A.5 Performance Management Plan Reading Narrative

The Performance Management Plan for TCDS provides four strategies and accompanying action steps. The plan details how TCDS will develop, implement and support a curriculum and instructional program that ensures high and growing student performance in reading. This narrative explains the process necessary for each strategy and step and describes the process of data collection and analysis for evaluating the plan's effectiveness.

Evidence and Data Analysis

TCDS will implement four strategies to ensure that our students master the Arizona Career and College Ready Standards (AZCCRS) and achieve school goals. The process for gathering evidence and analyzing data on the effectiveness of the action steps for each strategy is described in further detail below.

Strategy 1: Provide and implement a curriculum that improves student achievement

The following narrative describes the strategies and the required action steps Tucson Country Day School is taking to continue to develop, strengthen, implement and support a schoolwide reading curriculum and instructional program that ensures increased student achievement in reading. The narrative explains the process we will follow within each strategy to gather and analyze data on the effectiveness of each action step. To aid in the evaluation of our reading program, Tucson Country Day School has established a baseline student performance level that we will use to set annual goals for student achievement. The baseline for student performance and our strategies for achieving it are described below.

A. Predicted Baseline

Tucson Country Day School looked at data from ten elementary schools and middle schools, both charter and traditional public schools, in the targeted population area to determine the predicted baseline for percent of students proficient in reading and the average student growth percentiles (SGP). We used data from the 2013 AIMS assessment as obtained from the Arizona Department of Education. To determine our predicted baseline, we calculated the average student proficiency in reading for the ten schools combined and calculated an average proficiency rate of 85%. We calculated the baseline SGP by averaging the reading median growth percentiles for the ten schools and calculated the median growth SGP to be 49.5.

Tucson Country Day School has Stanford 10 testing data and/or AIMS data for students in second through eighth grade. We will use this data in addition to benchmark data collected throughout the school to assess our progress in meeting our stated goals for academic achievement. Our goals are rigorous and exceed the average results achieved by schools in our target population area in 2013. Progress made towards meeting our

goals will be monitored monthly and reviewed with grade level teams and with administration at monthly data meetings. The data will also be presented to our school board at our regularly scheduled board meetings.

Goal: Students at Tucson Country Day School will meet or exceed the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards (ACCRC) in reading.

- Measure 1: 90% or more of students will achieve an 85% or higher on post-quarterly reading benchmarks that are aligned to the ACCRC.
- Measure 2: 90% or more of students will meet or exceed based on final RAPS 360 testing administered at the end of the school year
- Measure 3 (grades 3 to 8): 90% or more of students who have attended Tucson Country Day School for two or more years will meet or exceed the reading standards as demonstrated by the annual State proficiency assessment.

B. Process of Gathering and Analyzing Data on the Effectiveness of our Action Steps

Tucson Country Day School follows four strategies to ensure that our students meet or exceed the AZCCRS in reading and reach our schoolwide goals. The processes we follow for gathering and analyzing data on the effectiveness of our action steps for each strategy are described below.

Strategy 1. Provide and Implement a Curriculum that Improves Student Achievement

Curriculum Creation Process - Tucson Country Day School's curriculum is aligned to and is based on the AZCCRS reading standards. We used the Engage New York common core curriculum (https://www.engageny.org/common-core-curriculum) as a starting point for creating our schoolwide curriculum. This ensured that the curriculum is articulated from our youngest grade (preschool) through our oldest grade (eighth grade). Using Engage New York as a starting point, and incorporating the curriculum mappers and pacing calendars found in Measured Progress's DataWise benchmark program (http://www.measuredprogress.org), we have created our own curriculum maps and pacing guides to ensure students learn in a sequence that makes sense and provides for individual student success from one quarter to the next and from one year to the next.

Using the pacing guides, grade level teams create unit plans and assessments. They design daily lesson plans that are aligned to the unit plans. Pre-tests, end-of-year summative assessments and benchmark assessments that align with the grade level pacing guides are used to determine student achievement and progress throughout the year.

Grade level teams meet with administrators once a month to review assessment data and their own progress moving through the pacing guide. Modifications to the curriculum

occur on an as-needed basis and always occur when student achievement does not meet the expected levels.

Data Collection and Analysis – Well-thought out and comprehensive pacing guides used along with student achievement results from pre-tests, end-of-year assessments, pre-quarter and post-quarter quarterly benchmarks on the material taught during the quarter, and unit assessments are used to show evidence that the designated curriculum is being delivered in a manner that results in increased student achievement.
Modifications are made to the curriculum as needed to ensure student achievement is meeting the stated goals.

Individual student results on the assessments noted above are used to determine if individual students are meeting the established goals. When they are not, interventions are offered to those students who need them to improve their academic achievement.

Teaching Staff - As important as the curriculum we put in place, we know the importance of hiring, supporting and retaining highly qualified teachers who are effective and engage students in the learning process. To this end, Tucson Country Day School follows a rigorous hiring process that requires teacher and other staff candidates to engage in a day long interview process. During the process, candidates meet one on one with eight to ten teachers, administrators and staff They are asked a series of research-based questions covering a variety of topics including multi tasking, personal accomplishments, integrity, perseverance, work ethic, etc. Teacher candidates are given a content area and asked to teach a lesson to students, and student feedback about the teacher is obtained. At the end of the day, all interviewers meet together to discuss candidate qualifications and only those candidates who are approved by all interviewers are invited to join our team. Though this process is time consuming (we ran five day-long interview processes this past summer to find the right people for our team), it has proven to be highly successful. Through the process, we find talented, enthusiastic, knowledgeable people who love children and love teaching, and who have the skills needed to help students achieve at their highest potential.

New teachers undergo a one-day intensive "Introduction to TCDS" in-service and then participate along with all returning teachers in six days of in-service prior to the start of the school year. Additional professional development is offered throughout the year, and individual training occurs on an as needed basis.

Data from assessments is tracked and teachers who need additional assistance in any area receive it quickly in the form of one-on-one mentoring from a master teacher, discussion and interactions with our principal who serves as our instructional leader, outside training, and/or review of classroom management and engagement strategies.

Throughout the school, we have a focus on implementing and using systems that ensure that all students are taught the required curriculum. Our systems identify students needing interventions early in the school year and our practices allow us to provide the needed

intervention in a timely and effective manner. Our systems also enable us to identify students who are excelling and need to be challenged in the classroom, and allow us to provide enrichment activities as needed.

Strategy II: Develop and implement a plan for monitoring the integration of the Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards (AZCCRS) into instruction.

Process for Integrating Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards into Instruction - Tucson Country Day School has already incorporated Arizona College and Career Ready Standards into our instruction. As noted above, grade levels used the research-based Engage New York curriculum and the Measured Progress DataWise pacing guides to create a curriculum that fully integrates the AZCCRS reading standards. Any AZCCRS reading standards that were missing from Engage New York or Measured Progress were incorporated into the curriculum mappers and the resulting pacing guides.

Collection of Data and Data Analysis – Integration of the standards has been reviewed and checked by administration. All teachers are following a curriculum mapper that is aligned to the AZCCRS. As noted above, the web-based PlanBook is being used by administration to track the actual teaching of all required standards. Weekly, if not more frequent, observations by administration in teacher classrooms will provide additional data that the required standards are being taught, as will the results of post-tests, quarterly benchmarks and end-of-year assessments that are already created and assess instruction based on teachers following their AZCCRS aligned curriculum mapper.

Teachers who are not teaching the required standards will be given assistance and instruction to do so. A teacher who is noncompliant will not continue teaching at Tucson Country Day School.

Strategy III: Develop and implement a plan for monitoring and documenting student proficiency.

Process for Monitoring and Documenting Student Proficiency – Throughout Tucson Country Day School, we have a focus on implementing and using systems that ensure that all students are taught the required curriculum and that all students are achieving at their highest potential and seeing growth. Our systems identify students needing interventions early in the school year and our practices allow us to provide the needed intervention in a timely and effective manner. Our systems also enable us to identify students who are excelling and need to be challenged in the classroom, and allow us to provide enrichment activities as needed.

Our assessment system is an integral piece of our program and makes it possible for us to know at any given time where a student is performing and if a student is making the expected academic progress.

Our instruction is designed to be differentiated as we have a wide range of ability levels within each grade level. To assist in the delivery of remedial services, we use a common 90-minute literacy block every morning for kindergarten through third grade students, and for fourth and fifth grade students. The literacy block allows for an intensive intervention program that involves small group instruction (three to five students) with highly qualified teachers for those students who have been identified as needing assistance to close gaps in their learning and increase their academic skills. All elementary teachers participate in the intervention program, including our available specials teachers (Spanish, PE and technology) and Resource staff. For 30 minutes during the literacy block, each grade level is assisted by two to four extra staff, allowing students to be split into two larger groups of exceeds and meets students, a medium size group of approaches students, and one to five small groups of students needing intensive work in reading skills. Middle School students receive reading intervention services during the 30-minute enrichment block that occurs every day. During this period, students needing interventions in reading meet in small groups with one of four middle school teachers to work on gaps in their reading strategies and skills.

These leveled groups are fluid and students can move quickly and easily from one group to another based on their knowledge in specific reading-related areas. Students are initially placed in a group based on a combination of their prior year Stanford 10 and AIMS scores (if available), results from the RAP 360 test both at the end of the prior year and the beginning of the new year, benchmark data and any other information brought by the student's teacher. Students in the lowest two groups (tier 2 and tier 3), are reassessed using RAPS 360 every ten days. Specific gaps and needs are identified and improvement in achievement is seen as it occurs. All other students are assessed using RAPS 360 on a quarterly basis. Students are moved to the appropriate group as soon as the need for a change is seen through the evaluation of data and student achievement.

Collection of Data and Data Analysis of Student Achievement Data - As noted above, Tucson Country Day School uses a number of assessment strategies to track student progress and ensure that students are making expected gains in academic achievement. All the data we use is designed to give us a comprehensive look at whether Tucson Country Day School and each individual student is on the right path to meet our goals.

To make access to data easy for teachers, every teacher has a data binder. The data binder has a tab for each student in the class. Data from all assessments – pre and post-quarterly benchmark assessment in reading, RAPS 360 scores, unit assessments and comprehensive end of year assessment data – is included in the binder, along with AIMS results from prior years and any other data a teacher believes is relevant. Each student data page contains student and teacher set goals for expected student achievement in reading. Individual student goals that are met are noted, and when goals are not met a plan for meeting them is included in the data binder and is monitored by the teacher. (Middle School language arts teachers have a data binder for each class they teach. Each class has a data sheet for each student in the class.)

In addition to analyzing student-level data as a team, grade level teams analyze teacher level and grade level data with the administration at least monthly. Discussions about goals occur. Modifications and adjustments to curriculum and to individual instruction are made on an as-needed basis. Groupings for the intensive intervention program offered during the literacy block at adjusted based on the data.

Students are expected to achieve 85% mastery on assessments testing their mastery of the reading standards. Students who do not meet this level will receive additional interventions as noted.

Data will also be reviewed to see where teachers have been highly successful in increasing student achievement. Successful strategies used will be discussed and modeled for other teachers to use in their classrooms.

Strategy IV: Development and implementation of a professional development plan that supports effective implementation of the curriculum.

Process for Developing and Implementing a Professional Development Plan that Supports Effective Implementation of the Reading Curriculum – Tucson Country Day School recognizes the providing effective, engaging and meaningful professional development to our staff is an extremely critical piece to ensuring student success. Tucson Country Day School provides six days of professional development prior to the start of each school year (seven days for new teachers). During the in-service, teachers and teacher support staff focus on strategies that make a difference in student achievement such as:

- The design and use of the curriculum mapper and pacing guide
- The importance of assessing students after each lesson to see where they are and how to create post-lesson assessments
- The value of data driven instruction including frequent analysis of available data
- How to read data and understand it
- How to use data to drive instruction
- How to teach meaningful engaging lessons that capture students' attention and help them to see real world connections between what they are learning and their own life
- How to effectively implement a comprehensive reading program that provides intervention for students who need intervention and enrichment for students who are ready to move ahead
- Highly effective classroom management strategies (for new teachers)
- The value of the teacher evaluation process and how to use it to become a more effective teacher

Grade level teams meet to discuss what they are learning and to collaborate on how they see these strategies being applied in their grade level.

Five additional all-staff professional development half days are scheduled throughout the year and generally occur every other month. Topics at these professional development sessions are designed to build on the information taught during in-service and to respond to identified teacher needs that arise during the school year.

In addition, grade level staff development sessions occur during common planning periods and are led by our instructional leader and/or a knowledgeable team member. Data meetings are held monthly with each team and offer an opportunity for professional development. We work to build strong, team-oriented professional learning communities (PLC) within each team and encourage team members to support one another, share their expertise and work collaboratively to improve their teaching skills and the academic performance of our students.

Time is scheduled during the school year for grade level teams to meet with the grade above and the grade below them. This time is invaluable as it allows receiving teachers to let the sending teacher know of any skill gaps they are seeing in students moving up from a lower grade level, and fosters discussions about areas of focus, strengths and weaknesses at all grade levels.

Time is also built into the schedule to provide teachers with an opportunity to spend time doing peer observations in their own and other grade levels. Peer observations are used to share teaching strategies and to provide modeling of successful strategies when applicable.

After school professional development is offered at least twice a month on a variety of topics. Participation at most after school professional development sessions is voluntary but can be required by administration if needed.

Finally, we use the Danielson Framework as the basis for our teacher evaluations. Our instructional leader visits every classroom, observes and leaves comments at least once each week. Teachers can converse back and forth in writing with the instructional leader use a composition book that is placed in a wall pocket inside each classroom. Teachers who would like additional feedback, and teachers who are identified by the instructional leader as needing additional feedback, can sit with the instructional leader to discuss the observations and go through the Danielson rubric to identify areas of strength and weaknesses, and to create action steps for strengthening their instructional skills. Many teachers voluntarily ask for this feedback.