REVISED A.5 Performance Management Plan – Reading Narrative

A.5.a Basis for Baseline Figures

PCAE defines its target population as high poverty students in the South Mountain community (more details are available in section A2). Less than 15% of that population attends schools not part of the Roosevelt School District (RSD) and fewer than 5% of current PCA students in grades 4-10 come from schools not part of that district. Thus, the best basis for comparison for the proposed PCA Elementary (PCAE) is RSD schools (which are included among other in the details in section A2). Approximately 5,033 students in grades K-4 attended RSD schools in 2013 (per ADE School Finance ADM report).

The percentage of 3rd graders passing the Reading portion of the 2013 AIMS assessment in RSD schools (based on the ADE 2013 school report cards) is 54%. The percentage of 4th graders passing the Reading portion of the 2013 AIMS assessment in RSD schools (based on the ADE 2013 school report cards) is 59%. That compares to a 75% and 77% average of all Arizona 3rd and 4th graders, respectively. This dismal reality catalyzes this proposal to increase choice for parents of elementary-aged students.

The Student Growth Points, for the Roosevelt School District (RSD) is 49[1]. This number is not a perfect match for our purposes, as the Roosevelt number is based on students in grades 3rd-8th, but as the vast majority of the students PCA Elementary will serve would otherwise be attending RSD schools, this number is the best indicator available. This number means that the students in the area PCAE intends to serve are growing at 49% of the rate of their peers. This means every year they are falling further and further behind by over half.

A.5.b Curriculum

Curriculum at PCAE will be aligned to the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards. Teachers will develop curriculum through the time in the three weeks of Summer Professional Development, which is part of teachers' contract year (the cost here is included in the teacher salary lines of the startup and 3-year budgets). They will design a Scope and Sequence (Curriculum Map), Pacing Guide, a Year-long Vision and corresponding final exam, Unit Plans and Unit assessments. All of this will be vetted by the Principal and in content committees to ensure curriculum alignment. Teachers will implement this curriculum beginning at the start of the year and evaluate effectiveness weekly in formative assessments students complete and more formally at the end of each quarter based on cumulative exams for material of the year. The Principal will monitor student achievement and use that measure to ensure consistent implementation across the school. Supplemental resources such as textbooks will be researched by the content team, vetted by the Principal and then reviewed for efficacy by these same groups of people. These resource costs are estimated in the curriculum/resources lines of the startup and 3-year budgets.

A.5.c Monitor

All teachers will create their curriculum materials in alignment with Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards. Over the summer Professional Development period, the Principal will review and vet all materials (Unit Plans, Lesson Plans and Assessments) according to a rubric and a standards checklist (to ensure all

[1] http://www.azed.gov/research-evaluation/a-f-accountability/

standards are addressed). Throughout the year, teachers will be observed informally on a rubric at least bi-weekly, if not more regularly. Rubrics and evaluation protocols are already in development by the CMO (central office), so no cost will be budgeted for PCAE. These observations will include a written follow-up email of areas of strength and weaknesses. Twice a year (in December/January and March/April) teachers will receive a formal evaluation which includes a full class observation, an in-person debrief, and letter of strengths and weakness. The instructional efficacy of teacher instruction will be evaluated in weekly data review teams where they will review weekly formative quizzes to determine student challenges or misconceptions. These meetings are all led by the Principal. The cost for the Principal is included in the Principal salary lines in the startup and 3-year budgets.

A.5.d Assessment

The assessment system at PCAE is comprehensive. School leaders set ambitious goals for performance on state assessments and end-of-year exams (comprehensive exams of all standards covered in the course that year or semester). Teachers then set big goals in their individual classes that align with the overall school big goals. First and foremost, all students must show growth annually. Secondly, goals will center on absolute achievement levels on the new state assessment system, which is a component of students' mastery level and passage decisions. All courses are aligned to the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards.

Students will be assessed daily on a formative assessment commonly known as an "exit ticket". On this "ticket" main ideas and concepts of the daily lesson will be assessed independently. Teachers will review these tickets each day to determine immediate needs for remediation and areas of achievement. Weekly, students are given a formative assessment of the skills and concepts taught that week. This quiz will be reviewed immediately in structured data meetings so that remediation can be addressed the next week in small group pull outs, individual tutoring or whole-class re-teaching.

At the end of each quarter and semester, students take common summative assessments of all material covered in the course up to that time. These assessment results are reviewed and analyzed in data review meetings. Additionally, in order to measure growth in the core skill areas of reading, writing and mathematics, all students will be assessed with the NWEA MAP assessment. This assessment is a nationally-normed assessment and aligned to the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards. Students take this assessment in the Fall, Winter and Spring and it measures growth on these skills. This data is analyzed by the data review teams, and is used as our common benchmark exam. All students take regular STEP assessments at six-week intervals to target specific reading skills for mastery. The cost of MAP and SETP is budgeted in the curriculum/resources lines of the startup and 3-year budgets. The breakdown of that section is explained in the assumptions document where MAP and STEP's specific costs are explained.

A.5.e Professional Development

Professional development is critical to the success of any school program. Staff at Phoenix Collegiate Academy Elementary is required to attend three weeks of professional development before the start of the school year. In this time, staff members create curricular components such as revised scope and sequences, end-of-course exams, unit plans and lesson plans. Staff also use this time to norm on behavioral expectations and operational procedures. Staff members support in the student and parent orientations and prepare for their first week of classes.

Further, within these first three weeks, staff meets with their supervisor and identifies areas of growth and areas of strength. Supervisors develop coaching and action plans around what the teachers want and need for growth. Further, supervisors develop a year-long PD calendar based on what the teachers identify as needs for the students and teachers on their campus.

Every Friday, school is released early and teachers and administrators attend professional development sessions. These sessions are based on the observed needs of the teachers from the school leaders' walkthroughs and observations, or on upcoming anticipated needs (an example would be a professional development session on how to support remediation of content of final exams.) In the week following the PD, school leaders are observing and monitoring teachers and having follow-up and monitoring conversations.

Throughout the school year, there are full-day Professional Development days where teachers work in grade level teams on cross-curricular collaboration or in content teams on data analysis and remediation planning. These days are informed by assessment data and observations. School leaders follow these days with feedback on written outputs, monitoring of remediation and class, data analysis of the next round of assessments, and class observations. Professional development days are included in the cost of salaries, so no further costs are budgeted.

Teachers are observed bi-weekly on a common rubric. Teachers receive a formal mid-year evaluation in November or December and a formal end-of-the-year evaluation in February or March. All teachers receive constant coaching because we know that teaching is an ever evolving practice. Together with the school leaders, teachers set ambitious goals for their own constant growth and the growth of all the students they serve.

On-going throughout the year, all staff participate in grade level team meetings that are collaborative and modeled after professional learning communities. All staff participates in content team meetings that are best practice sharing and collaborations for that content area to grow as educators. Finally, all staff attend weekly data meetings to work together to determine what the next steps are for student success across the whole school.

A.5.f Process for Improving

Data is critical to the improvement of the school as a whole. Every week teachers are dissecting data about their classrooms. Quarterly, teachers and school leaders are analyzing data deeply and developing action steps for remediation. Quarterly, administration and the central office staff analyze data to ensure resources and staffing are properly aligned to serve the needs of the students. Without the constant review of data, it is impossible to know if the direction we are moving in is best for student achievement.

In these reviews (mentioned above), data is reviewed on multiple levels. Firstly, grade-wide data is reviewed. Administration looks at mastery on specific standards, mastery on subjects as a whole, and general trends for areas of difficulty. Then, the data is looked at in different sub-groups. Gender, special-education status, ELL status, and race are all categories that the data is analyzed in. (We do not categorize for income-level because 97% of our students are Title I.) In this analysis, any group that is below the median is a group that is "red flagged" and new action steps will be created. Any group that is below the mastery goal is "yellow flagged" for a deeper look at the action steps and if they are effective for mastery of content.

One we have determined groups that are urgent, action steps are analyzed through these questions: Is the action step directly relating to the data and how? Is the action step being implemented with fidelity? Are there any skills or knowledge gaps for the teachers in implementing the action steps? And, is there a better action to be taken to address the group that is under-performing? As a group these questions are analyzed and evaluated. If it is determined a new action item is necessary, then the steps below are followed to ensure that step is implemented.

Once implemented, the administrative team will be assessing regularly to ensure it is effective. If any subgroups are failing they will note that data and make minor adjustments to improve. At the end of the quarter these data points will be reviewed by an academic committee and then new action steps created if there is a clear need.

The performance management plan will be reviewed and revised annually in May and will be adopted for the following school year at the next closest board meeting. If a new action step is recommended, that action step will be discussed with the designated "Responsible Party" and a deadline for action will be set. This will occur no later than the end of June. That person will take it to a committee of at least two others to discuss possible changes in the first two weeks of July. The ultimate decision of how to implement an action step will be reviewed by an academic team of one school leader, one teacher, and one network staff member. The recommendation will be written into the plan no later than the first of August.