

## High School News Release

The Paradise Valley Unified School District piloted an expanded drug testing program for students in our district during the 2005-2006 school year. This was as a result of survey data collected from parents of middle- and high-school students in the spring of 2005. Prior to the 2005-2006 school year, the only students who were part of our district's random student drug testing program were those who participated in activities sponsored by the Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA). Nearly 90 percent of the parents and guardians who responded to the survey were in favor of expanding voluntary, random drug testing to the broader student population, with parent permission.

Based on the survey response, district personnel contacted the Maricopa County Attorney's office about funding an expanded program. The Maricopa County Attorney's Office provided such funding for the last three years for the expanded drug-testing program. We will continue the program this year as we have for the last three years.

If parents/guardians give their permission, their high school student will be included in the random drug testing program, which is designed as a deterrent to drug use and as a tool for parents to initiate or continue discussions with their children. A positive test result will not result in disciplinary action and police will not be involved. The school principal and district director of student services are the only staff members who will receive test results and contact with the parents regarding test results will be made by the principal.

Permission forms to include non-A.I.A. students in the district's random drug testing program are now available at all PVUSD high schools for parents to pick up or request their student bring home. The form must be signed in the presence of a school employee and a picture ID presented. The form may also be notarized and must be delivered or mailed to the school. Forms will not be accepted from students. Parents may rescind this permission at any time, in a letter addressed to the principal.

Parents and guardians may also request a home drug testing kit from the principal. This kit tests for marijuana (THC), cocaine, opiates (heroin) and methamphetamines and is done in the privacy of your home. Although the home drug test kit is not as expansive as a laboratory test, it does allow for a drug test to be completed in the privacy on one's home.

Parents may also request a voucher from their school's administration for Southwest Labs, which offers a more expansive drug test. With this format, the parent can take their student to a laboratory near 40<sup>th</sup> Street and Bell Road and will receive the results of the test from their principal within three to five school days. Additional information on this program is available from your school's administration or counseling department.