

Know Your Schools

By Gail Malay

Superintendent, Lake Havasu Unified School District #1

Why is it important a community knows about their schools? When talented future employees are thinking about relocating to an area, if they have children, one of the first things they would like to know about is the schools. Active, committed parents know that a good education is more important than ever for their children.



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If employers like the hospital cannot attract and keep talent, the level of health care goes down in a community.

So...what is happening in Lake Havasu Unified School District? We have a high performance team environment committed to preparing students for a successful future. A foundation to a successful future starts with being able to read well. With summer approaching, we are hoping that families (parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles) will keep students reading. When picking out books, make sure to pick out non-fiction as well as fiction books. Reading for information is a very important skill to have in order to be college and career ready.

Read with your child, even when they are older. When my youngest daughter was in middle school, we would often read *Harry Potter* together. When partner reading, ask questions. Questions help to make sure your child understands what they are reading. It also provides an opportunity for good discussions. When discussing the reading, ask, "What is your evidence for your thinking?" The new standards in education ask students to provide evidence

for their thinking. This is a good thing; too much of society currently has opinions with no evidence to back up their opinions.

Find ways your child can write more. Writing is a thinking process, and helping young people develop thinking skills is critical to their success. I often hear employers complain they cannot find enough employees who are good problem solvers.

Another skill needed today is keyboarding. In the summer, if students have access to a computer, spending time practicing their keyboarding skills is important.

Lake Havasu Unified School District has a committed focus on math. When students have trouble getting through high school, many times it is in the area of math. In order for students to do algebra, they have to have their math facts memorized and understand fractions. Fractions can be reinforced through cooking. When in the kitchen, ask your child to measure things and think about what $\frac{1}{4}$ cup looks like or how much a $\frac{1}{4}$ of a pizza or a cake would be. Show how $\frac{2}{4}$ is the same thing as $\frac{1}{2}$.

When our students come from families who value education and partner with us, they do extremely well. We are getting ready to honor twenty seniors from the class of 2013. Many of these successful students have been with us for most of their education. They come from families who know the importance of attending school and getting homework done with quality and handed in on time. Values such as these come from the home and make a difference!

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