



The Tolleson Quarterly

A Message from Your Superintendent



Dr. Lupita Hightower
Superintendent

Dear Tolleson ESD Families & Community;

Thank you to our entire education community for a great start to our school year. We have a full year of teaching and learning ahead and are incredibly focused on our core belief: All Children are Capable of Success – NO EXCEPTIONS!

We need your support to make our core belief a reality. The first is regarding STUDENT ATTENDANCE. Every day of learning is critical to a child's success at school. Days of school missed are like losing sleep. It is difficult to recoup the lost time. Children miss out on socializing, building relationships and active learning when they are not in school. It is important to build excellent school attendance from the very beginning in preschool and kindergarten. Studies indicate starting young with great attendance leads to maintaining it and academic success.

The second is attending your child's Academic Parent Teacher Team Meeting (APTT). Our APTT's are held at the beginning of the school year and again at the beginning of the calendar year. When this newsletter reaches you, you will most likely have already attended the APTT in August. However, if for any reason you missed out, please contact your child's teacher so you can meet to discuss your child's goals for the year.

Throughout this newsletter you will also see many celebrations of our team members, information about our Welcome Center and factual information regarding our request to sell bonds which is on the ballot for the November 7, 2023 election. Our last bond election was in 2018.

Please take time out to read our newsletter and share it with neighbors, family and friends. We welcome all to our education community!

Sincerely,

Dr. Lupita Hightower
Treasure Hunter & Superintendent
Tolleson Elementary School District



REWARDING JOB OPPORTUNITIES

At Tolleson ESD we have rewarding job opportunities for you to work with our treasures right in your neighborhood. Please consider joining our team as we need SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS, BUS DRIVERS, PARAPROFESSIONALS, CROSSING GUARDS and more. Our rate for substitute teachers is among the highest you will find in the valley (as high as \$175.00/per day). Our bus drivers are full-time employees receiving benefits. For all the details, call us today or check us out online at <https://tolleson.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx>.

Important Dates

September 2023

- 4th, Monday
 - Labor Day. No School.
- 6th, Wednesday
 - Governing Board Meeting.
- 13th, Wednesday
 - Teacher In-Service. No School.

October 2023

- 4th, Wednesday
 - Governing Board Meeting.
- 9th-13th, Monday-Friday
 - Fall Break. No School.

November 2023

- 1st, Wednesday
 - Governing Board Meeting.
- 10th, Friday
 - Veteran's Day. No School.
- 20th-24th, Monday-Friday
 - Thanksgiving Break. No School.

December 2023

- 13th, Wednesday
 - Governing Board Meeting.
- 22nd, Friday
 - Early Release.
- 25th-January 5th, Monday-Friday
 - Winter Break. No School.

January 2024

- 15th, Monday
 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day. No School.

For more detailed and up-to-date information, visit TollesonSchools.com. Meeting dates, times and locations are subject to change.

TollesonSchools.com
623-533-3980

MARIO RODRIGUEZ OUTSTANDING EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR

Each year it is an honor to recognize our Mario Rodriguez Outstanding Employees of the Year at our Back-to-School Luncheon Event. This year our Outstanding Certified Employee of the Year was awarded to Ms. Kristen Leone, Counselor at Arizona Desert Elementary School. The Outstanding Classified Employee of the Year was awarded to Mr. Lonnie Peters and Mr. Jim Daum both in our District Maintenance Department. Mr. Armando Mejia, Grounds & Maintenance Custodian at Porfirio H. Gonzales Elementary School, was recognized with a special Golden Apple Award. Thanks to these team members who go above and beyond to serve our treasures, families, teachers and staff each day.



Mr. Lonnie Peters
Maintenance
Operations Department



Mr. Jim Daum
Maintenance
Operations Department



Mr. Armando Mejia
Grounds, Maintenance, Custodian
Porfirio H. Gonzales
Elementary School

DISTRICT AWARDED COMPETITIVE SCHOOL SAFETY GRANT

As we share with you often, the overall well-being and safety of our treasures is our top priority. As we work hard to provide a safe, comfortable learning environment for all, I am pleased to share with you that we have been awarded a three-year School Safety Grant from Arizona Department of Education. The grants are awarded to support, promote and enhance safe and effective learning environments for all students by supporting the costs of placing school resource officers, school counselors and school social workers on school campuses.

We are grateful to have two counselors (one paid out of the safety grant and the other one paid through a maintenance and operations override) on each of our campuses and a district-wide social worker to support our students and families. We have been awarded two safety resource officers to be shared across our four schools. A Safety Resource Officer will be assigned by City of Tolleson for both Arizona Desert and Porfirio H. Gonzales Elementary Schools, and we are working with City of Phoenix on support for Desert Oasis and Sheely Farms Elementary Schools.

We are grateful to both City of Tolleson and Phoenix for their support and responsiveness, as well as our entire community. You do an outstanding job of alerting our school officials when you see or hear of any potential concerns to our community. It allows us to work effectively with officials to determine the credibility of any potential threats and do everything possible to keep our education community a safe place to learn and work. Thank you.



Preschoolers through 8th Graders

JOIN US

TOLLESON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT



Tolleson ESD where all children are capable of success – NO EXCEPTIONS!

WELCOME CENTER

We are here to help you enroll
at any of our 5 great schools!
9401 West Garfield Street
623-533-3980



**ARIZONA DESERT
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**
8803 West Van Buren Street
PreKindergarten - Grade 8
623-907-5260



**DESERT OASIS
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**
8802 West McDowell Road
PreKindergarten - Grade 8
623-533-3901



**PORFIRIO H. GONZALES
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**
9401 West Garfield Street
PreKindergarten - Grade 8
623-907-5181



**SHEELY FARMS
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**
9450 West Encanto Boulevard
PreKindergarten - Grade 8
623-907-5270



**TOLLESON VIRTUAL ACADEMY
Eagles**
Beginning August 2023
Serving Grades 5-8
623-533-3900

OUR WELCOME CENTER AWAITS TO SERVE YOU



Our Welcome Center offers numerous support and services for our students and families in addition to enrolling students in all our schools.

Services include: Community & Parent Workshops & Education, Eligibility for Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS), Family & Social Support, Food Distribution for Students & Families, Student Enrollment in our Schools and Student Uniforms.

We are also connected with numerous resources to connect our students and families including: Citizen & Immigration Services, Counseling, Domestic Violence Support, Emergency Utility Assistance, Healthcare, Housing, Vision & Hearing Needs.

For support or information, please contact:

Odette Meraz (Bilingual – Spanish & English)
Social Worker & Coordinator Student & Community Programs
623-533-3936 or omeraz@tesd17.org

Andrea Contreras (Bilingual – Spanish & English)
Community & Family Engagement Coordinator
623-533-3914 or acontreras@tesd17.org

To enroll your children, please contact:
Alma Ival (Bilingual – Spanish & English) or
Barbara Vega at 623-533-3980
aival@tesd17.org bvega@tesd17.org



Ms. Alma Ival
Enrollment



Ms. Barbara Vega
Enrollment

District Governing Board

GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

Tida Garcia, President
tgarcia@tesd17.org
Roberta Garcia, Vice President
rgarcia@tesd17.org
Anthony Aponte, Member
aaponte@tesd17.org
Belinda Quezada, Member
bquezada@tesd17.org
Samuel Quezada, Jr., Member
squezada@tesd17.org

For more information about our Governing Board and meetings, please visit www.tollesonschools.com/Governing-Board

Honoring Indigenous People Day October 9, 2023



Copia en Español

Si desea una copia de este informe en español, por favor llame al 623-533-3980 o visite nuestro sitio web en TollesonSchools.com.

CONGRATULATIONS, MR. EFRAIN CASILLAS – NOMINEE ARIZONA TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Mr. Efrain Casillas has been selected as one of five finalists among fifteen teachers nominated by Arizona Educational Foundation for Teacher of the Year. The Teacher of the Year will be chosen from the five Finalists and announced at Arizona Educational Foundation's Teacher of the Year Event on October 14th! For more information, please visit www.azedfoundation.org.

Please join us in congratulating Mr. Efrain Casillas – he is certainly the winner in our hearts and minds!



Mr. Efrain Casillas
Music Teacher
Porfirio H. Gonzales &
Desert Oasis Elementary Schools

TollesonSchools.com 623-533-3980



9261 West Van Buren Street
Tolleson, AZ 85353



Elementary Schools

Arizona Desert
Desert Oasis
Porfirio H. Gonzales
Sheely Farms
Tolleson Virtual Academy

ECRWSSDDM
POSTAL CUSTOMER

The Governing Board of Tolleson Elementary School District Requests to Sell Bonds November 7, 2023 Election - Factual Information Provided Here

Tolleson Elementary School District requests to sell bonds to improve, enhance and maintain the campuses, facilities and transportation for our students and staff. The request to sell \$30 million in bonds will be on the ballot for the November 7, 2023 election. The last request to sell bonds was 2018.

What are bonds?

Bonds are loans made to the school district and used to purchase capital items and make capital improvements to existing facilities, such as building or renovating a school or purchasing school buses.

How will the money be used?

- Renovations and improvements to existing school facilities (including kitchens, cafeterias, classrooms and exterior weatherproofing).
- Improving school grounds (including playgrounds, playfields and drainage).
- Replacement of pupil transportation and fleet vehicles.
- Improving the safety, security, and equipment in school buildings such as:
 - o Replacement of aging or non-serviceable air-conditioning and heating units
 - o Upgrading of fire alarm and security systems
 - o Security window treatment and protective glass (bullet proof)
 - o Roof replacements
 - o Replacement of worn flooring
 - o Replacement of furniture and equipment
 - o Upgrade classroom technology equipment

How will the sale of bonds impact taxpayers?

The sale is not expected to increase the bond tax rate. Although the estimated average annual tax rate for the new bond program is \$0.57 per \$100 of taxable assessed property value, the district has managed paying off its current bond debt such that the projections indicate the new bonds will also be able to be paid off within the current bond tax rate. For the owner of a home valued at \$100,000 for tax purposes (which is the approximate value of the average home in the District), the estimated average annual tax impact of the bond is \$57 per year and \$4.75 per month.

Will these improvements benefit homeowners in the district?

Yes, not only will our students and staff benefit greatly from these enhancements and safety measures, research indicates home values are positively impacted by high quality school facilities.

How can our community be assured the school district will spend the bond dollars as listed above?

Tolleson Elementary School District is a responsible steward of taxpayer dollars. Arizona state law requires districts to clearly identify how the bond proceeds will be spent in the election voter pamphlet and report spending at public hearings and comply or be in violation of Arizona state law.

When will this request to sell bonds be on the ballot?

November 7, 2023 election

www.TollesonSchools.com/Elections