ASU Preparatory Academy Celebrates its First High School Graduating Class; 98% College Bound

Phoenix Elementary School District #1 partnership instrumental in making the Class of 2015 a reality

Phoenix, AZ – May 28, 2015 – Today, ASU Preparatory Academy – Phoenix will celebrate the graduation of its first senior class. Ninety-eight percent of the class of 2015 from ASU Prep Phoenix will walk across the stage, receive their diplomas, turn their tassels and embark on their college careers. The success of the first graduating class also marks an important milestone in the partnership between Arizona State University and Phoenix Elementary School District #1.

Since 2008, ASU has worked with students, families, teachers, administrators and the Phoenix Elementary School District leadership to launch the ASU Preparatory Academy High School in Downtown Phoenix.

“The unique PreK-12 structure of the Phoenix campus has created an innovative educational experience for students that seamlessly connects all facets of their education from point of entry through a pathway to college,” said Beatriz Rendon, CEO of ASU Preparatory Academy and Sr. Associate Vice President at Arizona State University. “This partnership illustrates Phoenix Elementary School District’s commitment to ensuring more students are college bound,” added Rendon.

The ASU Prep Class of 2015 reflects a stunning turnaround for the once struggling school in Downtown Phoenix. The Phoenix Elementary School District made a bold, precedent-setting decision to partner with ASU to open a charter school that included a high school in its elementary school district. Today, nearly 2,000 students in grades PreK-12 are demonstrating daily that they can achieve at the highest levels regardless of socioeconomic status and ZIP Code.

“We are proud to celebrate the first 12th-grade graduating class of ASU Preparatory Academy,” said Myriam Roa, Superintendent, Phoenix Elementary School District #1. “As strategic partners, we have worked together since the elementary school was opened in 2008, and we celebrate the academic success of our urban students who are benefiting from PreK-12 school in the heart of the city.”

The Phoenix campus serves an urban population with 76 percent of its students qualifying for free and reduced lunch. ASU Prep’s focus on college readiness contributed
to a high college acceptance rate for the senior class. The class of 2015 will send 76 percent of students to a four-year university; 72 percent of students were accepted to Arizona State University; additionally more than 70 percent of the students, who applied to ASU’s Barrett Honors College, were admitted. The senior class also earned more than $2 million in scholarship money.

“In today's world, all of our schools must reach out to the community for knowledge, expertise and resources; which results in best outcomes for our students,” said Dr. Ruth Ann Marston, President of the Phoenix Elementary School District #1 Board of Directors. “Having ASU Preparatory Academy operate a PreK-12 school is now a great option for our college bound students, and we are proud to have successfully partnered with ASU to bring these opportunities to our families,” added Dr. Marston.

The Phoenix campus represents tangible evidence of Arizona State University’s commitment to being socially embedded in the downtown community and to informing the field of K-12 education by building educational models that will work in other school environments, serving a greater public good. Since its inception, the Phoenix Elementary School District and ASU Preparatory Academies have shared practices, including but not limited to, assessments and teacher hiring.

“Our families in Arizona simply want the best educational experience for their children,” said George Dean, ASU Preparatory Academy Board President. “The titles of traditional versus charter are irrelevant to them. The collaboration with the Phoenix Elementary School District demonstrates that the district/charter collaborations can work and result in high academic outcomes,” Dean added.

An overview of the partnership will be discussed at the 6 p.m. Phoenix Elementary School District #1 Board Meeting on Thursday, June 25 at the District Office, 1817 N. 7th St., Phoenix, 85006.

About Phoenix Elementary School District #1:
Serving preschool through eighth-grade students since 1871, Phoenix Elementary School District #1 is steeped in heritage and tradition and located in the heart of downtown Phoenix. The District offers a breadth of special programs and curriculum and is dedicated to the total development of every student by setting high expectations and fostering academic leadership. The District’s 14 Signature and Community Schools provide safe and secure learning environments with unique themes and free programs, including Montessori, Traditional, Language Acquisition, Performing & Fine Arts, Donde Vivo, Before & After School Care & Enrichment and more. For more information please visit www.phxschools.org or call 602-257-3755.

About ASU Preparatory Academy:
ASU Preparatory Academy (ASU Prep) is ASU’s innovative PreK to 12th-grade charter
school. ASU Prep currently serves more than 2,000 students across four campuses in two principal geographic areas: Downtown Phoenix and the East Valley. The schools are publicly funded, free to attend, and accept all students, space permitting. ASU Prep’s mission is to provide a university embedded academic program that prepares students to complete college, compete globally and contribute to their society.

www.asuprep.asu.edu

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