

# Dysart *achiever*

Dysart Unified School District No. 89

Volume 2, Number 3

March 2006



**Calendar  
Approved  
*Signature  
Programs***

**A Web of  
Communication**



Site of construction for Valley Vista H.S., the new district administrative center and Elementary School No.16.

# Bond Projects: An Update on the 2002 Commitment

**By Scott Thompson**  
Executive Director, Business Services

In 2002, voters in Dysart supported a \$74 million bond, to create equity in every school. The primary issues for the bond were bringing old schools up to a new standard and holding the tax rate for this debt at 79 cents.

The first goal was driven by the idea that every student in the district should have the same experience regardless of which school they attend. The idea that every school site should have the quality facilities that support the learning process was paramount for the community committee that recommended the bond election to the Governing Board. Since the passage of the bond, the district has been in a race against time. Construction costs have escalated by more than 50 percent since the first projects began in June 2003. While the committee that created the projects for the bond tried to anticipate increases to the projects, no one could have predicted what actually happened.

In addition to these construction cost increases, the district has seen a decrease in the amount of funding provided by the state to build new schools. This has increased the need to use local bond funding to supplement new school construction. The impact of the lack of state funding has been most significant at Valley Vista High School. This project

would cost \$12 million more than the district is receiving from the state. The design is similar to Willow Canyon, which was completely state funded. This has left the district with no other choice but to commit local funding to the project. Even with this commitment, the campus will not have a Fine Arts auditorium, which was cut in order to bring the project back into budget.

To date, the district has completed or is near completing the projects presented to the voters in 2002 with one significant exception — the relocation and rebuilding of Luke Elementary School. With the current costs of construction and challenges finding a new location for the school, the district has focused improving the current campus until a solution can be found.

The second goal was to keep all existing debt and any new debt issued by the district a rate of 79 cents in taxes. The district has completed this goal. Despite pressure to complete projects faster to combat construction cost increases, the tax rate for this voter-approved bond has never increased.

Here's an update on the projects from this election, and the status of each:

PROJECT	COST	STATUS
Dysart High School Renovation	\$23,600,000	Complete
Surprise Elementary Replacement	\$11,000,000	Complete
El Mirage Elementary Replacement	\$10,200,000	Complete
District Office Replacement	\$6,200,000	Under Construction
Willow Canyon HS Building No. 5	\$5,240,000	Complete
Preschool	\$5,200,000	Under Construction
Kingswood Elementary Renovation	\$3,000,000	Complete
Remaining for Luke Elementary	\$2,800,000	Uncommitted
Dysart Elementary Renovation	\$2,200,000	Under Design
Pupil Transportation (35 New Buses)	\$2,100,000	Complete
Valley Vista High School Supplement State Funding	\$1,500,000	Under Construction
Thompson Ranch Elementary Supplement State Funding	\$800,000	Complete
West Point Elementary Supplement State Funding	\$200,000	Complete

# Signature Programs Focus Students on Future

The Dysart Unified School District offers a selection of Signature Programs at each high school to help students pursue specific academic and career interests. These specialized programs provide advanced instruction to students while preparing them to continue their education in the field after high school. Some of the classes are eligible for college credit. Students in the Dysart Unified School District may apply for admission to their high school of choice to participate in a Signature Program.

## DYSART HIGH SCHOOL

### Automotive Technology

This program is for students who want to work in the automotive industry as an Engineer, Technician Parts and Service Management, or Business Management. Students will prepare for the ASE national tests, entering advanced automotive training programs, and working in entry-level automotive positions.



### Drafting Technology

This program is for students who are interested in designing buildings and homes, designing landscape or designing machinery that will help others. Class activities include designing and testing, technical illustration and displaying work.

### Early Childhood Education

The Early Childhood Education program focuses on teaching infants, toddlers and preschoolers. The first class is Child Development which provides an understanding of child growth from birth through adolescence. The series continues with Teaching Young Children and Early Childhood Education.

### Financial Services

For students with an interest in the Stock Market, creating a financial portfolio, investing or taking care of their own finances, these courses help prepare students for a career in Accounting, Financial Planning and as a Stock Broker.

### Information Technology

Repairing computers, developing networks and programming form the foundation of the Information Technology program. The courses provide students with the opportunity for hands-on experience in preparation for national certifications.

### Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps.

JROTC helps prepare students for various responsible leadership jobs of choice in the civilian workforce, private enterprise or military service. JROTC consists of both classroom and field experience.

### Nursing

The Nursing Services program provides students the opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge to work in the medical field. This two-year program allows students to experience the medical profession through classroom and clinical work.

## VALLEY VISTA HIGH SCHOOL

### Allied Health Program

For students who are interested in working in the world of sports as a Sports Physical Therapist or in Sports Rehabilitation, the Sports Medicine program is ideal. This Allied Health program is in partnership with Sun Health and Estrella Mountain Community College.

### Culinary Arts

Culinary Arts provides students with the opportunity to learn how to prepare gourmet foods, how to display food to make it pleasing to the eye, and develop the skills for state and national competitions.

### Law and Public Safety

This program provides students with the opportunity to learn and experience the skills needed to be a firefighter or police officer. The program is possible through a partnership with the City of Surprise and the Maricopa County Community College District.

## WILLOW CANYON HIGH SCHOOL

### Allied Health Program

This program offers two tracks: Sports Medicine and Lab Technician. For students who are more interested in working in a lab setting and assisting in the diagnosis of illnesses, the Lab Technician program is the right choice.

### International Baccalaureate Program

The International Baccalaureate Organization's Diploma Program is a demanding pre-university course of study. It is designed for highly motivated secondary school students. Students apply for the IB program for their junior and senior years.

### Small Business Management

This is a program where experiential learning is key. It focuses on problem-based learning through working with real problems faced by entrepreneurs and small business owners. This class provides a solid foundation in terms of the types of businesses students are most likely to start.



# Kindergarten Round-Up Set for April

An initial roundup of new kindergarten students in the Dysart Unified School District will be held in early April at each elementary school. Round-Up is an ideal time for parents to register their kindergarten students, learn about Dysart's full-day kindergarten classes, and introduce students to teachers and the school.

Round-Up will be held in two sessions, depending on which school the student will attend. Each registration event runs from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.:

*April 4:* Cimarron Springs, Marley Park, Sunset Hills, Countryside, Ashton Ranch, Kingswood, West Point and Elementary No. 15 at Surprise Farms (to be held at Sunset Hills Elementary)

*April 6:* Dysart Elementary, El Mirage, Thompson Ranch, Luke, Surprise Elementary, Rancho Gabriela, Elementary No. 14 at Greer Ranch (held at Rancho Gabriela Elementary) and Elementary No. 16 at Parkview (held at Dysart Elementary)

Kindergarten Round-Up generally takes less than one hour. The evening is designed as a friendly, organized "assembly line" where parents can move



through the registration process easily. Attendance clerks and secretaries will check all paperwork and make sure that everything is complete in the registration packet. Health personnel will double check shot records.

While parents are encouraged to participate in the Round-Up process, new kindergarten students can register at their school following the event. The sooner parents register, the easier it is for the campus to allocate needed classroom space and ensure appropriate staffing.

Students must be 5 years old before Sept. 1 to be eligible for kindergarten.

To register, the following documents are required and/or helpful: original copy of birth certificate, proof of immunization (shot records), proof of residence (i.e., water bill, lease or purchase agreement), and custody or guardianship papers and/or any other court documents.

Children who require immunizations can receive them free of charge from the Dysart Unified School District; call 623.876.7944 for details.

For information on which school a student will attend, contact any Dysart campus or the District Office at 623.876.7000. Additional information and boundary maps are available at [www.dysart.org](http://www.dysart.org).

## Summer Camps Presented for Dysart Kids

The long, dogged days of summer will be a little brighter for students and parents thanks to the Dysart Unified School District Community Education Department.

The district will offer the "Magical Mystery Summer Camp" from May 30 through August 11. The camp is billed as a worry-free program of summer activities for students who are currently in kindergarten through sixth grade. The program will be available from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily.

Each week of the "Magical Mystery Summer Camp" will feature a different theme. Included in the tuition are weekly field trips to Valley attractions, and visits to the Surprise Aquatic Center for swimming.

The program will be offered at Ashton Ranch Elementary School, 14898 West Acoma Drive in Surprise, and Thompson Ranch Elementary School, 11800 North Thompson Ranch Road in El Mirage. As a program licensed

by the Arizona Department of Health Services, the camps are each limited to 80 students.

Tuition for three days, the minimum, is \$75. For four or five days of summer fun, the cost is \$100. Families can register after April 3 by contacting the Community Education Department at 623.876.7079 or 623.876.7056.

The program is open to all children in the community.





## Dysart Unified School District No.89 2006-2007 SCHOOL CALENDAR

JULY '06						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

AUGUST '06 9/9						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

SEPTEMBER '06 20/29						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

OCTOBER '06 17/46						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

NOVEMBER '06 19/65						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

DECEMBER '06 16/81						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

JANUARY '07 17/98						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

FEBRUARY '07 19/117						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			

MARCH '07 17/134						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

APRIL '07 20/154						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

MAY '07 22/176						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

JUNE '07 4/180						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

- First Day of Classes August 21
- Labor Day September 4
- Fall Break October 9-13
- Columbus Day October 9 (*part of Fall Break*)
- 40<sup>th</sup> Day October 23
- K-8 Parent/Teacher Conf. November 2-3 (*1/2 days K-8*)
- K-8 Report Cards Issued November 3
- Veterans Day November 10
- Thanksgiving Recess November 23-24
- HS Final Exams Dec. 21-22 (*1/2 days HS*)
- Early Release Dec. 22 (*1/2 day all grades*)
- Winter Break December 25-January 5

- School Resumes January 8
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day January 15
- K-8 Report Cards Issued January 26
- 100<sup>th</sup> Day February 2
- President's Day February 19
- Spring Break March 12-16

- K-8 Parent/Teacher Conf. April 5-6 (*1/2 days K-8*)
- K-8 Report Cards Issued April 6
- No School/Staff Development April 27
- Memorial Day May 28
- HS Final Exams June 5-6 (*1/2 days HS*)
- Last Day of School June 6
- Graduation Day June 6 & 7

K-8 Quarters End/Days

October 27	44
January 19	46
March 30	44
June 6	46
<b>Total Days</b>	<b>180</b>

HS Semesters End/Days

December 22	81
June 6	99
<b>Total Days</b>	<b>180</b>

First and Last days of School Year  
 No School

*Students are dismissed early every Monday beginning August 28 to provide time for teacher professional development.*

# New Tools Help Track News, Events

With a new website, an e-mail list for news and an online event calendar, the Dysart Unified School District has introduced a trio of new tools to help parents and community members stay in contact with the latest district news and events.

A four-month project to create a new district website involved researching other school and organization websites, analyzing the district's existing website, and reviewing frequent questions or comments from community members. The district website last underwent significant revisions in 2002.

Data collected as part of the Superintendent's Dialogue and Input Initiative demonstrated that 58 percent of community members surveyed indicated that the web and e-mail were their preferred methods for receiving information on the Dysart Unified School District. That data helped to drive the design process, creating a site from the perspective of the user.

The new [dysart.org](http://dysart.org) site includes a refined organization structure to help users find key information more efficiently. Sections are devoted to helping people "Get Involved," and there are pages designed specifically for those "New to Dysart" as well as "Parents and Students." Employment opportunities, news headlines, school information and a complete listing of department contacts are also featured.

An online application developed by a district team allows schools to easily enter information on events, meetings and deadlines. By visiting <http://calendar.dysart.org>, parents and community members can search for events by school and month. The system is even flexible enough to allow two schools to be queried at the same time, helping parents who may have children at two campuses.

As part of the district's commitment to on-going communications with the community, all schools are expected to keep their online event calendars up to date.



Staff at the district office will ensure that district-wide events and activities are added to the calendar. With each entry, there is a link for parents to locate additional information or contact the event organizer.

The online event calendar can be found on the district's website, under "Get Involved."

Dysart's third new communication tool is the Dysart News E-Mail List for parents and community members. The free sign-up for the Dysart News list is available on the district's website at [www.dysart.org](http://www.dysart.org).

Subscribers will receive regular e-mails about district news, and a weekly summary of events and activities at Dysart's elementary and high schools. By subscribing, parents and community members will have immediate access to breaking district news, without waiting to read it in the newspaper or hear about it during a school meeting.

More than 2,000 e-mail addresses of parents, district residents and those with an interest in the Dysart Unified School District are already part of the list. As the e-mail communication program matures, specific mailing lists will be developed for athletics/activities, individual schools, parent leaders and other focused interests.

To self subscribe, visit: [www.dysart.org](http://www.dysart.org) and look for the Dysart News link.

The new Dysart website, e-mail news list and online calendar join Dysart-TV99, available to all Cox Cable subscribers in the district, as 24/7 methods for parents and community members to stay "tuned in" to district news and events.



## On the Move

### Dysart's Administrative Center

This spring, the district's administration will move in to new offices, which voters provided funding for in 2002. The new address will be:

15802 North Parkview Place  
Surprise, Arizona 85379

Phone numbers will remain unchanged.

# — Around Dysart —

## MLK's Lessons Focus of Fourth Graders

In Nichole Pottinger's fourth-grade class at Cimarron Springs Elementary, students spent a week learning about the significant contributions Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. made to U.S. history. Students created an illustrated timeline of events that occurred throughout his life, watched a video about his life, saw re-enactments of Dr. King's childhood and his contributions as an adult to society. They also listened to his "I Have a Dream" speech and discussed why his dream was important and exactly what his dreams were for our nation. Towards the end of the unit, students wrote expository paragraphs to display their understanding of why he is considered by many to be a "true American hero."



## Future Business Leaders Set Standard

Thirty-two Willow Canyon High DECA students brought home 37 medals from the Western Area Conference, including two first place, two second place and three third place. Participating students included: Briana Kiniry, Daniel Balette, Jacque Adkins, Eleisha Jackson, Carl Pavlock, Jennifer Vazquez, Anna Vitale, Pierson DeWeese, Stephanie Logan, Carolyn Rende, Jessica Roman, Kylie Gentry, Doni Wade, Tiffany Gonzalez, Manuel Hernandez, Joshua Blakley, Chris Durand, Afton Ellis, Christine Kaady, Kyle Kriete, Johnathon Larsen, Austin Harris, Darragh Burt, Steven Kargol and Lee Smithson.

## Donated Dictionaries Support Learning

Edna and Robert Jacoby presented Kingswood's third grade students with dictionaries on behalf of the Surprise Elks Lodge. The Elks plan to make this an annual event for all Dysart schools. The students were excited to be getting the dictionaries while the teachers were enthusiastic about having the educational resource for each child.

## 'Make Your Day' a Hit with Students

Students and staff at El Mirage Elementary celebrated the Make Your Day Program, a school wide citizenship program that allows staff to teach and students to learn in a safe and focused learning environment. Every student who signed their name to the pledge banner received a Make Your Day wristband to wear, symbolizing their support for the program and their continued effort to "Do What's Expected the Best They Can."

## Teachers Expand Expertise

From Rancho Gabriela Elementary School, Jennifer Morris and Susan Melbye attended a recent Imagineering conference at the ASU east campus. Imagineering is the art and science of using the imagination to apply the laws of math and science to an abstract world to make predictions. This conference was to learn how to incorporate experiential learning in classrooms and to foster a creative environment for students.



## Spiritline Earns State Honors

Please congratulate the Dysart High School Spiritline for their incredible performances at the AIA Spiritline Championships in January. They competed in the All Girl Stunt, Show Cheer and Pom categories. They received second place in the All Girl Stunt category, and also placed third overall in the 4A All-Girl Division, which was comprised of approximately 13 schools.

## Volunteers Outfit Students

Surprise Elementary first graders want to thank the wonderful ladies of the Sun City Sewing Club for the beautiful dresses and the handsome shirts they created for the girls and boys. The children enjoyed wearing the clothes to school before the winter recess to show their appreciation for the ladies' hard work.



Mark Maksimowicz, Ed.D.

*“Dysart staff and educators are charged with seriously addressing any incidents that could be classified as bullying.”*

## From the Superintendent Bullying Goes High-Tech

Schools across the nation are seeing more incidents of bullying on the Internet. No longer is bullying confined to school-yard confrontations or neighborhood disputes, today’s bullying has gone high-tech.

Bullies have a range of new tools to use against their victims today. This includes Internet message boards, e-mail, cell phone text messages and digital photos. This is one reason the Dysart Unified School District prohibits students from using cell phones and other electronic devices during the academic day. Restrictions at school, however, won’t solve “cyber bullying” problems.

Dysart, like most other school districts, is seeing more problems starting on blogs, personal journals that many Internet users maintain. These blogs – short for web logs – allow students to spread rumors and harass their classmates, sometimes without outwardly revealing their identities. We have found that some students who wouldn’t otherwise be bullies, become mean-spirited and aggressive when sending messages through a thin veil of anonymity.

In many of these instances, your school can offer assistance. We can work with students to positively resolve disputes, confront the behaviors or in some cases assign consequences. In some other cases involving Internet-based harassment, it might be necessary to involve local police.

We can call it many things, but bullying is basically harassment, assault, abuse or hazing.

None of these behaviors are acceptable. Dysart staff and educators are charged with seriously addressing any incidents that could be classified as bullying. There does not need to be a pattern of behavior or actual harm before we become involved. Our objective is to positively address these issues before they transform into larger problems.

Cyber bullying poses challenges for school administrators. We don’t always know where to look for these messages, so we depend on the help of students to report when harassment or threats are being made online. Parents, too, can help us keep our schools and students safe by providing information to administrators about online threats.

Just like harassment person-to-person in the street or school yard, cyber bullying has the potential to dramatically impact the safety of a school and its students. While not all of these issues may be in the school’s “jurisdiction,” we take seriously our responsibility to help keep students safe at school and in the community.

As access to technology continues to widen, online bullying and harassment will continue to increase as school and community issues. Get a head start by monitoring your child’s Internet usage, and working with your school to keep everyone safe.

### Governing Board

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- Charles Otterman  
Member
- Mike Planeta  
Member
- Laura Ramirez  
Member

### District Administration

- Mark Maksimowicz, Ed.D.  
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Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education
- Denise Birdwell, Ed.D.  
Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education
- Lynn Montanya  
Executive Director of Human Resources/Legal Counsel
- Scott Thompson  
Executive Director of Business Services
- Timothy Tait, Public Information Officer  
Editor
- Jenea Bono Moore, Communication Specialist  
Graphic Designer



The mission of the Dysart Unified School District is to ensure that our students achieve academic success and make responsible life choices through a bold, distinctive educational system that cultivates their innate gifts, provides multiple opportunities and inspiration for unlimited learning in a safe environment and sustains effective community and family relationships.

### Dysart Unified School District No.89

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