Performance Management Plan Narrative

Sequoia Charter Elementary School

K-6

Sequoia Charter - Elementary School (K - 6)

Sequoia Elementary Schools' mission is "*To prepare young people to become lifelong learners and positive contributors to society*".

Historical Information

Sequoia Elementary School is registered under the Sequoia Charter. The elementary program is listed as Sequoia Elementary with the Arizona Charter School Boards. The following history traces Sequoia Elementary from the current school year back seven years.

From 2004 to 2012, Sequoia Charter evolved from one principal over both schools (elementary and high school) to two principals, one for each school. We currently have an assistant principal at both schools (high school and elementary). Sequoia moved to an assistant principal model in order to build additional leadership capacity. This also allowed the principals the time to become more responsive to the changing demographics at each site.

- In 2004-2005 Sequoia Elementary had 385 students the combined population of the elementary and high school was 800 students with one principal.
- The enrollment for the elementary school dropped to 342 in 2005-2006.
- At this time, it was decided that there would be a separate principal for Sequoia Elementary and Sequoia Secondary.
- There was an assistant principal appointed at the start of 2006-2007.
- In December of that school year, the principal left Sequoia Elementary and the Secondary principal became the principal of Sequoia Elementary.
- The next two school years, 2007-2009, were consistent, with the same principal and assistant principal.
- At the start of 2009-2010, the assistant principal (Amy Fraser) became principal. She remains the principal.
- Enrollment is at its highest number of students ever in grades kindergarten through sixth (400+).

In the intervening years from 2004 to 2012 the demographics of our school changed dramatically from a predominately Caucasian middle income environment to a very high free and reduced lunch environment with a majority of the families being Hispanic. This change required the school to become more Hispanic friendly and the reach out to our new families and intentionally be more welcoming.

Our efforts included:

- Offering free English classes two nights a week
- Providing translators
- Extended parent/student activities (i.e., reading under the stars).

To cope with this cultural change we have:

- Increased emphasis on high expectations for student success.
- Increased professional development
- Relevant and timely data collection
- Focused our analysis of data to drive instructional strategies.
- Created outcome based professional development
- Established accountability structures for students
- Redefined and implemented supervision and evaluation protocols to ensure accountability for teachers and principals.

Current School Year

Demographics:

- Currently the school has an enrollment of 423 students.

- Twenty (20) percent are English Language Learners (ELL), primarily Spanish speakers

- 83% of Sequoia Elementary School's students participate in the free and reduced lunch program.

Enrollment Summary for Sequoia Charter School (K-6)

Grade Level	TOTAL IN GRADE	Asian/Pacific Islander	Black/ African American	Hispanic/ Latino	American Indian	White	Unclassified
0	65 35 / 30	0 0 / 0	6 2 / 4	35 21 / 14	2 1 / 1	22 11 / 11	0 0 / 0
1	70 25 / 45	1 0 / 1	7 4 / 3	34 15 / 19	3 0 / 3	25 6 / 19	0 0 / 0
2	67 33 / 34	2 1 / 1	3 0 / 3	34 17 / 17	6 4 / 2	22 11 / 11	0 0 / 0
3	58 32 / 26	0 0 / 0	2 2 / 0	37 17 / 20	1 1 / 0	18 12 / 6	0 0 / 0
4	53 32 / 21	1 1 / 0	4 3 / 1	28 20 / 8	2 1 / 1	18 7 / 11	0 0 / 0
5	54 30 / 24	2 1 / 1	2 1 / 1	30 18 / 12	1 0 / 1	19 10 / 9	0 0 / 0
6	56 35 / 21	0 0 / 0	3 2 / 1	33 18 / 15	2 1 / 1	18 14 / 4	0 0 / 0
TOTAL	423 222 / 201	6 3 / 3	27 14 / 13	231 126 / 105	17 8 / 9	142 71 / 71	0 0 / 0

Programs:

Sequoia Elementary is a Title I school committed to providing high-quality instruction and intervention matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals and applying student response data to important education decisions. Teachers and principal are held accountable for the academic improvement of these children. The level of "risk", as defined by DIBELs is expected to decrease significantly and that there are very frequent meetings to ensure there is appropriate intervention.

Curriculum - Language Arts:

- There is a policy that requires all teachers to construct a curriculum map and provide evidence that it is being used through the school year.
- Teachers are expected to make notes on their curriculum maps regarding how they might provide better **learning**.
- Furthermore, the principal is expected to review the curriculum maps on a regular basis with the teacher (to ensure the map is actually being used). Teachers, principals and assistant superintendents worked in groups to construct the curriculum maps. There has been a tremendous effort to create a common format and we are currently looking at placing our collective efforts on line so all teachers within our system can take advantage of the work and share comments.
- Kindergarten through 2nd grade have implemented the Superkids program published by The Rowland Reading Foundation.
- Superkids is aligned to the Common Core State Standards for K-2. It is built on systematic phonics, and balances all five essential elements of reading, integrates reading, writing, spelling, and grammar.
- Third grade through 6th grade will be starting the process of implementing the Common Core Standards using the McMillan- McGraw Hill Treasures series which is a research based, comprehensive Reading Language Arts program. It has high quality literature coupled with explicit instruction and ample practice ensures that students grow as life-long readers and writers.
- Instructional material adoptions must be agreed upon by the committee assigned and the principal.
- All teachers have been very involved in un-wrapping the common core standards, reviewing cross-walks to the current standards and plan to make the transition to common core standards over the next 18 months.
- The district level PLC's focuses on establishing common formative assessments and at the school level the PLC's will focus on the implementation of the common core standards.
- It is also the policy of the school to require all teachers to have active word walls and that each teacher is expected to emphasize academic language.
- There is a policy that all teachers are required to have current lesson plans that follows the lesson format the school has adopted.

Professional Development

Five years ago, before the start of the school year, we would have the teachers respond to a survey asking them to identify their skill level in a large number of educational categories. In reality, it was a self-assessment. Given the fact that many of the teachers appear to have over-estimated their skill sets we decided the following year to give every teacher a test that was used previously in a teacher prep program. The results were dramatically different. Since the information gathered indicated significant needs we decided that we would do the following to address our professional development needs:

1. Training for all new teachers on basic programs, Dibels, Dora, Fast Math, etc.
2. Have teachers participate in the on-line Texas Reading Academy.
3. Training for those who need a "refresher"; (example would be Dibels).
4. Training was provided for any new programs prior to implementation.

We then evolved to a more useable approach in identifying the professional development needs, as follows:

1. The teacher would be asked what is their greatest professional needs
2. Were there any outstanding formal educational needs for the teacher identified during supervision and evaluation?
3. What does the data we gathered reflect with regards to reading, writing and math?

This data included our own formative and summative assessments (Dibels, DORA, and Fast Math) and AIMS data.

We then created professional learning communities based on the data we gathered. This data guides the PLC days at district and the local level. We continue to have workshops from our Instructional Support Group. We also continue to participate in ADE workshops in a selective manner with the PLC and the principal working together to ensure the professional development needs have been identified and are being met by the workshops selected.

With regards to our Instructional Support Group, our school has enjoyed math coaches, reading coaches, literacy support groups, consultants have work with our staff and very importantly, the principal and assistant superintendent work as mentors with ALL of the teachers. It should be noted that both the principal and the assistant superintendent are expected to spend a majority of their time working with teachers.

Math:

Math Teachers at Sequoia Elementary use the scope and sequence that is provided by Fast Math when making lesson plans. Fast Math is highly correlated to the AIMs and represents Sequoia's effort to ensure the teachers are always informed of any changes to state math standards.

Comments on the Reliability and Correlation between Fast Math and AIMS

We first looked at the FAST MATH data scores at the end of 2009-2010. We had up to four benchmark scores for each math student grades 3-12 and a corresponding Aims Math Score. We expected that the third Benchmark Score would be most highly correlated with Aims and as an independent variable it was highly and significantly correlated.

A derived composite score averaging the performance of a student across each of the benchmarks taken throughout the school year (whether 1 or up to 4) was actually the measure that had *the highest correlation (r=.839) with a students subsequent AIMS score and was significant at a .01 confidence interval level. This process was repeated again at the end of the 2010-2011 school year with similar results. The two year correlation is r=.797 at a .01 confidence interval level.*

Within Fast Math, there are five different questions for every State Standard in Math. These assessments are both formative and summative. It confirms learning and specific areas of need. All Math Standards are identified as essential or not. Teachers are required to teach students to demonstrate proficiency by scoring 80% or better on each assessment of each standard.

Prior to the current school year, Sequoia Elementary did not adopt any particular math text book. There had been a variety of math text books used. Teachers and staff taught the Arizona State Standards using resources from the internet, commercial books, and any materials that addressed the scope and sequence of Fast Math (State Standards). At the beginning of the 2011-2012 school year, we began using the Singapore Math program. Singapore math devotes more time to fewer topics, to ensure that children master the material through detailed instruction, questions, problem solving, and visual and hands-on aids like blocks, cards and bar charts. Ideally, they do not move on until they have thoroughly learned a topic. Slowing down the learning

process gives students a solid math foundation upon which to build increasingly complex skills, and makes it less likely that they will forget and have to be re-taught the same thing in later years. It should be note that the bench mark scores in math in the current year are significantly higher than previously. In addition to the adoption of Singapore Math, all teachers are now required to submit an electronic progress report each week to the principal with regards to each student's current week and year-to-date progress by standard.

Response to Instruction/Intervention (RTI)

Sequoia Elementary follows the RTI. The rigorous implementation of RTI includes a combination of high quality, culturally and linguistically responsive instruction; assessment; and evidence-based intervention. Comprehensive RTI implementation will contribute to more meaningful identification of learning and behavioral problems, improve instructional quality, provide all students with the best opportunities to succeed in school, and assist with the identification of learning disabilities and other disabilities.

Our Response to Intervention team includes the following staff:

1. Principal: Provides a common vision for data-based instructional decision making, provides RTI training for staff to support the RTI process, ensures implementation of intervention support and documentation, communicates with parents regarding the RTI process, regularly meets with the Student Study Team (SST) to review student data of students in the RTI process.
2. Title I teachers: Provide information about supplemental instruction; collect data based on interventions; meets with classroom teachers to review student progress; keep data based on interventions; charts data.
3. Classroom/Specials Teachers: Provide information about core curriculum; collect data based on interventions; meets with appropriate staff to review student progress; keeps data based on interventions; charts data.
4. Parents: Provide developmental and social history of the child.

The RTI team meets bi-weekly to discuss student progress and review student data. These meetings are led by the Principal. Meetings are held with the team (others joining as needed) to review student data and progress in interventions. Student data is reviewed to identify if students are making progress in the intervention group or if the intervention needs to be revised. The team also identifies professional development needs and resources.

The following are data source(s) and the data management system(s) used to summarize data at each tier for language arts, mathematics, and behavior:

Baseline data: Gathered at the beginning of the school year and includes Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) benchmark, the district Focus on Arizona Standards Test (FAST) math benchmark assessment, Reading comprehension (DORA) and the 6 traits writing assessment. In addition, the team reviews Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) and Stanford 10 scores from the prior year, and curriculum assessments from school adopted curriculum.

Progress Monitoring: Gathered monthly during the school year and includes Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and the district Focus on Arizona Standards Test (FAST) math assessments.

Mid-Year Data: Gathered mid point of the school year and includes Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) benchmark, the district Focus on Arizona Standards Test (FAST) math benchmark assessment, and the 6 traits writing assessment.

End-of-Year Data: Gathered at the beginning of the school year and includes Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) benchmark, the district Focus on Arizona Standards Test (FAST) math benchmark assessment, and the 6 traits writing assessment. The team will review curriculum assessments from school adopted curriculum and ff applicable, will also review the current years AIMS and Stanford 10 data.

Behavior Data: Student referrals are input into Power School, the district-wide student data base program. Reports can be run and printed to gather information on students. Implementation of the Social Curriculum and behavior management will be on-going.

English Language Learners (ELL) Program:

Sequoia Elementary is committed to ensuring that all of our students, including those who are not yet fluent in English, receive the best education possible. All school-aged English language learners (ELLs) are eligible for support to help them become fluent English speakers. Our self contained and mainstream programs that serve limited English proficient students are based on sound educational theory, are carried out with adequate, qualified staff and materials, and are effective in helping students learn English. All ELL classrooms provide the following:

- Instruction is done in English;
- When possible, the child's primary language is used to clarify instruction;
- English is taught through reading, language arts, math, science, and social studies;
- There is a strong English language development (ELD) component in every lesson;
- The acquisition of English takes place in a structured, non-threatening environment in which students feel comfortable taking risks; and
- Lessons include controlled vocabulary while students gradually acquire the necessary language skills to succeed academically and become lifelong learners.

How we meet the needs of English language learners:

- We have increased the capacity of programs for English language learners (ELLs).
- We offering weekly night parent support classes.
- We are preparing more teachers to effectively teach our English language learners through professional development.
- We are identifying and purchasing appropriate materials to better serve English language learners.
- We are working to create and maintain a welcoming school climate for English language learners.

Kindergarten through 1st grade Early Literacy Professional Learning Community PLC).

The K/1 PLC meets weekly and is led by the lead teacher. The meetings include the following activities: review RTI process, review testing schedules, discuss professional development needs of the staff, evaluation of curriculum expectations, evaluation of what is working well, reporting to Principal what teachers may need support in to achieve maximum student growth.

Supervision and Evaluation Program

The primary goal (intention) of the teacher support program used by the Sequoia Elementary administration team will be to help new and existing teachers move through Stages 1 and 2 as quickly as possible through the Professional Grade Model (see attached documentation) for the supervision and evaluation of teachers and principals. Sequoia feels that without mentoring and support teachers may struggle with personal concerns and strive to lead by asserting their authority. In addition, teachers may seek advice and help from successful teachers in our programs and attempt to moderate their programs and approach without regard to learning and personal styles and traits that may be a factor in the success of the teacher or principal that they are seeking assistance from.

Since 2009, all teachers have created or are in the process of creating and utilizing a curriculum map in his/her core subject(s). The purpose of the Sequoia Curriculum Mapping Project (SCMP) is to create a "BluePrint" for each subject and teacher that aligns instructional plans, assessments and teaching tools with the state standards. The curriculum map is an ever evolving document that helps teachers translate essential standards into their day-to-day instructional planning and is a working tool that they can utilize to implement, assess, and revise their instructional practices. In order to provide the best education for their students each teacher will create or revise a curriculum map and begin utilizing it according to our policy.

Sequoia Elementary Review of AIMS Data, 2007-2011

Sequoia Elementary has met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) four out of the last five school years. Last year, Sequoia Elementary did not meet AYP in the area of math in fourth and sixth grades. However, we did make AYP in all other areas and grades. During the current school year, we have already made drastic improvements in the area of math in grades 3-6, as measured by our district benchmarks. These benchmarks have been an accurate indicator of how are students will do on the AIMS test.

Benchmark Performances in Math (See Math Benchmark Data Charts)

Sequoia Elementary recently received our math scores from the third district math benchmark and our students performed higher than they ever have. We have proven that our district math benchmark is correlated within approximately 80% to our student performance on the AIMS. With the data we received, I am confident we will make AYP in all grade levels during the 2011-2012 school year. This confidence comes from our commitment to school based professional learning communities. This project was initiated last year and is supported by the district level team that supports the enhanced academic programs at our school. For the last seven years, the school has been able to identify every state standard each student is proficient in. The principal has been able to not only track student performance by each State Standard, but also can measure the level of improvement from the beginning of the year and how it compares with the other three benchmarks. This means that the principal can determine which teachers are the most effective and who are the least effective by measuring the difference of the mean scores of each benchmark and then rank the teachers according to academic effectiveness.

The following is the school's most recent (February, 2012) 3rd through 6th grade math benchmark data class median percent:

Benchmark Results in Math for grade 3 to 6 for 2011 – 2012

Comparing February Results with Year-end Goals

Class	**February Benchmark Median** **Percentage**	**Median Goal for May, 2012** **Percentage**
3A	76	77
3B	80	77
4A	76	82
4B	63	82
5A	73	73
5B	75	73
6A	73	77
6B	62	77

Please note that the February Benchmarks for most of the grades are very close to the end of year goals.

Data Reporting for this Narrative (Commentary follows Graphs)

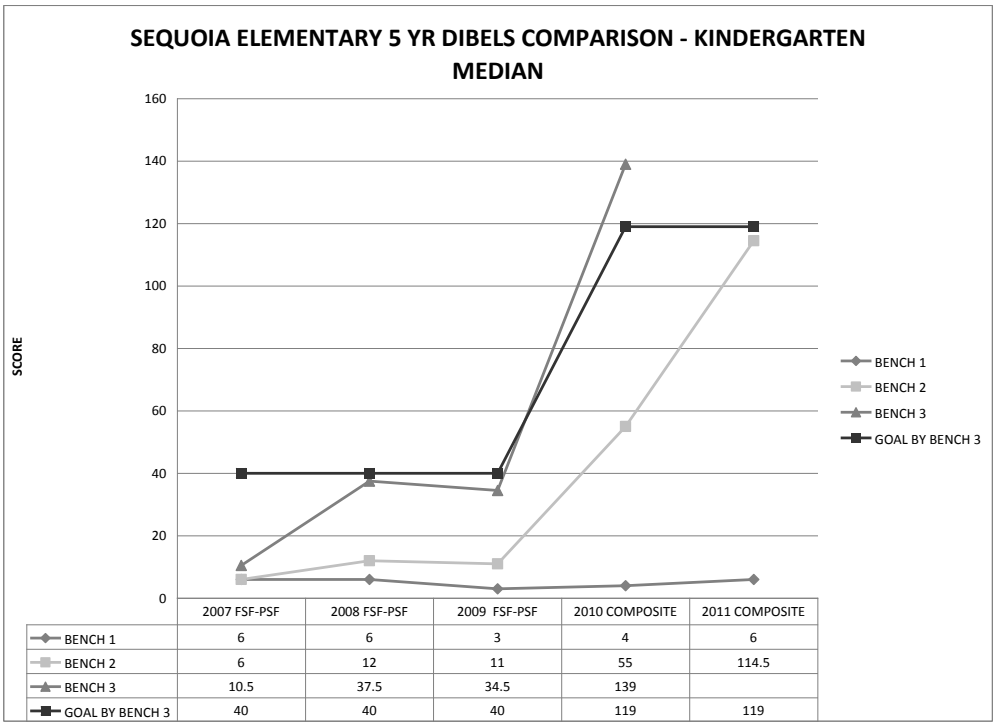
The following abbreviations are used in the DIBELS segment of this report.

FSF: First/Initial Sound Fluency
PSF: Phoneme Segmentation Fluency
NWR: Correct Letter Sounds/Words Read
DORF: Words Correct per Minute
Composite: OVERALL Score Available with the DIBELS Next test since 2010

Note: Benchmark 3 for 2011 has not been given as of this date.

SEQUOIA ELEMENTARY					
KINDERGARTEN					
	2007 FSF-PSF	2008 FSF-PSF	2009 FSF-PSF	2010 COMPOSITE	2011 COMPOSITE
BENCH 1	6	6	3	4	6
BENCH 2	6	12	11	55	114.5
BENCH 3	10.5	37.5	34.5	139	
GOAL BY BENCH 3	40	40	40	119	119
GRADE 1					
	2007 NWR	2008 NWR	2009 NWR	2010 COMPOSITE	2011 COMPOSITE
BENCH 1	33	22	26.5	104.5	117
BENCH 2	51	45	48	96	125.5
BENCH 3	61	70.5	59	155	
GOAL BY BENCH 3	58	58	58	155	155
GRADE 2					
	2007 DORF	2008 DORF	2009 DORF	2010 COMPOSITE	2011 COMPOSITE
BENCH 1	37	41	38	183.5	163.5
BENCH 2	70	79.5	77	223	207.5
BENCH 3	85.5	102	95	282.5	
GOAL BY BENCH 3	87	87	87	283	283

GRADE 3					
	2007 DORF	2008 DORF	2009 DORF	2010 COMPOSITE	2011 COMPOSITE
BENCH 1	57	65	73	219	223
BENCH 2	79	81.5	82	281	321.5
BENCH 3	108	105	100	355	
GOAL BY BENCH 3	100	100	100	330	330
GRADE 4					
	2007 DORF	2008 DORF	2009 DORF	2010 COMPOSITE	2011 COMPOSITE
BENCH 1	78	92	87	274	332.5
BENCH 2	105	113	105	344.5	364.5
BENCH 3	115.5	113	120.5	411	
GOAL BY BENCH 3	115	115	115	391	391
GRADE 5					
	2007 DORF	2008 DORF	2009 DORF	2010 COMPOSITE	2011 COMPOSITE
BENCH 1	108	107	104	282.5	351
BENCH 2	119	118	121	383	386.5
BENCH 3	130	123	130	461	
GOAL BY BENCH 3	130	130	130	415	415
GRADE 6					
	2007 DORF	2008 DORF	2009 DORF	2010 COMPOSITE	2011 COMPOSITE
BENCH 1	107	111	117.5	384	441
BENCH 2	103.5	122	128	368	481
BENCH 3	113	136	133	459	
GOAL BY BENCH 3	120	120	1 20	380	380



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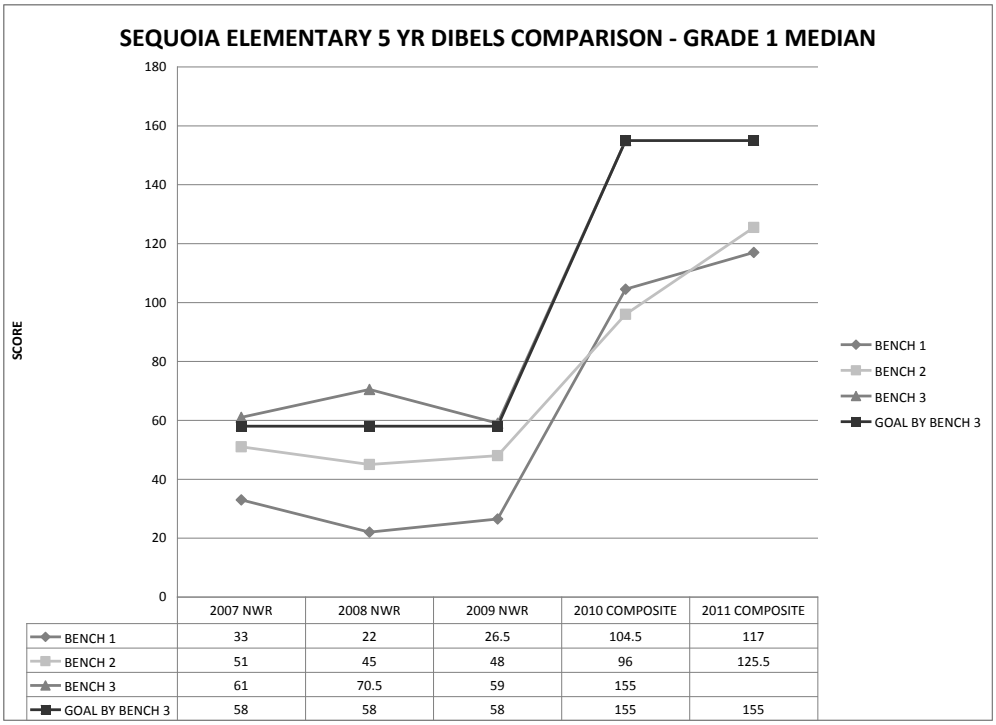

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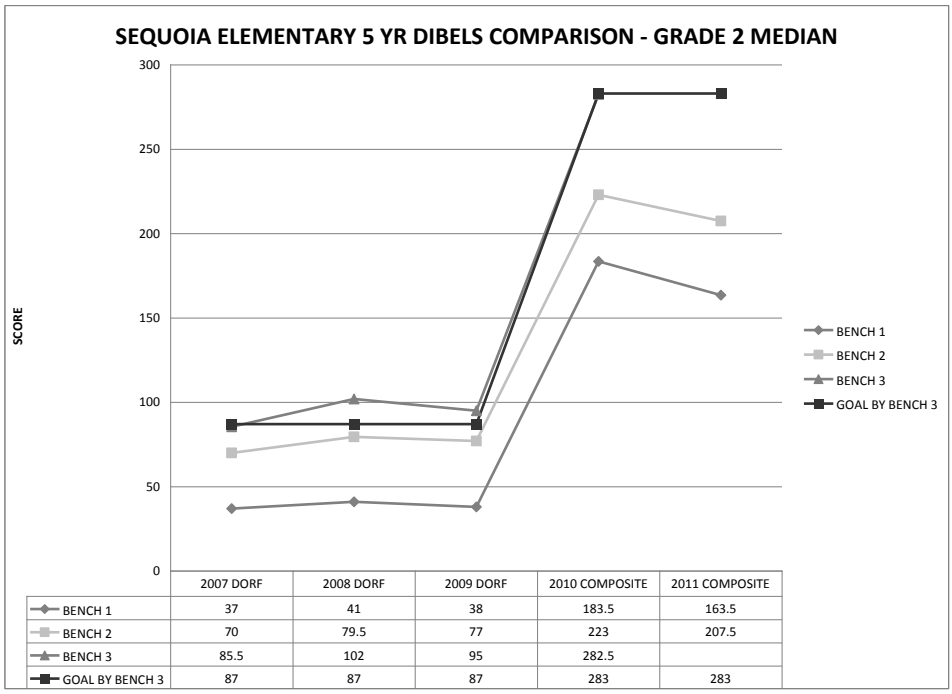

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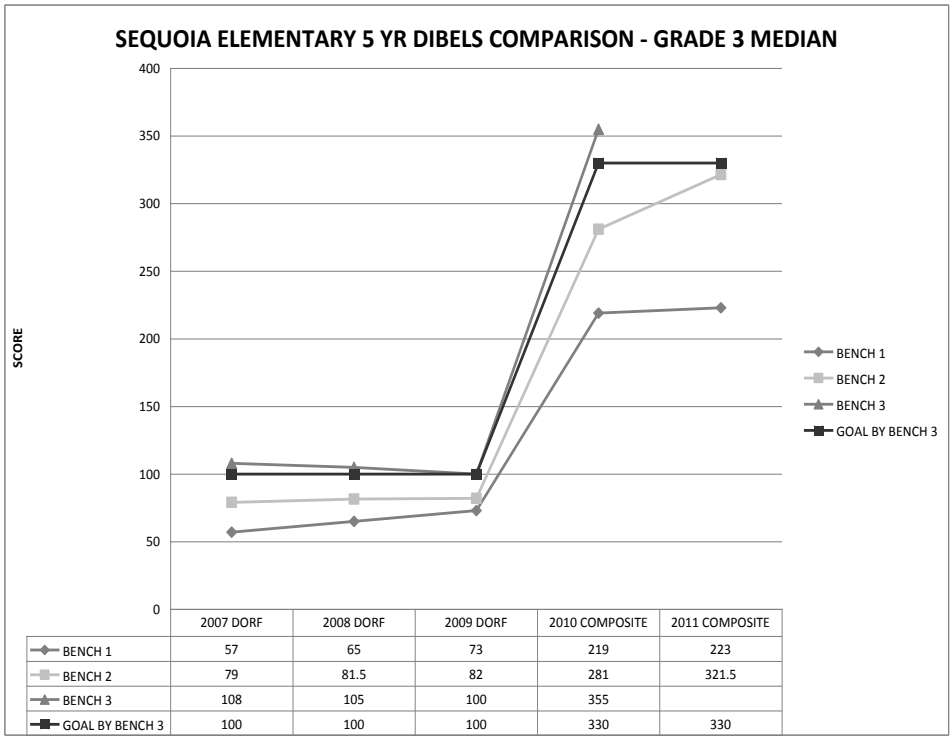

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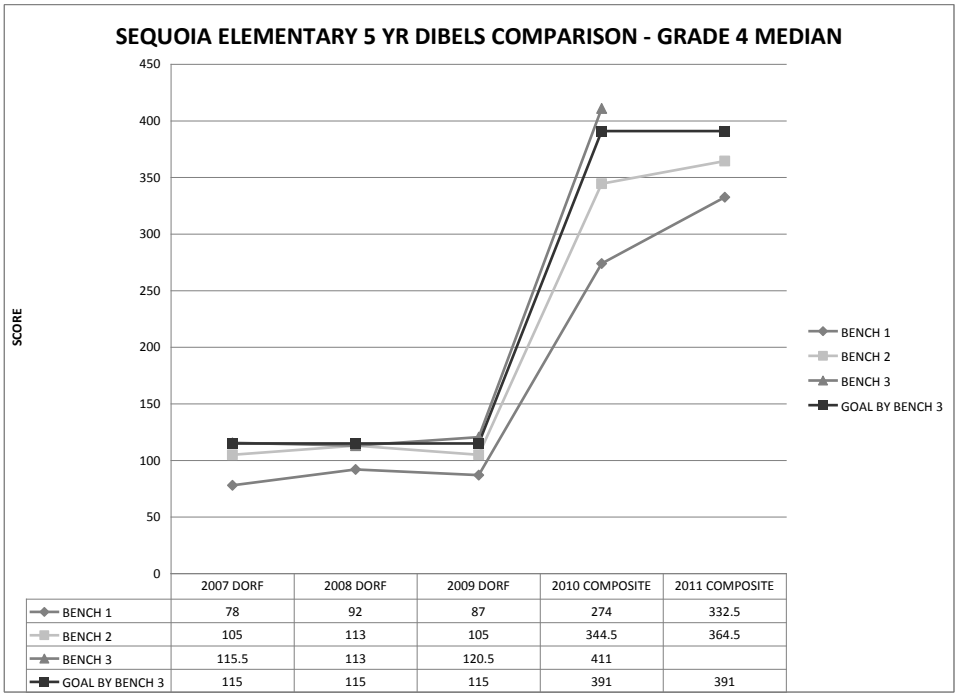

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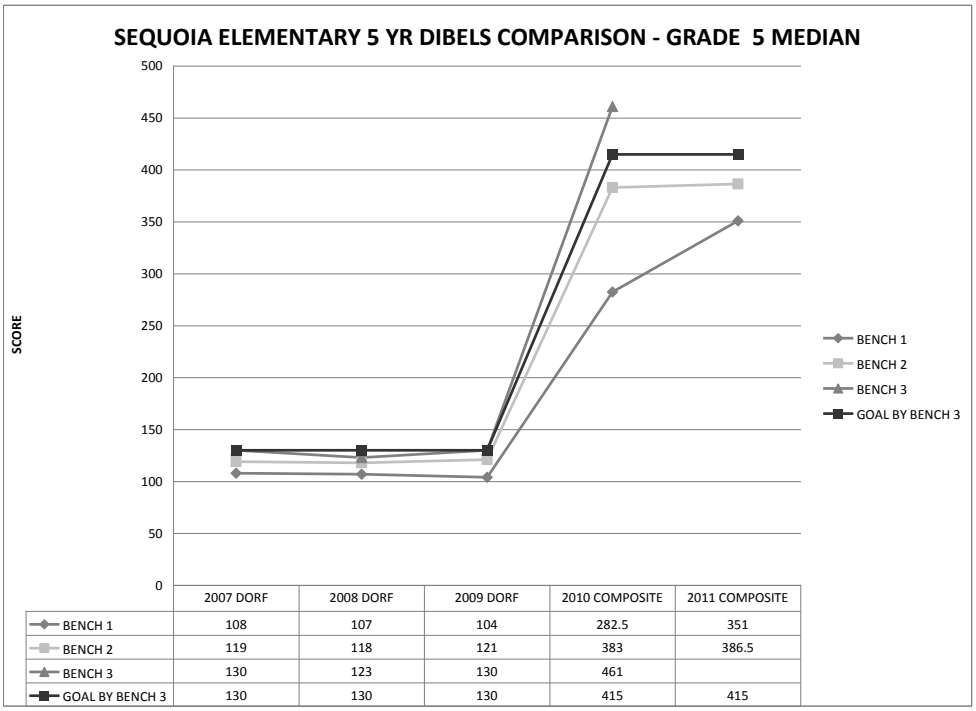

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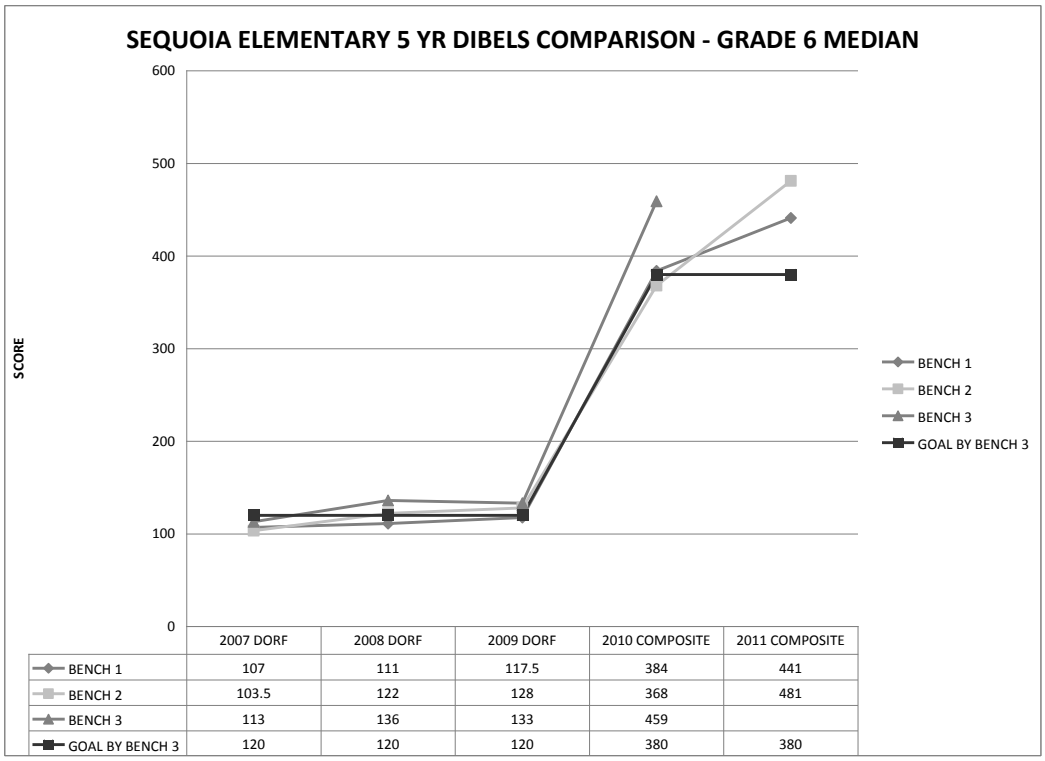

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GOAL BY BENCH 3	120	120	120	380	380

The Dibels Data reflects our growth in Reading during the past three years as these graphs graphically illustrate. Our student growth is a direct result of our improved performance.

DIBELS graphs:

1. Kindergarten FSF: Note exceed grade level in 2010 .
2. Kindergarten expected to exceed grade level in 2011 -2012 (please note results from 2nd benchmark).
3. 1st grade NWR (non-sense word fluency) - exceeded grade level every year. Expect to exceed grade level for 2011 – 2012.
4. 2nd grade – DORF Word fluency per minute; met or exceeded grade level for last 4 years.
5. 3rd grade – DORF (word fluency per min.) met or exceed grade level for last 4 years. Expect to exceed grade level for 2011 – 2012.
6. 4th grade – DORF Made grade level the last two years; the current year better than last year; note 2nd benchmark last year 344.5 and this year 364.5, a very significant improvement.

7. 5th grade – DORF, made grade level 4 out of the last 5 years. The current year is significantly better than last year; this year projected to exceed grade level.

8. 6th grade – DORF, made grade level 4 out of the last 5 years. The current year is significantly better than last year; this year projected to exceed grade level.

The school uses all of the DIBELS data, reading inventory data, DORA data (reading comprehension and AIMS data to track trends, determine where teachers need help, etc. Teams meet regular to discuss progress and possible instructional strategies that may be appropriate for that given child. A great deal of intervention is planned each week; we have a regular intervention schedule.

Benchmark Data from Fast Math (Sequoia Proprietary Program for Math)

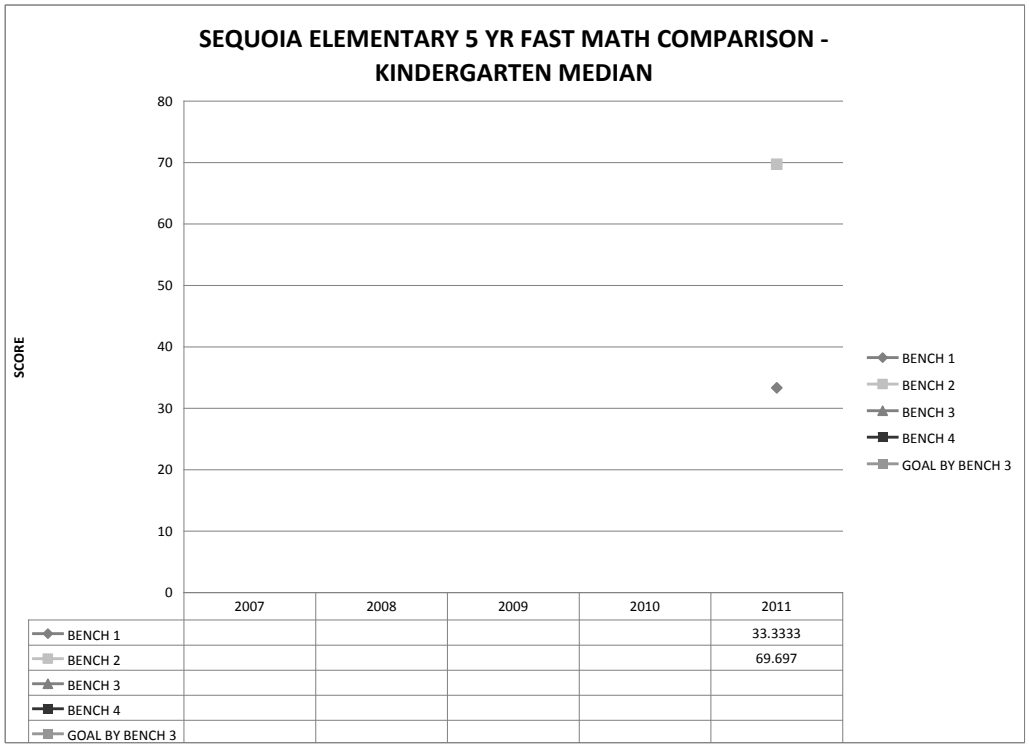
(Kindergarten through 2nd Grade added in 2011.)

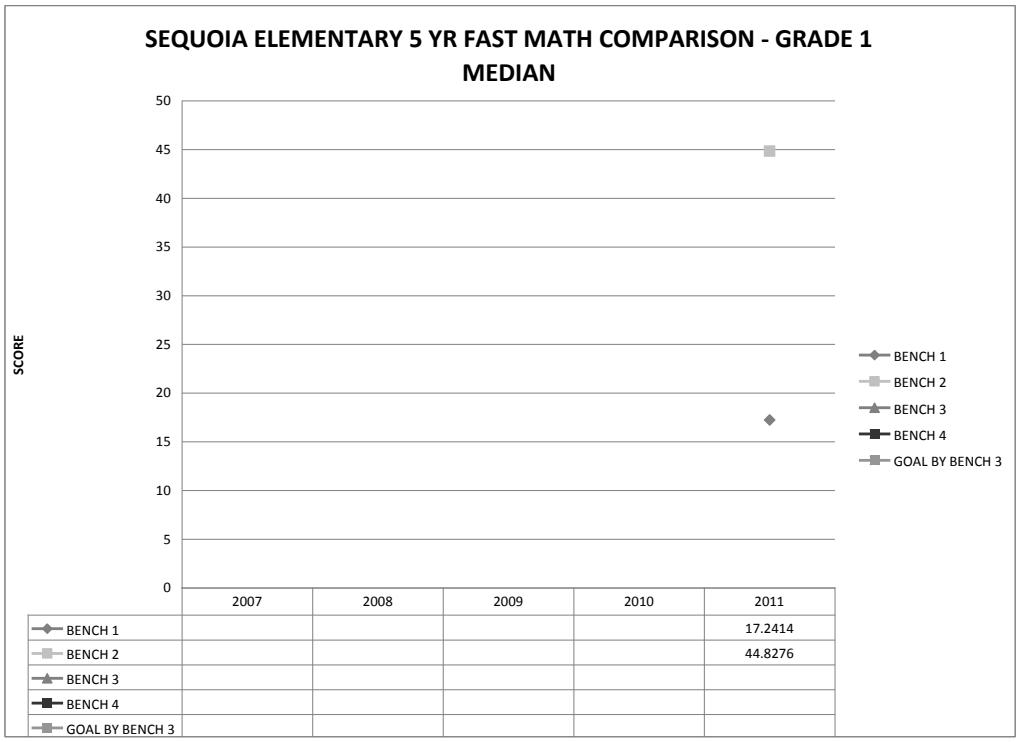
SEQUOIA CHARTER					
KINDERGARTEN					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
BENCH 1					33.3333
BENCH 2					69.697
BENCH 3					
BENCH 4					
GOAL BY BENCH 3					
GRADE 1					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
BENCH 1					17.2414
BENCH 2					44.8276
BENCH 3					
BENCH 4					
GOAL BY BENCH 3					
GRADE 2					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
BENCH 1					31.0345
BENCH 2					58.6207
BENCH 3					
BENCH 4					
GOAL BY BENCH 3					

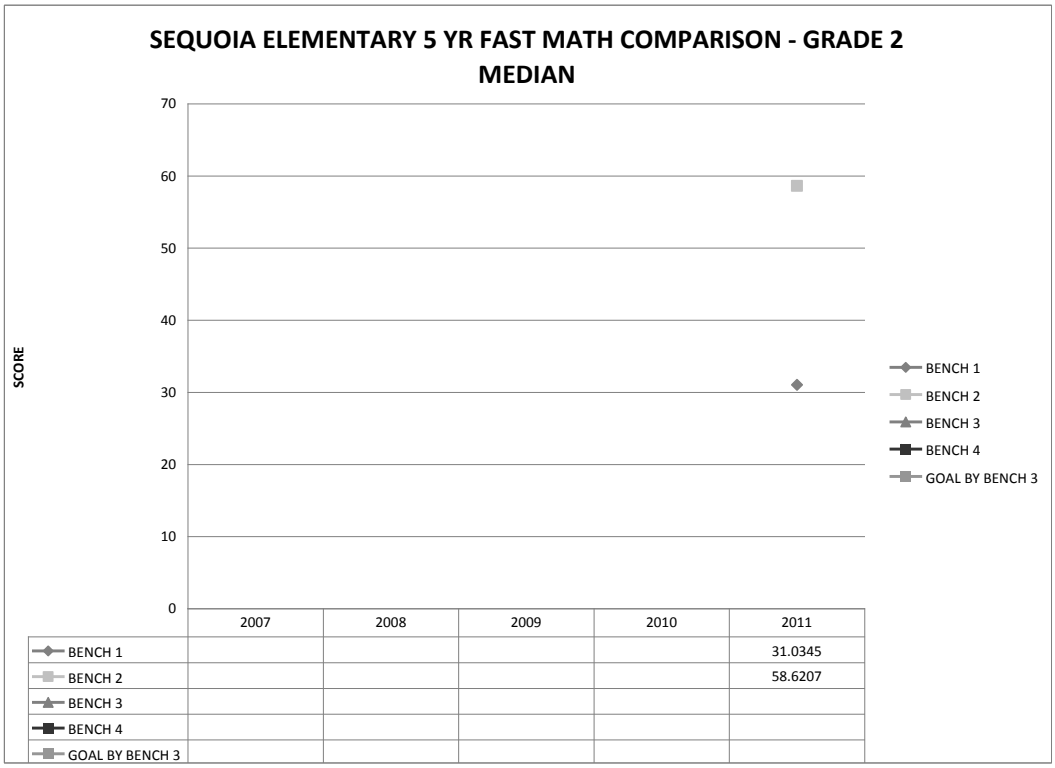
GRADE 3					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
BENCH 1			38	40	44
BENCH 2			58	51	63
BENCH 3			74	68	
BENCH 4			79	76	
GOAL BY BENCH 3	72	72	72	72	72
GRADE 4					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
BENCH 1			43	41.6667	47.5
BENCH 2			55	58.335	61.6667
BENCH 3			70	63	
BENCH 4			72	70	
GOAL BY BENCH 3	70	70	70	70	70
GRADE 5					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
BENCH 1			34	39.165	41.6667
BENCH 2			50	57	60
BENCH 3			45	70.835	
BENCH 4			55	75	
GOAL BY BENCH 3	64	64	64	64	64

GRADE 6					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
BENCH 1			39	36.67	45
BENCH 2			50	43.33	57.5
BENCH 3			50	51.67	
BENCH 4			55	57.5	
GOAL BY BENCH 3	61	61	61	61	61
GRADE 7					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
BENCH 1			31	38.5714	37.85715
BENCH 2			36	43	41.4286
BENCH 3			40.5	44.29	
BENCH 4			49	45.7143	
GOAL BY BENCH 3	59	59	59	59	59
GRADE 8					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
BENCH 1			40	36	34.28574
BENCH 2			40	39	40
BENCH 3			41	45.145	
BENCH 4			46	50	
GOAL BY BENCH 3	60	60	60	60	60

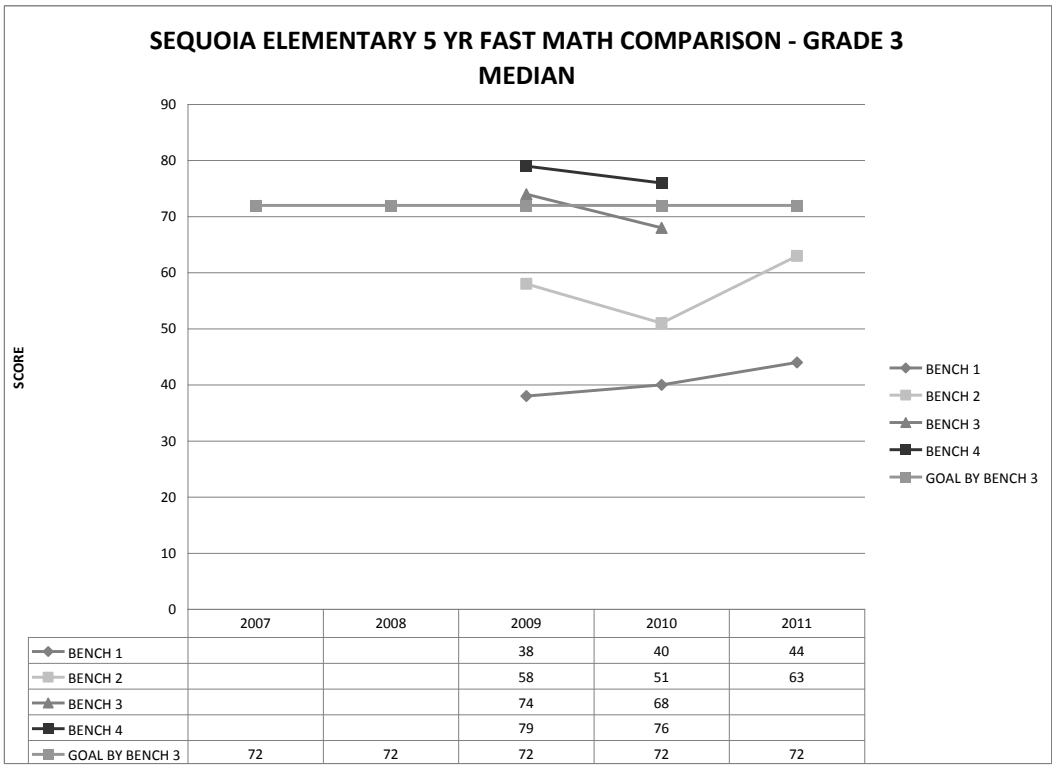
GRADE 9					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
BENCH 1				20	30
BENCH 2				31	38.5714
BENCH 3				40	
BENCH 4				45.7143	
GOAL BY BENCH 3					
GRADE 10					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
BENCH 1			30	32.8571	34.2857
BENCH 2			39	39.285	44.2857
BENCH 3			30	45.71	
BENCH 4			36.5	51.43	
GOAL BY BENCH 3	57	57	57	57	57


SEQUOIA ELEMENTARY 5 YR FAST MATH COMPARISON - KINDERGARTEN MEDIAN
SCORE
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
BENCH 1
33.3333
BENCH 2
69.697
BENCH 3
BENCH 4
GOAL BY BENCH 3

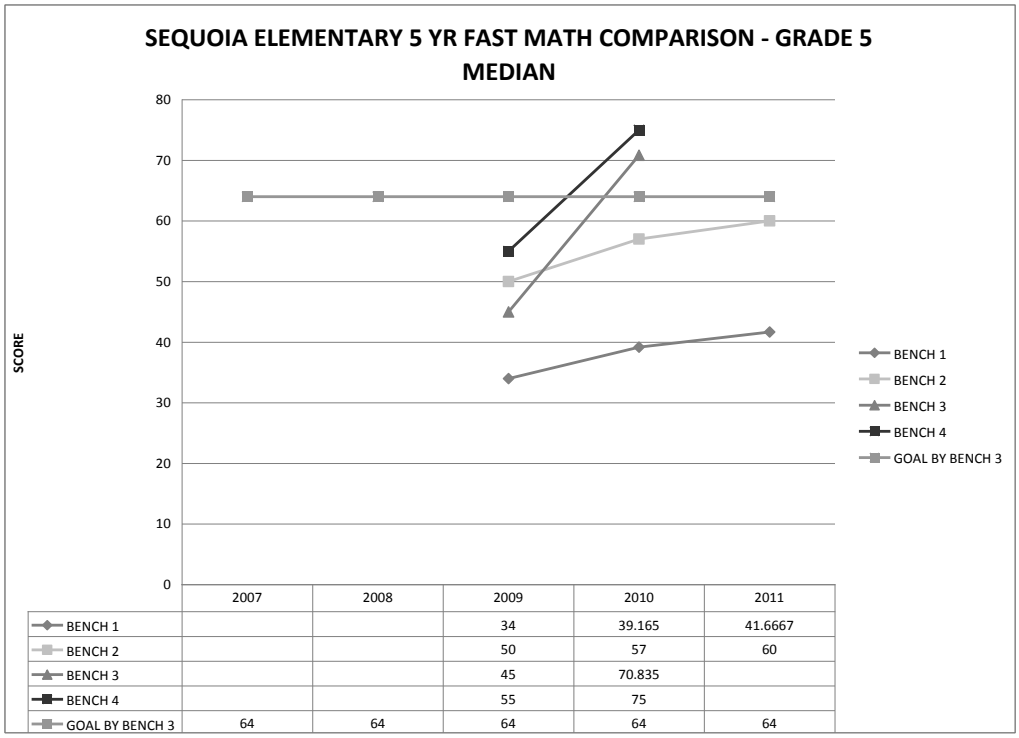

SEQUOIA ELEMENTARY 5 YR FAST MATH COMPARISON - GRADE 1 MEDIAN
SCORE
50
45
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
BENCH 1
17.2414
BENCH 2
44.8276
BENCH 3
BENCH 4
GOAL BY BENCH 3



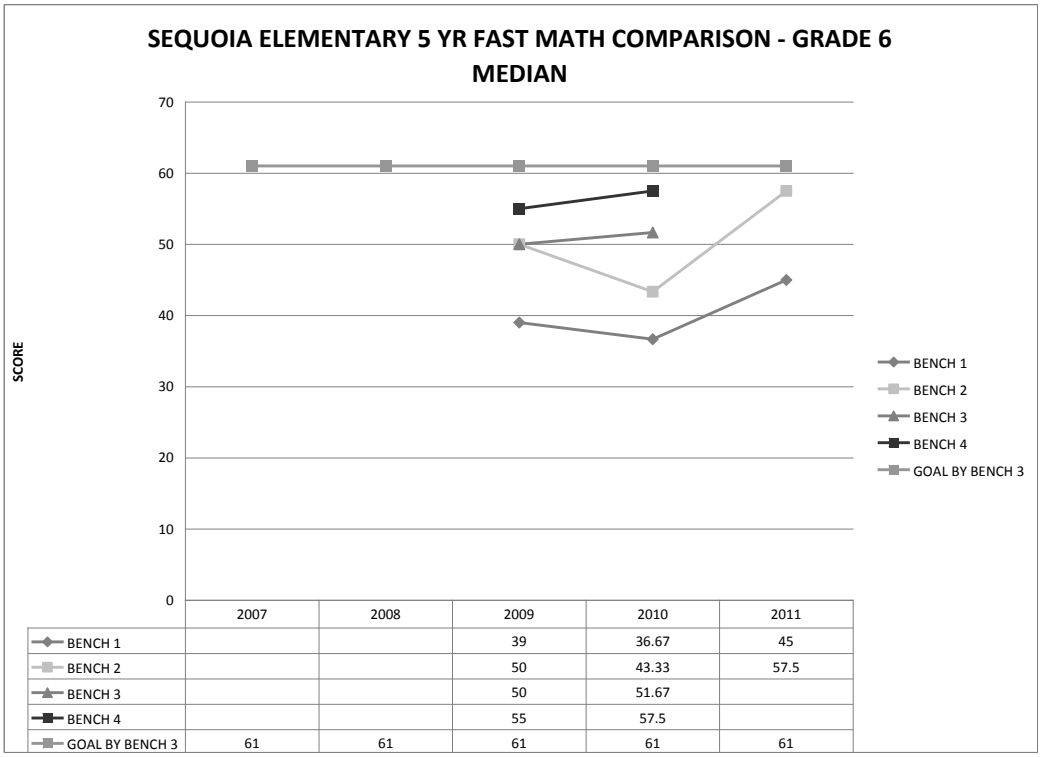
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
BENCH 1					31.0345
BENCH 2					58.6207
BENCH 3					
BENCH 4					
GOAL BY BENCH 3					



	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
BENCH 1			38	40	44
BENCH 2			58	51	63
BENCH 3			74	68	
BENCH 4			79	76	
GOAL BY BENCH 3	72	72	72	72	72



	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
BENCH 1			34	39.165	41.6667
BENCH 2			50	57	60
BENCH 3			45	70.835	
BENCH 4			55	75	
GOAL BY BENCH 3	64	64	64	64	64



	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
BENCH 1			39	36.67	45
BENCH 2			50	43.33	57.5
BENCH 3			50	51.67	
BENCH 4			55	57.5	
GOAL BY BENCH 3	61	61	61	61	61

Math Benchmarks

While Sequoia Elementary has been administering Fast Math Benchmarks for 7 years, we have only had a centralized depository for the data in the last three years. The dark horizontal line at the top of each math chart show what is expected each year.. In 2009-2010, 4th &6th grades did NOT meet the standard. The school does understand the reason why the school was label as not making the standard is due to the 4th & 6th grade math. Please note that the 3rd benchmarks for math (February) for 2012 have not been recorded on all of the graphs. We do know that 4th & 6th grade for 2012 have already exceeded the year-end goal on the 3rd benchmarks. With this data and the data that has not been published, that this will be the best year in Math for Sequoia Elementary.

Given that the demographics has changed dramatically over the last five years and our scores (except for last year have been improving is amazing.

One of the most important aspects of data collection is the 21 standards we evaluate the teacher with, using a rubric. It helps us to identify which specific areas are teachers need help, on a school wide basis, grade wide basis, or on an individual teacher basis. It has become increasingly clear that elementary teachers must become more effective in their teaching. Teachers need help in three major areas in math:

1. Many teachers need to be able fully internalize the mathematical concept that need to be taught; we are finding that many teachers only have a superficial understanding of some key math concepts.

2. Teachers need to be refereeing to mathematical terms more frequently as they teach other subjects. There is a great need for students to gain a greater number sense regardless of the subject being studied.

3. Teachers need to convey that math can be fun.

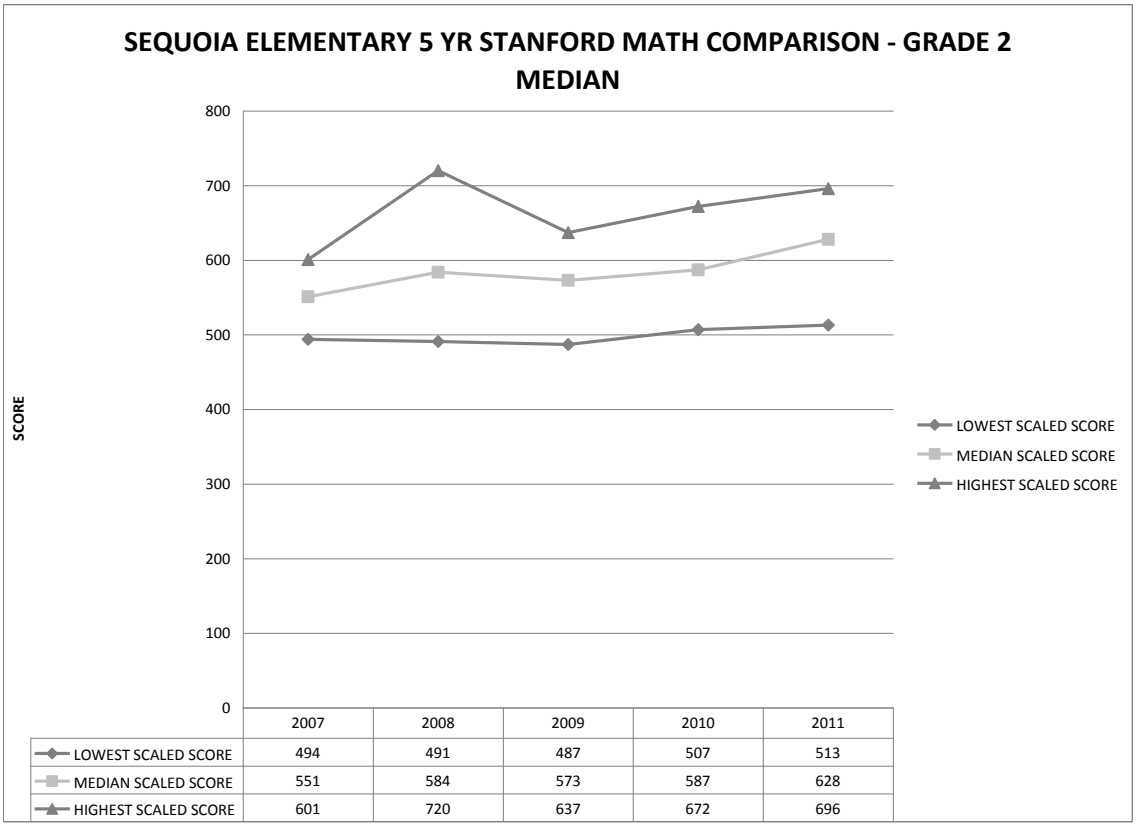
Incorporating academic data with the teacher evaluation is starting to give us further insight as to how we might better support our teachers in becoming more effective.

As we improve our mathematics scores on our benchmarks we expect that the children that we send on to our seventh and eighth grade programs will demonstrate greater and greater proficiency. Our schools work together to ensure consistency and fidelity in our mathematics program.

Stanford Mathematics Data

GRADE 2					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
LOWEST SCALED SCORE	494	491	487	507	513
MEDIAN SCALED SCORE	551	584	573	587	628
HIGHEST SCALED SCORE	601	720	637	672	696
GRADE 3					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
LOWEST SCALED SCORE	548	534	385	477	535
MEDIAN SCALED SCORE	611	620	612	610	620
HIGHEST SCALED SCORE	740	740	740	705	702
GRADE 4					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
LOWEST SCALED SCORE	566	403	544	505	522
MEDIAN SCALED SCORE	643	641.5	634	625.5	609
HIGHEST SCALED SCORE	770	770	683	745	745

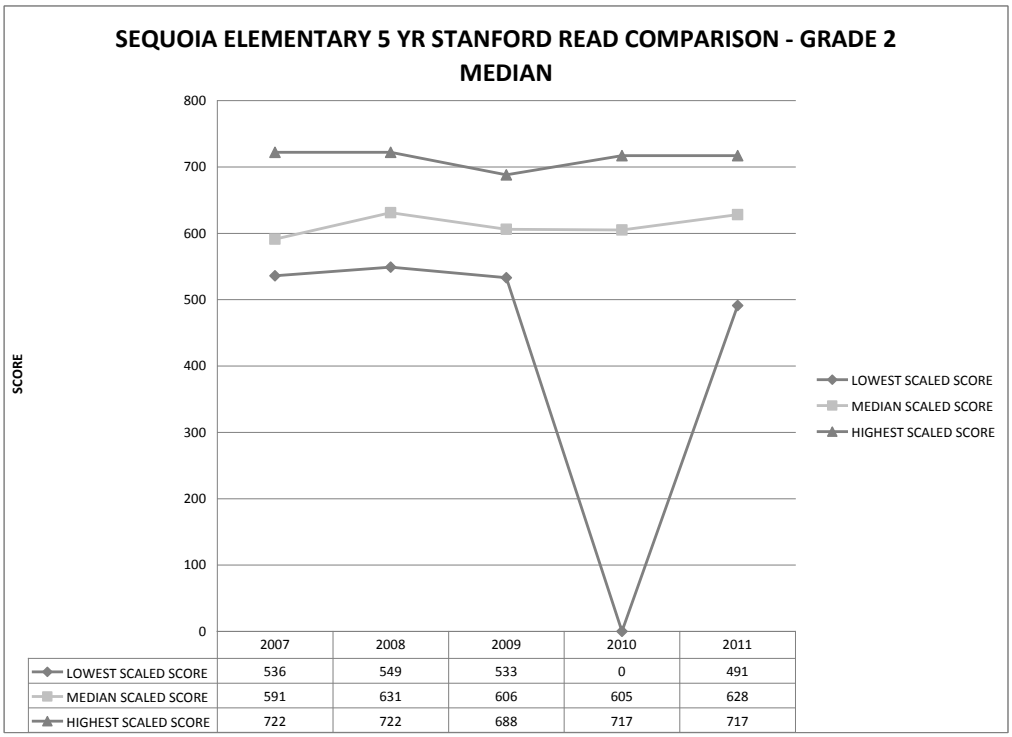
Grade 5					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
LOWEST SCALED SCORE	430	579	502	570	568
MEDIAN SCALED SCORE	638	648.5	639	637	655
HIGHEST SCALED SCORE	797	797	797	697	752
GRADE 6					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
LOWEST SCALED SCORE	477	477	536	577	589
MEDIAN SCALED SCORE	676	650	668.5	660	645
HIGHEST SCALED SCORE	820	820	820	741	767



Please note the median is improving in Math

Stanford Reading Data Sequoia Elementary

GRADE 2					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
LOWEST SCALED SCORE	536	549	533	0	491
MEDIAN SCALED SCORE	591	631	606	605	628
HIGHEST SCALED SCORE	722	722	688	717	717



	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
LOWEST SCALED SCORE	536	549	533	0	491
MEDIAN SCALED SCORE	591	631	606	605	628
HIGHEST SCALED SCORE	722	722	688	717	717

Addendum

The following narrative:

- ✓ Describes the initiatives outlined on the prior page.
- ✓ Provides a context of how they were developed
- ✓ Describes the implementation process
- ✓ Describes the monitoring process
- ✓ Includes policies and procedures related to the initiative
- ✓ Describes the integration with Arizona and National Academic Standards
- ✓ Discusses professional development associated with the initiatives
- ✓ Analyzes tools used to review the data and the data's relationship to improving student achievement
- ✓ Relates this through supervision and evaluation with teacher effectiveness
- ✓ Describes the data presentation used in the school's narrative, and how it is related to our management plan

Sequoia Supervision and Evaluation Process

Fully implemented in 2010 – 2011 the Sequoia Supervision and Evaluation process is documented and fully reproduced in the documentation provided to the Charter School Board for each school's renewal. (See: Sequoia Supervision and Evaluation Model for Teacher (and Principal) Effectiveness). Work on this implementation began in 2009 (prior to any State mandate). Mr. Neil and the board had used several tools prior to committing to asking the staff to develop the attached model.

The Sequoia supervision and evaluation program is based on the premise that supervision and evaluation of the instructional program is essential to the efficacy and professional growth of the teacher and principal. Any performance management plan for a school must have a supporting system for supervision and evaluation that is designed to increase teaching effectiveness.

We believe it is imperative that the supervisor and teacher identify, analyze, and act on the results of supervision and evaluation activities and use the data gathered in this process in a meaningful, constructive, and timely way.

The tools we have created provide this data in useful, easy to understand, and meaningful ways to the organization and to the practitioners in the field.

We believe that learners benefit from teachers who are effective in the classroom. Teacher effectiveness improves when thoughts, practices and information are shared. Effective professional conversations improve teacher's effectiveness and school performance.

At Sequoia our Supervision and Evaluation protocols were established in 2009 – 2010, and have been setting the benchmark for Supervision and Evaluation in Arizona Charter Schools. We have presented this model at the Arizona State Charter Schools Conference (2011) and to the Arizona Charter Association evaluation staff.

Monitoring is done on a DAILY basis with principals in the classroom on frequently for informal observations, semi-formal observations and protocols (see model) and formal observational tools for substantive follow up for ineffective teachers. Assistant Superintendents provide this monitoring for principals utilizing a similar format and structure.

The Supervision and Evaluation process captures all of the data on each person being supervised and provides us with a way to monitor the professional growth and efficacy of each staff member. Graphic data including student feedback on performance is provided during the evaluation process.

Supervision and evaluation protocols are published and dates for monitoring the process are mandated in policy. Training in the method is continuously upgraded with special attention being given to inter-rater reliability at six annual principals' professional development days.

DATA DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

As noted, Sequoia provides several central office level staff members to provide the schools with data analysis services. Each principal is required to submit and review State testing, Sequoia Benchmark Testing, and any survey tool that Sequoia provides. This policy is institutionalized in Policy and Procedures.

FAST MATH - Sequoia Schools uses FAST Math, an assessment program aligned to the Arizona Mathematics Standards. FAST is an acronym which stands for Focusing on Arizona Standards through Technology. FAST Math includes a Scope and Sequence for each grade level, micro-assessments aligned to each objective on the Scope and Sequence, benchmarks aligned to the essential objectives on the Scope and Sequence, and a skills test that assesses a student's knowledge of the basic math skills at each grade level. Monitoring is done at the local, district (dedicated staff (see chart)), and reviewed at the assistant superintendent and superintendent level.

Each quarter, Sequoia Schools Instructional Support personnel hand delivers math benchmark testing materials to grades 3 – 10. The benchmarks are then collected, scored, and the results provided to the teachers and principals. The K-2 teachers are given math benchmark testing materials at the beginning of the school year (initiated in 2011 at this level). They are responsible for administering, scoring, and recording the results of their math benchmarks. The principal monitors the results and provides feedback to the teacher regarding interventions and activities. Teachers are highly aware of the math benchmark data and use it to inform their instructional decisions. Students and parents are informed about the math benchmark results.

The development of FAST Math (Sequoia's Proprietary Program for Benchmarking Mathematics) began in 2002.

Analysis reveals a 0.88 correlation between the results on FAST MATH and success on the AZ Standards. Data for FAST MATH is presented in the Charter and School Level Narrative.

DIBELS and DORA - Sequoia Schools uses DIBELS to assist in assessment of reading performance. The principal monitors DIBELS results and provides feedback to the teacher regarding interventions and activities. Teachers need to be highly aware of the DIBELS assessment data and use it to form their instructional decisions and help struggling students get up to grade level. Students and their parents are also highly aware of the student's DIBELS assessment scores and progress. It is expected (in policy and procedures) that this discussion take place during parent conferences.

DIBELS testing is done at least once a quarter. However, for struggling students, progress monitoring with greater frequency is required by Sequoia Schools according to the following schedule:

- Weekly for at risk students
- At least every other week for students with some risk

Sequoia does not require progress monitoring of students that are at grade level on DIBELS.

DIBELS graphic results for the Charter are presented at the end of the Charter – School Level Narrative.

Similar protocols are used for the DORA testing at each school.

AZ AIMS Testing - Annual AIMS testing is an integral part of each school's AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) and AZ LEARNS (Measurements taken by ADE to determine if each school is meeting "No Child Left Behind" and other state mandated requirements). All AIMS information can be accessed at the following site: http://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/

Special education students taking AIMS are granted various accommodations that must be followed as the test is planned and administered. Teachers should review each student's IEP prior to administering the test so that they are prepared to provide the stated accommodations as written with no exceptions.

Each year ADE provides fall and spring AIMS workshops which outline test guidelines, the ordering process and materials security and return instructions. Principals and/or a designee are required to attend this training and will be provided with hard copies of all the materials covered at the workshop. Upon completion of the workshop, each site should determine a plan of action to insure a smooth testing period. The principal and each staff member are responsible for all AIMS administration and record keeping. Graphs regarding AIMS and Stanford results are provided in the Charter-School Level Narratives.

A Five Year Testing Calendar provided by ADE helps each school plan their calendars to insure that adequate instruction and preparation has been given before the test.

Stanford 10 Testing - Stanford 10 Testing is required by state law and is conducted every spring for 2nd and 9th grade students over a one or two day testing period. The Stanford 10 Test provides each student's national percentile rankings in core subjects. The results of the Stanford 10 test can be used to determine student strengths and weaknesses and help them better prepare for AIMS testing. Sequoia Schools provide tutoring and after school programs at many sites to reinforce and encourage students' skills. Mandatory remediation may be provided and is noted in school level narratives.

Data is gathered and analyzed at the central office level and at the school level. AIMS and Stanford Testing results are widely distributed to staff.

Our evaluation rubrics (see rubric 18-21 (Sequoia Teacher Effectiveness Rubric) specifically address the use and reporting of data from AIMS, Stanford, and Benchmark testing.

Formative, Summative and Performance Assessments **-** Teachers are expected to use formative, summative and performance assessments in their teaching. Monitoring and expectations for these assessments is provided for in the Teacher Effectiveness Rubrics. Sequoia tracks all teacher assessments through supervision and the Power School database. There must be a correlation between these assessments and the school's curriculum as stated in Curriculum Maps and Lesson Plans.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

All Sequoia Charters are required to use Sequoia's Policies and Procedures to guide their day to day activities. As part of the supervision and evaluation system, all staff is rated on their understanding and implementation of Sequoia's Policies and Procedures.

Web based, linked support for staff on Sequoia policies and procedures. These resources include academic, social curriculum, professional and disciplinary supports. Expectations for interventions, special education, and student – staff interactions are all part of these procedures. Please visit our website for the entire document.

CURRICULUM MAPS AND CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT TO STATE AND COMMON CORE STANDARDS

Curriculum Maps - Sequoia implemented a policy regarding the construction and utilization of Curriculum Maps in 2008 with mandatory participation in 2009.

Any teacher employed by Sequoia Choice Education and Development, and Edkey, Inc. is required to create and utilize a curriculum map in their core subject(s).

For the subject of reading the curriculum map needs to, at a minimum, address the following:

- Explicit vocabulary instruction
- Direct and explicit comprehension strategy instruction
- Opportunities for extended discussion of text meaning and interpretation
- Instruction in reading foundational skills (e.g., decoding and fluency) for students who need to be taught these skills

2009 Curriculum Maps Requirements

Elementary School Teachers

- Teachers at the Elementary level shall be required to complete a DRAFT of their curriculum map for English Language Arts by July 30, 2009 and submit it electronically to their principal and the Instructional Support Department.

Secondary School Teachers

- Teachers at the Secondary level shall be required to complete a DRAFT of at least one core subject/grade by July 30, 2009 and submit it electronically to their principal and the Instructional Support Department.
- All Teachers Employed After June 1, 2009
- Teachers employed after June 1, 2009 shall complete the first DRAFT of their curriculum map by January 21, 2010 and submit

it electronically to their principal and the Instructional Support Department

2010 and Beyond Implementation (All Teachers Employed After 2009)

All teachers hired after 2009 shall be required to complete a DRAFT of their curriculum map according to the Elementary and Secondary guidelines above and submit it electronically to their principal and the Instructional Support Department within the first 3 months of their employment.

Failure to create and submit the required curriculum maps will be viewed as a serious breach of Arizona's Professional Teaching Standards and may result in dismissal.

Curriculum Maps guide instruction throughout the year and are amended, enhanced and discussed frequently.

Sequoia Staff has been provided Professional Development Days during the past five years to work on and learn about curriculum maps. New teachers are oriented to these protocols during a separate week of orientation for new teachers each year.

Unwrapping the New Core Standards - Sequoia currently has district wide (all schools) participation of staff in the unwrapping of common core standards and their impact on curriculum at all of our schools. This process is monitored by members of the District Level Instructional Support Team as outlined previously. Principals, staff and the assistant superintendents also monitor curriculum and decisions are made based on data whether to change practice based on these discussions.

(See also Sequoia Supervision for Teaching Effectiveness for rubrics related to staff implementation and monitoring of curriculum and staff expectations for curriculum maps.)

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Educators committed to working collaboratively in ongoing processes of collective inquiry and action research in order to achieve better results for the students they serve. PLC's operate under the assumption that the key to improved learning for students is continuous, job-embedded learning for educators.

- DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, Many, 2006

Professional Learning Communities are

- A collaborative process
- Focused on student work and student learning
- Focused on Instructional Practice
- An empowering infrastructure of support
- Effective professional development
- Connected to the context of teachers' classrooms
- Action and results oriented
- Continuous school improvement

Professional Learning Communities at Sequoia:

- Professional
  - "Every teacher is a leader; every leader is a teacher."
- Learning
  - In a PLC School, learning applies as much to teachers, administrators, and parents as to students.
  - Focus on instruction, curriculum and assessment.
- Community
  - Support
  - Cooperation vs. competition
  - Focus intensely on the mission, vision, goals, and values.
  - Improvement of the whole vs. striving to get ahead individually.

Professional Learning Communities change the focus from "teaching" to "learning', and establishes a strong student centered environment.

Support for the organization wide and school level Professional Learning Communities is provided by the Instructional Support team identified earlier. Individual charters will discuss school level PLC's in their narratives for renewal.

(See also Sequoia Supervision for Teaching Effectiveness for rubrics related to Professional Learning Communities and staff expectations for this vital part of our program.)

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE SUPPORT

Sequoia lists this as a separate component rather than linking it to Curriculum Mapping, Curriculum, and Unpacking the Core Standards because Academic Background knowledge consists of segments of information which have words and phrases associated with them. Numerous studies have found a positive correlation between academic background knowledge and achievement in school.

Students who have a large amount of academic background knowledge about a topic learn new information on the same subject easier and quicker than those who do not. Moreover, studies have revealed a significant relationship between knowledge of academic information and achievement later in life.

In Building Background Knowledge for Academic Achievement: Research on What Works in Schools, Robert Marzano first outlines a program of wide reading to compensate for the lack of academic experiences. Its purpose is to provide a variety of virtual experiences. Then, he details a research based process for teaching academic terms, people, and events to build academic vocabulary.

Marzano details this process in his six step process for teaching new terms. Sequoia currently has brought all staff up to speed on this method training and paying for workshops for staff since 2008. We provide staff with access to Marzano's materials via our web page. All classrooms are expected to work on academic vocabulary during all of their lessons. Word walls are expected in each room. Monitoring is provided in our supervision and evaluation model, through checks on lesson plans and with daily visits. Several of our supervision and evaluation rubrics address this issue. At Sequoia Arts and Academics teachers are expected to keep word walls and to actively teach vocabulary. This effort is starting to pay off in our reading and language data. We are concentrating on increasing our students' mathematics vocabulary as we have identified that deficit as a problem area.

Working with Students

Our students are the most important people at Sequoia Schools. *Sequoia Schools offers all students including those who have not been successful in other academic environments* a chance to succeed. Sequoia Schools strives to give its teachers the tools they need to work effectively with all students.

Each teacher, instructional aide and other staff member is responsible and evaluated (see Teacher Evaluation Artifact) for the following:

Assuring the safety and well-being of each student in their class and each student at the site on a daily basis;

Creating an environment of academic progress for each student in their class as outlined below:

1. Knowing each child in their class at a level sufficient to promote best teaching practices;
2. Supervising each of their students' personalized learning plans, attendance and behavior. This includes making learning goals, setting expectations for student performance and modifying their teaching and those goals and expectations as directed by the data;
3. Assessing, monitoring and acting on assessment data ***and*** information gleaned from dealing with the student as an individual;
4. Initiating consistent and pertinent contact with each student and their parents to communicate student performance and insure achievement of academic and individualized learning goals;
5. Maintaining accurate and timely records of student progress toward achievement of academic goals in Power School.
6. Maintaining accurate and timely records of student attendance and discipline in Power School
7. Designing and implementing the site's instructional program as outlined in the school's curriculum guides and curriculum maps;
8. Being an active member of the site's curriculum team;
9. Providing assistance to site staff and students in their particular area of certification and beyond as needed.
10. Supporting, implementing and enforcing all of Sequoia Schools' Policies and Procedures including student attendance, dress and behaviors.

Staff Expectations Regarding Student Achievement

In "What Works in Schools: Translating Research into Action", Marzano et al present a comprehensive survey of the research on best practices and rank the factors that impact student achievement. The chart on the next page consolidates the information and presents the factors, their rank and the descriptor used by the research.

School Level Factor		Descriptor used by Researchers of the Factor
Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum		Opportunity to Learn Time, Content Coverage, Concentration of Teaching and Learning, Focus on Central Learning Skills, Emphasis on Basic Skill Acquisition
Challenging Goals and Effective Feedback	2	Monitoring of Student Progress High Expectations and Requirements Pressure to Achieve
Parental and Community Involvement	3	Parental Involvement Home – School Partnerships
Safe and Orderly Environment	4	School Climate / Safe and Orderly Atmosphere A LEARNING Environment Pupils have Rights and Expectations Positive Reinforcement
Collegiality and Professionalism	5	Leadership, Shared Vision and Goals Process Oriented Staff Development Cooperation A Learning Organization

Chart 1.0 **Modification of Marzano et al 2003**

Student Achievement

Sequoia Schools' intention is to provide its staff with the tools needed to take "what works in schools" and apply it at each site. While the above factors are self-descriptive some deserve further explanation as outlined below:

Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum - A guaranteed and viable curriculum is not an accident. To be guaranteed and viable each teacher must create a meaningful annual curriculum map along with effective weekly and daily teaching plans that provide each student the opportunity to learn, that allow adequate time to cover all content satisfactorily, that focus on central learning skills and that emphasize basic skill acquisition

Children must be actively taught vocabulary to succeed in reading and other academic endeavors (See a complete list of necessary academic vocabulary for success in school and AIMS testing in Marzano's Word Lists a PDF file available.)

Challenging Goals and Effective Feedback - Each child will have a greater opportunity to achieve academic success if they are appropriately guided, challenged and monitored. As teachers help their students set realistic and attainable educational goals and then consistently work to fulfill, refine and report on those goals academic achievement will increase. We will outline the steps we have taken to manage the challenges we face at each site in the Performance Management Segment of this renewal application.

Parental and Community Involvement - Student achievement will rise in proportion to the level of parental or other interested parties' involvement in the child's learning. To this end, effective, consistent and regular communication between the school the teachers and the parents is imperative and must be an ever improving attribute at each site. This involvement is detailed in the specific school (charter) report that follows.

Effectively managed site councils are not only encouraged but required at each site. Each site administrator is encouraged to develop relationships with individuals and organizations that desire to assist in the educational process.

Safe and Orderly Environment - Students must feel safe while attending or in transit to or from their school. Classes must maintain a level of order that permits teaching and learning to occur. Students must understand and be empowered to claim their right to learn. We specifically teach the Social

Curriculum at our sites and maintain a highly trained group of teachers that help monitor and train staff on this method.

Collegiality and Professionalism

Sequoia Schools seek to become the standard for student success. As part of that vision each school is committed to creating an environment of collegial and professional relationships.

Collegiality - Sequoia Schools defines collegial behavior in terms of teachers and staff in a supportive role with one another. The ultimate goal is the academic success of each student. Open and civil interactions that are respectful of each professional's role in the education of students are expected.

Because of the correlation between professionalism and student achievement Sequoia Schools has placed a premium on attracting and keeping highly qualified and effective instructors. Each staff member is encouraged to constantly augment and monitor their professional growth. All principals are expected to attend the Arizona Principals' Academy as part of their professional growth.

Pedagogical Knowledge - Sequoia Schools seek pedagogical methods that lead to success in the educational environment. Research shows that when schools do the following action steps there is a high rate of academic success:

- Establish norms of conduct and behavior amongst staff that engender collegiality and professionalism.
- Establish methods of structures that allow professional staff input into decisions and policies for the organization.
- Engage teachers and staff in meaningful staff development activities.

Evaluating Pedagogical Success of a Principal - Principals are evaluated using the Sequoia Principals' Effectiveness model developed by Sequoia and presented at the annual Charter School Conference this October (2011). See artifacts section of this application). Principals are evaluated on their ability to effectively apply the following pedagogical skill sets in their schools:

- Be the academic leader of their school
- Resolve conflicts between themselves and their staff or district office
- Address and solve professional problems
- Share information about students and employees
- Communicate to third parties about their interactions with one another
- Conduct themselves professionally

Staff Competencies

Sequoia Schools' principals are the site supervisors at their site. Sequoia Schools' staffs are supervised based on expectations in the following components:

- Teachers' Professional Hierarchy
    - Teachers receive a copy of the Teachers' Professional Hierarchy (see Artifacts on Evaluation) and are supervised and evaluated based on their progress on this hierarchy.
    - In addition to this hierarchy teachers are expected to display the following:
        - Computer Resources Mastery
            - Sequoia Schools' staff members are expected to be proficient users of the computer systems and programs. To assist employees in this requirement Sequoia Schools Information Technology Department (IT) provides training on the computer systems when a new employee is hired or as requested.
            - Access to Sequoia Schools' computers is limited to students and/or employees of Sequoia Schools. Assignment of computer rights occurs after the employee is hired. All staff members are trained and sign off on Sequoia's Policies and Procedures regarding computer use and electronic communications. Our systems are highly monitored for internet safety.
        - Student Management Systems
            - All teachers are expected to be able to keep their student records up to date and accurate. Training on the school management system is conducted each August.

Control of the Learning Environment - The first task of the teacher is to establish the tone of the room as that of a classroom with expectations for students relating to talking in the room, entering and exiting the room, requesting assistance and other rules and procedures that promote an engaged learning environment. As noted earlier the Social Curriculum is actively taught in each of Sequoia's Schools.