Ten teachers, the most-ever in one year, earned National Board Certification in 2014. The most certifications in one year previously was seven, each of the last two years. There are now 43 National Board Certified teachers in the District, including five who joined PUHSD last year, having earned certification in another district.

Kevin Berlat, Central English teacher and the speech and debate coach, was selected in the 2015 Section 7 (AZ, CA, HI, NV and UT) recipient of the “National High School Heart of the Arts Award” by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) for exemplifying the ideals that recognize Teacher Excellence in Citizenship.

Chavez science teacher Chele Myrann and a group of enterprising students advocated for a physical design a theater chair received a patent for their invention five years after the chair was developed with a $10,000 grant through the Lemelson-MIT InvenTeam Program in 2009. Two members of the InvenTeam were invited to Washington, D.C. and met President Obama in 2010 during the first-ever White House Science Fair.

Students from Carl Hayden and Central were winners at a 24-Hour Code Day in February. Hayden won the top overall project, and Central won the Valley Leadership Audience choice for best program.

Cesar Chavez Football Coach Jim Rattay and his Champions celebrated his 300th career win in October. He finished season with 303 wins. Rattay’s career has spanned five decades, 38 years, and seven state championships in two states—Ohio and Arizona.

CamelBack Band Director Jamie Johnston was selected as a GRAMMY Music Educator Award quarterfinalist, one of only two from Arizona among the 7,000 nominees.

Superintendent Kent P. Scribner was named the 2014 Out-of-School Time Champion by the Arizona Center for After School Programming (ACASE), in recognition of his dedication to and consistent support of quality out-of-school time programming.

Central senior Alexis Smith earned Honorable Mention All-State in Division II Basketball and scored her 1,000 career point late in the season. She was second in scoring among Division II players in the state, averaging 22 points a game. She was also All-Academic First Team.

Two Phoenix Union students made the All-State Band and both play trombone. Arturo Aguilar of Camelback was the second in a row. Louis Mendez of Carl Hayden.

The AIA introduced Robotics to its interscholastic lineup, with the help of the Carl Hayden Falcon Robotics team at halftime of the Division I Football Championship game, in November. In fact, the game ball and coin for the coin toss were delivered by a Falcon robot. The Falcons’ finished second in the inaugural AIA-sanctioned robotics state event in Prescott in May.

Central High School’s ROBOTC instructor First Sergeant Ronnie Hurt was awarded the District DVF/City of Phoenix VFW Chapter Citizenship Education Teacher Award, by the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9400, recognizing Teacher Excellence in Citizenship.

Central’s new name on a new building for Suns-Diamondbacks was inducted into the Arizona Sports Hall of Fame in 2015.

President Barack Obama came to Central High School for a speech in January. Central students presented the colors, Pledge of Allegiance and performed the National Anthem. Hundreds of students attended the event. Superintendent Kent P. Scribner and Central Principal John Biera met the President backstage.

Students from Phoenix Union High School District took part in the Arizona College Application Campaign in 2015. Central High had 431 seniors complete at least one college application for a 94% completion rate.

In its last full year of AIMS (Spring 2014) Phoenix Union was eight points up in Writing, had a three-point improvement in Reading, and one-point increase in Math (50) for 9th graders. The State average had a four-point increase in Writing, a five-point gain in Reading, and two-point gain in Math.

South Mountain’s Rafael Lopez earned a Flinn Foundation Scholarship in 2015. One of only 21 awarded to Arizona seniors in 2015, Lopez is the first South Mountain student to win the prestigious and lucrative scholarship, which can be used at any of Arizona’s three state universities. The Flinn is valued at over $115,000 for four years.

Eight schools were above the 4-year graduation rate (2014) state average of 75%, including 81% for Betty Fairfax and Cesar Chavez, 87% at Maryvale, 90% at Metro Tech, 95% at Franklin and 100% at Bioscience.
Brie Anna Frank, a Maryvale senior, was named the City of Phoenix 2015 Outstanding Young Woman of the Year in May. Four other Phoenix Union students were among the 16 students nominated as Outstanding Young Men and Women for each of the eight city council districts. The winners were selected for outstanding community service and commitment to excellence in all areas of their lives.

North High’s Fernando Cortez Betanzos was among the only 258 students worldwide who earned the highest scores in the nation in the Cambridge Curriculum exam. Cortez’s perfect score was on the AP Spanish exam. Each year, approximately 4 million AP Exams are taken by U.S. public high school students.

Central High’s Leidy Gonzalez and Dulce Aguilar turned in the highest scores in the nation in the Cambridge Curriculum Art and Design exams taken in Spring, 2014.

Trevor Browne and Metro Tech dual student Samantha Melendrez was chosen as the 2015 Arizona Future Educators of America (FEA) Student of the Year. She was in Metro Tech’s Education Professionals Career and Technical Education program.

Maryvale’s Amanda Delphy (right) was named High School Student of the Year at the Arizona American Indian Excellence in Leadership Awards ceremony in November.

North’s Poetry club, called “Generation Ink” placed first in the Unity Festival City-wide Poetry Slam for the second straight year in November.

The Carl Hayden Robotics team was the subject of a documentary, Underwater Dreams, a motion picture, Spare Parts and a book of the same name in 2014-15. The Falcons burst onto the scene when they defeated MIT and several other universities in an underwater robotics competition 10 years ago. The documentary was shown in Phoenix in September, the motion picture premiered at the campus, and at a fundraising event, January 6 and was released nationwide January 16. Underwater Dreams was made available for schools nationwide, free, through a White House STEM Initiative.

Four Phoenix Union High School District students from four different schools were named Gates Millennium Scholars, earning the prestigious scholarship from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation–Isis Comma, Cameball; Julio Melchor, Trevor Browne; Fernando Resendez, Metro Tech and Esther Avila Rodriguez, Carl Hayden. The scholarship, which can be applied toward undergraduate, graduate and doctoral degrees, is valued at over $250,000.

Mackenzie Kong-Sivert of Bioscience High School and Sarah Dudy of North won National Merit Scholarship finalists in the 2015 National Merit Scholarship Program. North also had one National Merit Program Commended student, and four National Hispanic Scholars.

North High’s Cortney Davis placed 1st in the Arizona Future Educators Association (FEA) State Conference for Job Interview. She went on to compete at the FEA National Competition in April, Arizona against 29 national competitors and finished in second place.

South Mountain’s Multimedia Communications magnet teamed up with the PBS (Public Broadcast Corporation) Student News Hour. The students submitted stories to PBS for its News Hour show, including one on emergency procedures at the school. PBS will also select a student to go to Washington D.C. for training and a possible paid internship at the NBC News affiliate.

Four South Mountain Law Magnet students took part in the Marshall Brennan National Moot Court Competition in Washington D.C., and Jorge Cervantes kept the school’s streak of having at least one National Seminarist every year of the competition.

Teams from Bioscience and Carl Hayden and a Metro Tech student represented the District at the International FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics competition in April.

South Mountain is one of 27 public schools across Arizona recognized as Arizona Civic Engagement Schools by the Arizona Department of Education’s Excellence in Civic Engagement Program (CECP). In the first year of the program, South Mountain was recognized as a School of Merit and this year it moved up to one of nine Schools of Distinction.

Trevor Browne won the statewide JROTC Adventure Team competition in October, the sixth time in seven years that the Bruins have won this event.

Alhambra’s Zarriea Willis was the Division I Girls High Jump State Champion for the second straight year, and Cameball’s Anthony Stennis, won a State title in the Division III Boys 300 m hurdles.

Central High moved into a new JROTC facility in 2014, made possible through the 2011 Construction Bond.

Four schools qualified for the State Academic Decathlon in March. Cesar Chavez finished 9th in State, its fifth top 10 finish in the last six years. Maryvale, Alhambra and Betty Fairfax also earned bids to the 40-school championship.

Both the Metro Tech boys and girls teams won State Cross Country Championships for the 2014 National Cross Country Championships (NXCA) in November. North was the first girls’ athletic state title in Metro history.

Underwater Dreams, a motion picture, Spare Parts and a book of the same name in 2014-15. The filmmakers and cast were recognized as Arizona Civic Engagement Schools by the Arizona Department of Education’s Excellence in Civic Engagement Program (CECP). In the first year of the program, South Mountain was recognized as a School of Merit and this year it moved up to one of nine Schools of Distinction.

The winners were selected for outstanding community service and commitment to excellence in all areas of their lives.