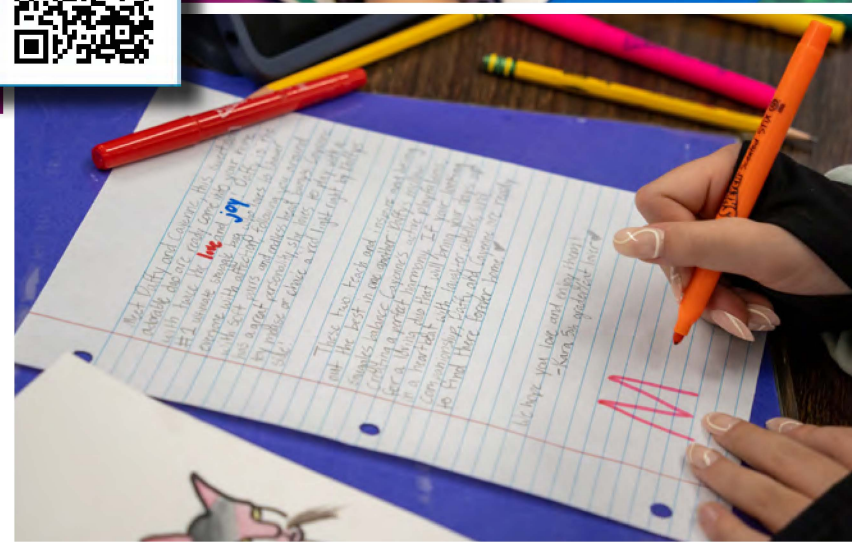
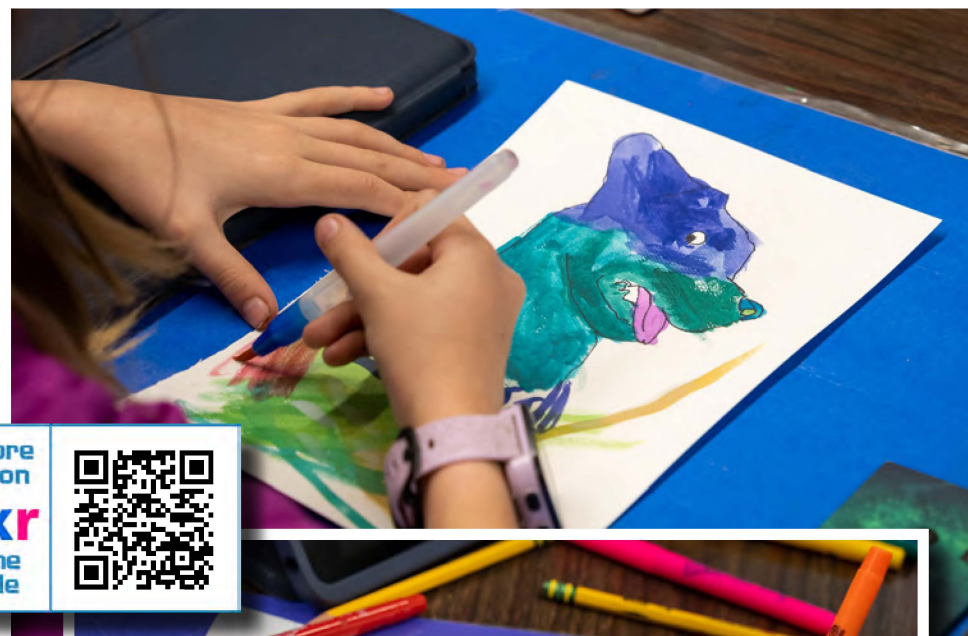




View more
photos on
flickr
Scan the
QR Code



Using Art to Help Animals Find Homes

December 18, 2024

Fourth and fifth graders at DeMiguel Elementary School are putting their creativity to work to support local animal shelters! Under the guidance of their art teacher, Ms. Autumn, students created portraits of shelter animals and wrote persuasive paragraphs encouraging their adoption.

These thoughtful and heartfelt artworks will be displayed at local shelters, helping animals catch the eyes of potential adopters. As a special touch, adopters will receive the portraits as keepsakes to celebrate their new furry family members.

Amazing work, DeMiguel Lobos, for using your talents to make a difference in the community. 🌲

IN THIS ISSUE



FHS Welding Team Wins Gold...
Page 3



Chee Represents FUSD in
London... Page 6



New Carpet Installation at FUSD...
Page 10



A message from our SUPERINTENDENT

I understand that recent changes to immigration laws and practices may be causing fear and anxiety within our communities. I want to assure you that the Flagstaff Unified School District (FUSD) remains steadfast in its commitment to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment for all students. Our district is actively monitoring these changes, seeking legal guidance, and preparing our staff on how to respond.

FUSD will continue to partner with local organizations and groups to provide resources for our immigrant families and communicate with our families and staff as updated information becomes available. I encourage us to continue to treat each other with the respect and

dignity we all deserve. Thank you for the support of our schools and the students we serve.

Please also take note of the changes to the Arrival and Dismissal times for FUSD schools that will go into effect for the 2025-2026 school year. These changes have been communicated to families and staff, and are highlighted in this newsletter. I believe that by addressing the well-being needs of our students, the Flagstaff Unified School District (FUSD) can build healthier and more resilient school communities. I appreciate your understanding and cooperation as we implement this important change next school year. 🌲



Photo, back row L-R: FUSD Governing Board Clerk Aaron Cirzan, Board President Erik Sather, and Member Carolyn Kidd. Front row L-R: Members Kortney Zesiger and Melissa Kirk.

Celebrating School Board Recognition Month

January 22, 2025

January is School Board Recognition Month, and FUSD is proud to honor the incredible dedication of our Governing Board members. We extend heartfelt thanks to President Erik Sather, Clerk Aaron Cirzan, and Members Carolyn Kidd, Melissa

Kirk, and Kortney Zesiger for their leadership, vision, and commitment to student success. Your efforts ensure a bright future for public education in Flagstaff—thank you for all you do! 🌲

ADMINISTRATION

MICHAEL PENCA
Superintendent

LANCE HUFFMAN
Assistant Superintendent of
Curriculum & Instruction

GOVERNING BOARD

ERIK SATHER
President

AARON CIRZAN
Clerk

KORTNEY ZESIGER
Member

CAROLYN KIDD
Member

MELISSA KIRK
Member

CONTACT

FLAGSTAFF UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
3285 East Sparrow Avenue
Flagstaff, AZ 86004

(928) 527-6000 | www.fusd1.org





Flagstaff High School Welding Team Wins Gold at Welding Thunder Competition

December 1, 2024

Congratulations to the Flagstaff High School Welding Team on their GOLD medal win at the 12th Annual Welding Thunder Team Fabrication Competition held November 22-23, 2024, at the West-MEC Buckeye Campus! Competing against welding teams from across the state, our talented students showcased their skills by designing and fabricating the "Ultimate Welding Table," this year's competition theme.

Their outstanding craftsmanship and teamwork earned them the top spot, bringing home the gold medal for Flagstaff High School.

Welding Thunder, hosted by West-MEC and officially sanctioned by Welders Without Borders, invites CTE welding programs to participate in a collaborative challenge that highlights students' technical expertise, creativity, and teamwork.

Way to go, Welding Eagles, for making Flagstaff High School and the community proud. 🌲



Cromer Elementary Partners with Summit Fire Department for Fire Safety Awareness

December 1, 2024

In October 2024, Cromer Elementary School partnered with the Summit Fire Department to teach students about the importance of fire safety. Firefighters visited classrooms to deliver essential lessons on fire safety, how smoke detectors work, and what to do in case of an emergency.

Students also had the exciting opportunity to get an up-close look

at the fire truck and firefighting gear, bringing the lessons to life in a fun and engaging way.

A special thank you to the Summit Fire Department for their dedication to keeping our community informed, prepared, and safe. We are so grateful for this partnership, and for the lasting impact it has made on our students. 🌲

Chemistry Meets Culinary Arts

A Molecular Gastronomy Collaboration at Coconino High School

January 25, 2025

At Coconino High School, chemistry and culinary arts came together in an extraordinary collaboration that brought science, art, and cooking to life. This innovative project, led by CIT & AP Chemistry teacher Amanda Harrison and Advanced Culinary teacher Janeille Buckley, introduced students to the fascinating world of molecular gastronomy—specifically the spherification of liquids, the process behind the creation of “bursting boba” and “fruit caviar.”

Supported by the ASU Arizona STEM Acceleration Project (ASAP), this project showcased the interconnectedness of chemistry, culinary, engineering, and mathematics. Harrison has been an ASAP Fellow for the past two years, receiving \$2,000 annually to fund creative, STEM-based projects. These funds made it possible to purchase equipment and consumables for the collaboration, ensuring its continuation for years to come.

The project paired Harrison’s Honors CIT Chemistry students with Buckley’s Culinary students in a two-day hands-on learning experience. Chemistry students researched and presented the science behind spherification, while culinary students taught their peers about kitchen safety, sanitation, and the recipe itself. Working in seven groups, nearly 70 students—46 chemistry students, 19 culinary students, and student aides—transformed the kitchen into a bustling laboratory of creativity. Using flavors like Ginger Ale, Dr. Pepper, pomegranate, orange juice, and orange white tea and experimenting with cherry juice as a test flavor, students measured, mixed, and dripped solutions into a

setting bath to create edible spheres. On the final day, they enjoyed their creations with ice cream and soda while reflecting on what went well and brainstorming improvements for future experiments.

The success of this project has paved the way for an ongoing partnership between chemistry and culinary classes at Coconino High School. The grant funding from ASAP provided essential supplies and professional development for Harrison and ensured that the collaboration would continue annually with the support of Career and Technical Education (CTE) funding.

Last summer, Harrison presented the Chemistry—Let’s Lick the Spoon project at the ASU STEM Acceleration Project Conference, sharing lessons learned and best practices with fellow educators. The lesson plan is now published on the ASU website as part of their open-source STEM resources, allowing other teachers to bring this interdisciplinary experience to their classrooms.

This unique collaboration has shown students how chemistry and culinary arts are deeply intertwined, inspiring them to explore the practical applications of science in everyday life.

“Our students loved this activity and the opportunity to see how culinary and chemistry are really related,” said Harrison. 🌲

Photos, top: Coconino High School chemistry and culinary arts students work together to make bursting boba as part of their molecular gastronomy collaboration. Bottom: The finished product of the collaboration was boba. Pictured is orange juice flavored boba.





Kindergarten Registration Opens February 12, 2025

January 22, 2025

Flagstaff Unified School District (FUSD) is excited to announce that kindergarten registration for the 2025-2026 school year opens on Wednesday, February 12, 2025. All FUSD elementary schools will also host Kindergarten Open Houses throughout February. These open houses provide families with an excellent opportunity to tour the school, meet staff, and learn more about the kindergarten experience. Please contact your local school for specific dates and times of their open house events.

If you have a child entering kindergarten next school year, visit www.fusd1.org/kindergarten for detailed information and to register your child.

Kindergarten Eligibility

All children who turn five years old on or before August 31, 2025,

are eligible to enter kindergarten. Children who turn five in September may be considered for early entrance based on screening. To arrange a screening, contact the Educational Enrichment Department at (928) 527-6156. Additional details on Early Kindergarten Entrance can be found at <https://www.fusd1.org>.

Online Registration

Kindergarten registration for the 2025-2026 school year will be completed online via ParentVUE. To register, parents will need to provide several essential documents, including the child's birth certificate, a current immunization record signed by a healthcare provider, and a completed Pupil Registration Form. Proof of residency must also be submitted using the Arizona Residency Documentation Form, accompanied by items such as a driver's license, utility bill, or rental agreement. Additional required

forms include the Kindergarten Transportation Information, Student Health History, Primary Home Language Other than English Form, McKinney-Vento Form, Title VII Student Eligibility Certification, and the FUSD Student Emergency Information Card. For detailed instructions on how to register, please visit www.fusd1.org/onlineregistration.

KinderCamp

Families interested in giving their child a strong start in kindergarten should consider KinderCamp, a free program provided to qualifying families through United Way of Northern Arizona in partnership with local school districts. KinderCamp takes place in June and is designed to support students transitioning into kindergarten who have limited preschool experience or meet other eligibility criteria. The program helps children develop essential

skills such as following directions, cooperating with others, and becoming comfortable in a classroom setting. Parents frequently report a significant boost in their child's confidence and enthusiasm for starting school.

To have your child considered for KinderCamp, complete the interest form at <https://bit.ly/2025KinderCamp> and register your student for kindergarten by April 25, 2025. Notifications regarding KinderCamp approval will be emailed during the first week of May.

Need Assistance?

If you have questions about kindergarten registration, please contact your child's school site for support.

We look forward to welcoming your child to FUSD and partnering with you for a successful kindergarten journey. 🌲

Chee Represents FUSD at Prestigious Global Leadership Conference

January 16, 2025

Ryan Chee, principal of Leupp Elementary School, proudly represented the Flagstaff Unified School District (FUSD) at the International Successful School Principalship Project (ISSPP) Research-Practice Conference. This prestigious event took place in London, UK, from November 11-15, 2024, bringing together educators, researchers, and policymakers to explore the role of leadership in advancing educational equity and achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4—quality education for all.

Leupp Elementary School, located on the Navajo Nation, was one of only five schools worldwide selected for a UNESCO Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report case study. Chee was the sole school leader chosen to present on behalf of the selected schools, sharing innovative practices that blend Navajo traditions with modern education.

During his opening remarks, delivered in both English and Navajo, Chee captivated an audience of global policymakers and Ministers of Education.

"The world is in love with our language and culture," he said. "It was amazing to see how fascinated people were by Navajo traditions and how they connect to education."

The conference theme, Successful School Leadership for Sustainable Development, closely aligned with Chee's work at Leupp Elementary. Many of his students travel hours each day from remote areas, and he has implemented programs that emphasize academic achievement while honoring Navajo identity. Among his initiatives is the No Excuses college readiness program, which encourages students to pursue higher education, and the

Language and Leadership Academy, which fosters cultural preservation alongside leadership development.

Chee prioritizes college exposure from an early age, organizing elementary school visits to campuses like Northern Arizona University, where he is pursuing a doctorate in educational leadership.

"I want my students to see themselves on these campuses," he explained. "They need to understand that higher education is a real possibility for them."

Leupp Elementary's achievements have earned national and international recognition. The GEM Report highlighted its success in integrating language and culture with academic goals.

"The ISSPP and GEM Report validated the work we're doing," Chee said. "They've shown that cultural values and academic rigor can be successfully interwoven to achieve great outcomes."

At the ISSPP conference, Chee participated in several discussions, including a United Nations convening, where he addressed the importance of trust in leadership.

"Trust is the foundation of leadership," he said. "It allows principals to develop programs that align with their community's values and goals, ensuring better outcomes for students."

Chee also emphasized the role of community partnerships in student success. Leupp Elementary collaborates with the Winslow Indian Health Care Center, the Navajo Nation, and Northern Arizona University to provide extracurricular and cultural learning experiences. Programs funded by tax credit donations, including field trips and the Navajo Leadership Academy, further enhance students' education.

"These resources give our students

opportunities to learn and grow in ways that reflect who they are," he said.

Chee's experience at ISSPP reinforced the broader impact of strong school leadership.

"The main purpose of this event was to stress how critical leadership is for successful schools," he said. "It's not just about managing a school—it's about inspiring students, empowering teachers, and fostering a community that values education."

The conference concluded with Chee delivering the closing remarks in Navajo, a moment he described as a career highlight.

"Speaking in Navajo in front of Ministers of Education from around the world was a powerful experience," he shared. "It highlighted the significance of language and culture in education and the need to preserve them for future generations." Chee's participation at ISSPP not only showcased the exceptional work at



Leupp Elementary but also elevated FUSD's presence on the international stage. His leadership is an inspiring example of how culturally responsive education can transform students' lives and create lasting impacts in communities.

As FUSD celebrates Chee's achievements, it also reaffirms its commitment to fostering innovative leadership across all its schools. 🌲



Relocation Plans Take Shape for Kinsey Elementary School

January 27, 2025

Big changes are ahead for Kinsey Inquiry and Discovery School as the Flagstaff Unified School District (FUSD) prepares to relocate and rebuild the beloved school. Thanks to bond funding approved by the Flagstaff community, the new Kinsey Elementary will be constructed on a 12-acre site south of I-40 and west of South Lone Tree Road. The decision to move forward with the project comes after careful consideration of the current building's limitations and the need to create a modern, accessible, and safe environment for students, staff, and families.

The new location, owned by the Arizona Board of Regents for Northern Arizona University (NAU), presents an ideal setting for the future of Kinsey. Positioned conveniently near the Bow & Arrow Acres neighborhood and planned housing developments,

the site will offer improved access for many Kinsey families. The school will feature state-of-the-art classrooms and outdoor learning spaces designed to meet the highest standards of modern education. Enhanced traffic flow and pedestrian access at the new site will also provide increased safety for students and families, addressing concerns at the current location.

This project represents a collaborative effort between FUSD and NAU, with both organizations recognizing the mutual benefits of exchanging properties to advance their respective educational missions. An Intergovernmental Agreement outlining the exchange was presented to the FUSD Governing Board on December 10, 2024, and continues progressing through the approval process.

Although the project is still in its early stages, FUSD is committed to informing the community as plans

for the new Kinsey Elementary progress. Updates on the design and construction timeline will be shared in the coming months, and the district looks forward to celebrating the opening of the new school in the 2026-2027 school year.

Kinsey Inquiry and Discovery School has long been a cornerstone of the community, and this relocation ensures a future where it can continue to inspire and educate students in a modern, safe, and innovative environment. FUSD extends its gratitude to families, staff, and the entire community for their continued support as it builds a brighter future for Kinsey Elementary. 🌲



Join the Student Wellness Committee!

January 6, 2025

The Student Wellness Committee is looking for new members! This is a fantastic opportunity for FUSD staff and community members to contribute to the well-being of our students. The next meeting will be held on February 20, 2025, at 3:00 PM in the FUSD Boardroom.

If you're interested in joining or have any questions, please contact Steve Rhode at 928-527-6010. We'd love to have your voice on the committee. 🌲



FUSD 2025-2026 School Year Calendar Approved

January 29, 2025

The Flagstaff Unified School District (FUSD) Governing Board has officially approved the 2025-2026 school year calendar during its regular meeting on January 28, 2025. This calendar meets the state-mandated 180 days of instruction while incorporating key holidays, breaks, and professional development days to support both students and staff.

Highlights of the 2025-2026 School Year Calendar:

- **Staff In-Service/Work Days:**
July 29, 30, 31, and August 1, 2025
- **First Day of School:**
August 4, 2025
- **Holidays and Breaks (No School):**
Labor Day: September 1, 2025
Fall Break: October 10–13, 2025
Veterans Day: November 11, 2025
Thanksgiving Break: November 24–28, 2025 (entire week off)
Winter Break: December 22, 2025–January 2, 2026
Martin Luther King Jr. Day: January 19, 2026
Presidents' Day: February 16, 2026
Spring Break: March 9–13, 2026
- **Quarterly Dates:**
End of First Quarter: October 6, 2025
End of Second Quarter/Semester 1: December 19, 2025
End of Third Quarter: March 3, 2026
- **Parent-Teacher Conferences:**
October 7–9, 2025 (early release days)
March 4–6, 2026 (early release days)
- **Last Day of School: May 21, 2026**
- **Graduation and Teacher Work Day:** May 22, 2026

Make-up days, if necessary, will follow this order: April 20, 2026, and May 8, 2026.

The calendar is now available for viewing and download on the FUSD website in both English and Spanish.

We look forward to another successful school year and thank you for your continued support of FUSD students and staff. 🌲

FUSD to Adjust Arrival and Dismissal Times for 2025-2026 School Year

January 29, 2025

The Flagstaff Unified School District (FUSD) is set to adjust its school start and end times beginning with the 2025-2026 school year. This change, effective August 2025, is part of a district-wide effort to enhance student well-being and academic success.

Background

In April 2024, FUSD announced plans to modify the arrival and dismissal schedules for all schools. Key adjustments include earlier start and end times for elementary schools and later start and end times for middle and high schools.

The decision stems from research and community input, aiming to better align school schedules with the needs of students, families, and staff.

Why Change School Times?

FUSD is committed to prioritizing the health and success of its students. In recent years, a rise in youth mental health challenges—including depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation—has highlighted the need for proactive measures. While no single action can address all these challenges, adjusting school start times is an evidence-based step in the right direction.

Studies show that later start times for adolescents can positively impact their health and academic outcomes. The benefits include improved focus and academic performance—adequate sleep supports cognitive function, attention, and learning; enhanced physical and mental health—quality sleep is linked to reduced stress, better emotional regulation, and overall physical health; and promoted well-being—later start times contribute to a more positive school environment and community spirit.

This initiative reflects FUSD's dedication to fostering supportive, nurturing environments where students thrive.

Decision-Making Process

The Superintendent convenes an annual Calendar Committee, which includes representatives from various roles within the district, including staff, parents, and administrators. Last school year, the committee reviewed research and gathered input through surveys completed by over 1,900 families and staff members.

Survey feedback revealed strong opinions on both sides of the issue, but the majority supported flipping arrival and dismissal schedules. The Calendar Committee's recommendation was endorsed by the district's Negotiations Committee and approved by the Superintendent and Governing Board.

The delayed implementation until August 2025 allows FUSD to prepare for

Continued on page 9 / Arrival and Dismissal

Arrival and Dismissal / From Page 8

potential impacts on athletics, transportation, childcare, and staff schedules. The district remains committed to minimizing disruptions and ensuring a smooth transition.

New Schedules for the 2025-2026 School Year

To support a seamless transition, FUSD is sharing the new arrival and dismissal times in advance:

School	Arrival	Dismissal	Early Release
Cromer Elementary	7:50 a.m.	2:20 p.m.	11:35 a.m. (Friday)
DeMiguel Elementary	7:50 a.m.	2:20 p.m.	11:35 a.m. (Friday)
Killip Elementary	7:50 a.m.	2:20 p.m.	11:35 a.m. (Friday)
Kinsey Elementary	7:50 a.m.	2:20 p.m.	11:35 a.m. (Friday)
Knoles Elementary	7:50 a.m.	2:20 p.m.	11:35 a.m. (Friday)
Leupp Elementary	8:30 a.m.	3:00 p.m.	12:45 p.m. (Friday)
Marshall Elementary	7:50 a.m.	2:20 p.m.	11:35 a.m. (Friday)
Puente de Hozho Elementary	9:00 a.m.	3:30 p.m.	12:45 p.m. (Friday)
Sechrist Elementary	7:50 a.m.	2:20 p.m.	11:35 a.m. (Friday)
Thomas Elementary	7:50 a.m.	2:20 p.m.	11:35 a.m. (Friday)
Mount Elden Middle School	9:00 a.m.	3:30 p.m.	12:45 p.m. (Friday)
Sinagua Middle School	9:00 a.m.	3:30 p.m.	12:45 p.m. (Friday)
Coconino High School	8:50 a.m.	3:20 p.m.	12:35 p.m. (Friday)
Flagstaff High School	8:50 a.m.	3:20 p.m.	12:35 p.m. (Friday)
Summit High School	9:00 a.m.	3:30 p.m.	12:45 p.m. (Friday)

FACTS Program Availability

The FACTS program will continue to provide before- and after-school care for elementary students. Hours of service will remain the same, offering safe, enriching opportunities from 6:45 a.m. until 20 minutes before school starts and after school until 6:00 p.m.

Athletics and Clubs

The district is committed to maintaining robust athletic and extracurricular offerings for middle and high school students. Practices will generally conclude about an hour later than before, with some high school practices potentially scheduled in the mornings. Activity buses will remain available for designated rural routes Monday through Thursday afternoons.

Moving Forward

This change marks an important step toward fostering healthier and more resilient school communities. FUSD appreciates the understanding and cooperation of families and staff as the district implements this schedule adjustment.

For additional details, please contact your school administration or visit the district website. Together, we look forward to a successful transition in August 2025. 🌲

Klopfenstein Named Cameron Impact Scholar

January 27, 2025

Coconino High School senior Elena Klopfenstein has been named a 2025 Cameron Impact Scholar, an honor awarded to only 15 high school seniors across the nation. This prestigious, full-tuition, merit-based scholarship recognizes students who demonstrate excellence in academics, leadership, extracurricular involvement, and service to their communities.

The Cameron Impact Scholarship, established by the Bryan Cameron Education Foundation in 2015, supports extraordinary young leaders who are committed to making a meaningful impact in their communities and beyond. Recipients receive a four-year, full-tuition scholarship to a college or university of their choice, allowing them to pursue higher education without financial barriers. Elena has distinguished herself through her academic achievements, leadership roles, and dedication to service. Her commitment to making a positive difference aligns perfectly with the mission of the Cameron Impact Scholarship. She joins an elite group of scholars nationwide who are poised to influence the future through innovation, service, and leadership.

“We are incredibly proud of Elena and all that she has accomplished,” said Amie Lucas, Executive Director of the Bryan Cameron Education Foundation. “She has demonstrated a strong commitment to her



community and a passion for making a positive impact. We are excited to support her journey and future endeavors.”

Elena’s selection came after a rigorous application process that reviewed over 3,000 applicants from across the country. After multiple rounds of evaluations, she was chosen as one of the final 15 scholars

based on her leadership, community service, and academic excellence.

Applications for the 2026 Cameron Impact Scholarship will open on February 1, 2025. For more information about the scholarship and the Bryan Cameron Education Foundation, visit www.bryancameroneducationfoundation.org.

Congratulations to Elena Klopfenstein on this outstanding achievement. 🌲



New carpet at Sinagua Middle School.

New Carpet Installation at FUSD

January 28, 2025

As part of an ongoing effort to improve school facilities and provide a welcoming environment for students, staff, and families, Flagstaff Unified School District (FUSD) has been installing new carpeting in key areas of several schools. This project is funded through 2022 Bond dollars, with a total budget allocation of \$755,805.83 for flooring upgrades at Flagstaff High School, Sinagua Middle School, Thomas Elementary, and Summit High School.

The flooring improvements, approved by the FUSD Governing Board on June 25, 2024, include the replacement of outdated carpet and linoleum systems in high-traffic areas. The new carpet tiles, installed by Diversified Flooring Solutions (DFS), not only enhance durability but also incorporate school colors, adding a fresh and branded look to each campus. Unlike previous broadloom carpet installations,

these carpet tiles allow for easier maintenance and quick replacements when necessary.

According to Justin Nabors, FUSD's Director of Operations, the decision to replace carpets was based primarily on safety concerns. Schools with the oldest carpets—those posing potential trip hazards—were prioritized for installation. Additionally, schools with significantly stained or worn flooring were considered to ensure a cleaner and more polished appearance.

"So far, carpets have been installed at Flagstaff High, Sinagua, Thomas, and Summit, with three more schools planned for upgrades this summer," Nabors explained. "The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with students, staff, and families appreciating the improvements."

One notable design feature is the use of accent carpeting in school colors, which adds a unique touch

Continued on page 11 / Carpet



Marshall Elementary Construction Update

January 24, 2025

Progress on the new Marshall Elementary School is in full swing, with exciting milestones reached over the past two months. Construction Superintendent David Heckard and Flagstaff Unified School District's Director of Operations, Justin Nabors, recently shared updates on the project's advancements as crews work steadily through winter conditions.

At the north entrance of the school, construction on what is being called the "canyon" corridor is taking shape. This continuous hallway stretches from the north to the south end of the building, featuring high masonry walls and exposed sealed wood ceilings that will create a modern and open space. In the gymnasium, crews have completed pouring the slab-on-grade, along with the stage and ADA-accessible ramp, ensuring these key elements were in place before winter weather set in.

On the east side of Area B,

significant progress has been made with the installation of roof sheathing over glulam beams, trusses, and steel structures. With this foundational work complete, roofers are set to begin installing the final roofing in January. The design of Area B also incorporates a raked roofline with large south-facing windows that will allow ample natural light to illuminate the classrooms, creating an inviting learning environment for students.

Beyond the building itself, plans for the outdoor spaces are also coming together. The south side of the school will feature a playground area with a basketball court, four-square boxes, and a spacious grass playfield for students to enjoy. Meanwhile, crews are working diligently to install underground utilities, including APS primary lines and an eight-inch waterline, which will connect to the school's mechanical room. Interior construction is progressing

Continued on page 11 / Marshall

STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

FUSD's New Director of Operations

January 28, 2025

Flagstaff Unified School District is pleased to welcome Justin Nabors as the new Director of Operations. He steps into the role following the resignation of Justin DiNardi in December 2024.

Originally from Kansas City, Missouri, Justin moved to Phoenix after college, where he lived for eight years before relocating to Flagstaff. He has been with FUSD for over two years, bringing a diverse background in education, facilities management, and military service.

Before joining FUSD, Justin worked as a maintenance director at Aspire Transitional Care and previously served as a 5th-7th grade history and science teacher at a charter school. He holds a bachelor's degree in management, a project management

certification, and is currently pursuing his master's degree in business management.

As Director of Operations, Justin oversees transportation, custodial services, grounds, and maintenance for FUSD. His primary focus is aligning accountability measures with the district's strategic plan to enhance operations and support FUSD's vision.

Beyond work, Justin is an avid hiker and animal activist, often volunteering at animal shelters and sanctuaries. He also brings a strong background in service, having spent five years in the U.S. Marine Corps as a military police officer, including three years stationed in Japan and two years in Yuma, Arizona.

We are excited to have Justin leading our operations team,



ensuring our schools continue to thrive in a safe, well-maintained environment. 🌲

Carpet / From Page 10

to common areas. The new carpets have been installed primarily in hallways, entryways, and other high-traffic zones, rather than in individual classrooms.

Future carpet installations will continue to follow a needs-based assessment, prioritizing safety and facility wear over cosmetic updates. The next phase of installations will be determined based on evaluations conducted later this year.

For those interested in seeing the changes firsthand, Nabors recommends visiting Flagstaff High, Sinagua, Thomas, or Summit, where the transformations are most visible at main entrances and common walkways.

Through this initiative, FUSD continues its commitment to providing safe, clean, and visually appealing learning environments for all students. 🌲

Amber Nicole Munoz: A Passion for Education and Art

January 2, 2025

At Kinsey Elementary School, Amber Nicole Munoz has been making an impact since she joined the Flagstaff Unified School District (FUSD) in August 2024. Currently working as a custodian, Amber is preparing to transition into a new role as a paraprofessional in early 2025.

Her passion for education stems from her personal experiences as a student. Having been on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) herself, Amber understands the challenges students face and hopes to use her background to support those who struggle academically. Encouraged by staff at Kinsey, she has been shadowing in classrooms and is eager to start as a paraprofessional once she completes her CPR certification.

Beyond her role as a parapro,

Amber has set her sights on becoming a high school art teacher. A 2023 graduate of Flagstaff High School, she has always had a love for art and hopes to inspire students by providing them with a creative outlet.

"Art is a great way to distract your mind if you're not in a good place mentally," she said. "A lot of kids struggle in middle school, and I want to help them find something they love."

Amber plans to pursue her degree in education with a focus on arts and history at Northern Arizona University. Her journey from custodian to educator is a reflection of her dedication and passion for student success.

We look forward to seeing Amber's continued growth in FUSD and the positive impact she will have on students for years to come. 🌲



Marshall / From Page 10

as well, with teams working on mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and fire sprinkler systems. Interior block insulation and framing began in mid-January, signaling another phase of development.

As the project moves forward, cranes are currently on-site finalizing roof installation while construction teams continue enclosing the building. Work on utilities and interior systems will extend into February, keeping the project on track to provide Marshall Elementary School students with a state-of-the-art learning environment.

Stay tuned for more updates as we get closer to the completion of this exciting project. 🌲



3285 East Sparrow Avenue
Flagstaff, AZ 86004

(928) 527-6000
www.fusd1.org

FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



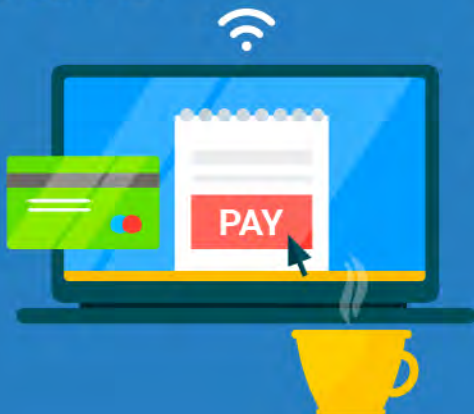
View more
photos on
flickr
Scan the
QR Code

Pay School Meals

Online or with the app

- ✓ Easy
- ✓ Fast
- ✓ Safe

MY
SCHOOL
BUCKS



FEBRUARY 2025

- | | |
|--|--|
| 2/4: Bond Oversight
Committee Meeting | 2/13: Kindergarten Open House
Marshall Elementary
Thomas Elementary |
| 2/5: Kindergarten Open House
Puente de Hózhó | 2/17: Presidents' Day - No School |
| 2/6: Kindergarten Open House
Kinsey Elementary | 2/20: FUSD Wellness Committee
Meeting |
| 2/11: Governing Board Meeting | 2/25: Governing Board Meeting |
| 2/12: Kindergarten Open House
Knobs Elementary
Killip Elementary
Cromer Elementary
DeMiguel Elementary
Sechrist Elementary | |

Early Release - All Schools
All Fridays this month

FLAGSTAFF UNIFIED
School District

Now Hiring!

For all positions district-wide