

Sequoia Choice Times

August/September

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Dear Families,

I don't know about you, but I love Fall. I am not sure if it's the cooler temperatures, the slower pace of life, or just the happiness anything with pumpkin spice seems to bring. One of my favorite book series when I was growing up was Winnie the Pooh. Have you ever noticed it is always Fall in the Hundred Acre Wood? Have you ever paid attention to the difference in the characters as learners? I feel they represent the majority of any school's student population.

Pooh Bear learners are those who seem open, upbeat, and cheerful. They are insightful and willing to try new things. They usually need to be pushed just a bit since they seem blissfully unaware of the consequences of falling behind, or not following through.

Christopher Robin students are those who are cheerful, wise, and often more mature than others their age. They display intelligence, cleverness, helpfulness, compassion, and the ability to lead change.

Those who learn like **Piglet** love to share their thoughts and have their voice heard. They will most often encourage others. Sometimes Piglets have a hard time taking a stand for what they really believe.

I think we all know about **Eeyore**. Eeyore learners will often give up before they ever start.

Kanga is full of peace and harmony. Kangas are quick to help others, and are willing to help those who are struggling.

Roo is a sponge, and so are Roo learners. There is very little that gets by them. Roos also need to see the relevance in all that is taught and expected.

Rabbit, and Rabbit students, like to go fast and they like things to be done correctly. They don't like to be held back by structure or other people.

Tigger-like students are full of energy, fun-loving, and over-confident. Keeping focused and being closure can be a challenge for these types of learners.

Throughout the history of Sequoia Choice, we have made it our goal to reach each learner in a way that makes sense for them. We know that our school is full of students who view life and learning in so many different ways. It is our job to reach the students in a way that is meaningful to them.

I encourage parents and students to give us feedback on how we are doing. If we can do a better job meeting your needs, please do not hesitate to contact us. We also want to be learners.

Warm Regards,

Cindy Chleborad

Principal, Sequoia Choice — Arizona Distance Learning

Our mission is to provide a caring environment of high expectations, individualized attention, and great teaching via a distance learning delivery system that is sufficiently adaptable to help K-12 students in traditional and non-traditional educational settings achieve their maximum academic potential and life goals.

Counselor's Corner

Seniors: Changes in Financial Aid

Are you a senior who will graduate this school year? Do you plan on continuing your education next year? Maybe you're debating between attending a community college, a four-year university, or a trade or technical school. No matter where you go, if you plan to attend school next year, you need to read this.

Starting this year, the federal Department of Education has moved the date up that the FAFSA, or Free Application for Federal Student Aid, becomes available for submission. The FAFSA is your key to receiving financial aid for your post-secondary (post-high school) education.

Starting this year, **the FAFSA will open on October 1** rather than on January 1. That means next year's college freshman (this year's seniors) should fill out the FAFSA this fall rather than next spring. The FAFSA will use your and your parents' tax information from the prior-prior year, or 2015. Previously, parents and students would use the prior year's information (2016). Since most people do not submit their taxes in January, students had to go back later and update their information after their parents filed their taxes. The change in date eliminates the need for later corrections.

If you plan to continue your schooling next year, you should submit your FAFSA right away. Sit down with your parents and fill it out. The FAFSA is important because it's the only way you can receive financial aid for post-secondary schooling. Remember, financial aid is different than scholarships. Scholarships are generally based on academic merit, whereas financial aid is based strictly on financial need. You do not need to get excellent grades to receive financial aid, but you do need to pass your classes and work hard.

A couple of weeks after submitting your FAFSA, you will receive notice of what is called your EFC, or Expected Family Contribution. This is how much you and your family can reasonably be expected to pay toward your education in the next school year. Naturally, the lower your EFC, the more aid you will be eligible for. Schools then take your EFC to determine your total aid package.

Financial aid is based on financial need, but it also operates on a first-come, first-served basis. If you have an EFC of zero, which means you and your parents cannot contribute anything toward your post-secondary education,

you will likely receive a lot of financial aid. Most students, however, do not fall into that category. Time is money. If you wait to submit your FAFSA, you will receive less financial aid.

Financial Aid Overview

You will find that there are two types of almost everything in financial aid. First, there are two types of financial aid: free money and self-help.

Free money comes in the form of grants. So long as you pass your classes and use the grants only for educational purposes, you won't have to pay them back.

Self-help comes in two forms: loans and work study.

Loans also come in two types, subsidized and unsubsidized. Subsidized loans do not accrue interest as long as you are in school. Unsubsidized loans start accruing interest the moment you take out the loan. Naturally, you want subsidized loans rather than unsubsidized ones. And even though you may be offered \$20,000 in loans does *not* mean you should take all of it! Only take what you need. You will need to repay those loans someday, *with interest*. Be wise in your educational borrowing.

You can also convert some of your loans to work study if you receive more loans than you want to take. If you convert a loan to work study, once you earn the money through the work study program, you do not have to pay it back.

I have lots more information about financial aid and the FAFSA on the school website. Check it out at <http://www.sequoiachoice.org/counselors-corner/financial-aid/>.

Go fill out the FAFSA right away: <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>.

As always, if you have questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Ms. Jeanine Newsom

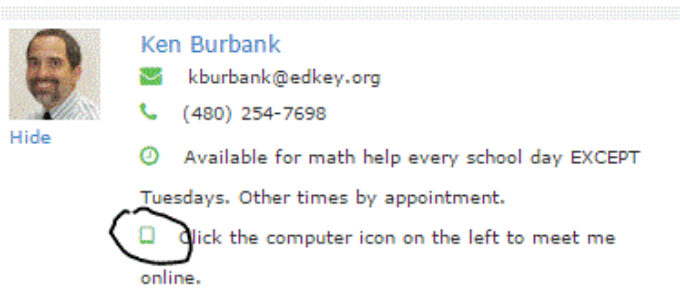
School Counselor

480-461-3222 x10644

This math is driving me crazy! How can I get help?

We've all been there. We've read what we're supposed to read, watched the videos, tried the hints in Khan, and yet we are still stumped. What now?

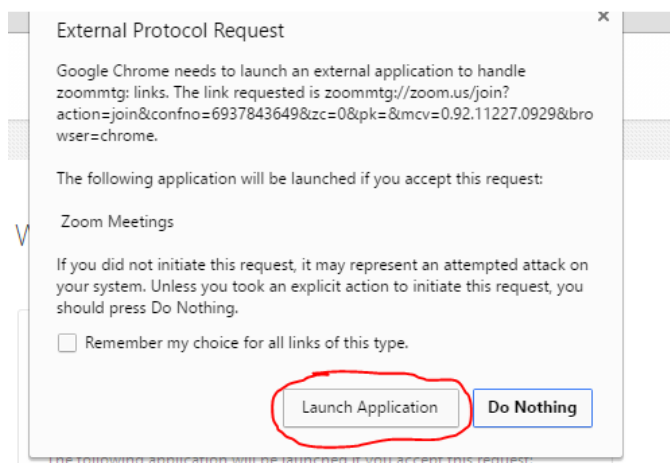
Here's what? Click the computer icon on your course page and get linked directly to your teacher in the virtual classroom:



Ken Burbank
 kurbank@edkey.org
 (480) 254-7698
 Available for math help every school day EXCEPT Tuesdays. Other times by appointment.
 Click the computer icon on the left to meet me online.

You don't need to make an appointment or put it off. Check your teacher's available times in their profile; if you need help click the icon. Make sure you have ear buds in so you can hear. If you also have a microphone hooked to your computer, that's even better.

You'll see these screens to click on:



External Protocol Request

Google Chrome needs to launch an external application to handle zoommtg: links. The link requested is zoommtg://zoom.us/join?action=join&confno=6937843649&zsc=0&pk=&mcv=0.92.11227.0929&browser=chrome.

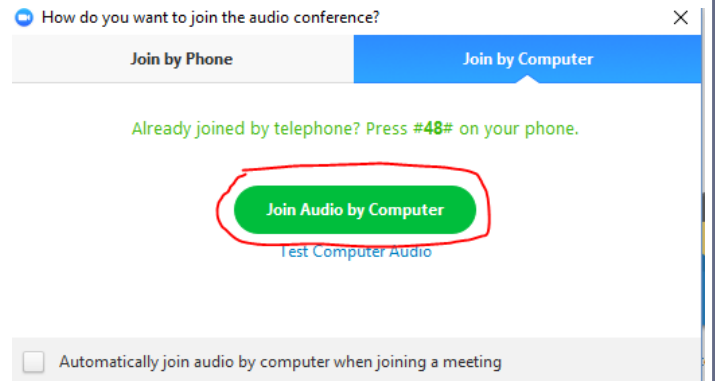
The following application will be launched if you accept this request:

Zoom Meetings

If you did not initiate this request, it may represent an attempted attack on your system. Unless you took an explicit action to initiate this request, you should press Do Nothing.

Remember my choice for all links of this type.

Launch Application Do Nothing



How do you want to join the audio conference?

Join by Phone Join by Computer

Already joined by telephone? Press #48# on your phone.

Join Audio by Computer
 Test Computer Audio

Automatically join audio by computer when joining a meeting

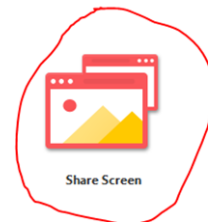
If you get a message that says "Waiting for moderator to start the session", just give it a few minutes and your teacher will join you online. It's just like raising your hand in class, but your fingers won't get numb while you wait.

You'll be able to share your screen with your teacher and you can meet together to get the help you need.

Meeting Topic: Ken Burbank's Personal Meeting Room
Host: Ken Burbank
Invitation URL: <https://zoom.us/j/6937843649>
 Copy URL
Participant ID: 48



Join Audio
 Computer Audio Connected



Share Screen



Invite Others

Testing Information

Benchmarks

This year we are working harder on achieving accuracy and effectiveness within the Galileo benchmarking system. In order to do this, benchmarks will now be aligned with the student's actual progress in their courses. When it's time to take the test, a marker within the course will direct the student to take the pre, CBAS #1, or post benchmark.

For those families that are returning, you will see that Galileo has a new interface. There are many improvements to allow you and your student to review the assigned Galileo assessment on the Dashboard and ease of obtaining your scores. Please review the introduction to the new student page using the link below.

http://www.ati-online.com/video/PD_K12/Student_Access/Student_Access.html

The student username will be the same as your MyEdkey information. On occasion, a student may have a different username due to a prior student having the same one. If you have any questions about your username and password, please contact your advisor.

AzMERIT

In order to prepare your student for AzMERIT, the state has provided sample tests on <http://azmeritportal.org> which are open to all individuals. You can also find other support materials such as calculator guidance, ELA Writing Guides, and Math Blueprints at that link. AzMERIT will be administered in the Fall for students enrolled and receiving high school credit for specific courses. See the chart on the next page and look out for more information from your advisor.

General testing information can currently be reviewed on the ADE website. <http://www.azed.gov/assessment/azmerit/>

AzMerit sample test instructions: <https://cms.azed.gov/ContentCache/54e7666daadebe103c500934/index.htm>

Civics Test

New this year!!

We will be working in accordance with the Arizona Department of Education to implement this high school graduation requirement. The Civics test does need to be proctored and scores will be recorded at the school level. There will be more information to come as the year progresses.

From the ADE :

In 2015, the Arizona legislature passed the Arizona Civics Test Law (House Bill 2064). This bill will require students, beginning with the graduating class of 2017, to pass a civics test based on the United States Immigration and Naturalization civics questions. Students will be required to score 60% or higher in order to graduate from high school or obtain a high school equivalency certificate.

Arizona Civics Test Law: <http://www.azleg.gov/ars/15/00701-01.htm>

Several links have been provided to prepare your student for the Civics test.

Study Materials for the Civics Test:

<http://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/learners/study-test/study-materials-civics-test>

Flash Cards:

<https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/see-all-section-items-title-right/Civics%20Flash%20Cards%20for%20the%20Naturalization%20Test/55239?destination=node/41140>

Fall 2016 Testing Dates

State testing is a requirement of your enrollment at Sequoia Choice. If you are enrolled in one or more of the following classes, you will be required to take the assigned AzMerit test this fall.

English	Math
English 9 B	Algebra 1 B
English 10 B	Geometry B
English 11 B	Algebra 2 B
ENG 101 and ENG 102	MAT090 through MAT151

The test window is **October 24, 2016 to December 2, 2016**. For English courses, the **writing portion** of the test must be completed **no later than November 18, 2016**. We will schedule multiple testing locations around the state to accommodate all the students who

need to test—however, you may schedule make-up or alternative testing arrangements at our Mesa office at any point during the testing window. Remember, state testing is a requirement of enrollment. If you do not test, you **WILL** be withdrawn!

More information about AZMerit, including practice tests and estimated test times, can be found at the links below

- * <http://www.azed.gov/assessment/azmerit/>
- * <http://azmeritportal.org/>

Sequoia Student Spotlight



Congratulations to Sequoia Choice student, Nahnalah Guerrero, for being one of the winners of (Van's Warped Tour) Lisa Johnson's Think TEI - Life in the Pit 2016 Photography Contest! Her photo of Spencer Charnas of Ice Nine Kills was a winner. Here's what Lisa Johnson Rock Photographer had to say about the photo: "Capturing the raw emotion of a rapidly moving object human are always a challenge. Nahnalah has nailed it here with her image of Spencer from ICENINEKILLS, as his constricted facial expression is frozen in time." Nahnalah has been shooting for just over a year and is now the primary photographer/co-founder for Tour Press Force and a leading contributor for New Music Inferno.

We're so proud of our Sequoia Choice Students! If your child is doing something AMAZING, we want to know! They could be the next Sequoia Spotlight Student.

Refer a Friend Program

REFER A FRIEND



Throughout the years, Sequoia Choice Arizona Distance Learning has offered our Refer a Friend Program to our students. We are excited to be offering it now! Referring a friend to our school makes you eligible for a \$50 Walmart or Amazon.com gift card! Claiming a gift card is easy. Just visit our website at azdl.org. Find the drop-down menu in the top right corner and completed the required form.

There are many reasons why your friends may want to attend AZDL for FREE:

- * We offer credit recovery to students who may have previously failed a course at their home school.
- * We offer college courses to students who meet the requirements.
- * Some students enroll to take elective courses with the intent of transferring the credit back to their high school to improve their GPA or class rank for scholarship purposes.
- * We serve students who quit school, but need an option for continuing school while working full-time. We accept students up to their 21st birthday.
- * Many of our students are trying to get ahead in their high school credits.
- * We offer an elementary program that allows parents to be very involved. Our approach is unique to the industry.
- * We are a small school with a great staff who care about each student. We are not a national conglomerate.

Many students do not realize that being enrolled in more than one school is an option in Arizona. Students may attend as many schools as they wish. We currently have several students who attend one school during the day, and work in their AZDL courses at night and on the weekends.

Phoenix Fan Fest!

Are you coming to Phoenix Fan Fest? **Christin Pike and Laney Rhineheart from the AZDL main office will be joining a panel to discuss Mental Health in Disney media and culture on October 22nd at 1:30 PM.** Stop by room 228 AB in the North building for an entertaining AND educational discussion about mental health. More information about the panel can be found here: <http://www.phoenixcomicon.com/programming/panel/5310>



New Teachers at R.E.A.C.H!

From the Director of R.E.A.C.H education enrichment program: I have some wonderful news to share from here in our little City of Maricopa!

The R.E.A.C.H. program, our home education enrichment program that runs one day a week, has two new, wonderful teachers!

Michelle Lowman is our new science and art teacher. Her previous experience includes a supervisory position and trainer within the City of Phoenix Municipal Court, as well as a paraprofessional within the Kyrene school district. She brings much needed order to the program with her razor sharp organization skills, and is an absolute treasure with the students.

Jennifer Martin, our P.E. and Performing Arts teacher, is a long-time home education advocate, with four of her own children being home educated at various times in their school careers. She brings a wealth of experience to the program, having personally taken part in it with her own children, as well as various other experiences including her time as a CASA volunteer for the Pinal County Court system. Her love for the students shows in everything she does.

This program has been a joy for me since its inception seven years ago. I'm so grateful for teachers who share my vision of inclusion, gentle instruction, and immersion in a culture of mutual respect. Please join me in welcoming these two wonderful women!



Calendar of Events

October 2016

- ◆ 10 - 14: Fall Break, NO SCHOOL
- ◆ 24 - AzMERIT Testing Window Opens

November 2016

- ◆ 11 - Veterans Day, SCHOOL OFFICES CLOSED
- ◆ 16 - AzMERIT Writing Portion Must Be Completed
- ◆ 24 - 25 Thanksgiving Holiday SCHOOL OFFICES CLOSED

December 2016

- ◆ 2 - AzMERIT Testing Window Closes
- ◆ 22 - Last Day of the Fall Semester
- ◆ 23 - Jan 6: Winter Break, NO SCHOOL

For a complete view of our school calendar, please visit our website at <http://www.sequoiachoice.org/>