Section 7 – Teacher Selection and Training

Teacher Selection and Training

The International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL) has published a large of body of research on best practices in K-12 online education. These iNACOL best practices will guide PIE-AZ's teacher recruitment, training, and ongoing professional development, and will be used as a foundational guide in the development of ongoing teacher training and professional development.

PMG's team has extensive experience and knowledge implementing highly successful research-based blended and online learning programs throughout the United States. The leadership team will recruit NCLB highly qualified staff in each content area with extensive online and blended teaching experience. Fifth Arrow's principal will ensure that all teachers are provided with training, coaching and ongoing professional development opportunities.

Because Fifth Arrow intends to serve a student population with extensive academic, social and emotional needs, PMG has developed a training program that ensures teachers are fully inducted into the program model and understand its specialized components. For two weeks prior to the start of each school year, PMG will conduct an induction program to develop teacher skills in working with the targeted population. Training topics will cover the online model, school structure, school culture and guiding principles, effective strategies for working with diverse populations (ELs and special education students), and developing and maintaining Individualized Learning Plans (ILP), among other topics. Additionally, novice teachers will be trained in effective communication techniques for online learning.

Supported by PMG and iNACOL resources, Fifth Arrow will institute a system of continuous professional development and monitoring for teachers and staff in an online learning environment. Professional development for teachers and staff will be conducted regularly through onsite trainings and off-site virtual labs (i.e. Go-To Training or Adobe Connect).

PMG's administration will recruit experienced online teaching staff using multiple recruiting sources, including but not limited to:

- Arizona Department of Education Employment Board
- Local Teacher Training Programs
  - Arizona State University
  - University of Phoenix
  - Rio Salado Community College Post-Baccalaureate Program
- Local job fairs
- Networking with highly experienced educational consultants in the Phoenix-metro area

Once the teaching staff is secured, Fifth Arrow will continue to secure a pool of experienced online adjunct teachers that represents all core area needs. As the online program develops, teachers that were recruited will be offered the opportunity to teach with the program. All teachers and staff will be provided comprehensive training on the LMS, SIS, and in blended and virtual teaching best practices.

The iNACOL guide *Online Teacher Support Programs: Mentoring and Coaching Models* will be used as a guide for the development and implementation of professional learning communities. Specifically, the INACOL publication *Research Committee Issues Brief: Examining Communication and Interaction in Online Teaching* (September 2009) will be used to inform these PLCs. Novice

teachers will also have access to similar publications that share best practices in effective online teaching.

All faculty will be trained and required to display competency in web-based course content and use of the LMS and SIS. Measures of competency will be developed using a rubric on which all faculty will be scored. This process is a safety measure to ensure that a faculty member's lack of technology fluency does not inhibit instruction, which can create a barrier to students' learning and overall academic success. Faculty members' levels of proficiency will be monitored during the initial orientation and new staff onboarding process. PIE-AZ is a member of the iNACOL, an organization that offers various professional development webinars in current best practices of online teaching and administration.

Additionally, PIE-AZ will recruit Phoenix area education leaders that have a proven track record of success in secondary online education. These leaders will be sought out from current postsecondary institutions that provide guidance, training, and professional development as well as high performing AOI Programs.