A.3 Program of Instruction

A. Curriculum Overview

The Synergy Public School Curriculum Team will use the Arizona College and Career Readiness Standards (AZCCRS) to outline skills and content for grade level student proficiency. Keeping the AZCCRS as the minimum desired outcomes, the Curriculum team will utilize Backward Design to make a determination of the desired evidence of learning, both through formal and informal assessments. Last, the Curriculum team will develop a scope and sequence that logically scaffolds the desired learning.

Synergy is confident that by developing and selecting high quality curriculum materials and resources, coupled with effective instructional and assessment practices – we can excel in meeting the academic needs of the students we serve. The founding team has engaged in a thorough process of evaluating community needs in alignment with the school's mission.

Synergy Public School curriculum will include the following core subjects:

Reading- Success For All

The Success For All Foundation will be our guide to comprehensive reading instruction. Success for All is a whole-school reform strategy that features research-proven tools, cooperative learning to engage students and collaborative leadership for continuous improvement. The success for All Reading Program is made up of key components and a wide variety of instructional practices that have been proven to increase student learning. A unique feature of this reading program is that students are grouped by their specific, individual reading level and re-grouped each eight weeks to ensure that their needs are being met. Teachers with extensive training in teaching various reading levels are matched with students. This ensures that teachers are most effectively matched to student needs. All students at Synergy will receive 90 minutes of reading instruction daily at their instructional level whether they are reading below, at, or above grade level. This ensures that struggling students are receiving gap instruction to move them closer to grade level and advanced students are accelerated and challenged. Synergy's Success For All reading curriculum is an endorsed partner of The Common Core Readiness Standards Initiative and has documented how the powerful reading tools within the curriculum align to the reading standards.

English Language Arts

Aligned to the AZCCRS, the English Language Arts (reading, writing, and speaking) will be taught for 65 minutes per day. The ELA instructional period incorporates reading, writing, and speaking using grade level strategies. In comparison to the 90 minutes students will spend in Success For All Reading at their individual instructional level, the English Language Arts block will provide a second dose of reading that will support grade level standards. The Arizona College and Career Readiness Standards outline core conceptual understandings that are necessary for success in real world settings. Our curriculum emphasizes the importance of both literary and nonfiction texts in an English Language Arts curriculum. The Standards provide ten Anchor Standards based on Key Ideas and Details (1-3), Craft and Structure (4-6), Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (7-9), and Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity (10), across three concentrations: Literature, Informational Text, and Foundational Skills. Students become critical readers of all materials, engage with the stories and texts, use their background knowledge, and

use what they read to build their understanding of not only what they read, but also the world that they live in.

Synergy ELA instructional materials will include:

- Teacher generated units: The Synergy Curriculum Team will lay out the daily learning objectives on an academic calendar based on the Backward Design from the AZCCRS. The delivery of direct instruction of the daily objective will be formulated by the classroom teacher. The teachers at Synergy will create a Lesson Plan Collection to share resources and activities. The creation of the lesson plan resources will be pulled from a variety of online resources.

- The Scholastic Reading Program: This Program provides individual students with a simplified system to track reading growth. Students are assessed using the Scholastic Reading Inventory online assessment and given a Lexile score. This Lexile score can be used to determine what grade level a student is reading at, as well as what titles of books to read to show growth. Assessments are given monthly. Students will be assigned books 50-100 points above their Lexile ranges and within their personal interests.

- Reading Intervention/Acceleration Program: A systematic and logically sequenced program of intervention and acceleration will be used. Students working below grade level with missing foundational reading skills, low fluency, poor comprehension and demonstrate a need for extra practice and remediation will receive additional tier two intervention supports provided by the teacher.

  Students who master each taught objective and are working at or above grade level will have the opportunity to apply and extend their learning through the on-line programs. This progressive approach allows teachers to differentiate appropriately and meet the specific reading, writing and speaking needs of all students

Math

Math instruction in Synergy Public School will adhere to the AZCCRS. Students will spend 65-minutes a day engaged in math instruction. We will utilize a variety of research-based techniques and multiple curriculum resources to attain the eight critical mathematical practices and components. Eight Critical Components: (1) make sense of problems and persevere in solving them (2) reason abstractly and quantitatively (3) construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others (4) model with mathematics (5) use appropriate tools strategically (6) attend to precision (7) look for and make use of structure (8) look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning. Synergy's primary math curriculum source is Engage New York and will be supplemented with teacher created lessons. Engage New York modules will be used to create rigorous classroom reasoning, extended classroom time devoted to practice and reflection through extensive problem sets, and high expectations for mastery.

Science

With our science curriculum, we aim to provide students with a rigorous, standards- aligned experience

in which they are encouraged to engage and explore the world in which they live. Teachers will use this time to implement a problem-based approach to learning so that our students can experience curriculum with a multitude of different learning strategies. Our curriculum will be both internally designed and supplemented with science kits that will allow students to not only learn the standards assigned to their grades, but also be given time and opportunity to explore, discover and experiment. Our science program will support a STEM initiative integrating the components of science, technology, engineering and math.

Social Studies

Synergy's social studies curriculum will also be internally developed in alignment with the needs outlined by Arizona College and Career Ready Standards. Because students living in our target population often lack the background knowledge needed to comprehend complex reading passages, a wide of variety of literature and informational resources that align to the social studies standards will be used to create high quality lessons that teach students' American history, world history, civics/government, geography, and economics and are integrated with the English Language Arts standards of reading, writing, and speaking. In grades K-2, social studies will reinforce literary skills to the extent possible, using social studies topics. For the most part, it will be another opportunity for our students to read and write to ensure progression in literacy. In grades 3, 4 and 5 we will focus more on social studies content.

Character and Leadership Development

A strong school culture will be built around character and leadership development. This character and leadership curriculum will developed by the Executive Directors and Director of Curriculum and will be based upon the Ron Clark Essential 55. Students will be taught these lessons daily during morning meetings. The Essential 55 will be a set of skills that are taught to the students. These skills will lead to confidence, and confidence will lead to pride and self-esteem. Students will gain skills they can use throughout their lives, and, therefore, build their self-esteem. [1]

Special Education

At Synergy, we recognize and believe all children have gifts and talents; it is our responsibility to find, nurture and inspire them. As we identify special needs students we will: differentiate their instruction to motivate and scaffold learning; we will nurture their social and emotional needs; and we will inspire students to reach their full potential making additional gains needed for the respective grade level. Appropriate academic course offering that are proven research based programs for qualified special needs students such as Wilson Learning, will be evident in the curriculum at Synergy. The curriculum programs will be composed of sound, viable and researched-based programs that are rich in content and promote critical thinking for all students.

For students identified as in need of Special Education services, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will be implemented via:

- Individual Growth Plans (IGP) that outline the assessment scores, growth, and areas of need for each students. Data driven instruction
- Intervention Services. Students will be placed in Leveled Reading Classes and Math Classes,

[1] http://www.educationworld.com/a_issues/chat/chat073.shtml

according to their needs. Students will be re-assessed every 30 days for placement.

- Response to Intervention (RTI) embedded into the instructional model. All students will partake in whole group instruction of an objective driven lesson with an end of lesson assessments. If a student does not meet mastery (80% accuracy), he/she receives small group instruction using alternative instructional methodologies.
- Assistive Technology: Students will have access to assistive technology to enhance their access to the curriculum.
- Multi-sensory learning: Kinesthetic, Visual, Tactile, and Auditory.
- Accommodations: Student's IEP's will reflect the tools necessary to access grade level curriculum through a variety of learning modalities. Accommodations may include but not limited to: shorter reading and writing assignments; having questions read or explained to the students; extra time to complete assignments; chunking assignments; small group instruction, one-on-one instruction; large print books, using a peer tutor; allowing answers to be given orally or dictated; use of computers.

English Language Learners

For identified LEP students, an Individualized Language Learner Plan will be constructed that incorporates:

- Individual Growth Plans (IGP) that outline the assessment scores, growth, and areas of need for each students and be addressed during Goal Setting/Math Foundations period. Intervention Services. Students will be services according to need into Leveled Reading Classes and Math Classes.
- Response to Intervention (RTI) embedded into the instructional model. All students will partake in whole group instruction of an objective driven lesson with an end of lesson assessments. If a student does not meet mastery (80% accuracy), he/she receives small group instruction using alternative instructional methodologies.
- Structured English Immersion (SEI). Synergy Public School will abide by the state statutes for all students who are identified English Language Learners (ELL). Structured English Immersion gives more attention to English Language Learner students' language needs and explicitly teaches student the English language with an emphasis on discrete grammar helping student to become English proficient.
- Sheltered Instructional Operation Protocol (SIOP). The SIOP Model assists teachers in delivering lessons that involve multiple input sources in addition to language, such as visual and kinesthetic, making the content more comprehensible to English Language Learners.

B. Methods of Instruction:

To ensure that all children experience a challenging and progressive child-centered educational program Synergy's teachers will utilize research-based instructional best practices to design, implement, evaluate and adjust instruction. Teachers will receive training in the following instructional methodologies, which are identified as best practices through extensive bodies of research.

Cooperative Learning

Based on the work of Dr. Spencer Kagan, cooperative learning structures are designed to increase academic achievement, improve social skills and social relations, improve thinking skills, and reduce

discipline problems.[2] Cooperative Learning is a style of learning that allows students to work together to accomplish a specific goal. The research on cooperative learning indicates that cooperation, compared with competitive and individualistic efforts, typically results in (a) higher achievement and greater productivity, (b) more caring, supportive, and committed relationships, and (c) greater psychological health, social competence, and self-esteem (Johnson, D, 1993). Cooperative learning structures will be utilized in all Synergy classrooms.

High-yield instructional strategies

High-yield instructional strategies are the strategies identified as most effective in the research of Robert Marzano. High-yield strategies will be utilized in all Synergy classrooms. Such strategies include:

- Vocabulary building and instruction
- Feedback and praise
- Graphic organizers
- Identifying similarities and differences
- Goal-setting
- Generating and testing hypotheses
- Summarization[3]

Gradual Release of Responsibility

The gradual release of responsibility model provides teachers with an instructional framework for moving from teacher knowledge to student understanding and application. The gradual release of responsibility model ensures that students are supported in their acquisition of the skills and strategies necessary for success. Teachers will provide direct instruction in an "I do, we do, you do" format. This allows for a gradual release of responsibility in performing the objective and starts with a demonstration or think aloud in which the teacher is showing the "I do," then moves to opportunities to practice together so that students can still feel comfortable exploring and making mistakes with the "we do", and then has students practice on their own so teachers can evaluate mastery in the "you do".[4] This model is fluid by allowing teachers to check for understanding easily and adjust instruction as necessary in real time.

ELL Strategies

Synergy will use the following strategies to support its ELL students. It is important to note that these are all good teaching practices that support all students in accessing a rigorous curriculum.

- Vocabulary and language development
- Metacognition and authentic assessment
- Explicit Instruction
- Modeling graphic organizers and visuals

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[2] http://www.kaganonline.com/about_us.php
[3] http://ideas.aetn.org/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/3834/Teachscape_HY_catalog.pdf
[4] https://www.mheonline.com/_treasures/pdf/douglas_fisher.pdf

Differentiation Strategies

Differentiation can be defined as a strategy that plans for and designs assignments, lessons, activities, tasks, and projects to match student needs. Students will learn the same concepts or skills but may approach them through different activities. Differentiation is a crucial aspect of effective instruction at all levels and teachers at Synergy Public School will differentiate content, process, and/or product according to students' readiness and need.

Formative Assessment & Daily Informal Checks

A great deal of emphasis will be on formative assessments (on-going). Students will be formatively assessed each day by their teachers who will check for understanding, or gather and respond to data collected through questioning and observation techniques. Teachers will incorporate minute-by-minute (thumbs up, thumbs down, hand signals, whiteboards) and end of lesson (exit ticket, take a stand, small group sampling) checks for understanding in their daily lessons.

Through frequent checks for understanding, real time assessments and daily exit tickets, teachers can immediately respond with opportunities for acceleration of some students and remediation for those who are struggling. This can look like a quick chat during the day or setting up a time before or after school as needed. These checks can also help the teacher to assess full-class trends that result in meeting with their grade level team to set up intervention groups or re-teach a lesson if it becomes clear that the class needs additional time on a skill.

These informal daily checks will be addressed and analyzed in weekly PLC meetings.
To monitor progress throughout the year toward the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards as well as performance objectives Synergy Public School will conduct interim, standards aligned assessments in math on a monthly basis. These interim assessments will be internally created with the help and collaboration of the leadership team and the Director of Curriculum and Instruction.

Alignment to Educational Philosophy

Synergy Public School's instructional approaches and models are designed specifically to address the unique needs of the target population, in an effort to bolster student achievement. We will do this by offering the following: strategic academic programming, rigorous curriculum resources, research-based best practice instructional methodologies, data-driven decision making processes, authentic experiential learning opportunities, strong support services/systems, and a culture and community emphasis. Synergy believes that by serving this community with excellence, we will raise the bar collectively among the surrounding schools.

C. Summative Assessment Plan

Synergy Public School believes in the importance of dependable assessment systems. Our assessment system will allow us to assess:

- Our progress toward achieving our mission of providing students in an under-served community with a challenging and progressive curriculum.
- The effectiveness of our curriculum and instructional strategies; and
- The performance of our individual students toward ambitious educational goals. In order to assess progress toward our mission, we will utilize nationally normed tests that show us; how

our students are progressing in relation to their peers nationwide.

To assess the academic progress of our students, we will utilize a comprehensive system of assessments. Assessment data will be analyzed in reference to Arizona College and Career Ready Standards. Analysis of all assessments will provide the basis for our process of evaluating instructional effectiveness and adjusting curriculum accordingly.

The assessment system will allow us to continuously receive reliable, valid, bias-free information about our students and educational program. Objectivity is obtained through the use of research-based, norm- and criterion-referenced assessments from nationally recognized publishers. When using internally created assessments, we will avoid bias by correlating our assessments to the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards.

At Synergy Schools, we will administer baseline and quarterly assessments aligned to the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards. These assessments will give an analysis of student's gaps, if any and allow for purposeful planning of specific instructional approaches for each learner. This data will facilitate teacher's rapid responses to provide focused remediation for some and offering greater challenges and enrichment for others.

Quarterly NWEA MAP Assessments

Synergy Public School will use Northwest Evaluation Association's MAP test for diagnostic, summative and progress monitoring throughout the year. The MAP test will be given at the start of the year to diagnose the academic needs of the students who are attending Synergy Public School. The data provided will assist in the development of relevant curriculum that fits the needs of each student in the school. The test will provide a percentile rank to provide an understanding of how students perform in comparison to their peers nationally. The test provides lexile levels to help teachers inform choices about classroom text and materials. Finally, a breakdown of mastered skills and areas of weakness that correlate to the AZCCRS are shown in the reports. These data points are vital in providing concrete evidence about how our students are progressing and what we need to focus on in the short term to see the most progress. There is no time to waste and this information will allow Synergy staff to quickly assess and address needs to accomplish our goals. The team at Synergy Public School will use the data collected from the MAP test to set growth goals for every student. To best serve our students' growth, MAP goals will be set three times each school year. Students will take an end-of-year assessment to measure growth and achievement accomplished throughout the school year.

Success For All Quarterly Assessments

Synergy Public School has chosen to use Success For All (SFA) as their core literacy program. Assessment is not separate from instruction in the SFA reading program. It is a major, essential, and integrated part of the teaching and learning process. Students' progress and mastery of the desired student outcomes will be determined using multiple measures. Because these assessment scores are collected across time and in different situations, they are all considered important and will be used to verify one another. Students reading level are assessed every eight weeks for determination of reading mastery and reading levels.

Additionally, Synergy Public School will administer the 4Sight AZCCRS Benchmark Assessments in Reading and Math for 3rd, 4th and 5th graders. The assessments are developed by the Success For All

Foundation (SFAF) and are designed primarily to predict students' performance on end-of-the-year state exams. The 4Sight will measure the same set of knowledge and skills at several points during the school year to see if students are making progress and to provide an early warning of potential problems. AZCCRS 4Sight will provide a formative evaluation of synergy student's progress that predicts how they would do if the AzMERIT was given on the same day.[5]

Galileo Quarterly Benchmark Assessments

Galileo AZCCRS Benchmark Assessments will be given in kindergarten through fifth grade quarterly to assess Synergy students on their progress towards mastery of the standards. These benchmark assessments will be used as a guide in planning and developing lessons.

State Assessment

Synergy Public School will administer the annual state AzMERIT assessment according to state guidelines. AzMERIT results will provide a roadmap for continual improvement and development of the yearly academic systems plan, which will guide instructional decisions for each new school year.

D. Alignment of Program of Instruction and Performance Management Plan

Synergy Public Schools Academic Systems Plan discusses specific strategies that detail the action steps, resources and accountability required to ensure success of the Program of Instruction.

[5] http://www.iu13.org/store/4sight-assessments/#sthash.HZXtcKg2.dpuf.