

It's Teacher Appreciation Week so I wanted to give a special recognition to every teacher in Tucson Unified. We thank you for what you do for our student's day in and day out.

Tomorrow also marks National School Nurse Day. We appreciate everything you do to care for our students as well. We'll hear more about National School Nurse Day just a bit later in the meeting.

We're also showing our thanks to all of our employees this week with a special awards show tomorrow night called "Celebration of the Stars." Each teacher of the year from the schools will be honored along with employees in blue collar, professional and classified, as well as principals and assistant principals.

All of the nominees and teachers of the year are listed at TUSD-ONE-DOT-ORG and you can watch the event live starting at 6pm on our LiveStream feed on our website as well. This is the first year TUSD has held a districtwide event to honor the employees who go above and beyond.

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As you know, the state recently eliminated the AIMS test as a high school graduation requirement. Students who have earned the required 2015 course and credit requirements will graduate in May.

Students in prior years who did not pass AIMS did not meet the graduation requirements for that year. But with the new ruling from ADE, many of these students now meet the 2015 requirements.

Since the AIMS repeal, the counseling department has helped 62 students get their diplomas and has provided information on how to earn any missing credits to an additional 29 students so far.

In fact, one mom called to see whether her son, who would have graduated in an earlier year, could get his diploma. He didn't graduate in his year because he didn't pass the AIMS test, she explained, but he had worked very hard—retaking classes to get better grades and taking extra courses just to learn.

When Beth Counts in our counseling department looked at his records, she found that he had met the 2015 credit requirements and he now has earned his diploma!

Ms. Counts said that the mom burst into joyful tears upon hearing this news. She put Ms. Counts on speaker phone to tell her son that he is now a high school graduate. There was quite a celebration in the house!

It is so exciting that students who passed all their classes but didn't fare so well on one or more sections of AIMS might now meet the 2015 requirements for their high school diplomas. It truly can be a life-changer.

Anyone who has questions about meeting the 2015 high school graduation requirements can call the TUSD School Counseling Department. They are ready to help in every way.