A.5 Performance Management Plan-Reading Narrative

The exercise of writing a performance management plan will ensure that the Arizona Autism Charter School's (AZACS) curriculum, instruction, monitoring of student achievement and professional development strategies will be in place for providing the highest quality education for all students attending the school.

Basis for Setting Predicted Baseline Figures

In order to adequately support our target population and offer the best education in the area of reading, it is important to establish predicted baseline figures. Because the target population for AZACS is students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), the team studied the 2011 AIMS scores for students with disabilities who took the test with standard accommodations. The scores reviewed were from the 13 elementary school districts feeding into Phoenix Union High School Districts. These school districts are Alhambra Elementary District, Balsz School District, Cartwright School District, Creighton School District, Isaac School District, Laveen School District, Madison School District, Murphy School District, Osborn School District, Phoenix Elementary School District, Riverside Elementary School District, Roosevelt School District and Wilson School District. The scores used to determine averages were from grades K-5. AZACS found that only **12%** of students with disabilities tested with standard accommodations scored proficient (meets or exceeds) on the reading portion of the AIMS.

In order to determine the Average Student Growth Percentile, AZACS reviewed the data from every school feeding into the Phoenix Union High School District. There were 129 schools in the 13 districts mentioned above. The Average Student Growth percentile in reading for all students in those 129 schools is **52**. This average accounts for all students, typically developing and disabled.

It is clear that a very strategic effort is required to improve the percentage of students passing the AIMS in reading as well as the student growth percentile.

Plan for Providing and Implementing a Curriculum that Improves Student Achievement

AZACS believes that for students with ASD, this means individualized instructional programs in the area of reading delivered via Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). In order to deliver an effective reading curriculum via ABA that will improve student achievement for the 81 students the school plans to enroll in its first year, AZACS will hire nine special education teachers who have experience working with students with autism using ABA strategies. Because the AZACS program will require extensive individualized instruction, the school will offer a 3 to 1 ratio, with one lead teacher and two instructional aides in each classroom. Students with autism have various levels of functioning and academic abilities that don't necessarily correlate with age or grade level. For this reason, AZACS will have multi-grade

classrooms that will group students based on their needs and abilities. AZACS plans to have one kindergarten classroom, four 1st-3rd classrooms and four 4th-5th classrooms for a total of nine classrooms. Depending on enrollment, AZACS plans to offer two grade-level classrooms that will operate as similarly as possible to a typical public school program. These classrooms will be used for students who are getting ready to transition back to a more typical public school setting, but still need supports.

This will require hiring 18 qualified paraprofessionals. Once teachers and aides have been hired, during the summer of 2013, a Reading/Language Arts curriculum committee will be formed to identify Essential Learning Outcomes (ELO's) for each strand of the Common Core Standards. This committee will meet at least one time per week during the months of June and July. A curriculum map will be developed for each grade level (K-5) that includes ELO's, priority standards, key vocabulary and how all of these should be implemented and/or modified for students on Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Once curriculum plans are in place, ABA programs/lessons will be developed that align with ELO's and priority standards. Delivery of all ABA lessons will include data collection. The committee will also determine percentages for proficiency and mastery of each reading standard. ABA style summative assessments would also be created that would include checks for generalization of the reading skill (demonstrating mastery across different instructors and environments). During the summer of 2013, curriculum materials will be purchased. SRA Reading programs are the curriculums being considered as they have a track record of efficacy with the autism population. The reading curriculum committee would ensure the materials provided align with curriculum maps and Common Core Standards.

In order to ensure the appropriate time is allocated for Reading/Language Arts instruction on a daily basis, 90 minutes of Reading/Language Arts will be included in students' daily schedules. Also, every IEP will be checked by the Curriculum Director to ensure reading goals are aligned with ELO's and priority standards.

Once school is in session, teachers and instructional aides will deliver ABA lesson plans in reading based on students IEPs or Personalized Education Plans (PEPs) for students performing at grade level. Efficacy of reading curriculum will be reviewed daily and graphed weekly by the teacher. Data reports will be reviewed at least biweekly by Curriculum Director for proficiency and mastery in ABA reading programs. At the end of the school year, the Reading/Language Arts committee will meet to discuss strengths and weaknesses in the reading curriculum and discuss purchasing additional resources and materials to meet student needs in the following school year.

Plan for Monitoring the Integration of the Arizona Academic Standards into Instruction

Teachers will be held accountable for integrating state standards into students Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Personalized Education Plans (PEPs), lesson plans and daily instruction. A teacher evaluation form will be developed that includes criteria for integration of state standards. Individualized lesson plans will be placed in student notebooks along with data collection forms. The Curriculum Director will check lesson plans at least biweekly and ensure alignment with state standards. The Curriculum Director will also schedule regular observations and coaching sessions to ensure curriculum is being delivered to students using ABA and that delivery of lessons reflect written plans and especially alignment to state standards. At the end of each semester the plan for monitoring integrations of state standards will be evaluated by teachers and school's executive team. Modifications will be made to improve the plan based on the experience during the year and improvements will be reflected in an updated Performance Management Plan.

Plan for Monitoring and Documenting Student Proficiency

Teachers will develop IEP and PEP reading goals to be reached by students by the end of the school year. To achieve mastery on reading standards, students will be expected to achieve at least 80% of their reading goals based on ABA assessments. To determine students' baseline levels in the area of reading, they will be assessed using the Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills (ABLLS). Based on the results from this assessment, reading goals will be written for the year that align with state standards. Each student will have a binder created for him/her that will have ABA lesson plans for reading and accompanying data sheets to track their progress. At key intervals in each ABA reading program, a formative assessment will be administered to determine students' growth toward mastery and any remediation or modifications that need to take place. At the end of an of the ABA reading unit, students will take summative assessments that are aligned with state standards and IEP and PEP goals. In order to determine mastery, teachers will set and document percentages that need to be acquired in each goal (for example, 80% accuracy over three consecutive days on a specific reading skill). Because children with autism often have trouble replicating a skill across different environments, teachers will conduct a generalization check to ensure students can and will perform reading goals across different activities, environments and instructors.

Monthly data meetings will be conducted by Curriculum Director and teachers to analyze progress toward mastery in reading goals.

These strategies will be evaluated at the end of each semester and if teaching staff feels changes are necessary to improve documentation process, a revised strategy will be reflected in the Performance Management Plan.

Professional Development Plan that Supports Effective Implementation of the Curriculum

Teachers and instructional staff will be continually evaluated and receive regular coaching from the Curriculum Director and Curriculum Supervisor to ensure ABA lessons are being delivered correctly and in line with state standards. An official form will be created and used to document evaluation of staff. Coaching sessions will be evaluated as well on a form created for that purpose. Videotaping may also be used as a tool in the evaluation and coaching process.

Prior to the beginning of the school year, a one week in-service training will be conducted for instructional staff. The training will include hands on training in ABA and Common Core Standards in the area of reading, modified standards for special education and alignment of standards in IEP's and PEP's.

There will be professional development days scheduled throughout the school year every other Wednesday when students have early-release. These professional development days will include continual training in ABA, integration of Common Core Standards for reading in individual student programs and preparation for AIMS and AIMS-A. These professional development opportunities will also be used to train teachers on appropriate use of purchased reading materials and resources.

Teachers will be able to bring any concerns to Curriculum Director at any time, but time will be scheduled for one-on-one meetings at least once a month. Teacher evaluations, student data and supports needed in the classroom will be among the topics discussed during one-on-one meetings. Executive Director will participate in these meetings as needed. These monthly meetings may occur before or after school and will be scheduled on alternate Wednesdays not designated as early-release professional development days as reflected in the school calendar.

Process for Updating and Implementing Improvements to the Action Steps Based on Data Analysis

At the end of each semester, individual and cumulative student data will be analyzed as well as data by classroom and grade level. Data form teachers' coaching sessions will be reviewed as well to determine if teachers' strengths and weaknesses are affecting student progress. All of these elements will be checked against the action steps in the Reading PMP and revisions will be made to fill in gaps and improve the plan to strengthen the reading program and curriculum for the students at AZACS.