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Arizona Teachers Academy Annual Report: Enrollment Doubles; More Teachers for Arizona's Classrooms

Flagstaff, Ariz. – Enrollment in the Arizona Teachers Academy more than doubled to 464 students in 2018-19 from 221 the previous year, supporting growth of the Arizona teacher pipeline and addressing Arizona's teacher workforce shortage.

Detailed in the fiscal year 2019 Arizona Teachers Academy Annual Report, approved by the Arizona Board of Regents this week, are growth trends, capacity and progress of the academy at Arizona's public universities and community college partners. The board also approved the budget and allocation of funds among the institutions for the academy.

Created in 2017 in partnership with Gov. Doug Ducey, the fiscal year 2020 state budget includes \$15 million dedicated to providing more quality teachers for Arizona's classrooms through the academy. With the infusion of new funding, the board anticipates growing the academy to approximately 3,000 students.

"With expanding enrollment and funding to allow for more students, we are eager to be part of the solution to bring more highly-qualified teachers to our state's classrooms," said ABOR Chair Ron Shoopman. "Our universities have a long and proud tradition of educating and training Arizona's teacher workforce. Together, the universities and our community college partners are able to help meet a crucial need in our state's schools and offer more affordable options for students who aspire to this noble profession."

The Arizona Teachers Academy offers a year-for-year tuition waiver scholarship for students who commit to teaching in the state's public schools. In addition to tuition waiver scholarships, students enrolled in the academy have access to support services during and after completion of their program of study. These services are provided by the university in partnership with school districts and include new teacher induction and mentoring to improve outcomes and retention.

“Just two years since its implementation, the Arizona Teachers Academy is making real, demonstrable progress. We appreciate and thank the governor and Legislature for a dedicated funding source that will allow the universities to provide more teachers for Arizona’s classrooms,” said ABOR Executive Director John Arnold. “We all know that a great teacher can change a student’s life. It’s inspiring to think how many lives will be positively impacted by the wonderful educators graduating from the academy.”

This year’s report demonstrates demand for the Arizona Teachers Academy and its success:

- The number of academy graduates grew by 68 percent year-over-year, from 102 completions in 2017-18 to 171 completions in 2018-19.
- By the end of 2018-19, it is expected that 273 students will have completed a program of study through the academy.
- During the 2018-19 school year, 120 academy graduates were teaching in an Arizona public school.
- Of the total enrollment of 464 students, increases at the universities were as follows: Arizona State University, 146 to 276; Northern Arizona University, 60 to 160; and 15 to 28 at the University of Arizona.

Each of Arizona’s three public universities – ASU, NAU and UA – offer differentiated programs through the academy, allowing the enterprise to provide undergraduate and graduate students in rural and urban settings an opportunity to earn their teaching degree tuition free. The report includes details on university-specific program offerings, as well as campus enrollment numbers and outcomes during the past two years.

Budgeting for the academy will allocate state funded scholarships based on the number of students enrolled in each institution’s education degree programs or post-baccalaureate programs at the community colleges. ASU’s projected allocation of funds for the academy is approximately \$4.9 million, NAU \$4.2 million and UA \$1 million. For the community colleges that are part of the academy, Maricopa Community Colleges will receive about \$909,000 and Pima Community College approximately \$630,000.

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