-Division of Developmental Disabilities
- Desert Rain Health and Wellbeing
- Dircks Moving & Logistics
- ENE Structural Engineering
- Estrella Mountain Comm College
- Faith Law, PLC
- Flood Control District of Maricopa County
- Foothills Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation
- FPC Financial Coaching
- Freestyle Production Studios, LLC
- Goodwill of Central and Northern Arizona
- Grand Canyon University (Post Secondary)
- Help my RV Repairs Mobile Service
- Holiday Inn Glendale- Stadium & Entertainment District
- Huntington University Arizona
- Influence Media LLC
- Jen Chapman Creative
- Jostens
- Junior Achievement Inspire
- Lincoln & Wenk, PLLC
- LiveViral Media
- Maricopa Career Institute
- Maricopa County Air Quality Department
- Maricopa County Environmental Services Vector Control
- Maricopa County Sheriff's Office
- Maricopa County Stormwater Quality Program
- MES Event Group
- Midwestern University
- Modern Grind
- Moneta De Sine LLC
- NAU at the Mesa Workforce
- NY Pizza Dept
- On The Move Physical Therapy
- Phoenix Children's Hospital
- Photography by Roshan, LLC
- Phoenix College
- Providence Training Institute
- Rising Youth Theatre
- RMG Communications
- Smokin' Joe Designs
- Sonora Quest Laboratories
- Sound Valley Studios
- Southwest Valley Chamber
- Spherion Staffing and Recruiting
- Sundt Construction
- TGen
- The Refrigeration School
- The Studance Lab
- Total Image Wigs & Hair Restoration Center
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Ecological Services Office
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- United States Merchant Marine Academy
- University of Arizona
- University of Maryland Global Campus
- Verrado Golf Club
- W.P. Carey School of Business
- WaFd Bank
- Way Out West Coalition and Youth4Youth
- Wee Care Corporation
- WESTMARC
- West-MEC
- Willis Engineering, Inc.
- Women Tech Makers Phoenix
- Young Rembrandts - West Valley Phoenix Metro

# YOUR DISTRICT'S VISION

## CREATING CHOICE. CRAFTING CHARACTER. CULTIVATING COMMUNITY.

“As a Governing Board Member for the past eight years and a current PebbleCreek resident, I’ve witnessed firsthand the powerful impact of the district vision. Its focus on workforce development, safety, and critical repairs has greatly benefited our students and the Southwest Valley. The District remains committed to collaborating with local businesses to prepare students for careers in healthcare, entrepreneurship, public safety, IT, and trades, ensuring a strong workforce pipeline. Safety and security will continue to be top priorities as we enhance our campuses. Together, we are building a brighter future for our students and community.”

*-GOVERNING BOARD PRESIDENT GINA DECOSTE*

“Since coming to the District in 2021, I have been incredibly proud of our remarkable growth and achievements. Our family of high schools—Agua Fria, Millennium, Desert Edge, Verrado, and Canyon View—are excelling academically and in extracurriculars, earning a reputation as the premier high school district.

This excellence wouldn’t have been possible without the support of our community in developing the 10-year Strategic Plan, parents as educational partners, retirees’ participation in Senior to Senior, businesses’ shared responsibility in the Academies of the Southwest Valley, and highly talented and dedicated staff and educators. I am excited for the 2024/2025 school year and confident it will bring even more achievements. Through this edition of Community Connect, we want to share your District’s vision of creating choice, crafting character, and cultivating community.”

*- SUPERINTENDENT MARK YSLAS*



## GOVERNING BOARD

ERIC CULTUM | KRISTEN ACTON | TREY TERRY | GINA DECOSTE | VICKIE LANDIS

# CREATING CHOICE

The Academies of the Southwest Valley provides tailored academic experiences, helping students explore high-wage careers and understand the education and training needed to reach their goals. Our dedicated partners play a crucial role in preparing our students by offering internships, mentoring, guest speaking, job shadowing, workplace tours, and more. By aligning core classes like Algebra, English, Arts, and US History, with workforce-focused experiences, students can apply classroom lessons with the business community.

“As a nurse, mother, and public servant, I am deeply committed to our students’ safety, well-being, and future success. By implementing specialized academies, we can equip all students with the practical skills necessary to excel in their chosen fields and focus on workforce development, which will benefit our community and local economy.”

*- GOVERNING BOARD VICE PRESIDENT*

*Kristen Acton*



# CRAFTING CHARACTER

Your high school district is committed to promoting civic engagement by offering students pathways to careers in public service, such as law enforcement, the military, and government leadership.

**40** HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES  
FROM THE CLASS OF 2024  
CHOSE A MILITARY CAREER

PICTURED: JROTC STUDENTS.

# CULTIVATING COMMUNITY

The **Senior to Senior** program partners your district's high school seniors with senior citizens in the surrounding community.

Together, these seniors form intergenerational friendships. We value the PebbleCreek Rotary and Victory at Verrado, as partners in this program, who offer diverse professional backgrounds to help students envision their future after graduation.

This year, 40 senior students and 40 senior citizens will gather monthly to discuss topics like financial literacy, networking, and technology. They will tour various school sites, participate in community service projects, and enjoy reading to elementary students.



**SENIOR  
TO  
SENIOR**



# GOODYEAR HIGH SCHOOL

Have you seen the exciting progress at Goodyear High School? The 55-acre campus, located at the northwest corner of Cotton Lane in Van Buren, will be the future home of the Mavericks. We are thrilled to share that construction has officially gone vertical! Phase 1 of the project will open its doors to freshmen in fall 2025, with an initial capacity of 400 students. To see renderings and stay updated on construction, visit [aguafria.org/ghs](http://aguafria.org/ghs) or @ghsmavs on Instagram.



# SAFETY ENHANCEMENTS



Safety is the District's priority, and we will continue to maintain and enhance our safety measures year after year. This year, we plan to install **Safe Haven** ballistic window film on all outward-facing windows and continue training our safety and security teams.

**“A safe and friendly learning environment is the foundation for academic success. We work tirelessly to keep our five schools safe and secure.”**

**–Kristen Acton, Governing Board Vice President**



**“School Resource Officers (SROs) are a valued and integral part of our schools. SROs bring their knowledge and law enforcement expertise with them each day. They build positive relationships with students, staff, and community. They provide a safe place for students. I have personally seen their commitment to ensuring the students are in a safe environment.”**

**Debbie Ranney, Avondale resident and former District employee of 23 years (pictured in yellow)**



Your high school district is committed to creating opportunities for all students. Through the Grow Our Own Academy, we proudly foster an inclusive workforce. In the 2023-2024 school year, we welcomed 16 students of varying abilities as paid interns in food services, bookstore operations, and campus maintenance, supporting their growth and preparing them for future success.



## NO TAX RATE INCREASE

The District has called for an election, asking voters to consider a \$138 million bond. The District is part of the fastest-growing region in the United States and has school buildings over 60 years old that desperately need renovations and improvements. The Bond will address and fund workforce development, critical repairs, and improvements at our five existing campuses. The District is committed to not increasing the tax rate. To accomplish this, current and future bonds will be structured not to exceed 75 cents per \$100,000 of secondary assessed home value. The estimated average tax for the total proposed bond is \$14.84 monthly per average household.

### CRITICAL REPAIRS: PHASE 2

Efficient learning environments are essential for maintaining educational standards and supporting the well-being of our growing student population. As a District we must continue to upgrade current facilities to meet the evolving needs of students and accommodate hyper growth.

- Replacement or repairs to aging systems like air conditioning, roofs and parking lots
- Technology infrastructure enhancements
- Student transportation (new buses)
- Classroom furniture and equipment

### SCHOOL BUILDING IMPROVMENTS



PHASE 4 REMODEL: CLASSROOM AND BUILDING MODERNIZATION



SOUND ENHANCEMENTS IN CLASSROOMS



PHASE 2 REMODEL: CLASSROOM AND BUILDING MODERNIZATION



PHASE 2 REMODEL: CLASSROOM AND BUILDING MODERNIZATION



PHASE 1 IMPROVEMENTS: CLASSROOM AND BUILDING MODERNIZATION

### SCHOOL SAFETY EFFORTS: PHASE 2

A safe and friendly learning environment is the foundation of student success. These continued efforts protect students and staff, ensuring that education can remain uninterrupted.

### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Your high school District is working with local business partners to ensure we prepare youth for health care, public safety, information technology, trades, and entrepreneurial opportunities. Bond dollars will allow us to build the facilities and provide modern equipment for the Academies of the Southwest Valley.

## FUN FACT!



Unified Sports brings together athletes with and without intellectual disabilities on the same team. Each of our campuses has Unified Sports teams through our Exceptional Student Services department. These games are fan favorites and nearly always sell out!



Special Olympics



FOR FACTUAL INFORMATION, SCAN THE QR CODE.