

What do deseg dollars mean to PUHSD?

Phoenix Union High School District puts desegregation funds to good use

Phoenix Union High School District is an integral component of the shared future of Phoenix and Arizona, as well as the collective success of individuals coming from families of greatest need. Established in 1895, PUHSD encompasses 220 square miles, with 20 schools and 27,700 students.

Desegregation funding has allowed PUHSD to develop a series of magnet programs in areas such as aerospace, bioscience, police and fire science, and computer coding. Deseg dollars also have allowed PUHSD to launch the state's first and only Montessori High School, as well as double the state average for support services to help ensure students' security, well-being and future success.

What is "desegregation funding" and its history?

- Desegregation funding is a special tax levy established in 1985 to settle a federal lawsuit over inequities in school district services.
- The district closed several schools in the late 1970s, forcing low-income and minority students to travel many miles to other campuses. The federal court decreed that the district open three new schools in the underserved areas and develop programs to attract low-income and minority students.
- Although PUHSD no longer is under federal court control, the tax revenue source for enhanced programs and those mandated by the settlement and consent decree remains in place via desegregation funding.

What does deseg funding mean in actual dollars?

- Desegregation funding makes up about 24 percent of the district's \$224.4 million budget.
- Property tax for district residents is about \$1.29 per \$100 assessed valuation. That means the owner of a \$200,000 home in the district will pay \$1,012 in property taxes to PUHSD, with deseg funding representing \$258 of that total.
- PUHSD gets fewer dollars per pupil (\$2,471) than the state average (\$3,825). However, the district has a greater total per-pupil funding (\$11,428) than the state average (\$8,703), thanks in large part to desegregation funding and greater federal funding.

What are some of the positive outcomes of deseg funding?

- PUHSD has an 81 percent four-year graduation rate – 3 points above Arizona's average graduation rate – despite many of its students coming from challenging family scenarios.
- The district's dropout rate (3.2 percent) is less than half of the national average and slightly less than the statewide four-year dropout rate.
- In recent years, deseg funding has come under threat. In 2016, a failed bill in the Legislature would have ended \$211 million in deseg funding for 18 school districts including PUHSD.
- College is the goal for many PUHSD students, who earned \$93 million in scholarships in 2017, according to the district.