

ADE EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT & RETENTION NEWSLETTER



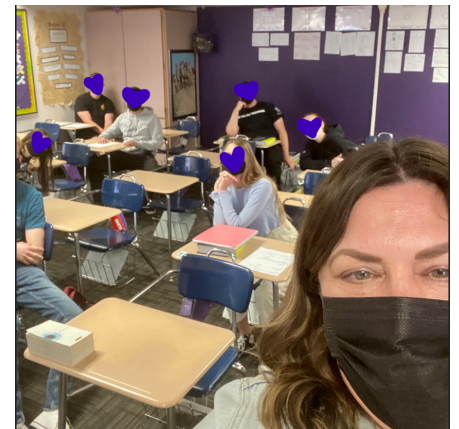
Welcome Spring

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We know many of you are returning to in-person instruction this month and want to wish you all well.

We know it has been a challenging year, whether you've been online, in-person, or teaching a hybrid class and we are grateful for all you do for your students and the community.



Current Projects

Teacher Table Talk Update:

As of March 15, we have hosted 5 virtual Teacher Table Talks (TTT) with educators around the state. (In addition to the 2 in-person and 1 virtual in 2019 & 2020).

Our TTT project goals include elevating educator voices, hearing directly from those in the field about the current realities, and giving educators an opportunity to directly impact the work of the agency. We are gathering wonderful, honest feedback and are enjoying hearing the similarities and differences among educator experiences across Arizona, across content areas, and from district and charter schools. Superintendent Hoffman has been able to attend several of the events and values hearing directly from teachers as well.

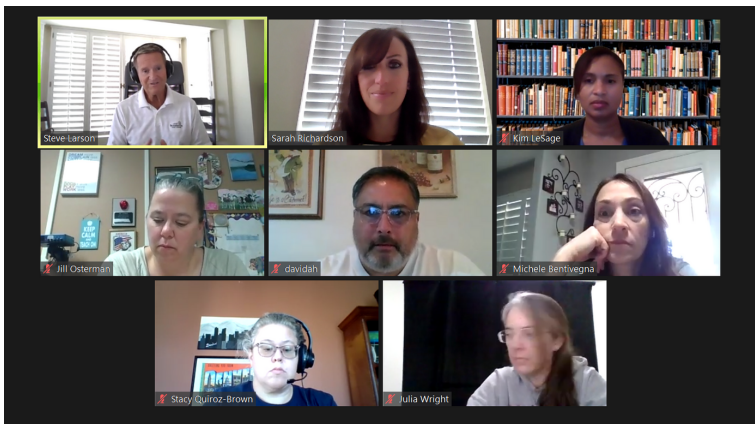
We will host 9 more in the next month and will make plans to host the events regularly throughout the year. If you would like to participate, please email us at teach@azed.gov for an invitation to register.



Cari Eng- High School Math Teacher, Deer Valley USD



Anna Wold- High School Math Teacher, Page Unified School District



Economics Teacher Table Talk March 10, 2021- Steve Larson-ADE, Sarah Richardson- ADE, Kimberly LeSage- ADE, Jill Osterman-Sierra Vista USD, David Ahumada- Sunnyside USD, Michele Bentivegna- Peoria USD, Stacy Quiroz-Brown- Phoenix Union HSD, Julia Wright- Washington Elementary SD

Issue Spotlight: How to Become a Special Education Teacher

Becoming a SPED teacher

Special education is a top workforce shortage area in Arizona, and many LEAs in the state struggle to find qualified Special Education Educators. Identifying ways to address this challenge is a priority for ADE, and we will continue to work together with the field to develop pathways and programs to address the shortage. Our ESS Recruitment and Retention team put together some information to help LEAs and current educators:

Recruitment

Developing Local Strategies for LEAs:

Educators are constantly adding tools to their toolboxes, and districts and charters are no different! The [Educator Shortages in Special Education: Toolkit for Developing Local Strategies](#) from the Center on Great Teachers & Leaders is organized around the guiding principle that short-term strategies to meet immediate demand must be intentionally paired with long-term solutions to attract, prepare, and retain effective special educators.

Becoming SPED Certified for Educators:

Currently, two options exist to become appropriately certified to teach in a SPED classroom.

- You can obtain a [full SPED certificate](#) after completing an approved program.
- If you already have a teaching certificate, you can obtain a [SPED endorsement](#) as a more efficient path to become eligible to teach in a SPED classroom.

GETSET and SETTA Tuition Assistance Programs:

Every spring, we look forward to reviewing applications for our two "grow your own" opportunities for educators in Arizona public schools.

- The General Education Teacher to Special Education Teacher (**GETSET**) program provides tuition reimbursement to certified general education teachers who want to pursue special education teaching certification.
- The Special Education Teacher Tuition Assistance (**SETTA**) program provides tuition reimbursement to paraprofessionals and educational interpreters who want to pursue special education teaching certification.

The applications linked below contain detailed information about eligibility requirements, the selection process, and the types of certifications that can be acquired. Applications must be submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. on **April 16, 2021**.

[General Education Teacher to Special Education Teacher \(GETSET\) Application](#)

[Special Education Teacher Tuition Assistance \(SETTA\) Application](#)

For additional information, please email Aanya Rispoli at aanya.rispoli@azed.gov or call (602) 364-4022.

Issue Spotlight: How to Become a Special Education Teacher

Retention

Coming This Summer: Teach Camp 2.0!

Teach Camp is a year-long support system for beginning special education teachers. The goal of Teach Camp is to increase the retention of special educators by providing our newest special education teachers with the tools they need to **survive** and **thrive** during their first years in the classroom. **Teach Camp** is designed for special education teachers who will begin their first, second, or third year of teaching special education in the fall of 2021 and will kick off **July 7-9, 2021** (online). Registration is coming soon. For more information, [visit the Teach Camp webpage](#).

Retention of Related Service Providers

Exceptional Student Services recently hosted targeted professional learning opportunities for school psychologists and speech-language pathologists (SLPs). Approximately 700 school psychologists and school-based SLPs attended these free virtual trainings in February. Be on the lookout for additional professional learning opportunities for related service providers coming soon!

Meet the ADE ESS Recruitment and Retention Team



Kim Rice - Recruitment and Retention Specialist

Julie Lenza - Recruitment and Retention Specialist



Mary Keeney - Recruitment and Retention of Related Service Providers

Contact Us: ADE ESS Recruitment and Retention ESSRandR@azed.gov

Educator Spotlight: Kelly Agros, 3rd Grade Teacher

We received an email from Jennifer Bagnasco, a 4th-grade teacher at Red Mountain Ranch Elementary School, to share the proud news that a fellow teacher and friend Kelly Argos, recently published a book. We were happy to reach out to Kelly and find out more about her journey to becoming a published author.

ADE: Tell us about the story of your book.

Kelly: The story of the book is how Zelma Jo learns the reasons why to wear a mask during a pandemic. It stresses the importance of wearing a mask not only to protect yourself, but also friends and family.

ADE: What made you want to write a children's book?

Kelly: Last summer we were visiting my son and daughter-in-law (Erica is a co-author) and my grandson, Clark in southern California. Everything was in lockdown at that time, and we were thinking about how we could teach Clark and other kids the importance of wearing a mask. As a 3rd grade teacher, I was preparing to head back to school and I knew my students would be asking me, why do we wear a mask, Mrs. Argos? I know first-hand the importance of reading aloud to children. It not only helps improve language and comprehension skills, it deepens their understanding of the world. That is when we decided a children's book would be a perfect way to teach children about the importance of wearing masks.

ADE: What was the process for writing the book?

Kelly: It took about a month and many phone calls and emails until we were ready to submit to our publisher in late July. We heard back in September 2020 that Newman Springs would publish our book. It was so exciting! Originally, we were slated to have the books printed by the end of November, but because of Covid, we did not have our book in hand until the end of January.

ADE: What was something surprising you learned from the publishing process?

Kelly: We were both surprised to learn that how detailed the publication process is...from start to finish including illustrations and editing we had no idea how long the process would take.

ADE: What do you hope readers take away after reading your book?

Kelly: The most important thing we want kids to learn is that wearing a mask not only protects you, it also protects friends and family. It's the right thing to do!

ADE: How/where can people get a copy of your book?

Kelly: "Why A Mask You Ask?" is available on Amazon and Barnes and Noble.

[Amazon](#)

[Barnes and Noble](#)



Kelly Argos

3rd Grade Teacher & Author- Red Mountain Ranch Elementary

We are committed to highlighting all of Arizona's educators. Let us know if you have a story to share.
We are looking for stories from support staff, administration, teachers, & LEA employees.

Email us at teach@azed.gov

LEA Spotlight: Michael Anderson School Award Finalist



MICHAEL ANDERSON SCHOOL

Dream Big, Work Hard

Michael Anderson School in Avondale Earns \$10,000 as NIET Founder's Award Finalist Maricopa County school among four nationwide being considered for \$50,000 grand prize

The National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) announced today that Michael Anderson School in Avondale Elementary School District, Arizona, has received \$10,000 for its selection as an NIET Founder's Award finalist. The school is among four across the country under consideration for the \$50,000 grand prize, which will be announced virtually at the NIET National Conference on Thursday, March 4, 2021, at 10 a.m. ET.

"Michael Anderson School provides a positive learning environment where teachers and students are motivated to reach their highest potential," NIET Chairman and Founder Lowell Milken said. "I congratulate Principal Lori Goslar and her staff on their outstanding academic progress and unwavering commitment to make talented teachers the driving force for educational excellence."

For 20 years, NIET has partnered with schools, districts, states, and universities to ensure all students have effective educators. Its work to help develop teacher leaders, collaborate on successful strategies and provide feedback and support to peers that address teacher and student needs have served more than 9,000 schools and have impacted more than 275,000 teachers and 2.75 million students.

NIET's partner schools have shown success by both outperforming similar schools and having greater teacher retention. Schools including Michael Anderson have continued to advance during the pandemic through the use of NIET's new tools and resources that accommodate virtual instruction, support from expert leaders and trainers, and access to a large network of educators united around shared learning. The Founder's Award was created by Lowell Milken to honor one school annually for exceptional implementation of NIET's principles to build educator excellence and advance student success.

"Michael Anderson's focus on great teaching and a 'dream big, work hard' attitude is making a difference for students," said NIET CEO Dr. Candice McQueen. "Principal Goslar and her team are a strong model for how to build capacity, strengthen and deepen instructional practices, and become reflective learners. These structures have only been enhanced when taking learning online – further proof that what they are doing is working."

Founder's Award recipients are selected by NIET based on their efforts to make instructional excellence the cornerstone of school improvement; plan for regular professional learning focused on real-time needs of teachers and students; create a culture of collaboration and reflection; and leverage teacher leaders and administrators to drive student growth.

Michael Anderson School has employed these principles in a comprehensive way as part of a districtwide effort to implement NIET's TAP System for Teacher and Student Advancement starting in 2011. Since that time, the growth in teachers' skills each year has led to gains in student achievement: The percentages of students testing proficient in English language arts and math have more than doubled, and the school's state rating has jumped from a C to a high B.

LEA Spotlight: Michael Anderson School Award Finalist

What Sets Michael Anderson School Apart

Michael Anderson, located near the heart of the Phoenix-metro area, serves 840 students of whom 89% are Hispanic, a quarter are English Language Learners, and all are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Having led the school since the beginning of the NIET partnership, Principal Goslar has seen the growth of teachers and students firsthand as they have made the NIET rubric – a comprehensive, research-based set of exemplary instructional practices – their own.

“The structures of NIET and its rubrics serve as a timeless avenue that has built teaching, learning, and results,” Goslar said. “We have continued to grow, anchored to the rubric in every way. It creates a pathway for teachers, students, and families.”

Michael Anderson’s leadership team uses the NIET rubric as a guide to coach faculty, identify strengths and needs of both teachers and students, and differentiate instruction to ensure everyone is moving forward. The rubric is also a central resource for onboarding new teachers and uniting faculty around a common language and vision for excellent instruction. As an added benefit, some incoming teachers are already familiar with the rubric before starting at Michael Anderson, having completed their undergraduate coursework and student teaching there through NIET’s partnership with Arizona State University and Northern Arizona University.

Strong collaboration and supportive relationships have led to improvements in student learning year after year. From 2015 to 2019, Michael Anderson has increased its percentage of students reaching proficiency in English language arts from 16% to 34%, and from 20% to 44% in math. From 2017 to 2019, English language learners increased their performance growth by 36 percentage points, compared to the state growth of 20 percentage points during the same time. By 2019, Michael Anderson’s English language learners also outpaced the state average. Improvements in student growth and behavior have gone hand in hand. Over the past two years, the school has seen chronic absenteeism drop from 14% to 8%, and the number of behavioral incidents decrease by 62%.



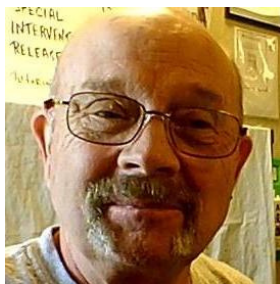
This school is the namesake of Lt. Col. Michael Anderson, NASA Astronaut who perished on the Space Shuttle Columbia upon its re-entry. Lt. Col. Michael Anderson lived in Avondale and attended 3rd grade at Avondale Elementary School (now Michael Anderson School).

Troops to Teachers

"Military Veterans have had instilled in them attention to detail, good communication, and leadership. These are all skills needed in the classroom. This combination makes the Troops to Teachers program a great fit for our transitioning service members (TSM). After serving their country, not all TSM's know what they want to do when they leave the military. Mr. Lee Fernwault provides insight on what it means to be an educator and how military skills fit nicely into the classroom.

Arizona schools need quality educators and who better to fill those roles than TSMs? Showing Veterans that they already possess the qualities needed and that moving from one mission, defending our country, to a new mission – molding the minds of our youth makes sense! Our Veterans find their new roles in the classroom rewarding and feel that they give back to their communities like they did when they served our country."

Angelica Johnson
Community Readiness Specialist
Transition Assistance Program
Luke AFB, AZ



Ken Simonen- 7th-grade Math/Science Teacher, New World Educational Center



Svea Anderson-7th grade Science Teacher, Flowing Wells Junior High School

Educator Preparation Programs

EPP Quarterly Meeting Update: In February, we hosted the Quarterly Educator Preparation Program meeting and had some valuable discussions. We talked about possible legislative changes affecting programs, new electronic reporting requirements, and then discussed successful strategies for recruiting diverse students, updates on our Teach grant shortage areas, connecting with Ed Rising programs in high schools, and recruiting from other colleges within the universities. We will have another meeting at the end of April where we will discuss how each EPP is preparing students for the realities of the current classroom, among other topics.

- Current Projects
- Educator Spotlight: National STEM Scholar
- Organization Spotlight: Leading Change Conference
- Troops to Teachers Update
- EPP Update

Next Issue Preview

How can we help? We would love to hear from you.

Email us at teach@azed.gov with suggestions, stand out stories, educator recognition, information or research requests, topics for our next newsletter, etc.