



BEAT THE ODDS

I N S T I T U T E

AN INITIATIVE OF THE CENTER FOR THE FUTURE OF ARIZONA

Research Into Action

Beat the Odds began as a research study to answer the question, “What does it take to get great results in schools with mostly low income, mostly Latino students?” Five years later, the question has been answered, and schools across the state are implementing Beat the Odds keys to success.

The Facts

- Latinos, Arizona's fastest growing population segment, struggle against barriers to educational achievement and lag well behind the state's White population in educational performance.
- Latino youth comprise 43% of Arizona's K-12 enrollment and will soon become the majority in Arizona.
- Fourth-grade Latino students in Arizona have an average score on the national reading test that is 22 points lower than White students.
- The four-year high school graduation rate for Arizona Latinos is 64.7% compared to 73.4% for the state.
- Latinos only account for 13.3% of the population at Arizona's three state universities.

The Challenge

Improve Academic Achievement Among Arizona's Latino Students

In 2001, the Morrison Institute for Public Policy released *Five Shoes Waiting to Drop on Arizona's Future*, a landmark report that identified Latino's lack of educational success as a detriment to Arizona's future prosperity and quality of life.

Dropped? Latino Education and Arizona's Economic Future, the institute's follow up report published in 2012, reveals that what was once an issue for concern is approaching a crisis. The educational achievement gap between Latinos and Whites represents a "grave threat to Arizona's future economic health."

Education is the key to prosperity – for individuals, families and the state as a whole. Without a successful turnaround in Latino education, Arizona will not make a successful transition into the 21st century economy.



"Beat the Odds has proven that through strong and steady school leadership and the six Beat the Odds principles, students in minority-intensive schools and low-income communities can succeed in ever larger numbers."

Lattie Coor, Ph.D.
Chairman and CEO
Center for the Future of Arizona



"Beat the Odds was founded on the premise that improving the principal's leadership skills will improve student performance in low-income, minority intensive schools. This approach has now been corroborated by research attributing 25% of a student's performance to the principal."

Marjorie Kaplan, Ph.D.
Director
Beat the Odds Institute



The Research

Why Some Schools With Latino Children Beat the Odds ... And Others Don't

What does it take to get great results in a school with a student enrollment that is mostly Latino and mostly poor?

With the active involvement of business guru Jim Collins, author of *Good to Great*, a research team, sponsored by the Center for the Future of Arizona and the Morrison Institute for Public Policy, embarked upon a comprehensive study to answer the question.

After identifying 331 Arizona schools, researchers found 12 low-income, high-minority elementary and middle schools that were performing beyond expectations in reading and math scores. Six specific elements were common to the high-performing schools – and typically not evident in comparison schools.

More than three years of comprehensive research findings, published in 2006, became the foundation for Beat the Odds Institute.

Six Keys To Success

- **Clear Bottom Line** - emphasize the achievement of every student in every classroom and take responsibility for that performance. No excuses.
- **Ongoing Assessment** - assess student performance early and often. Use information to drive improvement rather than to assign blame.
- **Strong and Steady Principal** - leaders are focused on the things that truly improve schools and keep pushing ahead, no matter what the roadblocks.
- **Collaborative Solutions** - responsibility for improvement is shared among all, not concentrated at the top.
- **Stick with the Program** - magic occurs when the school finds a good program and sticks with it.
- **Built to Suit** - customize instruction and intervention to fit the needs of each student. One size does not fit all.



“Through the use of the ‘Beat the Odds’ research, the Center for the Future of Arizona and its partners are taking a very significant step toward building the great schools we need for a vibrant and successful future.”

Jim Collins
Author and Management Educator



Beat the Odds School Gold Award Recipient
Mandi Caudill, Sevilla Primary School



"Yuma Union High School District is proud to be a Beat the Odds District. As leaders we have sharpened our skills to focus on our clear bottom line: every student ready for success in college and career."

Antonia Badone
Superintendent
Yuma Union High School District



"Beat the Odds provides a crucial opportunity for principals working in high-risk demographics to support each other through mentoring and training sessions. The level of camaraderie is incredible and we build each other up for the challenging task. All of us have improved the work we do for our students, staff and community because of Beat the Odds."

Jeff Sprout
Beat the Odds Mentor
Director of STEM Research/Development
Alhambra Elementary School District

The Initiative Beat The Odds Institute Founded in 2007



"Implementation of Beat the Odds over the past five years demonstrates the importance of mentors and the commitment of principals to do whatever it takes to assure success for all children ... proving the 'magic is in the schools.'"

Terry Eisenberg
Beat the Odds Institute
Mentor Team Leader

Armed with research on how successful schools do things differently, Center for the Future of Arizona took proactive action and created Beat the Odds Institute in 2007.

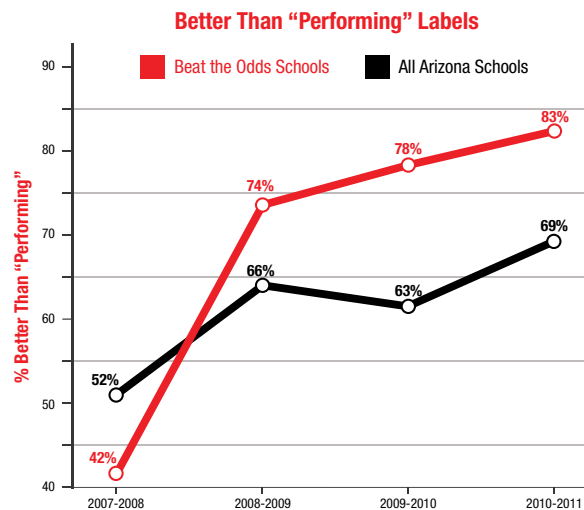
The pilot program, with an ambitious goal for low-income, high-minority schools to make academic achievements better than predicted by their demographics, began with 27 schools.

The School Partners Program, which has grown exponentially in the past five years, provides individualized mentoring, partner meetings, training seminars, resources and support to principals in applying the six keys to success. A district-wide model was introduced in 2010.

A participating school is designated as a Beat the Odds School when it accomplishes Gold Partner status, which requires sustained academic improvement, cohort meeting attendance and three years as a partner. Beat the Odds Silver and Bronze partners are also recognized.

- Beat the Odds focuses on K-12 principals in schools where at least 50% of the students are on free or reduced lunch and at least 50% are minority, primarily Latino.
- Since its inception, Beat the Odds has served a total of 145 public, charter and tribal Arizona schools in Maricopa, Pima, Graham and Yuma counties. Schools typically participate in the program for three years.
- During the 2011-2012 school year, 67 principals, 34 assistant principals, 20 aspiring principals and 12 district office representatives participated in Beat the Odds.
- In 2011-2012, ethnic distribution for Beat the Odds schools was approximately 64% Latino, 21% White, 6% African American, 5% Native American and 2% Asian/Pacific Islander.

The Difference Performance at Beat the Odds Partner Schools



Beat the Odds schools that achieve AZ LEARNS labels better than "Performing" exceed the percent of all Arizona schools on the same measure.

2009 WestEd Policy Center Evaluation of Beat the Odds Institute School Partners Program

- Beat the Odds partner schools had higher performance on state tests in reading and math than schools with similar demographics that were not enrolled in the program. Findings were based upon the first two years of available data.

2011 State Achievement Results

- On state rankings released in fall 2011, 83% of Beat the Odds partner schools earned labels better than performing compared to 79% for similar schools not in the program and 69% for all Arizona schools.
- The percentage of Beat the Odds schools meeting and exceeding standards on Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) reading tests in 2011 exceeded similar schools not in the program and all Arizona schools.
- The percentage of Beat the Odds schools meeting and exceeding standards on the Arizona state math tests (AIMS) in 2011 exceeded similar schools not in the program.

2011 NCEA Higher Performing Schools

- The National Center for Education Achievement, in partnership with the Arizona Department of Education, released a list of performing schools in late 2011. Fourteen Beat the Odds schools were recognized for advancing their students toward college and career readiness more rapidly than schools of like demographics over a three-year period from 2008-2011.

2011-2012 Principal's Evaluations on Effectiveness

- Statewide, more than 95% of principals who participated in 2011-2012 cohort meetings and trainings held throughout the school year ranked them good or better.
- Comments have included: outstanding interactive presentation; engaging, helpful and awesome; important information and resources; productive dialogue; excellent opportunity to collaborate; and wonderful sharing of ideas that will sharpen our practice.
- Principals have said their most valuable Beat the Odds experience is the opportunity to network and collaborate with other principals across districts.



"Beat the Odds has grown significantly over the years and deepened its roots to innovate and reform. It has made a critical impact in improving achievement at struggling schools and is impressive in its sustainability."

Jim Zaharis
Vice President, Education
Greater Phoenix Leadership



"The greatest impact on a school's success is the effectiveness of the principal's leadership. Beat the Odds leverages the power of mentorship to assist new school leaders in developing the skills necessary to ensure a high quality education for its students."

Dr. Karen Williams
Superintendent
Alhambra School District



Milestones

Beat the Odds Important Events

May 2007: CFA established the Beat the Odds Institute under the center's umbrella. Its goal is to improve student academic performance by partnering with Arizona educators to bring the six Beat the Odds principles into daily practice in low-income, high-minority schools.

October 2007: The Beat the Odds School Partners Program was **launched in the metro Phoenix area with 27 pilot schools**, providing K-12 principals with the training, assistance and support needed to apply the Beat the Odds keys to success in their schools year-round.



"Beat the Odds has given me the advantage of sharing and learning with my peers in a supportive environment that recognizes exemplary practices around teaching and learning."

Kate McDonald
Principal
Metro Tech High School
Phoenix Union High School District

March 2006: With the active involvement and research methodology of Jim Collins, author of *Good to Great*, CFA released the landmark research study entitled *Why Some Schools with Latino Children Beat the Odds... and Others Don't*. By studying mostly Latino, mostly low-income Arizona schools with higher than expected reading and math scores, the research team identified six keys to success that could be adopted by other schools.



"Based on my experiences in Beat The Odds, I can attest: These principles aren't adopted overnight – it takes hard work and discipline – and it's worth it. I wish I had had the support provided by the Institute earlier in my career!"

Roger Freeman, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Littleton Elementary School District

September 2008: Participation in Beat the Odds more than **doubled to 59 Phoenix-area school partners** in its second 2008-2009 school year.

October 2008: Nine of the 24 schools completing the one-year pilot program reached the highest possible level of achievement in the first year of the program—bronze-level Beat the Odds School Partner. These schools had to effectively implement the Beat the Odds framework school-wide and receive at least a "performing" AZ Learns label from the Arizona Department of Education for the 2007-2008 school year.



September 2009: In its third 2009-2010 school year, **Beat the Odds participation grew to 85 schools—a 70 percent increase from the previous school year**, and more than triple the first-year’s enrollment. Thanks to an Accio grant, the third year also saw the program expand geographically to metro Tucson to serve principals and assistant principals.

October 2009: Thirty-nine of the 59 metro Phoenix-area schools earned bronze and/or silver Beat the Odds Awards for academic improvement during the 2008-2009 school year. Eighteen schools received the silver award, the highest possible award in what was the second year of the multi-year program. The silver-level designation requires schools to demonstrate academic growth in the majority of students in reading and math internal test scores, as well as to meet the criteria for bronze status.

January 2011: **The first Arizona K-12 schools to earn gold awards and the title of Beat the Odds School were announced.** The 10 gold-level schools were required to achieve three consecutive years of academic improvement, ending with the 2009-2010 school year, and meet the criteria for the silver and bronze awards. Twenty silver awards and 24 bronze awards were presented to the 2009-2010 participants.

September 2011: In its fifth 2011-2012 school year, Beat the Odds has served 145 public, charter and tribal schools in Arizona.



“When everybody was cutting back and saying change can’t be achieved in this economy, we have accelerated our expectation of what could be achieved to bridge not only the digital divide, but also the economic divide, achievement divide, and college divide.”

Manuel Isquierdo, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Sunnyside Unified School District

September 2010: In its fourth 2010-2011 school year, Beat the Odds expanded geographically and as an education reform model. Yuma school principals, assistant principals and district staff joined the School Partners Program. Several partner schools fulfilled their three-year commitment and new schools entered, netting a total of 85 participating schools for the academic year.



“We are very proud of our success and dedicated to sticking with the program. My mentor is an incredible role model who portrays how to be the best one can be as an elementary school principal.”

Joseph Jacobo
Principal
Pima Elementary School
Pima Unified School District

Lessons Learned Five Years of Insights



"Beat The Odds was selected in the first cohort of grantees for Arizona Community Foundation's Accio Education Fund, which has been viewed by the U.S. Department of Education as a national model for supporting innovative reform organizations. From the beginning, we have been truly impressed with Beat the Odds' commitment, research, principles and programmatic design."

Jim Pitofsky
Chief Strategy Officer
Arizona Community Foundation

In the past five years, Beat the Odds has demonstrated that demography is not destiny. Schools with mostly Latino, mostly poor students can succeed.

The Beat the Odds Approach is Working

- It is possible to improve student achievement in low-income, minority-intensive schools.
- The Six Beat the Odds Keys to Success for improving student achievement are effective.
- The central focus on improving achievement for every student in every classroom is correct.

A Strong and Steady Principal is Essential

- The network of Beat the Odds partner principals is one of the most valuable features of the program.
- Participation in training sessions is extremely useful and leads to collaborative teamwork at the school level.
- Mentors, who are successful principals in low-income, minority-intensive schools, are pivotal to helping partner principals accomplish their goals.

The Magic is in the School

- Beat the Odds provides a basic framework for improving academic achievement over time.
- While the principal's leadership is of utmost importance, teachers, staff and students must collectively create a culture that promotes learning, day-in and day-out.



Metro Tech High School
Phoenix, Arizona



The Road Ahead

Next Steps for Beat the Odds



"To ensure Arizona's students are academically prepared to succeed in college and career, we need effective school leaders who remain focused on creating a high-expectations culture centered around student academic performance. Beat the Odds is successfully building a pipeline of strong leaders who not only care about the success of their students, but who understand the impact that success will have on the future of our state."

Paul J. Luna
President and CEO
Helios Education Foundation

Arizona's Latino school enrollment is fast becoming the majority. The Beat the Odds program should strive to reach every low-income, minority-intensive school in Arizona.

The Beat the Odds Institute's next steps are to:

Create Greater Public Awareness

- Advance public understanding of how Arizona can educate young people from every socioeconomic level.
- Underscore the connection of a fully educated workforce to Arizona's economic future.

Partner with Other Organizations

- Work collaboratively to help all low-income, high minority schools meet the increasingly rigorous standards of graduating their students college and/or career ready.

Expand and Strengthen the Beat the Odds Leadership Model

- In addition to principals, continue to extend the district-wide program to reach assistant principals, aspiring principals and district staff.
- Develop electronic and interactive delivery systems, including online tools to train statewide Beat the Odds mentors.
- Incorporate technology into the school partners program, not only to track student achievement, but in the use of digital learning in the classroom.

Participating Schools 2007-2012 Beat the Odds School Partners

Alhambra Elementary School District

Andalucía Middle School
Catalina Ventura School
Cordova Middle School
James W. Rice Primary School
Sevilla Primary School

Balsz Elementary School District

Balsz Elementary School
Brunson-Lee Elementary School
David Crockett Elementary School

Cartwright Elementary School District

Holiday Park Elementary School
Peralta Elementary School
Heatherbrae Elementary School
Tomahawk Elementary School

Creighton School District

Excelencia School
Larry C. Kennedy School
Squaw Peak Elementary School

Deer Valley Unified School District

Barry Goldwater High School
Paseo Hills School
Village Meadows Elementary School

Dysart Unified School District

Countryside Elementary School
Desert Moon Elementary School
Marley Park Elementary School
Mountain View School
Surprise Elementary School
Thompson Ranch Elementary School
West Point Elementary School
Western Peaks Elementary School

Fountain Hills School District

Four Peaks Elementary School

Gilbert Unified School District

Burk Elementary School
Gilbert Junior High School
Harris Elementary School

Glendale Elementary School District

Bicentennial North
Challenger Middle School
Glendale Landmark
Glenn F. Burton Elementary School
Sunset Vista Elementary

Glendale Union High School District

Cortez High School
Washington High School

Isaac School District

Esperanza Elementary School
J.B. Sutton Elementary School
Joseph Zito Elementary School
Lela Alston Elementary School
Mitchell Elementary School
Morris K. Udall Escuela de Bellas Artes
Moya Elementary School
P.T. Coe Elementary School
Pueblo Del Sol School

Kyrene School District

Kyrene Akimel A-al Middle School
Kyrene de las Lomas Elementary School
Kyrene de las Manitas

Laveen Elementary School District

Cheatham Elementary School
Trailside Point School

Liberty Elementary School District

Freedom Elementary School
Liberty Elementary School
Rainbow Valley Elementary School

Litchfield Elementary School District

L. Thomas Heck Middle School

Littleton Elementary School District

Littleton Elementary School
Quentin Elementary

Marana Unified School District

Marjorie W. Estes Elementary School
Roadrunner Elementary School
Thornycroft Elementary School

Mesa School District

Edison Elementary School
Emerson Elementary School
Hawthorne Elementary School
Lincoln Elementary School
Lowell Elementary
Webster Elementary School
Smith Junior High School

Osborn School District

Solano Elementary School

Paradise Valley Unified School District

Campo Bello Elementary
Echo Mountain Intermediate
Echo Mountain Primary

Pendergast School District

Amberlea Elementary School
Copper King Elementary School
Desert Horizon Elementary School
Westwind Elementary School

Peoria Unified School District

Alta Loma Elementary School

Phoenix Elementary School District

Emerson Elementary School
Kenilworth Elementary School
Maie Bartlett Heard Elementary School

Phoenix Union High School District

Bioscience High School
Franklin Police & Fire High School
Metro Tech High School

Pima Unified School District

Pima Elementary School

Roosevelt School District

Bernard Black Elementary School
C.J. Jorgensen School
C.O. Greenfield School
Ed and Verma Pastor Elementary School
George Benjamin Brooks Academy
John R. Davis School
Maxine O. Bush Elementary School



What School Partners Say About Training Sessions:

"It is always nice to hear what is going on with other schools and share ideas."

"Great presentation! Applies to what is going on in every school."

"I like the activities and the sharing. Keep up the good work!"

"Always good! Love the feeling after Beat the Odds meetings."

"Thanks for the opportunities to talk to others around the room."

"Very knowledgeable and instructive—relevant topic."

"Great ideas that can be implemented at any school."

"Timely topic for our school. We are re-tooling!"

"Outstanding interactive presentation!"

"Timely and appropriate topic."

"Very organized! Excellent engagement strategies."

Percy L. Julian School
 Rose Linda School
 T.G. Barr School
 V.H. Lassen Elementary School
 Valley View Elementary School

Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Schools

Accelerated Learning Academy
 Early Childhood Education Center
 Salt River Elementary School
 Salt River High School

Sunnyside Unified School District

Apollo Middle School
 Billy Lane Lauffer Middle School
 Challenger Middle School
 Chaparral Middle School
 Craycroft Elementary School
 Desert View High School

Drexel Elementary School
 Esperanza Elementary School
 Los Amigos Technology Academy
 Sierra Middle School
 Sunnyside High School

Tempe Elementary School District

Aguilar Elementary School
 Arredondo Elementary School
 Carminati Elementary School
 Curry Elementary School
 Evans Elementary School
 Frank Elementary School
 Gililand Middle School
 Holdeman Elementary School
 Laird School
 McKemy Middle School
 Meyer Elementary School
 Nevitt Elementary School
 Scales Technology Academy

Thew Elementary School
 Wood Elementary School

Tolleson Elementary School District

Desert Oasis Elementary School
 Porfirio H. Gonzales Elementary School

Tolleson Union High School District

Copper Canyon High School
 La Joya Community High School
 Sierra Linda High School
 Tolleson Union High School
 Westview High School

Tucson Unified School District

Ford Elementary School
 Lawrence Intermediate School
 Oyama Elementary School

Whiteriver Unified School District

Canyon Day Junior High

Yuma Union High School District

Cibola High School
 Gila Ridge High School
 Kofa High School
 San Luis High School
 Vista Alternative High School
 Yuma High School

Charter Schools

StarShine Academy (Phoenix)
 Tertulia Pre-College Community Primary Campus
 Vicki A. Romero High School (Phoenix)

Center for the Future of Arizona (CFA)

The Center for the Future of Arizona is helping to shape and define Arizona's future through an action-oriented agenda focused on issues and topics critical to the state.

More than a think tank, the center is an independent "do tank" that combines public-policy research with collaborative partnerships and initiatives that serve the public interest and the common good.

Its goal is to help guide and inform the decisions that impact quality of life and opportunities for Arizonans, now and in the future.

Established in 2002, the Phoenix-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization is governed by a distinguished board of directors. It is privately funded through individual, foundation, corporate and community contributions.

CFA Board of Directors

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Paul J. Luna, President and CEO, Helios Education Foundation
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Investors in the Beat the Odds School Partners Program

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