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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA PARTNERS WITH SUNNYSIDE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
TO LAUNCH PATHWAYS TO TEACHING PROGRAM**

TUCSON, AZ, September 18, 2019—The Sunnyside Unified School District and University of Arizona College of Education have created a pathway for people affiliated with the Sunnyside District to enter the teaching profession via a 17-month, fast-track degree program, Pathways to Teaching. Upon completion, Pathways participants earn a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education with a K-8 teaching certificate and English as a Second Language Endorsement. The first cohort starts in January 2020.

The program is open to anyone with an affiliation with Sunnyside Unified School District including former students, parents, community members, and District employees. The program covers tuition and includes a monthly stipend.

"Pathways to Teaching addresses Arizona's teacher shortage by providing a clear pathway to teacher certification for employees and any others who have a connection to the Sunnyside District. These future teachers will be familiar with Sunnyside families and the community and will be able to draw from their experiences and relationships to design truly effective learning environments for their students," said UA College of Education Department Head and Associate Professor Marcy Wood.

Equity, innovation, and disruption are at the core of this initiative. "This program disrupts the traditional teacher education model by investing in people who are familiar with our school community and dedicated to serving students as a career. This place-based approach is a must in a competitive era where there is a shortage of adults committed to the teaching profession," said Sunnyside Superintendent Steve Holmes. "Our employees devote so much time and passion to our students, what better way to support them than through a top-notch program like the one at the UA College of Education?"

While tuition is provided at no cost to those in the program, students are responsible for nominal fees associated with fingerprint clearances and state exam study guides. District employees must step down from their current position to enroll in Pathways to Teaching. Students receive a \$1,000 monthly stipend from the UA College of Education for the duration of the program. The future teachers will work in Sunnyside classrooms throughout this program, building a steady pipeline of qualified teachers for the district.

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Established in 1921, the Sunnyside Unified School District is the second largest district in Southern Arizona, serving more than 16,300 students and families. Located in a culturally-diverse community and surrounded by two First Nations—the Tohono O’odham and Pascua Yaqui Tribe, our learning community is flanked by an aerospace and innovation corridor, such that our District is positioned to lead our students into the 21st century through excellence in pedagogy, world-class career and technical education, and a legacy of athletic excellence and passion for the fine arts.

The UA College of Education is at the forefront of research on the global challenges that confront education today. Through our research, instruction, and outreach, we generate new knowledge about education, teach the next generation of educators and leaders, and engage educational and community groups in discovery and improvement. Not only are we responsible for the vast majority of teacher education on campus, we collaborate across education and business sectors and with government and nonprofit agencies to leverage resources to make a difference in the lives of many. An education degree can serve as the foundation for a career in law, nursing, writing, and so much more — just ask our alumni!