Avalon Elementary an
Excalibur Charter School
Demonstration of Sufficient Progress

School Growth 1a. SGP/ 1b. SGB Bottom 25%

Avalon's teachers and administrators have worked over the last year to purchase a new math curriculum and to crosswalk our current Scott Foresman Reading Street curriculum with the new Arizona College and Career Ready Standards. With the implementation of Galileo requiring teachers to create formative assessments and regularly benchmarking students on a bi-monthly basis, we have seen an increase in benchmark test scores. Based on current results we expect to see an increase in AIMS scores as well.

The data is shared across the school with monthly data meeting conducted by the Executive Director. Within these meetings, teachers (along with reading and math coaches) review and discuss interventions to help access two opportunities to increase academics achievement with the students. The first opportunity available to all teachers is the use and access to the Instructional Specialist from Southwest School Turnaround who has been working with the schools Executive Director and teachers to better use the Galileo data to help drive instruction across the grade levels. The second opportunity is the enrollment of the Executive Director in the Beat the Odds Institute, in which he has access to an instructional mentor through the AZ Lead Principals Institute.

Avalon's teacher's use curriculum maps and pacing guides to build highly effective lessons, teachers start each lesson with a posted instructional objective which is then periodically reviewed throughout the lesson to ensure that students understand the concepts being covered during that lesson. During a classroom walkthrough, students are asked two questions, "What are you doing?" and "What are you learning?" This is a way for the observer to truly know if the student understands the information being taught. Instructional objectives must be taught to 80% mastery before a new concept in taught in the classroom. The latter concepts that were mastered are consistently reviewed during subsequent lesson so that the students' skills in those areas are still retained.

Lesson plans are collected weekly and reviewed by the Executive Director. We are working to ensure that the instructional objectives, as well as the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards are being met. Students who are having difficulties are identified and individual interventions are being implemented. The school has purchased several of the Hawthorn Learning Intervention Guides to better help teachers with students who are not performing at grade level; to provide them with a resource of ideas for interventions.

Prior to the start of the 2013-2014 school year, general education teachers, Title One Interventionists, along with the Executive Director reviewed existing AIMS and Galileo Data to help identify at risk students. During the second week of school students took the first of five benchmark tests in Galileo. This information was then compared to prior years test data and students were placed in Math Intervention based on score comparisons during small group time. During this time small groups of 6 to 8 students were pulled from the classroom to work with our Math Coach. Students who were identified below grade level though AIMS and DIBLES testing for reading are pulled out for small group instruction and provided additional help with reading and comprehension skills. Many of the students identified for services fall into the bottom 25% sub group and supplementary instruction is provided to this group through our Title One Program. Any student who is recognized as "at risk" may receive additional supports through Title One Push In/Pull Out program. This program allows the classroom teacher to provide enrichment opportunities with students who have mastered a concept while the Title One instructor works on bringing students who have not mastered the instructional concept using Hawthorn Learning Intervention materials.

Through our review of existing Galileo data between grade level cohorts we have seen growth in our math scores between 3rd grade students who are now 4th grade students since the implementation of the Envision math curriculum at the start of the school year. This growth has taken place at every grade level through 6th grade. Our continued use of Reading Street with fidelity has enabled us to see an increase in the reading scores in Galileo by grade level as compared to the 2012 Galileo scores (see 2a.)

Our Seventh and Eighth grades math curriculum was updated at the same time as the primary grades to ensure continuity of materials being taught to the students. Avalon purchased the next set in the Pearson math series called "Digits." Avalon has seen some growth with our middle school cohort which has lead the school to test the students' prior knowledge through Galileo assessments, and it was discover that many of the students who were new to Avalon are lacking many of the basic math skills. The middle school team made the decision to remediate many of the 7th and 8th grade students. This was done through a combined effort of our middle grades math teacher and math coach. In order to work on student growth, three interventions were established.

- Students were ability grouped within the classroom and provided targeted instruction which allow students having difficulty to work on material to help fill gaps and provide rigorous work toward mastery of the standards to the students on grade level.
- The Math Coach provided pull out intervention services to the students into the math lab were they could work on and have additional time with concepts not mastered in prior academic years.
- The Digits curriculum was supplemented with handouts from "Math Worksheets Land", an online resource providing worksheets that are adapted to the College and Career Ready standards. Buckle Down is also used as a supplemental material.

Teachers in Kindergarten through the sixth grade reviewed the Scott Foresman: Reading Street program and it was determined that teacher would crosswalk the curriculum to the new Arizona College and Career Ready Standards. Professional development and training were done on how to use materials effectively related to the new standards. The materials are an older textbook series that contain fiction, non-fiction, and expository texts along with leveled readers that meets the ability level of the students.

Assessment

Avalon uses three summative assessments to monitor students' academic growth throughout the school year.

● AIMS--During the summer before school begins AIMS data is analyzed, copied, and prepared for each grade level teacher, reading interventionist, and math coach. Students who fell far below or approached in math or reading are highlighted for each grade level teacher. A current AIMS blueprint is used to determine priorities in instruction and compared to grade level curriculum maps.

● Galileo—First through eighth grade classroom teachers are using Galileo for benchmark testing. Students receive five benchmark tests throughout the year which consist of a pre-test, 3 benchmarks tests, and a post-test. Each assessment provides the classroom teacher with useable data meant to target areas needing improvement. One report, the Individual Student Profile, provides a risk assessment that the teacher can use to individualize and differentiate instruction. Teachers then target individual student needs based on the data collected. Our math coach also reviews data from Galileo testing and uses it to develop additional intervention groups, then provides supplementary instruction time in mathematics.

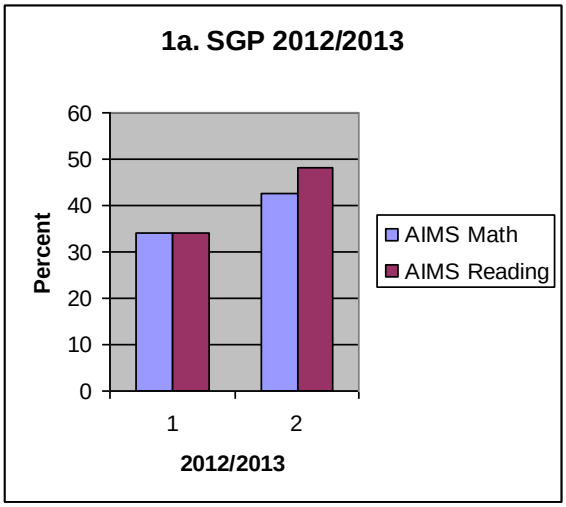
● DIBELS--DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) assessments are given to all students, kindergarten through sixth grade, three times a year by our reading interventionists. Progress monitoring is conducted on a monthly, bi-weekly, or weekly basis in the classroom, based on student's benchmarks for literacy skills. Results are shared with intervention program teachers as wells as general education teachers. This data is used to provide student with addition support in reading when needed.

Professional Development

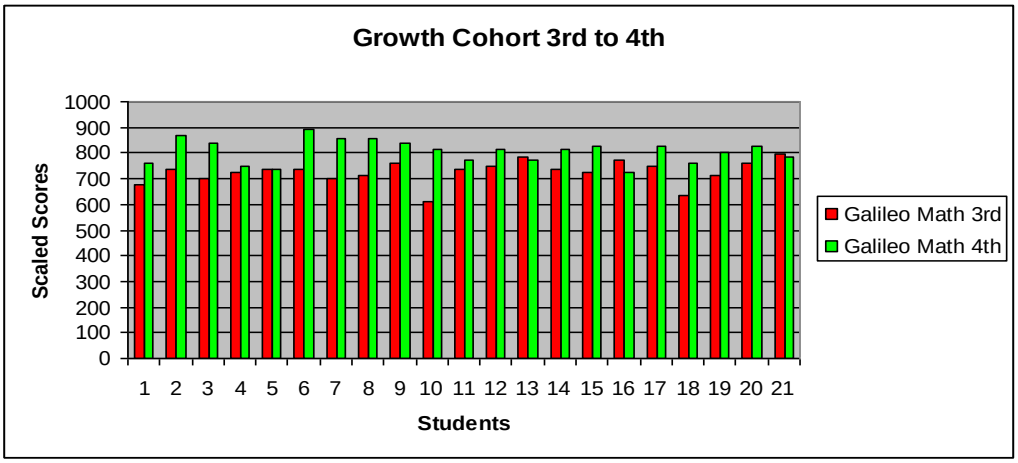
Each Friday is early release for students, which allows time for staff meeting and trainings. All staff is required to attend Friday afternoon meetings. The trainings were determined based on surveys completed by the staff and identified needs by administration. Our trainings began the week before school started to ensure that all staff were aware of our data, the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards, and ways to effectively use Galileo. In regards

to professional development, there have been several opportunities available for classroom teachers and the Title One department that assists in targeting and providing support to our students. After looking at last year's AIMS and benchmark data, a survey was created and sent out to all teachers and instructional staff designed to give them a listing of professional development topics of focus based on the data that was analyzed. Once teachers and interventionists submitted their feedback, professional development was targeted to meet the needs of teachers and students, as measured by AIMS data. Listed below are some of the results chosen:

- Pinal County Education Association: Using Data Workshop
- Pinal County Education Association: Math Common Core Phase 1
- Pinal County Education Association: English Language Arts Common Core Phase 1
- Pinal County Education Association: Reading Foundations Training
- Pinal County Education Association: Close Reading Training- Reading for Meaning
- Galileo Assessment Training
- EES Provided – Mandatory SPED Training
- Understanding the Needs of Special Ed Students, presented by Dr. Patty Vogel
- Effective Lesson Planning



SGP Growth from Arizona Charter Board Dashboard



This chart shows the students in the Cohort class progress on two years of Galileo benchmark assessments.

2a. Percent Passing

Avalon has been able to better track academic progress since the implementation of the Galileo benchmark testing. Teachers are now reviewing data on a regular basis which has allowed instruction to be to be tailored to the needs of the students. We have seen growth in both Galileo as well as the AIMS results in both Math and Reading scores. We feel that continued targeted instruction based off of our benchmark tests will lead to further success with our students. The following sections will indicate what we are doing to enhance and promote growth in overall student performance on the AIMS exam in reading and math.

Curriculum and Instruction

Avalon's improvement in AIMS scores can be attributed to our ongoing review of data and a focus on students mastering the essential concepts before moving on to a new topic. A better understanding of how to use AIMS and Galileo data, along with the use of the AIMS blueprint, has allowed the school to incorporated curriculum maps and pacing guides provided in the purchased curriculum, allowing teachers to target instructional objectives. This provides the template from which teachers can plan their classroom instruction, while lesson plans are submitted weekly to the Executive Director. Teachers are able to progress monitor by using multiple data points collected through assessments provided through Galileo, DIBELS, and AIMS Buckle Down practice tests. Galileo also provides an administrative dashboard that helps target grade levels that are falling behind or not showing growth. Teachers are provided with common planning time so the collaboration between grade level classrooms can take place. This affords teachers the ability to talk and discuss students' progress outside of the monthly data meeting with the director and intervention staff. Teachers are asked to revisit and update their curriculum maps based on progress produced in the classroom. Any standard or concept that students may be showing as a problem area, teachers can re-teach or revisit until mastered.

Classroom walk-through observations are conducted weekly to ensure instructional objectives are being taught in all core academic areas. Periodic classroom observations are conducted to monitor for accuracy in teaching and alignment to the standards. If inaccuracies are noticed, feedback is provided quickly so that the teacher can get back on track. Instructional objectives are to be listed in every classroom in a language that students can easily understand concerning what is being taught in that lesson.

Students are monitored though the use of benchmark testing and the results are analyzed by the Executive Director to safeguard against students falling behind. If an individual student or a class is falling behind, Galileo can provide an intervention assessment to help the teacher target priorities as it pertains to covering the standards necessary for proficiency. In the future teachers will be notified at the beginning of the school year that Galileo data usage will factor into their performance evaluations (50%). Failure to use data in the planning and implementation process of instruction will result in a lower performance evaluation. One of the formal observations will be done the beginning of December so that teachers have ample time to make any necessary changes before AIMS testing.

Reading and math curriculum are being used in classroom preparation for AIMS as well as a host of other supplementary instructional materials designed to help drive learning in the classroom. The switch to "Scott Forseman Envision Math" is being implemented in Kindergarten through sixth grade with supplemental materials being provided by "Edhelper" and "Drops in the Bucket".

Seventh and eighth grade students use "Pearson Digits Math". Finally, teachers rely heavily on AIMS Buckle Down for math, reading, writing, and science, because they align very closely with AIMS.

Through the implantation and use of AIMS Buckle Down tests in 3rd-8th grade we can closely simulate the questions that will be asked of the students on the AIMS test. This has helped eliminate some of the test anxiety students face when taking the AIMS exam and provides the students with examples of a variety of functional, expository, and literary texts. Buckle Down provides engaging reading passages, helpful tips, and authentic AIMS test practice questions that will get students ready for the state test. The format used in Buckle Down offers progress monitoring

with separate pre and post-test which allows the teacher to know if mastery of the content has been reached. Identifying troublesome areas has become easier since the implantation of Galileo testing at all grade levels.

DIBELS assessments are also given to track reading fluency and vocabulary understanding in Kindergarten through 6th grade. All of these instructional supports are being used for reading and math to help teachers drive specific instruction to their classrooms as indicated by Galileo scores and data.

Assessment

● Galileo—the administrator dashboard provided through Galileo allows to the director to have accurate and timely data to monitor and adjust instruction throughout the school. Galileo has become a crucial piece in the assessment of students in reading and math. Avalon has used information gathered through the data provided in Galileo to increase instructional minutes related to math and reading as well as providing push in/ pull out services for students have difficulty in those areas.

● AIMS Test Prep Materials—Teachers are using practice AIMS tests downloaded from the Arizona Department of Education website along with Buckle Down as guided practice. This allows teachers to monitor students' progress on a continuous and ongoing bases leading up to the AIMS exam.

On January 29, 2014, Mary Arno, from Arizona Department of Education School Improvement and Intervention, conducted a site visit which included classroom observation as well as interviews with teachers and the Executive Director here are her findings:

"Leadership: Teachers and the principal have received two days of professional development on the topic of "Qualified Evaluators Training" from Kathy Gardiner: consultant with AZ Ed. Associates; the two day training helped educators learn what to look for in the classroom, stressing the advantage of beginning with the end in mind. To that end, teachers must know what prior knowledge students would need in order to be able to learn the objective being taught. Teachers task analyze the objective in order to create a lesson plan wherein all students can learn.
The science fair this year features an addition to STEM: STEAM: science, technology, engineering, arts and math.

The Principal/Executive Director is new to the role as of two and a half years ago. In that role he is chairman of the board of directors and is responsible for all aspects of the district office except for the support he receives for bussing and building management.

Many of the teachers left or were asked to leave under the new leadership provided by Mr. McCord. Changing the focus of the school to a student centered school whose educators have high expectations for themselves and for their students caused some teachers to leave. "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" by Steven Covey and "The Seven Habits of Happy Kids – The Leader in Me" serve as the guiding principles for teacher and students. Other changes at the school are a greater use of data in making decisions, not only about student learning but, almost any decision. Galileo and DIBELS provide student achievement data. Teachers review student data to make instructional decisions, and, monthly data meetings are held. Benchmarking, with Galileo, occurs every other month; intervention groups are created based on those results. There is, now, a data wall at the school, and, each teacher has a data wall in his/her classroom. The school has a reading and math interventionist. A teacher mentor program has been created. A block schedule has been implemented, providing common planning time to grade levels and additional instruction time for students.

When asked about the barriers to academic improvement at the school, the principal/executive director responded: the economic nature of the community, adding, I'm sure it is hard to be passionate about education when you're hungry: 98% of the students receive free and reduced lunch: breakfast and lunch. (When students took a field trip to the symphony; their comments indicated they had never been to the city of Phoenix; they were amazed.)

When asked about the teaching staff, the response was they work hard, there is a great willingness to share with each other; they work together well.

When asked about parent involvement, the response was that there is a parent leadership team which plans events monthly. Some events have been: "Starry Nights", featuring a guest speaker, who explained the constellation; telescopes allowed for a better viewing of the constellation. The Christmas concert drew 800 people.

When asked about the history/background of the community, the response was: low socio-economic, lots of trailers, large retirement community, the down-turn in the economy has improved the community a little; people who lost their homes in Mesa and other areas came here.

Teachers: to the question how does the principal spend his time, the response was: visiting classes, doing paperwork, conducting evaluations, he encourages teachers, he supports us. To the question: what role do you or others have in decision-making, the response was: a large role and we conduct surveys to see what all teachers think about a certain item/possible decision. Frequently, when changes are made, the teachers are given an opportunity, through surveys, (and in person), to provide feedback relative to how the change is beneficial, or not.

When asked about professional development opportunities, teachers stated that they attend conferences. One teacher stated that she has never been turned down relative to a request to attend P.D., adding: "I go multiple times a year." Teachers recently learned about "bio-mimicry": when humans copy animals: evidently, humans saw how beavers built strong dams and used the concept to build dams. When asked if they are required to implement new skills learned through professional development, teachers stated: yes, adding that the principal is in our classes all the time.

When asked what criteria are used to determine which students attend additional instruction time, the response was: Galileo and DIBELS. When asked what curriculum is used during additional learning time, teachers responded: "Drop in the Bucket". Teachers stated all students have access to a complete set of instructional materials. RTI occurs in the morning with students needing extra help being "pulled out" of the regular classroom while the remaining students review, as needed to deepen learning.

When asked about monitoring students' academic progress, the response was: each student has a data notebook and creates bar graphs and line graphs which show their progress, (or lack thereof). The data notebooks are used during "student led parent conferences".

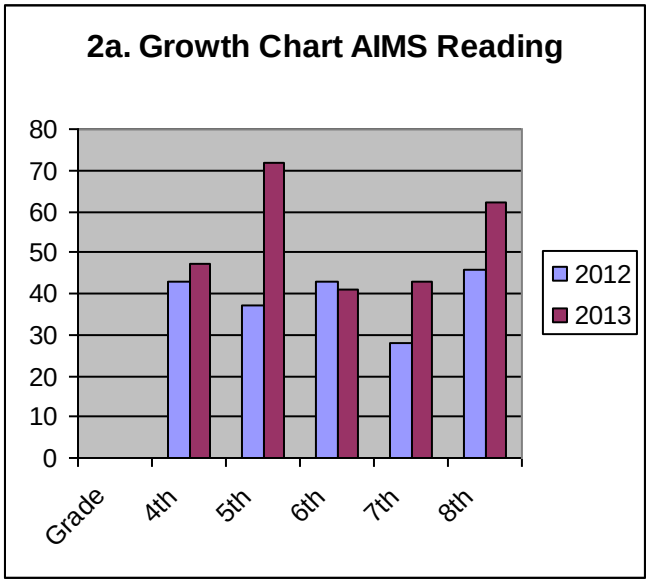
When asked about barriers to learning, teachers responded: the parents don't have homes with beds; the families don't have enough food; we give them clothes at the school, an example was cited of an extended family of mother and father, mother's sister, two service dogs and the children who all live in a small motel room. Students often have adult responsibilities. Teachers buy clothes for the students; one teacher spent $100.00 to buy all sizes of jeans for students.

When asked about systems and procedures in place to create and maintain a safe school environment and positive climate, teachers responded, part of the health class deals with procedures and drills; a positive climate starts at the top; we're praised and are told we're doing something wonderful. It's a family here; we're supported.

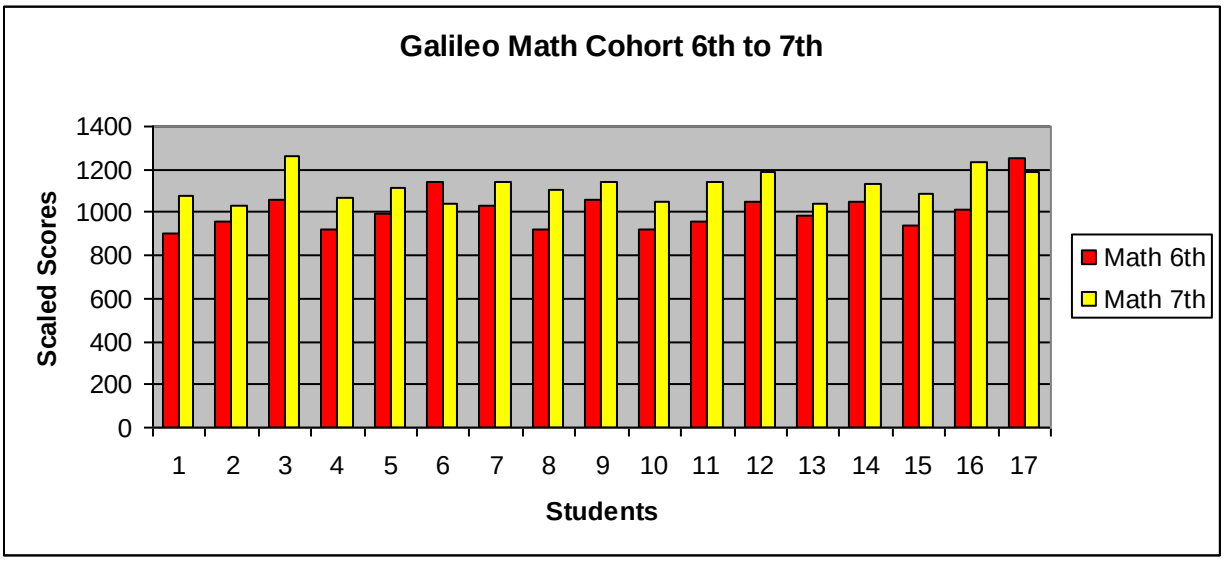
When asked about efforts to increase parental involvement, teachers responded that parents have been surveyed and the results told us we needed to communicate better with them, which we improved on: the board outside, flyers home every week, T.V. in the front office, Facebook, daily reports which students take home and they must be signed by a parent and returned to us and we keep them in a notebook - now there are no issues."

Professional Development

The impact of total students passing in our data has prompted us to create data meetings and train teachers on the effective use of data walls this year. Our school wide focus for last year was increasing a standardized assessment. Our school wide focus this year has been to use the data provided by the standardized assessment to instruct teachers to use the data to guide instruction. In addition the data driven professional development we have also focused on building strong leadership within our organization through the "Principals Institute", "Southwest Schools Turnaround" and "Beat the Odds'. This dual focus is aimed at increasing student achievement in reading and math through the growth of the adults.



Growth Chart using AIMS scores Percent Meets



Galileo post assessment data last year and most current assessment for Cohort students.

2b. Composite School Comparison

Many of our parents and students have chosen Avalon due in large part to the struggles their child was facing in the public district. Avalon recognizes that the school services a very diverse population with varying ability and learning levels.

Currently the following is a breakdown of our actual numbers in these previously mentioned three areas:

- SPED population is at 12.1% with 31 total students enrolled.
- FRL population is at 97.5%.

From 2012 to 2013 dashboard our scores grew both in reading and math letting us know that while we are improving more interventions are necessary. In our area there are several schools with similar numbers in these listed categories. These schools are currently posting a "C" letter grade, as are we.

Curriculum

Avalon has shifted to using one math curriculum Kindergarten thru Eighth grade and required teachers to implement Pearson Envision and Digits with fidelity. Fidelity to the core curriculum is assured with classroom walk-through observations.

In relation to reading, cross walking our current reading curriculum has proved the best way to provide students with a consistent reading program across the grade levels.

In the past year's AIMS results we have shown significant gains in sub groups in both ELL and SPED demographics as well as our bottom 25%. This has led us to exam in what ways these students delivered the curriculum that allowed them success so that we can build upon that information and make every student successful. Explanations for what we are currently doing to increase growth in math and reading can be found in the subgroup category of this document.

Instruction

Avalon has focused heavily this year on Instructional Objectives as well as data analysis to help improve instruction to ensure the students are learning and mastering the materials being taught.

Listed below are instructional practices designed to hold teachers accountable to the standards:

- Grade level core standards are included in the curriculum maps.
- Teachers are required to list the instructional objectives they will be teaching for that day somewhere in their classroom, in language that would be familiar to the student.
- Informal walk-through observations are done for each teacher and cross checked with their lesson plans. Walk-through observations ensure posting of instructional objectives and monitoring of basic classroom management skills.
- Two formal observations are done per school year, Fall and Spring. The formal observations last for a single lesson, no less than 30 minutes, documenting teaching methods and practices.
- One formal evaluation is done per school year, in the Spring. Again reviews and documenting teaching methods and practices, for no less than 60 minutes.

Assessment

A combination of formative and summative assessments is being employed to evaluate the students learning. This is accomplished through Galileo summative benchmarks and formative progress monitoring. Galileo assessments are given five times a school year as indicated by a benchmark calendar provided at the beginning of the school year. Galileo affords the teacher the ability to review student performance and see what standard the students are not understanding in relation to math and reading and allow for more targeted interventions.

Galileo is used by each department of our school including Special Education, Title One, and our ELL students.

Teachers are able to create quizzes that align with state standards within Galileo and score them on a weekly basis. We are able to track progress as it relates to the strand or concept they are learning in the classroom. We are currently piloting a program in a grade level where teachers are creating assessments per student for all standards not yet mastered and tracking growth of those students.

DIBELS benchmark assessments are used to determine students' progress in reading fluency. Our Title One Reading Interventionist conducts benchmark DIBELS assessments three times per year and teachers track student progress monthly through DIBELS progress monitoring program. Once a student is determined to be on track or at risk determines how many times a month he/she would be progress monitored. Data collected from DIBELS is reviewed by both the Executive director and reading interventionist.

Data collected from both DIBELS and Galileo are shared with the teachers as soon as the data is analyzed by administration.

Professional Development

Administrators are currently revising our professional development process to align more with standardized testing scores and strengthen instructional performance. Avalon believes that by focusing the schools professional development plan around 5 key areas we will have more effective instruction in the classroom.

5 Keys of Professional Development:

1. Align the focus of school-wide professional development with district goals and the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards
2. Prioritize and allow for a diversity in professional development learning opportunities
3. Emphasize classroom follow-through and implementation
4. Support ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of professional development
5. Identify and address the needs of the staff as a whole and also allow for individuals to seek out opportunities to address personal professional learning needs

The Executive Director and two teachers attended the Qualified Evaluators Training conducted at the Arizona Schools Association. This training focused on evaluating teacher performance in the classroom, and how to develop a lesson that is focused on the learning being done by the students in the classroom. This training was attended and within days of the training the three staff members who attended were holding professional development after-school to pass the knowledge along to the other teaching staff. Effective lesson planning was a large part of this training. Teachers have been working on creating specific instructional objectives and improving lesson planning skills. Teachers turn in lesson plans to the Executive Director every Monday morning. He then goes around to the classrooms and does informal walk-through observations to ensure that teachers are teaching the essential skills needed for that given lesson.

Avalon Elementary an
Excalibur Charter School
Demonstration of Sufficient Progress

School Name	County	Charter	Growth Points	Composite Points	Total Points
Avalon Elementary	Pinal	Y	56	60	116
Desert Vista Elementary School	Pinal	N	40	74	114
Four Peaks Elementary School	Pinal	N	44	65	109
Superstition Mountain Elementary School	Pinal	N	45	72	117

2c. Subgroup ELL

In 2013/ 2014 school year we have no identified ELL students. Last year while we were not successful in math dashboard we did pass all great level AMOs.

Curriculum

Our established curriculum has provided ELL intervention material that we will use when we have identified ELL students. This enrichment material has been provided by both the Reading Street and Envision Math.

Instruction

Many students who are classified as ELL may also qualify to be receiving Title One services from both our Math Coach as well as our Reading Interventionist. In keeping with good teaching practices teachers are provided with ELP standards found on the ADE website. Due to our small population of ELL students in the past we use ILLP with each ELL student. Teachers followed their SEI training by providing differentiated instruction through small group lessons as well as hands on projects. Parents were encouraged by teachers to be very active in their child's education. Teachers offer to parents strategies to help students at home become more effective. An example of how this is done by giving parents copies of the Spalding flash cards and asking them to work with their child at home. Within the classroom teachers look for ways to make learning visible through patterns that connect learning to information they already know and understand.

Each classroom teacher is required to designate a place in their classroom to introduce new vocabulary or common words used in academic context. For the ELL students the word may have an image or picture to describe the meaning, helping a student visualize the meaning. General education teachers may have a variety of words that span multiple subjects whereas middle school teachers may have subject specific words listed. The idea behind this strategy is to expose students to words and vocabulary that they will encounter in their studies on a day to day basis. Special attention is given to words that commonly appear in math and reading.

Assessment

Multiple assessments are used to monitor ELL student progress in reading and in math. The following are some of the instruments used to measure student proficiency with our ELL student population.

● AZELLA TESTING--AZELLA tests are administered to all students who were identified by a PHLOTE form in the registration packet. If the primary language spoken at home is something other than English students would be targeted for AZELLA testing. Once they are tested they are then classified according to the results as ELL or mainstream. As mentioned previously teachers would then be required to provide additional instruction in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Another AZELLA test is given later in the school year to reassess progress and indicate proficiency levels. If a student tests proficient they are then monitored for an additional two years. Although, the AZELLA test is designed to assess language acquisition it is the starting point for establishing a benchmark and gives the teacher an idea of how to focus in reading instruction. A student listed at basic would most likely not be able to handle grade level reading materials and small groups within the classroom could be created. Teachers then ability group based on the AZELLA test results within their classrooms and provide very specific reading opportunities tailored to their reading level. Each teacher then monitors progress within each group and shuffles groups around as progress is demonstrated.

● Galileo--Galileo aligns very closely to the format and presentation of AIMS testing which provides opportunities for progress monitoring. ELL students take the benchmark assessments and are scored based on their ability levels. Five benchmark tests are administered throughout the school year which provides ample opportunities to assess progress in reading and math. In addition, teachers can create quizzes or assignments within the program that align with standards their students might be having difficulty with in effort to increase reading and math proficiency.

● DIBELS--DIBELS testing is used to track ELL students' progress specifically in reading. Similar to Galileo, DIBELS provides three benchmarks at the beginning, middle and end of the school year specifically for reading fluency. Although DIBELS does not focus extensively on comprehension, it does allow the teacher to identify fluency in reading.

Professional Development

Through our Title Two program the school has planned SEI training for teachers who are provisional and need any portion the 90 hour course. As mentioned in previous sections teachers received professional development.

- Differentiated Instruction and Assessment of ELL students
- Incorporate ELP standards into every lesson plan.

2c. Subgroup FRL

The bulk of our student body falls into this category; we have a large homeless population and work in a largely low socio-economic area of the far-east valley.

The following is a breakdown of those numbers for each category:

- 98 % of our student body qualifies for Free and Reduced breakfast and lunch.

Curriculum

A majority of our campus qualifies as free and reduced lunch therefore many of the items concerning curriculum have already been mentioned in previous sections. Our curriculum committee met and reviewed existing curriculum and found math to be lacking the needed rigor and has been change to "Envision". Our reading program was found to meet

our needs and was cross walked to the new College and Career Ready Standards. Curriculum committee asked very specific question concerning the rigor and alignment.

The following questions are what the committee asking:

- How closely does this math curriculum align to Arizona College and Career Ready?
- What does data show in terms of effectiveness in using the proposed curriculum?
- Will the curriculum work with each subgroup within our school community or will other pieces need to be adapted to fit?

Once these questions have been answered they will be presented to the Executive Director for review then presented to the school board for approval. Once the curriculum was purchased the Executive Director provided professional developments and trainings during the summer by Pearson that teach the new math curriculum and how to use the curriculum effectively.

Student from this subgroup who also qualify for Title One are provided supplemental curriculum by the Math Inventions. These students are identified at the beginning of the year through their AIMS scores and are provided curriculum to decreased education gaps in their learning.

Instruction

Avalon fully supports the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards. Teachers are required to exclusively teach the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards in their classrooms. The Executive Director conducts walk though observations regularly as well as two formal observations and one formal evaluation yearly. Feedback is given to teachers within 48 hours of the review; successes are shared and areas of improvement are identified. Data from DIBELS, Galileo, AIMS are used in the assessment process related to teachers instructional performance. Through the collection of multiple data points we use this information to drive our professional development and support for the teaching faculty.

Students who have also qualified for Title One are provided push in and pull out services through our intervention programs. Students receive additional instructional support specifically in math as we showed great growth in reading. Student gaps are identified using Galileo and instruction is tailored to their specific academic needs. Our Math Coach works with all grade levels providing supplemental instruction for increased student achievement.

Assessment

Our school uses a variety of assessments to determine student growth in reading and math. References to these assessments have been made in detail in previous sections. The following are the names of numerous assessments our school uses to monitor and track progress in reading and math:

- AIMS student achievement reports (baseline)
- Galileo (school benchmark and monitoring program)
- DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills)
- AZELLA (establish English proficiency ratings)
- Buckle-Down AIMS prep booklets

Professional Development

See Professional Development 1a./1b.

2c. Subgroup SPED

Currently our Special Education Department is servicing approximately 31 students. Time is spent with students working on not just academic goals, but providing students with coping skills as well as social/ Emotional development that many of these students are lacking. Support of the academic goals are focused on and delivered to students by using all areas of study including science and social studies materials. Chucking the lesson into its smaller parts and re-teaching the concept and then provide guided practice helps students better understand the material being learned. Performance trends in the data collection indicate that our special education sub group is making progress toward academic growth year after year.

Curriculum

The Special Education Department uses a variety of resources for reading and math. Due to the number of students serviced in reading and math (31 total), the variety of ages, and scope of IEP goals, various instructional supports are used by the special education teacher and paraprofessionals to target IEP goals in reading and math. We have employed an outside special education consultant, Dr. Patty Vogel, to assist our Special Education Department in assuring that student's IEP needs and goals are being meet and align to the standards. Data collected through our benchmark testing is used to help support the student's leaning within the special education program. The special education students scores are provide to the resource teacher as another tool to help improve academic achievement within this subgroup. Classroom teachers and the special education teachers collaborate and strive to provide the student with every opportunity to be successful. This has led to focusing lessons on the needs of the individual student both in the regular education classroom as well as in the resource classroom. Special education staff can then plan lessons that support the general education teacher and align what is being taught in the classroom.

As a result of servicing students K-8th grade the Special Education Department has access to a variety of instructional materials that line up with each grade level's standards. An assortment of online materials and text books are used to provide support, such as the use of Buckle Down books, because of the close alignment to AIMS. Assignments can be modified to the student's ability level and special needs. Galileo is used and teachers can take problems from benchmark exams and level the learning to the students' needs while still providing them access to grade level materials.

Instruction

The special education teacher uses many resources and different strategies to meet the students' needs for reading and math. Listed below are some of the changes made this school year that focused on improvement in reading and math:

- Hiring a paraprofessional to help enforce and support the instruction of the certified SPED teacher. The previous SPED teacher chose to leave during the middle of the school year due to the director's request that he increase the rigor of the SPED program and a new, more qualified SPED teacher was hired.
- Hiring an outside special education consultant with extensive experience in state compliance and classroom instruction. This decision was made to better support the special education teacher and allow for collaboration within the department.
- The learning environment was made more conducive to learning by rearranging work areas and strengthening the use of the computer work area. Programs such as Khan Academy are being used for those specific students to learn to read phonetically.

We see parent involvement as a critical part of the students learning. Our current special education teacher encourages parents to contact him weekly through email or by phone, to check in on their child's progress for the week. Each student is unique and with the proper support we believe that our students can increase and grow academically.

Areas of improvement for the special education department have been reviewed and additional changes to the program to help student growth.

- Identifying the barriers to closing the achievement gap earlier. We have established a child study team that provides teachers with interventions. This allows the teacher to implement those interventions and then reviews the results. Interventions are providing thought scientifically based research through Hawthorn Publishing.

- Increase the use of various CBM's (curriculum based measurements) on a weekly basis to monitor student IEP goal progress and use information to write more specific and measurable goals aligned with ACCR Standards.

- Provide support within the regular education classroom by allowing for push in services to be provided by paraprofessional from the resource classroom.

Assessment

● IEP Goals and College and Career Ready Standards--The Special Education teacher uses the computerized Individual Education Plan Program (IEP Pro) to develop student goals. These goals are selected an aligned with College and Career Ready Standards. The special education department has transitioned to using the new ACCR standards.

● Galileo--The Special Education Department has access to Galileo data, specifically the students that they service. When Galileo was first set up at the beginning of the school year, special education students were entered in as a cohort so that the special education teacher could look at benchmark data in effort to coordinate teaching to meet the IEP goals in reading and math.

● DIBELS-- DIBELS helps to assess the reading levels of our SPED students and allows the teacher to track progress. Quarterly benchmarks can be established by the teacher to align with IEP goals.

Professional Development

Teachers identified the need for more professional development in effective practices to help students with special learning needs. This includes how to teach student problem-solving skills to open questioning, differentiation of instruction, and hands-on math concepts. Our schools special education consultant provides professional training to staff and modeled a lesson using open questioning and differentiation of instruction.

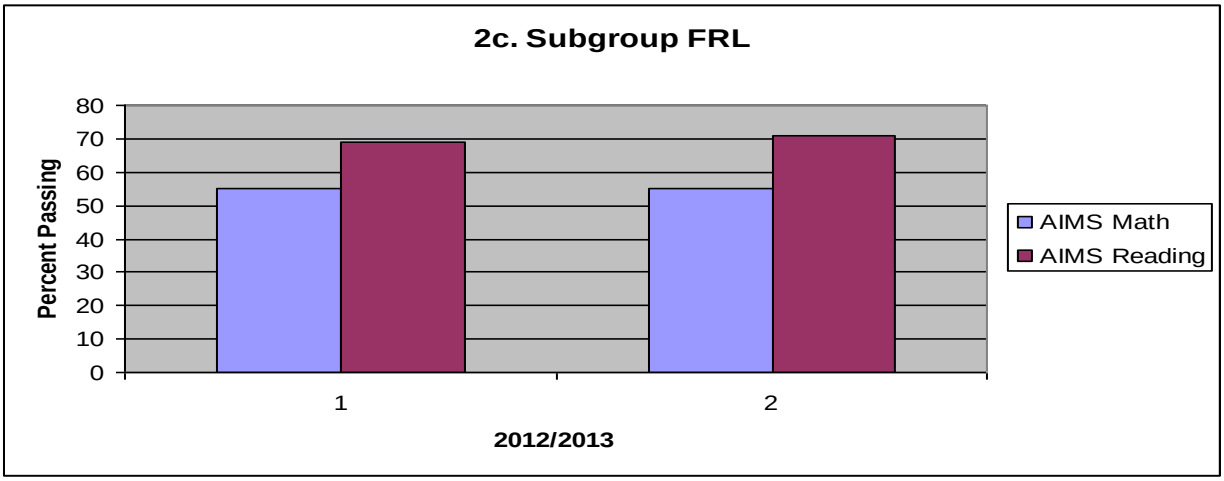
The special education department has received training on how to align IEP goal with the new Arizona College and Career Ready Standards. This was done as a collaborative effort between the regular education teacher and the resource faculty. The professional development of the special education teacher is on-going throughout the school year as students with various disabilities are added to the program.

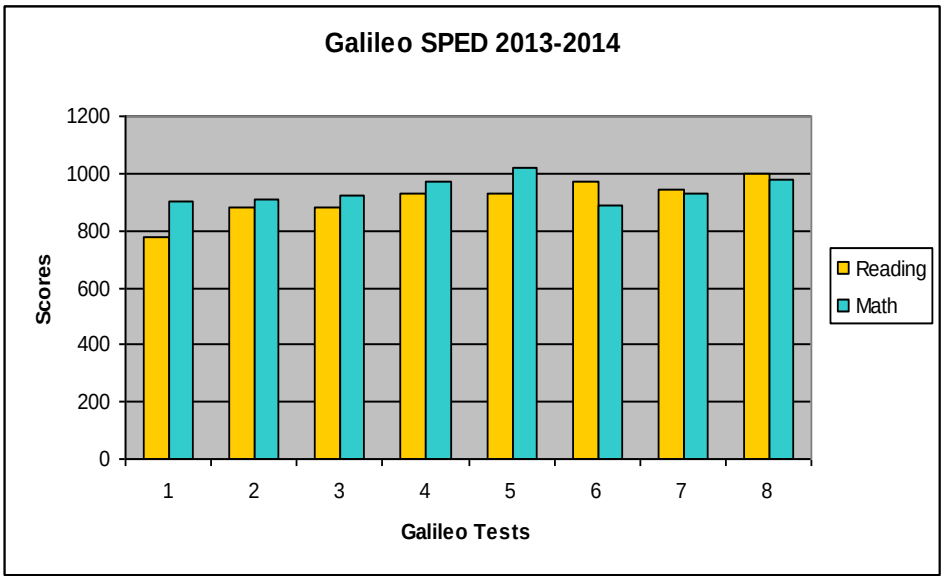
The teacher does an excellent job seeking additional information on how to instruct the students beyond the multi-disciplinary evaluation determination. Formal professional development is drawn from what is provided by the Arizona Department of Education as well as other training programs marketed to the schools from various organizations.

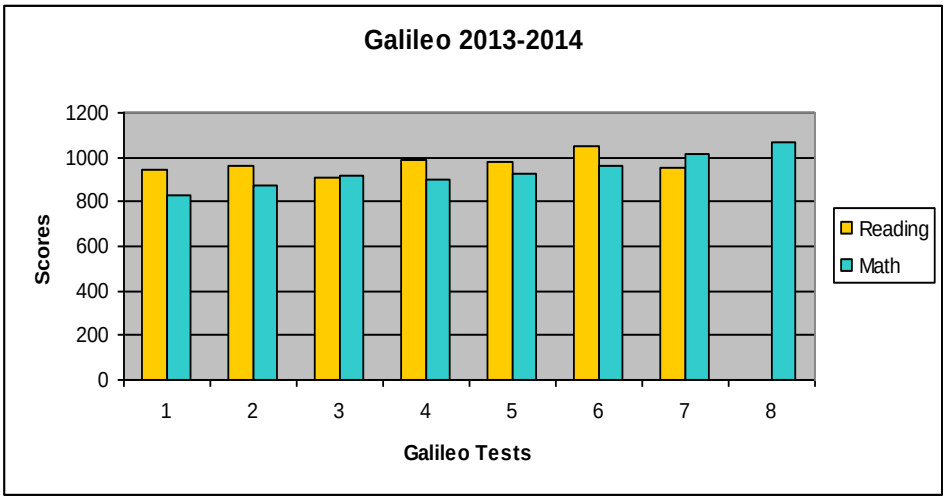
- Developing an IEP that aligns to Arizona State standards or Common Core standards

- Individualized training provided by EES in the areas of IEP development and implementation.

We recognize that our classroom teachers need more training on working with special needs students. With the rise of ADD and ADHD, teachers need more training and ideas on modifications in the classroom. We will be providing more opportunities for teachers to receive professional developments and in-services on how to service theses students in their general education classrooms and provide better modifications to push our special needs students to perform at grade level.







These charts show two SPED students data for two years of Galileo assessments in Math and Reading.

3a. State Accountability

Efforts from all departments have led this school to improved academic progress for the 2013-2014. Our State Accountability label increase by 26 point rising Avalon for a "D" to a "C" school. Avalon was 3 points away from becoming a "B" rated school. Our school's faculty is continually looking for ways to improve student learning. There are some areas that we can continue to build upon as it relates to our state accountability targets. Avalon has identified that our need is to continue to improve on direct whole group instruction as well as small group instruction.

Curriculum

Essential to students learning is to afford every student access to quality instruction and curriculum in the classroom. Avalon has realigned many of the teaching methods focusing on whole brain learning and asking inquiry, or guided questions to ensure that the students understand the material being taught.

The following are additional strengths that support curriculum:

● Curriculum maps have been established and will be revised as needed throughout the school year to ensure the proper standards are being learned at each grade level.

● It is critical that materials and curriculum are demonstrating success with our students in the areas of math and reading, and continued supports are offered to the teachers.

● Avalon's Curriculum Committee will continue to research new curriculum that will best support our campus' demographics and help us to increase student productivity.

● Avalon's Curriculum Committee will measure any possible selection of curriculum against the needs of our students in our ELL, FRL, and SPED subgroups.

● All curriculum programs that are evaluated by our Curriculum Committee will be heavily scrutinized as to its effectiveness meeting the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards and help close the achievement gap in our at risk population.

● Teachers will continue to align their lessons to Arizona College and Career Ready Standards first and supplement curriculum as it is available.

Instruction

High poverty low income schools struggle to hire highly effective teachers. We have worked to increase our pay scale to attract more highly effective teaching staff. We see instruction as the corner stone by which a solid foundation is laid. Avalon has seen some improvement since making changes to the instructional staff at the school. Curriculum is only as good as the person guiding the learning in the classroom and the instructional leadership of the administration. Focus has been given to specific teaching practices; several example of this are quality lesson planning and the use of instructional objective and success criteria and asking the question "what do the students need to know when this lesson is finished?". Student achievement increases in schools where teaching and learning have the highest priority, and students achieve at higher levels when teachers know their subject matter. Arizona College and Career Ready Standards has created a paradigm shift that allows teachers to use every subject to teach math and reading skills. The need for a more in-depth understanding of topics will be essential to student development in reading and math. As a result the following are instructional strategies that we will continue to enforce and promote within our teaching community:

● We will actively continue to hire only highly qualified teachers according to state provided guidelines.

● Before school begins teachers will attend in-services on the expectations and requirements for lesson planning and the procedures for submitting plans on a weekly basis.

● All lesson plans K-8th grade are required to contain Arizona College and Career Ready Standards listed under the subject they are teaching and are checked periodically for accountability.

● Our SPED department will continue to push our SPED students toward their IEP goals in reading and math at grade level.

● The Executive Director performed informal evaluations for each teacher and cross check with their lesson plans to verify standards being taught, posting of learning objectives, and basic class management skills.

● The Executive Director provided two formal evaluations per school year fall and spring.

● After several performance reviews teachers who were deemed ineffective did not have their contracts renewed.

● Data will be required as a part of formal evaluations and teachers will be responsible for utilizing school provided evaluation tools to help drive instruction.

Assessment

In addition to AIMS assessment results, teacher use current and ongoing benchmark data to drive instruction inside the classroom and track student achievement. Teachers are required to analyze data as provided by a variety of assessment tools in effort to provide classroom instruction that is tailored to overall student needs. Teachers have participated in professional development that increases the teachers understanding of the appropriate use of multiple assessment data points and how to use the data to improve instruction.

All of our formative assessments are designed to provide the immediate, explicit feedback useful for helping teacher and student during the learning process. Formative assessment is a tool to continually evaluate students' academic needs and development within the classroom and will be happening constantly to ensure that local benchmark assessments and state-mandated summative assessments are easily mastered at the completion of the grade level.
Teachers who engage in formative assessments give continual, explicit feedback to students and assist them in answering the following questions:

- Where am I going?
- Where am I now?
- How can I close the gap between the two?

In order to show students how to close the gap between where they are academically and where they want to be, teachers must help students evaluate their progress in the learning process and give them explicit, descriptive feedback specific to the learning task. Through a variety of instructional methods students will learn to not be afraid of not knowing, making mistakes, not understanding, or taking risks. We are seeking to create a culture in which it is "cool" to learn and grow. As a result, students come to understand that errors are an inherent part of learning, are normal, and can be positive.

Summative Assessment Plan
Summative assessments are cumulative evaluations used to measure student growth after instruction and are given at the end of a course in order to determine whether (minimally) the standards have been mastered and the long term learning goals have been met. Summative assessments are an evaluation that the goals and plans on a large scale have been achieved. Student growth is measured at a summative level. High quality summative information can shape how teachers organize their curricula or what courses schools offer their students. Summative assessments are instrumental in planning curriculum needs and long range goals for curriculum adoption. Data driven decision making for school improvement is best achieved using the results from yearly standardized assessments.

Although there are many types of summative assessments, those most commonly used at Avalon include:

- State-mandated assessments
- District benchmark assessments
- End-of-unit or -chapter tests

- End-of-semester exams

Summative assessments are always followed by parent-teacher conferences, where parents can fully discuss their child's progress with all relevant teachers. Parents will also receive their child's report card to further communicate their child's performance and progression within the curriculum.

The following are the primary assessment tools we will continue to use to guide instruction:

- AIMS testing results will be the primary method of establishing a baseline benchmark for each individual student.
- Galileo--The Galileo post-test given at the end of the previous school year will be combined with the AIMS results and given to each classroom teacher for the upcoming school year to help establish an individual student's benchmark.
- DIBELS- DIBELS testing will continue to be used grades K-6th as a means of monitoring reading fluency progress. AZELLA testing will continue twice a year to monitor new students, Kindergarten, transfers not tested before, and returning students who qualify as identified on registration PHLOTE and school records.
- Data is also collected from less formal assessment, such as in classroom tests, homework assignments, and observations of student performance.

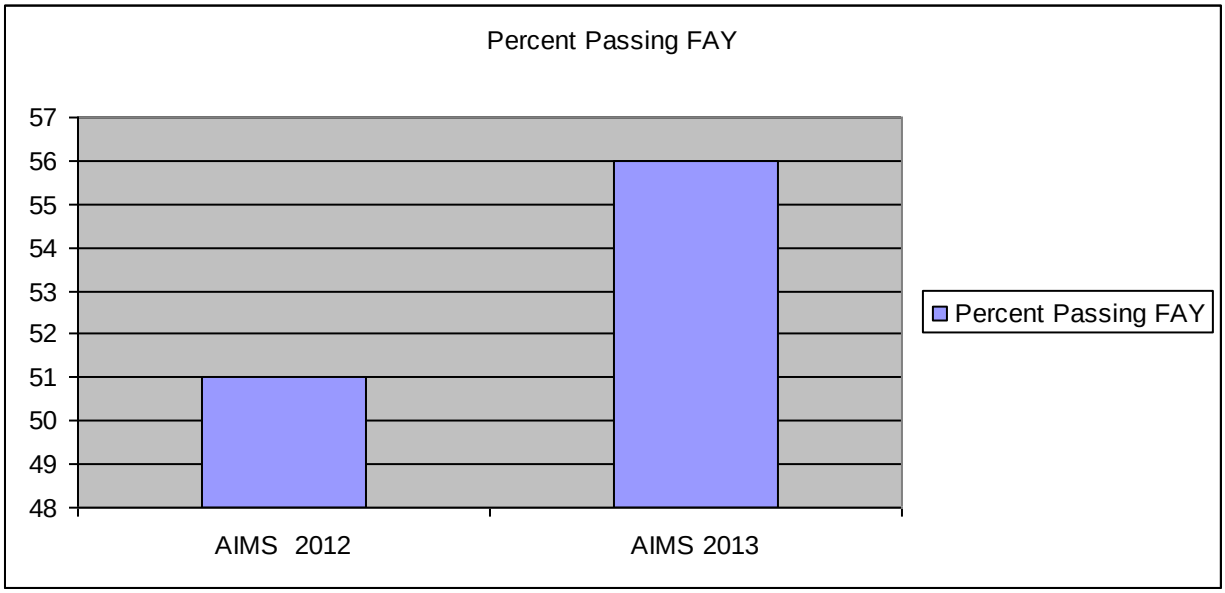
Professional Development

Teachers and Para Professionals must be equipped to face the challenges of helping all students increase their scores and show academic growth on the AIMS exam. To achieve this teachers have received high-quality professional development and were required to implement the program in the classrooms. The school's instructional leader will determine, based on the scores and feedback provided from teachers, what professional development topics will be covered. Additional trainings will be added as the need arises, however, most of the professional development opportunities will align with indicators from the AIMS scores and Galileo benchmarks results. Instructional leadership will evaluate and review all areas of the school with focuses all populations to assure they are being served.

Based on our current school dashboard, our school will be targeting professional development in the following areas:

- Math and math interventions which align with Arizona College and Career Ready Standards. This will align with the curriculum committee's recommended math curriculum.
- Reading and reading interventions which align to Arizona College and Career Ready Standards.
- Math and reading interventions for at-risk students.
- Special Education trainings that promote collaboration between SPED teachers and general education teachers in creating effective accommodations/modifications.
- ELL trainings on providing accommodations/modifications in the classroom.

Avalon Elementary an
Excalibur Charter School
Demonstration of Sufficient Progress



School Growth

1a. SGP

1b. SGP Bottom 25%

Excalibur Charter High School is a small charter school serving a very transient and low-income population. We are committed to working diligently with every student that comes through our doors and to strive to make continuous progress toward becoming a more successful school.

The departure of our high school administrator mid-year created a good opportunity for us to move in a more positive direction. A key part of this effort has been to establish current baseline data and to use that data to set measurable goals. A team of highly qualified staff members began this process with a considerable amount of time reviewing student records.

This comprehensive review brought a number of factors to light. We found that 95% of the high school student body was found to be substantially behind in necessary credits to graduate according to state guidelines. It became apparent that student performance at the high school level was not showing enough progress toward the state mandated annual measurable objectives. Contributing factors included high turnover in the student population, a lack of leadership or clearly established goals, and insufficient academic guidelines.

The Executive Director worked with the school board to review the academic data, including data provided by the Arizona Charter Board. Goals were set based on the review of data. They include:

- Immediate improvements to staffing at the high school
- Increasing the instructional day by two and a half hours
- Increased rigor in all subject areas
- Improved assessments and using data more effectively
- Using resources more effectively
- Creating a blended instructional approach, using both online and traditional models

.

We are currently using two online curriculum sources for the high school, American Virtual Academy and Acellus. The model that we have created empowers our students to succeed with an enhanced online learning experience. Both of these programs are aligned to the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards and are instructed by highly qualified instructors, in a virtual classroom through online tutorials.

We have changed the staffing of the high school so we now have a highly qualified history, math and science teacher on campus to offer one-on-one tutoring times with students that are struggling in certain content areas.

Students are taking the Galileo benchmark assessments four times a year to monitor progress in reading and math skills. We will use this data to solidify what standards need to be focused on and help close the achievement gap. The data collected from these tests are used by the teachers to target instruction.

We have established goals to increase rigor and increase the students' depth of knowledge in all subject areas by using a blended model of classroom instruction as well as the use of a virtual classroom provided by AVA and Acellus. Along with the blended model, teachers require research based projects in core content areas.

After administration reviewed the curriculum, it was discovered that the virtual classroom lessons only required a minimum of 50% mastery in core academic areas to progress to the next lesson. Immediately this was corrected by requiring the students to show a mastery of 70%- 80% before a new concept is taught in the core content areas. Live monitoring provides the teacher with an opportunity to track classroom performance as the students are completing the lessons.

Another of our goals is to monitor all students' achievement using Galileo benchmark assessments. All students have a notebook, which contains the student's most recent Galileo benchmark assessment and a copy of last year's AIMS results for reading and math. The scores are compared and individual skill risk assessments are created to help guide instruction. As an intervention we hired a math coach for a pull in/pull out program. Intervention groups were created based on students that fall in the bottom 25% academically using Galileo data.

SGP Bottom 25%

1b. Increased academic expectations in the students that fall in the bottom 25% academically, led the school to identify, specifically in math, the need for intervention beyond the normal classroom environment. Targeted groups designated solely for small group instruction were established. This was achieved by the hiring of a math coach that reviewed Galileo and AIMS data. He then created intervention groups, which meet for twenty minutes per day, assisting the students who "fall far below" on AIMS and Galileo benchmark assessments. The high school math coach is using the AIMS Buckle Down workbooks to help prepare students for content they will encounter on the AIMS test. This has allowed the school to level the instruction based on the students' needs. This has provided an opportunity to fill in gaps in the student's knowledge base.

We discovered we had only three students that were enrolled for two consecutive years that were within the bottom 25% academic subgroup. In looking at the growth of these three students we did see growth, ever so small, but growth still the same for these students.

Information was analyzed directly from the AIMS scores (2011-2012 and 2012-2013). As you will see from the following charts our students do show growth in these three AIMS areas of testing. They are still in the process of continuing to take the AIMS to achieve a meets in all categories. Here at Excalibur, growth is means you are moving forward and for some of these students any movement forward is an achievement to be celebrated. It is our mission to get these students back on track to enjoy learning! In today's world these are all necessary skills that the students of Excalibur will need to succeed.

.**Assessment**
The following are the primary assessments used in assessing student growth.

- **AIMS—** Each summer, before school begins, AIMS data is analyzed. Students who fell far below or approach in math or reading are highlighted for each cohort. Any standard

indicated as falling far below or approaching is highlighted and referenced in planning for intervention services.

- **Galileo--**Instructors are using Galileo, an online assessment-based program that closely aligns with the AIMS test to establish benchmarks in Reading, Writing, Math, and Science. Each assessment is different and once completed provides the instructor with useable data meant to target areas needing improvement. A report called an *Individual Student Profile* provides a risk assessment that the instructor can use to individualize. Galileo has also become a primary tool used to target instruction for our students that fall in the bottom 25% academically.

Professional Development

In the area of professional development, there have been several specific opportunities available to instructors, which help them provide support to students, including students that fall in the bottom 25% academically. Professional development was targeted to meet the needs of teachers and students, as measured by AIMS data. Listed below are some of the results chosen:

- Pinal County Education Association: Using Data Workshop
- Pinal County Education Association: Math Common Core Phase 1
- Pinal County Education Association: English Language Arts Common Core Phase 1
- Pinal County Education Association: Reading Foundations Training
- Galileo Assessment Training
- EES Provided – Mandatory SPED Training
- Understanding the Needs of Special Ed Students, presented by Dr. Patty Vogel

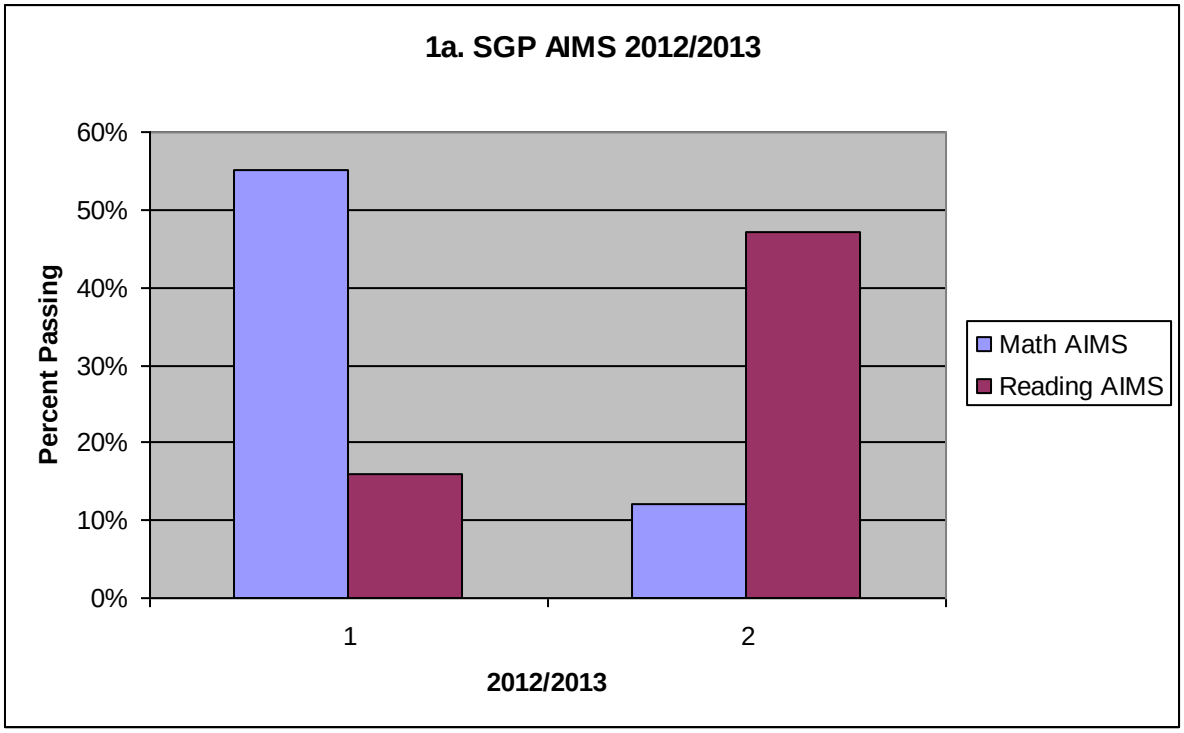
Excalibur Charter Schools, as a district provides training to all teachers across grade levels. This has lead to a district wide approach to teaching students, which focuses on two key elements, strong instructional leadership and highly trained teachers overseeing the learning environment. To implement these changes our instructional leader has attended several professional development seminars, and has been working with a mentor principal through AZLEADS. The trainings taken by the instructional leader include, but are not limited to:

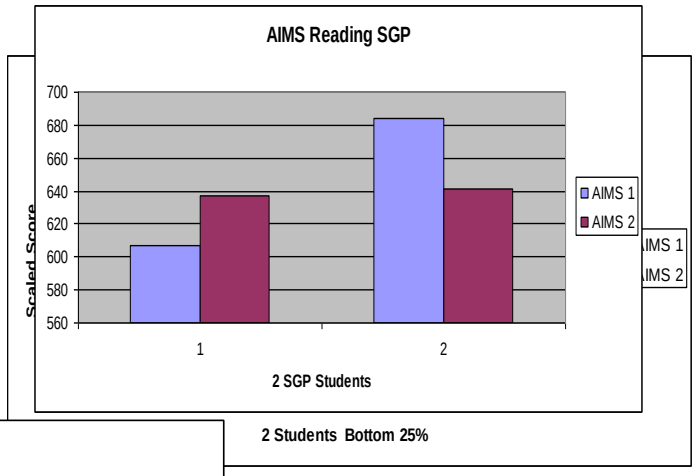
- AZLEAD Principals Institute
- Arizona School Association: Qualified Evaluators Training Parts 1 – 4.
- Title One Conference: Principal attended numerous workshops provided by the conference.

One specific training offered to the instructors focused on working with Special Education students. There were three trainings on how to use Galileo, which included analyzing the data to better focus instruction and build quizzes to match lessons being taught in the classroom. Instructors were able to look at numerous reports designed to help them focus in on areas indicated

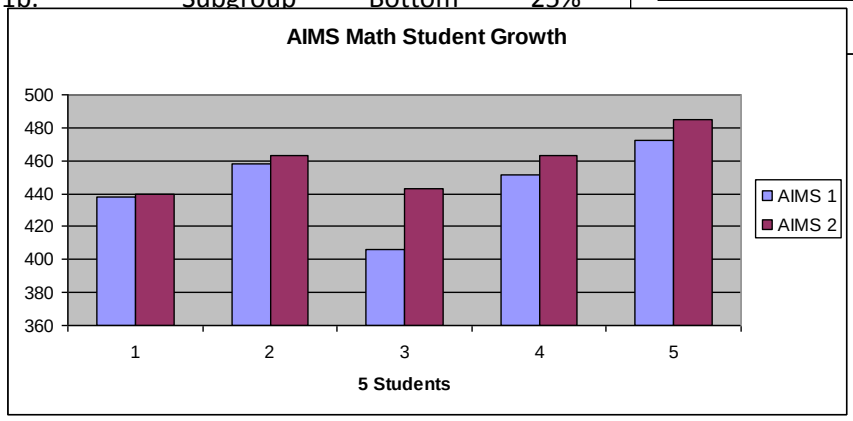
in Galileo as areas of Approach or Falls Far Below the standard, then target specific standards for instruction.

This current school year various professional development in-services have been done on site as well as off-site individual teacher trainings and workshops. A new professional development strategy is being assessed to better select topics of focus based on what previous AIMS data and teacher feedback provides. The professional development survey will be sent out shortly after AIMS data is analyzed and topics will align more with what the data indicates as specific needs. A Galileo post test will also provide valuable data in assessing projected professional needs for targeting overall school growth and the needs of the students that fall in the bottom 25% academically.





1b. Subgroup Bottom 25%



2a. Percent Passing

Green on the dashboards

2b. Composite School Comparison

Green on the dashboards

2c. Subgroup ELL

Excalibur Charter High School did not have any English Language Learners for the past two years.

Green on the dashboards

2c. Subgroup FRL

In regard to FRL, the majority of our campus falls into this category. The following is a breakdown of those numbers for each category:

- 61% of our student body qualifies for Free and Reduced breakfast and lunch..
- 2% of our student population qualifies for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

As a result many of our intervention efforts have been targeted to meet the needs of those students who qualify. We have a healthy school climate and although there is a high poverty rate, many of our students enjoy school and have a desire to learn and grow at Excalibur and Avalon.

Curriculum

With the change in leadership an opportunity presented it self to analyze the curriculum and ensure that materials were aligned to the standards as well as providing the students with the essential knowledge needed to demonstrate mastery on the AIMS exam. Through this analysis each lesson was reviewed by instructional staff and found to meet the standards**.**

As stated above we are currently using two different online curriculum sources for the high school:

- American Virtual Academy- which uses a curriculum that aligns to the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards.

- Acellus, The Science of Learning- which aligns to the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards and are instructed by highly qualified instructors.

ECAPS

We have changed the staffing of the high school to include a highly qualified history, math and science instructors on campus. He is able to offer one-on-one tutoring times with students that are struggling in certain content areas.

Instruction

All newly enrolled students meet with an administrator to review their transcripts and determine the best courses to meet their individual needs. Students are placed into courses depending on the credits and courses listed on their transcripts and as determined by the credit recovery program. All students are enrolled in five courses that will run a full semester and achieve .5 credit hours for each course completed in which a D or better is earned. Courses consist of content videos, quizzes, assignments, cumulative unit tests and midterm and a final exam. Students that do not master a unit with a 70% or better will have a instructor remediate the lesson until mastery is attained.

By providing and online format, aided by a classroom instructor, it allows for some flexibility when dealing with students who are having difficulty understanding concepts with a specific unit or lesson. Many of our students have struggled in the traditional classroom model which has set many of them back in their education. Being able to provide this hybrid educational model allows students to have the support when needed and permitted to move forward without restriction if mastery is obtained.

Assessment

The following are the primary assessments used in assessing student growth:

- **AIMS—** Each summer, before school begins, AIMS data is analyzed. Students who fell far below or approached in math or reading are highlighted for each cohort. Any standard indicated as falling far below or approaching is highlighted and referenced in planning for intervention services.

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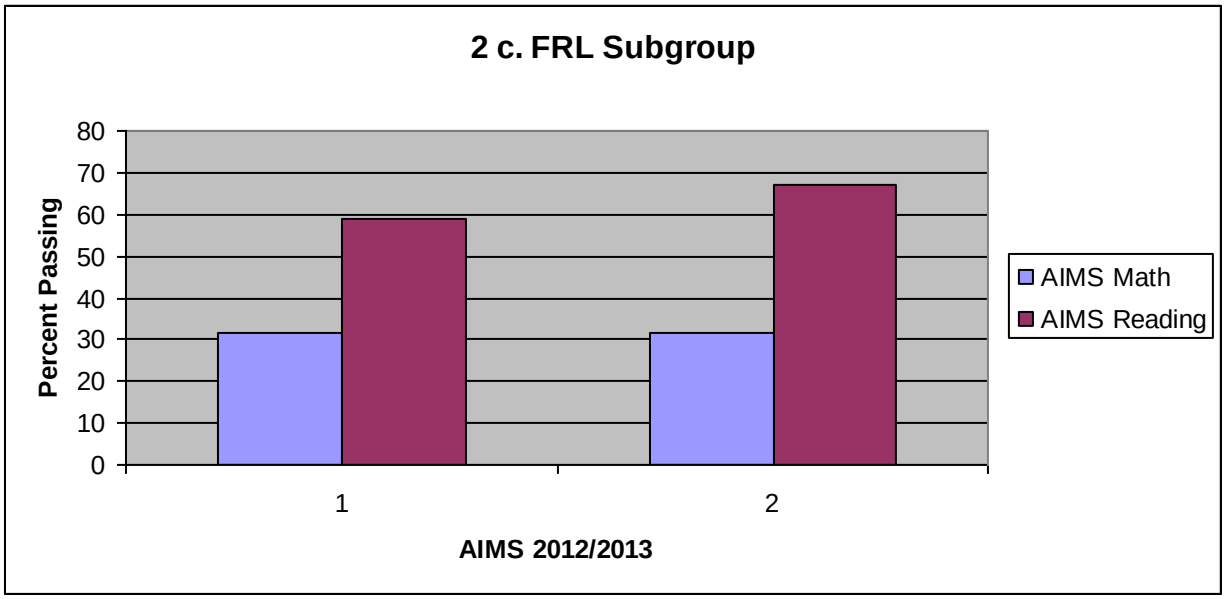


61% of our students are FRL status. This chart shows their progress in the areas of AIMS Math and Reading.

2c. Subgroup SPED

Green on the dashboards

3a. State Accountability

Through the oversight of Excalibur's Board of Directors and the Administration the district has seen significant change over the last three years.

The decline in student performance has sparked a change in leadership at the high school level. The current administration recognizes the need for increased student achievement and increase accountability for student success. Student progress is now reviewed by the site director along with instructional staff on an ongoing basis.

Curriculum

With the change in leadership an opportunity presented it self to analyze the student curriculum and assure that materials were aligned to the standards as well as providing the students with the essentials knowledge needed to demonstrate mastery on the AIMS exam. Through this analysis each lesson was reviewed by instructional staff and found to meet the standards**.**

As stated above, we are currently using two different online curriculum sources for the high school:

- American Virtual Academy- which uses a curriculum that aligns to the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards.

- Acellus, The Science of Learning- which aligns to the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards and are instructed by highly qualified instructors.

We have changed the staffing of the high school to include a highly qualified history, math and science instructors on campus to offer one-on-one tutoring times with students that are struggling in certain content areas.

Instruction

All newly enrolled students meet with an administrator to review their transcripts and determine the best courses to meet their individual needs. Students are placed into courses depending on the credits and courses listed on their transcripts and as determined by the credit recovery program. All students are enrolled in five courses that will run a full semester and achieve .5 credit hours for each course completed in which a D or better is earned. Courses consist of content videos, quizzes, assignments, cumulative unit tests and midterm and a final exam. Students that do not master a unit with a 70% or better will have a instructor remediate the lesson until mastery is attained.

By providing and online format, aided by a classroom instructor, it allows for some flexibility when dealing with students who are having difficulty understanding concepts with a specific unit or lesson. Many of our students have struggled in the traditional classroom model which has set many of them back in their education. Being able to provide this hybrid educational model allows students to have the support when needed and permitted to move forward without restriction if mastery is obtained.

We also are requiring the students to prove their work in the class by taking notes in their binders. The notes are included in their grade for the class as is there progress (not just the grade). We also

spent time to show the kids how to use the resources (notes, extra videos) on their lessons. When they ask for help the first thing we ask them to do is walk us through their notes.

Assessment

The following are the primary assessments used in assessing student growth.

- **AIMS—**Each summer, before school begins, AIMS data is analyzed. Students who fell far below or approached in math or reading are highlighted for each cohort. Any standard indicated as falling far below or approaching is highlighted and referenced in planning for intervention services.

- **Galileo--**Instructors are using Galileo, an online assessment-based program that closely aligns with the AIMS test to establish benchmarks in reading, writing, math, and science. Each assessment is different and once completed provides the instructor with useable data meant to target areas needing improvement. A report called an *Individual Student Profile* provides a risk assessment that the instructor can use to individualize. Galileo has also become a primary tool used to target instruction for the students that fall in the bottom 25% academically.

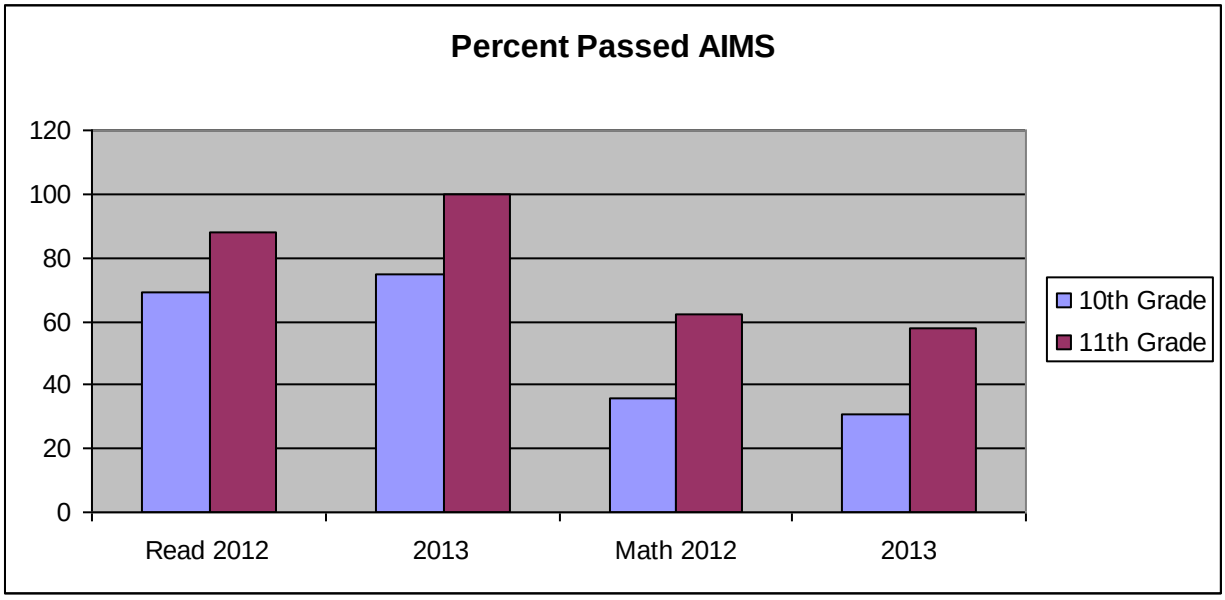
- Students will also have the opportunity to take the ASFAB assessments. These are civilian assessments adopted from the United States Military recruiting offices, to help students see what skills they possess that they can turn into a career. This program also helps them plot a course as to what they need to learn to achieve their chosen career. They will also be assessed using Work Keys, an online assessment that employers are using for hiring qualified employees.

Professional Development

In the area of professional development, there have been several specific opportunities available to instructors, which help them provide support to students, including students that fall in the bottom 25% academically. Professional development was targeted to meet the needs of teachers and students, as measured by AIMS data. Listed below are some of the results chosen:

- Pinal County Education Association: Using Data Workshop
- Pinal County Education Association: Math Common Core Phase 1
- Pinal County Education Association: English Language Arts Common Core Phase 1
- Pinal County Education Association: Reading Foundations Training
- Galileo Assessment Training
- EES Provided – Mandatory SPED Training
- Understanding the Needs of Special Ed Students, presented by Dr. Patty Vogel

Excalibur Charter Schools, as a district provides training to all teachers across grade levels. This has lead to a district wide approach to teaching students, which focuses on two key elements, strong instructional leadership and highly trained teachers overseeing the learning environment.

One training offered to the instructors focused on working with Special Education students. There were three trainings on how to use Galileo, which included analyzing the data to better focus instruction and build quizzes to match lessons being taught in the classroom. Instructors were able to look at numerous reports designed to help them focus in on areas indicated in Galileo as areas of Approach or Falls Far Below the standard, then target specific standards for instruction.

This current school year various professional development in-services have been done on site as well as off-site individual teacher trainings and workshops. A new professional development strategy is being assessed to better select topics of focus based on what previous AIMS data and teacher feedback provides. The professional development survey will be sent out shortly after AIMS data is analyzed and topics will align more with what the data indicates as specific needs. A Galileo posttest will also provide valuable data in assessing projected professional needs for targeting overall school growth and the needs of the students that fall in the bottom 25% academically.