

AGUAFRIA
HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
PRESS RELEASE

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Agua Fria High School District Campuses Celebrate Academy Selection Day

(AVONDALE, Ariz. - Feb. 4, 2026) Agua Fria High School District campuses recently hosted Academy Selection Day celebrations, allowing students across the District to commit to their chosen academies and career pathways officially. This year, each campus facilitated its own celebration, creating a more personalized and campus-centered experience for students.

Academy Selection Day is designed to build excitement, foster a sense of belonging, and celebrate the future journeys of students as they take an important step in shaping their academic and career paths. Across all campuses, students came together with peers and staff to mark the milestone through school-specific activities that highlighted pride, connection, and school culture.

Academy Selection Day allows students to explore specialized learning pathways through three Academies: Academy of Creative Arts & Media, Academy of Business, Design & Technology, and Academy of Science, Service & Innovation. The event allows students to engage with academy staff, experience hands-on activities, and gain insight into programs that align with their interests, strengths, and future goals.

Barbara May, Academy Coach, said, "As an academy team, our campus had so much fun planning an event to celebrate all our Freshmen and their transition into their next step to be college and career ready. For me, the best part was the ability to come together to celebrate our Freshmen. We had all our principals on the field, many staff members, and over 100 student clubs or activities participants helping to make the event happen."

During the celebrations, students connected with academy coaches, pathway teachers, and campus leaders while hearing messages of encouragement from their principals. Avery Lewis, a 9th grader at Verrado High School, said, "I thought that it was really cool and fun, and I loved the way they made it a big celebration. It was more special than just sending an email. I loved being able to be around my friends to find out we all had the same pathway".

Colby Lewis-Turk, also a 9th grader at VHS, shared, "I thought it was very exciting, and I loved the different ways we were cheered on, the countdown, and the cookies."

Many campuses incorporated music, games, and visual displays of the academy colors to unite students within their cohorts and build excitement for the journey ahead. Students were encouraged to remain curious, embrace new opportunities, and fully engage in their academy experiences.

“Academy Selection Day is about more than choosing a pathway,” said Superintendent Mark Yslas. “It’s about helping students see themselves as part of something bigger, building confidence, identity, and excitement as they take meaningful steps toward their futures.”

The Academies of the Southwest Valley serve as a cornerstone of the District’s commitment to preparing students to enroll in college, enlist in the military, join the workforce, or pursue entrepreneurship. By offering relevant, student-centered learning experiences, the Agua Fria High School District continues to ensure every student has access to opportunity and real-world readiness.

For more information on the Academies of the Southwest Valley, visit aguafria.org/academies.

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Agua Fria High School District was established in 1955. Today, the district serves the communities of Avondale, Buckeye, Goodyear, and Litchfield Park, with six high schools: Agua Fria, Canyon View, Desert Edge, Goodyear, Millennium, Verrado, and Agua Fria Online. Additionally, the District offers two alternative programs: Coldwater Academy and New Directions. More information can be found at www.aguafria.org