

# Queen Creek Unified School District Annual Financial Community Report

Our Past, Our Successes, Our Future



*Learning is our #1 priority.  
Make the right choice for your child!*



## OUR PAST, OUR SUCCESSES, OUR FUTURE.

Welcome to Queen Creek Unified School District. We are very proud of the high standards of academic achievement attained by our students and staff. We are pleased to share the news that all of our schools earned "A" or "B" grades from the Arizona Department of Education; we are one of only ten school districts across the state of Arizona that earned a grade of "A" from ADE for the last three years, 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013. Additionally, six of our Queen Creek Schools earned an "A" grade!

Our goal as a district is to provide a quality education with the belief that all children can learn. We are proud of the comprehensive pre-K through 12th grade academic programs that we offer to meet the needs for all of our students. Quality programs are offered in regular education, gifted, special education and early childhood. Career, technical and alternative high school services are also available.

All of our classrooms have state-of-the-art technology. Every classroom has interactive boards, projectors, responders, and document cameras. These technology tools enable our staff to better prepare our students for success in the 21st century workforce.

We feel very fortunate to have great support from our parents and community; we know this partnership is crucial to our providing an excellent education for students.

For more information about the Queen Creek Unified School District's academic success and financial integrity, visit us at [www.qcUSD.org](http://www.qcUSD.org). Thank you for making QCUSD the district of choice for *your* children.

Sincerely,

Mr. Tom Lindsey, Superintendent

Proud to be the Premier District  
of Choice for the East Valley.

### REPORT OVERVIEW

Queen Creek academics . . . . page 3

Programs for all students. . . . page 4

Understanding school funding pages 5-7

# EDUCATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Queen Creek students continue to outperform their peer districts on the AIMS test year after year.



## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

In Queen Creek we are proud of our 'A' grade from the Arizona Department of Education. It demonstrates the high student achievement in Queen Creek schools. Student assessment is a critical component in examining the quality of our instructional landscape. Each year, students at all Queen Creek schools are administered the AIMS (Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards). AIMS measures student performance in writing, reading, mathematics and science. QCUSD students consistently score at the highest levels of achievement on the Arizona AIMS tests, outperforming all other districts in the state.

*graded A*

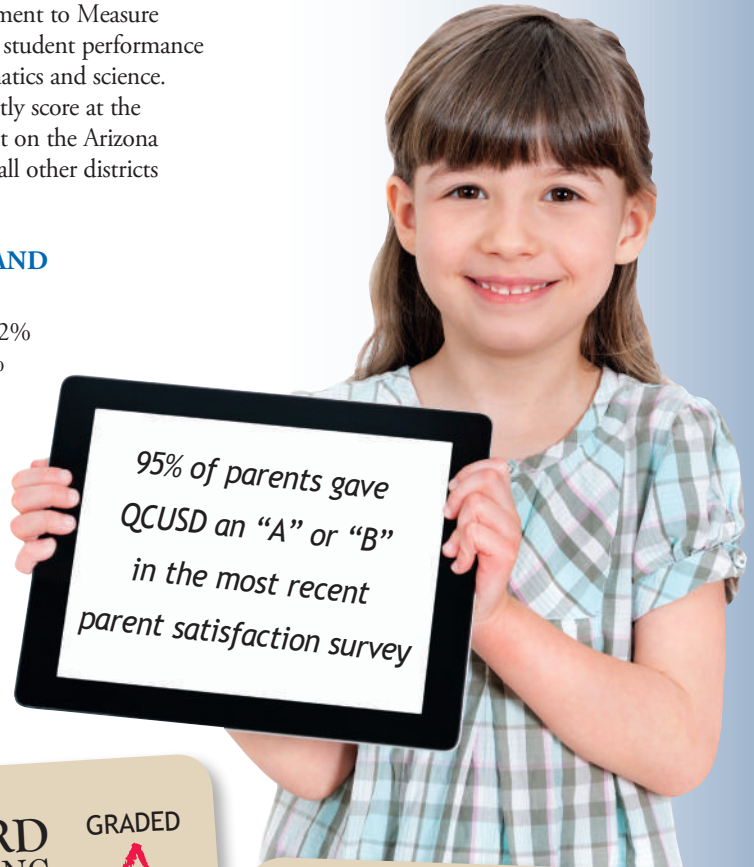
Six of the Queen Creek District schools received a grade of A during the 2013 year.

## GRADUATION RATE AND SCHOLARSHIP DATA

District Graduation Rate: 92%  
State Graduation Rate: 78%

\$3,050,000+ awarded in scholarships and aid to our 2013 senior class

\$1,700,000+ awarded in scholarships and aid to our 2012 senior class



95% of parents gave QCUSD an "A" or "B" in the most recent parent satisfaction survey

### REPORT CARD 2011 AIMS TESTING

GRADED **A**

Gr	QCUSD		STATE	
	Reading	Math	Reading	Math
3	90%	84%	76%	68%
4	93%	88%	75%	65%
5	90%	77%	79%	63%
6	90%	65%	81%	59%
7	91%	76%	82%	61%
8	82%	64%	71%	56%
9	Data not reported			
10	88%	71%	77%	60%
Total	89%	72%	78%	61%
ACT	23.5		19.7	

### REPORT CARD 2012 AIMS TESTING

GRADED **A**

Gr	QCUSD		STATE	
	Reading	Math	Reading	Math
3	90%	84%	75%	69%
4	91%	88%	75%	66%
5	89%	80%	78%	63%
6	91%	78%	80%	62%
7	91%	72%	84%	62%
8	82%	65%	71%	56%
9	Data not reported			
10	89%	71%	80%	60%
Total	89%	76%	78%	61%
ACT	23.4		19.7	

### REPORT CARD 2013 AIMS TESTING

GRADED **A**

Gr	QCUSD		STATE	
	Reading	Math	Reading	Math
3	90%	88%	75%	68%
4	91%	88%	77%	64%
5	90%	83%	79%	63%
6	92%	85%	80%	63%
7	92%	81%	85%	65%
8	85%	76%	72%	57%
9	Data not reported			
10	90%	72%	83%	61%
ACT	23.4		19.6	

Queen Creek Unified School District offers many unique programs and services to all students.



## QCUSD UNIQUE PROGRAMS

In the Queen Creek Unified School District, learning is our number one priority. Our schools offer a unique learning delivery model including K-4 elementary schools,

5-6 middle school, 7-8 junior high and one 9-12 comprehensive high school. The following are some of the highlights of the different programs offered to all students.

### Preschool and Early Childhood

Children between the ages of 3 and 4 years old have the opportunity to participate in several high quality programs including Coyote Plus, Kinder Prep 3 and Kinder Prep 4. The creative curriculum for preschools is used to provide a framework for quality learning experiences and skill development that will help prepare young children for kindergarten. Each program is taught by a highly qualified teacher.

### Career and Technical Education

Students at Queen Creek High School are offered a wide variety of instructional opportunities, preparing them for our ever-changing world and providing them with skills needed to be successful. We provide a unique comprehensive educational program for all students. Some of the many courses include Agriculture, Audio/Video Production, Biotechnology, Child Development and Toybox, Computer Aided Design, Construction and Cabinetry, Culinary Arts, Design and Merchandising, Graphic Communications, Health Occupations, Journalism/Yearbook, Marketing.

### Lifelong Learning

Queen Creek is proud to offer lifelong learning opportunities by partnering with Chandler/Gilbert Community College, Rio Salado Community College and Arizona State University to provide higher education classes in the Queen Creek community.

### Advanced Placement Dual Enrollment

AP/Dual Enrollment: The AP program offers classes in Language and Composition, Literature and Composition, World History, US History, Government, Biology, Calculus, and more! The Dual Enrollment Program offers students college credits in English 11/ENG 110-112, English 12/ENG 101-102, College Math/MAT141, Pre-Calculus/MAT187, Calculus/MAT220, Advanced Biology, Marketing, Spanish 3/4.

### Athletics

Our Athletic program promotes sportsmanship and fosters the development of good character. Sports programs must be conducted in a manner that enhances the academic, emotional, social, physical and ethical development of student-athletes. Queen Creek High School is a "Pursuing Victory With Honor School of Distinction" and is recognized by Arizona Interscholastic Association. Queen Creek High School strives to teach our student-athletes positive life skills that will help them become personally successful and socially responsible.

### Community Education

The Community Education Department at QCUSD is home to Discovery Kids (before and after school care program), after school enrichment classes and Intersession Camps and Clinics.

The Discovery Kids program is a licensed program located at each of the K-4 schools in the District. With low staff-to-student ratios, it provides working families a quality program connected to the District curriculum and access to the District's state of the art classroom technology. Discovery Kids provides homework help, structured recreation, art, science and FUN! Programs are contracted with DES to provide financial assistance for families who qualify.

Enrichment Classes vary each quarter and are at each of the K-4 schools. Class topics range from LEGO to duct tape crafting and dodge ball to karate. Over 800 students participate in these classes each year. Additionally, intersession programs offer a structured, educational fun-filled all-day camp, half day specialty camps and clinics.

### Bridges Academy

The Bridges Academy at Queen Creek Middle School is a highly innovative and comprehensive self-contained program for our 5th and 6th grade gifted students. The goal of the Bridges Academy is for students to receive an education that explores and develops the gifted child's potential by providing rich learning opportunities.

This creative program strives to provide challenging learning experiences that focus on higher order thinking, problem solving and communication skills. Teachers provide opportunities for in-depth analysis of topics and project based learning.

### Band and Orchestra

Band and orchestra are offered to students at Queen Creek Middle School. Instruction includes learning to play an instrument and reading musical notation. Playing an instrument is fun! Students learn how to successfully work together. Two concerts are performed annually. Playing an instrument teaches dedication, communication and responsibility, enhances other academic subjects, and promotes positive self-esteem. Band and orchestra skills can be enjoyed for a lifetime. QCMS has over 250 students participating in the band and orchestra program, most of whom have never played an instrument.

The annual expenditure budget serves as the foundation for the district's financial planning and control. The objective of these budgetary controls is to ensure compliance with legal provisions embodied in the annual expenditure budget approved by the district's governing board.

## HOW ARE SCHOOLS FUNDED?

### Understanding Arizona School Funding - District Budgets

School district budgets can be very complex. A budget is not just a document full of numbers prepared by the business office, rather it is a working tool central to the successful operation of a school district. Budgeting represents an opportunity to plan a district's mission, improve operations and achieve a district's educational objectives.

Arizona school districts receive funding based on a formula defined by state statute, designed to help ensure that all children in the state receive an equitable educational experience. (See A.R.S. 15-901 for details.) The formula applies a rate to the number of enrolled students (weighted by grade) and then adds amounts for transportation, district additional assistance and Classroom Site Fund. Enrollment is adjusted to account for multiple schools that a student might attend.

The portion of the budget that accounts for most of the day-to-day spending is referred to as the Maintenance and Operations (M&O) Fund. The majority of this fund is spent on salaries and benefits. The chart on page 6 demonstrates how each dollar is spent in the Queen Creek Unified School District.

## FINANCIAL AWARDS

The Association of School Business Officials awarded a Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting to the district for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2013. The district has received this distinguished award for the past nine consecutive years. In addition, the Government Finance Officers Association awarded a certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to the district for its CAFR for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2013. Queen Creek Unified has earned this award for the past five consecutive years.

## FINANCIAL REPORT CARD

### Queen Creek Unified School District

The Arizona Auditor General's office assessed multiple district level measures that impact resources and financial management practices to determine financial stress for each school district. The financial stress assessment measures include:

- number of students attending
- operating and capital overspending
- voter-approved spending increases
- operating reserve percentage
- years of capital reserve held
- financial and internal control status

For 2013, QCUSD received a score of "low level financial stress." This positive designation indicates that the District manages its resources well and the community can ensure the District is accountable to its reporting agencies.



### Arizona Auditor General

## FINANCIAL REPORT CARD

In 2013, QCUSD received a score of low level financial stress. This can be attributed to:

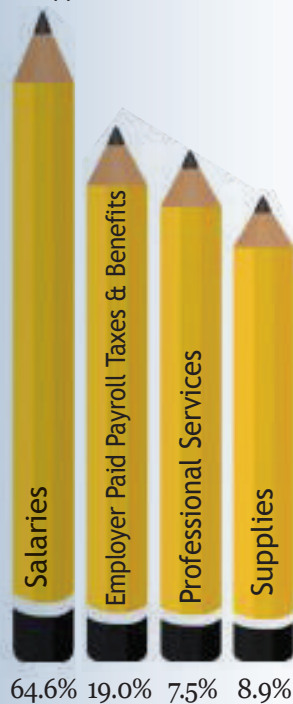
- number of students attending
- operating and capital overspending
- voter-approved spending increases
- operating reserve percentage
- years of capital reserve held
- financial and internal control status

# UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL FUNDING



Queen Creek Unified School District spends 51.2% of each dollar in the classroom.

- Salaries 64.6%
- Employer Paid Payroll Taxes and Benefits 19.0%
- Professional Services 7.5%
- Supplies 8.9%



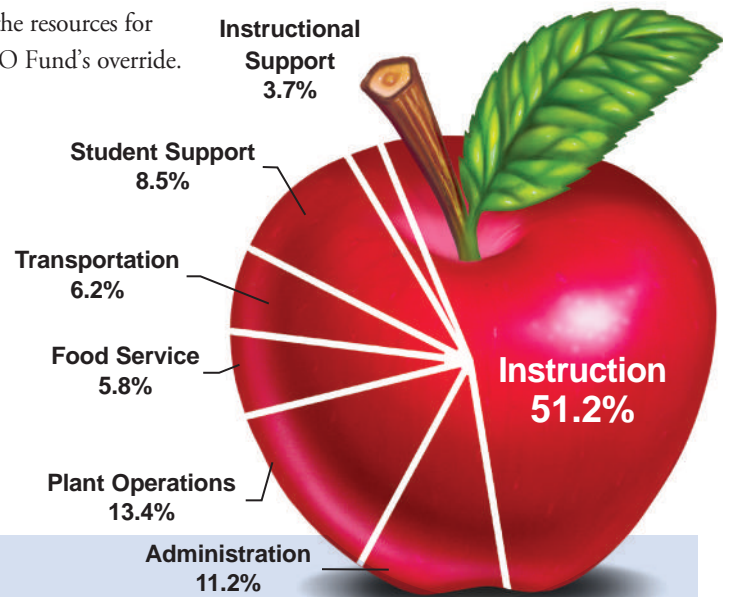
## WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM

The district's funding can be broadly classified as coming from three revenue sources: local, state, and federal. The largest revenue source is the state, followed by local revenue (which includes property taxes), and federal revenue (made up of several grants of various sizes).

Arizona property taxes are divided into two categories: primary and secondary. The primary tax rate is one of the resources for the M&O Fund (see page 5) and capital funds. The secondary tax rate provides the resources for debt payments and the M&O Fund's override.

## WHERE THE MONEY GOES

The Arizona Auditor General's office issues a report each year that compares individual school districts to state and national spending levels as well as spending trends in instruction and six nonclassroom categories. Following is a summary of the general operating fund, capital projects fund, and grants funds expenditures for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2013.



## General Operating Fund Definitions

**Instruction:** salaries, payroll taxes and benefits for teachers and instructional aides, classroom supplies

**Administration:** expenses associated with the superintendent's office, business office, human resources and administrative technology

**Plant Operations:** utilities, equipment repair, groundskeeping, security

**Food Service:** costs of preparing and serving student meals

**Transportation:** costs of transporting to and from school and school activities

**Student Support:** salaries, payroll taxes and benefits of counselors, speech pathologists, nurses, attendance staff and social workers

**Instructional Support:** expenses associated with school libraries, teacher training, curriculum development and instructional technology

# UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL FUNDING

## STATE CAPITAL FUNDING

The Unrestricted Capital Outlay portion of the budget covers long-term capital items, such as major building renovation or improvement projects as well as instructional capital needs such as technology, textbooks, library books, science equipment and school buses.

In the past, districts received Building Renewal money from the School Facilities Board based on the district's square footage. The money was used for major renovation and repairs of buildings, upgrading systems and areas that extended the buildings' useful lives and infrastructure costs. Districts across the state have been underfunded based on the State legislative formula and ultimate elimination of Building Renewal, and QCUSD has not received Building Renewal money since 2007-08, due to a state-wide budget deficit.

## CAPITAL FUNDING NEEDS

The district currently has \$40.6 million in outstanding debt, with \$4.0 million due in 2013. These bonds were issued for various capital improvement projects including renovating and remodeling older school buildings. The district paid down its debt by approximately 10% in 2013.

### Current capital funding needs include:

- Safety and Security – Security system improvements
- Transportation – Student buses and vehicles
- Building and Grounds – Plumbing, utility infrastructure, roofing repairs and replacements and fire alarm upgrades
- Infrastructure for Technology – Classroom learning systems and hardware



## ARIZONA SCHOOL ELECTION LAWS/LIMITS - Voter Approved Initiatives

### Maintenance and Operations Override

#### What is an override?

State law allows a school district to increase its M&O budget up to 15%, if approved by the voters of the district.

#### Have voters in QCUSD passed budget overrides in the past?

Yes. The first M&O override approved by Queen Creek Unified School District voters was in 2002 in the amount of 10%. In 2007, voters reauthorized the override. In November, 2013, however, the override election failed, requiring a one-third M&O override reduction of approximately \$835,000 during the 2013-14 school year and an additional \$835,000 in the 2014-15 school year for a total funding reduction of \$1,670,000. If this override is not renewed in November 2014, the override will be eliminated with a total funding loss of \$2,505,000.

#### How has the reduction of the override affected the District in the current year?

The loss of approximately \$835,000 in override funding combined with the already significant reductions in state funding has resulted in unprecedented reductions in the 2013-14 budget.

### Bond Authorization

#### What is the current bond authorization?

In 2010, the Queen Creek voters approved a \$15M bond authorization.

#### What can the District use bond funds for?

Proceeds from the District bond can be used for:

- Acquisition or lease of sites
- Construction or renovation of school buildings
- Supplying school buildings with furniture, equipment and technology
- Improving school grounds
- Purchasing pupil transportation vehicles



## ARIZONA TAX CREDIT COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The State of Arizona allows an individual or married couple to claim a nonrefundable tax credit for making cash contributions or for certain fees paid to a public school located in Arizona for the support of extracurricular activities or character education programs. Queen Creek Schools are grateful to the community for their continued support towards our students.

2011 – \$95,698  
2012 – \$93,463  
2013 – \$131,730

## CONNECT

Like us on Facebook  
Website: [www.qcUSD.com](http://www.qcUSD.com)  
20217 East Chandler Heights Road  
Queen Creek, AZ 85142  
Phone: 480-987-5935



## BOARD MEMBERS

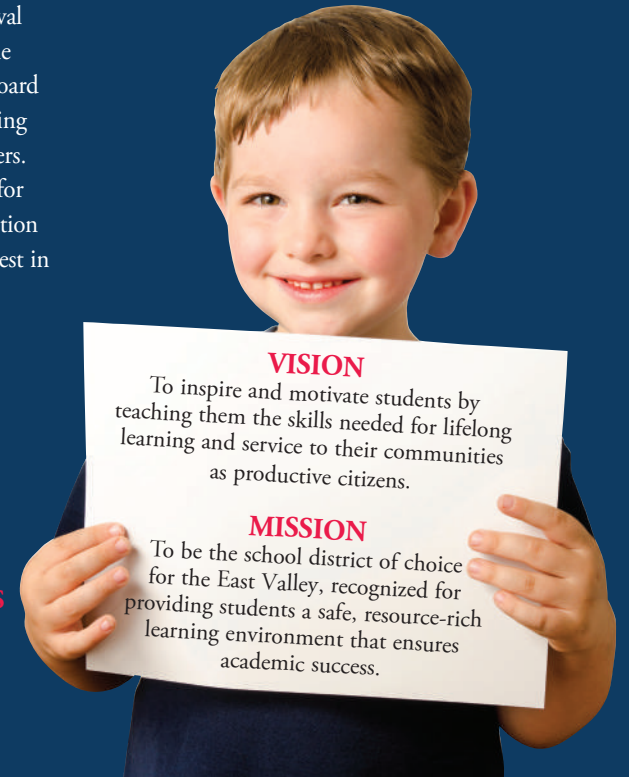
The five elected members of Queen Creek Unified School District's Governing Board play a critical role in the formulation and approval of policies which guide the operations of the District. Each member of the Governing Board is elected to serve a four-year term. Governing Board members are unpaid elected volunteers. We thank our Governing Board Members for their countless hours of support and dedication to ensuring Queen Creek Schools are the best in the state.

### Governing Board Members:

Laura Roland, *President*  
Ken Brague, *Vice President*  
Wendy Baggs, *Member*  
Del Caron, *Member*  
Judah Nativio, *Member*

## CHARACTER COUNTS SIX PILLARS

Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility,  
Fairness, Caring, Citizenship.



### VISION

To inspire and motivate students by teaching them the skills needed for lifelong learning and service to their communities as productive citizens.

### MISSION

To be the school district of choice for the East Valley, recognized for providing students a safe, resource-rich learning environment that ensures academic success.

## DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

The Queen Creek Unified School District spans the town of Queen Creek as well as south Mesa. Our district is located approximately 16 miles southeast of Chandler, AZ, near the junction of Chandler Heights and Hawes Roads.

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

**Desert Mountain Elementary**  
22301 South Hawes Road  
Queen Creek, AZ 85142-8987  
(480) 987-5912

**Frances-Brandon Pickett Elementary**  
22076 E. Village Loop  
Queen Creek, AZ 85142  
(480) 987-7420

**Jack Barnes Elementary**  
20750 South 214th Street  
Queen Creek, AZ 85142  
(480) 987-7400

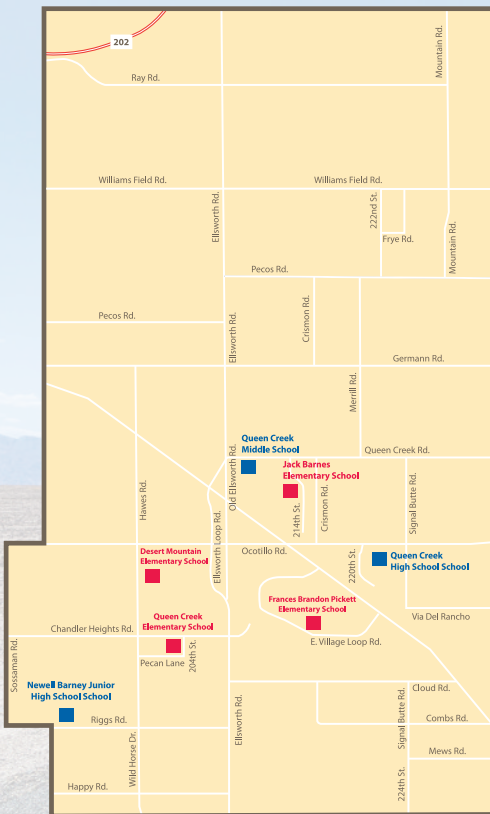
**Queen Creek Elementary**  
23636 South 204th Street  
Queen Creek, AZ 85142-9677  
(480) 987-5920

## MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOLS

**Newell Barney Junior High School**  
24937 South Sossaman Road  
Queen Creek, AZ 85142  
(480) 474-6700

**Queen Creek Middle School**  
20435 South Old Ellsworth Road  
Queen Creek, AZ 85142  
(480) 987-5940

**Queen Creek High School**  
22149 East Ocotillo Road  
Queen Creek, AZ 85142-7750  
(480) 987-5973



Graded 'A' by the Arizona Department of Education  
At QCUSD, Learning is our #1 Priority!