

## Paradise Valley Students Ready for Math Challenges

*McGraw-Hill My Math Sparks Enthusiasm for Math*



### Success Story: Paradise Valley Unified School District



**Paradise Valley Unified School District**  
Phoenix and Scottsdale, Ariz.

#### Overview

Paradise Valley Unified School District is a largely suburban school district serving areas of Phoenix and Scottsdale, Arizona. The district has 30 elementary schools, seven middle schools for seventh and eighth grades, and five high schools for grades 9-12. Also, the district operates two alternative schools and one

comprehensive online school. In 2014, 18 district schools attained A grades on the Arizona Department of Education's A-F School Accountability Letter Grade System. An additional 34 schools received A and B grades in 2014, while 11 of the district's Title 1 schools received A or B grades.

#### Aligning with standards, increasing performance

Paradise Valley Unified School District implemented the *McGraw-Hill My Math* curriculum in the fall of 2013, after a lengthy adoption process involving a stakeholder committee, made up of curriculum directors, teachers, parents, and administrators. Over nine months, the committee reviewed many products aligned with the district's adoption of the Common Core State Standards.

Dr. Jason Reynolds, Paradise Valley's assistant superintendent of secondary instruction, led the adoption process while serving as the Director of Curriculum and Instruction. He notes, "In the end, we were most impressed with the resources and approach *McGraw-Hill My Math* provides."

*McGraw-Hill My Math* focuses on the Common Core's three components of rigor: Conceptual Understanding, Procedural Skill and Fluency, and Application, which are woven throughout the program in equal intensity, helping students to progress toward higher achievement levels.

"One of the things we saw right away is the enhanced rigor within each grade level and students being asked to do more at each grade level," says Reynolds. "It's made a huge difference in our district in terms of performance," he adds.

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— Dr. Jason Reynolds  
Assistant Superintendent

# SPRING 2015



**DISTRICT ENROLLMENT**  
32,316 STUDENTS

**59% WHITE**

**3% BLACK**

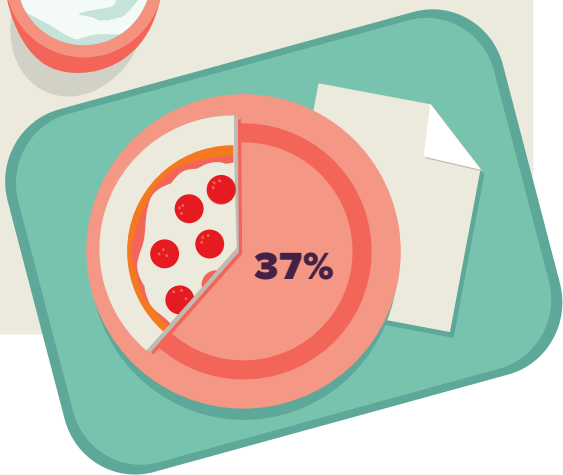
**30% HISPANIC**

**3.6% ASIAN**

**1.2% OTHER**



**FREE & REDUCED LUNCH**



## Making math rigorous and fun

With a focus on the standards of mathematical practices, the *McGraw-Hill My Math* curriculum is uniquely designed to provide students with multiple experiences to build conceptual understanding; modeling, reasoning and productive disposition activities; and real-world, problem-solving opportunities.

Pinnacle Peak Elementary School Principal, Lora Herbe, says, “The scores have improved, but I think, more importantly, students really have a deeper understanding [of math]. *McGraw-Hill My Math* has provided students a lot of opportunities and the tools to be math problem-solvers.”

Nancy Stanton, a fourth- through sixth-grade honors teacher at Pinnacle Peak, notes, “Before *McGraw-Hill My Math*, the curriculum was more regimented, there was no problem-solving, not a lot of application, just more algorithm-based learning. The students could definitely do the algorithm but applying the skill and being able to enrich them wasn’t there. Now, students know they will be held accountable, they have to know not only how to do it, they have to explain, apply, and enrich it.”

Also, Reynolds says *McGraw-Hill My Math* is closely aligned with Paradise Valley’s implementation of college- and career-readiness standards. *McGraw-Hill My Math* prompts creativity and critical thinking, both of which are part of Paradise Valley’s career- and college-preparedness standards.

In addition to rigor, teachers in Paradise Valley find that students are simply more engaged with math. Where students once showed little enthusiasm for math class, teachers say they’re now excited and ready to learn.

Debbie Gill, a fourth grade Pinnacle Peak teacher, shares, “We have a lot more fun in math now because of the manipulatives we’re using. Students are excited about math – they love to come to math class.”

## Tools to engage

In feedback Reynolds receives from teachers, they routinely mention how easy-to-use *McGraw-Hill My Math* program is for them. Reynolds notes that teachers say they feel well-equipped to engage their students and help them grasp deeper mathematical concepts and tackle harder, higher-order thinking.

“Within the walls of the program, teachers have an all-encompassing toolkit to help their students succeed,” Reynolds says. “But they also have flexibility built in. They can choose to take a lesson plan and run with it, or add supplemental material. This has saved teachers a significant amount of time in planning,” he notes.

As a diverse district, Paradise Valley also requires teachers to adjust instruction to meet a range of ability levels. Whether personalizing lessons for English Language Learners (ELL) or helping students level up, *McGraw-Hill My Math* has helped greatly by providing tools for differentiated instruction, educators there say.

“The built-in ability to differentiate instruction was a major attracting feature in our decision to implement *McGraw-Hill My Math*,” says Reynolds. “It goes hand-in-hand with the ease-of-use and we really liked that.”

Paradise Valley is focused on integrating technology in the learning environment, and *McGraw-Hill My Math* does that, educators say. Teachers, students, and parents benefit from *McGraw-Hill My Math* digital tools. Teachers can use digital tools to plan, sequence, and deliver instruction. Students have access to lessons, online games, downloadable apps, and personalized vocabulary, while parents can access lesson animations and personal tutors to help their child with work at home.

“It’s been wonderful to have the technology piece,” Stanton says. “It’s more engaging, and students love it!” Reynolds agrees.

“The online portion of the program really helps teachers provide that engagement for students,” he says. “Students today want to be involved and want to be on their computers and iPads®, they want to be working online on their materials, and with this program, they have all that and more,” says Reynolds.

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— Lora Herbe  
Principal

## Smooth transition

With a common authorship team, shared digital platform, and overlapping instructional features, *McGraw-Hill My Math* (PreK-5) and *Glencoe Math* (grades 6-8) together provide a continuum of consistent instruction that teachers in Paradise Valley praise.

“I saw such a difference in the students moving through *McGraw-Hill My Math* to the course one book of *Glencoe Math* than with previous programs we had used. It was amazing. The concepts came faster, students were able to do it and achieve what they needed to achieve for mastery. It didn’t take nearly as long as it did prior to using *McGraw-Hill My Math*,” says Stanton.

Reynolds adds, “The advantage of having a consistent program for K-8 is huge. Students are able to use similarly formatted resources and tools year in and year out and that has helped us tremendously while aligning what we were doing with the standards.”

## Outstanding professional development support

Paradise Valley teachers and administrators appreciate the customer service and training support provided by McGraw-Hill Education. When recommending the program to other districts, Reynolds says they always note the value of having McGraw-Hill Education as a trusted partner.

“The support McGraw-Hill Education provides is outstanding. That relationship has far exceeded expectations. It really feels like a partnership,” says Reynolds.

In the end, *McGraw-Hill My Math* is a tremendous resource, Reynolds says. It is user-friendly for the teacher, provides school-to-home support for parents, provides teachers with video instruction examples, provides support for ELL students, and engages students with Foldables®, manipulatives, games and video. By making math fun, *McGraw-Hill My Math* continues to engage and inspire lifelong math learning in Paradise Valley.