SKYVIEW SCHOOL
Succession Plan for the Corporate Board and Instructional Leadership Team

PART I: Succession plan for the Corporate Board.
As discussed earlier, members of Skyview School's Board of Directors serve two-year, staggered terms and have the option of renewal for additional one or two-year terms. Whenever possible, Board members end their terms and begin their terms at the start of the academic/ fiscal year on July 1. In this way, there is both an orderly, predictable turnover of Board members, as well as opportunities to build and train new Board members during the summer months, when personal and school obligations are fewer.

In general, Skyview School follows the principles of John Carver's 10 Policy Governance Ground Rules, which are essential Board of Director guidelines for non-profit organizations. To this end, Board member training consists of training in the provisions of the Open Meeting Law; managing dual and multiple relationships; Arizona Revised Statutes relating to governing Boards; Board structure; Board decision-making processes; a historical overview of Skyview School including its mission and vision; common problems and pitfalls with school governing boards; understanding the essentials of budget development and budget management; state and national regulatory compliance; training in the difference between governance and management; and personnel issues and laws relating to the recruitment, hiring, renewal, and dismissal of both exempt and non-exempt staff. Additionally, other important training issues are covered as well, including a review of the *Skyview School Policies and Procedures Manual*, which outlines additional areas of governance and compliance.

There are currently six members of Skyview School's Board of Directors. The current succession plan is as follows:

- **Board President Judy Sulltrop** is completing her second, two-year term on June 30th and the Board of Directors asked Judy to serve an additional, one-year term, which shall be completed by June 30th, 2011.
- **Board Vice-President Chrissy Shumaker** is completing her two-year term on June 30th, 2010.
- **Board Member Kathryn Miedema** will complete her two-year term on June 30th, 2011.
- **Board Member Warren Miller** is completing his two-year term on June 30th, 2010.
- **Board Member Wayne Regina** began his term on January 1st, 2010. According to Board policy, when a member is brought on outside of the normal beginning-of-year cycle of July 1st, her/ his term shall either be for 2+ years or 1+ years depending on whether that term began closer to the beginning of the replacement cycle of July 1st or after the half-way point in the year. As Dr. Regina's term began exactly halfway through the fiscal year, his term was designated as 2.5 years, with an expiration of service on June 30th, 2012.
- **Board Member Jason Whitten** is completing his term on June 30th, 2011.
- An orderly transition for the retiring two Board members is underway. For example, the Board of Directors and School Director have already identified and spoken with a teacher to serve as a staff member on the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors and the School Director are currently in the process of identifying prospective Board members from the alumni community, the parent community, and the local community.

As discussed previously, the Skyview School Board of Directors is a self-perpetuating Board that has the sole authority to identify, recruit, accept, and retain new Board members. To this end, the Board

works in close consultation with the School Director. Normally, retirement, resignation, and replacement of Board members is conducted in an orderly fashion, with rotating and staggered terms. When resignations and retirements come unexpectedly, usually due to personal life situations, the Board of Directors works closely with the School Director to replace that member or members. As the charter requires a minimum of four members of the Board of Directors, at no time can or does the Board of Directors function with less than four members. If a member wants to retire or resign and that would leave the Board with less than the required size, the Board of Directors does not accept that request to retire or resign until and unless a new member can be brought on to keep the Board of Directors at the minimum required number of four members.

Board recruitment is a collective and joint effort by Board members, in close consultation with the Director, to identify, recruit, and accept new Board members.

- The Skyview School Board of Directors is a self-perpetuating Board. As such, it is solely responsible for bring new members onto the Board and accepting the resignations of present Board members.
- Prospective new Board members are developed and recruited directly by the Board, with assistance of and consultation with the Director.
- The Board seeks collectively and jointly to recruit members that bring particular strengths and diversity to the Board (e.g. attorneys, accountants, educators, etc.). As a whole, the Board identifies potential individuals and a Board representation or Board team approaches each prospective new member. Prospective Board members receive a *Board Expectations* document detailing important aspects and responsibilities of Board membership. Board members are advised not to recruit Board members on their own without support of the entire Board and in consultation with the Director.
- Skyview School's charter states that the composition of the Board shall be between four and nine members, with parent representation. As such, the Board is comprised of external community members and internal community members.
- Skyview School's Board of Directors is a working Board, meaning that all Board members are expected to contribute to the smooth functioning of the Board and the school by coming prepared for meetings (having read all meeting material before hand), actively participating in Board matters during and between Board meetings, conducting themselves in a professional manner as representatives of Skyview School, and, to the extent possible, attending community events such as town halls, graduations, celebrations, festivals, etc.
- When a previously-identified prospective Board member accepts an invitation to join, he/she completes a *Board Nomination Form*. The Board President then presents the issue of membership to the entire Board for discussion at the next Board meeting.
- Individuals wishing to self-nominate to serve on the Board must receive sponsorship by a majority of Board members. To be placed on a Board agenda for consideration, the person must approach the Board President about consideration, receive a *Board Expectations* handout and complete a *Board Nomination form*, and obtain sponsor signatures from a majority of the Board members. This effort shall be coordinated through consultation with the Director. Failure to obtain a majority Board sponsorship will result in the self-nominee not being placed on a Board meeting agenda for consideration.

PART II: Succession Plan of the School's Instructional Leadership Team

Over our fourteen-year history, Skyview School has experienced some of its greatest successes with promoting from within. While all searches for open full-time teaching positions and the position of School Director are conducted through national searches, and while internal candidates are not always successful in these searches, the ones that are successful generally outperform those who were not trained in the philosophical and pedagogical approaches at Skyview School. To ensure that all newly hired teachers, whether they were internal or external candidates, are successful, Skyview School has established a four-tier mentoring program.

The first tier involves partnering the new teacher with a mentor within the same level (i.e., kindergarten, primary, intermediate, or middle school). The mentor teacher meets with the new teacher every Friday to provide assistance with curriculum development, guidance with instructional strategies, and feedback on classroom management, parent involvement, and assessment methods. The mentor teacher is also a resource for the new teacher on a daily basis as needed. The second tier involves the use of instructional teams led by instructional team leaders, who are founding teachers that have been with the school for the past fourteen years. At Skyview School there is a K-3 instructional team and a 4-8 instructional team that work towards aligning the curriculum vertically and ensuring that each level scaffolds seamlessly. The teams meet monthly and the instructional team leader facilitates training on the multiple intelligences; differentiated instruction; thematic, project-based curriculum; and guidance on the math, reading, and writing programs. The third tier involves the use of our senior teacher, who is also an instructional team leader who serves the role of curriculum coordinator. This senior teacher facilitates and ensures that there is a seamless K-8 program, provides mentoring to all the teachers as needed, and conducts in-service training. The fourth tier involves the use of the Director, who meets annually with all of the teachers to provide direction on their professional development plans. In addition, the Director provides specific feedback through formative and summative evaluations, works with newly hired teachers to train them in the areas of classroom management, community building, and other key areas outlined in the charter.

A prime example of Skyview School's successful mentoring program has been Ms. Kathryn Miedema. She began her career at Skyview School as a student teacher from the Master of Arts program at Prescott College. After her student teaching experience, where Kathryn demonstrated great success under the mentorship of one of our master teachers, she was hired part time to teach middle school science and 6th grade math. As Kathryn continued to demonstrate greater and greater success as a teacher and with students and parents, she was reassigned as an assistant teacher in the Intermediate 3-4 classroom, which was experiencing challenges with a teacher hired through a national search. At the end of the year, the Intermediate 3-4 teaching position became available and Kathryn was re-assigned full time in this classroom, where she continues to develop her teaching skills and capacities in this important classroom. In addition, as the Intermediate 3-4 teacher she plays a crucial role bridging the two instructional teams ensuring that there is a smooth transition from the primary grades to the intermediate grades.

Another strong example of Skyview School's mentoring program is the current School Director, Mr. Scott McCreery. He began his career at Skyview School as a work-study student from Prescott College. His background experience leading Outward Bound classes was clearly evident as he worked so effectively with students. The following year, Scott was hired as a teaching aide. Eventually, an unexpected opening occurred when a teacher who was scheduled to return reneged on his contract in

order to teach in Japan through the Department of Defense. This occurred only three weeks before the beginning of the school year. As Scott had recently completed his B.A. and was now a certified teacher, he was transferred into this teaching position, where he worked under the tutelage of Ms. Pam Robbins, one of our master teachers, and he excelled in this classroom for seven years. Scott first began as a junior teacher with the intermediate teaching team. When Pam was promoted to teaching the middle school, Scott became the senior and master teacher of the intermediate team. When the School Director position came open, Scott applied and was the successful candidate among a strong national pool. His experiences, competence, and determination demonstrated that Scott was the right person for the position of School Director, and his successful leadership is continually demonstrated day after day at Skyview School. These are two examples of how Skyview School develops and implements career opportunities for internal staff.

Skyview School has not adopted a merit pay system. Simply put, with commitment to a national search standard, a rigorous search process, high expectations for teacher performance, a solid formative and summative evaluation system, and no tenure system, Skyview School recruits and retains the best teachers that we can find. In addition, all teachers are required to undertake extensive and continuous professional development training in the form of workshops, advanced classes, and in-service programs. Our thorough formative and summative evaluation system strengthens teacher accountability and provides opportunities for growth and improvement. All teacher salaries are determined by an annually-adopted pay scale system approved by the Board of Directors, and success at Skyview allows for annual increases in pay, through this adopted system, when funds are available for pay increases. As such, Skyview School has never needed or adopted additional incentive pay systems and relies on both the intrinsic motivation of employees to excel as well as the formative and summative evaluation systems to identify and reward strengths, and provides specific opportunities to address identified challenge areas.

Professional development is constant at Skyview School. Opportunities include mentoring, instructional teams, in-service training, bi-monthly staff meetings, conferences, workshops, and classes designed to improve teacher training and performance. These opportunities are funded through a combination of sources, including funds through Proposition B Part II, Title II, fundraising, and Instructional Improvement Fund money. In addition, all teachers are required to remain current in their fields, especially regarding the delivery of multiple intelligences-based best practice teaching methods and approaches. Finally, all teachers are required to obtain the necessary certifications beyond that of a classroom teacher, including SEI certification for all instructional staff and Early Childhood endorsements for the kindergarten teachers.

All hiring is completed through standards identified through No Child Left Behind and the requirements of our charter contract. As such, all teachers are certified and meet the criteria for highly qualified. In addition, all teacher aides/ paraprofessionals have either two years of college or have passed the required exam to receive certificates as paraprofessionals. While our School Director does not have an administrative credential, he has a professional development plan to complete his Masters degree and receive an administrative credential. There is no requirement, though, through either our charter or through NCLB that a charter school Director possess an administrative credential. Nonetheless, that is the standard the Board of Directors adopted for him.

The *Skyview School Policy and Procedures Manual* outlines all hiring procedures. For example, the Board of Directors approves a new teaching or School Director hire and the School Director assembles a

search committee using the requirements outlined in the manual. (In the event that the hire is for the School Director, the Board President performs all of the School Director's duties noted in this section.) There are clear search guidelines that the committees must follow to ensure legal compliance and due diligence. The School Director is a part of each search committee, and there is representation by a Board member, staff member, and parent. All teacher candidates must provide a teaching demonstration to students and for the search committee. As these searches are national, appropriate resources are allocated for national advertisement. These resources are a part of the annual budget, which assumes and funds two national searches annually. Fortunately, there are currently many opportunities to advertise nationally through free websites at colleges, universities, professional organizations such as Expeditionary Learning Schools and the Coalition of Essential Schools, and even the Department of Education in Arizona. With the advent of the digital age, national advertising is less costly, while reaching a broader professional audience.

These succession plans guarantee continuity of quality leadership at Skyview School into the foreseeable future.