

2018

Excellence in Action Award

Sunrise Mountain High School

Peoria Unified School District's Fire Science Program of Study

Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security Career Cluster

OVERVIEW

The Fire Science Program of Study at Sunrise Mountain High School in Glendale, AZ, prepares learners for postsecondary and career success by providing rigorous in-school instruction and opportunities to learn directly from experts working in the field. The program was started in 2004 due to Arizona's critical need for employees in fire science.

To meet this demand, the Peoria Fire Science Advisory Council worked with Peoria Unified School District to develop the program of study. The council continues to be involved by revising standards, determining what skills learners need to be successful in the workforce and expanding work-based learning opportunities.

Student Demographics (42)	Percentage
Male	90%
Female	10%
Low Income	16%
Minority	17%

INSTRUCTION FROM INDUSTRY EXPERTS

The Fire Science Advisory Council members cover the full breadth of stakeholders needed to create a high-quality program of study, including multiple educational partners, eight fire departments, representatives from the Bureau of Land Management, and Professional Medical Transport Ambulance staff, among others. Council members regularly offer work-based learning experiences, including mentorship, job shadowing and internships. Learners are required to complete a minimum of 100 hours of work-based learning activities, including internships, job shadowing, ride alongs and more.

While work-based learning is not a requirement of the program, 100 percent of students take part in work-

based learning opportunities and experiences. After they have gained skills through training, learners share their knowledge in the community by teaching fire and life safety skills to CO-OP programs at three high schools.

The hands-on skills the Fire Science students are gaining in workplace settings are complemented by their classroom instruction. Program instructors are an active-duty fire captain and firefighter, each bringing decades of professional experience to the classroom.



CAREER EXPLORATION IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Peoria Unified School District begins exposing learners to career possibilities before high school. Every year, the district hosts the My Life Days event for 7th and 8th grade students to tour high schools, participate in hands-on experiences, meet current Career Technical Education (CTE) students and discover their passions.

Learners in 7th and 8th grade are also required to participate in the career exploratory CTE program called Technology, Life and Career. The purpose of the program is to introduce the six Peoria Career Fields and the National Career Cluster® Framework. This exploration incorporates classroom instruction and hands-on lab experiences.

A CLEAR VISION OF SUCCESS WITH STACKABLE CREDENTIALS

The stackable credentials offered throughout this program are a key component of the program’s success. Throughout the duration of the program, learners earn college credit, and various industry certification offerings allow learners multiple on and off ramps throughout their education and career. Specifically, students can earn up to nine dual enrollment credits, which articulate to an associate of science degree in emergency response and operations in fire science.

These seamless transitions set learners up with the academic knowledge, hands-on experiences and credentials needed to succeed after graduation.



“These young men and women come in prepared both physically and mentally while possessing the necessary skills to become a professional firefighter. The skills they are exposed to while in the Fire Science Program mirror our standards at the academy. ... The Peoria Unified School District Fire Science Program is a huge asset in preparing our future firefighters and lays the groundwork for successful career in fire service.”
— Captain Tony Neely, Lead Recruit Training Officer, Peoria Fire Medical Department

Success by the Numbers



100%

Participated in Work-Based Learning



100%

Graduated High School



100%

Earned an Industry-Recognized Credential



60%

Earned Postsecondary Credit