

To: Members of the Staff
From: David Lykins, Superintendent
Date: July 31, 2017

Re: **WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL!!**

Welcome back to school - truly the best time of year. I hope that everyone had a great summer and an opportunity to rest, relax, and reflect. I am excited that our new school year is just around the corner. The district staff and year-round employees have been working diligently over the summer to prepare for an outstanding start of the 2017/18 school year. I would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to all of them for their efforts and collaboration.



As we prepare for our students to return to school on August 9th, there are many things our district can be proud of! The countless well-prepared students who have graduated from the Sedona-Oak Creek School District and gone on to be successful in college, careers, and in life, as a result of our collaborative efforts, is certainly something to be proud of. Much time, effort, and collaboration have helped us achieve the successes we have experienced in the past, but this journey has not ended. We have to keep moving forward, guided by a vision of student achievement and learning. This journey has already begun, and is paying off.

This summer, Big Park Community School submitted its application for International Baccalaureate (IB) candidacy. The teachers, staff, students, and community are working collaboratively to be recognized with the distinction of becoming an IB World School. Additionally, West Sedona School enters into the 2017-2018 school year with Advanced STEM Certification driving its curriculum. West Sedona School is one of only two schools in the State of Arizona to have earned the distinction of this specialized certification. In order to achieve this vision, we need to hold high expectations of our students and of each other. We have to approach challenges with a problem-solving, growth-oriented mindset. We have to be collaborative - working together, not in isolation. We must always remember that the future of our students rests with all of us! This makes the stakes high!!

I am so eager to embark on the 2017/18 school year! I am looking forward to a year filled with learning, growth, and achievement for every student. I extend my gratitude in advance for the great things to come as we start this journey together for the benefit of our students and community.

TOGETHER WE CAN