

Southwest Academy

SWA

February 2018

A word from the Principal:

Southwest Academy embraces and is committed to staying progressive and continues to make the necessary changes to our school systems and processes, a necessity, when a school continues to grow.

A new development to share is the implementation of a full curriculum for our ever-growing life-skills clientele. The Unique Learning System, an award-winning program, led by Miss Shauna Silverman, our BCBA at Southwest Academy, provides meaningful and high-quality instruction and addresses our student's complex learning needs.

Last, a practice we can all assist with as a community, is setting routines and maintaining them, as this is critical for students in helping them grow up. Consistency matters. Children need to take responsibility in keeping their personal belongings at home and honoring the Southwest Academy Dress Code. This includes our policy of no cell phones, jewelry, and zippers or hoods on jackets. Please also remember that backpacks are not needed in middle school or high-school.

Please support your children with this responsibility to be resilient.

Please contact me for any questions or concerns you may have. I would be happy to meet with you.

Shari Guerra, Principal
shari.guerra@menta.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 18th– No School

February 27th – Early Release 1:00 pm

Science Fair– TBD

March 6th- Early Release 1:00pm

March 8th- End of 3rd Quarter

March 11th-15th- Spring Break



Culture Fair

MENTA believes in providing an Optimal Learning Environment for all students. We accomplish this through Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and differentiation of instruction to meet the needs of all or our students. One way we incorporate UDL is through Project Based Learning where we integrate the use of technology for research. Students then read, write, apply, create and present projects academic themes aligned with AZ College and Career Readiness Standards.

One example of Project Based Learning occurs during our Annual Culture Fair. This year the theme was Native American Cultures "The indigenous Peoples of America". The projects were creative and well researched.

Our classes each selected a Native American Tribe and presented their projects to each other across MENTA sites in AZ. This years annual event was held at Southwest Academy in Phoenix and many of our district representatives took the time see our student presentations.



Student Spot Light

Axel was one of the many students that passed through the doors of a Menta classroom each year. He thought that the adults in his life had given up on him. A year ago, he transitioned from a Level D placement back to a Menta Level C campus classroom. Menta campus staff learned that the student had an interest in sports and worked with the campus equipment manager to create opportunities for Axel during the school day and at sports events on campus. Over the past year, Axel has gone from a student that was not a fan of school to a well-known and well-liked student by both peers and staff. He now wears his high school jacket proudly and looks forward to graduating and becoming a productive member of his community. The collaboration of the Menta and Sierra Linda High School staff made the student feel welcome and cared about from the moment that he walked onto the campus. Sometimes a simple sense of belonging and the support and belief of a team can go a long way in the growth of our students.



PIBS– A continued and successful approach

PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) is an implementation framework for maximizing the selection and use of evidence-based prevention and intervention practices along a multi-tiered continuum that supports the academic, social, emotional, and behavioral competence of all students. At Southwest Academy, our PBIS committee ensures that students engage in and develop and learn social, emotional, and behavioral competence, supporting their academic engagement. All educators develop positive, predictable, and safe environments that promote strong interpersonal relationships with students through teaching, modeling, and encouragement.

When PBIS is implemented with fidelity, a reduction in major disciplinary infractions, antisocial behavior, and aggressive behavior is observed. Data displays improvements in emotional regulation and academic engagement and achievement.

Students at Southwest recently enjoyed a full taco bar to improve student attendance, maximize academic time and prevent elopement behaviors.



Occupational Therapy Tip:

Children need to sit in a good position so that they are stable in order to concentrate and use their arms and hands effectively.

Proper positioning for homework, meal time or other table top activities:

- Feet are placed flat on the floor (if your child's feet do not touch the floor a foot rest, shoe box or phone book can be placed under the feet).
- Pelvis is at the back of the seat.
- Hips and knees are bent approximately at 90°.
- Arms are forward symmetrically.
- The work surface is approximately 1 to 2 inches above a bent elbow.

Proper positioning when using a computer for academic or leisure activities:

- Head should be level with the monitor, with the top of the screen at eye level.
- Forearms should be parallel to the keyboard and held only slightly above it.
- Lower back should be supported, place a small pillow or rolled up towel between the lower back and the chair for back support.
- Feet should rest flat on the floor or on a footrest. If feet cannot reach the floor, stack boxes or telephone books to place feet on. Have knees parallel to hips.
- Take a 2-minute stretch or movement break at least every 30 minutes.

Southwest Academy

4018 N. 67th Ave.

Phoenix AZ, 85033

(623) 846-8511

Sharon Makhoul, West Valley Regional Director

sharon.makhoul@menta.com



THEMENTAGROUP®

Arizona Private-Public School Programs

Apache Junction School District- Apache Junction

Mesa Academy for Success-West- Mesa

Mesa Academy for Success-East- Mesa

Mesa High School- Mesa

Westwood High School- Mesa

Tempe Union High School District S.E.L.F. Program – Tempe

Tempe Union High School District S.E.L.F. -A Program – Tempe

Tolleson Union High School Copper Canyon- Glendale

Tolleson Union High School Sierra Linda- Phoenix

Tolleson Union High School Westview- Avondale

Arizona Special Education Schools

Southwest Academy- Phoenix, Arizona

Southwest Education Center- Casa Grande, Arizona

Menta Academy Verde Valley – Cottonwood, Arizona

Menta Academy Yuma - Yuma, Arizona