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15

16   **IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**

           FOR THE DISTRICT OF ARIZONA

17

Roy and Josie Fisher, et al.,	CV 74-90 TUC DCB (Lead Case)
Plaintiffs	
v.	
United States of America,	**DECLARATION OF MARTHA TAYLOR IN SUPPORT OF OBJECTION TO REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE REVISION OF TUSD'S COMPREHENSIVE MAGNET PLAN**
Plaintiff-Intervenor,	
v.	
Anita Lohr, et al.,	
Defendants,	CV 74-204 TUC DCB (Consolidated Case)
and	
Sidney L. Sutton, et al.,	
Defendants-Intervenors,	

1 Maria Mendoza, et al.

2   Plaintiffs,

3 United States of America,

4   Plaintiff-Intervenor,

5 v.

6 Tucson Unified School District No. One, et al.

7   Defendants.

8

9   I, Martha Taylor, declare under penalty of perjury that the following statements are

10 true:

11   1.   I am the Senior Desegregation Director for Defendant Tucson Unified School

12 District No. One ("TUSD") and have held this position since January 2015. I have personal

13 knowledge of the facts stated herein.

14   2.   Attached hereto as **Exhibit A** is a clean copy of the June 26 Revised

15 Comprehensive Magnet Plan (the redlined version of which was filed on June 26 and

16 docketed as ECF 1819-1 at 26).

17   3.   Attached hereto as **Exhibit B** is a true and correct copy of the Revised

18 Dropout Prevention and Graduation Plan (Dropout and Retention Plan) dated January 30,

19 2015 and re-revised March 13, 2015. This plan addresses ELL strategies and was approved

20 by the Special Master and the Plaintiffs.

21

22 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the

23 foregoing is true and correct.

24

25   DATED this 20th day of July, 2015

26

27   Martha Taylor

28

2

EXHIBIT A

TUSD

Tucson Unified School District

Revised Comprehensive Magnet Plan
6.26.15

2015-16
2016-17

Table of Contents

Attachments

Attachment	Title
A	2011 Magnet School Study
B	Job Description: Magnet Coordinator
C	Job Description: Teacher Assistant
D	Job Description: Instructional Data and Intervention Coach
E	Professional Learning Community Protocols (DRAFT)
F	Site Magnet Plans

Overview

Magnet schools were established in Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) in 1978 in response to a federal district court settlement agreement. The intention of magnet schools at that point was to eliminate the vestiges of the previously segregated dual school system. In the ensuing years, the purpose of TUSD magnet programs changed. TUSD is currently under a desegregation plan, with magnet programs identified as a primary strategy for integrating schools within the District. The goal of magnet schools by definition is to attract a racially diverse student body by creating schools so unique and appealing that it will draw a diverse range of students from across the district. In successful magnet schools, the student and staff population is diverse and academic achievement is higher than non-magnet schools.

In TUSD, there are currently 20 magnet school sites. As the District moves toward unitary status, TUSD's Magnet Department is committed to magnet schools becoming integrated and high achieving. To do so, specific goals have been created that will address the issues surrounding integration and student achievement.

Court order 1753 requires that TUSD magnet schools are integrated and academically successful by the end of the 2016-2017 school year. The first goal reflects the USP definition of an integrated school [USP II.B.2].   In addition, there are five student achievement goals: 1. A magnet school must be an A or B school as defined by the Arizona Department of Education school letter grade system. 2. Students in magnet schools will score higher than the state median in reading and math on the state assessment. 3. Students in magnet schools show higher growth than the state median growth in math and reading. 4. Magnet schools will secure the growth of the bottom 25% of the students at the school at a rate higher than the state median growth of the bottom 25%. 5. Magnet schools will reduce achievement gaps between the racial groups so that achievement gaps between racial groups are less than those in schools not participating in magnet programs.

History of the Comprehensive Magnet Plan

A Comprehensive Magnet Plan was approved by the Governing Board on July 15, 2014. This plan was rejected by the courts. A court order was filed in January 2015 which requires a revision of the Comprehensive Magnet Plan be submitted to the Special Master by May 15, 2015. Order 1753 requires that the District work with the Special Master to create school plans. The Special Master provided specific guidance and support during the development of the school plans.

Magnet Plan of Action

The purpose of this section, *Magnet Plan of Action*, is to address the requirements of the Unitary Status Plan.

Magnet Strategy and Operations [USP (II)(C)(2); (II)(E)(3)]

The Tucson Unified School District Magnet Department has adopted a continuous school improvement model inspired by Michael Fullan (*Leadership and Sustainability: System Thinkers in Action*, 2005), Paul Bambrick-Santoyo (*Leverage Leadership*), and Mark A. Smylie (*Continuous School Improvement,* 2010). Using the organizational design principles outlined by Bambrick-

Santoyo, each school created a continuous school improvement plan. Every magnet school plan describes strategies that focus on improving integration and student achievement.

During the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years, the Magnet Department will provide oversight of each site's Magnet School Plan. The Magnet Director and a Senior Program Coordinator will work with campuses to assure implementation and compliance of each plan and provide support as needed. The Magnet Department will take an active role in improving instructional quality and academic rigor so schools can attain the student achievement goals defined in Court Order 1753. Collaboration with the Curriculum and Instruction Department, Human Resources, Student Equity and Title I will ensure that all available resources are leveraged. The Magnet Department will also work closely with the Communications Department to implement marketing and recruitment campaigns. These campaigns will support schools in meeting integration benchmarks defined in each Magnet School Plan. The Magnet Department will continue to partner with family centers, support events, provide outreach, and market school brands.

Student Assignment Overview [USP (II)(A)(1); USP (II)(A)(2); USP (II)(E)(3)]

Tucson Unified School District's School Community Services Department manages the lottery system that determines student placement for magnet or open enrollment. This lottery is weighted to support integration of schools according to USP ethnicity requirements. Magnet applications are accepted at school sites, on-line, at family centers, and at School Community Services. The Magnet Department and School Community Services collaborate each year to ensure that information about magnet programs and pipelines are accurate before applications are released to the public. The application window for lottery selection for magnet programs runs from November through March. Parents may continue to submit applications after the March lottery window deadline. Students will be placed if the magnet campus has available seats.

Other than the weighted lottery, there are no other admission priorities for magnet schools. However, at Tully there will be two GATE components: self-contained – as an addition to the District's self-contained GATE option - and GATE Plus. Students in the self-contained strand will take the GATE placement test; all other students will receive GATE Plus services in their regular classrooms. The self-contained strand thus has a testing component, which is unique among TUSD magnet schools.

Magnet Programs – Magnet School Plan [USP (II)(E)(3); Order 1753 Filed 01/16/15]

Current budget capacity does not exist to adequately resource and staff new and replicated programs. As a result, during the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years, the District will not be adding new magnet sites and no programs will be replicated or relocated. No additional dual language magnet programs will be offered during the 2015-16 or 2016-17 school years. However, the District may consider adding programs in the future. Pipelined magnet programs offer a continuous theme from Kindergarten to High School. The District currently has an International Baccalaureate, Fine and Performing Arts, and Science Technology and Math pipelines (STEM). As some pipelines might be disrupted by program elimination, the District will work to identify new magnet sites to continue these pipelines. After the 2016-17 school year, new, replicated and/or relocated magnet

programs will be considered based on budget capacity, available resources, public interest, and location.

During the 2013-14 school year, the District initiated a comprehensive boundary review. The Boundary Committee determined that any change in boundaries would not have a significant effect on the integration of magnet schools. Therefore, no changes will be made in attendance boundaries for magnet schools during the 2015-16 school year. Dodge Magnet Middle School will remain the only magnet program with no attendance boundary.

The District assigned new magnet themes to two campuses. Tully Magnet Elementary will change their theme from STEM to Gifted and Talented (to be implemented during the 2016-17 school year) and Carrillo Magnet Elementary adopted Communication and Creative Arts as a theme effective 2014-15 school year. [USP (II)(E)(3)]

In accordance with Court Order 1753, each site created a Magnet School Plan (MSP) that addresses two specific components: integration and student achievement. Each magnet school created a two year plan that includes both long term goals and annual benchmarks. Each school adopted a continuous improvement model that is driven by systematic, steady and incremental progress.

Schools underwent a needs assessment to determine goals and benchmarks for integration and student achievement. Schools analyzed two years of data. From these data points, schools created goals and benchmarks. Some schools anticipated that the majority of growth was going to occur the second year of implementation. The goals and benchmarks were modified to show equal incremental growth over the two year span of the plan. Each Magnet School Plan includes intentional strategies that will allow for progress toward integration and student achievement. By using specialized instructional strategies for diverse populations and strengthening their unique theme, schools will meet the challenges set before them. These strategies are integral to the schools' missions and their identity as magnets.

In March and April of 2015, principals and key magnet staff were trained on the processes and components of continuous school improvement. Participants were briefed on the difference between the change process as an adaptation to internal and external demands compared to the idea of change that occurs over time and never reaches a final outcome. School teams analyzed current conditions and processes to determine what adjustments needed to be made in order to implement continuous improvement. These components were embedded into the Magnet School Plans.

Processes and Schedules to Improve Magnet Programs

A committee comprised of District representatives, a plaintiff representative, and the Special Master analyzed enrollment and student achievement data for all twenty magnet schools. Two data points were used to group schools: the state letter grade and the application of the integration formula. Schools were grouped according to state letter grade and integration trends. Table 1 indicates how schools were grouped.

Table 1

School	Letter Grade	Integration Status	School	Letter Grade	Integration Status	School	Letter Grade	Integration Status
Carrillo	A	No	Bonillas	C	No	Cragin**	C	Yes
Dodge	A	Yes	Booth-Fickett	C	Yes	Pueblo	C	No
Drachman	A	No	Borton	C	Yes	Holladay	D	No
Palo Verde	A	Yes	Mansfeld	C	No	Robison	D	No
Cholla	B	Yes	Safford	C	No	Utterback	D	No
Davis	B	No						
Ochoa	B	No						
Roskruge	B	No						
Tucson	B	No						
Tully*	C	No						

*= Tully is exempt from elimination because of theme change in 2015-16

**= Magnet status eliminated 2015-2016 school year

To address integration, the District worked with magnet schools to review successful strategies and brainstorm strategies that have not been explored. Schools added these strategies to the Integration section of their magnet school plans. "A" and "B" schools that are integrated or close to integration will divide the Magnet Coordinator's time between supporting recruitment and improving student achievement. "C" and "D" schools will utilize the coordinator position to primarily improve student achievement.

All schools must show progress toward integration each year, with 2014-15 being the baseline year. Integration can be measured in two ways. First, Special Master will examine the overall integration of the school using the 70% and 15% thresholds. Second, progress toward integration will be measured by the incoming class at lowest grade and those students in subsequent years. Integration must be maintained at each of the subsequent grade levels starting with 2014-15 and 2015-16, and from 2015-16 to 2016-17. After the 40th day of enrollment for 2015-16, and the 40th day of 2016-17, the Special Master may recommend to the courts that these schools that have little chance to integrate and magnet status should be relinquished. Schools that have shown substantial progress toward integration will have until June of 2017 to meet USP integration standards.

To address student achievement, the District required each school to adopt a continuous school improvement (CSI) process centered on student data. CSI enhances the ability of teachers to employ a repertoire of instructional strategies rooted in culturally responsive pedagogy to create school cultures that are inclusive and supported by shared leadership and instructional support systems. "A" and "B" schools were directed to include the following three strategies for improving overall student achievement and closing the achievement gap in their school plan. Schools that have a magnet identity were encouraged to keep that identity and embed the theme into the strategies:

- Implement PLCs a two hour block of time at least once weekly
  - The district will provide training on the implementation of the DuFour Model of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and the in-depth data analysis strategies outlined by Paul Bambrick-Santoyo.

o   The District has created a protocol for all PLCs (See Attachment E). The protocol begins by teachers coming to a common agreement on four basic questions: 1) What do we want students to learn? 2) How will we know if they learn it? 3) How do we respond when students are not learning? 4) How do we respond when students have already learned it? Next, the professional community will purposefully analyze student work to determine who has learned the skill(s), are there specific trends to consider, and to determine who did not learn the skill. The professional community can begin to dialog and problem solve collaboratively. This protocol includes a Team Agenda and a Team Feedback Sheet so that communication is apparent between team members, teacher leaders, and the leadership team.

o   Tucson Unified School District recognizes the importance of professional development of all staff and believes that to build instructional capacity, teachers and staff who provide instructional services for students must be continuous learners. To this end, the District has set aside one day week where students leave early, freeing up quality time for staff to participate in PLCs, Learner Centered Professional Development, and other training as necessary. Teachers in magnet schools will participate in PLCs during release time on Wednesdays and will be compensated for an additional hour to ensure that they have a minimum of 90 minutes at least once a week. Some schools have leveraged staff so that additional time is built into the schedule without impacting or reducing the amount of instructional time. Mansfeld is a good example. Because of the seven period day, Mansfeld is able to give teachers additional planning time without impacting the school day for students.   Borton, Holladay, and Carrillo utilize certified specialists to provide art, outdoor learning, and drama. While students are in these classes, teachers are able to plan, meet and collaborate.

o   Provide Learner Centered Professional Development (LCPD) incorporates what we know about adult professional learning and couples that with research from school reform efforts. LCPD approaches professional learning as an interactive process where teachers are viewed as competent and motivated learners. LCPD focuses on the improvement of instructional practices and instructional strategies that are directly related to the daily challenges of the classroom. There is the direct connection between the actions that a teacher needs to take for students to be successful and measuring how those actions directly impact the challenges of the classroom. LCPD can be more effective than the traditional methods of professional development because the learning is job-embedded and directly related to classroom experiences. When teachers develop analytic capacity and are responsible for identifying what they need to learn, they are more motivated and committed to the learning. The content of LCPD focuses on what students are to learn and how to address the different problems students may have in learning the material.

o   LCPD is driven by analyses of the difference between the goals and standards for student learning and student performance.

o   LCPD is primarily school-based and integral to school processes and schedules.

o   LCPD is organized around collaborative learning and problem solving.

- A Magnet Coordinator (see attachment B) will provide support for classroom teachers to improve instruction, aggregate data, and guide PLCs as needed. Magnet Coordinators will be trained in facilitating data dialogs (*Leveraging Leadership*).

"C" and "D" schools were directed to include the three strategies above. As well, these schools were directed to choose from a menu of other strategies:

- Create Teacher Leaders of PLCs.. Reduce class size or student to adult ratio.
- Provide training on differentiated Tier 1 instruction for all students. The training must be followed up by classroom observations and coaching.
- Utilize Cooperative Learning strategies
- Utilize peer tutoring
- Provide Tier 2 intervention within the school day.
- Provide Tier 3 interventions.
- Use a Peer Observation Model to provide lesson and instructional feedback.
- Utilize an Instructional Data and Intervention Coach or Learning Support Coordinator (LSC) to support PLCs.

Schools were given the opportunity to include research-based strategies that address student achievement or closing achievement gaps in addition to the strategies listed above and that were approved by the District and were in line with the CSI initiative. To meet the student achievement goals, all magnet schools wrote specific strategies to improve academic achievement for all students, address achievement discrepancies in the lower 25%, and address achievement gaps. For those schools that did not reclassify enough ELL students to receive additional points from the Arizona Department of Education letter grade system, they included strategies in their plans specifically designed for the success of ELL students. Benchmarks for 2015-16 and budgetary requirements are also outlined in each Magnet School Plan.

Magnet schools that have a state letter grade of "D" have been granted magnet funding for the 2015-16 school year. This funding is to be allocated towards student achievement, with care taken to not supplant Title 1 programs. After analysis of 2015-16 40th day enrollment data, the Special Master may consider withdrawing magnet status. In the case of Cragin, the District agreed with the plaintiffs that budgetary capacity does not currently exist to support this site's magnet program. Therefore, after 2015-16 Cragin will no longer receive magnet funding and will not be considered a magnet school. Cragin will not be included in the magnet lottery process for 2015-16. However, because of location, the District may consider Cragin as a magnet in the future. Tully will be exempt from this measure because of the theme change.

Strategies to Improve Student Achievement
There are two key factors to improving student achievement: Instruction and School Culture. Data driven instruction, observational feedback, instructional planning, and professional development when done with purposeful intention will improve student achievement. School Culture is defined by student expectations, staff culture, and distributed leadership.

The District will provide professional development opportunities that are consistent with current research to ensure that teachers build a broad range teaching strategies for students who are struggling academically. Related training will be provided to principals, teacher evaluators
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and instructional support staff. The District will offer training opportunities to help principals and teachers use data driven instruction, observational feedback and instructional planning. Principals will receive training in creating a positive school culture that reflects high expectations for both students and teachers and in developing distributed leadership systems, with teachers as Teacher Leaders.

All magnet schools have to implement three strategies: Create robust PLCs around what students need to learn, implement Learner Centered Professional Development, and utilize an instructional expert to support teacher learning. Magnet schools that are "C" and "D" have to include other strategies in their plan.

Those that intend to reduce the student to adult ratio will utilize Teacher Assistants (see attachment C). To be a Teacher Assistant in TUSD, you must have the following qualifications:

- Associates Degree (or higher), OR 60 Semester Hour credits, OR AZ Department of Education approve Academic Assessment Test
- At least one year experience working with youth
- Speak, read, and write English

Based on student data, teachers will identify students who either have learned the skill, who are on their way to learning the skill, or who are struggling. Teachers will then provide either small group instruction or one-on-one instruction to address the students who have not learned the skill. Balancing a full classroom and providing small group and individualized learning can be a challenge for the best of teachers. Teacher Assistants in the classroom can provide the support needed so that all students can succeed by providing guidance and direction while the teacher works with small groups or one-on-one. When Teacher Assistants are used, they will be supporting the learning of students who are not struggling so that certified personnel can work more intensively with students who most need their expertise.

Other schools have chosen to implement Multi-Tiered System of Support.. This model uses student data to determine grouping for specific purposes that relate to student needs and strengths. When teachers focus on students' cultural linguistic and cognitive assets, they can design learning situations that enable students to connect what they know to what we want them to learn. The model of grouping is fluid and flexible where not only the students move in and out of support systems, but what they are learning changes also. The majority of student learning time is in whole group, flexible groups, or individualized. Pull-out interventions will be used minimally. Teachers will use a range of instructional strategies that minimize the use of achievement groups such as cooperative learning, peer tutoring, and differentiated instruction. Some schools have elected to use an Instructional Data and Intervention Coach to support these efforts.

Interventions provided outside the school day will be considered at each magnet school. The Magnet Department has been instrumental in writing grants for schools. Currently, thirteen of the twenty magnet schools have 21st century funding. The Department submitted five more grants that could be funded for 2015-16. This is a five year grant by the Arizona Department of Education that provides extended day opportunities for students and includes transportation. Some schools are using a community school approach that includes a minimal fee. Other schools are providing after school tutoring and Saturday school where teachers are working

directly with students on specific content skills. After school tutoring and Saturday school may include transportation.

Some schools recognize the need to improve instructional practices. Those schools will utilize specialists to support teacher learning. Magnet Coordinators will work directly with teachers in planning and lesson delivery. Instructional Data and Intervention Coordinator (see attachment E) will support PLCs and individual teachers in creating meaningful assessments, providing data reports, and support teachers in understanding the data. This position will track student data and offer recommendations for interventions. Teacher Leaders, although not a dedicated position, will work with PLCs to facilitate deep and deliberate dialog that connects assessment to student learning to instruction. This will allow teachers to reflect and make adjustments to both planning and instruction.

Teaching used to be seen as a deeply personal craft and often teachers were reluctant to have others observe their practice. In today's schools, this is not the case. More and more, teachers are becoming open minded and are welcoming other practitioners to provide feedback and help one another reflect on their instruction. Some Magnet schools have chosen peer observation as a tool to improve instruction. In peer observation, teachers meet together to discuss the lesson that is going to be taught. The teacher who is going to be observed explains any nuances of the lesson or particular areas that he/she would like to have special attention paid. The observing teacher watches the entire lesson as planned and makes observational notes. After, the two teachers come together to reflect on the lesson, study the data, and work collaboratively to improve instruction. This strategy takes a great deal of training before being implemented.

Processes and Strategies to Eliminate Magnet Programs

According to Court Order 1753, each magnet school will be evaluated annually using data markers for integration and student achievement. This will allow the Special Master and the District to determine the viability and desirability of existing programs. According to the Draft of Response to January 16 Court Order, "Should it appear highly unlikely that any particular magnet school or program will be able to meet the six goals (sic) by the end of the 2016-17 school year, the Special Master may recommend that magnet status be withdrawn." In the Fall of 2015, the Special Master will review 40th day enrollment data to determine whether magnet schools have met the USP integration goal or the goal for incoming grades, beginning with those grades that began in 2014-15. This analysis will be the first determining factor in identifying which magnet programs will be recommended for elimination. If the Special Master recommends that the magnet be eliminated, and if the Court adopts the recommendation, the funding allocated to the school for recruitment and marketing will be reallocated. Students attending under magnet status would continue to receive transportation until they reach the highest grade in that school. Once students reach the highest grade, they will returned to their neighborhood school or families may choose to open enroll.

Student achievement data will be the second determining factor in identifying possible magnet elimination. Assessment data from the 2016-17 school year will be analyzed according to five goals. Magnet schools must:

1. Be an A or B school as defined by the state school letter grade system.
2. Score higher than the state median in reading and math on the state assessment.

3. Show academic growth of all students higher than the state median growth in reading and math.
4. Secure the growth of the bottom 25% of the students of the school at a rate higher than the state median growth.
5. Reduce achievement gaps between ethnic groups so that achievement gaps between these groups are less than those in schools with similar demographics and socio economic factors and that are not magnet schools in the district. The gap shall be defined as the difference between performance in math and reading/literacy of the highest ethnic group compared to other ethnic groups within the school.

The budgeting process for most schools begins in the spring and is finalized by the end of June. Teachers and administrators are notified of the positions at the schools based on these preliminary budgets. Student test scores are usually made public late June or early July.   If a magnet is eliminated because of lack of progress in improving student achievement, magnet funding will not be continued beyond the year in which funding is withdrawn. However, schools that lose magnet status will be funded as needed to meet student needs. In this case, schools will be allowed to exceed formula funding. Students attending the school under magnet status will receive transportation until they reach the highest grade at that school. The District will create a plan to support schools in building both budgetary and programmatic capacity so that the schools that lose magnet status are able to maintain basic school functions. These plans will vary from site to site, as some schools are more heavily invested in instructional staff and support positions.

Schedule for Magnet Programs

Date	Action	Participants
March-April, 2015	Schools develop Magnet School Plans	Site leadership
	Plans reviewed by stakeholders	Site leadership, district leadership, Special Master, plaintiffs
	New theme chosen for Tully	Theme determined by District leadership
May, 2015	Comprehensive Magnet Plan submitted	Magnet Department, Special Master
June, 2015	Comprehensive Magnet Plan to Governing Board	Magnet Department
	Comprehensive Magnet Plan submitted	Court
June, 2015	26-TUSD files its responses to Plaintiffs objections	TUSD, Plaintiffs, Special Master
	30-Plaintiffs may file comments on individual plans	
June-July, 2015	CMP Approved by Court	
	Professional development focusing on achievement	Magnet school staff, District professional development staff
July-May	7-TUSD may file response to Plaintiffs' comments about individual school plans	Plaintiffs, Special Master, Magnet Department, School Staff, Communications Department
	9- Special Master files his recommendations with the Court	

	The Parties my each file a response to the Special Master's recommendations Marketing and Recruitment begins Training for Magnet Coordinators Training for Principals	
October, 2015	40th day enrollment data compared to 2014-15 baseline	Magnet Department, Research and Accountability, School Community Services, Special Master
November, 2015	Court report on enrollment data findings regarding integration goals with recommendations concerning magnet status	Special Master
January, 2016	Achievement data submission	Magnet Department, Special Master
February 2016	Report of achievement to courts with recommendations concerning magnet status	Special Master

The Magnet Department will work in collaboration with other District departments to provide high quality professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators in order to on build knowledge and skills necessary to meet the five achievement goals set forth in the Order.

Federal Magnet School Funding USP (II)(E)(5)]

The Magnet Department will apply for the Magnet Schools Assistance Program grant in 2016-17.

Transportation – General Provisions [USP (III)(A)(3)]

The District will continue to provide free transportation to all magnet students who meet the guidelines established in the District's Transportation Policy EEA and in the USP VIII.A.5. If a magnet is eliminated, students attending as a magnet student will continue to receive transportation until they reach the highest grade at that school. Students participating in 21st Century programs will also be eligible for transportation. Schools that provide after school community programs, tutoring, and Saturday school will work with the Transportation Department to ensure equitable access to transportation so all students have the opportunity to participate.

EXHIBIT B

TUSD

Tucson Unified School District

Revised Dropout Prevention and Graduation Plan
(Dropout and Retention Plan)
January 30, 2015
(re-revised March 13, 2015)

USP LANGUAGE

V. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

E. Student Engagement and Support

2. Academic and Behavioral Supports Assessment and Plan

b. By ~~July 1, 2013~~ September 1, 2013[1], the ABSC shall develop: (i) an assessment of existing programs, resources, and practices disaggregated by school site(s), grades served, number of students served, ELL status, and resources (e.g., part-time or full-time personnel assigned, annual budget); (ii) an analysis, based on the data identified in this Section, of any additional resources or programs that may be needed, by grade and school site; (iii) an analysis of the school sites with the highest concentration of students in need of such programs and resources; (iv) annual goals, in collaboration with relevant staff, for increasing graduation rates for African American and Latino students, which shall be shared with the Parties and the Special Master and used by the District to evaluate the effectiveness of its efforts; and (v) procedures to ensure follow up when Mojave automatically flags a student for attention. By ~~October 1, 2013~~ November 1, 2013[2], the ABSC shall develop a plan, in collaboration with the personnel identified below in this Section, incorporating research-based strategies to focus and increase resources for academic and behavioral support programs and dropout prevention services to ensure equitable access to such programs, concentrate resources on school site(s) and in areas where student and school data indicate there is the greatest need, and reduce the dropout rate and increase the graduation rate in each high school.

---

[1] This date was changed by agreement among the Special Master, counsel for plaintiffs and the District. The assessment and the flag procedures were completed by September 1, 2013; the analyses was completed by October 1, 2013; and the annual goals were completed in conjunction with the development of the plan (dropout data vital to developing goals was not released from the Arizona Department of Education until the Fall).

[2] This date was changed by agreement among the Special Master, counsel for plaintiffs and the District.

   i. *Dropout Prevention and Retention Plan. The District's dropout prevention and retention plan shall include, but not be limited to:*

      I.   *Developing yearly goals for lowering dropout rates, increasing graduation rates, and reducing retentions in grade for African American and Latino students, including ELLs, in each high school, taking into account the recent dropout, graduation and retention rates for each group. Graduation rates, disaggregated by a number of factors including race, ethnicity and ELL status, for the 2008 -2011 school years are set forth in Appendix H;*

      II.   *Hiring or designating a dropout coordinator to work with the ABSC to implement the strategies identified herein to reduce dropout, increase graduation, and focus school and District resources on working with students whose patterns of attendance, classroom performance, or other individual challenges indicate a serious risk of dropping out;*

      III. *Developing and implementing strategies to identify African American and Latino students, including ELL students, most at risk of being retained in grade and providing identified students with extra time and resources to accelerate their learning (e.g., additional time for instruction in and after school, summer programs and individualized support, including participation and literacy programs). Particular attention shall be given to reducing the retention rate of students in grades 3 and 8;*

      IV. *The engagement, as appropriate, of language accessible social workers, health clinics, and school staff, or volunteers to assist in providing supports to these students;*

      V.   *Summer credit recovery programs rather than grade retention whenever possible;*

      VI. *Ninth grade academies to ease the transition to high school;*

      VII. *Special efforts to involve at-risk students and their families in school programs and to improve academic skills;*

      VIII. *Positive alternatives to suspension; and*

      IX. *Consultation with national experts on dropout prevention.*

OVERVIEW

The Unitary Status Plan (USP) requires that the Academic and Behavioral Coordinator (ABSC): 1) complete an assessment of existing programs, resources, and practices disaggregated by school site(s), grades served, number of students served, ELL status, and resources (e.g., part-time or full-time personnel assigned, annual budget); 2) complete an analysis, based on the data identified in this Section, of any additional resources or programs that may be needed, by grade and school site; 3) complete an analysis of the school sites with the highest concentration of students in need of such programs and resources; and 4) set annual goals, in collaboration with relevant staff, for increasing graduation rates for African American and Latino students.

Student Support Review and Assessment (SSRA)
The SSRA was conducted from July through September of 2013 and completed on October 1, 2013. The ABSC assembled a team made up of various staff from a variety of district departments. The team created a 170-question survey for schools to elicit responses about site-based resources, programs, and supports. Most of the survey questions were simple yes or no answers as the team sought to gather data from multiple sites in a meaningful format. The survey categorized the supports as follows:

- Tutoring
- Fine Arts
- Student Support Services
- Exceptional Education
- Academic Intervention
- Behavioral Intervention
- Summer Program / Transition
- Before / Afterschool Programs
- Instruction and Instructional Support
- Interscholastics
- Family Engagement

The team also obtained information from central departments about the resources and support systems they provide to schools and students.

Graduation and Dropout Prevention Plan
Through December of 2013, the Graduation and Dropout Prevention committee and subcommittees continued to meet frequently to review data, analyze current district practices, and plan for more effective District practices in order to best provide access to and support for "At Risk" African American and Latino students, including ELL students. The subcommittees included Family Engagement, Positive Alternatives to Suspension, and Supports for "At Risk" Students, Strategies to Reduce Retention and increase Graduation, and Recommendation for Review and Assessment.

Implementation

Some recommendations resulting from the Student Support Review and Assessment (SSRA) were implemented during SY 2013-14; others will be implemented in SY 2014-15 with monitoring, evaluation, and adjustment as needed. In addition, in an annual review, the designated committee will continue to research best practices, seek resources, provide training, and recommend remedies to any supports for Graduation and Dropout Prevention for African American and Latino students, including ELL students.

DEFINITIONS

AASSD	African American Student Services Department provides support services for African American Students.
MASSD	Mexican-American Student Services Department, a District department that offers mentoring and tutoring services to primarily Latino students.
Unitary Status Plan (USP)	A court-mandated plan to guide the District in its efforts to achieve "unitary status" by eliminating the vestiges of a "dual" or segregated system.
AVID	Advancement Through Individual Determination (AVID) is an international program that is highly effective in providing academic support for underrepresented students with a college-preparatory focus.
AZELLA	Arizona English Language Learner Assessment. An assessment proficiency of the English language learners for appropriate instruction.
AIMS	Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards. A standard based assessment that measures a student's proficiency of the Arizona Academic Content Standards in writing, reading and mathematics.
PARCC	Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, a 19-state partnership that is developing K-12 assessments in English and Math.
True North Logic	An on-line training website that allows employees to take web-based courses or take other training courses offered by the employer.
Stanford 10	A national assessment in multiple choice formats used by elementary to secondary schools in the United States. Stanford 10 measures student progress in content standards for reading and math.
MTSS	Multi-Tier System of Support, aka Response to Intervention (RtI), is a multi-tiered framework designed to maximize achievement for all students. It focuses on outcomes through the systematic gathering of data to guide educational decisions. As such, MTSS is not a system to categorize and refer students for Exceptional Education testing and qualification.
Dropout	Students enrolled in school, any time during the school year, but are not enrolled at the end of the school year and did not transfer or graduate.
Dropout Rate	A rate calculated for grades seven through twelve by ADE, based on a calendar year that runs from the first day of summer recess through the last day of school. A school's total enrollment is used as the population figure

	against which dropouts are subsequently counted.
SAIS	Student Accountability Information System is the Arizona Department of Education's system for monitoring student movement from school to school throughout the State of Arizona. Each enrolling student is given a SAIS number which attaches to the student's name.
Student Attendance Codes	The Arizona Department of Education has developed codes which reference a student's current educational status.
Mojave	The current Student Information System used by TUSD.
Arizona College and Career Ready Standards	Based on the National Common Core Standards, Arizona's College and College and Career Ready Standards, were adopted in 2010. Schools began implementing the standards during the 2013 school year. Pilot testing will begin in Spring of 2014 and full implementation expected for SY 14-15.
LSASP	The Life Skills Alternative to Suspension Program is an alternative education placement for students that are long term suspended from school between 20-45 days.
Watch Point	TUSD's pilot data dashboard system to ensure that students who (i) fall below a particular academic threshold, (ii) go above a certain threshold of absences, or (iii) receive a certain threshold number of disciplinary consequences or referrals, are flagged and referred to the student services resources identified.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Plan includes the following preliminary sections: USP Language; Overview; Definitions; and Executive Summary. The Plan includes the following main sections:

I. FINDINGS OF STUDENT SUPPORT REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT PLAN

II. ANNUAL GOALS AND PROGRESS MONITORING

III. IDENTIFICATION AND MONITORING OF STUDENTS

IV. SUPPORT AND INTERVENTION
    A. GRADUATION SUPPORT SERVICES
    B. FAMILY ENGAGEMENT
    C. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

V. CONSULTATION WITH NATIONAL EXPERTS

VI. NATIONAL RESEARCH

I.   FINDINGS OF THE STUDENT SUPPORT REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT (SSRA)

A. Analysis

The Student Support Review and Assessment (SSRA) team was comprised of central personnel from various departments, site-personnel, and principals from all levels. The SSRA team used a comprehensive approach to identify additional resources or programs that may be needed, and to identify the highest concentration of students in need of such programs and resources. The team analyzed data from multiple sources including:

- student achievement data (by grade and by school);
- resource, program, practices data from the school survey;
- human resource vacancy data; and
- an assessment of the needs of individual sites to identify high-needs sites (using academic, behavioral, and attendance indicators)[3]

The SSRA team had a 100 percent return from all sites regarding surveys and other information requested. The team also considered implementation of state academic standards, increased academic rigor as required under proposed state assessments, and research regarding effective educational practice. The preponderance of data reveals that the greatest academic need and gate-keeper for successful matriculation within and beyond the District is student achievement in mathematics.

B. Recommendations

1. Increase Mathematics Supports

After an analysis of the needs assessment, the team saw a greater need for supports in the area of mathematics. Schools have a variety of resources and supports for students K – 12 in reading, but limited resources were provided focusing on math.

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[3] Needs Assessment. For each student currently at the school with a standardized score (AIMS by preference, Stanford 10 if AIMS is unavailable) from the previous year, a determination first is made if the individual student is already at the mastery level required by their current (not previous year) grade. If not, the difference between their "current" (Spring 2013) level and their needed level is computed. These differences then can be aggregated, averaged, etc, so that we can speak of the "Total Need" and "Average Need" for both a school and for each racial/ethnic group at the school, as well as the percentage of students who have a need. This is accomplished separately for both Reading and Math.

2. **Provide Additional Instruction and Supports in Non-Traditional Ways**

- Provide Saturday School (Academy)
- Extend the school day for our neediest schools. These additional hours of instruction must be filled with quality instruction that is targeted for students' needs.
- Extended Year for schools using the intercessions to provide additional support opportunities.
- Research and identify different ways for students to engage in credit recovery opportunities.
- Provide a standardized curriculum throughout the District to ensure continuity for the District's highly-mobile student population.

II.   ANNUAL GOALS AND PROGRESS MONITORING

Students drop out of school for many reasons, and no matter how proactive a school district is or how good its schools and support programs are, no school or district will ever completely eliminate dropouts (and thus, will not be able to raise graduation rates to 100%). The research, as well as our experience and data in the District, shows that the majority of students who either drop out or fail to graduate on time do so because they are failing their classes and not accumulating enough credits toward graduation. Thus, to effectively raise the graduation rate and reduce the dropout rate, the District will apply strategies that identify (and identify as early as possible) students who are struggling or failing classes, and provide them with academic support and credit recovery options so they can stay on track, or get back on track, toward on-time graduation. The following goals are based on the assumption that the District can effectively address this root cause (students not accumulating enough credits in a timely manner), and should help all students while specifically targeting African American and Hispanic students, including ELLs.

A. Four-Year Graduation Rates[4]

The District will work to increase the four-year graduation rate for all 12th grade students. Specifically, for African-American and Hispanic students, the goal is to increase the four-year graduation rates by 3% (not 3 percentage points) in SY 2014-15 – as compared to the four-year graduation rates from SY 2013-14. This goal is reasonably calculated to reduce disparities by race and ethnicity by SY 2017-18. This goal will be evaluated and adjusted annually based upon the data.

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[4] Each student that enters high school grade is assigned to an expected graduation year ("cohort year") that is calculated to be four years after their entry to high school. The "Four-Year Graduation Rate" is the number of students who successfully graduate by their "cohort year" divided by the total number of students who graduate plus students who drop out plus students who are still enrolled but have not yet graduated.

For example, if at the end of SY 2013-14, the African American Four-Year Graduation Rate is 75%, the goal for the end of SY 2014-15 would be 77.25%, an increase of 3% (75 x 1.03)).

The District will work to increase the four-year graduation rate for all 12th grade ELL students.

Specifically, the goal for the end of SY 2014-15 would be to increase the number of African-American ELL students graduating by 100%, and to increase the number of Latino ELL students graduating by 50% as compared to SY 2013-14; or to increase the graduation rate by 10 percentage points – whichever is higher. In addition, when analyzing the ELL data, we will consider reclassified ELLs when evaluating progress towards ELL goals.

It is important to consider both options as the number within a cohort may change throughout the year. Another important factor to consider is that every year's cohort of ELL seniors has different English proficiency levels (and different proficiency levels in varying core subjects). Also, the District will continue to track the Five-Year Graduation Rate for all students. The District will then extract from the data the five-year graduation rates for subgroups including ELL students. Five year graduation rates are a more appropriate measure for students who (a) may not even be proficient in English *and* have to take the 4 hour block, and (b) may not have not been in TUSD for most or all of their education careers (some are refugees, some come from other districts, etc.)

B. Dropout Rates

The District will work to decrease the dropout rate for all 7th - 12th grade students for the SY 2014-15 by .2% for African American and Latino students. In 2012-13, the dropout rates were 1.8%, 2.5%, and 2.5% for White, African-American, and Hispanic students respectively. The dropout rates in SY 2013-14 were 1.9%, 2.2% and 2.0% for White, African-American, and Hispanic students respectively. The revised goal of a .2% decrease in dropouts for both groups in SY 2014-15 would reduce the disparity further (or eliminate it). This goal will be evaluated and adjusted annually based upon the data. The District will work to decrease the dropout rate for all 7th - 12th grade ELL students. Specifically, for African-American and Hispanic 7th – 12th grade ELL students, the goal is to maintain a dropout rate that is lower than each group's non-ELL dropout rate for each given year. This goal is reasonably calculated to reduce disparities by race and ethnicity by SY 2016-17.

C. Reducing In-Grade Retention Rates (K-8)

The District will work to decrease the in-grade retention rate for all African American and Latino students in grades K – 8. For African-American students, the initial goal is to decrease the in-grade retention rate by 10% in SY 2014-15 – as compared to the in-grade retention rate from SY 2013-14. This goal is reasonably calculated to reduce disparities by race and ethnicity, to the extent practicable, by SY 2016-17. For Latino students, the initial goal is to decrease the in-grade retention by 50% in grades 3 and 8 when compared to Anglo (White) students. Goals will be

evaluated and adjusted annually based upon the data. The baseline data is as follows (For grade-level data, see AppendixV-40 of the 2013-14 Annual Report):

Year	White	AfAm	Hisp	NatAm	Asian	MR	Total
2012-13	0.9%	1.2%	0.9%	1.3%	0.4%	1.5%	0.9%

For example, if at the end of SY 2013-14, the African American in-grade retention rate is 1%, the goal for the end of SY 2014-15 would be 0.9%, a decrease of 10% (1.0 - (1.0 x 10%)).

D. Attendance Rates

The District will work to increase attendance rates for all K – 12th grade students. Specifically, for African-American students, the initial goal is to increase attendance rates by .05% in SY 2014-15 – as compared to the attendance rates from SY 2013-14. For Hispanic students, the initial goal is to increase attendance rates by .6% in SY 2014-15 – as compared to the attendance rates from SY 2013-14. These goals are reasonably calculated to reduce disparities by race and ethnicity, to the extent practicable, by SY 2017-18. Goals will be evaluated and adjusted annually based upon the data. The above mentioned percentages were selected based on the disparities that exist in the attendance rate for each subgroup of students per the chart below. The baseline data is as follows:

Year	White	AfAm	Hisp	NatAm	Asian	MR	Total
2012-13	92.10%	91.68%	90.83%	88.68%	94.45%	91.21%	91.21%

For example, if at the end of SY 2013-14, the Hispanic attendance rate is 90.75%, the goal for the end of SY 2014-15 would be 91.35% an increase of .6%.

E. Progress Monitoring

Centrally, a committee (including representatives from Student Support Services, Curriculum and Instruction, Dropout Prevention, Student Equity, and Family Engagement) shall have responsibility for quarterly monitoring of Plan implementation and progress, and for reviewing annual goals yearly. In addition, each school will have an MTSS team (discussed in detail below) that also is involved in progress monitoring, and also shall have responsibility for quarterly monitoring of Plan implementation and progress, and for reviewing annual goals. When issues are identified during the central monitoring process, the central committee will collaborate with the appropriate MTSS site-based team to address the concerns.

III.   IDENTIFICATION OF AT-RISK STUDENTS

In SY 2013-14, the District piloted an automatic identification of students for interventions (using a system in Mojave called Watch Point) based on criteria in three areas: 1) grades; 2) overall attendance; and 3) behavior. Based on the collected data, and on observations of best practices in other school districts, the District will make the following changes to its practices for identifying students in need of intervention for SY 2014-15 through the MTSS process:

1) Use individual course absence data, not overall absence data, for middle and high school students.
2) Combine the individual course absence data with the grades data and identify students who are failing a course **and** excessively not attending a course (for example, students who are absent for more than 10 days).
3) Continue to use behavior data (i.e., discipline referrals, In-School-Suspension and Out-of School Suspensions to identify at-risk students.
4) Explore adding other sources of data to enhance identification of at-risk students, including benchmark and other standardized tests.
5) Align automatic student identification with the MTSS (Multi-Tier System of Support) so the automatic identification will help to place students into either tier two or tier three support.

The District will continue to refine the automatic student identification system to ensure that the data points are identifying "At Risk" students and interventions are being implemented.

Based on the SSRA and other research (Kennelly & Monrad, 2007) (Heppen & Therriault, 2008), the District will implement specific supports and interventions for identified "At-Risk" students. The District will also focus specific supports and interventions for schools whose data supports the need for additional assistance (see fn 1, above). By targeting supports and interventions, the District will seek to meet the goals stated above.

IV.   SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS

The District conducted a thorough review of the research related to the best-practices for addressing dropouts (See Section VI below, National Research). The following three areas surfaced as having the greatest potential for mitigating dropout rates:

- Graduation Support Systems - direct support to students (pre-K through 12th grade)
- Family Engagement - outreach to families to provide indirect support to students
- Professional Development - support for teachers designed to result in higher student achievement

A key element of this Plan is the Multi-Tiered System Support (MTSS) model. However, the Plan also includes specific strategies targeted for specific grade spans of students, and for the transitions of students between grade spans, including: High School (Ninth Grade); High School (All Grades); Middle School; and Elementary School.

A.   Graduation Support Systems

Direct support to students will be implemented as early as third grade. The supports will address those indicators identified by researchers (Kennelly & Monrad, 2007) as highly correlated to students most likely to drop out, as follows: poor grades in core subjects; low attendance; in-grade retention; and disengagement from school (including behavioral problems). At all grade levels, timely intervention will occur either within the school day, during an extended day opportunity, or in summer to avoid grade level retentions.

K-12 Strategies:

1. **Multi-Tier System of Support (MTSS) in SY 2013-14 (See Appendix A).** MTSS is a multi-tiered approach to providing services and interventions to students at increasing levels of intensity based on progress monitoring and data analysis. The MTSS model is implemented by the classroom teacher with the assistance of the school-based MTSS Support Team and District-level support to ensure fidelity. This systemic way of providing tiered intervention will ensure support for African American and Latino students in need of intervention. The MTSS system will use data from the Watch Point System (Early Identification System) to intervene with issues of behavior, attendance, and academics.

   The MTSS process includes all students and will address the specific needs of ELLs and recently reclassified ELLs to provide supports for language and literacy development. The MTSS intervention will be provided during the four hour ELD block (not additional pull-out time) for ELLs specifically.

2. **School wide academic and behavioral intervention support plans.** Each school's plan will provide targeted support for African American and Latino students, and for African American and Latino ELL students, who are identified as students who are at risk of dropping out. Each plan must provide for the establishment of a school-wide MTSS team. Principals (in conjunction with the designated MTSS site coordinator) will establish MTSS teams by submitting team member names to their immediate supervisors no later than September 1 each year[5]. MTSS teams, facilitated by a site administrator, will plan and provide for targeted support and interventions for identified students.

3. **Standardized curriculum.** The District will provide standardized curriculum throughout all schools at all levels, due to mobility. Development of standardized curriculum will continue in SY 2014-15.

4. **Language Accessible Social Workers.** The District will continue to provide Social Workers at targeted schools with a high population of students at risk at all academic levels using the integrated Social Worker model. In an integrated model, social workers will be trained to be able to provide and document services. Social work services include, but are not limited to, individual and group counseling with students and families, community resource and referral for students and families, coordination of community services and school services, crisis intervention for students and families, supporting school staff in understanding and providing mental health services, seeking and coordinating community mental health services to be provided in schools, conferencing with school staff regarding student needs, follow up social work services for issues raised at restorative circles or other student and/or parent administrative interactions, parenting education, and support of school wide PBIS programs. (These positions have been, and will continue to be, funded from 910(G) funds).

5. **ELL Transportation.** Allow for ELLs whose families move into another attendance area to be given an option of staying at their home school for the current school year, and be provided bus passes for transportation.

6. **Home Visits.** The District will implement the use of home visits at each site, and when feasible with Student Support Services and Dropout Prevention Teams, to reduce the likelihood of a student dropping out of school.

7. **Steps to Success.** The District will implement an annual Steps to Success student reengagement program to encourage students to return to school. This annual event will focus on middle and high school students. Steps to Success is designed to make home

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[5] The MTSS team may consist of teachers, District resources and support personnel, academic specialists, school site interventionists, RPPCs, counselors, college career coordinators, community representatives, nurses, admin representatives, social workers and case managers. At high schools, registrars may be included, as well as dropout prevention staff. This team should consist of people who are seen as leaders and represent a variety of subject areas and grade levels.

visits to students who have dropped out of school, or are in serious jeopardy of dropping out of school. As part of this process, a Steps to Success – Success Center will be established for students to reengage in school.

High School (Ninth Grade)

Ninth grade is often considered a pivotal year for students. More students fail in ninth grade than any other high school grade, and a disproportionate number of students who fail courses in ninth grade are more likely to drop out (Herlihy, 2007). With that in mind, support for identified African American and Latino students, including ELL students, must be systemic for freshmen. Recommendations include:

1. **Pilot a summer bridge program for incoming ninth graders.** By using 8th grade data to identify African American and Latino students, including ELL students, who are at risk for dropping out, connections can be made to students earlier, prior to students failing classes. The focus of the summer program will be both an introduction to the expectations of high school as well as a math focus to address gaps in content knowledge. If implemented, data will be collected to show the effectiveness of this program. The District will evaluate current bridge programs to determine effectiveness and cost-effectiveness

2. **Organize high school classes for freshmen into smaller communities or teams.** Wherever possible, students should be placed with teams of teachers (math, science, English, etc.). Teaming provides a greater level of support for students, allowing teachers to share common concerns and strategies to address student needs.

3. **Pilot a program to use 8th grade data to place students in need of math support in a two hour block of algebra/algebra support.** In districts nationwide, as many as 50% of students fail Algebra I the first time and must repeat it—some more than once. These struggling students often end up behind in gaining needed requirements for graduation and college, and are at greater risk of dropping out. The recommendation to double-block Algebra for struggling math students (provide a companion math class) is to provide comprehensive math intervention for an extended-time class to helps students who are significantly behind become successful in Algebra within one academic year. Central to the pilot program is the idea that struggling students need a powerful combination of additional time, a challenging curriculum, and cohesive, targeted supports and interventions. With these tools and teaching supports in place, students can stay on track, graduate on time, and gain passage to advanced learning.

    For this reason, the Curriculum, Instruction, PD, and Assessment Office will work to develop a curriculum to be piloted in the 2015-16 school year that will provide seamless instructional support for a two-hour block of time. The District will specifically target 8th graders who are falling far below the standards based on their last statewide assessment

performance, and pilot this strategy at one high school. The scope of implementation after the 2015-2016 will be determined upon review and evaluation of the impact of the curriculum on actual student performance.

High School

Through a review of data and current practices, this Plan addresses the varied approaches to improving graduation found at individual high school campuses. This Plan explicitly focuses on the development of coherent and comprehensive systems to improve graduation rates to be implemented at all high schools. Effective research-based systems to support graduation rates are essential vehicles for reducing dropout rates.

1. **Dropout Intervention Specialists.** In general, research suggests that students who attend school any less than 90% of the time are cause for concern (Allensworth and Easton, 2007).   Dropout Intervention Specialists will be assigned to each high school to monitor and address student attendance issues. Dropout Intervention Specialists will collaborate with the Academic and Behavioral Supports Coordinators (ABSC) to ensure that specified strategies are being implemented to reduce dropout, increase graduation, and focus school and District resources on working with students whose patterns of attendance, classroom performance, or other individual challenges indicate a serious risk of dropping out. According to Governing Board Policy JE, students who have 10 or more absences earn no credit for a class. Dropout Intervention Specialists will be responsible for implementing a tiered system of intervention at 3 and 6 absences to help students and families understand the importance of good attendance. Dropout Intervention Specialists will ensure that families understand the Governing Board policy related to how a student might lose credits and, if they do, how the appeals process works.

2. **Credit Tracking Training.** The District will provide continual training on the District's student credit tracking system (personnel, data base, etc.) to ensure that students, families, and school staff are able to monitor progress towards graduation.

3. **Education and Career Action Plans.** All students will develop an Education and Career Action Plan (ECAP) that includes personalized information on high school graduation. The Arizona State Board of Education approved Education and Career Action Plans for all Arizona students in grades 9-12. An ECAP (Education and Career Action Plan) reflects a student's current plan of coursework, career aspirations, and extended learning opportunities in order to develop the student's individual academic and career goals

4. **Credit Recovery Options.** Credit recovery options will be offered in a variety of ways to include during the regular school day, in an extended day format (0 or 7th period), on the weekend (TUSD Weekend Academy), online (Agave or Grad Link 2) and during the summer. To determine the effectives of each credit recovery option, student coursework completion and data will be collected by the respective program coordinator.

5. **Credit Recovery Priority for ELL/R-ELL Students.** ELL and recently reclassified ELL students will be given priority for Credit Recovery before/after school and during the summer, allowing students to take courses in their primary language if it is available.

6. **Increase ELL Participation in AGAVE.** Increase African-American and Hispanic ELL student participation in AGAVE state assessment courses (before/after school and during the summer). AGAVE provides rigorous, standards-based, quality curriculum in a virtual environment.

7. **Structured Concept Recovery.** Whenever possible, students who have difficulty mastering key concepts will be offered an opportunity to participate in structured concept recovery. Re-teaching may occur after school, during class (if time is allocated for enrichment/intervention), or on weekends. Students who participate in concept recovery, and show mastery of key concepts, will receive a corresponding acknowledgement for the concept attainment via a corresponding grade change (rather than retaking the entire course).

8. **Improved Tier I Instruction for ELL Students.** The District is using the information from the curriculum audit to address the need for improvement of Tier 1 instruction during the ELD block to make the curriculum more engaging and increase the level of rigor. A focus of the block will be on academic literacy with an emphasis on reading and writing strategies to help students to be successful in core subjects.

9. **Alternative Schools.** The District will provide information on various alternative school placements (Agave, Project More, and TAPP) for students that are unsuccessful in the comprehensive high school. To determine the effectives of each alternative option, student coursework completion and data will be collected by the respective program coordinator.

10. **Explore Quarterly Credit Options.** The District will continue to explore quarterly credit options for students so they may gain partial credits, rather than an all or none option.

11. **ELD I & II Classes for Pre-Emergent/Emergent & Basic Level ELLs.** The ELD I class includes Pre-Emergent and Emergent level students. It follows the ELD curriculum used during the school year in the areas of listening & speaking, reading, writing and grammar. The Pre-Emergent students may be new to English and to school; they may have very low literacy but strong oral skills and may be preliterate in their first language.

The ELD II class is for students who are moving from ELD Level I to ELD Level II and possibly from ELD Level I to ELD Level III. The curriculum focuses on each of the four domains: listening & speaking, reading, writing, and grammar. Special emphasis is placed on writing, moving students from writing sentences to longer pieces including

essays. Students receive one language arts credit for successful completion of these classes.

ELD I students only attend "hub" schools: Catalina, Rincon, Pueblo, and PaloVerde.

12. **MTSS Math & Literature Intervention Classes for Intermediate Level ELLs and R-ELLs.** These summer school classes are made up of high Basic to high Intermediate (Level III/IV) ELL students as well as Reclassified students, and it focuses on the skills needed to pass the math, reading, and writing exams required to pass the state assessment. Students rotate through each of the three areas of reading, writing and math, but those students who have already passed the state assessment in one or more section/s, receive concentrated help in the remaining areas.   The class targets 11th and 12th grade students. Students receive one elective credit for successful completion of this class.

13. **Sheltered Content Classes.** Provide Sheltered Content Classes in Math for ELLs and former ELLs.

Middle School

1. **Organize middle school classes into smaller communities or teams.** Wherever possible, students should be placed with teams of teachers (Math, Science, English, and Social Studies.) Teaming provides a greater level of support for students, allowing teachers to share common concerns and strategies to address student needs.

2. **Dropout prevention support.** Wherever possible, Dropout Intervention Specialists will work with students at select middle schools. Specialist will assist schools with monitoring attendance, addressing student attendance issues, and working with families on the importance of attendance in school.

3. **6th Grade Bridge Program.** Transitions can be difficult for everyone, but for young people one of the most difficult transitions is the one from elementary to middle school. At the same time that young adolescents are adapting to a multitude of cognitive changes, they suddenly enter new educational environments that typically are less nurturing, larger, and more departmentalized (e.g., going from one classroom to another). Middle school students generally are expected to be more independent and responsible for their own assignments as well as other commitments. At the end of SY 2015-16, a selected number of schools will host a summer bridge program. The Summer Bridge Program would provide students with supports such as: learning and organizational skills, skills from AVID, Metacognitive study skills, and daily middle routines.

4. **Core Plus.** This program is being implemented in SY 2014-15, and will be evaluated for effectiveness. The Core Plus Academic Intervention Program goal is to provide rigorous Tier 1 and Tier 2 academic interventions to low academic performing Latino and African-American 6th graders to decrease retention and dropout rates in the 8th grade. Sixth grade was chosen to help with transition from elementary school to middle school. Other middle grades were not selected due to cost restraints. The program objective is to increase Standardized test scores of students enrolled in the program *and* increase Standardized test scores at the middle school level. This is accomplished by identifying 6th grade students below grade level from across the District, enrolling them in the program but maintaining their middle school registration, and providing academic intervention with a focus on math and reading in, currently, two self-contained classrooms with low teacher to student ratios. The classrooms are dispersed geographically across the District.

5. **Summer School.** At the end of SY 2014-15 a selected number of schools will host a summer school program for those individuals at risk of being retained for failing Math and Language Arts/Reading. Students in need of extra assistance in math or reading and could be "At Risk" but did not fail in Math or Language Arts/Reading would be able to attend the Summer School program as well for extra support.

6. **Sheltered Content Classes.** Provide Sheltered Content Classes in math for ELLs and former ELLs. Our policy for TUSD / Language Acquisition is that all ELLs, regardless of language proficiency, take a math class every year. Regardless of proficiency level, ELLs participate in math because it is a four-year graduation requirement and the content is more accessible as it is not as language intensive as other core content classes

7. **Summer School for ELLs**. The District will offer ELD I and II as well as state assessment prep for Intermediate English-proficient students.

Positive Alternative to Suspension (high school and middle school grades)

The District's alternatives to suspension will be implemented as a tiered-approach. The alternatives listed below are, generally, listed in the order that Administrators should consider.

Option 1: Restorative Conference: These can range from small impromptu circles where a few people meet to briefly address and resolve a problem to formal restorative conferences that address serious problems of behavior that may involve wrongdoers, victims, parents, and school administrators.

Option 2: Required Interventions: For all serious mid-range misbehaviors (misbehaviors coded at level 3 in the GSRR) such as fights or disorderly conduct, students may not be suspended unless interventions and/or restorative practices have first been used to redirect the student away from the misbehavior.

Option 3: Abeyance Contracts: A student is placed on a behavior contract in place of some or all suspension days.

From the TUSD GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (GSRR): An administrator may offer to not immediately impose the assigned out-of-school suspension if (1) the administrator believes it is in the best interest of the student and the school community, (2) the student admits to committing the infraction, (3) the student and parent/legal guardian agree to certain conditions, and (4) the student and parent/legal guardian sign a contract, called an abeyance contract. The term of the abeyance contract may not exceed the maximum suspension term for the offense level. If a student violates his/her abeyance contract with a suspendable offense, the student must serve the remaining term of the initial offense plus the suspension for the additional offense. These two suspensions would be served concurrently. (The last days of the first suspension would also be the first days of the additional suspension)

Option 4: In-School Intervention (ISI): The District's ISI will focus on students' academic, behavioral, and social/mental health concerns with a goal of promoting social and emotional learning to complement academic skills and encourage positive behavior. For an alternative to short term suspensions, students are placed with a certified staff member (either an administrator or teacher) who continues their instruction on an individual basis including counseling and problem solving education. The District will implement a "team" model whereby the certified staff member will collaborate with counselors, paraprofessionals, social workers, and/or the site's MTSS team. The District anticipates offering this alternative using a phased approach. This alternative will begin at every comprehensive high school (not including UHS) for SY 2015-16, and may expand to middle and K8 schools in SY 2016-17, for a total of 15-25 schools. Each student will have a 'success action plan' (exit plan) to transition each student from ISI back into the classroom. Social workers are key in collaborating with "local mental health, child welfare, law enforcement, and juvenile justice agencies and other stakeholders to align resources, prevention strategies, and intervention services." The plans would include a grade/transcript analysis, character-building, analysis of the students' social and/or family situation, etc... The team will work to engage the parents and/or families, and to follow up on the students' success action plan.
"[S]tudents who need to be removed from the regular classroom setting for even a short period of time should have access to an alternative program that provides comparable academic instruction to that provided to students in the regular school program."

Option 5: Life Skills: The Life Skills Alternative to Suspension Program (LSASP) allows long-term suspended students (more than ten days) to receive academic and social instruction by a certified teacher instead of students serving out the suspension unsupervised at home, in the streets, or in some cases, in juvenile hall. The model resembles the ISI model above but is implemented as a much more long-term engagement with the student.

Currently the Life Skill Alternative to Suspension Program (LSASP) is at Magee Middle School, Southwest Education Center (middle school and high school), and Whitmore Annex (high

school).   TUSD agrees to expand the District's efforts by restoring this program at Doolen Middle School.

The LSASP can support additional students beginning in 2015—2016 and provide services for non-long-term suspended students. The District will explore the use of LSASP in partnership with the MTSS model. Students who are not successful through Tier 1, 2, and 3 interventions at the school site may be suggested to Academic Directors by the site MTSS team as possible candidates to determine if LSASP will be provided to them as an alternative.

Elementary School

Using the MTSS system, schools will develop student support plans in both reading and math. Interventions will be provided during the regular school day. Additional after school support will be provided, as feasible.

1. **Master Schedule.** The District will follow the state-mandated instructional minutes schedule per subject area. The schedule defines the time required each day for Reading, Writing, and Math. By standardizing instructional time the students will be able to receive instruction in all core areas beginning at elementary school building a strong foundation for future success.

2. **Focus on Early Literacy.** A study released in 2011 by the American Educational Research Association claims that a student who cannot read on grade level by the end of 3rd grade is four times less likely to graduate by age 19 than a child who does read proficiently by that time. Fiester, L. (2010.). In order to ensure that all 3rd grade students are reading at grade level, the district will be focusing much of its literacy efforts on early grades. The District will conduct trainings on reading support programs, such as, "Daily Five," "Leveled Readers," and "Close Reading." The trainings provide the knowledge and skills necessary to implement effective reading strategies/practices. Additional trainings will include the District selected research-based diagnostic, *Assessing Reading Multiple Measures* by CORE, to assist staff with an assessment tool that supports focused instruction to close reading gaps. TUSD will provide on-going professional development support for implementation.

3. **Preschools.** The District will continue to offer high-quality preschool programs in select schools with large populations of African American and Latino Students, and will provide Infant and Early Learning Centers (IELCs). Both preschool models will better prepare students academically, not just socially, for the expectations of common core using a research-based curriculum designed for preschool-aged students.

    Early opportunities for students have shown to have a great impact on future student success. The District is committed to focusing on students in pre-K and in early grades to keep students with their grade cohort. Preschools support a key component of dropout

and retention prevention by providing opportunities for the early identification of learning problems and access to quality academic programs for young students.

4. **Imagine Learning English for ELL Students.** Imagine Learning (IL) is an innovative digital learning software program that creates an interactive, personalized learning path for children as they master critical skills for reading and speaking. IL is research-based and presented in a highly interactive, motivating, yet rigorous format. (Baumann, 1984). IL differentiates and personalizes instruction for ELL students, struggling readers, and students with special needs. IL provides instruction, practice, and assessment that are designed to teach Arizona College and Career Readiness standards which will prepare students to quickly become English language proficient. IL provides an initial placement test to assess each student at the beginning of the school year. This enables teachers to individualize their instruction to meet individual student needs. IL provides an academic language emphasis within a personalized learning framework to ensure that ELL students become proficient in subject matter and increase critical thinking to improve test scores. Finally, IL centralizes and systematizes student performance data at the district level. Data will be made available to teachers and principals, plus district-level aggregated data to inform decision-making. These reports will ensure that the Language Acquisition Department will be able to see in detail how the implementation is going.

B.   Family Engagement

The District values the family as the first and most important teacher and partner in the education of students.

The District is using the Multi Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) model to implement different types of family engagement. In order to remain consistent, the District will follow a tiered model for family engagement and support.

Type 1 family engagement involves general outreach to all families, with a focus on African American and Latino students and families, occurring mostly at school sites and family centers at times that are accessible to families. Type 1 family engagement includes activities such as: parent training, quarterly informational events, parent education and resource opportunities; and using multiple media to connect with families.

Type 2 family engagement involves specific outreach to the families of African American or Latino students who are struggling, disengaged, and/or at-risk of dropping out. Type 2 family engagement includes specific activities related to the needs of the identified students as documented on the District's Student Equity and Intervention Request for Service form.

Family Engagement – Type 1
1. All schools will provide training to parents at least twice per year (minimum once per semester) regarding curricular focus. A required element of these trainings for parents will be specific strategies along with providing materials/tools for families to employ at

home to support student achievement in reading and/or mathematics using a model such as Academic Parent Teacher Teams (APTT).

    a. Training for implementation of this model will be required – Proposed Training would be Train the Trainer Model.

    b. All schools in concert and coordination with Student Support and Partnership Centers will provide information regarding parent education and resource opportunities.

2. Quarterly events will be held throughout the community. These sessions will inform parents of the programs and opportunities available for African American and Latino students.

3. Accessibility - In order to maximize parent participation, the sessions will take place at various times and may be connected to student related or community events within a positive supportive environment, particularly for families of African American or Latino students.

4. Scheduling - Event dates will be coordinated through the District Family Engagement Director and/or Family Engagement Coordinator.

5. Multiple media - Develop and use social media structures to connect with students and families in contemporary fashion. This may include Facebook, text messaging, mobile/smartphone applications (i.e. TUSD's Parent Link), media-based parent training and events. Family engagement opportunities and outreach may include:

- webinar sessions for parent trainings linked to school websites
- math websites for parents such as Khan Academy
- strategies for parent student interactions in newsletters
- inspirational texts or quotes for families to discuss
- parent access to TUSDStats
- administrative newsletter and website communications for parents and students

Family Engagement – Type 2

The District's African-American and Mexican American Student Services Departments, in conjunction with site administrators, Family Engagement Staff, and Title I staff, are primarily responsible for coordinating targeted parent outreach for African American or Latino students identified as struggling, disengaged, and/or at-risk of dropping out.

1. Families of students identified as struggling, disengaged, and/or at-risk of dropping out will receive outreach from District staff most closely aligned to students' identified demographic or academic need as possible.

    a. Site staff including Title I family engagement, teachers, and other school staff will perform targeted outreach to families with students identified as struggling, disengaged, and/or at-risk of dropping out.

    b. Site staff will use the District's Student Equity and Intervention Request for Service referral form provides another opportunity to coordinate and communicate specific outreach needs (form available to site staff at http://intranet/interventionform.asp).

To ensure more comprehensive support, the District will add Language Acquisition and Exceptional Education to the list of departments from whom service requests may be submitted.

2. Outreach to families of students identified as struggling, disengaged, and/or at-risk of dropping out will be conducted to encourage attendance and engagement at site and district quarterly events, and may include direct mailing(s), home visits, and/or phone calls to targeted families. This outreach will be coordinated between school and district resource staff including Title I family engagement & district support staff. These communications will meet the District's language accessible standards for families.

Schools will endeavor to provide recognition/celebrations to students in non-traditional ways. These may include celebrating improvements in academics (most improved …), learning habits and behaviors (improved attendance, greatest improvement/reduction in tardies), and others. In order to maximize parent participation, these sessions will take place outside of the school day and should be connected to student related events within a positive supportive environment. Dynarski, M., et al, 2008)

Families of students with disabilities will be supported through Types 1 & 2. Additional family support and outreach will be provided by a dedicated staff member who is under the supervision of the director of Exceptional Education. The role of this person is to provide advocacy training, education and support.

The District Communication Department will develop and use social media structures to connect with students and families in contemporary fashion. This may include Parent Link, Facebook, text messaging, media-based parent training and events and others. Family engagement activities and communication and outreach may include:

- Provide webinar sessions for parent trainings linked to school websites.
- Provide math websites for parents such as Khan Academy, and Family Meal Time Program.
- Strategies for parent student interactions in newsletters.
- Inspirational texts or quotes for families to discuss.
- Administrative newsletter and website communications for parents and students.

C.   Professional Development:

The following strategies will be implemented to support professional development:

1. Professional development for certificated staff will address two major components.

    a. Developing a positive school climate, a common element in successful dropout prevention programs. This training will be required of all teachers. Through the training, teachers will be expected to better understand the students that they serve and acquire the cultural competency skills necessary to implement practices that will effectively engage a diverse population of students. Specifically, teachers will be provided with a menu of strategies for differentiating the learning experiences of students in their classroom for the purpose of improving student performance and academic achievement. The Teacher Evaluation Instrument will be enhanced to include Cultural Competency Indicators that will better inform the evaluators on how to best support teacher improvement in this critical area.

    b. Ensuring that teachers are able to provide instruction in reading and math that is rigorous and consistent with quality first instruction. With the implementation of the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards in place for the cohort of 2017, all teachers must have the instructional knowledge to support instruction including a renewed emphasis on writing skills and the ability to read expository text. Based on the needs assessments of the schools, there is also a significant need for math support. Curriculum facilitators, working at the school site, will provide the necessary support for reading, writing and math achievement by analyzing student data and working with teachers to ensure a high standard for instruction in these areas.

2. The District will provide training once a semester on the District's student credit tracking system (personnel, data base, etc.) to ensure that students, families, and school staff are able to monitor progress towards graduation.

3. The District literacy team will conduct trainings on Reading Foundations which include the basic early literacy skills. The trainings provide the knowledge and skills necessary to implement effective reading strategies/practices through TUSD's Integrated Literacy Continuum which includes: ELA AZCCRS, Planning, Instructing, Intervening and Assessing. Additional trainings will include the District selected research-based diagnostic, *Assessing Reading Multiple Measures* by CORE, to assist staff with an assessment tool that supports focused instruction to close reading gaps. TUSD will provide on-going professional development support for implementation.

4. The District will provide training for Student Support services to assist teachers during tier 1 instruction.

5   The District will continue to provide on going training to all administrators and LSC on the MTSS system with a specific focus on data gathering and data analysis. Administrators and LSC will provide training to staff at sites on the MTSS system in order to effectively implement its design.

6. The District will provide quarterly training for Attendance Accounting Staff (and other staff involved in changing student attendance codes) in high and middle schools. The purpose behind this training is to eradicate in-house errors that create dropouts and speed up the record keeping process. Familiarizing Attendance Accounting Staff with ADE policies will help to alleviate SAIS bounce-backs from the ADE.

7. The District will provide professional development for Imagine Learning English. The purpose of the trainings is to enable ELD teachers and principals to understand the format and use of Imagine Learning English within the classroom. It will also ensure that teachers and students understand the format and use of Imagine Learning as an ELD intervention tool within the classroom. Teachers will also learn how to accurately group ELD students and data collection.

8. The District will provide quarterly professional development opportunities for support staff in academic support for reading, writing, and math.

V.   CONSULTATION WITH NATIONAL EXPERTS

The District has conducted extensive research on dropout prevention strategies, methods, and practices.   Furthermore, National Dropout expert, Dr. Russ Rumberger reviewed and made recommendations regarding the District Dropout Prevention and Graduation Plan.   Dr. Russ Rumberger states, "I support final version." Additionally, the District worked to align the Plan with the African American Academic Achievement Task Force (AAAATF) recommendations, and incorporated the recommendations that resulted from consultation with national experts Dr. Bob Peterkin and Dr. Wade Boykin, including the following recommendations:

2.   Identify and Replicate Successful Teacher Practices.
4.   Monitor and Implement Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) (aka "Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices") through the Supportive and Inclusive Learning (SAIL) training.
5.   Develop Focused Professional Development
11.   Monitor Recommendations for Placement to Remedial and/or Exceptional Education Programs
12.   Evaluate Support Programs
14.   Monitor Disciplinary Actions
15.   Enhance the Parent Engagement Program
16.   Develop and Implement Extended Learning Opportunities

Further, the District has consulted with Jerry Weast during the development and review of this Plan and the District has incorporated his feedback into this document.

Finally, the District will seek to collaborate with any or all of the following national experts and/or organizations during the initial implementation phase between the spring of 2014 and the start of SY 2014-15 (*See Appendix B)*:

1.   The Equity Assistance Center at WestEd
a.   Dr. Bob Peterkin
b.   Dr. Louie Rodriguez
c.   Dr. Pedro Noguera
d.   Dr. Jerry Weast
e.   Dr. Rose Owens West

VI.   <u>NATIONAL RESEARCH</u>

1. Allensworth and Easton, 2007, What Matters for Staying On-Track and Graduating in Chicago Public Schools
2. English Baumann, J. F. (1984). The effectiveness of an instruction paradigm for teaching main idea comprehension.
3. Dynarski, M., et al. "Dropout prevention: A practice guide (NCEE 2008–4025). Washington, DC: US Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences." *National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance. Retrieved from http://ies. ed. gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practice_guides/dp_pg_090308. pdf* (2008).
4. Fiester, L. (2010). Early Warning! Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters. KIDS COUNT Special Report. Annie E. Casey Foundation.
5. Heppen & Therriault, 2008, **Developing Early Warning Systems to Identify Potential High School Dropouts, betterhighschools.org**
6. Kennelly & Monrad, 2007, **Approaches to Dropout Prevention: Heeding Early Warning Signs With Appropriate Interventions, betterhighschools.org**
7. Proven Strategies from the OSEP Positive Behavior Support and Interventions website: www.pbis.org. Over the past 30 years, a clearly defined research-validated literature base exists on effective classroom management practice (Alberto and Troutman, 1998; Charles, 1995; Colvin and Lazar, 1997; Kame'enui and Darch, 1995; Kerr and Nelson, 1998; Sugai and Tindal, 1993).
8. Research and information from National Dropout Prevention Center / Network
9. Institute of Education Sciences What Works Clearinghouse, Dropout Prevention, Practice Guide, August 2008
10. Early Warning System Implementation Guide by Susan Bowles Therriault, Jessica Heppen, Mindee O'Cummings, Lindsay Fryer, and Amy Johnson
11. www.teachsafeschools.org/alternativestosuspension
12. http://www.indiana.edu/~atlantic/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Disparity_Policy_031214.pdf
13. http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/index.html