School Growth 1a. SGP/ 1b. SGB Bottom 25%

Inquiry-based instruction, foreign language acquisition, and collaboration are key components of the ICSA instructional program. All the components are well-researched and proven to add value to the goal of increasing content knowledge and encouraging students to become life-long learners.

Develops thinking skills.

• Problem solving teaches students to consider multiple perspectives on a given situation

• This develops flexibility in thinking and reasoning skills, as students compare and contrast various possibilities in order to draw their conclusions.

• Students tap into their prior knowledge and experience as they attempt to solve a problem. Thus, students continually integrate new knowledge into existing knowledge, thereby providing context and creating a personal "storage room" of resources that will be available for future problem-solving needs.

• Students also learn to make connections and associations by relating the subject matter to their own life experience.

• Students learn to support their conclusions with evidence and logical arguments.

• Students learn to synthesize several sources of information and references in order to draw conclusions and then evaluate these conclusions.

• Students learn to question ideas and knowledge through the process of comparing and contrasting alternative ideas and contexts.

• Students are encouraged to engage in individual reflection in order to organize and understand the world.

• Students experience insights as they think through a problem or inquiry activity, and draw inferences that allow them to go beyond the simple acquisition of facts and information by learning how to see implications and apply them to other situations.

Develops communication and social skills.

• Students must learn how to clearly articulate their ideas as well as to collaborate on tasks effectively by sharing the burden of group projects. Students must therefore exchange ideas and so must learn to "negotiate" with others and to evaluate their contributions in a socially acceptable manner. This is essential to success in the real world, since they will always be exposed to a variety of experiences in which they will have to navigate among others' ideas.

• Students learn how to communicate their ideas and findings with others. This becomes a self-assessment activity, whereby the students gain more insight into how well or poorly they actually understand the concepts at hand.

Helps students transfer skills to the real world.

• Students adapt learning to the real world, gaining problem-solving skills and ability to do a critical analysis of a given set of data. These skills enable the student to adapt to a constantly changing real-world environment. Thus, classroom learning does not result in (only) acquisition of a canon of absolute "truth"; it also results in a resource of personal knowledge.

Promotes intrinsic motivation to learn.

• Constructivism recognizes and validates the student's point of view, so that rather than being "wrong" or "right," the student reevaluates and readjusts his knowledge and understanding. Such an emphasis generates confidence and self-esteem, which, in turn, motivate the student to tackle more complex problems and themes.

When looking at establishing a reading and math curriculum it was important to determine what were each grade levels strengths and weaknesses. Information was analyzed directly from the AIMS scores, classroom created assessments and AIMS practice tests to help plan and prepare pacing guides and curriculum maps for the current school year. AIMS scores are being used to solidify what standards need to be focused on and where curriculum materials need to be supplemented.

A team comprised of administration and the general education teachers met and determined the intervention services through that will be the best course of action in helping the student be successful. AIMS data is used and analyzed to view areas of concern. Shortly after the meeting all classroom teachers administer a Galileo benchmark assessment which is analyzed and compared against the AIMS data for the bottom 25% students. Inconsistencies in identified areas of need are established and additional students are selected to receive tutoring services by the subject area teacher.

Currently, once students are identified, a file is created which contains the student's most recent assessments and a copy of last year's AIMS results for reading and math. The scores are compared and individual skill risk assessments are created to help guide instruction. The classroom teacher plans as to what focus there needs to be for their individual student.

Lesson plans are submitted weekly and checked against learning objectives being taught in the classroom. Teachers use weekly assessments to progress monitor as to determine if students are mastering the standards being taught. Learning objectives must reach at least 80% mastery before a new concept is to be taught. Teachers are ability grouping as to provide intervention services directly within the classroom. On Friday's various in-services, professional development opportunities, and teacher planning meetings occur to provide instructional support in areas that need more attention. Administration checks in with each teacher to determine what additional supports are needed based off what progress data indicates.

The following changes were made and began January 3, 2013:

- Highly qualified teachers provide direct instruction to all students serviced in reading and math. .
- The bottom 25% students are targeted first based on their needs in reading and math. However, teachers can still refer students to tutoring once an established criterion for referral has been met.

In the General education classrooms teachers are providing instruction aligned to the standards indicated as a primary need. There is a specific process used to evaluate the effectiveness of Reading and Math instruction provided by instructional staff. This process is defined and explained before each school year begins so that instructional staff understands what is required of them in terms of aligning their instruction to Arizona Common Core Standards. In addition a list of our bottom 25% of students was compiled and given to every grade level teacher. This includes our special education and RTI departments. The following will describe the process that is in place:

- Before school begins in the fall, curriculum maps are revised and finalized to provide templates as to what content will be taught month by month and within each quarter. Grade levels will compare curriculum maps as to provide similarities in content as much as possible. Grade level standards are included in the curriculum maps.
- Focus was given on planning and implementing instruction to the bottom 25% students at the general level and through interventions.
- Before school begins teachers are instructed on the requirements for lesson plans and the procedures for submitting them to the principal on a weekly basis. All lesson plans, through eighth grade are required to align to Arizona Common Core Standards listed under the subject they are teaching and are checked for accountability. Teachers' lesson plans are compiled in a binder kept in the principal's office for reference and for accountability purposes.
- Teachers are required to list the standards they will be teaching for that day somewhere in their classroom in language that would be familiar to the student. The standard code is also suggested for evaluation purposes.
- Informal pop-in evaluations are done bi-weekly for each teacher and cross checked with their lesson plans to verify standards being taught. Evaluations ensure posting of learning objectives and monitor basic class management skills.
- Two formal evaluations are done per school year, fall and spring. The formal evaluation reviews an extended period of time, documenting teaching methods and practices.

Assessment

Several methods are used in developing instruction for all general education, SPED, and our bottom 25% students. Each assessment method is done within the general education classroom.. The following is the primary assessment used in assisting teachers in planning instruction and monitoring process for all students including the bottom 25%:

- **AIMS--**During the summer before school begins AIMS data will be analyzed, copied, and prepared for each grade level teacher. Students who fell far below or approached in math or reading are highlighted for each grade level teacher and department head. The bottom 25% of student scores are pulled during the summer and comparisons are made in developing a plan of action for each student. Any standard indicated as falling far below or approaching is highlighted and referenced in planning for intervention services. A current AIMS blueprint is used to determine priorities in instruction and compared to grade level curriculum maps. Special attention is given to the specific data listed on the student profile to target concepts that were not mastered. This also assists in developing curriculum maps for the school year. These specific student files are also used when discussing intervention services.

Professional Development

In regard to professional development, there have been several specific opportunities available for classroom teachers department that assist in targeting and providing support to our students including the bottom 25% students. After looking at last years AIMS data that was available to us on our students, a survey was created and sent out to all teachers designed to give them a listing of professional development topics of focus based on the data that was analyzed. Once teachers submitted their feedback, professional development was targeted to meet the needs of teachers and students, as measured by AIMS data. Listed below are some of the results chosen:

- Adapting to Common Core Standards 70%
- Integrating Technology into the Curriculum 43%
- International Baccalaureate Critical Thinking Assessments 34%
- Writing in a K-8 environment 30%

Out of these above listed topics Arizona Common Core professional developments (train the trainer) were lined up and nine teachers have attended for reading and math.

This current school year various professional development in-services have been done on site as well as off-site individual teacher trainings and workshops. Topics include: Technology focused trainings, Common Core trainings in reading and math, Project based learning, Interactive Vocabulary Strategies, integrating modifications and accommodations for all students. The remaining in-services of the school year are focused on vertical alignment with Common Core standards and how they will be applied at ICSAZ.

A new professional development strategy is being implemented to better select topics of focus based on what previous AIMS data and teacher feedback provides. The professional development survey will be sent out shortly after AIMS data is analyzed and topics will align more to what the data indicates as specific needs. For example, if AIMS data indicates that the bottom 25% student showed decline in math and decline in reading then trainings or in-service

opportunities for reading and math would be chosen for those teachers. A Galileo post test will also provide valuable data in assessing projected professional needs for targeting overall school growth and the bottom 25% student needs.

2a. Percent Passing

One area we have focused on specifically this school year is our school wide scores on the AIMS test in all grade levels. As mentioned previously we will purchase the Galileo assessment program to help teachers specifically focus and tailor curriculum and instruction to the overall classroom needs. As a brand new school our focus was on the International Baccalaureate and Common Core focus of critical thinking and rigor across the curriculum. We purchased all new Pearson text books and suggested texts in need to improve in percent passing in math. The following sections will indicate what we are doing to enhance and promote growth in overall student performance on the AIMS exam in reading and math.

Curriculum and Instruction

Once AIMS data was generated and sent to our campus we began to break down what areas needed to show improvement. A team of administration and teachers began the process of planning pacing guides for each grade level specifically focusing on the AIMS data and blueprints. Standards were then inputted into the pacing guides and curriculum maps as to focus on mastery of the instructional objectives throughout the school year. This provides the template from which teachers can plan their classroom instruction and lesson plans are submitted weekly to the principal. Teachers are able to monitor progress weekly through created assessments. Teachers are asked to revisit and update their curriculum maps based on progress produced in the classroom. Any standard or concept that students may be showing as problem area teachers can re-teach or revisit until mastered.

Once a week observations are done to verify instructional goals are being taught in reading and math. These observations are done periodically to monitor for accuracy in teaching academic standards. If inaccuracies are noticed, feedback is provided quickly so that the teacher can get back on track. . Instructional goals are to be listed in every classroom in a language that students can easily understand concerning what is being taught so that accuracy can be verified easily.

The principal monitors each class's progress lesson plans and classroom based assessments. If a class is falling behind, administration can provide an intervention assessment to help the teacher target priorities as it pertains to covering the standards necessary for proficiency. Failure to use data in the planning and implementation process of instruction results in a lower performance evaluation. One of the formal evaluations is done towards the beginning of March so that teachers have time to make any changes before AIMS testing.

Currently there are purposeful instructional materials being used in the classroom in preparation for AIMS testing in math and reading. Teachers use materials from Pearson, Khan Academy and MathScore for math and Exemplars (chapter books) and supplemental materials for reading and writing. Teachers rely heavily on the IB standards for math and reading as they align very closely with the Arizona State Standards.

Every student's Lexile level has been identified and ability levels have been created by each class to challenge the levels and allow for mastery and advancement in all students levels. All of these instructional supports are being used for reading and math to help teachers drive specific instruction to their classrooms.

Assessment

- **AIMS Test Prep Materials**--AIMS Practice is very helpful in assessing where students are in preparation for AIMS. Teachers are able to assess students in sections of the AIMS and monitor progress. Practice AIMS tests can also be downloaded from the state webpage and used as practice guides. In addition, our AIMS testing coordinator received a disk that contains a multitude of resourses that our classroom teachers are using to progress monitor. Grade level checks are done with each teacher to see how classes are progressing and what supports can be provided.

Professional Development

This school year, several professional development opportunities have been offered that would assist teachers in preparing their students for AIMS testing in reading and math. The most relevant to date have been the Common Core and IB trainings done at the beginning of the year. The first professional development provided an introduction to the common core and its function. Teachers walked through some of the standards. This information is helpful because it gives student practice with academic standards through benchmark testing.

As mentioned in a previous section, one area of school improvement professional development. We do a great job with the IB training and collaboration but need more time on critical and evaluative instructional methods to reach all students. The system in place will be adapted to align more with what AIMS results demonstrate from year to year. Professional development opportunities will be selected to provide student growth in math and reading.

2b. Composite School Comparison

At ICSAZ we have very little diversity of students and grade levels.at many different levels of learning and ability. We are a 5th through 8th grade middle school focused on the IB curriculum with a strong emphasis on foreign language. We have four SPED students, No ELL students and No FRL students. This is very unlike our direct feeder schools in our area.

In our area there are several schools with similar numbers in the listed categories. These schools are currently posting an "A" or a "B" letter grade. We recognize that we have only begun our first year and our sample population is small but the students we have acquired come from these districts and Charters.

Curriculum

School wide we are using Pearson math as our text and basing the curriculum on the state and IB standards in different grade levels which in turn promotes consistency in the classroom with instruction and assessment. Our curriculum committee is analyzing several math and reading curriculum maps that are available that aligns with Common Core Standards and will present to our school (teachers and administration) for selection.

Instruction

There are many check points in place to hold teachers accountable to teaching the Arizona State and Common Core Standards. Listed below are instructional practices designed to hold teachers accountable to the standards:

- Grade level state standards are included in the curriculum maps.
- All lesson plans through eighth grade are required to align to Arizona State Standards or Arizona Common Core Standards listed under the subject they are teaching and are checked for accountability.
- Teachers are required to list the standards they will be teaching for that day somewhere in their classroom in language that would be familiar to the student.
- Informal pop-in evaluations are done for each teacher and cross checked with their lesson plans to verify standards being taught. Evaluations ensure posting of learning objectives and monitor basic class management skills.
- Two formal evaluations are done per school year, fall and spring. The formal evaluation reviews an extended period of time, documenting teaching methods and practices.

Assessment

In terms of evaluating student performance in reading and math we are currently purchasing a program entitled Galileo. Galileo assessments are given five times a school year as indicated by a benchmark calendar provided at the beginning of the school year. Teachers are able to analyze the data in reading, math, and science to determine where focus may need to be given.

Currently we are using the text created assessments and the AIMS practice tests to evaluate progress in reading and in math for all students.

Professional Development

Our requirement for teachers is that Inquiry-based lessons will dominate instructional strategies, thus the teacher begins a lesson with a question, not a statement. This allows the students to search for information and learn on their own with the teacher's guidance. The instructional environment will be designed so students

• willingly engage in an exploration process

• raise questions, propose explanations, and use observations.

• plan and carry out learning activities.

• communicate using a variety of methods.

Instruction will place an emphasis on the development of inquiry and information processing skills and the nurturing of inquiring attitudes or habits of mind that will enable students to continue the quest for knowledge throughout life. Throughout the curriculum, ICSA will strive to strengthen holistic learning, communication and intercultural awareness along with learning content within a larger conceptual framework. Lessons will be designed to foster learning about the natural and human-designed worlds and the key questions the instruction will focus on are: How are these worlds organized?; How do they change?; How do they interrelate?; and How do we communicate about, within, and across these worlds?

This will be the focus for our professional development interwoven with the result of our survey so that we can meet the needs of the IB focus while preparing teachers to help their students. This will be done on Friday afternoons.

2c. Subgroup ELL

We do not have any students who qualified for ELL

2c. Subgroup FRL

We did not have any students who qualified for FRL and were FAY students

2c. Subgroup SPED

Special Education teachers use many resources and different strategies to meet the students' needs for reading and math. Support in these areas can also be manifested through Science, Social Studies, Daily Living Skills, Functional Academics, General Academics, Careers, Coping Skills, and Social/ Emotional Development subject matter. Multiple resources are used at the teacher's discretion to best facilitate and accentuate learning, provide guided practice, re-teaching, independent practice, and homework assignments.

Curriculum

The special education department uses a variety of recourses for reading and math. Due to the number of students serviced in reading and math (4 total), the variety of ages, and scope of IEP goals, various instructional supports are used by the special education teacher to target IEP goals in reading and math. All materials use in the teaching processed are aligned to instruction standards and checked through the submission of lesson plans every week. The Special Education teacher has access to all sped student scores and can create materials to supplement instruction. The Special education department also meets with the general education teachers to verify what standards are being focused on in the classroom. Special education staff then plan lessons that support the general education teacher and align what is being taught in the classroom. The special education department also reviews grade level curriculum maps and pacing guides to help keep them closely aligned to the general education classroom.

Assignments are modified to the student's ability level and special need. AIMS practice tests are used as benchmark to work with students as they mimic the and provide questions and examples similar to what will be given. The teachers can take problems from these tests and practice them with each student based on their ability level. In this way they are exposed to grade level instruction materials but allowed time to learn at their level.

Instruction

Currently special education department is servicing approximately 4. Our School embraces the philosophy of full inclusion, believing that special education students can best be educated in the regular classroom. Our teachers accept responsibility for all students in their classroom and modify, accommodate and adjust teaching techniques and classroom activities to meet the unique learning abilities of all students. Special education staff supports the regular classroom teacher with this process. There are not two distinctly different types of students, e.g. "special" and "regular". All students are individuals with their own unique set of physical, intellectual and psychological characteristics that influence their instructional needs. There are not two discrete sets of instructional methods – one set for "special" students and another for "regular" students. Individualized instructional programs are designed for each student.

- Inclusion is the underlying philosophy by which all students are educated.
- All students are educated with chronologically age appropriate peers.
- All students are educated full time in the general education classroom.
- All students learn and develop individually and the curriculum is modified or adapted to allow students to progress at their individual rates. Students are not penalized for the inability to progress at grade level.
- General education teachers assume responsibility to teach and meet the cognitive, affective and social needs of all students with special education teachers and staff providing support.

Assessment

- **IEP Goals and State Standards--**The Special Education teacher uses the computerized Individual Education Plan Program (IEP Pro) to develop student goals. These goals selected are aligned with the State Standards and Common Core. The state standards were used when writing the goals for the 2011-2012 school year that make up the current Individual Education Plans (IEP's). The Special Education department will change to Common Core in the next school year.

Professional Development

The professional development of the special education teacher is on-going throughout the school year as students with various disabilities are added to the program. The teacher does an excellent job seeking additional information on how to instruct the students beyond the multi-disciplinary evaluation determination. Formal professional development is drawn from what is provided by the Arizona Department of Education as well as other training programs marketed to the schools from various organizations. The following are some of the professional developments that correlate in reading and math:

- Alternate Assessment (AIMS A) Regional Training on 9/8/2011, 3 hrs. ADE Exceptional Student Services
- Developing Measurable Annual Goals Training, 9/21/11, 2 hrs, Barbara Paulson, ADE Specialist.
- Special Education Staff Training/Review – August 2012, 4 hrs

We recognize that our classroom teachers need more training on working with special needs students. Teachers need more training and ideas on modifications in the classroom. We will be providing more opportunities for teachers to receive professional developments and in-services on how to service theses students in their general education classrooms and provide better modifications to push our special needs students to perform at grade level.

3a. State Accountability

Curriculum

We recognize that curriculum is a fundamental piece of classroom instruction and that a good curriculum can help the students learning experiences. With the onset of Arizona Common Core we will be looking to enhance materials we already have and purchase new curriculums to help provide better instruction in reading and math. The following are items to point out as it involves curriculum support:

- Curriculum maps have been established before school began in Language Arts to provide direction to each grade level as to the standards that will be taught throughout the school year.
- Teachers will continue to use instructional materials that are showing impact and development in reading and math.
- Our curriculum committee will continue to research a math and reading curriculum that will best support our campus demographics and help us to increase student productivity.
- Our curriculum committee will measure any possible selection of curriculum in reading and math
- All curriculum programs that are evaluated by our curriculum committee will be heavily scrutinized as to its effectiveness in Arizona Common Core Standards and student achievement.
- Teachers will continue to align their lessons to Arizona State and Common Core standards first and supplement curriculum as it is available.

Instruction

Instruction is equally as vital as having a good curriculum to use. We will continue to seek highly qualified teachers in all grade levels. A curriculum is only as good as the person who guides the students through the learning process, as a school we continue to evaluate and perfect teaching practices within each grade level in all subject content. With the shift into Arizona Common Core it is important to have teachers who are well versed in combining content areas and not simply compartmentalizing each subject as a separate topic. The need for a more in-depth understanding of topics will be essential to student development in reading and math. As a result the following are instructional strategies that we will continue to enforce and promote within our teaching community:

- We will continue to hire only highly qualified and effective teachers
- Before school begins teachers will attend seven days of in-services on the expectations and requirements for lesson plans and the procedures for submitting them on a weekly basis.
- All lesson plans required to be contain Arizona Common Core Standards listed under the subject they are teaching and are checked weekly by administration for accountability.
- Our SPED department will continue to push our SPED students toward their IEP goals in reading and math at grade level.
- The Principal will perform informal evaluations weekly for each teacher and cross check with their lesson plans to verify standards being taught, posting of learning objectives, and basic class management skills.
- The principal will provide two formal evaluations per school year fall and spring.
- Data will be required as a part of formal evaluations and teachers will be responsible for utilizing school provided evaluation tools to help drive instruction.

Assessment

International Charter School of Arizona is committed to providing high quality instruction that is aligned with appropriate data driven assessment measure**s.** Teachers are required to analyze data as provided by a variety of assessment tools in effort to provide classroom instruction that is tailored to overall student needs. The following are the primary assessment tools we will continue to use to guide instruction:

- AIMS testing results will be the primary method of establishing a baseline benchmark for each individual student.
- Galileo—We are purchasing Galileo for the next school year.
- AZELLA testing will continue twice a year to monitor new students.

Professional Development

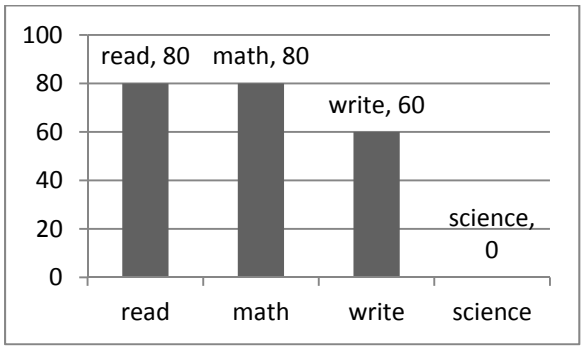
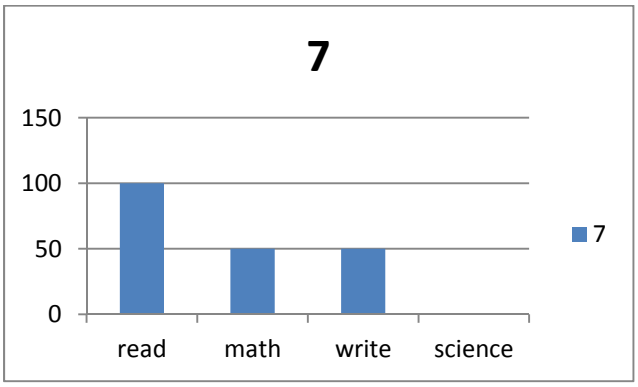
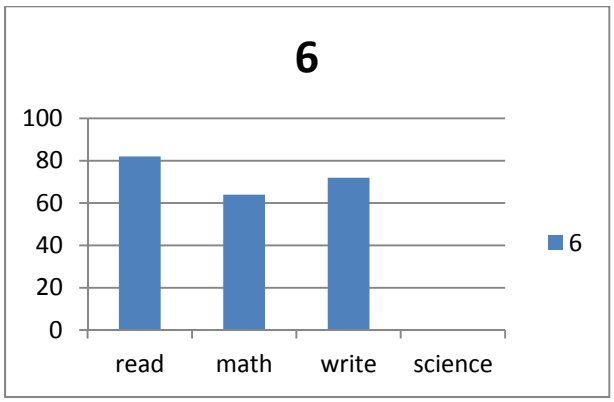
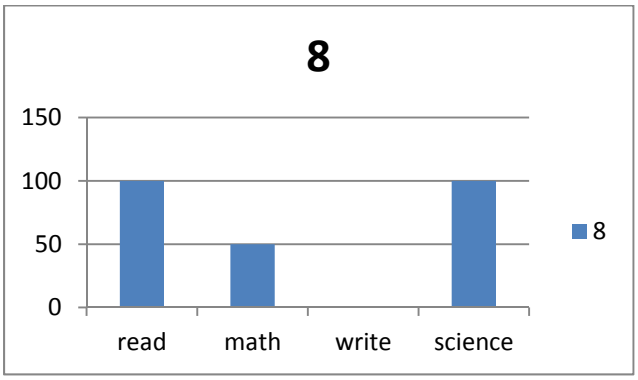
This school year we have provided in-services with International Baccalaureate trainings and infusing technology into curriculum. A total of nine faculty members have attended professional development trainings off-site related English Language Arts in Arizona Common Core development. These professional development opportunities were train-the-trainer models, meaning in-services will be planned and implemented on site with new teaching staff.

Ultimately, school leadership will determine, based on the scores and feedback provided from teachers, what professional development topics will be covered. A professional development calendar will be created before school begins and given out to teachers before school begins. Additional trainings will be added as the need arises, however, most of the professional development opportunities will align with indicators from the AIMS scores and Galileo benchmarks results. Based on our current data, our school will be targeting professional developments in the following areas:

- Math which aligns with Arizona Common Core.
- Reading and Writing which align to Arizona Common Core.
- Math and reading interventions for at-risk students.

Percent Passing AIMS End of Year

End of Year data

Overall Score and State Accountability.

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