B.3 Management & Operation

Instruction, Curriculum, Assessment, and State-Mandated Testing

The Principal will be responsible for oversight of the school's instruction, curriculum, and assessment, and state-mandated testing. The Principal will be aided in this task by Instructional Leaders and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) composed of 5-10 teachers. The position of Instructional Leader is an unpaid responsibility for a fulltime teacher. The Principal will appoint Instructional Leaders based on their instructional, curriculum, assessment, and leadership abilities. In year 1, there will one Instructional Leader. In years 2 and 3, there will an Instructional Leader for math/science and an Instructional Leader for English/social science.

In year 1, the school will have one PLC composed of all the school's teachers. In years 2 and 3, there will be two PLCs; math/science teachers will be in one PLC and English/social science teachers will be in the other PLC (other teachers will be apportioned to PLCs according to subject relevance and interest). The school will use the definition of a PLC found in DuFour et al., *Learning by Doing* (2010): "an ongoing process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve. Professional learning communities operate under the assumption that the key to improved learning for students is continuous job-embedded learning for educators." The PLC's instructional collaboration will center on certain critical questions:

- What knowledge, skills, and disposition must each student acquire as a result of this course, grade level, and/or unit of instruction?
- What evidence will we gather to monitor student learning on a timely basis?
- How will we provide students with additional time and support in a timely, directive, and systematic way when they experience difficulty in their learning?
- How will we enrich the learning of students who are already proficient?
- How can we use our goals and evidence of student learning to inform and improve our practice?

The positions of Principal and Instructional Leaders will have the experience and skills required to be effective leaders of instruction, curriculum, and assessment. The Principal will have documented experience as a classroom teacher and as leader of teachers. Instructional Leaders will have documented experience as effective classroom teachers, with experience leading other teachers a desired quality. As leaders of instruction, the Principal and Instructional Leaders will possess the following skills: the ability to communicate effectively; a deep understanding of how humans learn; the willingness to be an active, visible presence, focusing on learning objectives, modeling behaviors of learning, and designing programs and activities on instruction; and the ability to serve as instructional resources on current trends, effective instructional practices, issues relating to curriculum, effective pedagogical strategies, and assessment.

Curriculum and Instruction

The Principal, with help from Instructional Leaders and PLCs, will oversee curriculum and instruction. All curricula will be aligned to Arizona's Career and College Readiness Standards

(CCRS) and Advanced Placement (AP) standards. Curricula will be connected to instruction and assessment through a three-tiered process. First, each teacher, with help from Instructional leaders and PLCs, will create a syllabus for each course. Second, each teacher will create monthly unit plans, which show the standards, topics, and major activities of each daily lesson plan. Third, each teacher will create daily lesson plans, detailed plans that identify all of the daily lesson's standards, topics, activities, and assessments. For constructing daily lesson plans, the school will use Hunter's Essential Elements of Instruction (EEI). A set of a week's worth of lesson plans is due to the Principal or Instructional Leader a week before the first lesson. The Principal or Instructional Leader will evaluate the daily lesson plans and provide feedback.

Assessment

The Principal, with help from Instructional Leaders and PLCs, will oversee assessment. The school will create a school culture focused using multiple, formative interim assessments to facilitate all students reaching year-end mastery on state and national standards-aligned assessments. Formative interim assessments will be aligned to these CCRS and AP standards through software and teacher-generated questions. The process will begin will professional development in assessment for all teachers. Standards-aligned interim assessments will be created prior to teaching, and will serve as a road map for curriculum and instruction. Just as curriculum and instruction is divided into three tiers—entire year, unit, and daily—assessments will test at these three tiers. Teachers—with help from PLCs, Instructional Leaders, and the Principal—will create assessments that are aligned with CCRS and AP standards. This system will align curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Standards-aligned interim assessments will occur for every student every six weeks. Interim and other assessments will be cumulative, continuously reassessing previously taught material.

After each interim assessment, the Principal will have a data dialogue with each teacher. During this meeting, the Principal and the teacher will analyze and discuss student-assessment date, which will contain disaggregate data into the following levels: question, standard (all questions measuring the same standard), individual student, and whole class. After the data dialogue between teacher and Principal, the teacher will develop and commit to an action plan, using an Action Plan template, which will begin with the re-teaching standards that were not mastered by students, as demonstrated by the interim assessment.

State-Mandated Testing

A fulltime support staffer will serve as Assessment Coordinator, who will be directly supervised by the Principal. The Assessment Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring that all laws, regulations, standards, trainings, and practices are met when it comes to mandated state testing. The Assessment Coordinator will receive help in carrying out his/her duties by the Principal, support-staff members, and teachers. The experience and critical skills required of the Assessment Coordinator include: administrative experience; the skills and temperament to perform detailed, repetitive work effectively and efficiently; the ability to support and work in close collaboration with the Principal, as well as work independently; the ability to work in a hectic, face-paced environment that requires multi-tasking; excellent people skills, computer skills, familiarity with basic financial and office software, including Microsoft Office, and willingness to learn and apply new skills as needed.

Staff Development

The Principal will be responsible for oversight of the school's staff development. The Principal will be aided in this task by Instructional Leaders, PLCs of teachers, contracted services for on-site training programs, and support for teachers and support staff to attend off-site trainings. All staff development will be based on current best practices in the field. For teachers, development will be based upon information and trainings from the acknowledged leaders in the field, such as ASCD, Solution Tree, Phi Delta Kappa International, and others. Staff will also be encouraged to seek further higher education and state certification.

The school will have time set aside for professional development. Staff will have two full weeks of professional development in the summer, July 22-26 and July 29-August 2, 2013. During the school year, the staff will meet in Professional Learning Communities for 1.5 hours each week. During the school year, there will be two full days of professional development (October 7, 2013, and May 5, 2014). After the school year ends, there will be four more days of professional development, May 27-30, 2014. This is an estimated 168 hours of professional development for the entire year.

The critical skills and experience needed for oversight of staff development include: a belief in the efficacy of lifelong learning; an interest in, and knowledge of, sources of effective professional development; and effective communication and teaching abilities in order to present material effectively to adult learners.

Financial Management

The Principal will be responsible for oversight of the financial management of the school. The Principal will be aided in this task by contracted services, the School Secretary, and beginning in year 3, the Business/HR Manager.

In years 1 and 2, accounting, payroll, and financial management will be contracted out to Financial Guidance Services. This firm will work closely with the Principal and School Secretary. Consequently, both the Principal and the School Secretary positions will require following critical skills: perform administrative functions, including budgeting, project management, and communications; oversee operation and maintenance of the front office; perform research related to purchasing, general operations, and human resource practices; and manage the school's information resources and files; computer skills, familiarity with basic financial and office software, including QuickBooks and Microsoft Office, and willingness to learn and apply new skills as needed.

In year 3, the school will add a Business/HR Manager, who will report directly to the Principal. The Business/HR Director who will oversee the business and financial operations of the school, including preparing various financial statements and reports, preparing and overseeing an annual budget, and working with the auditors. The Business/HR Manager will focus on finance operations, forecast and analysis, and setting business and operational goals.

The critical skills and requirements for the Business/HR Manager include: strong leadership; broad experience and knowledge in business and financial management; ability to handle multiple projects/deadlines simultaneously; the ability to make departmental decisions and lead a team; the ability to present data effectively; excellent interpersonal and communication skills; is a self-starter with the ability to manage and complete projects independently; is self-directed, enthusiastic, and goal oriented; can work under tight deadlines while still maintaining attention to detail, quality, and accuracy; holds a BA/BS or higher in

Finance, Business Administration, Management, Accounting, or related field; having a CPA or MBA is a preferred; experience at executive level in business or finance; thorough knowledge of Microsoft Office products, including Excel and PowerPoint; experience working with financial software, QuickBooks preferred; experience working with databases, Access or others preferred.

Contracted Services

The Principal will be responsible for oversight of contracted services. The Principal will be aided in this task by the School Secretary and, beginning in year 3, the Business/HR manager. The Rising School is contracted with, or is contemplating contracting with, the following services:

- Accounting and payroll: Michael Morris of Financial Guidance Services
- Human Resources: Lola Kakes of Effortless HR
- Special Education: Cenpatico Behavioral Health
- Legal: Marian Abram of Karp & Weiss
- Property and casualty insurance: Michelle Martin of Martin Insurance Agency
- Health, life, and disability insurance: Mike Gietl of Gietl & Strutz
- Banking: Chris Fonseca, Branch Manager of Tucson Federal Credit Union
- Financial advising and retirement benefits: Pam Hopman of the Hopman Group
- Commercial lending: Steve Kirkpatrick of People's Mortgage
- Website design and SEO marketing: Chris Hogan of Found Co
- Marketing: Stephanie Rising of Canyon Concepts
- Informational Technology: Tony Williams of Williams Technical Service
- Custodial: Terry Barr of PROactive Janitorial

The Principal, School Secretary and Business/HR manager will need the following skills to oversee contracted services: the ability to research services; the interpersonal skills to work with vendors; the ability to hold contractors accountable; the ability to handle multiple projects/deadlines simultaneously; excellent interpersonal and communication skills; is a self-starter with the ability to manage and complete projects independently; is self-directed, enthusiastic, and goal oriented; and can work under tight deadlines while still maintaining attention to detail, quality, and accuracy.

Personnel

The Principal will be responsible for oversight of personnel/human resources. The Principal will be aided in this task by contracted services, the School Secretary, and beginning in year 3, the Business/Human Resources Manager.

In years 1 and 2, Personnel/Human Resources will be contracted out to Effortless HR. This firm will work closely with the Principal and School Secretary. Consequently, both the Principal and the School Secretary positions will require following critical skills: perform administrative functions, including budgeting, project management, and communications; oversee operation and maintenance of the front office; perform research related to purchasing, general operations, and human resource practices; and manage the school's information resources and files; computer skills, familiarity with basic financial and office software,

including QuickBooks and Microsoft Office, and willingness to learn and apply new skills as needed.

In year 3, the school will add a Business/HR Manager, who will report directly to the Principal. The Business/HR Director who will oversee the Personnel/HR operations of the school, including

The critical skills and requirements for the Business/HR Manager include: strong leadership; broad experience and knowledge in HR management; ability to handle multiple projects/deadlines simultaneously; the ability to make departmental decisions and lead a team; the ability to present data effectively; excellent interpersonal and communication skills; is a self-starter with the ability to manage and complete projects independently; is self-directed, enthusiastic, and goal oriented; can work under tight deadlines while still maintaining attention to detail, quality, and accuracy; holds a BA/BS or higher in Finance, Business Administration, Management, Accounting, or related field; experience at executive level in business or finance; thorough knowledge of Microsoft Office products, including Excel and PowerPoint; experience working with financial software, QuickBooks preferred; experience working with databases, Access or others preferred.

Grants Management

The Principal will be responsible for oversight of grant management. The Principal will be aided in this task by teachers, contracted services, and beginning in year 3, the Business/HR Manager.

The crucial skills required for grant writing and management include: excellent writing skills; clear understanding of the project process; strong research skills; discipline and organization; ability to keep track of grant application deadlines and follow-up on submitted applications; and ability to keep track of trends in the field and be aware of changes in the priorities of funding institutions, as well as new funding sources.

Student Accountability Information System (SAIS)

The School Secretary will be responsible for administering the school's student management system, PowerSchool, including uploads and downloads to SAIS and oversight of attendance and other student issues. The School Secretary will be directly supervised by the Principal. In addition, the Principal, other office staff, and other administrators (in year 3 and afterward) will be thoroughly trained in the student management system.

The School Secretary will be responsible for ensuring that all laws, regulations, standards, trainings, and practices are met when it comes to SAIS and related Department of Education mandates. The experience and critical skills required for administrating SAIS include: administrative experience; the skills and temperament to perform detailed, repetitive work effectively and efficiently; the ability to support and work in close collaboration with the Principal, as well as work independently; the ability to work in a hectic, face-paced environment that requires multi-tasking; excellent people skills, computer skills, familiarity with basic financial and office software, Microsoft Office, and PowerSchool, and the willingness to learn and apply new skills as needed.