REVISED Education Plan A2 Target Population

Phoenix Collegiate Academy Elementary proposes to open an elementary school in South Phoenix with the firm belief that all students, regardless of race, language or economic status can succeed if they have access to a high quality education. Phoenix Collegiate Academy Elementary targets the learning needs of South Phoenix's rapidly growing[1] underperforming early elementary student population by providing an academically rigorous education, a highly structured school environment, and a focus on leadership development.

Description of the Community

Forty-two percent of Arizona schools are failing to hit accountability targets, according to the *Arizona Republic*[2]. Similarly, the Children's Action Alliance has found that "three out of every four 4th graders in Arizona are unable to read proficiently." [3] According to the Casey Foundation, "low-income fourth graders who cannot meet NAEP's proficient level in reading today are all too likely to become our nation's lowest-income, least skilled, least-productive, and most costly citizens tomorrow."[4]

While these numbers are alarming for the future of Arizona, there are schools, both charter and district, that are breaking the mold and producing strong academic results with all students. Unfortunately, few of these schools are located in our targeted student community of South Phoenix.

Phoenix Collegiate Academy Elementary has identified three zip codes with a high-need student population (defining high need as a high percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced price lunch and few adequate options for elementary students to attain a high quality education) for a proposed school location: 85040, 85041, and 85042. This is the same location and target population that Phoenix Collegiate Academy Middle School and High School are already serving. The primary school district in this region is the Roosevelt Elementary District. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 74% of the population under 18 is Hispanic or Latino, 14% is Black/African- American and 7% is White/Caucasian.5 We estimate the local school district to have 88% of students who qualify for free or reduced price lunch,6 11% of students who are classified as special education7 and 25% of students who are English Language Learners.8 The three identified zip codes are within Legislative District 16. In this district, the median household income is $43,835 (compared to the Phoenix Metro median of $54,713), LD 16 has the second highest percent of children born to mothers without a high school education, and 34% of children are living in poverty.9 See Figure A.2.1 for more information.

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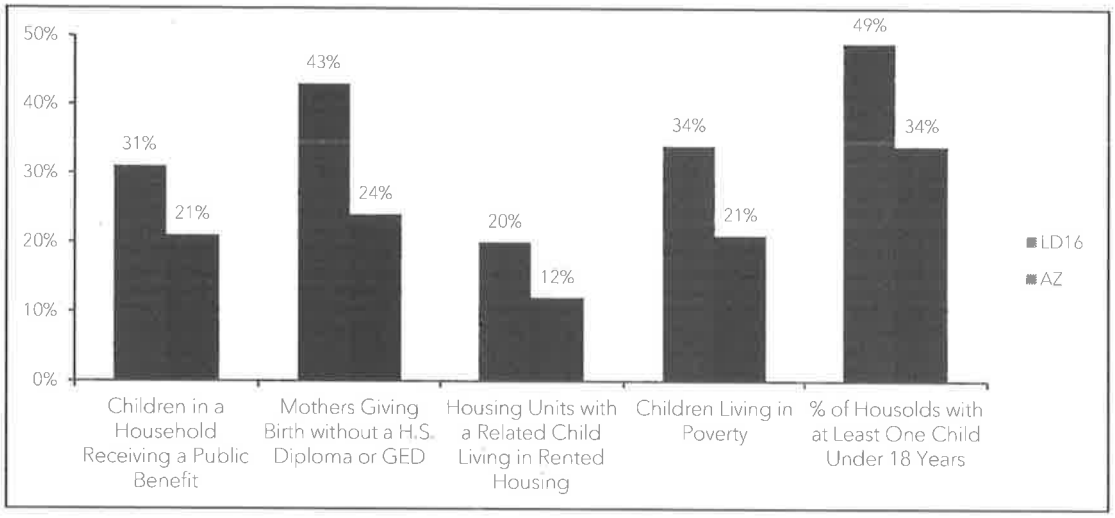
[1] For more information, see the "First Things First," SFY 2012 Funding Plan, 2011, http://www.azftf.gov/Documents/Jan%202011%20Meeting%20Materials/South%20Phoenix%202012%20Regional%20Funding%20Plan.pdf.
[2] "Arizona schools fail to hit test targets in record numbers" <www.azcentral.com/news/articles/2011/07/27/20110727arizona-schools-fail-test-targets.html>
[3] The Children's Action Alliance offers extensive research on early care and education. This statistic is highlighted from their report in 2010: http://www.azchildren.org/display.asp?pageId=80&parentId=46. The recent data from 2011 shows the same statistic.
[4] Casey Foundation's *Early Warning: Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters*, 2010.
[5] For more information see NCES: School District Comparative Profiles (Census 2010).
[6] Information gathered from the Arizona Department of Education: http://www.azed.gov/research-evaluation/aims-assessment-results/ and http://www.azed.gov/health-nutrition/frpercentages/
[7] For more detail see the National Center for Educational Statistics: http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/districtsearch/district_detail.asp?start=0&ID2=0407080.
[8] Ibid.
[9] The Children's Action Alliance: http://azchildren.org/default.asp publishes reports based on legislative districts. The three zip codes we have targeted are in LD 16.

Figure A2.a: Local Demographics



Additionally, "the number of adults claiming unemployment insurance more than tripled between 2007 and 2009, growing faster than the number in Maricopa County and the state.[10] The South Phoenix Region also "continues to experience the highest growth rate of children 0-5 and especially children ages 3-5."[11] This serves to further emphasize that not only is an additional high-performing school necessary to help combat low academic performance, but there will be a statistical need for an early elementary school due to the population increase of elementary students.

The majority of the adult population in the Roosevelt Elementary District is Hispanic or Latino and only 10% of the population has earned a bachelor's degree.[12] With an effective and quality education, the youth of this community "could become a potent new source of talent in the state, [as] Arizona's future economic and social well-being depends heavily on erasing the educational deficits of the state's young Hispanic residents."[13] Phoenix Collegiate Academy Elementary's educational philosophy and program are designed to close the academic achievement gap for elementary students in South Phoenix and prepare each student for success in middle school, achievement in high school and graduation from college. We can ensure this transition is successful as students will be able to be a part of a Kindergarten to College pathway with the addition of Phoenix Collegiate Academy Elementary to the already existing PCA Middle School and High School.

Analysis of Public Schools in Proposed School Territory

For the entire Roosevelt Elementary School District, the 2013 AIMS test results are (for applicable grades to Phoenix Collegiate Academy Elementary):[14]

- Grade 3: 44% passed math, 54% passed reading *(State Average: 68% math, 75% reading)*
- Grade 4: 42% passed math, 59% passed reading *(State Average: 64% math, 77% reading)*[15]

[10] 2010 First Things First – Needs and Assets Report: http://www.azftf.gov/RC014/Pages/ReportsAndPublications.aspx for South Phoenix.

[11] Ibid.

[12] This information is from an American Community Survey, US Census – 2009 Data Profiles: http://www.factfinder.census.gov/servlet/ADPTable?_bm=y&-geo_id=95000US0407080&-context=adp&.ds_name=ACS_2009_5YR_G00_&-tree_id=5309&-lang=en&-_caller=geoselect&-format=

[13] "Five Shoes Waiting to Drop on Arizona's Future." http://morrisoninstitute.asu.edu/publications-reports/APC01_5ShoesWaiting2DropOnAzsFuture.

[14] https://azreportcards.com/ReportCard?district=4279&school=-1

[15] The 2013 state results are located at the Arizona Dept. of Education: http://www.azed.gov/research-evaluation/files/2014/05/state-report-card-2013-final.pdf.

There is currently only one district option for elementary students to attend an A school in the area we have targeted. Arizona's most recent A-F Accountability grading system shows three schools in the RSD attaining a B; the rest of the District earned a C or D. [16]

A deeper analysis of school performance in the targeted zip codes can be found in Figures A.2.2 - A.2.4. There are 10 public schools in the 85040 zip code, 13 public schools in the 85041 zip code, and 8 public schools in the 85042 zip code with comparable grades to Phoenix Collegiate Academy Elementary-- not all are part of the Roosevelt Elementary District.[17] The District is comprised of 18 schools with a grade span of Preschool through 8. This chart lists all elementary public schools in Phoenix Collegiate Academy Elementary's proposed area. The grade levels, student body size, and school type were gathered from NCES[18] (2009-2010 school year), the AIMS data and the percentage of students who qualify for Free or Reduce Price Lunch was gathered from the Arizona Department of Education,[19] unless otherwise noted.

Figure A2.b: Public Schools - 85040 Zip Code

School Name	Grades	Total Size	FRPL %	School Type	2013 Math Percent Passing	2013 Reading Percent Passing
Arts Academy at South Mtn. (a.k.a South Phoenix Prep and Arts Academy)	K-8	72	80%	Charter	53	72
Cesar Chavez Community School	K-8	442	84%	District	35	49
Champion Schools	K-2	183	92%	Charter	66	80
Esperanza Montessori Acad.	K-3	245	85%	Charter	55	78
New Destiny Leadership	K-5	24	93%	Charter	66	69
Percy L. Julian	K-8	465	93%	District	32	54
Reyes Maria Ruiz Leadership	4-6	159	89%	Charter	65	71
Rose Linda	K-8	565	93%	District	43	62
Sabis International	K-8	669	81%	Charter	62	79
South Pointe Elementary	K-5	366	97%	Charter	28	45

[16] Data gathered from: http://www.azed.gov/research-evaluation/a-f-accountability/.

[17] Information gathered from NCES: http://nces.ed.gov/globallocator/index.asp?search=1&State=AZ&city=Phoenix&zipcode=85041&miles=&itemname=&sortby=name&School=1&PrivSchool=1&College=1&Library=1&Status=Search+Finished&Records=20&CS=B2A75947

[18] NECS – "Search for Schools"

[19] Information gathered from the Arizona Department of Education: http://www.azed.gov/research-evaluation/aims-assessment-results/ and http://www.azed.gov/health-nutrition/frpercentages/

Figure A.2.c: Public Schools - 85041 Zip Code

School Name	Grades	Size	FRPL %	School Type	2013 Math Percent Passing	2013 Reading Percent Passing
Bernard Black Elementary	K-8	913	81%	District	41	67
CJ Jorgensen	K-8	533	86%	District	35	57
Eagle College Prep	K-5	566	35%	Charter	66	83
Eagle College Prep-Harmony	K-3	124	40%	Charter	50	63
Pastor Elementary	K-8	685	91%	District	48	65
Ignacio Conchos	K-8	451	93%	District	39	58
John R. Davis School	K-8	586	86%	District	28	53
Maurice Cash Elementary	K-8	782	88%	District (Laveen)	61	69
Southwest	K-8	570	92%	District	42	63
Sun Valley Charter	K-6	193	68%	Charter	44	67
Sunland	K-8	569	93%	District	69	80
VH Lassen	K-8	520	93%	District	40	58
Valley View	K-8	644	85%	District	48	60

Figure A.2.d: Public Schools - 85042 Zip Code

School Name	Grades	Size	FRPL %	School Type	2013 Math Percent Passing	2013 Reading Percent Passing
Amy L. Houston	K-8	97	82%	District	18	24
Cloves Campbell	K-8	583	86%	District	57	69
C.O. Greenfield	4-8	593	93%	District	43	64
Desert Marigold	K-9	246	N/A	Charter	61	86
JFK Elementary	K-3	553	91%	District	50	56
Maxine O Bush	K-8	533	83%	District	37	57
Nevitt Elementary	PS-5	767	88%	District (Tempe)	72	82
TG Barr	K-9	382	90%	District	37	56

Of the 31 schools (charter and district) in our targeted zip codes, only six schools achieved over 75% on the 2013 AIMS test for reading (less than 20% of total elementary schools in the area). No school achieved over 75% on the AIMS test for math (0% of total elementary schools in the area).

At Phoenix Collegiate Academy Elementary, we believe that a strong literacy foundation will change the trajectory for our students. While there are six schools in our targeted area that are above 75% on the AIMS test, the highest scoring school has 83% passing in reading but only 35% of their student population qualify for free or reduced price lunch. Therefore, there is not one school in our target zip code that is educating a high percentage of children who qualify for free or reduced price lunch while concurrently achieving at a high level in reading proficiency (as indicated on the AIMS test). Phoenix Collegiate Academy Elementary's curriculum, schedule, and 215 minutes of literacy instruction in kindergarten through second grade and 135 minutes in third and fourth, are specifically designed to address the literacy gap that is causing an academic achievement gap for students in low-income communities.

Meeting the Needs of the Community

To provide a high quality education to the students in our targeted community, Phoenix Collegiate Academy Elementary has based our school model upon the successful implementation and execution of proven instructional design elements and practices at other high performing schools serving a similar community and upon practice- proven research that leads to strong results for our targeted community. We believe that our design must be based on proven models of excellence, not experimentation. As such, we have used successful practices from schools around the country to guide our design process in all areas including academic curriculum, instruction, culture, routines, operations, hiring, physical space, and leadership/character education. We believe strongly in the importance of ongoing school study visits and have built-in time to the annual professional development schedule for staff to visit successful urban charter schools.

Every element of our school model is based upon successful implementation and execution at other high performing schools. As outlined below, the planning team and particularly CEO Rachel Yanof continues to access and study the most successful schools during the startup phase of Phoenix Collegiate Academy Elementary through the Building Excellent Schools network of high performing schools. We will continue to seek improvement and best practices by visiting high performing schools throughout every year of operation.

Ms. Yanof has visited all of the schools identified below in order to learn from their best practices and design elements. Further, after four successful years establishing and leading Phoenix Collegiate Academy Middle and High School, we will build on those best practices as well.

Arizona: Great Hearts – Teleos and Maryvale Prep (Phoenix); Empower College Prep (Phoenix); Vista College Prep (Phoenix)

National: North Star Academy (Newark, NJ); Excel Academy (BES school, Boston, MA); KIPP Academy (Lynn, MA); Boston Collegiate (Boston, MA); Democracy Prep (BES school, Harlem, NY); Valor Academy (BES school, Los Angeles, CA); Achievement Prep (BES school, Washington, DC); Roxbury Prep (Boston, MA); Boston Prep (BES school, Boston, MA); Elm City College Prep (New Haven, CT); MATCH (Boston, MA); South Bronx Classical (BES school, Bronx, NY); Equitas Academy (BES school, Los Angeles, CA); Endeavor College Prep (BES school, Los Angeles, CA); Nashville Prep (BES school); Memphis College Prep (BES school); Amistad Academy Middle (New Haven, CT).

Given the strengths of these models, we nonetheless remain attuned to what David Racine, a specialist in

nonprofit replication strategies, notes as a common pitfall - believing that one must choose between a cookie-cutter approach and a community-specific approach. As Racine writes,

> [T]he truth is there never can be absolute replication of an original model, nor can replication efforts ever be successful if the adapters do not adhere to the model. The key is in capturing the essence of what made the original model successful, while still allowing for some local adaptation.[20]

In designing and delivering on the promise of Phoenix Collegiate Academy Elementary, we stay true to the core elements that have shaped high-performing urban schools' effectiveness and impact while adapting our model to meet the specific needs and articulated desires of our school community and age span. Analysis of urban charter schools achieving exceptional, measurable results indicates a core set of common characteristics[21] as seen in **Figure A2.e** that drive the overarching school design, educational program, and day-to-day operations.

Figure A.2.e: Core Characteristics of High Performing Urban Charter Schools

Firm belief that all students can learn and achieve at high levels.	Frequent internal assessments with data to drive instruction.
Clear, outcome-focused mission, understood by all, and evidenced throughout the school.	Strong discipline code enforced by all.
Leader(s) highly visible ensuring all are focused on mission.	Clear and frequent communications with parents regarding student performance.
Highly-structured learning environment and sound operating principles.	Strong curricular focus on skill mastery.
School-wide practices promote continuity from one classroom to another.	Extended school day.

Based on our study of South Phoenix demographics and our conversations with community members, **Figure A.2.f** details how Phoenix Collegiate Academy Elementary will use these foundational characteristics to meet and address identified needs in our targeted community.

[20] Lake, Robin J. *Identifying and Replicating the DNA of Successful Charter Schools*. National Charter School Research Project, May 2007.
[21] Compiled by Building Excellent Schools

Figure A.2.f: How Phoenix Collegiate Academy Elementary will Meet Community Needs

Community Need	Phoenix Collegiate Academy Elementary Model	Relations to Program of Instruction
Multiple 'A' ranked schools that serve a high free or reduced price lunch student population	Through adherence to the core characteristics listed above, based on the best practices of other high performing schools nationwide (Serving a similar student population), we believe we can achieve high academic results with our students and provide an outstanding elementary education for a low-income student population.	• Rigorous curriculum selected for our targeted student population • Data-driven instruction • Constant and consistent evaluation of data in grade-level meetings, school-wide and as individual classroom teachers
Rigorous classroom instruction that correlates to high student achievement and higher level thinking	All Phoenix Collegiate Academy Elementary purchased curriculum is based on the success rate at other high performing schools. During extended school day, students receive almost an extra two and a half weeks of additional schooling yearly. With many students entering kindergarten or first grade already behind, our extended day offers increased time to ensure students enter middle school at or above grade level. Teachers spend 18 full days and 3 hours every week in professional development, refining their instructional delivery.	• Phoenix Collegiate Academy Elementary curriculum is standards-based and purchased for sole reason of advancing student achievement. • Within lesson plans, teachers scaffold high level questioning to always push students toward higher level thinking. We use Doug Lemov's *Teach Like a Champion* taxonomy to create a common language among teachers that drives incredible instruction. • Teachers practice and role-play instructional strategies and video tape themselves to always be working to improve their delivery.
Targeted SEI instruction and quality special education expertise.	We anticipate about 25% of our students will qualify for ELL services; we require all teachers to learn SEI methods, and preferably have experience executing the SEI model. We anticipate about an 11% special education population; we will recruit highly qualified special- education teachers to meet the needs of the special education case load each year.	• All assessments will be administered in the correct time frame to ensure we are meeting the needs of all students. • We have high expectations for all students—ELL and SPED. • Staff will receive training in SPED and ELL compliance and be versed in SEI methods.

While our academic program meets the needs of students in our target area, we have already received significant support and enthusiasm from parents and community members in the form of intentions to enroll, offers to support, and expressed relief because our community wants a quality college preparatory choice for their children. Detailed information on our community outreach and support can be found in **C.2 Advertising and Promotion**.

Class Size and Teacher-Student Ratios

We provide class sizes of 20-30 students in Kindergarten through second grade, and no more than 35 in third and fourth, ensuring that in the early elementary grades our target students are in a class size most conducive to meeting their particular needs. Research is divided on the benefits of class size reduction[22] unless below 15 students, but by and large drastic reduction is less effective than increased spending to attract higher quality teachers[23], so PCA Elementary prioritizes talent recruitment and development, so that every student spends their limited classroom hours with the most effective teachers, rather than the smallest groupings. Research suggests that focusing on teacher quality over class size reductions are the best strategy for schools targeting improved educational opportunities for high-minority, low-income communities[24].

Class size reductions are most effective for students falling behind their peers, so PCAE ensures that struggling students spend remediation time in small groups and receive in-classroom instructional support from Teaching Fellows or aides, colleague teachers and Special Education teachers, and Teacher Coaches. PCAE will reduce teacher-student ratios with the support of one additional teacher during literacy blocks so that we can ensure small group instruction for effective learning. PCAE will employ the use of additional teachers for remediation to target individual student needs. While student teacher ratios may start between 1:20 and 1:35 in classrooms, they drop to half or less during remediation periods and math and literacy blocks throughout the week. Those smaller 1:10 or 1:17 ratios fall in line with where research shows teacher-student ratio reductions have the most impact. However, having smaller ratios alone is not enough to dramatically impact the academic achievement gap present in our target community, so more significant weight it put on prioritizing teacher quality over class size and ratios.

Due to our belief that literacy is everything in the early elementary grades, we have prioritized small group instruction to occur during the literacy blocks to specifically target an underperforming student population in literacy. Based on the best practices of schools we have studied, we believe this intense focus on literacy through direct and small group instruction translates into success in other subjects and places students on the path to college starting in kindergarten.

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22 Lawrence, Geoffrey. *Ineffectiveness of class-size reduction underscores problems with public education in Nevada.* Nevada Policy Research Institute, August 2013.

23 Richmond, Emily. *Is It Better to Have a Great Teacher or a Small Class?* The Atlantic, November 2013.

24 Mathematic Policy Research. *Access to Effective Teaching for Disadvantaged Students* U.S. Department of Education, November 2013.