

Adding Grade Levels to Charter Amendment Request

Charterholder Info

Charter Holder

Name:
BASIS Schools, Inc.

CTDS:
13-87-86-000

Mailing Address:
7975 North Hayden Road
Suite B121
Scottsdale, AZ 85258
> [View detailed info](#)

Representative

Name:
Carolyn McGarvey

Phone Number:
480-767-7696

Fax Number:
480-289-2089

Downloads

 [Download all files](#)

Current Grade Levels

Current Grade Levels Served

- 5th Grade
- 6th Grade
- 7th Grade
- 8th Grade
- 9th Grade
- 10th Grade
- 11th Grade
- 12th Grade

New Grade Levels

For each grade level being added, provide the following as a representation of a program of instruction aligned to the State's approved academic standards and to methods of instruction described in the charter. Please note that a separate upload must be prepared for each grade level and content area and be named as such. Additionally, applicants must restate the name of the file in the Brief Description box (e.g., First Grade Reading, HS Algebra II).

For K-8

Language Arts & Math: A completed curriculum sample for reading, writing, and math for each grade level being added including all attachments as outlined on the [required template and instructions](#).

For 9-12

Language Arts & Math: A completed curriculum sample for reading, writing, and math coursework for each grade level being added including all attachments as outlined on the [required template and instructions](#). Each course must align with the State's graduation requirements.

Add Grade Levels

K
1st
2nd
3rd
4th

Curriculum Samples


 [Download File](#) —

Effective Date
08/05/2015

Attachments

Board Minutes —  [Download File](#)

Narrative —  [Download File](#)

Timeline for implementation —  [Download File](#)

Additional Information*

No documents were uploaded.

Signature

Charter Representative Signature

Carolyn McGarvey 01/11/2015

**MINUTES of the meeting
of the**

BASIS Ahwatukee Governing Body, BASIS Chandler Governing Body, BASIS Flagstaff Governing Body, BASIS Goodyear Governing Body, BASIS Mesa Governing Body, BASIS Oro Valley Governing Body BASIS Oro Valley Primary Governing Body, BASIS Peoria Governing Body, BASIS Phoenix Governing Body, BASIS Phoenix Central Governing Body, BASIS Prescott Governing Body, BASIS Scottsdale Governing Body, BASIS Tucson Governing Body, and BASIS Tucson North Governing Body

**December 10, 2014
12:00 PM**

Location

BASIS Schools, Inc.
Conference Room
7975 N Hayden Rd.
Scottsdale, AZ 85258

Members were present telephonically.

Members of the public were permitted to attend the meeting at the BASIS School, Inc. office or any of the above listed school sites telephonically.

Members:

Board Members Present at Location: None

Board Members Present - Telephonic: Carolyn McGarvey, Christine Martinmaas, Anthony Pitucco, Rizwan Safdar, and Julia Toews

Board Members Not Present: Mittida Raksanaves

Also Present: Jennifer Werrell, Christine Garcia, and Rebecca Carey (telephonic)

1. Call to Order of the BASIS Schools Governing Body
 - a) Dan Nienhauser at 12:00 pm
2. Call to the Public
 - a) BASIS Mesa parent, Jennifer Werrell, attended the meeting telephonically at the BASIS Mesa campus.
3. Adoption of the Minutes of the September 8, 2014 Meeting of the BASIS.
 - a) Adoption of Minutes:
 - i. Motion to adopt- Carolyn McGarvey
 - ii. Second- Anthony Pitucco
 - iii. Motion passes by unanimous approval of the BASIS Schools Governing Body
4. Discussed and approved Resolution 14-R62 to adopt the BASIS Schools, Inc. Accounting and Procurement Policies for BASIS Goodyear.
 - a) Approval of Resolution 14-R62:
 - i. Motion to approve- Julia Toews
 - ii. Second- Carolyn McGarvey
 - iii. Motion passes by unanimous approval of the BASIS Schools Governing Body

5. Discussed and approved Resolution 14-R63 to approve the exemption for Uniform System of Financial Records for Charter Schools (USFRCS) and Procurement for BASIS Goodyear.
 - a) Approval of Resolution 14-R63:
 - i. Motion to approve- Anthony Pitucco
 - ii. Second- Carolyn McGarvey
 - iii. Motion passes by unanimous approval of the BASIS Schools Governing Body

6. Discussed and approved Resolution 14-R64 to submit an enrollment cap increase to the ASBCS of up to 1,320 for BASIS Ahwatukee. The submission may be for less than the “up to” number requested depending on capacity.
 - a) Approval of Resolution 14-R64:
 - i. Motion to approve- Christine Martinmaas
 - ii. Second- Julia Toews
 - iii. Motion passes by unanimous approval of the BASIS Schools Governing Body
 - b) Dan Nienhauser noted that the current enrollment cap is at 750 students and increasing it to 1,320 would give the school room to grow to its full, programmatic capacity.

7. Discussed and approved Resolution 14-R65 to submit an enrollment cap increase to the ASBCS of up to 780 for BASIS Chandler. The submission may be for less than the “up to” number requested depending on capacity.
 - a) Approval of Resolution 14-R65:
 - i. Motion to approve- Carolyn McGarvey
 - ii. Second- Anthony Pitucco
 - iii. Motion passes by unanimous approval of the BASIS Schools Governing Body
 - b) Dan Nienhauser informed the Board that the current enrollment cap is 760.

8. Discussed and approved Resolution 14-R66 to submit an enrollment cap increase to the ASBCS of up to 660 for BASIS Flagstaff. The submission may be for less than the “up to” number requested depending on capacity.
 - a) Approval of Resolution 14-R66:
 - i. Motion to approve- Carolyn McGarvey
 - ii. Second- Anthony Pitucco
 - iii. Motion passes by unanimous approval of the BASIS Schools Governing Body
 - b) Dan Nienhauser informed the Board that this is an increase of 10 students as the current enrollment cap is 650.

9. Discussed and approved Resolution 14-R67 to submit an enrollment cap increase to the ASBCS of up to 840 for BASIS Mesa. The submission may be for less than the “up to” number requested depending on capacity.
 - a) Approval of Resolution 14-R67:
 - i. Motion to approve- Julia Toews
 - ii. Second- Carolyn McGarvey
 - iii. Motion passes by unanimous approval of the BASIS Schools Governing Body



- b) Dan Nienhauser noted that the current enrollment cap is at 615 students and increasing it to 840 would give the school room to grow to its full, programmatic capacity next year.
10. Discussed and approved Resolution 14- to submit an enrollment cap increase to the ASBCS of up to 672 for BASIS Oro Valley. The submission may be for less than the “up to” number requested depending on capacity.
- a) Approval of Resolution 14-R68:
 - i. Motion to approve- Christine Martinmaas
 - ii. Second- Carolyn McGarvey
 - iii. Motion passes by unanimous approval of the BASIS Schools Governing Body
 - b) Dan Nienhauser noted that the current enrollment cap is set at 570.
11. Discussed and approved Resolution 14-R69 to adopt the enrollment cap of 810 for BASIS Oro Valley Primary. The submission may be for less than the “up to” number requested depending on capacity.
- a) Approval of Resolution 14-R69:
 - i. Motion to approve- Christine Martinmaas
 - ii. Second- Carolyn McGarvey
 - iii. Motion passes by unanimous approval of the BASIS Schools Governing Body
 - b) Dan Nienhauser pointed out that the current enrollment cap is 750.
12. Discussed and approved Resolution 14- to submit an enrollment cap increase to the ASBCS of up to 840 for BASIS Phoenix. The submission may be for less than the “up to” number requested depending on capacity.
- a) Approval of Resolution 14-R70:
 - i. Motion to approve- Carolyn McGarvey
 - ii. Second- Julia Toews
 - iii. Motion passes by unanimous approval of the BASIS Schools Governing Body
 - b) Dan Nienhauser noted that the current enrollment cap is 765.
13. Discussed and approved Resolution 14-R71 to submit an enrollment cap increase to the ASBCS of up to f 900 for BASIS Phoenix Central. The submission may be for less than the “up to” number requested depending on capacity.
- a) Approval of Resolution 14-R71:
 - i. Motion to approve- Carolyn McGarvey
 - ii. Second- Julia Toews
 - iii. Motion passes by unanimous approval of the BASIS Schools Governing Body
 - b) Dan Nienhauser informed the Board that the current enrollment cap is 720.
14. Discussed and approved Resolution 14-R72 to submit an enrollment cap increase to the ASBCS of up to 840 for BASIS Prescott. The submission may be for less than the “up to” number requested depending on capacity.
- a) Approval of Resolution 14-R72:
 - i. Motion to approve- Anthony Pitucco
 - ii. Second- Carolyn McGarvey
 - iii. Motion passes by unanimous approval of the BASIS Schools Governing Body

- b) Dan Nienhauser noted that the current enrollment cap is 600 and the increase will accommodate the addition of grades 4 and 11 next year.

- 15. Discussed and approved Resolution 14-R73 to submit an enrollment cap increase to the ASBCS of up to 1,260 for BASIS Tucson North. The submission may be for less than the “up to” number requested depending on capacity.
 - a) Approval of Resolution 14-R73:
 - i. Motion to approve- Carolyn McGarvey
 - ii. Second- Christine Martinmaas
 - iii. Motion passes by unanimous approval of the BASIS Schools Governing Body
 - b) Dan Nienhauser informed the Board that the current enrollment cap is 1,000.

- 16. Discussed and approved Resolution 14-R74 to amend the BASIS Schools, Inc. – BASIS Flagstaff charter to add grades, beginning with grade 4 in SY 2015-16.
 - a) Approval of Resolution 14-R73:
 - i. Motion to approve- Carolyn McGarvey
 - ii. Second- Christine Martinmaas
 - iii. Motion passes by unanimous approval of the BASIS Schools Governing Body

- 17. Discussed and approved Resolution 14-R75 to amend the BASIS Schools, Inc. – BASIS Prescott charter to add grades, beginning with grade 4 in SY 2015-16.
 - a) Approval of Resolution 14-R73:
 - i. Motion to approve- Anthony Pitucco
 - ii. Second- Carolyn McGarvey
 - iii. Motion passes by unanimous approval of the BASIS Schools Governing Body

- 18. Motion to Adjourn
 - a) Dan Nienhauser adjourned the meeting at 12:16 pm.

Minutes taken by Rebecca Carey.

Dan Nienhauser
Chairperson

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| BASIS PRESCOTT – Adding Grade Levels to Charter Amendment Grades K - 4 |
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1) Describe the rationale for the increase in grade levels served

BASIS Prescott seeks to add grades K-4 to the current BASIS Prescott Charter. The rationale for adding these grades is primarily rooted in the overall demand and interest demonstrated by the Prescott community for additional lower grades in the BASIS program. This, together with our increased ability to offer grades that will continue to better prepare students for the rigor of the BASIS upper school program provides the rationale for an increase in the grade levels served at BASIS Prescott. BASIS Prescott has sufficient physical capacity to add 4th grade for the 2015-16 school year and potentially expand downward to grades K-3 in future years. Any facilities expansion can be supported with the current financing and may result in no more than minor modifications to the existing facility.

BASIS Prescott currently serves grades 5 – 10 and in the fall of 2015, will be adding the 11th grade. In addition to adding a grade up (which is authorized under the current charter), we would like to also add a 4th grade next year. By ultimately adding kindergarten through 4th grade to the existing 5th through 12th grade BASIS model in Prescott, students will gain an opportunity to experience an uninterrupted and fully integrated college preparatory education. Starting earlier will allow teachers and staff to focus on instilling in students a love of learning, which will serve them throughout their experience in grades 5-12 and beyond. Our faculty will also focus on teaching students study skills and organizational skills that will enable them to be successful learners and to reach their highest academic potential in the middle and upper school grades. By offering students this opportunity in the early grades, a BASIS elementary program may result in fewer students in need of academic support and a seamless transition to the more rigorous academic approach in the middle and upper school grades at BASIS Prescott.

At some BASIS schools in greater Phoenix, as many as 40 percent of our incoming 5th graders lack basic literacy skills in reading, writing and math facts. Although BASIS is an open enrollment school, we believe many parents, who otherwise desire the rigorous BASIS curriculum, may not be choosing BASIS at 5th grade because they feel their child is not adequately prepared. Those same parents might be inclined, however, to enroll their child at BASIS in kindergarten were that an option. This expansion to the younger grade levels will therefore enable BASIS to reach a broader spectrum of children with even more impact on the community. We look forward to developing positive relationships with students and families that will last throughout their time on campus and beyond.

BASIS Prescott is located within the boundaries of the Prescott Unified School District, which received a grade of "B" from the Arizona Department of Education in 2014. All eligible BASIS schools consistently receive "A" ratings from the Department and we strive for nothing less.

With the addition of the 4th grade through K, BASIS Prescott will offer families an important opportunity that has been very rare up to this point: the chance to enroll their students in a reliably high-performing school for the continuum of their K-12 education. The existing system of schools cannot guarantee this for the Prescott area students in the way BASIS can. We are not aware of any other schools in the area that offer BASIS's unique combination of requiring teachers to be experts in their subjects, providing an accelerated curriculum (including Mandarin instruction) for students as young as 1st grade, and emphasizing individual responsibility and independence for students without the rigidity of a traditional school.

The target population for the additional grades at BASIS Prescott will include the entire Prescott, Humboldt, Chino Valley. Based on current enrollment of the current Prescott school, we anticipate the

majority of our enrollment will come from within the Prescott Unified School District boundaries. Currently, approximately 75% of the student body at BASIS Prescott is from this area. The families who choose to send their students to BASIS are those seeking the best education in the world. This is something the students in the Prescott Valley need—a single school that can raise them to their highest potential, to compete on a level consistent with their most successful international peers. This need had become increasingly urgent as the result of multiple pending school closures in the area. Families have expressed great interest in having a single school campus that will afford the continuity of high quality education from grades K – 12.

Table 1
Prescott Unified ADE “Letter Grade” distribution (2013-14)

| LEA | School Name | Charter School | Growth | Composite | Total | Letter Grade |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|--------|-----------|-------|--------------|
| Prescott Unified District | Lincoln Elementary School | N | 39 | 75 | 114 | C |
| Prescott Unified District | Miller Valley School* | N | 46 | 76 | 122 | B |
| Prescott Unified District | Taylor Hicks School | N | 48 | 84 | 132 | B |
| Prescott Unified District | Washington Traditional School* | N | 54 | 82 | 136 | B |
| Prescott Unified District | Abia Judd Elementary School | N | 58 | 92 | 150 | A |
| Prescott Unified District | Prescott Mile High Middle School | N | 46 | 80 | 126 | B |
| Prescott Unified District | Granite Mountain Middle School | N | 48 | 85 | 133 | B |
| Prescott Unified District | Prescott High School | N | 51 | 88 | 139 | B |

* Schools slated to close at the end of the 2014-15 school year due to District budget shortfalls

BASIS Prescott will be able to offer a complete K-12 educational experience for students. Families with more than one child will benefit by being able to have all of their school-age children in immediate proximity. Absent any advertising, there are currently over 425 families who have expressed interest in opening grades K-14 at BASIS Prescott.

2) How do the additional grades support the mission, educational philosophy, and methods of instruction? How does the implementation of the existing program of instruction meet the needs of the students at the grade levels being served?

BASIS seeks to provide an accelerated liberal arts education at internationally competitive levels for all students. We operate on the principle that math, science, and the humanities are not disparate but complementary ways of communicating. We believe that advanced coursework is for all students, not just the “gifted.” Our curriculum, consistent with the highest international academic standards, is designed to help students develop academic and organizational skills that will be essential to their success throughout life. Most importantly, we try to provide students with a deep knowledge base and a

passion for learning, which will motivate them to reach their highest academic potential and prepare them for the demands of college and the workforce.

The BASIS educational philosophy rests on several key tenets:

1. Creating and reinforcing a belief that learning is exciting, rewarding, and worthwhile

The BASIS school culture makes high academic achievement and intellectual engagement the norm and supports students to enable them to realize their own great academic potential. The goal of all BASIS faculty is to give students the overall sense that learning is exciting, rewarding, and worthwhile—and not just now, but for a lifetime. The entire teaching faculty in grades K-4 play an instrumental role in this high-achieving community, whether they are Subject Expert Teachers with academic degrees in the discipline they teach and a passion for their subject matter or Learning Expert Teachers with strong pedagogical skills and expertise in differentiation who work to ensure that students understand and master the material in all of their courses.

Not only does an overwhelming body of research demonstrate that an excellent teacher is the single biggest in school factor to a student's academic success, but BASIS has developed a model of teaching and academic supports that help students achieve at the highest levels and engage in subject matter with enthusiasm. By employing a SET/LET model, BASIS is able to bring the subject expertise passion that we have found so successful in the upper grades down to the earliest grade levels. For example, in the BASIS Tucson K-6 school, the 3rd grade Math/Science SET has a Master's degree in Physics and an undergraduate degree in Math and Physics. The 3rd and 4th grade Music Teacher has a Master's in Musical Performance and Choral Conducting and a BA in Music with minor in Molecular Biology. Students in the K-4th grades at BASIS Prescott will benefit from the deep teacher-recruiting pipeline that will bring in faculty of this same caliber. This unique model allows BASIS to engage incredibly passionate teachers who would not otherwise teach at the elementary school level.

2. Teaching Personal Responsibility

Another cornerstone of the BASIS educational philosophy is that students will be successful in every measure of life if they develop an individual sense of responsibility for their success. While support and engagement from parents can play a vital role in students' success, students who rely on micromanagement and supervision from their parents are more likely to struggle in college than students who develop skills to hold themselves accountable for setting and meeting their own academic goals. BASIS strikes the correct balance by encouraging parents to support their children's education while still allowing students, through guided autonomy, to build the skills and personal responsibility they will need to succeed in college and beyond. This autonomy is built up gradually and over a number of years.

BASIS actively teaches students to be well organized and empowers them to take responsibility for their education. One of the primary methods of developing student responsibility for their academic program is by teaching strong organizational skills. These skills, when learned early with consistent reinforcement throughout the BASIS program are among the fundamental tenants of a strong early education program that prepares students for later grades. The Communication Journal is the primary method of communication between parents, teachers, and staff with regard to a student's academic performance or classroom behavior. Students must bring the CJ to every class, every day. It is the most important tool for students to manage their assignments and to take responsibility for their own learning.

Instead of posting homework assignments online, BASIS teachers announce assignments during class. This teaches students to pay close attention in class, to take responsibility for knowing due dates rather than relying on their parents, to make sure they understand their assignments, and to complete homework on time. Students are assessed regularly to check understanding. Starting in the existing BASIS Prescott 6th grade, students are required to pass comprehensive examinations in each core subject in order to progress to the next grade level. Comprehensive exams ensure that students are prepared to move onward to more advanced material. Knowing they will be held accountable for information disseminated in class and via homework, students take their education seriously and quickly learn to “own it.” As students progress through the grade levels, they become models for younger students and help create a culture of positive and purposeful peer support.

3. Teaching Good Study Habits and Providing Support

The academic program at BASIS Charter Schools is among the most accelerated in the country. Student success, therefore, is inextricably linked to good study habits. BASIS believes that these skills must be taught and practiced. Students in the lower school grades learn how to take notes, manage their time, and organize their work. This starts in kindergarten, where students first keep communication journals to track their assignments each day. Teachers actively oversee the progress of their students and identify those who they believe might benefit from additional support. Any student may attend tutoring sessions with their teachers or participate in peer tutoring if they would like increased one-on-one time to help reach their academic goals.

4. Building Work Ethic

BASIS aims to teach students that success is the result of hard work. Whether a student is at the top of the class or struggling to keep pace with the demands of the BASIS curriculum, every BASIS student is encouraged to improve and to reach for his or her highest individual academic potential.

The BASIS philosophy underscores that every student can be successful at BASIS. Not only do our teachers have an excellent work ethic and yearn to pass that along to their students, but they dedicate time and energy to ensuring all students have every opportunity to receive support they might need. We know that all students do not learn in the same way. So, in addition to differentiating instruction in the classroom, teachers hold study hour and help student build individual academic goals that they can achieve and set themselves on a path to success.

Relation to target population

The families who choose to send their students to BASIS are those seeking the best education in the world. The success of the existing BASIS Prescott school has shown that demand for this type of education is particularly high in the BASIS Prescott K-6 area. The BASIS program provides students from these families with the tools necessary to reach that goal—the four tenets listed above—and achieve at an internationally competitive level. Our results clearly demonstrate the BASIS educational philosophy’s effectiveness for nearly any child meeting those simple criteria.

In conclusion, the BASIS philosophy for our K-4 students is simple: We offer students a world-class liberal arts education in order to prepare them to flourish in the rigorous BASIS Upper School program. The philosophy described above has been successful in our 12 existing schools across the country, and there is no doubt that the high academic standards and the emphasis on student accountability that are the foundation of the BASIS philosophy have helped our students achieve unparalleled academic excellence.

Improving Pupil Achievement: Student Support Program

The Student Support program at BASIS is meaningful, comprehensive and timely, and is designed to proactively identify and assist all students' educational, emotional, and motivational needs. BASIS Prescott's K-4 academic program will include integrated student support that begins with early identification as a child enters the school. Student support provides intervention and enrichment aligned to our advanced curriculum and provides opportunities for hands-on activities that relate to content acquisition and critical thinking. We anticipate that students who have had limited access to high quality educational options may need extra support to bridge any gaps they may be experiencing.

K-4 Student Support Program

At BASIS Prescott we will begin the elementary program by integrating aimsweb® and its Response to Intervention (RTI) program as a way to first assess baseline readiness and then closely monitor student progress as teachers engage students through a variety of tiered intervention strategies. (aimsweb® is a Pearson-owned assessment tool for measuring proficiency in early literacy, reading, early numeracy, mathematics, spelling, and writing.) While we continue to evaluate the best way the team of teachers, special educators, and support staff can implement successful strategies to advance individual student performance, we are able to use the data from the aimsweb® assessments to ensure we are making the adjustments necessary for each student.

Struggling students are identified quickly through observation and skill evaluations. Periodic skill evaluations are given to each child to determine if the child is on-level with their peers, falling below, or above level. Students will also be tracked throughout the year to ensure struggling students are brought up to level and middle and high achievers continue to perform well.

Students who are below their target goals or who are struggling in a specific content area are then given additional help during class meeting time or within the quiet reading period. With two teachers in the classroom—the aforementioned Subject Expert Teachers and Learning Expert Teachers—more individualized help can be given to students. Teachers are also available to answer questions and review materials with students during their tutoring hours each week.

The result of our dedication to extensive student support is a school where students are given the information they need to become successful managers of their own lives and where they learn how to be responsible for their own learning. We ask students to take responsibility for their work, to become resilient and creative thinkers, to commit to memory an extensive cache of core knowledge, and to develop confidence in their ability to consistently produce high quality work.

This system, full of check and balances, ensures that students do not fall far behind before the intervention is in place. At any time within the instructional day, and before and after school, students are moving between teacher classrooms, receiving the academic support needed to be successful at BASIS.

Lower School Student Support

As we add primary grades, the BASIS Lower School program at BASIS Prescott will continue to consist of grades 5 and 6 and student support will continue in the traditional BASIS manner. The Director of Student Affairs and the Dean of Students monitor individual student progress and monitor and assess individual student discipline issues. Besides working with students to develop study skills and organizational skills, the Dean of Students also evaluates a variety of options that can effectively meet the needs of each student. Student Support services do not substitute for policies and procedures

related to identifying or providing services to students with special needs. BASIS follows all state and federal guidelines when identifying or assisting students with special needs.

Peer Tutoring

The Peer Tutoring Program gives students additional opportunities to review or catch up on school assignments. Students who excel in certain subjects are selected as Peer Tutors and make themselves available before or after school to help struggling students.

Teacher-Student Hours

At every grade, each teacher is available at least one hour per week for students to come to class for extra help. This hour is on the same day and at the same time every week. No appointment is necessary; students may stop in at any time.

If the student is not struggling academically, the teacher-student hours provide an opportunity for the students to get clarification on concepts, receive homework help, or conduct test review. If the student is struggling academically, teacher-student hours become mandatory. The teacher communicates with administrators if and when the student attends these support hours through the Communication Journal (CJ). Each week, administrators call students to the office to review their attendance at teacher-student hours. Parents use the CJ to stay informed of the need for students to attend support hours.

Homework Buddies

When a student is absent, he or she is given a homework buddy packet, which outlines all of the material covered in class each day and any homework due in the next class. This prevents work from piling up over the course of absences.

Parent Appointments

Each teacher is available one hour per week for teacher-parent meetings. Parents can schedule a meeting for this hour in advance.

Academic Support Program

Students who are identified as needing extra support or remediation are placed in the formal Academic Support Program. Details of this program differ depending on the student's individual needs, but they may be required to get extra help in certain academic, organizational, or social areas. These students are also required to meet with the Dean of Students weekly.

Communication Journals

All students are required to carry an assignment notebook called the Communication Journal (CJ). Students use the CJ to write down homework assignments, and teachers and parents use the CJ to communicate with each other about the student's performance. However, this CJ is more than simply an assignment book at BASIS. It is one of the primary tools used to instill student accountability. For this reason, even kindergarten students begin using a CJ as they begin their BASIS education.

Frequent Feedback Home

Students in grades K-6 receive five progress reports per year in addition to report cards at the end of each grading period. All students also receive an end-of-year grade report reflecting the final grades they earned that year. Along with the CJ and parent-teacher hours, the progress and grade reports help BASIS keep in close contact with parents.

The result of our dedication to extensive student support is a school where students are given the information they need to be successful managers of their own lives and where they must learn how to

be responsible for their own learning. We ask students to take responsibility for their work, to become resilient and creative thinkers, to commit to memory an extensive cache of core knowledge, and to develop confidence in their ability to consistently produce high quality work.

The level of intervention described above, together with student commitment, can overcome most obstacles to high academic achievement. However, this is far from an ideal scenario for students. Filling educational holes in middle school cuts into a child's time to play and participate in extracurricular activities, which are important to their overall development. The students who are most behind—disproportionately those coming from the lowest-performing schools in low-income communities—have to put in extraordinary time and effort just to catch up with their peers. By serving students beginning in kindergarten, our model will support children even better, especially those coming from educationally underserved communities.

The BASIS K-4 program allows teachers to keep a close eye on students' progress, with a target class size of 30 students and each classroom contains two teachers: a Subject Expert Teacher and a Learning Expert Teacher. This leads to an effective in-class target student-to-teacher ratio of 15 to 1. (The overall student-to-teacher ratio for grades 1-4 is slightly higher than this due to the fact that some teachers teach multiple grade levels.) In kindergarten, the primary teacher is paired with one teaching fellow. From 5th grade on, the target class size is 30 students. However, due to scheduling and the support of Teaching Fellows, existing BASIS schools typically have a student-to-teacher ratio of 18 to 1. We have found at our other BASIS schools that these class sizes are appropriate and effective for our students.

A BASIS student's educational progression is a process of continual improvement, and we thoroughly analyze shortfalls and successes alike. BASIS, too, is always looking for improvement – and we do our part, as do our students, to discover strategies for progression. Regardless of special needs, individual giftedness, or socioeconomic privileges or challenges, each individual at BASIS learns that success is derived from applying oneself to the best of one's ability.

3) Describe the levels of proficiency that students must obtain to demonstrate mastery of academic core content and clear criteria for promotion from one level to the next.

In order to advance to the next grade level, students in grades K-4 must receive a grade of 60 percent or higher in all core subjects: English/language arts, mathematics, social studies/history, and science. Once students reach the existing school 6th grade, they must also pass Comprehensive Exams in each core subject.

Upon reaching the 6th grade, students who fail to pass Comprehensive Exams do not qualify for promotion status. To remedy their promotion status, these students' parents/guardians must formally request, in writing, permission to obtain conditional promotion status. If this is granted, students are given the opportunity to repeat the Comprehensive Exam over the summer. Students then advance from conditional promotion status to promotion status if they pass the exam on this second attempt.

Students who fail to earn promotion status, fail to obtain conditional promotion status, or fail to advance from conditional promotion status to promotion status, are held back. Additionally, 3rd grade students who Fall Far Below the Arizona standards on the Arizona State Assessment in reading examination will be retained. They will be enrolled in the same grade again for the next school year.

As long as space is available, students may enroll at BASIS Prescott at any grade level; however, it is critical that students are given every opportunity for academic success and are not unfairly set up for insurmountable academic challenges that could result in failure. Upon enrolling in the school, students

will be given diagnostic tests to determine their academic grade level and prior academic experience and retention. If these tests were to reveal that a student would not be prepared for a successful transition to the grade-level work typical at BASIS, the Director, Student Affairs will meet with the student and his or her parent/guardian to determine a plan that will create a successful transition to the rigorous academic program. Such a plan might include creating a Student Support Program unique to the student, or consideration of having the student enter BASIS Prescott at a lower grade level. BASIS reserves the right to place students in the grade level aligned to their academic preparedness, even if that is lower than the grade level the student's age suggests.

4) GRADE 9-12 ONLY – N/A

5) What changes in staffing will be needed to implement the new grades, how will they comply with Highly Qualified federal guidelines?

In keeping with the BASIS K-4th grade-staffing model, BASIS Prescott will employ the LET/SET staffing model for these grades. This model ensures that every BASIS student in grades K-4 has both a Learning Expert Teacher (LET) who remains with a class "Section" at all times as well as Subject Expert Teachers (SET) who are content area experts and focus on one specific core content area. This dual teacher model ensures that a teacher with an Arizona elementary education credential is part of the instructional team at all times. During teacher recruitment, BASIS places a very high priority on identifying the best possible candidates able to achieve the BASIS mission of delivering an accelerated liberal arts education at internationally competitive levels to all students. While BASIS employs many non-traditional educators as teachers, our subject matter experts are highly trained professionals with deep content knowledge in their field. BASIS has instituted a comprehensive business process within the Human Resources Division that monitors the Highly Qualified status of all BASIS teachers and ensures that BASIS complies with all federal and state requirements.

While the existing school staffing model for the current grades will not change, in the first year of expansion to 4th grade, BASIS Prescott will employ a minimum of two additional Learning Expert Teachers. In this first year of expansion it is unlikely that BASIS Prescott will need to hire additional Subject Expert Teachers, however, depending on returning student enrollment and scheduling demands, BASIS Prescott may have the need to hire additional teachers in the following subjects:

- Math
- Science
- Humanities
- Mandarin
- Fine Arts
- Physical Education
- Connections