

# West Valley VIEW

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## EMCC finds permanent spot in Buckeye

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The A Wing of Buckeye High School will soon be a satellite home of Estrella Mountain Community College.

The Buckeye Town Council on Tuesday entered a 30-year lease agreement with the Maricopa County Community College District, or MCCCCD, to use the building for classes and administration and testing rooms.

The agreement must be approved by the college district's educational board before it is finalized, said Clay Goodman, an EMCC representative.

Approval is expected, Goodman said.

EMCC is no stranger to Buckeye.

"This past fall, 11.5 percent of Estrella Mountain Community College students came from the Buckeye ZIP codes," Goodman said. "To put that in round numbers, that's about 1,100 students taking on ground classes, driving to our campus in Avondale. We hope that we will be able to save some of those students a commute by attending classes locally."

In 2005, MCCCCD bought 77 acres at Turner and Southern roads in Buckeye and plans to eventually build a new campus there.

The A Wing of the high school is owned by the town and will undergo some construction before EMCC will retrofit it for classes, said Cheryl Covert, the town's business development coordinator.

The town will contribute just more than \$1.2 million in renovations, such as asbestos abatement and demolition of certain areas, Covert said.

According to the agreement, MCCCCD will pay an upfront amount of \$586,005 for the 30-year lease.

Additionally, the school district will use its own money to do tenant improvements such as plumbing and carpentry work as well as add 90 parking spaces, she said.

Basic classes such as English, computer science and math will be offered at the Buckeye campus, Goodman said. Classes are scheduled to begin in August or September.

Because of space limitations, science and heavy occupational courses will not be offered, although the site will have on-site advisers, a bursar's office and enrollment officers.

"I'm tickled to death that you're coming," Mayor Jackie Meck told EMCC representatives at Tuesday's council meeting. "That's really going to benefit our young people."

Councilman Eric Orsborn said the satellite campus could be stepping stone for students interested in going off to a larger university.

"I started out at a community college," he said. "It was something that was close, that wasn't as big as starting off at ASU and having a campus like this or an opportunity like that, seems like it puts that in reach to people who might think that going to college is too big a thing."

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