Tucson Preparatory School

Renewal Application Narrative

Submitted to
The Arizona State Board for Charter Schools

Every student can learn, just not on the same day, or the same way.

– George Evans

Or in the same place!

Tucson, Arizona ▪ March 2012

BACKGROUND, HISTORY AND PROFILE

Tucson Preparatory School was chartered by ASBCS in June 1998 to fill identified gaps in educational resources for specifically targeted sub-groups of high school students. In short, at the time, school options for homeless students, adjudicated youth and those with other significant barriers to educational success were exceedingly limited. Traditional education routinely discouraged the matriculation of "problem" students and seemed unwilling and/or unable to meet the needs of these "problem" youth. At that time, the trend was for schools to adopt a rigorous zero-tolerance response to drug and alcohol use, behavioral issues, school safety concerns and character lapses.

Disciplinary systems were instituted and adjusted to permanently purge problem students from public schools. It worked as planned. "Regular" students were shielded from "risky" ones. The result was a flood of out-of-school youth with poor academic, social and behavioral skills. They overburdened the social service network and juvenile justice system—entities that were hardly equipped to effectively respond to youth who lacked the most basic skills for employment. Often, Juvenile Courts mandated school attendance, but schools were not obligated to accept students suspended or expelled by other schools, or those who could be considered dangerous.

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY Tucson Prep was conceived as an educational oasis for those who did not fit into traditional school settings. There was a conviction that students could not be expected to master algebra if they did not know where they would be sleeping that night, were hungry, or afraid to go home because Mom was back on meth. Tucson Prep was designed exclusively for students with serious barriers to academic success. Just as it is today, the future job prospects for uneducated youth were limited to subsistence employment.

Transportation would be provided, as would books and other school supplies along with smaller class sizes and more individual instruction. A case management approach was developed which assessed students' affective needs and linked them with youth-serving agencies and governmental services. Students were recruited from community-based agencies and through street outreach efforts in tunnels, abandoned buildings and desert washes. Some were literally dragged in by probation and parole officers. Teachers ranged from veteran professionals with experience in detention facility schools to former Peace Corps volunteers to fresh college graduates. They had to want to work with this population, be unafraid of teenagers and have high expectations for student achievement and school success.

We soon realized that our learning curve was steep. Students were like onions: We peeled off one problem only to find countless layers of other issues below. The community did not warm up to adolescents with outrageous attire and bad attitudes. As much as we tried, we couldn't make the students do what traditional schools are supposed to do. Consistent linear learning was not happening. Progress would be made with a student and then he or she would vanish from school. Some students would read at a 9th grade level one week and at the 4th grade level the next. Their language was foul, their dress off-putting and they would try to come and go as they pleased. Experts we consulted said, "Now you see why no other school wants them?"

But we persevered. And it has not been easy. We learned that our students responded to positive attention even though they expected negative responses. We found ways for them to experience small academic successes. They tested us, but we stood up to the challenge. Their comfort level grew as they realized that we actually wanted them to stay in school. We were upbeat, stable, consistent, orderly and kind. We expected them to learn the multiplication tables. Even though their spelling was atrocious (and still is, unfortunately) they began to write in complete sentences.

We let them know that we didn't care about what had happened at their last school or the school before that. We made it clear that every student enters Tucson Prep with a clean slate, baggage left behind in the cumulative files. We helped them find housing, get eyeglasses, and clear up warrants and fines. They began to trust us. We found that most were just like other teenagers, but lacking the basic life experiences that most of us take for granted. Many had never played Monopoly or Scrabble, or eaten in a restaurant with tablecloths and menus. They have stories that could break your heart, but could be taught resiliency along with nouns and verbs, periods and commas.

STUDENT PROFILE How do you describe Tucson Prep students? Our students are those who have already been left behind by the traditional public education system and are often described as "chronic school failures." They have all of the social and behavioral problems associated with adolescence and few of the resources available to other teens. They are often described as "system" youth because of their involvement with the child welfare system, the juvenile justice system and/or the publicly-supported mental health system. Most of our students do not have functional parents and lack the support systems that other children can depend on when there is a need or crisis. Many are living outside of the traditional family in group homes, foster care, with friends, or in independent living programs. The cynics among us call them collateral damage to society's woes.

The industry standard, "at risk," doesn't seem to fit them very well. "At risk" of dropping out? Most are dropping back in after dropping out more than once. "At risk" of not graduating? Most have already missed their anticipated graduation date and are fifth, sixth or seventh year seniors with freshman or sophomore credits. "At risk" of not reaching productive adulthood and becoming burdens or menaces to society? That one fits and should scare us all. . . . A popular new term is "students placed at risk." The National At-Risk Education Network's (NAREN) definition seems on target:

> *"Students are placed at-risk when they experience a significant mismatch between their circumstances and needs, and the capacity or willingness of the school to accept, accommodate, and respond to them in a manner that supports and enables their maximum social, emotional and intellectual growth and development."*

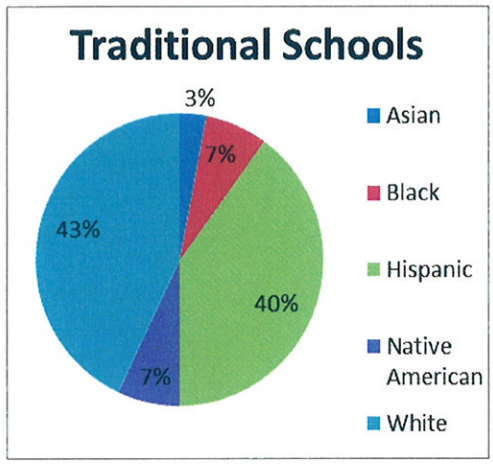
"Difficult students, students with barriers to success, hard-to-serve youth" are also meaningful terms.

On a daily basis there are 165 enrolled students who unabashedly bring their issues and problems to school with them. The school maintains a year-round waiting list that can sometimes grow to 50 or more. Tucson Prep students are probationers, parolees, wards of the state, youth with serious mental illness, homeless students, juvenile sex offenders, gang members, first generation Americans, substance abusers and students on expulsion and long-term suspension. Pregnant and parenting teens, chronic truants, students with disabilities are all welcomed. We've taught refugee children and a couple of the Lost Boys of the Sudan.

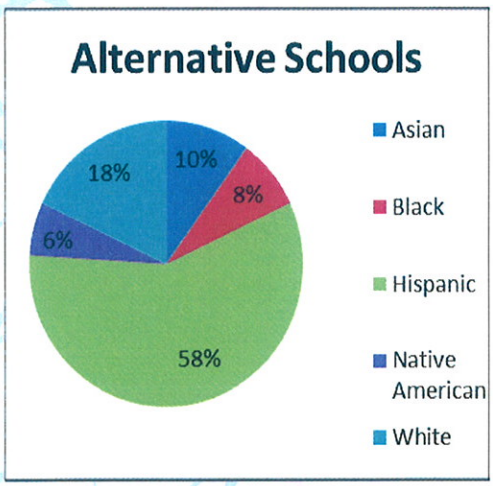
Every student has one or more identified, significant challenges at the time of enrollment. National estimates indicate that only 18 to 20 percent of "at-risk" students have two or more barriers to educational success. It is commonplace for a Tucson Prep student to be in out-of-home placement, on probation and involved with the publicly-supported mental health system, all at the same time. It's a matter of degree and intensity. Some students live in abandoned buildings, others live in Aunt Sally's guest house. Both students are homeless.

In addition to these issues, our students are likely to have a full complement of academic deficits that have not been previously identified or addressed, lack family support and are profoundly alienated from the educational process. At first enrollment, they have low self-concepts and readily describe themselves as "losers" with little potential for success. They bring long histories of interrupted education and are unlikely to remain continuously enrolled for an entire school year or even a semester due to incarceration, runaway, changes in placement or family instability. We've had a 20-

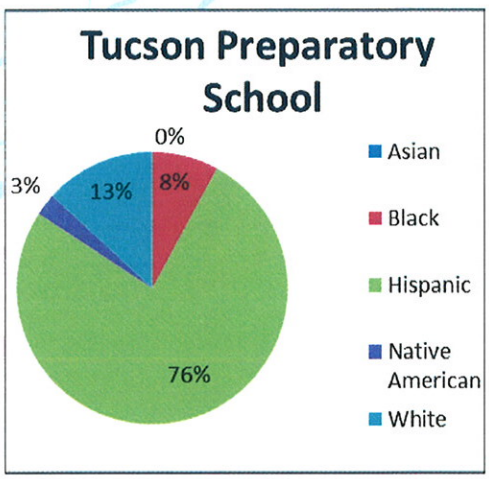
year-old with a better than usual attendance history diagnosed for the first time with autism, and more newly-eligible special education students that traditional education would like to admit.



Tucson Prep's demographics consistently reveal a student population that is considerably different and strikingly more "at-risk" than even the "alternative schools" serving seemingly similar populations. Tucson Prep students are predominantly youth of color with 87 percent minority representation in the 2010-2011 student body. Most are Hispanic or Latino; very few are Asian. Mixed race students are becoming more prevalent as the years go by.



Overwhelmingly, Tucson Prep students are poor, not just low-income. Few parents have careers or steady jobs. They seem to get by on entitlement income and, occasionally, shadow employment. If Title I criteria were used, 95 percent would be eligible for free and reduced-price lunches. Intact families with two parents related to the student are rare. Our most effective parents are often the *nanas* and *tatas*, the grandparents forced back into parenting roles.



In most cases, Tucson Prep graduates are their families' first generation to earn high school diplomas. Over the years we've had but a handful of parents who have attended college and three who have earned degrees. Family vehicles are a rarity, as are land telephone lines. Cell phones are the norm, often temporarily disconnected or unable to receive incoming messages. Frequently it is impossible for the school to reach a responsible adult by telephone.

Tucson Prep is located in Tucson's most distressed zip code where the incidence of street crime, child abuse, juvenile and adult probationers, domestic violence, substance use and substandard housing tops every other area of the city. Graffiti and litter are everywhere.

There are apartments that rent by the week and a profusion of dilapidated trailer parks reminiscent of the Third World, complete with rusty swamp coolers and cardboard covering broken windows. The convenience stores and check cashing establishments have "walk-up" windows. Three school districts converge in the neighborhood. Area elementary schools are low-achieving and thwart the hopes, dreams and learning that should be alive inside their walls. Evictions and utility shut-offs are commonplace. Tucson Prep's neighborhood is home to urban stress and despair with little relief in sight. It is our expectation that education will serve as a way out for the youth trapped in such ugliness.

As this table from 2010-11 demonstrates, class standing is exceptionally skewed toward the upper grades, with more seniors represented than the other three classes combined. Virtually every 12th grader is a "drop-in," having dropped out of high school one or more times previously.

Cohort	*Number*	*Percent*
9th Grade	42	13.8
10th Grade	39	12.8
11th Grade	53	17.4
12th Grade	171	56.0

Point-in-time data is used to illustrate the relative distribution of population sub-groups present on any given day. Students in the chart on the next page are unduplicated, but their sub-group identification is duplicated. The table includes categories that are regularly tracked to monitor shifts in population characteristics and referral source distribution.

Our statistics have faces and futures

A POINT-IN-TIME SNAPSHOT: *Who's at school today?*

Enrollment as of February 1, 2011	165	100%
Waiting list	27	16%
Current juvenile probationer	62	38%
Current juvenile parolee	3	1%
Current adult probationer	1	.6%
Pregnant	5	3%
Parenting	23	14%
Out-of-home placement (group home)	7	4%
Child Protective Services open cases	25	15%
Runaway	2	1%
Detained by Juvenile Court	1	.6%
Mental health system involvement	3	1%
Experienced one or more episodes of homelessness this school year	34	20%
Completed juvenile probation this school year	36	21%
Youth on Their Own (YOTO) participant	7	4%
Attending Pima Community College this semester	9	5%
SPED	23	14%
Young men	88	53%
Young women	77	47%
Hispanic/Latino	97	58%
African American	12	7%
Native American	15	9%
Caucasian/White	39	24%
Other	2	1%

TUCSON PREP'S STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Tucson Prep students are both our strongest asset and our greatest weakness. Our students define us as an institution and as educators. We must be cognizant that our target population is extraordinary and sets us apart from other schools in approach and methods, but not in accountability. Tucson Prep students are entitled to the same quality public education as other Arizona students. But, in addition to instruction in standards-based content, we must advocate for them and be there when they need us for things that have little to do with algebra or grammar. We must operate in a holistic arena, but concentrate on academics.

ACCOMMODATION OF TARGET STUDENTS AND ATTENTION TO THEIR NEEDS

As time passes, the challenges facing difficult students and those who care for and teach them have become more acute. Shifts in service mandates and funding levels now place youth in the community attending local schools rather than in institutional or therapeutic settings with in-house educational facilities. Lengths of stay in juvenile detention and correctional facilities continue to shorten. Juveniles who were once housed in correctional facilities are now at home in the community, placed on Juvenile Intensive Probation Services (JIPS). Those who were once on JIPS are now on regular probation with its lower level of supervision. Court personnel rely on schools to monitor the behavior probationers and parolees at unprecedented levels.

Youth who have been removed from their families by Child Protective Services are often transported to Phoenix because there are insufficient emergency placements in Tucson, and then brought back when a local bed becomes available. Tucson Prep offers the stability and continuity so important to these children. Meanwhile, students with problems are still shunned by traditional education and few schools elect to enroll or retain students with profound or multiple problems. Tucson Prep accepts every student between the ages of 14 and 22 without regard to the difficulty or complexity of presenting problem(s). Enrollment at Tucson Prep is prompt and unconditional, with new students welcomed every day, not just at the beginning of the school year or term.

We have developed a matter-of-fact approach for dealing with inevitable crises and drama –an on-campus arrest, an emotional meltdown -- so that they do not disrupt the school day for others. We expect good behavior and generally get it. Discipline is non-punitive and derived from a case management approach whereby the response is customized for an individual situation and not governed by a standard menu of infractions.

SOCIETAL BENEFITS Since inception, Tucson Prep has readily accepted students who are inappropriate for other educational settings, thus freeing other schools to stay on-task with their clientele. As achievement profiles and academic standards have become increasingly rigorous, other schools – districts and charters alike – preemptively "dump" students who are deemed likely to bring their numbers down at year end. These are students who are behind and cannot graduate on time with their cohort, or fallen far below on AIMS testing. Tucson Prep welcomes the onslaught of "dumped" students each spring – usually after the 100th day of attendance – without regard to the effect that their inclusion in our student demographics will have on our numbers. We believe that this is the right thing to do for the students in question.

A 17-year-old student enrolled this week. He was casually asked if he knew what credits he needed to graduate. He earnestly responded, "All of them." When reviewing his school history, it became apparent that he had been out of school for seven consecutive years! If this is indeed accurate and he has not attended high school before, he is a lucky young man. ADE guidelines allow us to enroll him as a 9th grader and work with him until his 22nd birthday. He came to Tucson Prep after several nearby schools had denied him the opportunity to enroll because of his age and lack of credits. We don't yet know what kept him out of school for seven years but we can rest assured that he wasn't on holiday.

Tucson Prep matriculates students based upon age, not class standing. Increasingly, we are seeing district middle schools advise the parents of 14-year-old 'troublemakers" to enroll them at Tucson Prep to avoid or interrupt the middle school's disciplinary actions. Probation officers do the same, often with 14-year-old probationers who can't find another school that is willing to accept them. Although there are a few exceptions, these are students who come to high school without an 8th grade certificate and without meeting 8th grade benchmarks.

If one looks at the outcomes of the 300 Tucson Prep students enrolled each year, the picture is hardly favorable. But, if the lens zooms in on graduates, the image is much different. Each year, 50 or so students who would otherwise be symbols of failure are moving on with their lives with skills, self-confidence and a path to the American Dream or, at the very least, within the margins of mainstream society. They have done what other high schools expect of them: earn credits and pass AIMS by score or through augmentation. They are often uncounted in the graduation rate of the school and state because it took them more than four years to earn their diplomas. It takes them more time and effort and, often, is not acknowledged.

STABILITY Unlike the unfortunate charter school stereotype, Tucson Prep's faculty is composed of highly qualified professionals with varied life experiences and

backgrounds. Four have masters degrees in their content areas or related fields. Three have training in the ancillary fields of social work and counseling. Half are culturally competent and bilingual. Several overcame childhoods similar to our students. Two para-professionals are Tucson Prep graduates. What is most unusual is the tenure of both faculty and staff. There is very little turnover from school year to school year, with most employed between five and ten years. The staff functions with great collegiality and works collaboratively with ease. The stability and continuity of faculty and staff are of great benefit to system youth whose mobility and household instability are legend. The same adult faces are at school day after day, year after year.

Tucson Prep operated in inadequate leased space for most of its tenure. A building was purchased in 2007 and renovated to meet the needs of a school. This necessitated a move from one neighborhood to another within the same zip code, There were construction delays that forced the school into temporary locations that were less than desirable. Our lowest achievement scores were realized during this time of transition and uncertainty. Stability has now been achieved with a building that is suited for its purpose and Tucson Prep will not relocate any time soon.

COLLABORATION Tucson Prep draws upon the expertise and resources of several agencies and community groups in support of our students. The school is a voting member of the Tucson Pima Coalition to end Homelessness (TPCH), and serves on its Youth Committee. The Tucson Prep case manager serves as a liaison to Youth on Their Own (YOTO), a community-based agency that supports homeless in-school youth with essential services and monthly stipends. In addition, Tucson Prep has partnered with YOTO and La Paloma Family Services to offer a grant-funded college prep program for homeless, at-risk and group home youth. Thirty to 35 Tucson Prep students are dually enrolled in Pima Community College each school year. Cooperating agencies provide emergency shelter and transitional housing, including apartments for parenting students, and conduct regular street outreach and referral. Governmental agencies provide some monthly bus passes, employment and training and assistance for families facing eviction or utility shut-off. We are pleased to work with the Juvenile Court, Child Protective Services and the Regional Behavioral Health Authority who bring us students in need of our educational program.

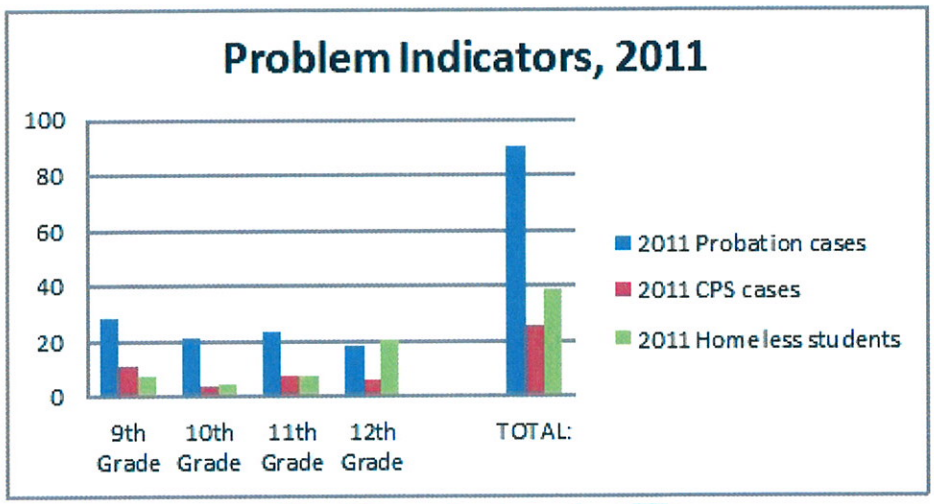
ADHERENCE TO MISSION AND CHARTER CONTRACT We had no "how-to" manual in 1998. Many mainstream educational professionals were sure we were crazy, engaged in a risky social experiment of deliberately recruiting students who were unworthy of such attention and inviting them into an unsecured facility. Despite all of this, Tucson Prep has forged ahead in the spirit of our charter contract. We have enrolled only students who met our criteria and done nearly everything we could to make them whole as students and as citizens. We have learned to be flexible and adaptive and creative. We have provided "a learning environment that improves pupil

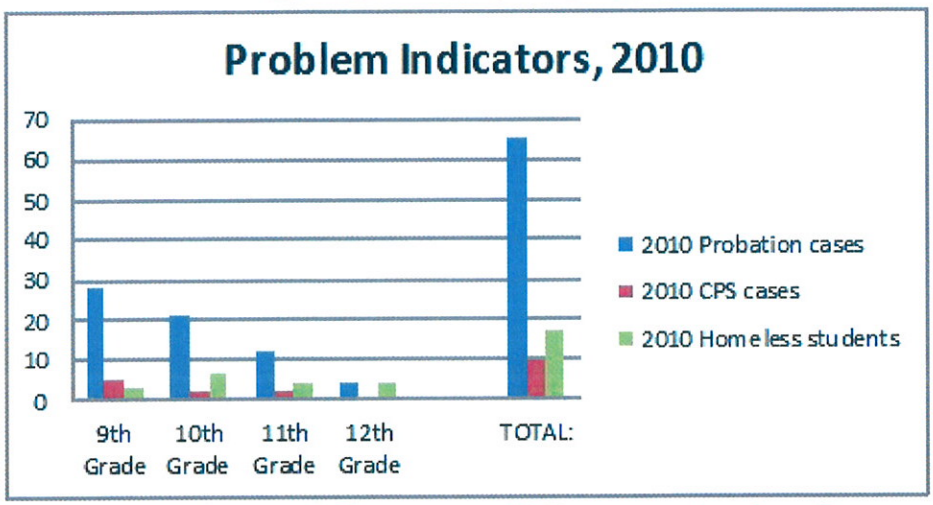
achievement" for our difficult-to-serve student population, and we have offered additional academic choices for parents and students. However rewarding our accomplishments with individual students have been, they are not "macro" enough to pass muster under the accountability structure adopted by the State Board for Charter Schools.

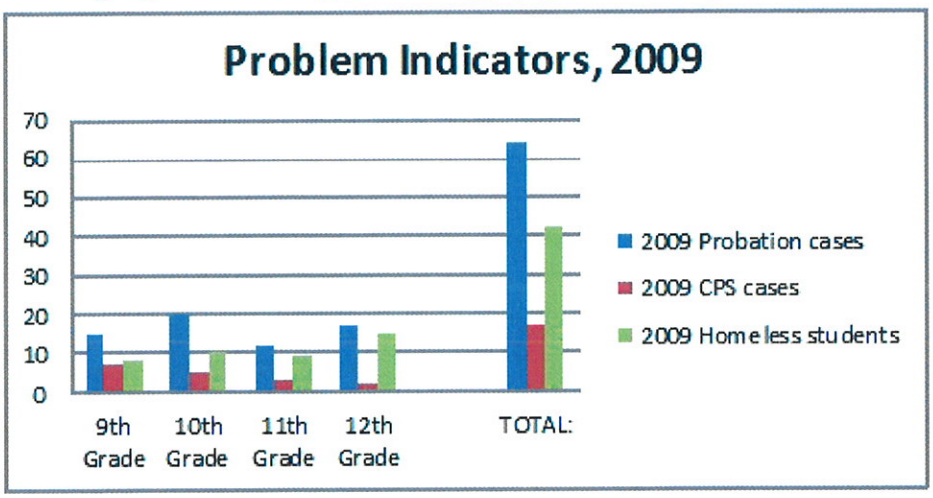
ACCOUNTABILITY Without belaboring the point, Tucson Prep has a glaring weakness that takes precedence over all others. Our weaknesses are not nuance, but obvious and straightforward. Although Tucson Prep has been consistently designated as a "performing" alternative school under Arizona LEARNS, and achieved Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in 2011, the school has failed to meet the Board's Level of Adequate Academic Performance. This is simply unacceptable.

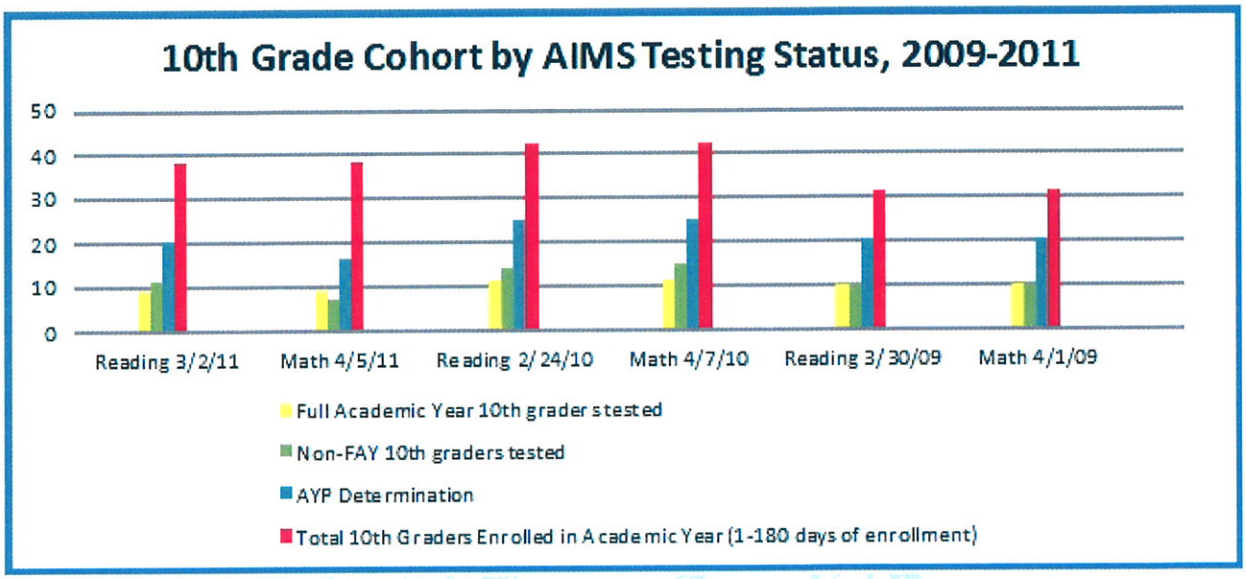
Anticipating this difficulty, Tucson Prep was an early and strong participant in the launching of the Alternative Education Consortium and contributes a faculty member to serve on its board of directors. The consortium is tasked with advocating for alternative schools – district and charter – in the development of accountability standards aligned with alternative schools' circumstances and demographics. Unfortunately, the consortium's work is still in progress as Tucson Prep's renewal approaches. In reality, Tucson Prep's demographic is far removed from the model alternative school student for which the alternative accountability system is to be designed. It's a matter of degree and intensity. For example, some students live in abandoned buildings while others live in Aunt Sally's guest house. Both students are homeless, but in different worlds when it comes to their needs and support required.

One of our more significant mistakes is that of misdirected emphasis. Up to this point we have focused our attention on older students who are up against time limits and the demands of adulthood. Tutoring and remediation have been directed primarily at older students and those with learning disabilities. They have generally done well in completing high school requirements for both graduation and workplace readiness, albeit outside of the desired time frame. This was short-sighted and detrimental to the school's overall effectiveness. Younger students – 9th and 10th graders – are often in the throes of situations that distract and overwhelm them to the exclusion of active engagement in learning. Consequently, our focus has been on addressing their affective needs and supporting them as they adjust to the demands of school in a comfortable, stress-reduced environment. As the charts below illustrate, the trifecta of problems often linked to poor school performance is well-represented among Tucson Prep students, generally with the heaviest frequencies in the lower grades.


Problem Indicators, 2011
100
80
60
40
20
0
9th Grade
10th Grade
11th Grade
12th Grade
TOTAL:
2011 Probation cases
2011 CPS cases
2011 Homeless students


Problem Indicators, 2010
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
9th Grade
10th Grade
11th Grade
12th Grade
TOTAL:
2010 Probation cases
2010 CPS cases
2010 Homeless students


Problem Indicators, 2009
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
9th Grade
10th Grade
11th Grade
12th Grade
TOTAL:
2009 Probation cases
2009 CPS cases
2009 Homeless students



Please note: Due to a conversion to new student management software three years ago, data from 2006-07 and 2007-08 were incompatible with the most recent three school years and have been omitted from this analysis. We are confident that our patterns are well established and have been remarkably consistent. Consequently, we believe that our three-year data does not significantly deviate from a five-year aggregation.

Tucson Prep acknowledges a dire need to improve 10th grade reading and math scores. As the graph above illustrates, one particular need is to effectively accommodate the small year-to-year sample size of Full Academic Year(FAY) 10th graders – whose cognitive levels may vary greatly on average from year to year -- who are counted in the testing sample. To meet the challenge of this statistically small sample we have developed several strategies that are listed in the Performance Management Plans.

Some of Tucson Prep's weaknesses which have contributed to poor test performance include:

✓ Allowing too much lag time between enrollment and expectations for credit completion and test preparation for 9th and 10th grade students

✓ Lack of sharpened curriculum standards for 9th and 10th grade students

Moving forward, Tucson Prep commits to improving 9th and 10th grade student outcomes, performance and accountability with a positive, incentive-based plan that we believe will lift Tucson Prep out of its unacceptable rating.

APPROACH AND PLAN OF ACTION

Tucson Preparatory School has historically practiced continued academic and social needs interventions for our student population. Since the school's inception, faculty and staff have met three times each week to "triage" student needs and performance. It is an opportunity for staff to share information, problem solve as a group, compare notes and keep everyone informed of issues and events occurring during the busy school day.

Tucson Prep has a tradition of "borrowing" approaches from other disciplines and adapting them to the school setting. Our meetings can sometimes mimic a social service staffing or CFT (child-family team) where a particular student is discussed, or a corporate meeting where critical decisions must be made using a consensus model. Data from these meetings is used to tailor interventions deemed prudent and reasonable on a case-by-case basis, and may include:

- ✓ Changes to a student's schedule to:
  - ✓ Prevent or address behavior problems
  - ✓ Shift emphasis from learning lab to classroom instruction, or vice versa
  - ✓ Institute block scheduling for a particular purpose
- ✓ Referrals for one-on-one or small group tutoring outside the classroom
- ✓ Case management/social service interventions for students and/or families
- ✓ Counseling
- ✓ Teacher referrals for special activities
- ✓ Professional development, often using an informal professional learning community model or external presenter

Wednesdays are set aside for special education students. A brief introduction of each new SPED student is made, including a brief oral review of the SPED file, current IEP and any special classroom accommodations requested. Continuing SPED students are briefly staffed each week to keep faculty and staff up to date.

Staff meetings have been the genesis of a wide variety of plans and approaches developed for the purpose of improving Tucson Prep and its students' performance. Such methods have included enhancements to Tucson Prep's tutoring program, grant-funded activities, same gender math classrooms, incentives, hiring an additional HQ math teacher, split Language Arts curriculum into specific Reading and Writing instruction. Over time, many ideas have been discarded only to come back to the table subsequently for an alternative purpose or for a different group of students.

Such is the case with two key approaches in the Performance Management Plan section of this renewal application.

It is evident from analysis of relevant pupil achievement data that some 9th and 10th grade students have not received the right kind of attention and supervision properly timed at the beginning of their high school careers. With the very best of intentions, we have missed the mark with these young students. The approach we have used successfully to track special education students seems to be an ideal foundation for what needs to be achieved with 9th and 10th graders in both course work completion and testing success.

Our method combines the principles and practices of the "social autopsy" with a *deliberate curriculum wrapping* strategy whereby the curriculum is individualized and recognizes that academics cannot be separate from personal issues. The approach is holistic and structured to deliberately and definitively address issues interfering with achievement and success in all facets of a student's life with the primary goal of improving academic proficiency. In addition, our approach will include affinity-based mentoring and individualized incentives. Like a one-to-one home room, targeted 9th and 10th grade students will be paired with a favorite staff member who will monitor daily activities and progress in a supportive fashion and serve as the gatekeeper for incentives chosen by the students themselves.

Each targeted student will be staffed on a weekly basis and adjustments made to his or her plan to further academic goals as needed. Case management needs will be quickly identified and addressed in-house or through referral to partner agencies. Each student's plan will be updated and validated each week. Student management data bases and case management notes will be used as systems to monitor progress and ensure that targeted students do not slip into those proverbial cracks.

Tucson Prep's math achievement scores were extremely low a decade ago and the trend has not reversed or improved much. For a variety of reasons, our students are not receptive to math instruction and often avoid or disregard our efforts to raise their proficiency. In fact, math is cited as the number one reason for our students dropping out of high school. Under the Performance Management Plan for math, we will establish a Math Resource Room that will use state-of-the-art technology and targeted incentives to substantially alter negative attitudes toward math instruction and improve achievement levels. The Resource Room will be equipped with i-pads, headphones and more student-friendly software than has been used previously. Staffing will include an HQ teacher and math tutor. Snacks will be available in the resource room for math students who are on-task. Chairs will be padded and on wheels to assure a more comfortable environment than a standard classroom.

This intervention is patterned after the school's Learning Lab that was established two years ago to better serve learning disabled students and those with other special needs.

Results have been better than anticipated, even though the Learning Lab is equipped with standard desktop computers and high quality but not particularly engaging remedial software. A tutor is assigned to the lab and can provide both assistance with the technology and on-on-one direct instruction in several content areas. We are delighted that the Learning Lab has become a pleasant destination classroom for students and is regularly accessed by them without fear of stigma or too much grumbling about math.

The balance of the strategies listed on the Performance Management Plans are rather straightforward and self-explanatory. No further elaboration is necessary.

Essential to the success of both major strategies – and the more minor ones -- is enhancement of assessment methods and practices. Under the Performance Management Plan, assessment will be upgraded so that multiple tools are used at regular intervals. (Regular by our standards which respond to the extraordinary mobility of students.) Assessments benchmarks will be tracked in a consistent process – again, consistent by our definition -- and shared with staff in the after-school meeting format. We want to be able to put the pieces together into a comprehensive approach that maximizes our ability to effectively intervene. For instance we need to know if a student has poor math skills because he was out of school when his class learned fractions and has never been remediated in math foundations. We also want to know when a dirty drop for probation may trigger a runaway situation, and particularly, a student on the run during the testing season. Often we can intervene with the student and the authorities to work out a plan that keeps the student in school and on track.

Plans will be developed or revised depending upon the individual circumstances and used to trigger particular incentives and monitor what we hope will be regular, linear student growth and student achievement that will soon meet and/or better approach the Board's Level of Adequate Academic Performance. It is our belief that these institutional interventions will allow Tucson Prep to productively move forward while continuing to serve our "placed at risk" students and maintaining the school's culture and vitality. We can indeed accomplish this with enthusiasm and integrity.

Curtain call at a recent production of Romeo and Juliet