



Rosetta Stone Customer Spotlight:

PHOENIX UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

74 Spoken Languages In School District Highlights Need for English Language Learning

Diversity as a hallmark

One of the largest high school districts in the nation, Phoenix Union High School District is home to 20 schools, 28,000 students, and nearly 3,000 employees, covering 220-square miles of Arizona's capital city. Diversity is a hallmark at Phoenix Union—95 percent of its students are minorities and 81 percent of those are Hispanic. More than half of the students come from a home where English is not the primary language spoken, and the district has a large refugee population, representing 74 languages. It is clear to see why language proficiency is a major priority for this district.

A portfolio district, Phoenix Union has 11 comprehensive high schools, four specialty small schools, three alternative schools, and two "micro" schools. Great emphasis is placed on academic rigor, with the district offering more Honors, Advanced Placement, and other high-level courses than ever before, and student enrollment in those classes is the highest ever. Students are earning college credit and accelerating their academics through community college dual enrollment.

Title 3 Funding Enables ELLs to succeed

Feeding into the schools' academic success is a dedicated English Language Learning (ELL) program that is as comprehensive as any in the state (from testing to placement to reclassification) and enables the city's refugee population and other pre-emergent/emergent students to hone their conversational English and academic vocabulary. Using Title 3 funding (federal money exclusively earmarked for ELLs), the school district began implementing Rosetta Stone® digital language-learning programs during the 2013-2014 academic year and now offers 500 licenses for its pre-emergent/emergent EL high school students on nine of its 11 high school campuses. Students spend four hours each day in ESL English classes, including a 50-minute class period using the Rosetta Stone program in a blended-learning environment. Every other day, students use the program on their own for self-paced, individualized instruction; the following day is spent with a language teacher and aide.



"Because Phoenix Union High School District features so many languages from countries like Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, and Somalia, the Rosetta Stone implementation has enabled us to assist a larger number of students in their English language-learning needs. Our goal last year for our ELL students was a three percent growth each week, and we are proud to have accomplished that."

Sally Claypool, Language Acquisition Content Specialist

With 97 percent of available licenses assigned and in use, Phoenix Union has seen a 22 percent increase in active learners year over year, from 399 in 2015-16 to 486 in 2016-17 (featuring 3,823 hours of learning) with a .7 percent usage increase year over year. In addition to its dedicated ELL program offered during the school year, the district offers a Refugee Enrichment Summer Program, in which rising freshmen through seniors meet for six hours, four days a week, for intense English language study using the Rosetta Stone program in a blended learning mode.

"Like any new skillset, English language learning must be undertaken consistently, preferably both within and outside a classroom setting. We see those students who regularly follow the Rosetta Stone® program become motivated and confident, more willing to participate in classroom activities, and acquire vocabulary at a much faster rate. It is not unusual to see these students move up one, two, and even three levels over the course of the school year. That is extremely difficult to do for a student who has never previously learned English."

Sharon E. Moler, ELL Teacher



Moler says two success stories, in particular, stand out: Two years ago, a 14-year-old pre-emergent student from East Africa arrived who had very little formal schooling, had never used a computer, and had no previous exposure to English. She immediately felt comfortable with the Rosetta Stone digital program and, after one year, moved up a full level and is now in Basic. Another student, from Tanzania, arrived at 16 years old speaking Swahili and French. She progressed from pre-emergent to intermediate during the school year, largely due to her commitment to using the Rosetta Stone tools on a consistent basis.

About Phoenix Union High School District



*Preparing Every
Student for Success in
College, Career, and Life*

Phoenix Union is one of the state's oldest school districts and its largest high school-only district, serving 27,813 students in 20 schools. Areas served by the district mostly include central Phoenix, south Phoenix, and Laveen. The district has 13 different elementary school districts which feed into its service area. It is also one of the most diverse districts in the state; more than 70 languages are represented, and more than half of district students come from residences where English is not the primary language. Hispanic students represent more than 80 percent of the enrollment, and the district currently has the largest enrollment of African American students in the state.

Phoenix Union belies the notion that large urban school districts struggle academically. It has drastically improved graduation rates, reduced dropout rates, and continues to close the "Achievement Gap" so often cited between high minority, low income districts and national averages. Its four-year graduation rate surpasses the state average, and its dropout rate is lower than the state average.

For more information about Phoenix Union High School District, please visit: www.phxhs.k12.az.us

About Rosetta Stone

Rosetta Stone is a global leader in technology-driven language and learning solutions for individuals, classrooms, and organizations. The company's scalable, interactive solutions have been used by more than 12,000 businesses, 9,000 public sector organizations, and 22,000 education institutions worldwide, and by millions of learners in over 150 countries.