

KGA Counselor Connection

November 2018



MEET OUR SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

Susan Arnpriester

Susan ("Sue") grew up in the Phoenix area and graduated from Arizona State University with a degree in Elementary Education before moving to the Midwest for graduate school. At the University of Nebraska, Sue earned a Master of Science degree in Developmental Psychology and later taught psychology courses at Iowa Western Community College. Back in Arizona, she put her elementary degree to work teaching in the Tucson area before returning to school to earn a specialist degree in school psychology with a focus in gifted education from the University of Arizona. Here at KGA, Sue works with a team of professionals to support our 2e learners. She also works with all students, teachers, and families to support the overall social emotional well-being on campus by running weekly mindfulness groups and working with student leadership to make positive impacts on the climate of KGA.

NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL GRATITUDE MONTH

Research has shown that gratitude can enhance our moods, decrease stress, and improve our overall health and wellbeing. On average, grateful people tend to have fewer stress-related illnesses and experience less depression and lowered blood pressure. People who practice gratitude also tend to be happier and enjoy more satisfying personal and professional relationships. Here are some ways your family can be intentional about practicing gratitude:

- ✦ Keep a gratitude journal. Take time each night to write in the journal as a family or individually. Thinking grateful thoughts before bed can improve sleep!
- ✦ Start a gratitude jar. Place a jar in a central location in your home with slips of paper nearby. Encourage family members to jot down what they are grateful for. Read all the slips on Thanksgiving.
- ✦ Write thank-you notes.
- ✦ Donate outgrown clothes or toys, taking time to be thankful for those items that have passed through your home on their way to a new family.

KGA's Mental Health Professionals:
Counselor Paula DeSantis desantis.paula@cusd80.com
School Psychologist Sue Arnpriester
arnpriester.susan@cusd80.com
480.812.6100

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 9 – Veterans' Day Celebration

Students will gather in **gratitude** for family members who have served our country with military service. Coffee & Pastries will be served to all our veterans at 8:40 a.m. with a program to follow.

November 16 – Friendship Friday

The Climatologists, a group of student leaders, are planning activities to promote **kindness** and **friendship** at KGA.

November 16 – Fall Festival

An opportunity for our school community to **connect** in family fun with games, contests, entertainment and food trucks

November 21 – Giving Thanks Parade

Unlock Potential. Find Your Password

by Sue Arnpriester

Here at KGA, we want students to reach their potential and develop skills to thrive in school and in life. This year, I am participating in National School Psychology Awareness Week, November 12-16, 2018, the theme of which is “**Unlock Potential. Find Your Password!**” The theme emphasizes how we can each find our own “password,” or personal key for unlocking any number of challenges and opportunities in our lives to help us thrive. My goal is to highlight how identifying strength words can assist students in unlocking resources, reaching potential, and developing proactive or preventative skills to thrive in school and life. The idea is that a “password” can help us set goals to help create critical academic and social-emotional skills. Words such as “imagine,” “encourage,” “learn,” “connect,” and “contribute” are examples of passwords that can push us forward in developing those critical skills.

Unlocking potential can take many forms. It can mean taking action to speak up when bullying occurs, engaging in learning, trying a new activity or skill, cleaning up trash on the playground, doing something kind for a classmate or neighbor, or making new friends. These actions empower children, create compassion, strengthen connections, and build resiliency—all traits that are critical for academic and social-emotional success. Unlocking potential to grow as an individual and to make the world even a little bit better can have a long lasting impact.



