

# **AEF™ A+ SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE™**

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## **PROGRAM PURPOSE**

The Arizona Educational Foundation created the A+ School of Excellence™ Program in 1983 as a comprehensive school assessment tool to identify, celebrate and recognize overall educational excellence in schools throughout Arizona. The program's purpose is threefold:

- To identify and give public recognition to outstanding public schools in Arizona;
- To make available a comprehensive framework of key criteria for school effectiveness that can serve as a basis for participatory school self-assessment and planning;
- To facilitate communication and sharing of best practices and outstanding practices within and among schools based on common criteria related to success.

Schools that ultimately earn the A+ School of Excellence™ designation are models of quality and equity. They have a strong commitment to academic excellence, meet rigorous teaching and learning standards, demonstrate strong student achievement and demonstrate that they are able to respond successfully to the changing environment that educators face. They cultivate learning-centered, safe school environments and support the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual needs of their students. They focus on the individual needs of every child and are recognized for their superior ability to go above and beyond the norm in providing services to children, families, and the local community.

Schools selected as winners must demonstrate high or improving levels of student achievement, innovation in classroom instruction and programs, implementation of goals through extensive collaborative involvement of parents and community, and evidence of high levels of satisfaction and consensus. A+ School of Excellence™ schools unify all stakeholders – students, parents, staff, and the broader community – in assuring quality and equity in all aspects of the school's programs, and engage all stakeholders in strategic thinking and planning toward continuous improvement.

The A+ School of Excellence™ award is a powerful energizer for increasing public confidence in recognized schools, creating greater parent and community involvement and possibly generating higher local funding. Schools selected for the award retain the status for three and ½ years. They receive \$500 and signage or a banner. All staff and faculty at award-winning schools receive a scholarship from Argosy University/Phoenix as follows: 20% for Master's degree; 15% for Baccalaureate or Doctoral degree. Schools that earn the award agree to comply with AEF™ authorized logo and name usage requirements related to the A+ School of Excellence™ designation.

## **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

To be considered for the A+ School of Excellence™ award, the following criteria must be met:

1. The school must be a public, or public charter school with some combination of grades Pre-Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade.
2. The school must have achieved a letter grade of "A" or "B" according to the Arizona Department of Education's A-F Accountability system in the year prior to applying for the award.
3. The school must be in at least its sixth full year of operation in its current (or similar) grade configuration when the application is submitted.

4. The school or school district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
5. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
6. The US Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
7. The school must not have been recognized as an A+ School of Excellence™ in 2012, 2013 or 2014. Previously recognized schools are eligible to reapply after their three and ½ year status has expired.
8. The school's principal must have completed at least one full year as leader of the applicant school when the application is submitted (NOTE: beginning in 2015-16, a principal will need to have completed at least TWO years as leader of the applicant school).

#### TIMELINE 2014-2015

January 23, 2015	Applications are due and must be submitted with the required signature sheet
February 6, 2015	Schools are notified if site visit will be conducted
February 16 - April 17, 2015	Site visits are conducted
Late April 2015 (exact date TBD)	A+ School of Excellence™ winners are announced

#### REVIEW PROCESS

- The Selection Panel reviews and evaluates application for completeness, accuracy and evidence documentation. The Selection Panel is comprised of experts that may include district administrators, A+ School of Excellence™ principals and staff, university faculty, business leaders and other expert consultants.
- The quality of the written document will have considerable influence on how the Selection Panel evaluates the application. Complete descriptions of school policies, programs, practices, and results are essential ingredients of a successful school application. Responses throughout the application must be well-written and carefully reviewed for content and style before being submitted. Failure to directly and concretely address critical elements of each section will result in an unfavorable review even though the school's programs and practices may, in reality, be quite excellent. The School Summary provides crucial background information and an overview for understanding the school and all prompts for this section must be followed.

- To qualify for a Site Visit, the application must address all elements of the application and schools must receive a rating of Exemplary (a score of “3”) on at least 4 of the 7 scored portions of the application, and NO Inadequate ratings. Part II, School Summary, and each subsection of Part III, Sections A-F, will be scored. Schools that do not qualify for a visit will receive written feedback from the Selection Panel.
- The Site Visit Panel is a large panel comprised of evaluators that include district administrators, A+ School of Excellence™ principals and staff, business leaders and expert consultants; they form individual Evaluator Teams that conduct site visits to qualifying schools. Evaluator Teams vary in size based on the number of students at schools.
- The purpose of a site visit is to validate, observe and affirm the contents of the application. During a school’s site visit the Evaluator Team will: observe in classrooms; meet with students, staff, parents, and community members; interview individuals as needed; meet with school leadership; and review documentation.
- After all site visits have been completed, each Evaluator Team presents its report to the Site Visit Panel, which meets to make final decisions about which schools will receive the A+ School of Excellence™ award. Schools are notified of the results following that final meeting. Schools not selected to receive the award are provided with feedback.

**Part II and Sections A through F of Part III will receive one of the following scores:**

**EXEMPLARY - 3 points: Stakeholders clearly go above and beyond the expected norms of practice, and the exemplary school practices can serve as benchmarks for excellence in schools.** Response contains outstanding innovative and creative initiatives that go above and beyond the expected norm. Schools may have outstanding programs in specific grade levels or content areas that are unique, coordinated among multiple grade levels, and multi-disciplinary. These practices may be unique to the school and should provide a much deeper and broader understanding of the content area, diversity/inclusion practices, and/or community involvement.

**ADEQUATE - 2 points: Programs and practices are sound and meet the expected norms for Arizona schools.** The public’s expectations are high for all schools; many creative practices have been adopted by individual schools to strengthen their programs. Schools that have good programs for parent involvement, co-curricular activities, community partnerships, and high achievement for students are to be commended, but to qualify as an A+ School of Excellence™ there must be clear evidence of extraordinary efforts and results related to these programs.

**INADEQUATE - 0 points: Response is incomplete, lacks sufficient evidence or is deficient in detail to meet acceptable standards or to make determination of merit.** An inadequate response most often occurs as a result of not having sufficient

**documentation to substantiate or determine the merit of claims made in the application or by not addressing the prompts in each section.**

## **2014-2015 A+ SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE™ APPLICATION**

Access the online application at <http://azedfoundation.org/a-school-for-excellence-application/>

### **PART II: SCHOOL SUMMARY (2,000 word limit)**

**Provide a brief but coherent snapshot of the school to be used primarily as a public relations document. If the school is recognized, the summary statement will be made available to the press. The Review Panel will not rate or score the School Summary separately from the remainder of the application; however, it will provide the panel with important background information for understanding the school.**

Chandler Traditional Academy - Humphrey campus is located in the northeast region of the Chandler Unified School District in Chandler, Arizona. The school was established in 1986 as Marshall Humphrey II Elementary School, and has operated as Chandler Traditional Academy - Humphrey Campus since the beginning of the 2012-2013 School Year. The school staff prides themselves in educating an economically and ethnically diverse population of students, in a supportive and fun environment, while maintaining a strong academic focus.

CTA-Humphrey's vision statement, "Preparing all students with the academic, and social skills necessary to pursue any dream," was built on the philosophy and mission that staff will facilitate each child's attainment of their academic, and social potential. This yields the establishment of a community of life-long learners. To achieve this goal Humphrey Administration and staff have incorporated Responsive Classroom principles in the normal school day. The implementation of the Core Knowledge Sequence of curriculum, while utilizing instructional strategies, keeps all students actively engaged in learning, and involves the efforts of all families to support the academic and social growth of students. Staff does this, while adhering to the framework and guidelines of the Chandler Traditional Academy Model. The purpose of a school community is to provide opportunities for all children to feel safe, respected, and wanted, and to become well-rounded citizens, both academically and socially. The hope and vision of staff is that students are equipped to become contributing members of society. The staff focuses on values such as, "Cooperation, Assertion, Responsibility, Empathy and Self-Control (C.A.R.E.S.) to support character building for all members of the CTA-Humphrey Community. The Staff strives to act with personal integrity, and commits to having a positive attitude that empowers vision. Together the expectation is to provide a legacy for continuous learning. CTA-Humphrey's vision, mission and values were developed over five years ago, and have been amended to add the inclusion of the Core Knowledge Sequence. The process involved collaboration among staff members, with the guidance and facilitation of an Intel Consultant. This process took three days, and involved staff working in both whole, and small group settings.

CTA-Humphrey's strength and most unique characteristic is the diverse demographic of families and students attending Humphrey. While over 50% of families qualify to receive free and reduced

lunch, approximately 25% have been identified as eligible to receive special education services. Providing quality programs and curriculum such as Spalding Reading, Saxon Math, the Core Knowledge Sequence, and offering families a rigorous school choice, brings pride to all who serve on this staff. This year the school incorporated a school wide writing program, called Write From the Beginning, which uses Thinking Maps as the primary structure for student writing. CTA-Humphrey's most recent accomplishments include an improved letter grade this school year issued by the Arizona Department of Education, which moved from a C to a B. Humphrey obtained the Healthy School Award, and National Bronze Recognition from The Alliance for a Healthier Generation in the spring of 2014.

CTA-Humphrey's primary challenge over the past five years has been managing and reversing a decreasing student population. This decrease began in the 2000-2001 school year, when the school serviced 782 students, and the number declined continuously until 2012 when enrollment plateaued at 451 students. Each year since 2012, enrollment has increased.

A future challenge for Humphrey might include, continuing growth for student achievement, as measured by standardized test scores. The school is experiencing an increase in both special education populations, and increased percentages of free and reduced lunch rate students. To meet this challenge the staff will continue to provide support for all students, by implementing researched based programs with fidelity. Administration and teachers will ensure professional development for new staff, and continued partnership with families. Using assessment data to guide instruction, and monitoring students' progress using both summative and formative assessments throughout the school year, will be crucial to identifying areas of need, and providing appropriate and timely interventions. A second challenge will be ensuring the school has the necessary space to accommodate growth over the next few years. The school principal and district administrators will continue to analyze enrollment projections throughout the year to plan for future growth.

In 2012, the Arizona Department of Education implemented a letter grade accountability system, and began issuing a letter grade to each school based on the total number of points earned each year. Since then, the CTA-Humphrey community has earned an increasing total number of points earned each year. Humphrey earned 102 points in 2012, 114 points in 2013 and 125 points in 2014, moving the schools letter grade from a low C, three points away from a D, to a solid C and recently a solid B. In recent years, individual grade levels have experienced fluctuating proficiency rates in both reading and math, however as a school, over each of the past three years students have increased the overall proficiency rates on standardized test scores. Growth rates for students, including the lowest performing students have increased. (See Chart Below) These are the three rates used to determine a school's total number of points and letter grade. Improving in these three areas, CTA-Humphrey earned additional points, over the last three years, for meeting ELL Reclassification Rate. In 2013 and 2014 Humphrey increased student achievement for students that fell far below on Aims.

	2012	2013	2014
Percent Passing	56%	59%	66%
Growth Percentile- All Students	40.5	48	51
Growth Percentile- Lowest Performing Students	42.75	47.5	53.75
Total Points	102	114	125
Letter Grade	C	C	B

To help close the achievement gap, the school transitioned from Marshall Humphrey II Elementary School to a traditional model and opened in July of 2012 as Chandler Traditional Academy - Humphrey Campus. This gave the teachers the opportunity to teach reading using the Spalding Method, and to use Saxon Math as the math curriculum. The implementation of these programs combined with consistent reading intervention and math fact practice, have increased student achievement, and reversed the decreasing proficiency rates in reading and math.

Chandler Traditional Academy - Humphrey Campus is truly a special school because of staff, students and parents. The diverse student population, the compassionate and dedicated staff, and supportive families are what make Humphrey special. CTA-Humphrey friendships form between families from very different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds. These same families would not have the opportunity to meet at many schools. Many teachers on campus have remained at Humphrey through difficult times when student populations and standardized test scores were declining. Many parents from the neighborhood, who at one time would not have enrolled their children at Humphrey, have become Humphrey's biggest supporters. Finally, Humphrey's learning environment has a strong academic focus and "Community Feel" where all students are afforded access to a quality education. During a community meeting to discuss the transition to a traditional model a parent asked, "Will Mr. Hickey still be the principal, and will the teachers stay?" After hearing the answer, "Yes." to the question, the parent replied, "Good, because that is what makes this school special, the "Community Feel." CTA-Humphrey is by far the best kept secret in Northeast Chandler.

### **PART III: EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS EVIDENCE DOCUMENTATION**

The criteria used for the A+ School of Excellence™ program are derived from reliable research about the efficacy of results-focused, effective schools. The guidelines in Part III are:

- **A basis for collaborative self-assessment:** The criteria are a useful tool for self-assessment, strategic planning, and involvement of all relevant stakeholders in a common school improvement initiative. Self-assessment is an effective school improvement strategy. Research and experience suggest that self-assessment benefits schools and fosters improvements in practice. Successful schools have a process for planning and reflection. Thus, the A+ School of Excellence™ criteria are valuable to schools assessing their current programs and practices in relation to those outlined in the program application.
- **Comprehensive:** They are intended to address all important internal and external aspects of school operations, yet be broad enough to suit diverse school contexts and to accommodate new or changing goals and strategies within any particular school.
- **Interrelated:** There is a dynamic link among the criteria. They address the multiple, embedded, and interacting contexts of school life. The systematic use of a broad composite of criteria helps to ensure that school improvement goals and strategies are balanced. The following must be embedded throughout all sections of Part III: professional development; the building blocks to college and career readiness through implementation of the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards and use of appropriate curriculum and effective instruction; and your school's response to implementation of Arizona College and Career Ready Standards, teacher and principal evaluation systems, budget challenges, and other external influences.
- **Non-prescriptive:** The focus is on results rather than on specific means or procedures. The A+ School of Excellence™ criteria and process may be used as a blueprint to help schools be more focused and more committed to specific school improvement strategies, implementation of Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards and teacher evaluation processes.

**EVIDENCE: BE SPECIFIC; SUPPORT YOUR CLAIMS.** In the process of writing an A+ School of Excellence™ application, rich evidence of success and innovation is a key component required in ALL sections in Part III. Some examples of evidence include:

**ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES; SCHOOL-WIDE FUNCTIONS**

- Purpose, goals, outcomes as related to Vision, Mission, Values, Strategic Plan and Goals
- Evidence of effectiveness and success as related to Vision, Mission, Values, Strategic Plan and Goals
- Participation rates (raw numbers or percentages) compared to class size, grade level, overall student population, etc. disaggregated by grade levels, gender, other
- Evaluation surveys, participant feedback, anecdotes
- Continuous ongoing assessment and improvement

**AWARDS/HONORS**

- Date received, by whom, and community members affected
- Significance and relevance

**MEETINGS**

- Purpose of groups/committees as related to Vision, Mission, Strategic Plan and Goals
- Make-up of groups/committees and how that is determined
- Meeting frequency and attendance
- What transpired; outcomes

## **A. Strong Instructional Leadership**

Describe a leadership style that is inclusive, collaborative and transparent. Describe (a) how the leadership centers the operation of the school on teaching, learning and working with stakeholders to improve all aspects of education at the school and (b) how the school's Vision, Mission and Values propel the school to excellence.

**A1. Leadership structure, roles and functions are important at the school (1,500 word limit).**

Luke Hickey, CTA Humphrey principal, has worked to create a positive and family-friendly atmosphere on the Elementary campus. He is an insightful leader for the school. Luke has been in education for fifteen years, six as principal of CTA Humphrey. He is hands-on, involved in all areas of the school, and he leads by example. Luke is very involved and visible throughout the school day. Mr. Hickey spends time in classrooms on a daily basis, is in the lunchroom and on the campus interacting with students. He is out on the playground during recess, in the cafeteria during lunch, and outside during parent drop off and pick up. The students view him as a regular part of their daily school day; his presence is part of the Humphrey persona. The students know they will see Mr. Hickey at all school events, including fundraisers and school wide activities. He has a segment on the weekly podcasts, which all students watch in their classrooms. He highlights positive events happening around the school, and addresses in student friendly terms, areas that need improved upon.

Luke regularly communicates with staff through e-mails concerning all pertinent school information. Using the District Marzano Evaluation Rubric, he professionally communicates overall areas of strength and specific areas for improvement, through use of constructive feedback. He is available for all members of staff to discuss areas of concern. The principal is well respected by the staff. He communicates the unspoken message that each member feels valued and respected.

Luke is also very involved with parents and families. He communicates regularly through newsletters, fliers, Remind 101 text messages, and personal daily conversations. The families are comfortable approaching him with, academic questions, or concerns, both positive and negative. He conducts tours of the campus for potential new students and their families so they are familiar with how the school runs, before they begin attending. He is present at school functions and fundraisers, interacting with families, staff, and community. Luke has been in constant communication with neighborhood residents about traffic concerns. He is working with the City of Chandler to create a plan to alleviate traffic congestion during student pick up after school.

Each grade level has an appointed team lead, that meets with the principal monthly to facilitate school wide decisions, including data, school improvement/enhancement, student achievement, and school/community involvement. These meetings support buy-in from all constituents. The school maintains an RTI/TAT team made up of volunteer teachers who hold meetings to review student data and create plans for intervention to support student learning. Using data from the implementation of the intervention plans, decisions are made about future teaching strategies, or possible special education testing. Teachers volunteer to participate in the district cadres. They include membership in science, social studies, reading, and math. These school representatives attend Cadre Meetings and support all teachers on campus in their assigned cadre subject. These cadre members collaborate with teachers around the district to learn and train their school staff, which provides support and enhances student learning and achievement at their school.

The counselor at CTA Humphrey facilitates special education meetings, with teachers, parents, psychologists, and speech therapists. She simplifies school wide anti-bullying CARES program for application in our classrooms by providing a method to utilize resources that provide teachers specific lesson plans. These programs align with Responsive Classroom, and are used on campus to support students socially and emotionally in their individual classrooms. She enters classrooms to teach lessons in relation to all of these programs and is responsible for creating programs for teachers to promote an anti-bullying school environment. She is a Crisis Prevention Institute Trainer, facilitating trainings for district employees on de-escalation strategy procedures practiced in the classroom. She works in conjunction with Southwest Behavioral Health initiating referrals for students in need of mental/emotional health assistance. When the principal is absent from campus, this position takes on the leadership responsibility for anything school wide in his absence.

Site Council leadership is made up of Certified/Classified Staff, and parents. They meet quarterly to address wellness, safety matters, major initiatives, as well as approve tax credit expenditures.

The physical education teacher is the Wellness Representative for school. He attends district meetings and prepares staff to build in wellness activities for school. He initiates activities for physical fitness, health communication activities that include starting days with classroom morning meetings. Some staff members participate in a school-wide wellness program that includes weekly fitness activities, healthy tips, and techniques to improve overall health. Humphrey has two Infinite Campus Representatives that go to district trainings and assist staff with questions and concerns regarding the use of Infinite Campus.



CTA Humphrey houses a Spalding Certified Lead Teacher in school that is always available to assist teachers in planning and facilitation of the Spalding lessons in the classroom. She has knowledge to share with staff members and is always willing to help with questions or concerns.

Humphrey has a very supportive Parent Teacher Organization. The parents who volunteer on this committee, help to provide resources and classroom supplies to enhance student learning. They also organize and facilitate activities and school wide events that create a family-like atmosphere for Humphrey families and students. Examples include, field trips, carnivals, a food truck night, family dances, family reading nights, and Otter Pop Sales. They work in conjunction with Student Council and Red Hats Service Learning Groups.

School leadership and district representatives collaborate when choosing professional development to meet the needs of students. Teachers take on leadership roles by becoming trainers for programs that have been implemented school wide. Teachers train staff using these programs and are available for support during implementation. These programs allow teachers to share strategies that are successful in the classroom and create camaraderie between staff members. Several programs that have been implemented using this model are, Write from the Beginning, Thinking Maps, Responsive Classroom, Spalding, Wilson, and Project Wet.

A wall of data outside the Admin Rooms and Staff Lunch room is maintained by Certified Staff. The leadership team created the data wall, which allows teachers K-5 to display their DIBELS scores. After each testing window, teachers adjust the students' cards on the data wall to show changes in scores. This practice allows teachers to see progress across grade levels. All teachers share the responsibility of school wide student learning. School goals are created based on student data, including AIMS, DIBELS, and DRA scores. The area(s) of need are identified and goals are created to meet those needs. These assessments, along with classroom assessments/information, are administered throughout the year to assess student progress. Individual teacher goals are set at the beginning of the year and are evaluated by Administration throughout the school year. Teachers reflect on their classroom teaching, set goals to improve their practice, and increase student achievement. During each walk through and formal evaluation, these individual goals are evaluated and teachers can monitor their progress.

Teachers have been implementing Professional Learning Communities on a weekly basis. These PLC Meetings allow grade level teams to collaborate on the value added on what or how material is being taught, and in addition initiates discussion among the team members on how to assess the material. They use the assessments to guide their upcoming instruction. All PLC forms are kept in a binder in the principal's office for other teachers to view and for sharing ideas and pedagogy.

Luke has created an atmosphere of shared responsibility and decision-making processes within the school. He is very open to staff giving input. He listens and values the opinions of all staff, in the educational process. CTA Humphrey has committees of teachers who maintain shared responsibility for educational decision making within the school. Some examples include the literature team, team leads, and Data Wise.

The Principal attends every PTO meeting where parents, teachers, and community members meet to discuss school activities and decisions that concern families and students. He listens to the questions and concerns of parents regarding all school matters. He gives an update on school information at each meeting. Each grade level sends one teacher. They take notes, and then report to their respective grade levels. Everyone is kept in the information loop.

**A2. The school improvement process or Strategic Plan is organized and managed to ensure that the school is always moving forward (1,500 word limit).**

Student achievement is a top priority at CTA Humphrey. Each year begins with the review of standardized test scores and academic information from the previous year. There is discussion between teachers, and administration concerning specific areas of need or enrichment for individual student learning. Combining this information with DRA scores, DIBELS scores, and academic data collected from classroom teacher's school wide, improvement goals are created each year on a global scale, and narrowed down to individual students. Staff identifies areas that need improvement, or students who need additional support.

During the 2013-2014 school year, a staff decision was taken, which included focusing improvements to target reading strands and concepts. A district wide program was implemented to look at student data, for guiding instruction and academic goal setting. A school leadership team was formed. The team decided to use AIMS Spring 2014 test results as an identifier focusing on specific reading strands and concepts. They analyzed student data that pertained to the academic goals. Students were found to be lacking the strategies to help them identify the main idea in literature accurately. Discussion, shared techniques and teaching strategies were implemented in each classroom which enabled staff to support, and scaffold main idea teaching in the classroom. Small group intervention practice for main idea using Journeys was implemented. The targets reflected the creation of the school wide learning goal.

In order to implement the main idea learning goals, teachers went through multiple trainings, including Thinking Maps, Saxon Math, Spalding, and Write from the Beginning. These staff members are always available to assist teachers with resources and planning lessons. Teachers meet on a weekly basis with their grade level, to discuss their weekly lessons and assessments. Teams analyze assessments and data to determining student mastery. These meetings are utilized to guide instruction to help reach Data Wise Goals.

Data from previous standardized tests will be compared to future tests to show growth in the specified reading and math concept areas. DIBELS, and Arizona Merit scores will be analyzed to show development. Teachers collect data in the classroom, which includes the use of Developmental Reading Assessments (DRA) to show student progress in reading. When comparing data from the past and present, future academic goals can be set to continue academic improvement.

Quality instruction supports the staff's ability to meet the student achievement goals. Since the 2012-2013 school year, the staff has used the Marzano evaluation tool. This instrument gives staff a chance to reflect on their teaching through feedback from the principal. Teachers are expected to set goals for improving instruction. All teachers are observed six times per year by the principal. He comes into classrooms for both announced and unannounced visits.

Teachers are given feedback on their instructional strategies, classroom management skills,

and classroom environment. Aside from observations, Luke is always available to meet with teachers to discuss instruction, classroom management, or other concerns. The principal and staff work meticulously to universally share and collaborate to ensure that students have every opportunity for success while attending CTA Humphrey. The mission of the staff is to support students in becoming life-long learners, who think creatively, reason critically, and learn enthusiastically throughout their life. As a result of our improvement plan, all teachers are implementing Thinking Maps, and Spalding Graphic Organizers into their reading and writing lessons. Each grade level team is currently participating in Professional Learning Communities to assist, target specific weakness, and guide utilization of varied assessments to scaffold instruction. The implementation of school wide strategies, helps support, and improves teaching practices throughout the grade levels. This vertical articulation facilitates a better understanding of curriculum on a broader scale. CTA Humphrey staff reached the goal of increasing our proficiency in Reading by 5% in grades 3, 4, 5, and 6, as measured by the spring 2015 standardized test results, which clearly indicates overall school progress. All of these initiatives support teacher collaboration and commitment for continued growth and improvement.

### **B. School Organization and Culture**

**Teachers and students must feel safe to have the necessary energy for teaching and learning. Focus on elements of the school environment and context that provide the successful framework for learning: organization; culture; and interpersonal relationships. This is an opportunity to describe the feel of the school. This section should reflect that the school is a positive, nurturing place for all stakeholders – staff, faculty, parents and students.**

#### **B1. Underlying values, beliefs and traditions ensure that people work together to solve problems and confront challenges (1,500 word limit).**

CTA Humphrey maintains a family-friendly positive climate, with a village style community that includes students, teachers, and parents from diverse backgrounds. Eddie Basha (8-24-37 to 3-26-13) offered this of Humphrey Elementary... “Humphrey teachers, and staff strive every day with unselfish commitment, and untiring dedication, to provide our youth a superb quality of instructional programs. The quality of love, the spirit of caring and commitment to excellence, epitomizes Marshall Humphrey’s life.”

The school staff has a universally applied character program-C.A.R.E.S. (Cooperation, Assertion, Responsibility, Empathy and Self Control). The teaching and application of this character program in class meetings include, gathering as a whole class each morning to greet one another, share news, and warm up for the day ahead. This includes but is not limited to rule creation by students to create classroom rules, interactive modeling, and teaching children to notice and internalize expected behaviors. Guided Discovery is implemented by teachers by introducing materials, using a format that encourages creativity and responsibility, Academic Core Choices allow for increasing student motivation and learning initiated teacher-structured choices in classroom work. Teachers pay close attention to Classroom organization including setting up the physical room in ways that encourage independence, model cooperation, and produce productivity. Staff acts daily in a professional manner, with personal

integrity, showing their commitment to students. CTA Humphrey's vision for students is to provide a legacy for continuous life-long learning. Teachers strive to understand cultural differences, individually striving to meet the needs of all those who learn differently. Forming relationships with the families, and working closely with parents as partners is essential. Modeling positive, professional behaviors between adults on campus is an important modeling opportunity for students to witness, and ultimately supports student's good behavior. When student's misbehaviors are not modeling CARES, logical consequences will occur. Staff responds to misbehavior in a way that respects children, guides them to recognize the effects of their actions, and helps them develop internal controls. There are systems in place within each program and grade level in the school, which accommodates for those struggling students. Staff collaborates and problem-solves using conferencing, role-playing, and other strategies to resolve problems with students. Teachers use positive teacher language, using Responsive Classroom wording and tone to promote children's active learning and self-discipline. Examples include but are not limited to, strategies that students utilize to change behavior, and experience positive outcomes instantly. These strategies support the students' ability to realize how using words to problem solve can eliminate, and in most cases solve their problems. Giving each student the optimal opportunity to reflect on their choices, and to use negative situations, as learning opportunities is everyday life in the Humphrey School Community.

CTA Humphrey strives to promote intrinsically motivated students. Perfect attendance and Honor Roll student certificates are passed out once a quarter. Teachers use CARES tickets that they fill out when they witness a student exemplifying any of the CARES character traits. Postings of the exemplary students in the Multi-Purpose Room, along with positive behaviors are celebrated. Representatives of the Red Hats Sixth Grade Learning Service Group read a morning message every day over the public address system. They read a daily inspirational quote to motivate and inspire the student body and staff. It is something unique to Humphrey Elementary School.

Monthly PTO meetings are held in in the multipurpose room or media center. Parents are in attendance, as well as the Principal, and each grade level is represented.

School staff and students enjoy Weekly Podcasts that spotlight students, teachers, and the important happenings around the school. These podcasts support a unified community and support the schools cohesiveness, by engaging student's awareness, and giving the comprehensive view of school events.

Humphrey has a surplus of clubs for students, which include Bucket Drumming, Running club, Math club, Homework Club, Drama Club (which do a yearly play, Alice in Wonderland, Beauty and the Beast, Hansel and Gretel are a few past examples). The News Club maintains a weekly Podcast, Fifth and Sixth Grade has a Battle of The Books, which lasts for two quarters, and culminates in a District Wide Battle of The Books Competition. There is a Cheer Club where students go and can learn how to cheer for sports teams. They develop movement and rhythm associated with using music and words. Student Council comprises intermediate grades, fourth through sixth, and works in conjunction with our Service Learning Club, the Red Hats. They are involved with many projects outside of the school. Art Club is unique, and it culminates with a yearly art walk that is combined with the Science Fair. Humphrey has a surfeit of school

events, including Chorus and Music Concerts, Peace Day, a Spelling Bee, a Kindergarten Friendship Celebration, Turkey Bowl, Kickball, Read Across America, Johnnie and Brookie Concerts, Kindergarten Nursery Rhyme Parade, Kindergarten Grandparents Day, Kindergarten Glamour Day for Moms (Kinder), Fireman Buddies, Jingle Jog (Whole School), Volunteer Tea, The Susan King Volunteer Award, Pink Day for the Cure, Talent Show, Family Picnic, Family Picture Day, Family Dances (Student Council) Annual Art Walk/Science Fair, Holiday Boutique (PTO) CCGC Into the Streets/Cultural Fair, Champions for Change Nutrition Program, Biggest Loser (Staff Health and Wellness) Movie Nights (Student Council), Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Celebration, Chandler North Rotary (dictionaries to students), NFL 60 Day of Play, Top Fit Schools (2014), Police Swat Dogs, Food Truck Night, School-wide art project, Jump-rope for Heart, Sixth Grade ceremony with a school-wide tunnel for graduates, and a pictorial timeline of all school activities throughout the year.

The community focuses on giving and participates in drives to give back throughout the year. Some of the drives the school does annually are Pennies for Patients to support children with cancer, Candy Grams, Jingle Bells, and Chandler Weekenders. The drives are run in conjunction with Student Council. The school counselor co-ordinates the Chandler Care Center donations that include canned foods, cereals, boxes of stuffing, frozen turkeys, and Jell-O. Chandler Weekenders work in conjunction with Red Hats to provide underprivileged students with toothpaste, snacks such as granola bars, fruit snacks, goldfish and applesauce. PTO coordinates several drives; Skate land/Peter Piper Pizza/Chipotle/Papa John's/Panda Express/McDonald's (PTO) Cookie Dough Fundraiser/Freddy Fusion.

## **B2. The school environment or climate is conducive to learning for all and moves beyond the elimination of undesirable behavior (1,500 word limit).**

Teachers facilitate daily morning meetings using Responsive Classroom to allow students and teachers to become acquainted with one another. This is the first step to learning kindness, tolerance and acceptance. The responsive classroom is a research evidence based approach to education that emphasizes the social emotional and academic growth of elementary students. This approach is based on seven basic tenets:

1. Social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum.
2. How children learn is as important as what children learn.
3. The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.
4. There is a set of social skills that children need to learn and practice in order to be successful (cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control).
5. We must know the children individually, culturally, and developmentally.
6. Knowing the families of the children taught is as important as knowing the children.
7. Teachers and administrators must model the social and academic skills that they wish to teach their students.

The responsive classroom approach is being implemented in Humphrey classrooms through the daily practice of morning meetings and the use of reinforcing, reminding, and redirecting language. A morning meeting lasts up to thirty minutes and consists of the following four sequential components: greeting, sharing, group activity, and news and announcements. Morning meetings promote opportunities for children to practice the skills of greeting,

listening, responding, and group problem solving. This practice creates opportunities for teachers to model skills and provide feedback to students. A sense of community, mutual respect, and positive social interactions are a direct result of daily morning meetings in the classroom.

The responsive classroom engages students to participate in shaping rules and expectations within the classroom. Teachers engage students in conversations about what will happen if they do not follow the established rules and expectations. This approach offers students a level of autonomy that involves them in their learning, and helps them feel better about their role in the classroom. Classrooms create rules that students have confidence in, buy into and make their own. Morning Meetings foster teaching students how to work together humbly, essential to a climate of inclusion. When students experience conflicts, they will write a reflection about their behaviors, and if an apology is necessary, they write and verbally give apologies to their peers and teacher when necessary. The anti-bullying program is based on Responsive Classroom principles that use time-tested strategies to create a classroom where bullying and cruelty diminish, and kindness, tolerance and understanding flourishes. This program utilizes the text, "How to Bullyproof Your Classroom" by Caltha Crowe. It provides five classroom lessons and clarifies how teachers can identify bullying, and report it. These lessons help teachers recognize and stop behaviors that are lead-ins to bullying. Students are taught acceptance, respect, in a climate of inclusion, which they practice with their peers, as well as their special needs peers' every day. Teachers are provided lesson plans for teaching students about bullying. Resources are available to all staff and can be signed out for use in their classrooms. School-wide anti-bullying training for all staff takes place at the beginning of the school year. Handbooks with safety procedures and school rules are handed out to all students and staff yearly. Monthly fire drills, quarterly lockdown drills, two-way radios, CPI trained employees, Safety committees, and staff trained CPR/First Aid are ready to serve as needed. Yearly district-wide Annual Best Practice Review –Bullying, FERPA, Health Precautions, Mandatory Reporting, Professional Conduct, and Technology Acceptable Use are all tools for moving beyond, to eliminate undesirable behavior.

Paraprofessionals are an integral part of the Humphrey Community- they support students during lunch, recess, specials, and within the classroom. In some circumstances, they provide one to one support for students. They assume roles such as the Health Wellness Representatives, for certain wellness programs. These staff members' support classified employees in trainings, to ensure they are up to date with current policies and procedures. Some Para -Educators assume the role of Spanish/English translators during parent-teacher conferences, IEP meetings, and can be contacted for last minute support with parents and teachers who have translation needs.

Paraprofessionals participate in many extracurricular clubs that occur after school, such as Art Club, News Club, Drama Club, etc. Some examples of our non-teaching staff adding to the positive culture of the school are health and wellness weight loss groups by a Para who is a fitness trainer. Office staff will decorate the office for every season and dress up as book characters for Read-Across-America Day adding to the robust atmosphere of life-long learning. In addition the office staff handed out gift bags to the outside guest readers visiting the campus, and provide resources to staff whenever needed. Non-teaching staff fully participate in the annual Turkey Bowl, end of year Kickball game, and Winter Jingle-jog, parents referee games participating in school wide fun.

The administrative assistant coordinates field trips, extra-curricular activities and collects discretionary funds for all clubs. The school health assistant updates staff on all health issues. The health office has extra uniforms for all students. The SPED bus drivers hand out bus bucks for positive behaviors on the bus (bonus points added to student's point sheet-totals allow student to purchase treats from the class store), which is coordinated by the paraprofessionals. SPED bus drivers have their own treasure box incentives for positive behaviors exhibited by students. Teachers receive a treat from the PTO for all staff birthdays and are generous with gifts of CTA Humphrey t-shirts, and Polo's to all staff members. They celebrate the staff yearly during Teacher Appreciation Week e.g. lunches, dinner and considerate gifts. The school counselor coordinates the Anti-Bullying program on campus, providing CPI training throughout the district, and takes charge of the one of the food drives on campus. She manages the Special Education cases. Humphrey staff members participate in the Holiday Assistance Program. (Underprivileged students on campus go to Perry High School to spend a day with the high school students and receive holiday gifts) The counselor creates behavior contracts for all students on campus who are having behavior difficulties, while collaborating with behavior health agencies to assist families. She is a district crisis team member and is a support district wide. The counselor teaches calming techniques and stress relieving strategies for students to use. The Principal at Humphrey provides individual and private school tours for potential interested families, supervises K-6 lunch and recess daily, and covers staff duties as needed. He is involved in crisis intervention directly with students, while on campus. Most grade levels have Buddy Classes. They meet with their buddies and do educational activities, provide leadership, and act as role models for younger buddies. Red Hats assist Kindergarteners during lunch. CARES tickets and Responsive Classroom principles are incorporated to foster personal relationships in classrooms school wide. There are bulletin boards that promote CARES for school-wide application by staff for all to see. The Anti-bullying curriculum fosters seamless first steps toward kindness and respect. Communication is paramount. Humphrey staff use, Remind 101 communications by text, quarterly PTO meetings/weekly updates/newsletters, and weekly podcasts. Art Masterpiece and Junior Achievement involve parent and community members as partners in education. All staff and students participate in yearly art projects. Weekly podcasts, annual school plays, and Core Knowledge Art (K-6) foster positive peer climates. All students are integral members of the school community; special needs students are systematically phased into the general education classrooms and take part in field trips, clubs, assemblies, and all school-wide events. They are welcomed and supported by their general education teachers and embraced and accepted by their regular education peers. Cultural diversity on the campus presents a unique opportunity for learned acceptance, tolerance, and varied experiences. Diversity provides an exceptional education that challenges each student to develop the attitudes, skills, knowledge and understanding to become highly successful, socially responsible global citizens. "It is a great reward to witness students of all walks of life playing together; free of the many emotional, physical, and/or psychological challenges that they may be facing in their lives." (CTA Humphrey staff member)

### **C. Guaranteed , Viable Curriculum and Meaningful Assessment**

**A guaranteed and viable curriculum is a master plan for what teachers will teach and students will learn based on the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards. Meaningful curriculum assessment is carefully and deliberately planned and implemented to align with and accurately measure student learning.**

**C1. The Curriculum reflects the use of best practices across all grade levels (1,000 word limit).**

CTA Humphrey staff work diligently with the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards implementing them into classroom instruction. For the past three years, CUSD has provided mandatory district classes in the areas of English Language Arts and Mathematics. These professional development courses have provided teachers with an in-depth analysis of the standards associated with their particular grade levels. Teachers are able to identify the foundational areas that span across different grade levels, vertically articulating ideas about what knowledge their students will need for future learning. These courses support the teacher's ability to apply pedagogy in relation to the standards, focusing in on specific strands. Teachers apply and implement these strands to classroom lessons, which support instruction and learning. Through district training, CTA Humphrey teachers are provided exceptional resources that help support and scaffold lessons. These resources enable all teachers to decipher between a lesson and an activity that is academically challenging. Teachers can utilize high level Depth of Knowledge question and more rigorous text. Comparing and contrasting Tier One and Tier Two questions enables teachers to facilitate student learning by supporting the students' ability to rise to the challenge of true rigor, and demonstrate their knowledge of the material. CUSD has provided various websites and resources that teachers use for lesson planning, ideas, and assessments, such as "Engage New York" and "Howard County".

CTA-Humphrey teachers follow the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards when articulating and implementing curriculum in the classroom. Review and collaboration is done on a daily basis and it helps to ensure that all of the students are following the state standards. Each grade level meets throughout the school week to collaborate and plan their lessons. In addition PLC Meetings are held to target data for specific skill sets, which enable staff to hold regular discussions about what works and what doesn't. Teachers articulate specific planning for specific subsets of missing skills or target areas of weakness. There is collaboration by all grade levels, including shared information for the transition of sixth grade students into the connecting junior high schools.

The CTA-Humphrey staff is currently utilizing PLC's within each grade level. These meetings give the teachers an opportunity to look at classroom data and discuss effective teaching practices that facilitate student learning. The staff collaborates while implementing writing strategies using the Write from the Beginning as a comprehensive curriculum school wide. Each grade level develops instructional plans based on data received from formal assessments such as: AIMS, Standard 10, DRA's, and DIBELS along with daily informal assessments by each individual teacher. The data helps to determine which skills students need to practice and drives the instruction at each grade level. Through small group instruction teachers can



include interventions, on grade-level specific targets, and provide extended enrichment opportunities.

The knowledge and skills are then sequenced and organized by each grade level team into their curriculum maps to allow ample opportunity for on-going student learning. The intermediate grade levels also collaborate and work together to teach their students through ability grouping.

At CTA Humphrey curriculum decisions are based on assessment tools, data that is closely monitored in the PLC (Professional Learning Communities) meetings, and the Chandler district guidelines. Teachers create formative assessments and utilize the current curriculum benchmark tests, and end of unit tests to gather data.

Each grade level has developed a PLC team to meet weekly to assess effectiveness of the applied curriculum, and to measure the ongoing needs to facilitate student learning. The PLC teams meet for one hour, and analyze the data from the common grade level assessments used during the week. Curricular decisions are made based on the gathered analyzed data. For example, one current plan for improvement based on our PLC data is the implementation of the Write From the Beginning program to facilitate and scaffold students in writing. Fifth Grade discovered that students were lacking cohesive, well –sequenced, and descriptive details in narratives. Write from the Beginning addresses this by the use of structured graphic organizers for each portion of the writing process. The program applies a structured pre-write system to encourage students to focus on the details in their stories, after structuring their piece. This writing program becomes a supplement to the Journey’s curriculum. “We are seeing marked improvement in student writing.” (Fifth Grade Team)

**C2. Indicators of Success: a coherent school-wide curriculum assessment program is tied to the school’s mission, which shows through multiple assessment measures that high levels of learning are achieved, or that there is significant growth in student achievement over time (1,000 word limit).**

Teachers use the DRA and DIBELS scores in order to determine students’ individual reading levels, fluency levels, and proficiency levels. This information is employed by teachers to ability group and target specific working subsets of skills needed by individual students. Teachers address the Arizona College and Career Readiness Standards within the ability groups, giving all students exposure to rich and rigorous text. DIBELS allows teachers to monitor students’ reading progress by giving weekly and monthly assessments. This snapshot of the reader helps to identify at-risk students. Teachers use these scores to determine their intervention groups. Intermediate grades use the Saxon Math Placement Assessment to identify the appropriate level of instruction for students. This allows students to have supplemental enrichment for those working above grade level, and allows for different individual pacing for students on or below grade level.

AIMS scores for third to sixth grade are used to determine and target standards to improve student work. This information is used to make a school wide plan of improvement vertically articulating at every grade level. In addition AIMS is used to target the students with missing subsets of skills that need facilitation and extra scaffolding, allowing teachers to provide extra support for those students.

Teachers pre-assess students to find their current levels of exposure to specific types of knowledge, in order to determine a starting point. From here, teachers use formative assessments daily to monitor student progress. Summative assessments used by all staff are DIBELS, DRA, and End of Unit Tests for Journeys and Saxon.

Programs employed are aligned with the AzCCRS. Teachers create learning scales encompassing the standards in which the students rate their progress through the unit. Teachers reflect on the results of end of unit assessments to determine the level of mastery.

The alternative assessments used at CTA Humphrey are SPIRE, BURST, Foundations, Wilson, Accelerated Reader and Spalding. The assessments are used as diagnostics to determine what specific phonics skills students are lacking, allowing the teacher to target specific needs. These assessments provide an alternative method of learning missing subset of skills the students struggle with from year to year.

Students are aware of their independent reading levels (using information from the DRA and Accelerated Reader program) and are able to self-select books within their reading range. Teachers create learning scales encompassing the standards in which the students rate their progress through units of study.

Certified staff meet twice a month to deliberate on current programs the school has in place and strategize if additional programs are warranted. The leadership team is comprised of grade level team leaders that communicate information changes shared by the principal. The principal keeps the staff informed additionally through emails regarding staff development and trainings. Teachers have been trained in Core Knowledge, Spalding, Saxon, Thinking Maps, Write from the Beginning, Teaching Reading Effectively, English Language Arts Common Core, Mathematics Common Core, CPR, and Crisis Prevention Institute Training. Teachers use computers, document cameras, and projectors in classrooms. Each teacher has a website for parents to have easy access to weekly newsletters, curriculum, and homework.

**C3. DO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING: (a) Select two curricular areas to discuss in depth, or (b) select one curricular area and one unique program apart from the selected curricular area to discuss in depth. Select these because of their central importance to the school's stated Vision, Mission and Values, and their special significance to the school (1,000 word limit).**

CTA Humphrey is unique from other traditional schools. In the past five years implementation of Core Knowledge offers teachers a guide to clearly defined learning goals. The *Core Knowledge Sequence* provides a clear outline of content to be learned grade by grade so that knowledge, language, and skills build cumulatively from year to year. This sequential building of knowledge not only helps ensure that children enter each new grade ready to learn, it also helps prevent the repetitions and gaps. Core Knowledge has a specific content sequence in science, World and American history, geography, literature, visual arts, and music. This program allows for each year to build upon the knowledge previously learned, and give all students equal exposure and access to information from around the world. It is with the Core Knowledge program that teachers are able to teach specific idioms, classic literature, America's history, multiple cultures and religions, and celebrate our world's diversity.

The Saxon Math program is a hands-on, success-oriented series that emphasizes the use of manipulatives and mental math. The series uses a multisensory approach to teaching and is designed for heterogeneously grouped children. Its use enables all children to develop a solid

foundation in the language and basic concepts of mathematics. The success of the Saxon Math program is evident by the growth Humphrey students have shown in their AIMS math scores. This achievement translates into learners that are real life everyday math problem solving individuals. They can reason critically through the use and application of learned mathematical skills.

Saxon Math is taught at CTA Humphrey a year ahead of current grade level. The spiraling of the math program allows for repetition and reinforcement, for mastery of the objectives. In grades fifth through sixth grade students are placed into math classes based on a pre-assessment. There are remedial classes, on-grade level (which is a year ahead), and exceeding grade level classes. CTA Humphrey's student population includes children that exceed grade-level expectation. The district's gifted program, Chandler Academically Talented Students (CATS), is offered at specific Chandler school sites. Admission requires a passing score of 97% on the Cognitive Aptitude Test (Cog AT). All students are tested in second grade, but can be recommended for testing by a teacher or parent at any time. Because of Humphrey's high academic standards and diverse programs, many students qualifying for CATS choose to remain at Humphrey, rather than attend a self-contained program at another site. Parents believe the school provides the rigor and challenge their children need, while providing unique opportunities to experience cultural diversity in a constructive stimulating atmosphere that generates meaningful learning.

CTA Humphrey has seen their enrollment increase with the implementation of Core Knowledge and Saxon.

#### **C4. All students, including learners with unique needs, have the opportunity to learn challenging content and to achieve at high levels (1,000 word limit).**

CTA Humphrey is uniquely positioned to house the EDGE Program. The program provides self-contained classrooms where students learn social living skills in addition to academics. When success in self-contained classroom is achieved, the students participate gradually into the general education classes, giving them time to adjust to changes in routines and expectations. They can gradually assimilate in to mainstream classes and maintain fluidity with both classrooms.

The school contains resource and speech programs. Students are pulled out of mainstream classes for one-on-one/small group support, and are given targeted instruction. Speech services are for students that qualify for language or articulation support. Occupational therapy is provided for students struggling with fine, or gross, motor skills.

We maintain SEI classrooms both with pull out and push in models. Students, whose native language is other than English, are placed in a class with an ELL or SEI certified teacher. The students receive extra hours of direct English instruction that includes grammar, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary one to one work.

Humphrey houses Priority Preschool. This program caters to preschoolers with special needs. The students learn a variety of social, emotional, and academic skills. The program has a low one-to-one ratio.

Students that are not making sufficient academic or behavioral progress are targeted, for Response to Intervention (RTI). During this process, the teacher contacts the parents, about academic or behavioral concerns. The parents complete a questionnaire pertaining to their child. The teacher tracks implementations utilized to support the student, and any

improvements are tracked. The teacher then meets with a team of teachers to come up with a variety of interventions/techniques to help the struggling students experience success. The teacher implements the provided techniques and tracks the student's progress. The student's progress is reviewed after six weeks of implementing the support measures. Based on the students' progress the RTI team will support the teacher in deciding what future action should ensue.

Humphrey has a forty-five day screening for new students. The screening is a checklist that the teacher completes for every new student. This allows the teacher to check off areas that the student is doing well in and areas that are of concern. This is a preemptive measure to check on students that may need additional support.

CATS Testing is provided for students that are academically advanced in second through sixth grade. This testing enables parents to make an active choice in helping support their students' academic needs. Since the District has an exclusive academically talented program that includes process/project base learning, parents can decide which track of learning they would like their child to take.

The primary grades utilize Journeys progress monitoring forms to keep track of how the students' are doing throughout the units. The progress monitoring allows teachers to see when the students are making gains and what areas need targeted focus. This is just one way to target instruction and fill the gaps in the student's sub-sets of missing skills.

CTA Humphrey utilizes DIBELS to give us a snapshot of students reading ability levels. DIBELS results place students in specific ability reading groups that focus on areas that need strengthening or extensions. This information provides intervention groups for students that are academically struggling both in the form of one to one support in Resource and also support in small group in the classroom.

School practice is to use Developmental Reading Assessments (DRAs) to pinpoint each student's reading level. DRA levels are used to place students in the appropriate reading and intervention groups throughout the year, using teacher summary sheets. Teachers collate information regarding reading levels, math, and behavior. The forms contain parent and ELL/Resource information that teachers utilize when placing the students in the classes for the next school year. The special education team provide input on placement for their students. Teachers meet collectively for this process.

Humphrey celebrates Kindergarten Step up Day, students have the opportunity to go to a First Grade class for story time and enjoy a first grade activity. This allows the kindergartners to meet the First grade teachers and see what the first grade class environment looks like; dispelling any fears they may be having about transitioning.

The Special Education Department provides transition meetings for Sixth Grade Students that are preparing to move on to Junior High. The transition meetings allow the students to meet their instructors for the next school year, and become acquainted with their new school environment.

**C5. HIGH SCHOOLS ONLY: Curricular offerings provide rigorous educational opportunities that transition students to post-secondary education and/or careers (1,000 word limit).**

- **Describe outside and honors curricular offerings: International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, dual credit, virtual learning, and CTE and college courses.**
- **Describe any special programs or curricular offerings not previously discussed.**
- **Explain how these offerings relate to the overall curriculum and provide examples of these programs' success.**

#### **D. Active Teaching and Learning**

**A challenging curriculum is valuable only insofar as students are actively engaged in learning. Address the dynamic of student/teacher/content interaction that is the central core of the educational process. Describe how multiple and varied opportunities consistently ensure that students will acquire knowledge, skills and understanding related to targeted outcomes.**

**D1. Introduce this section with a description of a typical day of teaching and learning that visitors to your school might observe (600 word limit). Describe or discuss:**

The staff's vision is for all students to accomplish their goals and experience success. The instructional philosophy that is embraced is an eclectic pedagogical approach based on the traditional academy model. This model remains malleable for a variety of learning styles. Teachers begin their day with Morning Meetings. School wide Responsive Classroom language is utilized building active student engagement through community. Teachers assess a student's prior knowledge in a variety of ways. One reading group example might include asking students what type of questions they have about the newly introduced book, just by looking at the illustration on the front cover. This questioning allows students to demonstrate critical reasoning skills, while embedded in the questions are predictions about the story. Student answers give the teacher insight into student's prior knowledge. Teachers conduct one to one developmental reading assessments. Students use white boards, thumbs up, peer tutoring, pair sharing, note taking, choral response, Think-Pair-share or clock partners to demonstrate understanding.

Teachers post specific learning goals from Arizona Career College Readiness Standards in English Language Arts or Mathematics. Morning messages have specific learning goals or objectives stated. Teachers verbally state learning goals prior to lessons. Goals and scales are established when teachers determine how they will deliver the content based upon student need and prior knowledge. Broader learning goals, help students see how different lessons and activities build upon their own personal knowledge and help them achieve the deeper understanding required.

During lessons, teachers encourage students to take ownership for their learning using rating scales. Teachers utilize child-friendly scales to show the continuum of learning within a unit of study. They might verbally state a scale, have it posted in the room, or have students create one in a notebook. Students reflect on their learning using a scale score to remain accountable. Students can self-reflect where they are on the learning continuum throughout entire unit, and celebrate progress as objectives are completed. Teachers use Essential Questions at the start of Units to establish what they want the students to walk away knowing. The use of formative assessment during lessons guides their instruction for future lessons. The use of exit tickets,

partner share, white boards, and group response with cards or thumbs up/down are ways in which teachers assess progress with the learning objectives.

Learning goals are developed using Essential Questions in conjunction with Arizona College and Career Readiness Standards. The goals are student centered, and allow teachers to cognitively coach remediate, and enrich student thinking. One example you might see is a Classroom teacher focusing student attention on both content and process, through the use of questioning and paraphrasing. Classroom teachers provide focus, emotional, and cognitive support to promote student higher-level thinking. Students challenge themselves because it is communicated by teachers that the highest scale level includes the next grade level's goals.

Standards have become more focused with much deeper coverage of content, developing all levels of thinking within the cognitive domains. The results realized are improved attention to detail, increased comprehension, and expansion of problem solving skills. In teaching Saxon Mathematical practices, students are required to self-reflect and justify their thinking, using multiple representations such as maps, diagrams, pictures numbers, and symbols. The emphasis stressed is to use a variety of ways students can record their knowledge. In addition teachers ask probing questions of students that extend beyond "show how you did it." Students are asked to explain their reasoning and justify their answers. This challenges them to use precision, and the appropriate tools to discuss and compare multiple strategies.

**D2. The school tailors professional growth and support to address the differences in career experience and professional needs with a system for novice and experienced teachers to develop instructional expertise in the following areas: planning and preparation; instructional strategies and behaviors; assessment; reflection on teaching; and collegiality and professionalism (600 word limit).**

Teachers assure students deep understanding of content and context throughout the curriculum by Depth of Knowledge questioning in classroom work, to deepen student understanding. They solve problems to new situations by applying acquired knowledge, facts, techniques, and rules in different ways. They examine and break information into parts by identifying motives or causes, make inferences and find evidence to support their generalizations, as they propose alternate solutions. Once problems are solved, students share their results. For example Saxon curriculum provides a structured spiraling approach that supports students' abilities to exhibit previously learned material by recalling facts, terms, basic concepts and answers. Teachers cognitively coach students developing their knowledge, using comprehension questioning, application activities, analysis explanations, and student justification to defend their judgments about information. They learn to critically reason through mathematical process, and are able to support their answers validity.

Humphrey staff use a variety of school wide strategies to incorporate core literacy and critical reasoning and thinking. Kindergarten through Sixth Grade analyze texts and use text evidence to support their answers and rely on increased complexity and balancing informational and literary text. Increasing complexity level, writing from sources, improved access to Tier two and three academic vocabularies are all strategies that ensure that critical thinking and core literacy skills are taking place. Students participate in Small Guided Reading Groups and Reading Intervention Groups daily. Some grade levels combine ability groups for targeted instruction.

The staff maintains the expectation that students are life-long apprentices. Real life examples are conveyed to demonstrate how people use information in relevant ways in life's situations in classroom work. Teachers work with parents as partners in education, and continue to support, and monitor skills students use in everyday life. Teachers send home weekly newsletters, maintain a district wide websites, and have varying subject materials easily accessible to parents and students. A parent portal gives parents access to their child's grades. There is an after-school homework club that has volunteer teachers who scaffold and support students completion of homework.

Time and finances are often limited, staff analyze what professional development goals should be maximized. Teachers and Administration collaborate annually to prioritize funding for specialized development, by determining which trainings are most critical to school-wide improvement goals. Teachers rotate between staff meetings, Professional Learning Communities, and specialized staff trainings. Administration create schedules to allow teachers to plan during specials.

The teacher evaluation process adopted by the district is designed to support individual professional growth. Evaluators use observation to improve instruction. The Marzano Instrument allows Administration to provide feedback that validates teacher practice and or improvement required. The protocol also reinforces the use of effective pedagogical strategies and actively connects practice to learning theory. Teachers utilize data from the previous year to build upon and continue to identify individual goals and areas of development needed for supplementary focus. This year the principal approved one school-wide goal that was based on specific school analyzed data centered on a set of state criteria. Teachers chose one specific goal for their professional growth.

Staff participates in professional development opportunities, which supports teacher practice for mediating student thinking. The use of Depth of Knowledge Questioning in the classroom, and student testing data are considered in order to focus on areas of improvement. Some examples include, but are not limited to, previous Aims Data, Dibels Testing Data, and Professional Learning Community Data. Seeking meaning through inquiry and interaction are the hallmarks in the learning focused classrooms. Humphrey teachers believe if students are to develop identities as thinkers and problem solvers, teachers too must develop and expand identities as mediators of meaning -making. Utilizing Responsive Classroom ideology has created a responsible group of learners that continuously reflect on their behaviors. Students begin to take ownership and are intrinsically motivated to do well both socially and academically.

**D3. A purposeful decision-making process that is research-based governs all aspects of teaching and learning; there is a discernible link between instructional strategies and student achievement (600 word limit).**

All classroom teachers participate in trainings by grade levels. They develop and create lesson plans for content instruction, organized by grade level standards.

Teachers post learning goals in their classrooms to clearly communicate standards to students. These posts enable students to understand what the purpose is for the day's instruction. Teachers actively work on developing a deeper understanding of the curriculum using varied DOK leveled questions with their classes. Implementation of the Grade Levels

curriculum maps for ACCRS is supported with weekly planning meetings within each grade level team to design and implement instructional units in a consistent manner. Teachers are trained at the district level and work on lessons, posting them online in team rooms. These lessons can be viewed in My Learning Plan. CTA Humphrey staff has a shared computer drive, with postings that can be accessed by all staff. These files can be shared consistently, and vertically articulated. There is a PLC binder located in our Principal's office, where each grade level are able to track data, use the lessons for ideas to assist with their instruction, promote vertical articulation and added communication between grade levels.

Teachers effectively communicate outcomes before the lessons are taught by verbally stating the standard posted in the classroom in student friendly language. This communication begins students thinking about how they would rate themselves. Rating scales are also posted in every classroom. These scales allow them to intrinsically set goals for themselves to achieve mastery. Students can participate actively during lessons working toward objectives and goal mastery.

Multiple staff resource teachers provide support for all students with IEPs. Staff are working toward providing students who are missing subsets of skills in specific areas, the additional support with increased learning opportunities. Examples include meeting in small groups for allotted resource time, or inclusion in a classroom setting where the resource teacher uses a push in model.

The ELL population is supported by grouping students in one class per grade level where they receive additional support in grammar, reading and writing. The program we use is Mondo, designed to facilitate movement toward academic English proficiency. This program supports understanding of Academic English, including but not limited to writing, and reading. Teachers use a lot of visuals, signals, songs, Mondo info cards for small group, including cross-text reading, which supports vocabulary and grammar development. There are also poster boards with pictures that provide visual cues as conversation starters.

All Dibels report summaries are printed by Administration and sent home to parents with report cards. This practice informs parents of their student's progression in reading, and it allows them the opportunity to extend the partnership with school by giving them strategies that can be utilized at home to support student improvement. Additional reports can be generated to identify groups that require intervention, and these students are provided with additional instructional lessons. Burst and Wilson are two currently in use by the support team, in addition to small group Spalding work. The additional data is tracked and utilized for small group planning and support.

CTA Humphrey is a unique school with unique opportunities for collaboration. There are individualized student curricular modifications, all implemented with the success of each student in mind. Sixth grade provides support for struggling math students by leveling the field, using ability groupings. This allows for one class of students to work at a slower pace in order to access the curriculum, and differentiate their time in order to gain understanding. As teachers collaborate within and across grade levels, they design a school environment that changes and evolves as we meet the individual needs of our students.

**D4. Students have opportunities to apply learning to real world situations (600 word limit).**



CTA Humphrey has a plethora of hands on learning opportunities for parents, students, and staff to participate in real life learning.

The school has a Junior Achievement Program K-6 and an Art Masterpiece Platform utilizing community and parent volunteers, designed to support students in a global competitive economic world. Parent Community, and Corporate volunteers are provided training, and resources to support pedagogy in the classroom, which includes, but is not limited to career choice, money management, economic windows to global economies, and skills to adapt the way they think monetary systems work. Junior Achievement is "Teaching children the importance of money, and how to manage it." quote by Laurie Peschke, Third Grade Parent. "We have several parents volunteer for JA, looping with their student's grade level continuously year after year." (Third Grade Team). Art Masterpiece includes parent helpers that work on classroom projects, which is then extended by staff with an afterschool Art Club. The response by students was not only positive, but so well attended that students had to be divided by quarter participation groups. The completed artwork is then used to beautify and enhance the look and feel of the school. Parents comment how warm and inviting Humphrey is upon entering the campus. The school has volunteers from not only from parents of students in the community, but in addition volunteers from the corporate world. (Applied Materials and Intel) These volunteers donate a minimum of ten hours a week of volunteer work in school, the money is then paid directly to the school for their non-profit services.

Another example of hands on learning is demonstrated with the Sixth Grade Service Learning Group called the Red Hats. Students are provided opportunities to discuss global issues that affect different societies both on an international level, and locally. They are able to get out in society and work with local Food Banks, Women's Organizations and Churches to support the eradication of World Hunger and to make a difference in the lives of Children and Adults. They run Food Drives, and participate in fund raisers in conjunction with the PTO, the Student Council, and work independently to provide supplies to food banks. They visit Nursing Homes and have better insight into the world of geriatrics, and what role the aging population plays in society. They reflect on themselves, and their character in an attempt to answer the essential question, "How does my character affect who I am to become?" They provide and do the daily morning announcements, to create an atmosphere of school spirit, and show that they will lead by example. They have worked with the Principal to get permission for spirit days for students to be added to the Friday Free Dress Days. One sixth grade student at graduation stated, "Being part of the Red Hats was life-changing." Red Hats work in conjunction with Student Council on varying projects during the year.

Student Council shares responsibility across fourth through the sixth grade, building a sense of community and leadership. They sell Jingle Bells for the Jingle Jog during the holiday season, which is an activity that brings the school together with a Fitness Run. They raise money with varying activities to fund events.

CARES is used by staff to instill ideas of cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy and self-control. This community applied teaching encourages students to become social, environmentally responsible, global citizens.

**D5. Resources are available to teachers and students for instruction, gathering information and sharing the results of their efforts (800 word limit).**

CTA Humphrey teachers recognize the importance of technology. The school integrates technology into each school day. All classrooms are equipped with teacher stations that are connected to a projector and a document camera. The teachers use their computers, document cameras and projectors to support, scaffold and enhance instruction. Additionally most classrooms have 2-3 student computers for student use. Some teachers utilize Easi -Teach Chalkboards as an additional teaching tool.

The school houses a computer lab that keeps a projector, 30 computers, headphones, and a document camera that students use regularly. Each class enjoys a half hour of technology instruction every six school days with the media specialist. They learn how to use technology and develop skills that support their ability to learn and practice grade-level objectives. In addition to the computer lab time with the media specialist, classroom teachers are also able to sign up for open lab time with their students.

Moreover to using the computers in the lab as a tool to learn grade-level appropriate objectives, all students learn basic technology skills. They can open and save documents, navigating the Internet, learn how to find and use credible resources on the Internet for research using templates, create data tables and graphs, that are intermediate and advanced formatting skills, image formatting and more. They use software programs such as Kidspiration, Windows MovieMaker, Microsoft Word, Publisher, Excel and PowerPoint. They also use web-based programs such as RazKids (online leveled books and quizzes) and Prezi (online presentation tool).

Each student second through sixth grade, and each staff member has his/her own server space on which to save work. Students have a shared drive that they can use for work that they collaborate with other students on and have the ability to use shared templates, photos, etc. Staff members have a shared staff drive that they use for forms, schedules, weekly news podcast, photo sharing, etc.

Supplementing the technology, students and teachers have a large media center with thousands of books, teacher books and materials, reference materials, literature sets, leveled books and audio and video resources. Each class visits the library once every six school days. Humphrey also has a daily "Open Library" time during which students are encouraged to come in and exchange books in between scheduled library times. Many students from all grade levels take advantage of this time to exchange their books between class library times.

Teachers use technology to collect and analyze reading data about students. Students K-5 take the DIBELS reading assessment at the beginning of the year, the middle of the year and the end of the year. Testing data is directly inputted to the computer where teachers can run reports and track student progress over time.

Students and teachers incorporate technology with the use of an Accelerated Reader Program. Accelerated Reader is web-based reading program that first through sixth grade students participate in daily. Students begin by taking a reading test on a computer to determine their reading range, which is slightly below to slightly above their instructional reading level. After that, students choose from hundreds of thousands of book titles in their range, many of which can be found in the school library. They read the books, then take a quiz on the computer about the book and earn points. Each quarter teachers help students set goals for the number of points they should be able to earn. The computer helps students and teachers monitor progress toward goals. Many of the students feel motivated to read and accomplish their goals.

Accelerated Reader is something that the school uses in addition to the Journeys and Spalding reading programs.

CTA Humphrey has a News Club that meets every Tuesday after school and puts together a weekly newscast that is stored on the shared drive for teachers to watch each Friday. The News Club uses cameras to capture still photos and videos for the newscast. They cover events and issues of interest at the school. They use Windows Movie Maker to put all of their videos, slides, still camera shots and music into a weekly newscast. The newscast is available to teachers as a WMV file in the shared teacher drive to watch when they have time each Friday.

## **E. Student Focus and Support**

**An effective school identifies and addresses both academic and non-academic needs of all stakeholders.**

**E1. The academic, nonacademic and cultural needs of the student population are addressed through a network of cohesive and integrated programs and services, which demonstrates a learning climate that is stimulating and nurturing to all students (1,000 word limit).**

Chandler Traditional Academy – Humphrey Campus strives to identify and meet the diverse needs of all students. To identify the academic and behavioral needs of struggling students, staff sometimes collaborates daily, utilizing the Response to Intervention (RTI) model. This process typically begins with the classroom teacher tracking students needing intensive and strategic intervention in reading, math or writing. The procedure occurs when students struggle to follow instructions or have difficulty adhering to other classroom norms. The teacher explores the student’s Personal Information Folder and looks at possible past referrals to the RTI Team. Communicating with the RTI Coordinator or School Counselor enables staff to get immediate feedback, because all Response to Intervention records are kept for six years. Teachers make student lists of those receiving interventions, and those needing support on the RTI Possibility Chart. Teachers begin collecting specific data on each student, while conducting intervention groups and send home a questionnaire to be completed by the child’s parent. If interventions are not successful, the teacher completes a student referral form, and submits this with the parent questionnaire to the RTI Team Coordinator. This referral form includes demographic information about the students, specific area(s) of concern, frequency and durations and prior intervention strategies utilized in the past. The RTI Coordinator schedules RTI meetings with the teacher and RTI Team to discuss all areas of concern, along with TIER II interventions that are currently being used, and a discussion is held to see whether the teacher is observing any student progress. The teacher continues to collect data points for a minimum of six weeks, working in conjunction with the RTI Team. Finally, the RTI Effect of Intervention Form is completed. This form includes a fidelity check to ensure the intervention(s) were completed correctly. During this check possible changes to the intervention(s) used can be modified, there is a monitor progress check, and the team makes recommendations to continue interventions in the classroom or may refer student for a special education evaluation. Interventions used at Humphrey include, but are not limited to TIER I reading interventions within the ninety minute reading block. TIER II reading intervention which is an additional thirty minutes of instruction outside the reading block, and a Wilson reading group that meet thirty minutes every morning, for students needing more intensive intervention. To identify excelling students, teachers review standardized test scores, refer to DIBELS benchmark scores, and administer the Saxon placement assessment. To meet the needs of excelling math students, they are afforded the opportunity to attend a

math class outside their grade level. In fifth and sixth grade, math classes are offered at different paces. Excelling readers participate in differentiated guided reading groups facilitated by the classroom teachers, and at times receive enrichment activities.

Teachers nurture a sense of belonging, importance, and emotional safety, so that all students feel comfortable taking risks, and working with a variety of peers. Humphrey staff members build caring relationships among students, by participation of all classes in Morning Meetings. These meetings take place before 8:30 a.m., and typically include a greeting, sharing and or group activity, and a morning message. This meeting helps to build a community within the classroom, and reinforces school values such as cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy and self-control (C.A.R.E.S.). These values are the names of the outdoor hallways, and are posted throughout the campus as street signs. Many of the school wide events, after school clubs, PTO sponsored events and activities help students build relationships with adults on campus. Students have a variety of occasions to interact with staff and parents.

CTA-Humphrey's diverse community innately gives students an opportunity to interact with classmates and families from different socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds. Attending school where just over 50% of children live in low-income households produces students with varying different social norms and behaviors. These demographic realities can be intensified when promoting educational equity for students who might otherwise find themselves schooled in a low-expectations environment. CTA Humphreys' ethnic diversity allows students to learn different religious beliefs, family traditions, languages and customs.

To facilitate smooth and non-threatening transitions for new students, an optional tour is offered to individual families before their children begin school at Humphrey. The tour consists of a visit to a classroom in the child's grade level, multipurpose room, computer lab, media center, music room administration building, and both primary and intermediate playgrounds. Academic programs and expectations, specials, lunch, recess, homework expectations, drop-off and pick-up, dress code, assessments, intervention options, school safety and other information is discussed. Families are welcome to ask questions any time during the tour. Depending on the grade level, teachers assign new students a "buddy" to answer questions and help support them become familiarized with the school. Parents are encouraged to join CTA-Humphrey's Remind 101 account, so they can immediately begin receiving important school information communicated by the school principal.

**E2.** The school addresses students' physical, social and emotional needs, and intervenes when students' personal needs are preventing academic success (800 word limit). E2: CTA-Humphrey provides strong non-academic support for students with emotional, social and behavioral needs. The school hosts one of the district's regional programs for students who have emotional disabilities. This program is referred to as the EDGE program, and uses the Engineered Classroom Approach. This approach and curriculum aligns with the Common Core and workplace standards. It is very structured, and provides positive behavior support plans, an integrated curriculum, a social skills curriculum, behavioral consultation, and non-violent crisis prevention intervention. To educate students in their least restrictive environment, many students in the EDGE program attend mainstream classes throughout the school day. The success of students depends on communication among the EDGE teachers, general education teachers and parents. Therefore, a daily point sheet is sent home with each student to communicate and document points earned for expected behaviors, and other relevant

information. A de-escalation room is available for students to access when they are physically aggressive and need to calm down. Before exiting this room, students are required to complete a reflection sheet to help them learn from the experience.

To help students learn to handle frustration, the school counselor teaches CB24 to all students and staff. CB24 is a deep breathing, meditation exercise, which involves, slow breaths to a four count. It can be used to calm the nervous system, increase focus and reduce stress. Individual students can implement CB24 breathing exercises; in addition a whole class can apply the exercises, when there is a need to calm down (during transitions) or before an assessment. The school counselor meets with individual and groups of students when they are bothered by negative interactions, or need social or emotional support. These meetings may be in isolation or on a regular schedule depending on the situation. The anti-bullying lessons taught by teachers at CTA Humphrey correlate with the Responsive Classroom language approach and the C.A.R.E.S. application and practice. When bullying occurs, schoolchildren are taught to cooperate by being friendly bystanders. Students should be assertive with their words, and not use physical aggression. Students show responsibility by telling an adult, and show empathy by asking the person being bullied to join their group. Finally, they need to exercise self-control by not joining in on the bullying. Periodically, surveys are given to students in the intermediate grades asking them to identify students who bully others. If they have been bullied, and if they have seen a peer bullied, they are encouraged to report these behaviors. Each teacher at Humphrey has their own copy of "How to Bully Proof Your Classroom," by Caltha Crowe and the school counselor has provided lessons for them to teach their classes to provide classroom support.

The school attendance clerk monitors student absences, and tardy records when non-compliance becomes a problem. She is on the front lines, and often talks with parents about the importance of attendance, and getting to school on time. She is responsible for notifying the principal when a student reaches ten absences, and sends home a letter to parents informing them. A truancy officer is available as needed to check on students, make home visits, and talk with parents regarding attendance. The principal, or counselor addresses serious discipline problems. The school utilizes conduct referrals to document and communicate incidents and dispositions. All conduct referrals result in an investigation of the incident by the principal, and contact is made with all involved students and their parents. If consequences are warranted, they may include, but are not limited to, a conference with the principal, parent notification, In School Suspension (ISS), Off-Campus Suspension, lunch detention and loss of student privileges. To prevent a high student turnover rate, the office staff and principal contact each parent prior to withdrawal of their child. This ensures open communication between parents and staff, and ensures withdrawal is not related to any oversights by the school. To minimize staff turnover, the school has a social committee to help build relationships, and support systems for teachers. They do this by coordinating staff gatherings, providing snacks at staff meetings, and supporting each other during difficult times. The principal has an open door policy, and consistently encourages staff to inform him when they need support professionally or personally.

"I refer people first to the Chandler Care Center for Health, Food Bank, Dental and Mental Health/Counseling. My second referral source is the Family Resource Center in Mesa. They

provide many of the same services but also parenting classes for free or sliding scale” Andrea Thornton-Miller School Counselor.

## **F. Parent and Community Involvement**

**Parent and community involvement activities that are effectively planned, coordinated and well-implemented result in substantial benefits to children, parents, educators, and the school. Students whose parents are actively involved in their education are more likely to succeed in school.F1. Families, partnerships and the community play an important role in supporting learning (1,500 word limit).**

The staff’s vision is to prepare all students with the academic and social skills necessary to pursue any dream, and become life-long learners. Students learn to engage enthusiastically, and reason critically in their everyday school life. CTA Humphrey provides an exceptional education that challenges each student to develop the attitudes, skills, knowledge and understanding to become a highly successful, socially responsible global citizens. CTA Humphreys’ mission statement “Is to help each child attain his or her potential, academically and socially, and establish a community of life-long learners.”

CTA Humphrey’s staff strive to accomplish the school’s vision and mission statements using Responsive Classroom. By incorporating this model, students are empowered to take ownership of their actions and are given daily opportunities to practice develop appropriate social interactions. Staff and students align their thinking to create an atmosphere conducive to life skill learning. In addition, teachers attain these priorities by implementing curriculum from the Core Knowledge Sequence for Social Studies and Science, following the Traditional Academy Guidelines using Saxon Math, and Spalding Methodology to teach Language Arts. One challenge the staff faces daily, are partnering with non-English speakers. “The school addresses this issue by sending home announcements in Spanish and English.” Sara Nakai (Co-Secretary PTO member)

The working demographic is high in the Humphrey Community, and it can be difficult at times to touch base with some of these parents. Teachers use email, telephone, Remind 101 and text to communicate with the parent population of the school.

Chandler-Gilbert Community College is an example of a community partnership. Chandler-Gilbert Community College and Humphrey enjoy a close relationship. Students from the college visit the school campus for community outreach and internship hours. CTA Humphrey students are invited to the college to participate in various reading and cultural activities. During Read across America Day, staff invites board members, district and IRC employees to come and read to students. In addition, there is a concert sponsored by Jonnie and Brookie, a teen rock twosome, who promote life-long learning and character building.

The school site is used as a meeting site for organizations like Girl Scouts. “CTA Humphrey worked with Sam’s Club to obtain a grant to help pay for the Anti-bullying program implemented on campus.” (Holli McMahan parent)

“All are welcome at meetings to provide input and offer suggestions on how to improve activity/progress for families. PTO recruits parent volunteers by sending home a parent contact form, where parents are asked to express what they are interested in volunteering for.”

(Sara Nakai parent) In addition teachers send home newsletters asking for Junior Achievement, Art Masterpiece volunteers, and chaperones for field trips Administration and staff use e-mail as a form of two way communication between school and families. Weekly newsletters sent out via e-mail to corresponding families, Remind 101 via text is utilized. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers or Administration via phone or e-mail with questions and concerns after reading newsletters. Parent-Teacher Conferences are offered twice a year.

Parent Volunteers are needed throughout the year for various educational tasks. At the beginning of the school year parents from each classroom are asked to volunteer for extensions of learning programs called Art Masterpiece and Junior Achievement. Volunteers for Art Master piece are trained by a parent coach, and Junior Achievement training is done by a sixth grade teacher. Once the training is completed each volunteer collaborates with the classroom teacher choosing dates that the volunteer can present each lesson.

## **F2. Educational resources in the school and the community are used to extend learning opportunities for students, teachers and families (800 word limit).**

CTA Humphrey partners with Chandler-Gilbert Community College in various ways throughout the school year. Students are invited to visit the College where they work with College students in multi-sensory educational opportunities. CTA Humphrey also partners with Tempe Center for the Arts in providing performances that are an extension of what students may be learning at school. The University of Arizona has partnered with the Fourth Grade classrooms this year to provide learning opportunities about nutrition through gardening activities. The University of Arizona has provided the Fourth Grade classrooms with resources and tools to engage students in a gardening project that will produce healthy assortments of vegetables. Parent volunteers from each classroom participated in helping the students prepare the soil, and plant the seeds. Fourth grade students have taken on the responsibility of maintaining the garden. Several grade levels participate in a Nutrition Program offered by the University of Arizona. Nutrition curriculum lessons, and resources are supplied to staff to teach the importance of healthy eating and exercise. In addition, CTA Humphrey worked with Sam's Club for a grant to help pay for the Anti-bullying program we now implement on campus.

The Community Education Department offers before and after school childcare in our cafeteria called Kids-Express. In addition they offer a variety of extra- curricular classes such as dance, cheerleading, and Legos.

PTO's mission within the school is to facilitate a climate, where students can do their best learning and teachers can do their best teaching. PTO encourages parents to be actively involved in their child's education. All families whose children attend Humphrey are welcome to attend meetings. They are encouraged to provide input and offer suggestions for improvement. In the past, PTO has paid for family memberships to the Phoenix Art Museum, and for concerts for the Phoenix Symphony. "PTO works hard to provide our teachers and students with supplies and help with extra expenses that are not covered by our district funds i.e., start-up funds, responsive classroom, books, and computer programs." (Holli McMahan Vice-President PTO) Humphrey has implemented a text system this year called Remind 101 to provide another avenue to inform parents of upcoming events, and activities. This is in

addition to the traditional-paper/fliers sent home and the kiosk in front of the school. “Volunteers are always asked to sign up for duties they would enjoy, and have time to participate in. We have so many opportunities to have volunteers help... classroom copying, PTO, Art Masterpiece, Junior Achievement, help with activities such as fundraisers, field trips, etc.” Holli McMahon Vice-President PTO)