Comprehensive Program of Instruction

School Community:
Employ-Ability Unlimited, Inc. primarily serves students who live in and around the cities of west Phoenix, Peoria and Glendale, although some students travel from as far as Surprise and Buckeye. Our goal is to provide an alternative to the local district schools in the area, and as such we have no specific target population. However, at the high school level, many of our students have been unsuccessful in the traditional district school setting and respond well to the school's smaller, more personalized environment. Specific student demographics are as follows:

- 58% of the student population qualifies for free and reduced lunches
- 40% are Caucasian, 17% are black, 38% are Hispanic, and 2% are Asian
- approximately 18% of the students in attendance have IEPs, primarily for SLD, OHI, and/or Speech and Language deficits
- the ELL population is relatively small, at 4%

The community of employees working at the schools is diverse in background, expertise and years of experience. All instructional staff are highly qualified, and most are certified. Staff retention is high, and all are committed to continuous improvement efforts. Because the schools offer services other than academics (i.e. on-site individual and family counseling, extracurricular athletic and special interest activities, and afterschool support services), the staff have a wide range of expertise and training.

Educational Philosophy:
Employ-Ability Unlimited, Inc. believes that every classroom presents a unique community of learners that varies not only in abilities, but also in learning styles. We believe that every student has the potential to bring something unique and special to the community, and it is our responsibility to assist them in developing their potential by believing in them as capable individuals, with the ability to express their own opinions and nurture their own ideas.
Our role as educators is to give students the intellectual, social, and emotional tools they need to grow and develop throughout their lives, in a way that promotes a lifelong love of learning. To this end, we strive to teach to the needs of each child so that all can feel capable and successful. We want to present curriculum in a way that incorporates the interests of the students and makes learning relevant to their lives as much as possible. Through the use of cooperative learning, direct instruction, group discussion, projects, small group instruction, individual work, hands-on learning, and technology, our instructional techniques help students become active learners who are engaged in, and motivated by, their own learning.
We promote the idea that students and their parents are responsible partners in the school and classroom community. With students, we use strategies such as structure and procedures, positive discipline, character education, and community service to reinforce this concept. With parents, we provide numerous opportunities for active involvement in their child's academic programming and success, extracurricular activities, and school-wide social and educational activities that promote a sense of

community and belonging. In showing students and their families how they can directly impact learning, they gain confidence, perseverance, and independence.
Finally, we believe that school environments should be big enough to offer a diverse and comprehensive course of study, yet small enough to provide a sense of safety and community among all who participate. Students should feel a personal connection to their peers, teachers, and other staff, and should believe that the adults involved in their education care about them and want them to be successful. The size and appearance of a school's physical environment plays a key role in this effort, therefore campuses will not serve more than 500 students at one time.

Methods of Instruction: In order to meet the diverse needs of the students, the methods of instruction utilized varies based on student needs and learning styles. In the primary grades, hands on activities that promote academic gains as well as social and interpersonal skills are frequently utilized, along with daily centers, small group instruction, cooperative learning, and direct instruction. Music, dancing, and singing are incorporated into academic lessons, and visual aids and manipulatives are used on a regular basis. In the middle school grades, direct instruction and lecture become more prominent, however cooperative learning, group discussion, peer modeling, and teacher demonstration are also significant components. In high school, lecture with class discussion, teacher demonstration/modeling, and project-based instruction take precedence. For all grades, SMARTBoards are used on a regular basis to engage students in the learning process, and small group instruction for students who are identified as needing additional assistance is utilized as needed.
The student population at the schools is very diverse, in many ways, therefore teachers must be well-versed in a variety of instructional methods, and be willing and able to use them as needed. The over-reaching philosophy of the schools is to actively engage the students in their learning, therefore emphasis is placed on the instructional methods that reflect this focus, such as cooperative and project-based learning, incorporating technology, and lecture with group discussion.

Methods of Assessment: The assessment systems in place include:

1. Instructional staff use formative assessments throughout the school day and year, such as quizzes, homework, class work, student demonstrations and performances, teacher observations, and student/teacher conversations to determine the students' progress towards academic goals. Adjustments in instructional practices, including differentiated instruction, occur based on this data, and feedback is provided to the students and parents regarding the student's progress.
2. Summative assessments such as cumulative tests, projects, and portfolios are used by teachers to evaluate the students' grasp of the concept(s) taught. For grades 9-12, students contract for a specific grade in their core subjects, and if their performance does not meet the criteria needed to achieve the grade on their contract, the teacher and student develop an action plan for the student to meet his/her contract.
3. Galileo, an on-line assessment program, provides information to teachers on students' progress on grade-level specific state standards and preparation for

AIMS testing. It is given to all students within 3 weeks of enrollment, mid-year, and again at the end of the school year. Teachers use the data to drive instruction, making instructional and curriculum adjustments at both the classroom level and individual student level as needed to maintain the students' progress at expected levels.

4. For grades K-6 in reading, students are assessed using the DIBELS and Johns Basic Reading Inventory (10th Edition) comprehension assessments within 3 weeks of enrollment. Those scoring below grade level are referred for reading intervention services with the Literacy Specialist, which consists of daily small group instruction focused on increasing fluency and comprehension. Students are progress monitored every two weeks, and once they meet benchmark for their grade level two consecutive times, they are released from intervention services and monitored closely by their regular classroom teacher for ongoing progress.
5. The TABE test (Test of Adult Basic Education) is utilized with special education high school students to determine the general grade level range in which they are functioning. This data is used by the instructional staff to design an educational program and plan that meets each student's individual needs.
6. In grades 3-12, web-based Study Island is used to provide additional support to students as they prepare for the AIMS assessment. It allows teachers to assess students' progress on the state standards, and the assessment data helps teachers identify areas related to the state standards and AIMS test that require re-teaching, review, and or remediation.
7. AIMS testing is given in grades 3-8 and 10 at the end of each school year. Data is reviewed by all instructional staff and action plans that address areas of noted deficiency are developed and put into place for the following school year (for grades 2 and 9, this same process occurs based on the Stanford 10 results).
8. Beginning in SY 2012, students identified as behind grade level in math in grades 6-12 will receive intervention via a web-based, self-paced math curriculum that also assesses their progress on a regular basis and makes automatic adjustments in lessons to accommodate their readiness to learn.

Remediation Plan: The need for remediation is evaluated by the assigned educational team (aka Child Study Team) based on student performance on both formative and summative assessments. Upon the assigned teacher's request, a Child Study Team convenes to review the student's progress, attendance, behavior, and early interventions/differentiated instruction already tried in the regular classroom. Based on this information, an Individual Intervention Plan is developed and implemented by the assigned teacher and other team members as required. This Intervention Plan may include changes in instructional strategies, additional academic, social, and/or behavioral assistance, pull-out or push-in intervention services from another teacher, and other accommodations not usually used with other students. A second review of student progress that includes the student's parent/guardian is conducted after 3-4 weeks, and if little or no progress has been made, the Intervention plan is adjusted and

implemented for another 2-3 weeks. If the student continues to show little or no progress after this time, a referral for possible special education evaluation is made. Students who do not qualify for special education yet require remediation are offered the following:

- free tutoring with teachers before or after school hours
- small group and/or individual instruction during regular class time
- peer tutoring
- for grades 6-12, home access to Study Island, a web-based program designed to assist students in learning state standards and being successful on the AIMS test
- for grade 9-12, specialized elective classes that focus on remediating math and language arts skills
- beginning in SY 2012, a self-paced, student driven web-based instruction and support in math that is accessible at school or at home

Remediation services may be schedule through the Child Study team, classroom teacher, or guidance department, based on the student's needs and interest.

Promotion and Retention Plan: Grade level promotion occurs for students provided they meet the following criteria:

1. Have not missed more than 10% of the total school days (unless there is a documented 504 plan, unplanned emergent medical or family issue, and/or IEP that allows for more than a 10% absence rate).
2. For grades K-2, have scored at the "meets" level in at least 65% of the academic areas evaluated.
3. For grades 3-8, have received a cumulative GPA for the year of at least a 1.50 (out of a possible 4.0).
4. Effective with the 2012 school year, have scored at the "approaches" level or above on the AIMS reading test (3rd grade only, and provided they are not educated under an IEP that addresses the areas tested on the AIMS assessment).

Exceptions to the above may be made for students on IEPs, or if it is deemed inappropriate by the assigned Child Study Team to retain the student due to social and/or emotional concerns (i.e. the student has been previously retained and retaining again would put him/her two years behind), or if there is significant parent objection. In this instance, the parent must appeal the school's decision with the Governing Board, and Board's decision is final.

Class Size: Teacher to student ratios in classes are as follows:

- Kindergarten through 2nd grade: no greater than 1:22
- 3rd-8th grade: no greater than 1:26
- 9th-12th grade: no greater than 1:26

Class sizes are lower in the primary grades to allow for teachers to provide more focused instruction in the earlier stages of education, thus providing a more solid

foundation for ongoing academic success in higher grades. In addition, more space is needed to effectively implement academic centers and activity spaces utilized with these age groups. In grades 3-12, class sizes are limited as listed for two reasons: 1) to allow teachers to provide more individualized instruction and make it easier to provide stronger supervision and structure, and 2) due to their physical size, the classrooms cannot appropriately house more than 26 students and maintain an environment conducive to learning.