6 schools get A+ designation

Six schools in the Northeast Valley are among 28 in the state to be named A+ Schools of Excellence last week by the Arizona Educational Foundation.

Schools are evaluated on student focus and support, school culture, active teaching and learning, curriculum, leadership, community and parent involvement and assessment data.

The winning schools in the area, and their principals, are:

» Anasazi Elementary, Jeff Quisberg; Cherokee Elementary, Walter Chantler; and Tavan Elementary, Margaret Serna, all in the Scottsdale Unified School District.

» Horizon High School, Dan Coursen, and North Ranch Elementary, Sarah Hartley, both in the Paradise Valley Unified School District.

» Lone Mountain Elementary, Nancy Shaver, Cave Creek Unified School District.

Winning schools receive $500 and a banner, and each school’s staff and faculty are eligible for partial scholarships from Argosy University Phoenix. The designation is valid for three years.

Schools must undergo a rigorous audit to win the honor. After completing an application in January, finalist schools are evaluated by a team that visits in the spring, analyzing classroom instruction and interviewing teachers.

In the application, each school provides demographic information, a description of current programs and practices, documentation of parent and community involvement and a profile of the school principal and his or her vision of the commitment to excellence, equity, service and sustained high achievement or significant improvement in the school’s assessment.