PUSD PAGE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Newsletter

December 2025



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Vision

A community of learners who direct our collective actions and resources toward the unique learning needs of every child in order for all students to become college and career ready and successful in a global society.

Motto

Collectively Committed to Every Student, Every Day, Every Minute.



Mission

Our schools are passionate about the learning-for-all mission and understand that every student matters. We are responsible and accountable for the education of every student that walks through our doors every day.

Manson Mesa High School Receives Alt-A Rating



For the second year in a row, the Arizona Dept. of Education has rated Manson Mesa High School with an Alt-A rating.

Manson Mesa High School falls under the alternative school model, which has different standards than a regular high school. ADE looks at Manson Mesa's proficiency rate for ELA and math, but a bigger percentage of the rating is based on growth toward graduation, which is a metric of credits earned, on-track status, and academic persistence.

Manson Mesa High School principal, Dr. Trina Hubbell, is very proud of the work her staff performs and the progress and growth of its students.

"The success of Manson Mesa High School can be attributed to our commitment to focus on relationships before rigor, ensuring every student feels known, valued and supported, our grading practices emphasize growth and mastery, not compliance, allowing students to learn from mistakes and take owndership of their progress," said Dr. Hubbell. "We connect instruction to real-world relevance giving students a sense of purpose in their learning. Equity drives our decisions—we remove systemic barriers and adapt our practices so that every student has a fair opportunity to succeed.

"Ultimately, our A–F grade reflects not just test scores, but a culture built on belonging, empowerment, and authentic learning."

We felt like it was the perfect opportunity to sit down with Dr. Hubbell and find out more about the school's philosophy and vision.

1. How does Manson Mesa High School define "success" beyond the traditional A–F grading system?

At Manson Mesa High School, success is defined by student growth, belonging, and purpose—not just letter grades. While the A–F system provides one external measure, we focus on how well students develop skills like self-management, critical thinking, and perseverance. Success means students feel known, valued, and empowered to reach their goals, both academically and personally.

2. In what ways does your school ensure that grades reflect learning, not compliance?

See MMHS pg.11

Symond Martin & Cross Country Team Are State Champions!









CAVE CREEK, Ariz. – Page High School senior Symond Martin is the Division III cross-country state champion!

He finished with a time of 15:27.7, 16 seconds ahead of the second-place finisher. Martin ran a 4:53.1 first mile, which made the crowd gasp when the announcer announced it over the loudspeaker. He was runner-up at the state championship the last two years.

"It felt great, since I got second the last two years," he said.

The state championship wasn't the final race of the season for Martin; he is preparing to run in the NXR Southwest the week after and was hoping he wouldn't have to go all out in the state championship so his recovery time before NXR would be easier and quicker.

"The plan going into state was to run to win, but not go all out or give too much energy so I'll be able to go all out in the NXR Southwest race," he said.

The team also took the state championship. It was the team's fourth state championship in a row, and its 21st state title overall. They have won the state title ten out of the last 12 years.

In the best race of his life, Nyall Prather placed third (15:48.70), passing six runners in the last mile.

Max Martin placed 10th (16:13.0), Maximus Reid placed 19th (16:44.9), Desmond Goldtooth placed 22nd (16:50.7), Jaiden Jordan placed 27th (16:58.0) and Justin Rivers placed 34th (17:06.4). All the Page runners posted their career fastest times during Saturday's championship race.

This year's Runnin' Devils team was expected to have a tremendous season as all the runners from last year's championship team returned this year. They also added Max Martin, who is a freshman.

The Runnin' Devils simply dominated the competition, finishing an astonishing 67 points ahead of second-place team, Rio Rico. The Runnin' Devils, in fact, posted the fastest time of ANY team this year, regardless of division, with 136 points. The next closest team, Highland High School,









had 223 points and the third fastest team this year, Flagstaff High School, had 239 points. This year's Runnin' Devils team has the fifth highest score/fastest time in state history, regardless of division. This year's Runnin' Devils team time was the fastest time of any previous Sand Devils cross country team, which is saying a lot given the program's deep championship legacy.

Setting a new record for the fastest time in team history was one of the team's goals.

"We are the favorites going into state, but our goal is a little bit higher this year," said cross country assistant coach Jonathon Prather in August, just as the season was starting. "We have an incredibly powerful team coming in this season, so the next question for us and for legacy is where are we going to be on the All-Time list."

When the final Runnin' Devil crossed the finish at state, Coach Prather was ecstatic with the race results.

"It was an incredible effort," he said. "Just how smart they ran, and the power they showed. We didn't really start racing until the 1.5 or 2 mile mark. With a mile left to go, is when we started to race. That's when we started to pull on people, that's when we started to move on people. We owned that

See RUN pg. 12



Flag Football Advances to Semi-Finals During Team-Building Year









The Sand Devils flag football team had an amazing season this year, advancing as far as the semi-finals before being eliminated by Heritage Academy 27-0 last Saturday in Phoenix.

The Sand Devils advanced to the semi-finals after defeating Arizona Lutheran Academy 7-0 a few days earlier.

The Sand Devils knew they would have to play the best game of their season if they wanted to get the win against Heritage Academy, the number 1-seeded team in their division.

When the Sand Devils took the field Saturday, the weather was overcast with temperatures in the 70s; very pleasant conditions for a football game. The team was greeted by 40 to 50 Sand Devils fans who had traveled five hours from Page to cheer them on. Despite the 27-0 final score, the Sand Devils actually played a great game, much better than the final score would indicate.

The flag football team had an overall record of 9-5, 5-1 in region. They were also region champs.

"We had a beautiful season," said flag football head coach, Dakota Richardson. "We had a lot of commitment this year. It was great watching all the improvement the girls made this year."

Sand Devils quarterback and team captain, Traidyn Sutherland, enjoyed the season.

"The season was great!" she said after Saturday's game. "It was super-fun. It was really refreshing to see all the girls get out. All of them worked so hard, and we were all working













together."

Head Coach Dakota Richardson has done an excellent job building the flag football program. Last year was the program's first year. None of his players had played football before and the first year of the program had a big learning curve as players learned fundamentals of the game.

One of Coach Richardson's big focuses this season was strong team cohesion, and he incorporated numerous activities off the field to help reach those objectives. One of those activities was attending an all-girls football camp. Other team-building activities included doing several community service projects for the National Park Service and the City of Page.

"A lot of that outside work contributed to our success on the field," said Coach Richardson. "One of our big goals this year was to set the foundation for the team to build on for years to come, and we accomplished that."

"All my players come from all different sports," said Coach Richardson. "Some came from basketball, some from soccer and some from softball and they weren't used to playing with each other. A lot of them hadn't played together since they were in city youth league. I feel like all the extra stuff we did on the side really helped us build into one team. I feel like we were a flag football team at the end of the season."

The assistant coach was Erinn Benally.

PUSD Teachers, Admins Earn Advanced Degrees

In the past year, several PUSD teachers and administrators have earned Master's or Doctorate degrees. Because of the high level of effort and dedication required to accomplish such a large goal, we wanted to highlight our teachers and administrators who have achieved a very lofty goal.

Wendy Gilbert



When did you receive you master's degree or doctorate?
July 2023

From what university did you receive your degree?
Grand Canyon University

What is your degree?
Master of Education in Educational Administration

How will your degree improve or advance your career?
I was able to advance from the position of Instructional Improvement Facilitator to Assistant Principal.

Taylor Oneal

When did you receive you master's degree or doctorate?
August 2025

From what university did you receive your degree?
Gettysburg College partnered with Gilder-Lehrman Institute

What is your degree?
Master of Arts in American History

How will your degree improve or advance your career?
My degree has deepened my understanding and provided me with new knowledge about the short history of the United States of America. It has also improved my historical skills through frequent practice throughout each semester.

It will help me be more informed when teaching my students the fine details of history.

How have you incorporated knowledge or skills from your degree in your classroom?

The research and writing process has been implemented in my classes since I began the program.

Dr. Anne Martin



When did you receive you master's degree or doctorate?
December 2024

From what university did you receive your degree?
Oakland City University in Oakland City, Indiana

What is your degree?
Educational Doctorate degree with an emphasis in the Superintendency

How will your degree improve or advance your career?
My degree allows me to meet educational requirements for executive leadership positions such as a district superintendent or leader in higher education. Within my first year of coursework, I met the requirements for an AZ superintendent's license, which I now hold. My degree also provided me with a high level of research writing skills and experience. I apply these skills to my decision making processes aimed at managing the change necessary to meet the standards of high-quality schooling for our community's students.



Ben Dalton



When did you receive you master's degree or doctorate?
Summer 2025

From what university did you receive your degree?
Mississippi State University

What is your degree?
Master of Science in General Biology

How will your degree improve or advance your career?
I can also once again teach at Coconino Community College here in Page along with teaching at the high school.

How will you incorporate knowledge or skills from you degree in your classroom?
My degree allows me to offer Dual Enrollment courses for my students at no cost. They can take College Biology DE for 8 credits or College Environmental Science DE for 4 credits. I am able to teach them college level content with high school level relational capacity, care, and support.

Julia Redman



When did you receive you master's degree or doctorate?
December 2021

From what university did you receive your degree?
Southern Utah University

What is your degree?
Master's of Education in Curriculum and Instruction

How will your degree improve or advance your career?
My degree helped advance my career by introducing me to the latest educational research and science backed instructional practices. It also gave me the opportunity to conduct my own practitioner research within my own classroom to find ways to best meet the needs of my students.

How have you incorporated this in your classroom?
I've been able to apply science backed instructional practices rather than focusing only on the educational fads that come and go every couple of years. I've since incorporated things like the science of reading, culturally responsive teaching, and brain-based learning.

Julianne Hatt



When did you receive you master's degree or doctorate?
June 2025

From what university did you receive your degree?
Grand Canyon University

What is your degree?
Master's of Chemistry Education

How will your degree improve or advance your career?
It will allow me to offer college-level chemistry classes to my students.

How have you incorporated this in your classroom?
had many lesson plans altered by what I learned and have done some special games to help students learn faster and better. I went to an MIT training on we the summer and also learned to make educational games along with my extra knowledge from my master's have made a difference already in my class.

Way to go Wendy, Anne, Ben, Julia, Taylor and Julianne!

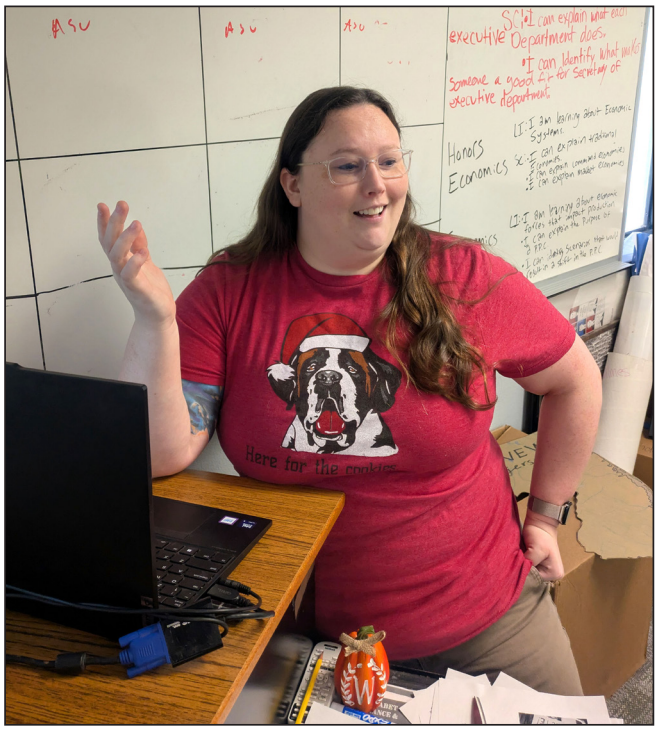
We recognize your many hours, dedication and sacrifice to achieve your ambitious goals.

Congratulations!

Rachel Willson Attends Constitution Conference

There are few things Rachel Willson is more passionate about than American law and the U.S. Constitution. So when she had an opportunity to attend a conference about the Constitution in the very place where it happened she jumped at the chance.

Willson teaches the U.S. Constitution, and Economics at Page High School. She particularly loves teaching the Constitution.



"It's my favorite," she said. "My area of expertise is political science, specifically American government. I have spent a lot of time – specifically in grad school – researching the Constitution and Constitutional law. I honestly probably would have gone to law school if I could just study the law without having to practice law."

Willson has a Master's Degree in political science.

In early November, she attended a three-day conference in Philadelphia, hosted by the National Constitution Center. The focus of this particular conference was Native Americans in the Constitution.

More than 400 teachers applied to attend the conference. Willson was one of 16 teachers selected. Travel, hotel and meals were all paid for by the National Constitution Center.

"I learned a lot!" she said.

"When you read through the Constitution, Native Americans are only mentioned twice, and not in a way that gives very much information. Living where we do, I really felt like I didn't have much to go on if I wanted to teach about the Constitution and how it relates to different groups of people, specifically Native Americans, when I know that's something most of our students care about. And I know it's easier to get interested in something if you feel some sort of personal connection to it.

"That was one of the reasons I applied; because I wanted to have more information so I could make things more relevant for my students."

Classes and sessions were taught by experts on various Constitution-related subjects. Some of the presenters were legal experts who have studied legal cases with current tribes, as well has historians who have studied treaties and cases from the past, and attorneys who have argued on Native American rights in front of the Supreme Court.

Part of the conference included a session about boarding schools and the affects that they had on the Native Americans who attended them. Most of the Willson's fellow teachers attending the conference were from areas where boarding schools didn't happen, or didn't happen on a large scale. She was glad it was included in the conference to help awareness of that era grow.

"Hopefully it becomes a more well-known thing that it was very real, it had a huge impact on native communities and it wasn't that long ago," Willson said. "I really like that they incorporated it in."

Page High School Principal, Leigh Guenther, is excited to see how Miss Willson incorporates her new knowledge into her already-info-packed curriculum.

"Miss Willson is a very knowledgeable teacher, and she is passionate about her content area," said Mr. Guenther. "She does a really nice job with our seniors in their Constitution and economics classes.

"Our students will directly benefit from the knowledge that she gained at this conference," said Mr. Guenther. "This will add more tools to her toolbox."

The conference also included a lot extra-curriculars for the conference-goers, as well as built-in free time, which Willson – an avid history buff – took full advantage of. She visited The Liberty Bell, and Independence Hall.

The hotel was located in Philadelphia's Historic District. Benjamin Franklin is buried in a cemetery right across the street from the hotel, and during one of her breaks, Willson



walked over and saw it. It surprised her.

"It was very cool, because his grave is very normal," she said. "He was such an important figure, but his grave is just a slab of marble maybe a little bit bigger than the rest, but it wasn't tall or crazy. All it said was his name and his wife's name. I thought that was really fascinating. It was really powerful."

One of Willson's favorite side quests was visiting The Constitution Center, which includes exhibits of the amendments for the abolishment of slavery, and women's suffrage. One room, called the Signer's Hall contains life-size bronze statues of all the people who signed the Constitution. Visitors are allowed to walk among the statues and get a feel for how it may have felt to mingle with America's Found Fathers.

"It was really cool," said Willson. "I was kind of surprised by how short some of them were. Some weren't any taller than I am, and I'm five-four. Most of them were my height, or slightly taller."

There were a few moments that were kind of surreal, when Willson would pause and acknowledge that she was standing in one of the most important places in American history.

"I know that a lot of it happened here, but it's not necessarily about the place where it happened; it's more about all the different places involved in the creation of it, and what it meant to different states and different people and how it has evolved over time.

"The Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights aren't just important to our country's history but the world's history.

Willson says she will begin incorporating what she learned at the conference into her lesson plans as soon as next week, and will add a lot more into future lessons plans.

"This is our law of the land. Everything has to answer to the Constitution. Whether a law is written as the state level, national level or local level, if it disagrees with what the Constitution says, the Constitution wins. Knowing what the Constitution says, knowing what the Bill of Rights says, and knowing what our rights as American citizens are is important to being an informed citizen.

"The better we know these things and understand them, the better informed decisions we can make and better engage in our civic duties in a more educated way."

Navajo Taco Day at Page High School















PUSD celebrated Native American Heritage Month in November. The District's Indian Education Committee, UNITY Club, and Navajo Language classes organized a lot of great activities and events happening in November to honand celebrate PUSD's many native students.

Chartwells also got involved, making Navajo Tacos for one of its lunches. Held outside at the Page High School courtyard, the lunch also featured drummers, singers and hoop dancers from Red Heritage who performed for students, teachers and staff.

It was such an amazing time!

We prioritize mastery over task completion. Teachers design assessments that measure understanding rather than point accumulation. Students are encouraged to revise work, reflect on feedback, and demonstrate growth. Grades represent what students know and can do, not whether they turned something in on time. This shift from compliance to competency supports authentic learning.

3. How do strong relationships between staff and students contribute to the success recognized in your A–F letter grade?

Our relationships are the foundation of everything we do. Every student has at least one trusted adult who checks in regularly, providing both academic and emotional support. When students feel connected, they engage more deeply in learning and take ownership of their progress. That sense of belonging directly contributes to improved attendance, behavior, and academic outcomes—factors that impact our overall school performance.

4. How do you cultivate a sense of belonging and psychological safety that supports both academic and personal growth?

We intentionally create a culture where students feel safe to take risks, make mistakes, and learn from them. Staff use restorative practices to build trust and repair harm, rather than punish. Our small learning environments ensure that every student is seen and supported. This emotional safety allows students to show up authentically and invest in their learning.

5. What does equity look like in grading and assessment at Manson Mesa High School?

Equity means grades reflect mastery, not privilege. We don't penalize students for circumstances outside their control. Instead, we focus on clear learning targets and multiple ways to show understanding. Teachers provide feedback and opportunities for reassessment. This approach honors individual growth and ensures that every student's grade communicates what they've actually learned.

6. How do you measure student growth and learning in a way that honors individuality and strengths?

We use multiple measures—academic data, student reflections, and teacher observations—to capture a full picture of learning. Growth is celebrated individually; progress is as important as proficiency. We look for evidence of learning that shows persistence, curiosity, and creativity, not just test performance.

7. What practices or cultural beliefs sustain your success and ensure continuous improvement?

Our culture is grounded in relationships, reflection, and relevance. Staff engage in continuous professional learning around equity and humanized practices. We use data as a mirror, not a hammer—to inform and improve, not to judge. By keeping our focus on people first and systems second, we sustain growth and collective success.

8. How do humanized education values show up in your data conversations and school improvement planning?

In our data meetings, we start with stories, not numbers. We ask, "Who are our students behind the data?" and "What support do they need to thrive?" Humanized education reminds us that each data point represents a person. This lens keeps our improvement efforts compassionate, student-centered, and deeply connected to purpose.

Staff Appreciation Message

Our staff are the heart of everything we do. Their dedication and commitment to being trauma-informed, culturally responsive, and focused on growth and mastery rather than compliance make all the difference in our students' success. Every day, they show compassion, patience, and purpose—creating spaces where students feel seen, valued, and supported. Their work goes beyond instruction; they build relationships, nurture resilience, and model what it means to be lifelong learners.

Because of their unwavering commitment, our school continues to thrive as a safe, inclusive, and empowering learning community where every student has the opportunity to grow and achieve.

What indicators are included?

For alternative high schools, the model typically includes these indicators (among possibly others):

- Proficiency on state assessments in ELA, mathematics.

- Growth to graduation (sometimes termed "Growth to Graduation"): measuring the school's success in moving students toward graduation (or credit accumulation) over time.

- Academic persistence / credits earned / on-track graduation: for alternative schools especially, the model focuses on metrics like credits earned, on-track status, academic persistence of students in the alternative setting.

- English Learner (EL) proficiency and growth: the performance and growth of English Learner students toward proficiency in English.

- Participation rate / N-size / data inclusion criteria: There are minimum student counts (n-size) and participation thresholds to ensure valid calculations.

RUN from pg. 2

last mile. That's where our runners just dominated. Everybody had monster PRs (Personal Record) compared to last year."

Going into the state championship race, cross-country head coach Tim Martin told his runners to "be relaxed, be confident and be dangerous. That's our saying." At this point in the season, at this point in their running careers there's not really much last-minute advice to give them, said Coach Martin.

"They all know what they need to do to run their best race," he said. "All that was left to do was go out and do it. And they did it All of them executed well. It was awesome!"

The strategy for Coaches Martin and Prather was a season-long strategy, which was to peak during the week of the state championships.

"We accomplished that," said Coach Prather. "We peaked at the right time, at the end of the season."

The boys cross-country team were also the 2025 3A North champions. Symond Martin was named 3A North Male Runner of the Year, and Coach Tim Martin was named 3A North Coach of the Year.

Symond has committed to Northern Arizona University to run cross-country and track.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Are you concerned about your child's development or progress in school?

Some children have difficulty learning or achieving development milestones. If you know a child who has a disability or one you suspect may have problems with learning, communication, vision, hearing, behavior, or motor control and coordination, ask for help.

Who can you ask for help?

Page Unified School District provides AzFIND referral services and/ or screenings to children birth through age 21 who may have a delay or disability. To refer a child contact Jill Anderson/Rene Frank at 928-608-4176. Anyone can refer a child; a parent, teacher, counselor, friend, relative, or the student. All referrals are considered confidential.

AZ FIND
FIND • HELP • SUCCEED

OCTOBER

Students of the Month



Cameron Endischee
Page Preschool



Riley Yellowman
Page Early Childhood Learning Center



Lily Bigthumb
Page Elementary



Raine Bennett
PHS Jr. High



Cooper Begay
PHS Sr. High



Francine Tsinnijinnie
Manson Mesa High School

Employees of the Month

Certified Employee of the Month

October 2025



Ben Dalton

Classified Employee of the Month

October 2025



Heather Saavedra