A.3 Program of Instruction

The Curriculum and Instruction of Incito Schools will emphasize the following four critical areas: **Quality Curriculum:** comprehensive, quality curricula, is the foundation upon which a student's educational program is developed. Incito's curriculum is designed to reflect the content area's review process and to align with the Common Core Student Standards. We will use Core Knowledge Sequence as the basis for our scope and sequence in all content areas. The Core Knowledge Sequence is a guide to what every child needs to know in Language Arts, American and World History, Geography, Visual Arts, Music, Math, and Science, Preschool - Grade 8. **Instructional Materials Support:** Providing teachers with quality materials to effectively teach is an area of emphasis for Incito Schools. Curriculum offerings will be a priority and is a hallmark of Incito. **Assessment:** Assessment aligned to authentically measure student achievement is another hallmark of Incito School's comprehensive curriculum offerings. Incito will assess major learning outcomes through a variety of assessment measures, including teacher-designed assessments, school-designed end-of-semester/year criterion-reference tests, and state-mandated assessments like the Stanford Ten (nationally standardized achievement test) and Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS). **Professional Development:** The inclusion of a comprehensive plan for on-going, continuous job-embedded professional development for teachers is also a hallmark at Incito. The school leader, teacher leaders and content experts will collaborate with colleagues to identify, develop, schedule, implement, and evaluate professional development offerings at Incito.

Content Area Curriculum: **Core Knowledge** offers a guide to specific, shared content clearly outlined in the Core Knowledge Preschool Sequence and the Core Knowledge Sequence (K–8) (a grade-by-grade guide to important knowledge). Core Knowledge provides academic excellence and higher literacy for elementary and middle schools that need a solid, specific, shared core curriculum in order to help children establish strong foundations of knowledge, grade by grade. *Core Knowledge website at: www.coreknowledge.org*

***English Language Arts*:** At Incito, our language arts curriculum will adhere to the Common Core Student Standards and build upon the Core Knowledge Sequence. Students develop competency of the standard by mastering the five components of reading which include phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension, as identified by the National Reading Panel. Mastery of these five components enables children to read and comprehend all genres of text in real world situations. Incito will foster students' understanding and working knowledge of concepts of print, the alphabetic principle, and other basic conventions of the English writing system. These foundational skills are not an end in and of themselves; rather, they are necessary and important components of our effective, comprehensive language arts program designed to develop proficient readers and writers with the capacity to comprehend and write to texts across a range of types and disciplines. Our learners will identify key ideas and details, read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text. They will determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas. Incito learners will craft and structure words with the integration of knowledge and ideas. They will have a range of reading and level of text complexity to effectively read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently. Our language arts instruction will be differentiated.

The Continuum of Literacy learning will be our guide to language arts instruction and consists of seven different learning continua: (1) Interactive Read-Aloud and Literature Discussion (2) Shared and Performance Reading (3) Writing About Reading (4) Writing (5) Oral, Visual, and Technological Communication(6) Phonics, Spelling, and Word Study (7) Guided Reading (small-group reading instruction)

The first six continua are organized by grade level—prekindergarten through grade 8. The seventh, Guided Reading, is organized by levels A–Z to assist in the teaching of reading. Like the Common Core Student Standards, the Continuum addresses the specific goals of helping students "actively seek the wide, deep, and thoughtful engagement with high-quality literary and informational texts that builds knowledge, enlarges

experience, and broadens worldviews." Also, like the Common Core Student Standards, the Continuum requirements go far beyond mechanical skills and stress ways to develop thinking (©2010 by Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell, Heinemann).

Science & Social Studies: Literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects in Incito Schools will adhere to the Common Core Student Standards and build upon the Core Knowledge Sequence. High-quality English Language Arts instruction incorporates multiple performance objectives into an integrated experience of learning for the student. Incito teachers will utilize research-based approaches to support our learners as they become life-long writers, speakers, and listeners and they are able to demonstrate with increasing fullness and regularity these capacities of the literate individual. We want our 21st century learners to show evidence of college and career ready qualities. These qualities are evidenced by demonstration of independence, strong content knowledge, and response to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline. Students will comprehend as well as critique; they will value evidence and use technology and digital media strategically and capably, and come to understand other perspectives and cultures. Students are engaged and open-minded—but discerning—readers, writers and listeners. Students will, with significant scaffolding, comprehend and evaluate complex texts across a range of types and disciplines, and they will construct effective arguments and convey intricate or multifaceted information. Our learners will be able to build on others' ideas, articulate their own ideas, and confirm they have been understood. More broadly, they will become self-directed learners, effectively seeking out and using resources to assist them, including teachers, peers, and print and digital reference materials.

Math: Math instruction in Incito Schools will adhere to the Common Core Student Standards and build upon the Core Knowledge Sequence including use of Singapore Math, Cognitively Guided Instruction and Math Exemplars. Math instruction will foster inquiry and discovery of the foundations and usefulness of mathematics through a variety of research-based techniques and materials. Students develop a deep understanding of key mathematical concepts and procedures, while gaining mathematical automaticity and discovering connections across content areas through real-life problem solving. We will utilize multiple curriculum resources to attain these eight critical components. Eight Critical Components: (1) make sense of problems and persevere in solving them (2) reason abstractly and quantitatively (3) construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others (4) model with mathematics (5) use appropriate tools strategically (6) attend to precision (7) look for and make use of structure (8) look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

Gifted and Special Education & English Language Learners

At Incito, we recognize and believe all children have gifts and talents; it is our responsibility to find, nurture and inspire them. Our responsibility to identified gifted and special needs students at Incito is to ensure: differentiated instruction to challenge, motivate and enhance learning of qualified strength and **attain growth needed to meet grade level standards**; identify and nurture the social and emotional needs of the individual learner; inspire students to reach their full potential and **make additional gains needed for grade level.** Appropriate academic course offering for qualified gifted and special needs students is evident in the curriculum chosen at Incito. The curriculum programs are sound, viable and researched programs that are rich in content and promote critical thinking for all students. The curriculum at Incito drives the instruction and allows all students full potential to be attained. In essence, we have created Incito to be a place for kids to grow and learn together in heterogeneous groups, but have provided within the classrooms a place for teachers to meet the needs of all students. K-8 students are placed in cluster classrooms for instruction. Through flexible grouping, students may be arranged according to intellectual ability, learning style, interest, achievement and other aspects of a learning profile, depending on the purpose of instruction. Students will receive regular, planned, and purposeful differentiation through Core Knowledge, Singapore Math and other curriculum choices made by Incito. Multiple differentiated strategies will be in place within each learning environment for our gifted and special needs students.

Differentiation Strategies:

- providing flexible instructional arrangements, such as special classes, seminars, resource rooms, mentorships, independent study, and research projects
- pre-testing for content knowledge and contracting instruction/activities accordingly
- providing extension and enrichment through product choice menus which reflect individual learning styles and strengths
- providing instruction which goes beyond the standard and asks students to apply, analyze, and infer within a framework of solid foundational concepts regularly incorporating Bloom's Taxonomy into lesson activities which focus on the higher-order thinking skills of application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation
- providing opportunities to increase critical thinking skills (logic, reasoning, problem solving) through regular instruction, modeling, Socratic methodology and/or formalized curriculum incorporating open-ended and proactive questioning strategies during instruction
- utilizing teacher &/or student generated rubrics to develop students who are self-directed learners and quality producers

Students identified for eligibility for **Special Education** services will be offered a variety of services based on the outcome of the assessment for the student's needs and how those needs can be served in the least restrictive environment. Incito will provide for delivery models of consultation, co-teach classes, special education classes, and self-contained classes to ensure that students have an opportunity to reach their maximum academic potential. In-coming learners who are deemed as at-risk students by surrounding schools will have individual learning profiles. A team consisting of the teacher of record, teacher leaders and content experts will support the creation of an individual learning profile and monitoring plan. The students' IEP will be reviewed annually with the possible team of parent(s), teachers, school psychologist, guidance counselor, and a school administrator to ensure compliance with Arizona Department of Education.

Students identified to be eligible for **English Language Learner** services will be placed into cluster classrooms so that they receive services in the most efficient manner possible. Students will benefit from ELL strategies incorporated in classroom instruction as teachers implement valuable methods such as inclusion, more pictures, rich language, conversation, cultural and diverse centered information. In addition individual attention will be offered with homework and daily instruction. Upon request and/or students' need learners will be scheduled for ELL services for no more than thirty minutes per day during instructional time to ensure compliance with Arizona Department of Education.

Students identified for eligibility on **504 Plans** will be accommodated with appropriate academic and/or behavioral modifications according to their disability. Each student's plan will identify how that student's progress is appropriately assessed. The students' 504 Plan will be reviewed annually with the possible team of parent(s), teachers, school psychologist, school counselor, and a school administrator to ensure compliance with Arizona Department of Education.

Instructional Methods

We will use the **Partnership for 21st Century Skills** and the following categories of 'workplace skills' for our learners. Core Subjects and 21st Century Themes: global awareness; financial, economic, business, and entrepreneurial literacy; civic literacy; and health literacy. The additional skills of core subjects, learning & thinking skills, rigor, reflection, relevance, relationships, 21st century content, Information and communication technology and life and career skills.

We will utilize the method of **Problem-Based Learning**. Problem-Based Learning enhances content knowledge and fosters the development of communication, problem-solving, and self-directed learning skills. Problem-Based learning challenges students to 'learn to learn' and to work cooperatively in groups. This method of instruction is a student-centered work/study group that allows students the opportunity to collaboratively solve the problem they are given by the teacher. It will challenge them to solve real world problems. This method will be used with our students so they can become independent learners. This type of instruction will help them understand what kind of learners they are and what strengths they have.

Cooperative Learning is another method of instruction we will provide for our students. Cooperative Learning is a style of learning that allows students to work together to accomplish a specific goal. The research on cooperative learning indicates that cooperation, compared with competitive and individualistic efforts, typically results in (a) higher achievement and greater productivity, (b) more caring, supportive, and committed relationships, and (c) greater psychological health, social competence, and self-esteem (Johnson, D, 1993).

The twenty-first-century skills, hands-on, and inquiry rich instruction will flood the classrooms at Incito Schools. Our learners will see that the workplace are settings in which people from often widely divergent cultures and who represent diverse experiences and perspectives must learn and work together. Students actively seek to understand other perspectives and cultures through reading and listening, and they are able to communicate effectively with people of varied backgrounds. They will evaluate other points of view critically and constructively. Through reading great classic and contemporary works of literature representative of a variety of periods, cultures, and worldviews, students will vicariously inhabit worlds and have experiences much different than their own. Students will maximize their thinking capacities through meta-cognition, exploration and constant inquiry across multiple disciplines.

Methods of Summative and Formative Assessments

Incito's **formative assessment plan** will ensure student progression and mastery as identified in the Performance Management Plan. Teachers will administer Developmental Reading Assessments on a weekly basis to all students to determine student's independent, instructional and frustration levels in reading. These formative assessments will be analyzed to guide instructional decisions for their guided reading groups. The teachers will use running records daily as a check for understanding/formative assessment to determine when their students are ready to move levels. This will be accomplished through leveled readers within the Core Knowledge Scope and Sequence. As stated in the PMP teachers will administer bi-weekly fluency assessments to monitor students reading progression towards mastery. Teachers will also administer common formative assessments through use of resources such as, Acuity Assessments Software and Core Knowledge assessments. This will ensure Incito is clear with the assessment cycle: assessment – remediation – progression – mastery.

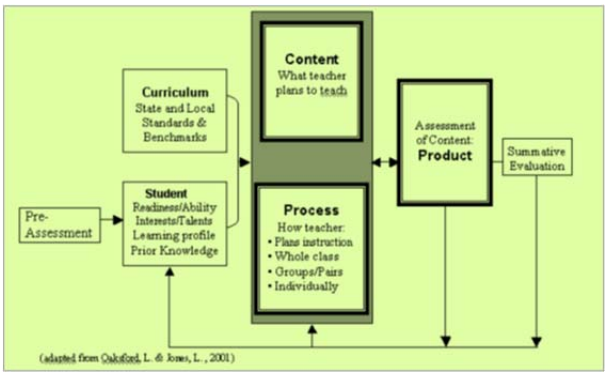
Formative assessments will also include observations (observations with informal notes, observations with checklists, observations with scoring rubrics); written assessments; performance assessments; and self-assessments. These assessments will be frequent, specific and embedded in lessons, examples, journals prompts, individual and collaborative work in all content areas. These real-time formative assessments will guide data conversations with teachers to monitor student progression toward mastery on standards and help to make informed decisions on curriculum and instruction revisions. Teachers will make formative evaluation decisions based on the information gathered from the formative assessments to monitor students' learning while an instructional program is under construction. The teachers will be able to determine how quickly progress is being made by the student and whether the instructional program is effective. They will be able to determine whether a change in instructional program is needed to promote the students' learning and demonstrate adequate progression towards mastery. Formative assessments will include individual and collaborative work on problems through the use of Singapore Math scope and sequence. Teachers will be asking guiding questions daily to ensure understanding with students at the individual level. Formative Assessments will be on-going assessments, reviews, and observations in a classroom. Our teachers will use formative assessments to improve

instructional methods and utilize student feedback throughout the teaching and learning process. The results of formative assessments are used to modify and validate instruction.

The formative assessment plan aligned to our PMP will also include: (mastery requirements are further defined in section A.3.1)

- Diagnostic: During the first week of school, students will be given a diagnostic exam. This will allow teachers and administrators to get immediate feedback on student strengths and weaknesses. Teachers will provide a post exam within the last month of school to record annual student progress.
- Response to Intervention (RTI): The second week of the first, second and third trimester students will be given a screening test in response to intervention. This RTI tool, along with the diagnostic test, will allow teachers and specialist to put together a powerful and productive intervention plan which includes a minimum of an additional 30 minutes of daily instruction specific to the students' area of need (see A.6 Performance Management Plan).
- Classroom: In response to differentiated instructional methodology, daily classroom assessment will include various formal and informal assessments. Informal assessments includes, but is not limited to, class discussions, teacher–student dialogues, observations, student groups, self- and peer assessments, and teamwork evaluations. Formal assessments includes, but is not limited to, graded and non-graded quizzes and/or tests, writing assignments with descriptive feedback, presentations, speeches, etc., and directed questions. The teacher collection of data will be used to inform and guide instruction. With a plethora of data collection teachers will be able to understand which instructional strategies are effective and which need to be modified to improve student achievement. This data will allow teachers to place students' in appropriate small subject groups, and monitor reading and writing levels to ensure progression towards mastery. The chart below demonstrates how decisions are made through assessments and guiding the teacher towards mastery. This will support Incitos core belief that differentiation of content, process, and product based upon ongoing diagnosis of students' varying readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles.

Learning Cycle and Decision Factors Used in Assessments



A summative assessment is a critical component to ensure all students are achieving at high levels and will take place at the beginning diagnostic of each school year. Student learning will also be assessed through a range of unit, quarterly, and semester summative assessments and annually through state standardized testing. All summative evaluations will also be linked to formative assessment results – to determine how well teachers and students are progressing toward the performance goals outlined in the PMP's and whether or not to alter curriculum, instruction, professional development and/or supplemental services so that the stated goals can be met. At Incito the teachers will use data to make informed and purposeful decisions as a base for student's instructional placement, formative evaluation, and diagnostic decisions.

Instructional placement decisions--what the student knows and where he or she should be in the instructional sequence--i.e., what to teach next

Formative evaluation decisions--information to monitor a student's learning while an instructional program is under construction--how quickly progress is being made, whether the instructional program is effective, and whether a change in instructional program is needed to promote the student's learning

Diagnostic decisions--which specific difficulties account for the student's inadequate progress so the teacher can remediate/accelerate the learning progress and design effective instructional plans

Additional Information on Formative Assessment-Acuity mentioned in the PMP:

This tool will allow teachers to be diagnostic, predictive and base decisions on individual instruction. It will include four diagnostic assessments per grade for language arts and math. The teachers will have access to instructional resources, performance assessment and rubric builders and easy to read reports to make data-driven decisions for guiding instructional decisions. The system will include student progress reports and assign instructional resources to students for intervention and additional practice. The teachers will use this to create their common formative assessments with custom assessments and robust item banks with item authoring tools. This will support teachers to make critical decisions daily to provide a rigorous, relevant and internationally benchmarked instruction. The system will support a data-driven process of formative assessment and instruction to dramatically improve achievement outcomes for students performing below grade level.

The Summative assessment plan developed at the beginning of each school year and evaluated at the end of the school year will be aligned to the Performance Management Plan (PMP) and used as a guide for monitoring progress, directing curriculum, and instruction and meeting goals.

The plan will involve: (1) Establishment of a Data Management Team (DMT) consisting of the School Leader, Executive Directors, Special Education Coordinator and a Core Academic Teacher from each grade level (2) Creation of a secured data management room with information in chart form on the walls to track progress by grade level, by student, and by teacher using formative assessment data (3) All Staff will be trained on how to interpret, analyze and use data (4) The DMT will review students' previous academic performance on standardized and other summative assessments from previous grade level results such as end of semester exams, state standardized test, portfolios, unit assessments, benchmark testing, projects and any other available summative information (5) The DMT will identify gaps and patterns to develop the school-wide improvement plan (6) Classroom teachers will analyze student data and identify strengths, weaknesses, and develop individual profiles for each student using current formative data and past summative assessment results (7) Based on the school-wide plan and individual student data analysis supplemental services will be implemented and targeted professional development training will be identified.

Students will be graded on a 100-point scale with 70% to 79% demonstrating proficiency and 80% or above representing mastery. Rubrics will use the FAME model with a 4-point scale with 4=Exceeding, 3-Meeting, 2=Approaching and 1=Falling Below. 90%-100%=A, 80-89=B, 70%-79%=C, 60%-69%=D, under 60% is an F. Any score below 70% is failing, 80% or above is mastery. Using the four (4) levels in the FAME model; criteria can range from four (4) or more criteria based on the rubric for each lesson, with a minimum score of 70%.

Incito Schools will exude a culture of getting better for kids and our assessment analyzes will be driven by this core belief. Our teachers will continuously use task analyzes to make their next instructional decisions through planning and preparation.