

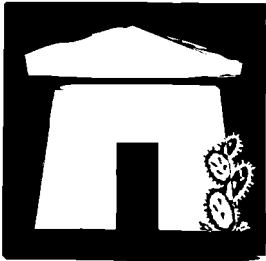
April 12, 2004  
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# cityscape

*the monthly newsletter for City High School & Tucson Small School Project*

City High School • 48 East Pennington Street • Tucson, AZ 85701  
phone 520.623.7223 • fax 520.624.4766

CITY  
HIGH SCHOOL



learning. working.  
creating. connecting.

CITY HIGH SCHOOL strives to be a community of learners in which all members use their minds well and care about one another. We engage with challenging academics and the unique resources of our city and region in order to become active citizens and responsible stewards of our world.

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TUCSON SMALL SCHOOL PROJECT is a nonprofit organization with two primary purposes: to start and sustain City High School, a new charter high school in downtown Tucson; and to promote dialogue and professional development that foster smaller, more equitable learning communities for all students. TSSP is an Arizona corporation with 501(c)3 tax-exempt status.

## A Month of Milestones

Although March might not have achieved the state of “madness” Wildcat basketball fans were hoping for, the month did turn out to be an eventful one for City High School. The school and its nonprofit organization achieved official status in the eyes of the State Board for Charter Schools and the Internal Revenue Service. Meanwhile, student enrollment for the first year surpassed the half-way mark.

### City High School Charter Contract

City High School Principal Carrie Brennan traveled to Phoenix last month to sign the school's charter contract with the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools. The Board accepted City High School's charter application a year ago, in March 2003. In order to sign the charter, however, a school must be able to demonstrate significant progress in the planning process and a commitment to open within six months. Check out the

“school search” on the Arizona State Board for Charter School's website [www.asbcs.state.az.us](http://www.asbcs.state.az.us) and look for City High School.

### TSSP Non-Profit Status

After a lengthy IRS application process, Tucson Small School Project received approval as a 501(c)3 organization. This allows all donations to TSSP and City High School to be fully tax-deductible. It also makes the school eligible to apply for foundation grants open to nonprofit organizations.

### First Phase of Enrollment

The open enrollment period drew to a close in March with over half of the spots filled for 2004-2005. Since the number of applications did not exceed capacity there was no need to conduct a lottery. The second phase of enrollment is on a first-come, first-served basis with a deadline of June 1.

## City High School Hiring Process Begins

Tucson Small School Project (TSSP) seeks passionate, bright, experienced teachers who have the energy and motivation to help launch and sustain a new small public high school in Tucson, Arizona. At City High School, highly skilled teachers will challenge and engage all students through an innovative curriculum that connects academic studies to real-world issues and the rich resources of the local community.

City High School will open with ninth and tenth grades in September 2004. Teaching positions are available in math, Spanish, and special education. The job announcement and application are on the school website: [www.cityhighschool.org](http://www.cityhighschool.org). The deadline for applications is April 30, interviews will take place in May, and final hiring decisions will be made by early June. In addition to full- and part-time teaching positions, TSSP is hiring fitness and health instructors and visual and performing artists on a contract basis for the City High School electives program.

## Student Steering Committee Expands

### Whole School Gathers for Student and Parent Meetings



*City High School parents, students, and board members start the evening with a "chalktalk" activity, responding together to the prompt "What are your hopes for City High School?" (above). Parents meet and talk with Principal Carrie Brennan (below), while students convene in a separate gathering to study and respond to the draft of the school calendar and other school planning issues (bottom).*



Despite the dramatic rainstorm, students and parents turned out in impressive numbers the evening of April 1 for a whole school meeting. The event was designed to build community and to engage students and parents in school planning and decision-making. On the agenda were topics such as the school calendar, dress code, and off-campus and on-campus lunch options.

Following a pizza dinner and an introduction, parents and students convened in two concurrent meetings facilitated by City High School staff. At the end of the evening, the two groups reported back to one another on their discussions.

The student meeting, a continuation of the student steering committee convened in

February, was facilitated by Eve Rifkin and Brett Goble. The group took the significant step of establishing norms, or groundrules, to guide their work together. (See below.) The students then dove into the agenda topics, offering feedback on the draft of the school calendar, brainstorming ideas for lunch options, and offering their opinions about appropriate vs. inappropriate clothing for school and the importance of self-expression.

Meanwhile, the parent meeting overflowed in the front area with approximately 50 mothers and fathers in attendance. The adults discussed the same topics as the youth meeting. Despite the adult group's larger size, they didn't generate quite the spirited noise level as the student group.

#### Norms established by the Student Steering Committee

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Encourage others

Call one another by first names

Avoid put-downs

No side conversations

Stick to the point

Listen to each other

No interruptions

Take risks

## Teaching Toward A Sense of Place

### Arizona State Museum Sponsors Workshop for Educators, April 24

An all-day event featuring the City of Tucson's Rio Nuevo Project, as well as downtown-area history and archeology, is scheduled for Saturday, April 24 at the Tucson Convention Center. As part of the day's events, the Arizona State Museum is sponsoring a workshop for teachers entitled "Teaching Toward a Sense of Place: Community as Context for Student Learning." City High School educators Carrie Brennan, Eric Dhruv, and Elliott Lax will be part of the team of workshop presenters.

Registration for the workshop costs \$15.00; teachers can receive professional development credit for participating. For more information about the teacher workshop or to register, contact at the Arizona State Museum, 626-9172 or [anamarie@email.arizona.edu](mailto:anamarie@email.arizona.edu).

The morning program will feature presentations and displays by the Arizona Historical Society, Desert Archaeology, and the City of Tucson. Tours of the Rio Nuevo historical sites will be available. For more information about the morning events, contact Kyle McKoy at the Arizona Historical Society, 628-5774.

***Join us for all or part of the day and learn more about the history and the future of downtown Tucson. All of the events will take place at the Convention Center, 260 South Church Avenue.***

***And for those who want even more ...***

### ***Two-Week Institute on Place-Based Education***

The Arizona State Museum is sponsoring an intensive professional development opportunity for educators this summer, June 1-11. Directed by Lisa Falk of the State Museum, the institute will include a variety of instructors from national and local institutions.

Place-based education is learning that is rooted in a local context. It relies on collaborative efforts between teachers and community members to help students make connections between their academic studies in school and the world around them. Institute faculty will provide training to K-12 teachers in developing curriculum that focuses on the heritage, cultural traditions, and history of local communities. Using the Rio Nuevo district for fieldwork, institute participants will study local history, learn

new teaching techniques, and develop curriculum and student projects for their own classrooms.

The registration cost for the institute is \$140 per participant, \$95 if two or more people attend from the same school. Participant fee-waivers are available for those with financial need. Graduate credit will be available through Continuing Education at the University of Arizona. The application deadline is May 7, 2004.

For more information, contact Lisa Falk, [falk@email.arizona.edu](mailto:falk@email.arizona.edu), 626-2973, or Beth DeWitt [dewitt@email.arizona.edu](mailto:dewitt@email.arizona.edu), 626-9172. Or visit the Arizona State Museum website: [statemuseum.arizona.edu/edu/senseofplace](http://statemuseum.arizona.edu/edu/senseofplace).

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## LOCATION:

48 E. Pennington St.  
Tucson, AZ 85701

## MAILING ADDRESS:

P.O. Box 2608  
Tucson, Arizona 85702

## PHONE:

520.623.7223

## FAX:

520.624.4766

## WEBSITE:

[www.cityhighschool.org](http://www.cityhighschool.org)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

(All events take place at 48 East Pennington St. unless noted otherwise.)

### April

- 4/15 5:30-7:30 p.m. **TSSP Board Meeting**
- 4/16 4:00-5:30 p.m. **Technology Advisory Committee Meeting**
- 4/20 7:00-8:00 p.m. **City High School Information Session**
- 4/24 8:30 a.m.-12 noon **Rio Nuevo Symposium**  
12:30-4:00 p.m. **Arizona State Museum Workshop**  
**"Teaching Toward a Sense of Place"**
- 4/29 6:00-8:00 p.m. **Humanities Curriculum Meeting**
- 4/30 **Applications due** for City High School teaching positions

### May

- 5/5 6:00-7:00 p.m. **City High School Information Session**
- 5/8 6:00-10:00 p.m. Booth at PRO-Neighborhood's **Fiesta de los Barrios** at Silverlake Park
- 5/11 City High School Presentation at **Menlo Park Neighborhood Association Meeting**
- 5/20 5:30-7:30 p.m. **TSSP Board Meeting**
- 5/27 6:00-8:00 p.m. **Curriculum Design Team Meeting**

This issue and **past issues** of **CITYSCAPE** are available on our **website**. If you are not receiving one in the mail and would like to, please **call or email us** to be added to the **City High School mailing list**.

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P.O. Box 2608  
Tucson, Arizona 85702

