



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

37 Arizona Public Schools Earn Arizona Educational Foundation A+ School of Excellence® Award

Phoenix, Ariz., February 15, 2024 – The [Arizona Educational Foundation \(AEF®\)](#) is pleased to announce the names of 37 Arizona public schools receiving the coveted [A+ School of Excellence® Award](#), for the 2023-2024 academic year.

The [AEF® A+ School of Excellence® Award](#) recognition began in 1983 as a way of identifying, celebrating, and recognizing educational excellence in schools throughout Arizona. In addition to showcasing exceptional public schools, the A+ Award application process provides school teams with an outstanding comprehensive framework that serves as a basis for school self-assessment and planning. The A+ School of Excellence® award is the highest state-level award given to a public school and is often a stepping-stone for schools seeking National Blue Ribbon status. The A+ Award is a powerful energizer for increasing public confidence in recognized schools, often resulting in greater parent and community involvement and even serves as an economic driver for some communities.

“The A+ School of Excellence Award is significant as it sends a message throughout communities that the local neighborhood public school down the street is an exceptional choice, brimming with opportunities for students to learn and grow, and for faculty and staff to thrive,” stated Kim Graham, AEF® Chief Executive Officer. “AEF was established to shine a spotlight on the great work of public schools and the hardworking educators and employees who devote themselves to serving students and families. The A+ School of Excellence Award is our way of honoring that incredible dedication.”

“The AZ Educational Foundation is thrilled to continue the A+ School of Excellence program,” stated Pam Roggeman, AEF Board President. “It is an honor to celebrate the students, teachers, families, staff, and dedication that make up an A+ School. Everyone should know that when an A+ School of Excellence banner hangs on a school, that community is something SPECIAL.”

A+ Schools are celebrated and recognized as exceptional. Earning the highly prestigious and coveted A+ designation spotlights the positive successes happening in public schools every day.

The 2024 A+ School of Excellence® schools are:

- **Acacia Elementary, Vail School District**
- **Arizona Charter Academy, Success School**
- **Arizona College Prep Middle School, Chandler Unified School District**
- **Arredondo Elementary, Tempe Elementary School District**
- **Boulder Creek High School, Deer Valley Unified School District**
- **Canyon Rim Elementary, Gilbert Public Schools**
- **Cienega High School, Vail School District**
- **Cortez High School, Glendale Union High School District**
- **Desert Canyon Elementary, Scottsdale Unified School District**
- **Desert Meadows School, Laveen School District**
- **Desert Willow Elementary, Vail School District**
- **Diamond Canyon School, Deer Valley Unified School District**
- **Eisenhower Center for Innovation, Mesa Public Schools**
- **Empire High School, Vail School District**
- **Encanto Elementary, Osborn School District**
- **Esmond Station K-8, Vail School District**
- **Faith Mather Sossaman Elementary, Queen Creek Unified School District**
- **Gowan Science Academy, Crane Elementary School District**
- **Kyrene Aprende Middle School, Kyrene School District**
- **Kyrene de la Mariposa, Kyrene School District**
- **Kyrene de la Sierra, Kyrene School District**
- **Kyrene Traditional Academy, Kyrene School District**
- **Kinsey Inquiry and Discovery School, Flagstaff Unified School District #1**
- **Mary C. O'Brien Elementary, Mary C. O'Brien Accommodation District**
- **Mesquite Elementary, Vail School District**
- **Mountain Ridge High School, Deer Valley Unified School District**
- **Paseo Pointe Elementary, Laveen School District**
- **Payson High School, Payson Unified School District**
- **Pima Butte Elementary, Maricopa Unified School District**
- **Poly STEM Elementary, ASU Preparatory Academy**
- **Ranch Elementary, J.O. Combs Unified School District**
- **Robert J. C. Rice Elementary, Chandler Unified School District**
- **Tombstone High School, Tombstone Unified School District**
- **Towne Meadows Elementary, Gilbert Public Schools**
- **Vail Academy and High School, Vail School District**
- **Verrado Heritage Elementary, Litchfield Elementary School District**
- **Wildflower Accelerated Academy, Avondale Elementary School District**

The AEF A+ School of Excellence® evaluative process is multi-faceted, identifying strong success in teaching and learning strategies, student achievement, leadership, and community integration. Public schools in Arizona can apply for the AEF A+ School of Excellence® Award by submitting an online application, which is then reviewed by a panel of A+ principals, teachers, and district leaders. If accepted, schools participate in the final step of the selection which is a multi-day site visit led by a team of A+ Award judges.

The AEF A+ School of Excellence® award is valid for four years, and schools must reapply to continue their A+ status. [View the list of the A+ School of Excellence Awardees.](#) [Visit the AEF website](#) to learn more about the A+ School of Excellence® program or email projects@azedfoundation.org.

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About Arizona Educational Foundation, AEF®

The mission of AEF is to celebrate excellence and cultivate equity in Pre-K-12th grade Arizona public education. This is accomplished through a variety of programs for teachers, administrators, and students. Some programs shine a spotlight on excellence; others provide a stepping-stone to help support schools and educators on the road to awesomeness. In addition to the [Arizona Teacher of the Year®](#) program, AEF also coordinates the [Arizona Spelling Bee](#), the [A+ School of Excellence® Award](#), the [Principals Leadership Academy of Arizona](#), [teachSTEM](#), [Our World](#), and [Take Your Legislator to School](#). AEF was founded in 1983, by then State Superintendent of Public Education, [Carolyn Warner](#), who felt a nonprofit needed to be established to champion public education and recognize the great work of public school educators. AEF annually reaches over 500,000 students, teachers and administrators throughout Arizona. **For more information visit www.azedfoundation.org, or contact info@azedfoundation.org.**



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