



TAP TO READ

Opportunities Await: GESD-Glendale Chamber Partnership Committed to Student Needs

By Matt Beardmore

Three years ago, Glendale Elementary School District (GESD) #40 became one of the first school districts in Arizona to earn Model Professional Learning Community (PLC) status from Solution Tree, a professional learning company, "for its sustained success in enhancing student achievement."

The continued partnership with the Glendale Chamber of Commerce is giving the district's more than 9,500 students even more opportunities to achieve and connect to their community.

Since Cindy Segotta-Jones stepped into her role as GESD superintendent five years ago, the school district, which includes 12 pre-K to eighth-grade schools, an online school, and a district preschool, has been named the best school district in Glendale by the readers of The Glendale Star in 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023.

In 2020, 10 years after GESD began its "journey of continuous improvement utilizing the PLC framework," the school district earned Model PLC status after successfully implementing the PLC process, which includes educators working in collaborative teams to focus on learning, building a collaborative culture, and creating a results orientation. GESD is one of only three school districts in Glendale and 11 in Arizona to have achieved Model PLC status.

GESD's commitment to the academic and social-emotional needs of its students, 1,500 employees, and the community is also evident in its strong partnership with the Glendale Chamber of Commerce.

"The Glendale Chamber serves as a networking hub and fosters connections among local businesses and community organizations," said Glendale Elementary School District Superintendent Cindy Segotta-Jones. "Partnering with the Chamber allows GESD to extend our network. By working with leadership at the Chamber and participating in committees

including the Chamber Education Committee, we are collectively enhancing the educational environment, uplifting student outcomes, and fostering a sense of community pride."

One such example of the Chamber helping the GESD while celebrating the heritage of Historic Downtown Glendale was with its support of the recent launch of GESD's customized board game, GESD-OPOLY. Sales from this game board (they can be purchased this summer for \$40 each at gustofoundation.org) will be used to support the work of the Glendale Uniting Students Teachers and Others (GUSTO) Educational Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that "provides incentives for staff members and awards for students across the district."

For this upcoming school year, GESD schools will also offer signature learning opportunities at all schools, Segotta-Jones said.

