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NEWS REPORT

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EXCELLING ON THE  
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**BEST OF  
THE WEST**

AESD WINS FOR  
SECOND YEAR





# AVONDALE ESD IS BEST OF THE WEST

Avondale ESD was named the Best Place To Work and the top 3 Best School District in the west valley's Best of the West 2022 Awards. In addition, Desert Star also received recognition as the top 3 Best Preschool, Best Public School and Best Elementary School.

Thank you to our students, staff and families for choosing AESD and making our schools a place where exceptional education flourishes.

## AVONDALE SCHOOLS NAMED BEST IN THE COUNTRY

Avondale Elementary School District was recognized in the first-ever US News rankings for public elementary and middle schools.

The publication included kinder through eighth grade public schools. AESD earned a total of seven recognitions for their schools in Goodyear.

Two schools earned the Best Elementary recognition and five schools were recognized as the Best Middle School.

US News analyzed more than one hundred thousand schools in Arizona. Rankings are based on the schools that place in the top thirty percent in the state. According to the organization, schools were assessed on their students' proficiencies in mathematics and reading, as measured by state assessments.

AESD has continuously been recognized at the state and national level in recent years for their high achievement in academics and professional development. Having the highest percentage of A Rated schools in the southwest valley, the district is a leader in public education in Arizona.

### US News Best Schools:

- Centerra Mirage STEM Academy - Best Elementary and Middle School
- Wildflower Accelerated Academy - Best Elementary and Middle School
- Copper Trails School - Best Middle School
- Desert Thunder School - Best Middle School
- Desert Star School - Best Middle School







## PERFECT SCORES ON AZ MERIT ASSESSMENT

Thirty three elementary school students received a perfect score on the annual Arizona MERIT state assessment. Third through eighth grade students excelled with a one-hundred percent grade point in the statewide 2021 achievement test. Two of those students excelled on both the math and ELA exams and two additional students received a perfect score for the second consecutive year.

Students, along with their families, were celebrated at the district's governing board meeting.

## SOARING TO THE TOP: MR. DEFFENBAUGH'S LEGACY

Mr. Deffenbaugh has been at Desert Thunder since the day it opened. Having started as a teacher, then assistant principal and currently principal of the A-rated school. For the last 18 years, he has created a community where his students feel welcomed, his staff feels supported and his families feel involved.

After nearly two decades, Mr. Deffenbaugh is announcing his retirement. Throughout the years, Mr. Deffenbaugh has been named the Rodel Exemplary Principal's Award - being the highest honor earned by administrators in Arizona. With his leadership, Desert Thunder became an A Rated school in 2019. His school's dual language program has seen so much success and increased variance rates from families wanting to enroll outside of the immediate boundaries.

Mr. Deffenbaugh has dedicated 30 years to education. Thank you for your dedication to ensuring our children received exceptional education daily!

LISTEN TO MR. DEFFENBAUGH TALKING  
ABOUT HIS CAREER ON AESD SCOOP



## CMSA WINS MCTEACHER'S NIGHT CHALLENGE

Twenty-one elementary and middle schools participated in the Southwest Valley McTeacher's Night Challenge this year.

Out of all the schools who participated across the valley, Centerra Mirage placed first in the "McTeacher's Night Challenge" receiving an additional \$1,000 donation.

Desert Star placed second receiving an additional \$500 donation and Copper Trails placed third receiving an additional \$250 donation.

Thank you to our families and community who support our fundraisers to ensure extra curricular activities receive extra funding.

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