

Peach Springs School

PO Box 360, Peach Springs, Arizona 86434 Phone: (928) 769-9034 Superintendent- Jaime Cole

June 15, 2018

Dear PSUSD Parents/Guardians,

The Arizona Department of Education has finalized Statewide school letter grades. This grade system is based on a formula that includes grades 9-12 high school drop-out rate and the standardized test (AZMerit) that all 3rd – 8th grade students took in the Spring of 2017; the data does not include current year 2018. Under A.R.S. 15-241, we are notifying all parents that our school received a letter grade "F". We have not been notified of our current AZMerit scores that include recent students' paper exams, but we will publish as soon as we are aware of the scores. As primary stakeholders, you probably know that growth takes a community-wide effort and partnership supporting a single mission to benefit our children. Educating children is no longer just the teachers' responsibility, but help and support is needed from parents, grandparents, administrators, tribal departments, and other community support systems. When all partners support the schools' goals and KIDS-FIRST VISION, students take ownership and responsibility in their learning.

It is critical that the whole Peach Springs community support efforts to help students make instructional gains as performance is connected to the whole child from social/emotional needs being met, hearing positive encouraging statements about their environment in and outside of the school, supporting policies and laws that ensure students feel safe and secure at home and at school, maintaining clear high expectations from home and at school through partnership by visiting classrooms to view what is happening in the learning environment, cultural connection between home and school, encouraging students to participate in learning activities in and outside school hours, sharing the value in completing high school and beyond, and encouraging hard-work to make a positive difference in his/her community. Students represent their environment and will model what is being observed. For example, if we read daily, students will watch and read a book on his/her free time. For the future of the Hualapai nation, we request all tribal departments to focus efforts on the children in the community and the needs. As elementary students increase academics, the high school graduation rate will increase.

On the part of the school district, we are working on a Needs Assessment, targeting action steps for our School Improvement Plan that address root causes and develop need statements to identify areas needing improvement by August 2018. We will continue to develop further strategies and action steps to improve our students' academic performance. Our goals this year include: increase academic growth, increase differentiated instructions in the classes to meet every child's academic needs, continue reaching out for children-first partnership with tribal agencies (I.H.S., culture department, head start, detention center, radio programs requesting an

hour a week for updates, First Things First, counseling service programs for students, PATHS with tribal support, dental program, visions and hearing with I.H.S. and incentives to increase behavioral expectations needed for success in school and in life). We will increase focus to target student attendance this year by working with the tribal agencies as students must attend school and be on time to learn what is needed each quarter. This action plan will be submitted to the Arizona Department of Education, as well as the Mohave county superintendent's office.

Parents may ask why students should attend Peach Springs USD. A few reasons include:

*State and federal funding is used directly to benefits students with the numerous staff on site to meet students' needs, full state of the art curriculum is in place for students, technology-based curriculum exceeds most school districts in AZ

*Our staff spend many hours weekly helping students one-on-one in the classroom, re-teaching concepts, collecting and analyzing data, provided individualized online targeted interventions, and planning and implementing effective strategies.

*100% certified Arizona Department of Education certified teachers

*Small class sizes (Arizona average class size is 40 students per class or multiple grade classes, we have on average 12-25 students per class).

* We are in compliance and meetings special education requirements, AZELLA/EL, curriculum in ELA, reading, writing, grammar, math, science along with having safety plans, social/emotional PATHS curriculum, enrichment plans for students that demonstrate (ROARS- Be Respectful, Take Ownership, Awesome Attitude, Be Responsible, Be Safe) behaviors.

We are improving in many areas, thank you for bringing your children to our small and safe school. We are committed to seeking success academically, to accomplish this mission we need support for our school from the community. We are looking forward to a whole-community support system in helping our students improve academically.

Realistically, there are 39 schools with "F" letter grades and 300 more with "D" grades throughout Arizona. Most schools with "A" are in Phoenix Area-Maricopa County. Two Mohave County schools received an "A". Kingman Academy, Hualapai Elementary, Manzanita Elementary and Academy of Learning all received "B" grades. The solutions for PSUSD are elusive but using positive focused action steps will create positive outcomes, and team effort is needed between the school district and community members to bring out the BEST in students.

In conclusion, we are calling on everyone in Peach Springs to focus on the strengths and intelligence of our children to create a new reality. In this community-wide effort to put children-first we need to bring out the best in others to make a better community. Focus on the learning needs of your children each day throughout the year. We can accomplish this by modeling responsibility, modeling respectful attitudes, promoting harmony and balance throughout the community.

Sincerely,

Jaime Cole, PSUSD Superintendent