

Principles and Principals

Evaluating the Role of SVP Arizona at Camelback High School

Executive Summary

To make meaningful impact in an educational setting such as Camelback High School, change agents need to 1) identify the problem as clearly as possible, 2) understand and articulate one or more principles that form a theory of change, 3) design specific actions and programs that are consistent with these principles, and 4) measure and evaluate progress, because 5) sustainable change happens in learning organizations with a continuous learning attitude.

Social Venture Partners Arizona (SVP) and other organizations like it that are dedicated “to build the capacity of our investees and strengthen their impact to create sustainable outcomes, and positive social change” can help make these kinds of change possible by finding the leverage points in a change process that will most effectively turn their dollars of support into lasting social impact.

To understand these leverage points, however, they must be put in the context of the larger change effort undertaken by the Phoenix Union High School District (PUHSD) and Dr. Chad Gestson during his tenure as Principal at Camelback High School (CBHS) from 2009 to 2014. Camelback was, in many ways, a failing school. It had undergone nearly constant changes in leadership for more than a decade, with no Principal staying more than two years. It was disconnected from the community, with its campus closed and locked at 3:00 every day. Students were fearful, disengaged from the educational process, and had a low opinion of their school. Many faculty and staff members had an antagonistic relationship with their students, didn’t see students as having potential for success, and were not promoting a culture of excellence.

Research done by Flanagan-Hyde Associates, LLC, with Peter Flanagan-Hyde as the lead consultant, documents that through the partnership between SVP Arizona and Camelback High School, substantive and sustainable changes occurred among students, staff, and the greater community. Specific changes that are supported by the evidence include:

- Decreased discipline problems
- Decreased dropout rate
- Increased attendance rates
- Increased enrollment
- Increased standardized test scores
- Increased college attendance
- Increased college scholarships awarded

Social Venture Partners Arizona provided an indispensable addition to the work of the Camelback leadership and staff. Evidence for this came from the qualitative research with all stakeholders who were interviewed. Some of the changes at Camelback were unique

among PUHSD Schools, and the progress at CBHS exceeded changes at similar PUHSD schools during this time. This is further evidence that progress is attributable to the specific changes that were implemented and supported by SVP. From these data a set of fundamental principles were derived that can guide similar change efforts at other schools. Focusing on these as principles, rather than trying to replicate specific programs, is more likely to lead to solutions that are adapted to the conditions at each individual school. The principles for school change, in the language of the change efforts at CBHS, are as follows:

- Principle 1: All students are loved
- Principle 2: All students are held accountable
- Principle 3: This is a learning community
- Principle 4: All students are supported
- Principle 5: Strong principal promotes a bold vision

These principles form the basis for developing the specific strategies that guide the implementation of school change policies. The strategies below were developed at Camelback for Camelback students and staff, and may need to be modified to fit at different schools. Nevertheless, they provide a starting point for creating approaches to promote positive school change. These strategies and the timeframe in which it is appropriate to implement them are as follows:

- Strategy 1: Build structures (right away)
- Strategy 2: Engage students at school (very soon)
- Strategy 3: Success is mandatory (intermediate time)
- Strategy 4: Engage students with their future (ongoing development)
- Strategy 5: Promote excellence (ongoing development)

Objectives and Methodology

There are two main research objectives for this investigation:

- Identify direct effects on CBHS that can be reliably connected with SVP's interventions.
- Capture lessons learned to guide the replication of SVP's approach at other schools.

The steps toward these objectives included the following:

- Review the current measures of success and impact, including the metrics tracked by CBHS and the information included in the report "Camelback: A Model for Transformative Partnership" and on the website Success is Mandatory (successismandatory.org).
- Conduct qualitative research with key SVP and CBHS stakeholders to articulate, with the benefit of hindsight and the literature on school change, the theory of action that directed SVP's interventions.
- Analyze existing quantitative metrics on school culture, achievement, and success to determine the degree to which the data is consistent with the theory of action.

- Investigate the potential usefulness and feasibility of tracking additional quantitative metrics that could provide further support to a refined theory of action.

The theory of action is based on dividing the change process into several stages. These trace the development of the program from the initial problems at CBHS to the intended impact of SVP's involvement with education in Arizona. These stages are:

- **Identify the problem.** The main issues that confronted CBHS can be grouped into three categories:
 - Poor student behavior, including social and academic elements.
 - Poor staff beliefs, particularly about the students they were teaching.
 - Poor campus culture, which had no sense of direction and purpose and was isolated from the larger community.
- **Identify principles of change.** There is ample evidence about the characteristics that make schools different from one another, and those characteristics that are universal are based on what motivates people and communities. These apply to any school, from large urban high schools like Camelback to small rural schools to elite private schools. These are detailed in the following section.
- **Identify context-specific actions at Camelback High School.** The particular strategies that will be implemented to apply the principles must be developed with a particular school in mind. While the principles are universal, the actions taken are highly contextual and depend on the circumstances on the ground. What works in one school setting may not be appropriate in another. At Camelback these strategies were adopted with a commitment to learning and adjustment as they were rolled out, and the adaptability shown by Dr. Gestson as things were underway was pivotal in the success. These strategies, and the role that SVP played in them, is explained below.
- **Identify anticipated outcomes at Camelback High School.** If the principles are applied through strategies that are appropriate to the community, then changes in measureable characteristics of students and graduates can be expected. These include:
 - Decreased discipline problems
 - Decreased dropout rate
 - Increased attendance and graduation rates
 - Increased enrollment
 - Increased standardized test scores
 - Increased college attendance
 - Increased college scholarships awarded
- **Identify the long-term intended impact of the program changes at Camelback High School.** This is the most important question and conveys the highest aspirations of those involved in this project. Essentially, what difference has the partnership between SVP and Camelback High School made? This difference takes place among the individual students, to be sure, but also affects the system through which we educate students. This is expressed in these two intended impacts:

- Change the lives of students who attend CBHS, now and in their future.
- Change education at large urban high schools in Arizona.

Principles for Change

Why some schools are more successful than others has been the subject of intensive and ongoing study, and validated principles for school change have emerged from this educational research. When these principles are consistently implemented through powerful leadership they create a framework that guides the adoption of specific activities and programs at schools. This was done effectively at Camelback High School by applying these principles to the problems that were identified and creating contextually appropriate strategies for change.

The most essential of these principles are aimed at creating a positive school climate that supports students as the center of the endeavor. The principles are interrelated and mutually support one another, because a school is a complex system that is composed of interrelated parts. Many of these principles are inherent in the statement from the CBHS website, “This is an amazing learning community where all students are loved *and* held accountable for reaching their full potential.”

The foundational principles are universally found at successful schools. In this report they are expressed using the language from the Camelback High School statement, other written documents, and conversations with various stakeholders. While there are other words that can be used to convey these ideas, every thriving school will be found to be implementing the principles in one form or another.

Principle 1: All students are loved

This is perhaps the most important, and yet most surprising of the principles. The word “love” is not typically used in educational reform movements, but its adoption by the leadership at CBHS indicates an important difference in approach – treat students first as people, secondly as academic projects. Vital in this is that all students be included, those who are struggling, facing challenges, and rebellious, as well as those who have traditionally been successful at school.

Included in this principle are priorities that are typically of paramount importance in families that are functioning effectively. These include physical safety, clear rules and norms of behavior that show respect for all parties, inclusivity, and emotional security.

Principle 2: All students are held accountable

The love that is shown at CBHS is tough love at times, to be sure. There is a relentless insistence on self-accountability for each student’s behavior and comportment, engagement with the life of the school, and academic success. High standards, steady challenge, and consistent rewards for good actions lead to success.

Principle 3: This is a learning community

Strong relationships with both the adults on campus as well as his or her peers are necessary for a student to find success at school. If every student knows that he or she has at least one adult on campus who cares deeply about their success and at least one close

friend that cares deeply about them personally, then they are much more likely to be successful in school. Students also must be engaged in the school through activities that are important to them if the community is to be strong.

Further, the leadership of the school must demonstrate a willingness to learn and adapt as well. While Camelback and other schools rightly look to establish traditions that provide a continuity in the educational experience, programs must continually evolve to keep them vibrant and responsive to changing circumstances.

The school community is embedded in a larger community, and making connections that provide mutual benefit produces a robustness that is invaluable. Organizations like SVP can facilitate these connections so that the school is supported by the larger community as well as gives back to the community.

Principle 4: All students are supported

Simply insisting that students rise to high standards will not create an environment of excellence. It takes a willingness to meet students where they are academically and personally, acknowledge and name the difficulties they are having, and provide a clear path forward that will allow all students to prosper. Students need to be supported in their leadership efforts as well, and at CBHS students have been involved in appropriate design decisions about the programs that serve them, such as the peer-tutoring program.

Principle 5: Strong principal promotes a bold vision

To move a school forward with purpose and clarity requires a shared sense of where the school is headed and an unflagging will to push all parts of the system in the same direction. At CBHS, Dr. Gestson provided this leadership with the consistent support of community partners, most significantly Social Venture Partners. As an integral part of the system, Phoenix Union High School District was instrumental in providing the freedom to design specific solutions for CBHS as well as the backing and support to take a long-term view of these change efforts – without this District commitment it would have been impossible to make the necessary changes.

Strategies for Change

Principles alone cannot create school change – they only provide guidance and orientation. Nor can principals alone create school change – they only provide inspiration and vision. Change is created through carefully designed and implemented strategies that are developed in the context of a specific school. These strategies must be developed using the guiding principles and backed by the strong leadership of the principal and other administrators. At Camelback High School, these actions took place beginning on Day One of Dr. Gestson’s tenure at CBHS and continued through the following five years, with modifications based on the observations of successes, failures, and new insights.

To be confident that these actions are appropriate to a specific school, the context of the school, including its history and present staffing and students, must be kept in mind. The particular problems that are present at the school must be identified as clearly as possible if effective strategies are to be developed. As part of this, the actions must reflect the values of the principal and senior leadership, teachers and staff, and students and their families.

Social Venture Partners worked with Camelback High School in designing and implementing these actions. To do this effectively, SVP or a similar community network must find the effective leverage points that make their contributions most effective. These leverage points will be dependent on the financial needs of the school and the resources of the community network. They also will depend on the specific expertise that individual members bring to the table, either from their business experience or from their personal qualities.

At Camelback High School, these strategies included the components described below. While these might inform the change process at another school, it is highly likely that the emphasis, timing, and composition of strategies at other schools would be different, reflecting the idiosyncratic realities of each school.

Strategy 1: Build structures (right away)

Providing a framework for the actions of the school was a critical starting point for the work at CBHS. Among the structures that were implemented were:

- Create a safe, secure, and orderly campus.
- Create a great working environment for teachers and staff.
- Develop a vision for what Camelback High School should and could be.

These set the stage for what followed, allowing students to feel free to be on campus without fear, allowing school employees to be engaged with rebuilding the school, and aligning all in a common vision of what was possible at Camelback High School.

Strategy 2: Engage students at school (very soon)

A school is a social environment, and consistent student engagement is critical for success. In order to show that students were both loved and held accountable, they first have to be known to the adults in the community. At CBHS, this took place mainly through the development of the advisory period, in which a teacher met with a small group of students. The relationships in this group between the teachers and students created an important bond, so that each student knew that there was at least one adult on campus who was looking out for them. Students stay with their advisor throughout their four years, so these bonds continue to deepen.

A school is not just classes, but a total environment. Involvement in activities that get students working towards a common purpose, in clubs, teams, and service, forms the basis of positive relationships and a positive school climate. At CBHS, this involvement in clubs, community service, and attendance at events was made a requirement. SVP stepped up with a wide array of new options for students, and the investment of the money and time was very valuable.

Strategy 3: Success is mandatory (intermediate time)

If anything is an example of a strategy tied to the facts on the ground it's the creation of the Success is Mandatory program at Camelback. In asking the question, "Why are some students not successful?" the realization came at some point that this was allowing an assumption that wasn't necessarily valid – that in every school, some students will fail.

Camelback High School made an intensive effort to connect to students who were having difficulties in a personal way, through the development of the advisory program. In this way they provided every student with a caring adult with whom to develop a relationship of care, accountability, and trust. The peer-tutoring program was developed to provide specific support to students who had failed a course, and its creation involved some trial and error that took final form through student involvement in its refinement coupled with inspiration provided by a similar program in Memphis, TN.

This program would likely not have been as successful if the community involvement with SVP had not been present. An SVP partner supported the initial connections to the program in Memphis, and the impact of the program at CBHS was aided by the evolution of the student leadership towards a paid scholarship position. This was funded through SVP partner actions.

Strategy 4: Engage students with their future (ongoing development)

For students, motivation comes not only from a sense of immediate success but also through an understanding of how education fits into the longer narrative of a developing life. At Camelback High School students did not generally have a sense of their future before Dr. Gestson's arrival. However, through several different avenues, SVP worked with the school to build this sense among students.

First, the community dinners that brought together successful adults with students from school to talk person-to-person about their lives was critical. This developed the knowledge in both directions: increasing students' sense of what is involved in navigating the sometimes difficult path that unfolds into a successful career and life; and increasing adult appreciation for the lives of current students, with joys and triumphs mixed with struggle and setbacks. Simply put, they got to know one another as people.

The school staff has worked to provide directions to college and career through the District's Education and Career Action Planning program (ECAP), and this has been supported by efforts of SVP to provide outlets through clubs and other activities to have career education more at the center of what being at CBHS means. Through the work of SVP partners, entrepreneurship was encouraged, a Career Day was established, and the college advising program was upgraded.

Many of the students at Camelback don't have the funds to attend college without financial support, and the growth in scholarship opportunities over the last five years has been remarkable, due in part to the work of SVP partners and others in the community.

Strategy 5: Promote excellence (ongoing development)

The vision of Camelback High School begins with "A Unified Community Dedicated to Building Graduates Worthy of the Spartan S.H.I.E.L.D." The shield acronym stands for Stewardship, Honor, Intelligence, Ethics, Leadership, and Discipline, the core characteristics of a positive, successful person. This aspiration to excellence is furthered by the inclusion of specialty schools, such as the Montessori College Preparatory and the Straight A's Initiatives. All these lead to the closing statement of the vision, "A Model Urban High School Where Success is Mandatory for ALL Students."

This clearly communicates that excellence in character and achievement is expected, and the emphasis on ALL students is key to making this a campus-wide aspiration. At some

schools having a select group that might be National Merit Scholars or otherwise honored is sufficient; this is not the case at Camelback High School – excellence is for everyone.

Developing a Theory of Action

A Theory of Action for Camelback High School – potentially applicable to other schools – describes the problem, identifies universal principles that are applicable to problem at hand, specifies contextually-sensitive actions that are consistent with the principles that address the problem, states measureable outcomes that are expected, and describes the ultimate impact on the people and system involved.

The basic logic of the Theory of Action is that changes in the environment and culture of the school that make it more welcoming and orderly create changes in people: they are more motivated and through their natural talents create more success for themselves. Students and teachers who are more invested in the school are both better behaved and more willing to engage in challenging course work.

The Theory of Action is developed in this order:

1. What is the problem at Camelback High School? Describing the problem as clearly as possible is critical to knowing what principles will apply and developing actions to address the problem.
2. What is the impact we'd like to have in solving this problem? This is the vision of how different we want things to be – the highest aspirations for what we'd like to accomplish.
3. What principles will guide our responses? Knowing the problem, and knowing how others have solved similar problems can lead to principles that will guide the construction of a coherent program with a high likelihood of success. For Camelback High School and Social Venture Partners, the principles are derived from understanding two things: 1) what makes some schools more effective than others, and 2) how do schools change from one condition to a better condition?
4. What specific actions will we take? Unless the principles are turned into concrete and consistent actions, nothing will change. Applying the principles to create a program of actions means having a thorough understanding of the context and particular issues, resources, and constraints that are present at Camelback High School. Further, not all actions are likely to be perfectly on target. Having an approach that is adaptable and responsive to evidence of successes and failures promotes ongoing learning about what works best in a given school.
5. What outcomes can we expect to see as a result of our actions? If we are correct about the principles and the actions that are developed in response to a problem, then there must be some changes in the attitudes, behaviors, and achievement of students that we expect as a result. At CBHS, the list of expected outcomes includes:
 - ✓ Decreased discipline problems
 - ✓ Decreased dropout rate
 - ✓ Increased attendance rates
 - ✓ Increased enrollment

- ✓ Increased standardized test scores
- ✓ Increased college attendance
- ✓ Increased college scholarships awarded

Outcomes Demonstrate Success

In fact, these outcomes have been observed over the last five years at Camelback High School. This is an affirmation of the Theory of Action and the appropriateness of the actions that have been taken, but that doesn't necessarily demonstrate a causal link between the actions and the outcomes. Camelback High School was operating in an environment of change, both in the Phoenix Union High School District, the State Department of Education, and the larger community. Each of these has the potential to create changes in the outcomes as well.

A deeper affirmation of this connection is made possible by comparing the changes at Camelback High School to changes at other schools. Keeping as much as possible the same in the analysis – except for the specific interventions at CBHS – makes it more likely that the interventions are connected to for the changes. The schools that are most similar to CBHS in the last five years are the other large schools in the same school district. These schools will have experienced very similar inputs from the District, State, and community, and would be expected to share changes in the outcomes if they are due to those inputs.

There are 14 schools in the Phoenix Union High School District. Of these, four are specialty schools of one kind or another, leaving ten that are comparable in terms of serving the general population with enrollments in the range of 2,000-3,000 students. These schools are Alhambra, Trevor Browne, Camelback, Central, Cesar Chavez, Betty Fairfax, Carl Hayden, Maryvale, North, and South Mountain. In as many areas as possible, comparisons of the expected outcomes between Camelback and this peer cohort were made to see if there were unique changes at CBHS.

Decreased discipline problems

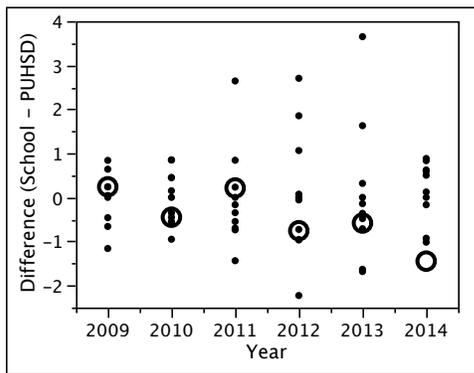
One of the most striking changes at Camelback is the decrease in the number of discipline problems that result in suspensions or other serious responses. Evidence that this makes a difference in the perception of students and their sense of safety is revealed in the index numbers that are part of a statewide Safe and Supportive Schools grant. Camelback High School went from an index of 73 in 2010-11 to 83 in 2013-14. This improvement was slightly larger than the District average of about 9 points.

Decreased dropout rate

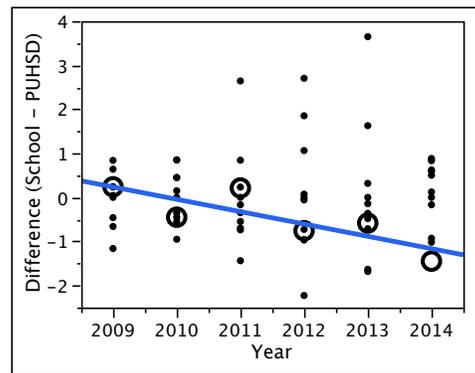
The dropout rate for each school is reported on the AZ Department of Education website, <http://www.azed.gov/research-evaluation/dropout-rate-study-report/>. The dropout rate for each of the PUHSD schools is compared to the District average each year to make a comparison of how an individual school's rate compares with its peer schools.

The graphs and information below demonstrate that the dropout rate for Camelback High School decreased relative to the District average. For this section, in order to make the process more easily understood, the picture will be developed in five stages that build to the final graph. In subsequent sections, only the final graph will be presented.

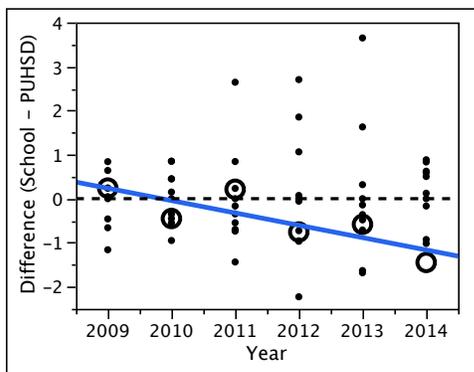
Graph 1: At each year (horizontal axis) there is a vertical stack of nine dots and a circle. Each dot represents the performance of one of the nine peer schools, measured as a difference from the District average. The position of CBHS is marked with the larger circle. Within each column of dots, CBHS generally falls in the period 2010-2014. Relative to the other PUHSD schools, the dropout rate at CBHS is decreasing.



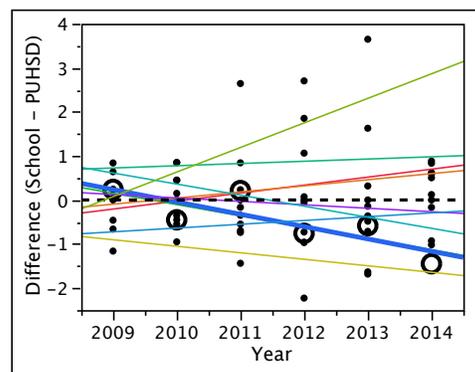
Graph2: This graph adds the trend line for CBHS, using the typical least-squares procedure. The slope of the line is -0.28 , meaning that, on average, the dropout rate at CBHS fell, relative to the District average, by 0.28 percentage points per year. During the years 2009-2014, the District-wide dropout rate averaged 3.25%. CBHS began with a rate above this and ended with a rate lower than the District average.



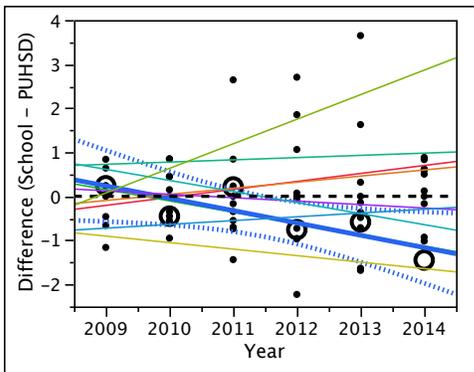
Graph 3: Adds the District average as a horizontal dotted line for reference. If Camelback High School was keeping pace with the District in terms of its dropout rate, its trend line would be horizontal, parallel to the District line. The negative slope (downhill trend) means CBHS is improving relative to the District average.



Graph 4: Adds the trend lines, thin, in different colors, for each of the other District schools. Those that are going uphill (positive slope) are falling behind the District average while downhill means improving relative to the District. CBHS has the steepest downhill slope, meaning that its dropout rate is improving faster than at any other District school.



Graph 5: This shows the trend line (heavy line) for CBHS along with dotted bands that show what is called a confidence interval for the trend line. The uncertainty in the trend shows in the up-and-down bouncing of the dots from one year to the next – but with an overall downward trend. The bands show where plausible lines might fall to account for this uncertainty. A horizontal line cannot be passed through the bands without crossing them, which indicates visually that the trend for CBHS is statistically significantly better than the District average.



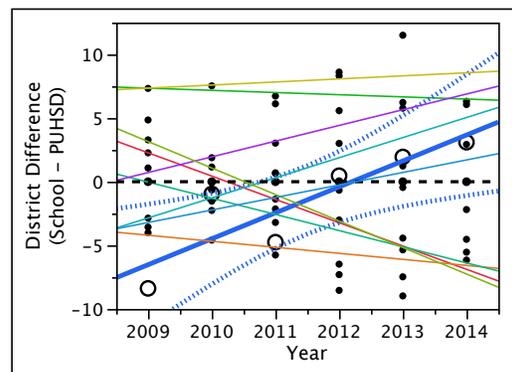
Significance test for slopes: The statistical procedures for finding the least-squares trend line also can produce a measure of the certainty that the slope is really different from horizontal, not just the result of random variation. It produces a test statistic, t , that measures differences in units like standard deviations and a “ P -value” that measures the likelihood that the observed slope is the result of random variation. Smaller P -values are more convincing of the genuineness of the trend and values less than 0.05 are used to indicate statistically significant trends, ones that are unlikely due to chance variation.

In this test, the results were $t = -2.91$ and P -value = 0.04. Since the P -value is less than 0.05, this is statistically significant. Camelback High School reduced its dropout rate more than the District schools as a whole.

Increased graduation rates

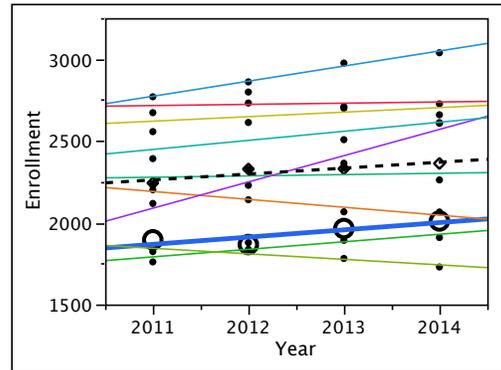
The graduation rate for each school is reported on the AZ Department of Education website, <http://www.azed.gov/research-evaluation/graduation-rates>. The graduation rate for each of the PUHSD schools is compared to the District average each year to make a comparison of how an individual school’s rate compares with its peer schools.

The graduation rates at Camelback High School improved an average of 1.46 percentage points per year. This was the highest rate among the PUHSD schools. To more easily see the change, values are plotted with the difference between each school’s rate and the average of the District. The statistical test values are $t = 3.60$ and P -value = 0.02. Since the P -value is less than 0.05, this is statistically significant. CBHS increased its graduation rate more than the District schools as a whole.



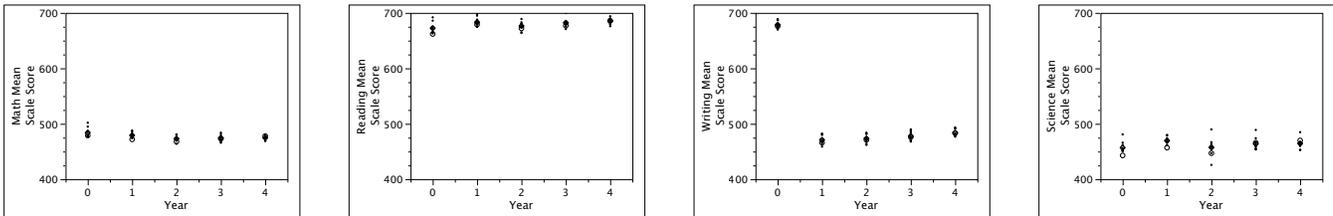
Increased enrollment

The enrollment at Camelback High School has grown during the years 2009-2014, averaging an increase of 44 students per year. However, this is similar to the District-wide average of 36 students per year, and the higher rate at CBHS was not statistically significantly different from the District trend.



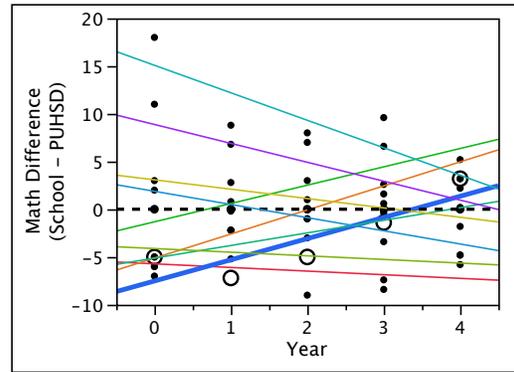
Increased test scores

The AIMS scores for each Arizona high school are reported on the AZ Department of Education website, <http://www.azed.gov/research-evaluation/aims-assessment-results/>. In educational testing, the most accurate comparisons are made with what are called the **scaled scores**. The Arizona AIMS scaled scores, however, vary systematically from year to year and between the tests. As an example of the differences in scaled scores from test to test and year to year, these graphs show the scaled scores for the years 2010-2104.

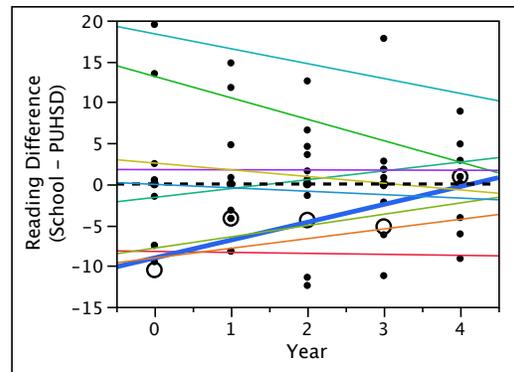


To ensure the focus is on the performance changes and not the scale changes, this analysis of AIMS scores will use the **difference** between each school's test results and the District average. Overall, Camelback High School students improved more than the District average on each of the four components of the AIMS test, Math, Reading, Writing, and Science. It is the only school in the District that can make this claim, with all other schools underperforming the District average improvement on at least one of the tests. Differences from the District pattern are greatest for Math and Science, and smaller for Reading and Writing. The analysis below examines each of the four components in detail, as well as the total AIMS scores.

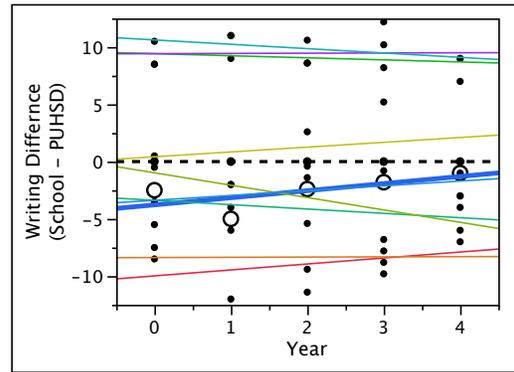
Math: Camelback had the second highest rate of growth among the District schools, with a slope of 2.22 points per year. This means that over the period from 2010 to 2014, students at Camelback improved on the District average by about 2.22 points per year on the scaled Math score. The improvement for Camelback High School students was marginally statistically significant ($t = 2.92$, P -value = 0.06).



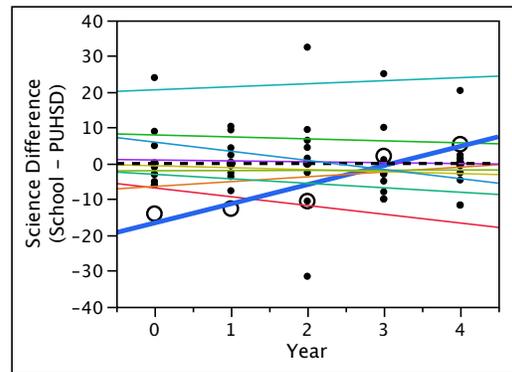
Reading: Camelback had the highest rate of growth among the District schools, with a slope of 2.18 points per year. The improvement for Camelback High School students was marginally statistically significant ($t = 2.81$, P -value = 0.07).



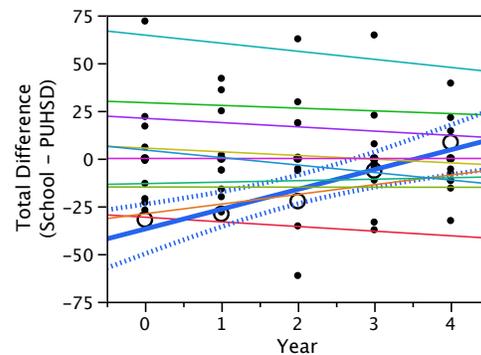
Writing: Camelback had the highest rate of growth among the District schools, with a slope of 0.62 points per year. However, the changes in the District overall were small for the writing test, and the improvement for Camelback High School students was not statistically significant ($t = 1.50$, P -value = 0.23).



Science: Camelback had the highest rate of growth among the District schools, with a slope of 5.35 points per year. The improvement for Camelback High School students was statistically significant ($t = 4.81$, P -value = 0.02). On the graph, this is demonstrated by seeing that a horizontal line (parallel to the District average) cannot fit within the confidence interval indicated by the dotted bands.



Total AIMS scores: Camelback had the highest rate of growth among the District schools by far, with a slope of 10.37 points per year. This rate of improvement was more than twice as steep as the next highest school at 5.07 points per year, and the improvement for Camelback High School students was highly statistically significant ($t = 6.22$, P -value = 0.008).



Increased college attendance

It was difficult to get reliable data on the proportion of students at the Phoenix Union High Schools that actually matriculated into college, and, more importantly, successfully completed a college career. More informally, however, there is good evidence that the college ambitions of CBHS graduates were much stronger at the end of this study period in 2014 than in 2009.

Increased college scholarships

One measure of the value attached to Camelback High School students is the dramatic increase in the number of college scholarships offered to students and the amounts received. In 2009, the total scholarships offered totaled \$906,000, an impressive figure, but by 2014 this had grown to over \$3.8 million dollars, a better than four-fold increase. Comparable figures for other PUHSD schools were not available.

Summary of Comparisons to Other District Schools

The table below summarizes the how the changes at Camelback High School compare to the nine comparable large, general high schools in the District (Alhambra, Betty Fairfax, Carl Hayden, Central, Cesar Chavez, Maryvale, North, South Mountain, and Trevor Brown).

Change, 2010-2014	Comparison to District	Notes
Decreased discipline problems	Not compared to other District schools	
Decreased dropout rate	Largest improvement among PUHSD schools, statistically significantly better than average change	CBHS went from the third highest dropout rate in 2009 to the lowest rate in 2014
Increased graduation rate	Largest improvement among PUHSD schools, statistically significantly better than average change	CBHS went from the lowest graduation rate in 2009 to the third highest rate in 2014
Increased enrollment	Slightly larger rate of enrollment increase than District average, but not statistically significantly different	CBHS did not change its rank in enrollment in the District schools between 2009 and 2014
Increased AIMS scores	Largest improvement among PUHSD schools, statistically significantly better than average change	CBHS led PUHSD schools in increase in Reading, Writing, and Science, and had the second highest increase in Math. Overall AIMS scores increased more than twice as much as any District school between 2009 and 2014
Increased college attendance	Not compared to other District schools	
Increased college scholarships	Not compared to other District schools	

Expanding the Impact

The partnership between Camelback High School and Social Venture Partners is a demonstrated success. It has produced outcomes that confirm the success of the program that was developed, and there are enough anecdotes about what has happened with students to be confident that the first part of the desired impact – change the lives of students who attend Camelback High School, now and in their future – is indeed underway. The second part of the desired impact is to change education at large urban high schools in Arizona. To realize this impact, the work done at Camelback must be spread to other schools. This is partly underway at PUHSD with the appointment of Dr. Chad Gestson in a leadership role, working with the other principals in the District on their leadership and emphasizing the principles that create positive school change.

Community network organizations like SVP have a role to play in the expanded impact as well, and need to work closely with any new partner schools to find the points of greatest leverage. These leverage points will be found at the intersection of the needs of the particular school and the assets of the community network. Determining these will come from good communication between the leaders of the school and the community network.

The partnership between Camelback and SVP was fortunate to have the unflagging support of the District and its superintendent, Dr. Kent Scribner. In future projects, securing an initial mandate from the District will be essential since it provides consistency of voice and patience for the time-scale of school change. The work at Camelback has taken place over five years so far, and there is yet more work to be done. Stakeholders can be frustrated with the slow pace of change, and District support is necessary to provide backing for the work at the school.

How to go about making the impact – changing education at large urban high schools in Arizona:

1. Select an appropriate school, with the necessary conditions and leadership.
2. Understand the specific problems facing the school.
3. With school leadership and staff, develop a vision of the impact school change can have on the lives of students.
4. Promote the principles of change with school leadership and school staff.
5. Connect with community networks, SVP or others, and enlist their help.
6. Develop context-specific strategies for change.
7. Commit to ongoing learning about how the strategies are working. Monitor them carefully, and be ready to redesign them as needed.
8. Monitor indicators of outcomes that point towards the intended impact on students' lives.
9. Celebrate successes that are achieved, in the school and in the community.

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