



Arizona Charter Schools Program  
Arizona Department of Education

Mission: AZ Charter School Program Ensures High-Quality Educational Choices by  
Selecting, Monitoring, and Assisting Transformative Leaders

**Arizona Charter Schools Program  
Start-up Grant Project Years 2021-25 Subgrantee\* Application**

*\* In compliance with Uniform Guidance 2 CFR §200.330, AZCSP awardees have been determined to be subrecipients of CFDA 84.282 A awarded to the Arizona Department of Education, Charter Schools Program, October 1, 2018. Subrecipients will also be known as non-federal entities.*

**Purpose**

Arizona Charter Schools Program is to, from the amount available (ESEA §4302(b)(3)), support the startup of new charter schools, the replication of high-quality charter schools, and the expansion of high-quality charter schools on a competitive basis (ESEA §4303 (b) (1)).

**Eligibility**

The applicant must submit an application to apply for the startup subgrant to obtain assistance in planning, program design, and the initial implementation of its charter schools. The entity applying for this grant must be a Not for Profit organization registered and in good standing with the Arizona Corporation Commission at the time of the application submission.

Applicants can apply in 2019 if they meet the following conditions:

- 1) the applicant has already submitted its charter application to the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (ASBCS) in June 2019 or
- 2) must have already submitted a replication application to ASBCS. Either application must be approved by ASBCS at its December 2019 public meeting.
- 3) New Arizona State University (ASU) sponsored charter schools must also be approved by December 2019.

Before the non-profit organization can receive the AZCSP application, it must complete and submit the Arizona Charter Schools Program Grant Eligibility Form and the applicant Registration Form. Both forms are available at the AZCSP website:

<http://www.azed.gov/charter-school-program/>.

**Notice**

1. The charter school must meet the federal definition of a charter school found in ESEA §4310(2).

(2) CHARTER SCHOOL —The term “charter school” means a public school that—

(A) in accordance with a specific State statute authorizing the granting of charters to schools, is exempt from significant State or local rules that inhibit the flexible

operation and management of public schools, but not from any rules relating to the other requirements of this paragraph;

(B) is created by a developer as a public school, or is adapted by a developer from an existing public school, and is operated under public supervision and direction;

(C) operates in pursuit of a specific set of educational objectives determined by the school's developer and agreed to by the authorized public chartering agency;

(D) provides a program of elementary or secondary education, or both;

(E) is nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations, and is not affiliated with a sectarian school or religious institution;

(F) does not charge tuition;

(G) complies with the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) (commonly referred to as the "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974"), and part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;

(H) is a school to which parents choose to send their children, and that—

(i) admits students on the basis of a lottery, consistent with section 4303(c)(3)(A), if more students apply for admission than can be accommodated; or

(ii) in the case of a school that has an affiliated charter school (such as a school that is part of the same network of schools), automatically enrolls students who are enrolled in the immediate prior grade level of the affiliated charter school and, for any additional student openings or student openings created through regular attrition in student enrollment in the affiliated charter school and the enrolling school, admits students on the basis of a lottery as described in clause (i);

(I) agrees to comply with the same Federal and State audit requirements as do other elementary schools and secondary schools in the State, unless such State audit requirements are waived by the State;

(J) meets all applicable Federal, State, and local health and safety requirements;

(K) operates in accordance with State law;

(L) has a written performance contract with the authorized public chartering agency in the State that includes a description of how student performance will be measured in charter schools pursuant to State assessments that are required of other schools and pursuant to any other assessments mutually agreeable to the authorized public chartering agency and the charter school; and

(M) may serve students in early childhood education programs or postsecondary students.

2. The proposed school shall meet one of the following definitions of educationally disadvantaged:

- 1) A school serving at least 40% racially and ethnically diverse students; or
- 2) A school serving at least 40% economically disadvantaged students eligible for federal lunch program support; or
- 3) A school serving at least 40% students with disabilities; or
- 4) A school serving at least 40% English Language Learners (ELL).

Select one of the four categories on page 2 of the accompanying AZCSP Eligibility Form.

3. To receive a replication or expansion subgrant, the applicant must demonstrate that is a high quality charter school as per ESEA §4310 (8).

**HIGH-QUALITY CHARTER SCHOOL.** —The term “high-quality charter school” means a charter school that—

- (A) shows evidence of strong academic results, which may include strong student academic growth, as determined by a State;
  - (B) has no significant issues in the areas of student safety, financial and operational management, or statutory or regulatory compliance;
  - (C) has demonstrated success in significantly increasing student academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for all students served by the charter school; and
  - (D) has demonstrated success in increasing student academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for each of the subgroups of students, as defined in section 1111(c)(2), except that such demonstration is not required in a case in which the number of students in a group is insufficient to yield statistically reliable information or the results would reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student.
4. A subgrant may be no more than 5 years of which no more than 18 months can be used for planning and program design. ESEA §4303(d)(1)(B) & 4303(h)(1)(B).
  5. AZCSP encourages applicants to propose academic programs and instructional practices that work for all students including serving students in rural communities.
  6. Allowable costs are described in the Budget Narrative Section G. Instructions for describing Planning and Implementation activities are in the Budget Narrative Section G.

### **Application Evaluation**

The AZCSP grant is aligned with the US Department of Education Charter Schools Program Priorities and the submitted application will be scored in light of these priorities. All applicants will be subject to review of previous state and federal education performance. *2 CFR §200.205 (1)* The Evaluation Criteria are provided to assist in meeting the expectations of the application. It is not the application.

### **Application Submission**

In preparing the application for submission, use 12-point Times New Roman, Arial or Calibri font, double line spacing, and 1-inch margins. Tables may be in an 11-point font.

Submit in pdf format to [AZCharterSchoolProgram@azed.gov](mailto:AZCharterSchoolProgram@azed.gov)

Application deadline is **October 7, 2019, 11:59 PM (MST)**

Capacity interview will be held during the week of October 21, 2019.

## Application Assistance

In-person application assistance is available in public trainings provided by AZCSP staff. Locations and dates are posted on the AZCSP webpage: <http://www.azed.gov/charter-school-program/>. Important written information regarding the application, its policies and procedures are also located on the AZCSP web page. AZCSP recommends applicants to attend the public training opportunities and to use the resources provided.

## AZCSP 2021-25 Application

- **ESEA Part C 4303 Compliance – Non-Scoring Section.** *(It is recommended that applicants review the following citations from ESEA Title IV, Part C Expanding Opportunity Through Quality Charter Schools. Failure to address them accurately and completely will disqualify the application from consideration. Links to ESEA Title IV, Part C, 4301 et. al, CSP Nonregulatory Guidance, and Office of Management & Budget Uniform Guidance can be found at the AZCSP Website.)*
  1. A description of how school governance is prepared to continue to operate once the subgrant funds are no longer available. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303(f)(1)(A)(vi)(II)*

### **AZCSP Funds Are for Planning and Implementation Only**

The Academy of Math and Science South Mountain (AMSSM) will use Charter School Program (CSP) funds for planning and initial implementation purposes only. The School Governing Body develops multiyear proformas that ensure that AMS, at enrollment capacity, is able to operate based off of base state aid payments including expenses for ongoing marketing and community engagement; replacement of curriculum, instructional equipment, and supplies; capital building and equipment maintenance and replacement; and salaries. The Governing Body will ensure that funds are set aside anticipating the depreciation of assets and use of consumables.

Many of the expenses paid by CSP funding will be one-time start-up expenses. These costs include the salaries for a community and student outreach team who will interface with the community, build partnerships and help families enroll, the Planning Principal's salary,

instructional technology equipment, curriculum, and student supplies including classroom library books and various student supplies. The school is projected to have operational reserves and a positive net income to support continuous operations.

**Funding for Ongoing Operations Post-Grant**

As a public charter school serving a significant percentage of economically disadvantaged students, primary sources of funding to keep the school in operation once CSP funding has expired will be state equalization and entitlement grant funding. State equalization payments provide over 80% of the funding for each Academies of Math and Science (AMS) school. In addition to designing a budget that is viable without external grant funding once AMSSM is serving students at capacity, the Governing Board will ensure that no more than 15% of revenues is spent on annual debt payments for the facility.

The Academy of Math and Science South Mountain will serve an estimated FRL population of 92.8% (as determined by 3- mile average of schools in the area), and will qualify for federal and state entitlement grants, including Title I, Title II, IDEA, and Prop 301.

While AMSSM will fully operate post-grant without the need for any funding outside of equalization and anticipated needs based federal funding, the school will nevertheless strive to secure additional competitive funding when possible. AMSSM's network office employs staff members who have extensive experience in fundraising and grant writing to serve high-needs communities in Arizona. AMSSM will work with resource providers such as the Arizona Department of Education, Federal Register, and Grants.gov to secure additional funding as available. As a network, AMS has proven expertise in identifying funding opportunities and writing proposals that fit within the scope of its Strategic Plan.

2. A description of how the eligible applicant will support recruitment and enrollment practices to promote inclusion of all students, including by eliminating any barriers to enrollment for educationally disadvantaged students including foster youth and unaccompanied homeless youth. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303(f)(1)(A)(viii)(I)*

### **Eliminating Barriers to Enrollment for All Students**

Pursuant to *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303(f)(1)(A)(viii)(I)*, the Academy of Math and Science South Mountain will employ recruitment and enrollment practices to promote the inclusion of all students by eliminating any barriers to enrollment for educationally disadvantaged students including foster youth and unaccompanied homeless youth. AMS is committed to providing equal opportunity for all students to enroll and participate in a free, appropriate public education. AMSSM will use a comprehensive, multi-platform community outreach program that includes a digital and in-person presence to ensure that students and families of all needs and backgrounds, including those students who are in foster-care or are accompanied or unaccompanied homeless youth, are aware of the new school, its program, and the rights of homeless and foster students.

Based on data from other AMS schools, AMSSM expects to be a neighborhood school in which 75% of students that attend the school will likely do so from within a 3-mile radius (see further in this application for further information). As such, AMSSM will invest significant time and resources into the local area to ensure that students and families may participate in the school's development and submit timely enrollment materials during the recruitment and enrollment period. AMSSM will specifically employ the following practices to eliminate any potential enrollment barriers for enrollment:

- Meet with nearby foster care organizations and organizations that support foster and homeless youth to inform them about our program, post school fliers at these organizations as well as at bus stops, parks, and other locations frequented by these families. Other locations for such physical outreach include grocery stores, community service centers, DES, homeless shelters, homeless service providers, food banks, clothing drives, etc.
- Individually meet with foster care and homeless families interested in the AMS program to conduct a needs assessment to inform school design, help them in finding nearby community resources, assist with filling out enrollment materials and gathering required enrollment documents, and provide transportation if necessary at the school's cost to ensure that children can make it to school consistently.
- Maintain a physical office during school and community outreach with fliers at the site referencing support for foster children and homeless families focusing on AMS programs that support the academic success of disadvantaged children, the rights of special education students and foster and homeless children and youth, and the range of ancillary services that AMS includes as part of the standard program at community resource organizations for families who lack access to technology such as allowing disadvantaged families to use school resources after school, and referring disadvantaged families to social, financial, and health services.
- Allow homeless children or youth to be immediately enrolled even if they are unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic

records, medical records, proof of residency, immunizations, or other documentation.

If the child of youth needs to obtain immunizations, or immunization or medical records, the AMSSM Homeless Liaison and Registrar will assist in obtaining necessary immunizations and records.

- Maintain an open physical, digital, and phone presence so that parents can engage with school materials and speak with AMSSM planning staff with immediacy regarding questions, concerns, or feedback. To do so, the Enrollment and Outreach coordinator and planning staff will operate a physical office during the time of marketing, maintain a school website, a school email, and phone line.
- AMSSM will employ bilingual staff and provide translation services for families who do not speak English via immediately available translated enrollment and school program materials, and translation in one-on-one meetings and at school events so that all parents may evaluate the school's offerings, and ultimately participate in their child's education.
- Partner with organizations who provide services to the community to identify and further support disadvantaged students in need of a high-quality STEAM education.
- Continuously conduct and review research on community demographics and adjust or offer new services that best fit community needs.
- Gather feedback from students, families, and community partners and differentiate practices to fit the community's unique needs.

- Accommodate and assist families that wish to enroll at the school but lack the means of doing so, such as transportation, or access to their previously submitted required school records, which AMS will assist in obtaining.
- Provide homeless students or youth resources and assistance coordinated by the AMSSM Homeless Liaison. All staff will be trained to identify and support homeless students at the school, and the AMSSM Principal will specifically serve as the Homeless Liaison. The services coordinated by the Homeless Liaison are detailed further in this section.
- As homeless and foster children disproportionately receive special education and physical accommodation services, AMSSM will provide the parents of students with learning and physical disabilities under one of the 13 categories of eligibility as listed in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) direct access to AMS Special Education personnel prior to enrolling in the school to ensure the continuation or creation of appropriate services in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
- Ensure that planning facilities are accessible to students and families of all capacities by offering to pay for the transportation to the school's physical location (including the enrollment office while the school is under construction).

#### **The Education and Accommodation of Homeless Students at AMSSM**

AMSSM will comply with the Arizona Revised Statutes and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act in the education of homeless students in both identification, enrollment, and their education. Specifically, AMS refers to A.R.S. Title 15,

Chapter 8, Article 2 Section 15-824, and 42 U.S.C § 11434a(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Act to generally define homeless children and youth as “individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.”<sup>1</sup>

Pursuant to state and federal law, AMSSM will immediately enroll any homeless child or youth upon identification, even if the child or youth is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency or other documentation. If the child or youth needs to obtain immunizations, or immunization or medical records, AMSSM shall immediately refer the parent or guardian of the child, or the child directly (should the child be unaccompanied) to the AMSSM Homeless Liaison (the AMSSM Principal) who shall assist in obtaining necessary immunizations, or immunization and medical records.

As the National Center for Homeless Education recommends<sup>2</sup>, AMSSM will facilitate the identification of homeless students by:

- Raising awareness of the definition of a homeless student, the rights of homeless students, and the role of the AMSSM Homeless Liaison throughout AMSSM, other AMS schools, other schools in the area, and the community.
- Including a residency question on the AMSSM enrollment packet to identify students who are unable to provide proof of residency as a consequence of their homelessness (students who cannot provide this information will be admitted immediately pursuant to federal law). The AMSSM enrollment packet also includes a page in which parents

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<sup>1</sup> National Center for Homeless Education. “Identifying Children and Youth in Homeless Situations.” 2017. p. 2. Accessed via: <https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/identification.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 3.

or homeless students can note their status as homeless as well as schedule an immediate meeting with the AMSSM Homeless Liaison and Registrar who will assist in providing necessary services as described throughout this section.

- Working with the AMS CMO's compliance staff and Title I / McKinney-Vento grants staff to ensure that policies and procedures comply with the law, and that appropriate funding is available for homeless students who attend AMSSM.
- Providing available notices of the rights of homeless students in places where homeless youth are likely to see them, in the school or enrollment office, and on the AMSSM website. AMSSM will also post homeless awareness notices advertising the rights of homeless students in the AMS program at least two times per year.

The AMSSM Homeless Liaison and all levels of school staff will be trained to be capable of identifying and providing any necessary services prescribed by the McKinney-Vento Act during the planning period and continually throughout operation. Specifically, the AMSSM Homeless Liaison will ensure that:

- Homeless children and foster youths have a full and equal opportunity to participate and succeed in AMSSM's program through reduction of barriers to entry in the program (such as providing residency and making sure to post in places where homeless and foster children can be found) and additional supports for success (such as recognizing and working with students around the constraints of their home life allowing them to use the school as a workplace before and after school).

- Homeless children and foster youths and their families receive a full range of additional or educational services that other families of the school are eligible for including referrals to community partners, health care services, mental health services, community service providers, social services organizations, and other appropriate services.
- Parents or guardians of a homeless child or foster youth, or any unaccompanied youth, are fully informed of all educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided information about meaningful opportunities to participate in their child’s education, including extracurricular programs that AMS offers at no cost.
- Parents or guardians of a homeless child or foster youth and any unaccompanied youth are fully informed of transportation services provided at no cost. For more information on the planned transportation services offered by AMSSM, please see Question 7 of this section.

To carry out the above identification and accommodation strategies, AMSSM staff and the AMSSM Homeless Liaison will collaborate with the Arizona Department of Education’s Office of Homeless Education and set aside Title I or other funding as necessary. In order to have equitable access to AMS’s program, homeless students require additional accommodation to overcome numerous challenges. Examples of how the AMSSM Homeless Liaison will use these funds to increase homeless or foster youth opportunity for success may include:

- The purchase of physical recruiting and enrollment materials for dissemination at local homeless shelters or local homeless service providers to advertise the full school program and the rights of homeless students.
- The purchase of physical materials to encourage parent involvement in a homeless student's education.
- The purchase of clothing and shoes necessary to participate in physical education or to be generally comfortable throughout the day.
- The purchase of additional uniforms for students with limited access to laundry services, and/or the purchase/provision of laundry services for homeless youth who cannot wash their clothes regularly. The Care One Partnership at existing AMS campuses provides washer and dryers at the school for family use to support attendance.
- The purchase of school supplies including backpacks, pencils, pens, paper, journals, books, or any other materials necessary for academic success that homeless students have otherwise limited access to.
- The purchase of or referral to free counseling services (either within the school or with an outside agency) to ensure that the anxiety caused by homelessness is addressed. CPES is a provider AMSSM has partnered with for these services.
- The referral to and purchase of any medical, dental, or mental health services that may help the student succeed including eyeglasses, hearing aids, or other equipment that alleviates the burden of physical barriers to learning.

- The purchase of additional tutoring or educationally related support services that take place in the shelter or other location where a homeless student may live that has overcrowded or distracting living conditions not conducive to their academic success. AMSSM will also provide homeless students access to free before and after-school care so that they may utilize the school's resources including technology, books, curriculum items, desks, a quiet space for learning, etc.
- Food, referrals to non-profit food banks, or gift cards to local grocery stores near their shelter or near the school if the student has limited access to food outside of their automatic participation in AMSSM's free and reduced lunch program that provides breakfast and lunch.

#### *The Accommodation of Foster Youth at AMSSM*

As in the enrollment and support of homeless youth, AMSSM will implement proven practices to support the success of foster youth in both enrollment and beyond. According to the National Working Group on Foster Care and Education<sup>3</sup>, students in foster care are:

- Twice as likely to be absent from school
- Four to five times more likely to have developmental delays
- More likely to experience caregiver incarceration or violence, with two-thirds of foster youth living with someone with an alcohol or drug problem
- Significantly more likely to undergo multiple school changes to the detriment of their academic success. The report states that "youth who had even one fewer change in

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<sup>3</sup> National Working Group on Foster Care and Education. "National Factsheet on the Educational Outcomes of Children in Foster Care." 2018. Accessed via: <http://www.fostercareandeducation.org/OurWork/NationalWorkingGroup.aspx>

living arrangement [and school] were almost twice as likely to graduate from high school,”<sup>4</sup> and that “school mobility has negative effects on academic achievement, including lower scores on standardized tests.”<sup>5</sup>

- Less likely to develop and sustain “supportive relationships with teachers or peers”<sup>6</sup> that are powerful contributors to “healthy development and overall well-being.”<sup>7</sup>

The report from the National Working Group on Foster Care and Education also identifies several key areas that schools must address for success with foster youth that AMSSM will act upon<sup>8</sup>:

- *Ensure School Stability:* The primary loss of school stability in foster youth occurs when a student in foster care changes homes or is removed from foster care that is proximal to their current school. To increase school stability in AMSSM foster students, AMSSM’s transportation plan will ensure that AMSSM students do not need to withdraw from the school should they move to a foster care home or facility that is far away from the school. By having a flexible transportation system paid for by the school (see Question 7 of this section for further details), AMSSM foster youth who change homes will continue to be able to attend free of charge and stress.
- *Enroll Students Promptly:* Pursuant to federal law, foster youth must be immediately enrolled regardless of their possession of required records, immunizations, or other enrollment materials. Given their training in this area related to assisting the

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 5-8

enrollment of homeless youth, the AMSSM Homeless Liaison will facilitate the immediate enrollment of any identified foster student (identified based on enrollment materials).

- *Promote Regular Student Attendance:* Through their participation in the AMS program, foster youth will be strongly engaged by their school community, and curricular and extracurricular participation. Regular opportunities to build relationships with their peers and teachers in one-on-one intervention, high-quality classroom instruction, and AMS's positive approach to behavior will establish a foundation of regular student attendance. As described in the logic model included further in this application, one of AMSSM's short-term outcomes to be achieved over a 6-18 month period is to have 95% daily student attendance, foster youth included.
- *Support Children and Address Trauma to Prevent Serious Behavior Problems at School:* Per the research-based findings detailed in the cited report, "youth in foster care experience school suspensions and expulsions at higher rates than their non-foster peers" due to a failure to address behavioral problems at school. As detailed in Question 3 further in this section, AMSSM will use Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to reduce the overuse of discipline practices, promote student engagement and retention, and generally decrease the frequency of student behavior issues. AMSSM will also have a dedicated Dean of Students who will serve in a mentorship and advisory capacity for all students who demonstrate behavioral issues.

- *Meet Children’s Special Education Needs with Quality Services:* As previously mentioned, students who enroll with AMSSM will have immediate access to the AMS network’s Special Education staff to begin the successful creation or continuation of Individualized Education Plans (IEP). By immediately identifying students and their needs, foster youth who require special education services will begin receiving a free and appropriate education from day 1.
- *Support Students to Succeed and Graduate High School and Support Transitions to College:* The AMS program is designed for lifelong success beginning in kindergarten. By participating in the AMS program, AMSSM foster youth students will receive the support, remediation, and acceleration required to successfully matriculate to a high-performing high school and ultimately the college or vocational school of their choice. Designed to achieve this kind of success in all disadvantaged student populations, the AMS program is well-suited to meet the needs of foster youth.

3. A description of how the eligible applicant will support all students once they are enrolled to promote retention and reduce the overuse of discipline practices. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303(f)(1)(A)(viii)(II)*

**Support of All Students**

Like existing schools in the AMS network, AMSSM will use a combination of behavior and engagement strategies to promote student retention, reduce the overuse of exclusionary or over-restrictive disciplinary practices, and foster student enjoyment. To help students learn positive behaviors, AMSSM will institute Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

(PBIS) designed to encourage positive behaviors using a set of core values, common campus language, celebrations, and rewards. In addition to PBIS, AMSSM will utilize other strategies that develop strong student-student and student-staff relationships and maximize student engagement, such as morning meetings, parent-teacher conferences, positive calls home to parents monthly, advisory with the Dean of Students, weekly and monthly attendance incentives, high-engagement instructional practices such as whole-group response and collaborative group work and focus on excellent lesson design, and classroom management techniques focused on recognizing positive behaviors and restorative practices.

### **AMSSM PBIS Objective**

AMSSM's goal is to leverage PBIS to foster holistic student development including social skills and character strengths to establish a positive school climate fostering academic and social growth. Additionally, it is more accurate to call PBIS a framework focused on prevention and instruction. Instead of allowing poor behavior to escalate into disciplinary measures, the general focus is put on teaching and promoting positive behaviors before student behavior becomes an issue in the school environment. By building on positive behaviors, escalation to disciplinary action is reduced, academic instructional time is maximized, and the student community becomes increasingly self-accountable for their learning.

### **PBIS Program Components**

The core values of PBIS begin with a fundamental belief in a positive, preventative approach to behavioral intervention carried out by all campus stakeholders, including administration, staff, students, families, and the surrounding community. The program's

guiding principles influence behavior before issues arise and can help the students understand the difference between right and wrong. At the beginning of each academic year, stakeholders will revisit behavior principles in order to keep the PBIS mission relevant and prominent on the AMSSM campus. AMSSM Staff will use a PBIS Behavior Matrix chart that clearly communicates the campus-wide behavioral expectations for positive behaviors in the various school environments, and which will be supported in the classroom environment with CHAMPS (what level of conversation is permitted, how to ask for help, what activity students should be working on, what movement is permitted, how students can participate, and what success looks like) clearly identified for all activities. The purpose of the PBIS behavior matrix is to identify and display positive behaviors that meet behavioral expectations across all school contexts and settings. Collaboratively developed by school staff, students, and parents, a PBIS matrix usually features two areas of focus, expectations and contexts, designed to increase student understanding of schoolwide expectations for behavior.

Secondly, AMSSM will use the PBIS Incentive Infrastructure in which incentives are earned, tracked, and rewarded to students based upon their behavior and conduct. The incentives will be broken down into two separate pieces: individual incentives and class incentives. Students earn individual incentives and spend them as currency once a month in the campus incentive store. In their classes, students and teachers will set collective behavior goals that must be accomplished together. Once goals are attained, classes can vote on an incentive and collect the incentive as a group. The PBIS Incentive Infrastructure not only provides tangible rewards for good behavior but also helps build student understanding of

the positive effect of class-wide or schoolwide good behavior, further building on the importance of self-accountability and cross-accountability for one's peers.

### **Engagement Strategies and AMS Essentials**

In addition to a formalized positive behavior system, AMSSM's staff will also incorporate strategies designed to maximize student engagement during instruction, leading to less behavioral issues within the classroom. Strategies such as Communication, Help, Assistance, Movements, Participation, and Success (CHAMPS), help teachers clearly define expectations, maintain a quick pace during teaching and transitions, and minimize behavior issues in the classroom.

AMSSM will also utilize the AMS Essentials, a network blend of proven teaching practices developed with two decades of experience improving the academic outcomes of students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds as well as adapting best practices from the highest performing charter school networks across the country. The AMS Essential strategies keep students engaged during learning and promote content retention. These strategies include the use of group discussion, think-pair-share, review of 2-part learning objectives during all lessons, and teacher proximity to monitor student behavior and performance. As part of the AMS network, AMSSM will receive feedback from the network academic team on the implementation of best practices, continually iterate and evaluate the effectiveness of the AMS Essentials, and implement newly developed research-based teaching methods as appropriate to meet unique school challenges.

### **Mental Health Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network**

AMSSM will also receive support and Professional development as part of the National Quality Initiative and National Center for Mental Health's Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network (COIIN). The Academy of Math and Science Desert Sky, under the same charter (Academy of Math and Science Flower) that AMSSM will operate as a new school site in, was competitively awarded participation in the COIIN program and receives ongoing student mental health related services to bolster ongoing efforts to foster student mental health and development. As part of the same charter, AMS Desert Sky will share best practices on mental health with AMSSM. The Academy of Math and Science Flower is the only charter in the state of Arizona currently part of the program.

As AMSSM will serve a student population with a significant percentage of economically disadvantaged students, and a well above average crime index (see crime data discussed further in this application), participation in COIIN will supplement AMS's existing positive behavior practices, help prevent the overuse of disciplinary strategies, and further promote student retention by building a positive school culture in which students are comfortable and excited to learn. The COIIN will also build on AMSSM's understanding of trauma-informed practices.

4. A description of the roles and responsibilities of eligible applicants, partner organizations, and charter management organizations, including the administrative and contractual roles and responsibilities of such partners. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303(f)(1)(C)(i)(I)*

**Eligible Applicant: Academy of Math and Science South Mountain – Roles and**

**Responsibilities**

AMSSM’s primary responsibility will be the academic success and advancement of all AMSSM students. The Founding Principal of AMSSM will oversee and direct all staff on campus excluding facilities, Information Technology (IT), and Special Education (SPED) personnel, who will be managed in a dual-supervisory structure with employees from the AMSSM charter management organization, AMS Impact Group (henceforth referred to as “the CMO” or “AMS Network”). While AMSSM will have myriad of responsibilities serving the school’s community, the Principal’s key responsibilities are to:

- Provide daily management of the school and all related responsibilities.
- Delegate and distribute duties across leadership and administrative teams.
- Hire high-quality teachers and support staff, ensure staff retention, and ensure that all instructional staff receive high-quality professional development, coaching, and mentorship on a regular basis in line with the CMO’s levers for student achievement.
- Ensure the safety of students and staff in all areas of school operation including pickup and drop-off and permissions, visitor management, parking lot procedures, safe school procedures including during transitions, recess, lunches, assemblies, and outside school functions.
- Implement the CMO-developed program tailored to the community’s specific needs.

- Develop local partnerships with civic, community, faith-based, social service, business, education, City, and high-school leaders and organizations.
- Provide both advanced instruction and targeted remediation to ensure that all students have the opportunities and resources necessary for academic success.
- Daily oversight of registrar and front office manager activities.
- Attract and retain families by providing a pleasant and caring learning environment that is well organized, peaceful, safe, and conducive to learning.
- Maintain open communication with students and parents.
- Provide opportunities for parents to become involved in the school program and after school activities.
- Ensure staff maintain professional behavior and positive attitudes.
- Respect and appreciate the cultural differences of students and their families, as well as adjusting school practices to fit a model of cultural understanding.
- Maintain high expectations for all students and staff.
- Create opportunities and enforce policies that help students to resolve conflicts in positive, nonviolent ways to help students develop a sense of personal and civic responsibility.
- Provide a challenging and rewarding education for each student.

In order to ensure that the school is able to focus on the responsibilities of its primary role, AMSSM's charter operator, Academy of Mathematics and Science South, Inc. (AMSS, Inc.), has an experienced and established Governing Board well versed in executing the

governance functions necessary for success. AMSS, Inc. also has an established contractual agreement with AMS Impact Group (AIG), the Academies of Math and Science CMO. Per the agreement, AIG will be responsible for supervising AMSSM Principals, reporting on the outcome of and implementing Board directives consistent with the CMO's and Board's instructional vision, ensuring the success of AMSSM as an AMS model school, meeting all compliance and legal requirements, and providing all back-office functions for the school. The support, feedback, monitoring, and oversight of AMSSM will allow the new school to focus on maximizing student remediation, engagement, and achievement. Supported by the CMO, the AMSSM Founding Principal will be responsible to deliver on these rigorous objectives and deliver regular updates to the Board for feedback and guidance.

**Charter Management Organization: AMS Impact Group – Roles and Responsibilities**

AMSSM's charter holder, Academy of Mathematics and Science South, Inc., currently contracts with the CMO for a wide array of services including what are typically considered back-office management services, IT, facilities maintenance and cleaning, operations, accounts payable and financial support, academic program design and implementation support, supervision and training of school leadership, and school startup services including site development, financing, student enrollment, and staff recruitment. This contract will extend to AMSSM, providing the school with these services as well. In practice, the AMS Superintendent is responsible for oversight of new and existing AMS Principals and implementation of the AMS model at each school. Together with the Co-CEO of Academics and the Co-CEO of Operations and Growth, the AMS Superintendent will report to the Board, and receive specific feedback to further guide the successful operation of the new school

site. These three executives oversee and lead CMO staff in providing the services detailed below. Any directives issued for the School Principal from the Board are overseen by one of these three executive leaders.

### Operational Services

The CMO is responsible for providing site management, technology and IT services, public relations services, staffing and human resources support, and development services.

The following is a description of the specific activities the CMO is responsible to complete for AMSSM:

- A. Refine and develop the AMSSM school model with input from all stakeholders including the Board, AMSSM and the local community in conjunction with all other schools under management
- B. Site and Academic Management
  - a. Monitor AMSSM's academic program and oversee the Principal
  - b. Provide day-to-day support for the Principal and other school leaders
  - c. Provide general assistance and coaching in the implementation of the AMS school model
- C. Technology and IT Services
  - a. Design overall technology and IT system and strategy
  - b. Assure alignment of technology purchases with technology strategy
  - c. Provide staff training on the technology and IT systems
  - d. Design overall data collection system; select and/or create database systems; assure compatibility and security of systems

- e. Manage IT staff at all school sites
- f. Conduct research on future growth of technology and IT services and equipment and implement changes and improvements
- g. Website content maintenance and supervision of design

D. Public Relations

- a. Develop the public-relations strategy for AMSSM
- b. Prepare and distribute press releases for AMSSM
- c. Conduct regular outreach efforts for AMSSM in conjunction with school leadership and engage firms for PR services as required
- d. Attend networking events and conferences as representatives of AMSSM in conjunction with school leadership

E. Enrollment Marketing

- a. Manage staff for open house events during the planning phase in conjunction with school leadership
- b. Manage online recruitment platforms including Google AdWords and all print advertisements including brochures and postcards

Academic Services

The CMO will provide management services for AMSSM in enrollment and enrollment maintenance, student information system services, curricular services, teacher and school leadership services, and special education services. The following is a description of the specific activities AIG is responsible to complete for AMSSM:

A. Enrollment and Enrollment Maintenance

- a. Train school leadership and administrative staff including registrars and front office managers to supervise and provide oversight of student registration, waiting-list management and withdrawals, student attendance, and student records
- b. Create manuals and timelines for policies, procedures, and staff training related to enrollment registration, student placement, waiting-list management and withdrawals, student attendance, and student records
- c. Conduct market analysis (demand for AMSSM's services) and help school leadership coordinate community surveys and needs assessments
- d. Conduct student-retention analysis
- e. Prepare periodic enrollment reports for the Board

B. SAIS – Student Automatic Information System

- a. Implement and maintain SIS (Student Information Management Software)
- b. Collaboratively develop school schedules and oversee placement of students into appropriate classes
- c. Conduct data-entry training for site staff
- d. Supervise data entry
- e. Supervise data uploads
- f. Reconcile SAIS and AMS database data
- g. Supervise SAIS legal compliance

### C. Curriculum

- a. Design and publish policies and procedures related to State-approved curriculum consistent with the community's needs and AMSSM's mission, as approved by the Board
- b. Design and administer AMSSM's Principal and Teacher manual
- c. Design AMSSM's student and school progress assessment system, manage the system, and train teachers and administrators on effective use
- d. Supervise the administration of required State assessments

### D. Teachers and School Leadership

- a. Design and assist school leaders with teacher-training programs in highest levers of student achievement including use of data to inform instruction, classroom management and support of teachers, lesson design for disadvantaged learners, school culture, parent engagement, developmental psychology, and Federal and State compliance, including special-education compliance
- b. Arrange training by outside providers and coordinate off-site individual teacher training and professional development activities
- c. Plan instructional staffing levels

### E. Special Education (SPED)

- a. Create policies and procedures and supervise SPED compliance and learning across all campuses including shared management of special education staff and full management of speech and physiological evaluation staff

- b. Oversee services administered to students who qualify for Special Education under one of the 13 categories of eligibility as listed in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) through contracted vendors or hiring of school-employed SPED staff
- c. Oversee development of IEPs, records requests, and placement of SPED students.
- d. Oversee compliance with federal and State laws and regulations, including State-required reporting
- e. Find, contract, and supervise licensed SPED staff at all school sites including, but not limited to, evaluation staff, psychologists, speech and all other therapists
- f. Supervise data collection and provide relevant data for State monitoring and SPED audits

Accounting Services

The CMO provides the following accounting and financial services to AMSSM as part of the service agreement:

- A. Prepare proposed, adopted and adjusted versions of school budgets
- B. Prepare financial reports for all the AMS Charter Schools
- C. Submit budgets and financial reports to lenders, bond holders, banks, Arizona Department of Education, funders and philanthropic organizations, auditors, and as required by participation in grants or loans or applicable law

- D. Coordinate, prepare, and provide audit data for annual audits
- E. Record AMSSM's accounting data
- F. Prepare quarterly financial reports for the Board
- G. Prepare AMSSM's tax returns
- H. Manage accounts payable and accounts receivable
- I. Maintain all vendor files
- J. Assure compliance with GAAP accounting standards
- K. Assure compliance with existing Bondholder reporting requirements

School Startup Services

When the AMS network decides to open new school sites, the CMO provides additional services beyond the scope of the general management services agreement. These are services that are necessary specifically during the planning and early implementation phases of the school. The CMO provides the following services during the new school development phase:

- A. Evaluate new school sites for demographics and working with brokers in procuring property listings in area
- B. Write, submit, and pursue new charter contracts as directed by the Board within Arizona
- C. Write, administer, and report on start-up grants for AMSSM working with school leadership and the Board
- D. Training and development of school leadership to ensure competencies essential to success in the AMS school model

- E. Oversee the marketing of new charter schools in the community in collaboration with school leadership and local staff including the development and implementation of public-relations strategies and community outreach and partnerships for AMSSM, as well as conducting regular outreach efforts for AMSSM
- F. Manage, in conjunction with local school leaders and staff, the student registration process prior to the Charter School opening
- G. Manage the search for and coordination of hiring for schoolteachers (with final interviews and selections made by AMSSM leadership) and training of school leaders
- H. Provide and plan common summer training for all new teachers in conjunction with the school leaders
- I. Procurement of financing, feasibility analysis, project budgeting, and project construction management including oversight of all vendors and consultants for the construction of new campuses

### **Roles of Community Partners**

AMSSM also has community partners who will have various roles to help establish wrap around supports for parents and students, inform the design of the school, and create a and participate in the education of students in a way that creates local ownership of the community in the school.

### **Institutes of Higher Education**

AMSSM is in the process of establishing relationships with both local high schools and local universities. The AMSSM student population come from families where a college education is not standard. AMSSM will partner with local high schools with graduation rates

of 90% and higher and local institutions of higher education to serve a critical role of exposing students to “the next step” in their education. By providing opportunities for students to hear about, visit, and ask questions about high school, college, and vocational schools while they are still in elementary and middle school, AMSSM hopes to guide students to approach the next stages of their education with not only excitement and confidence, but also a solid plan for success.

### *Partners for Student Enrichment*

While AMS schools focus heavily on improving the core academic performance of its students, AMSSM will also ensure that students have ample opportunities to discover, explore, and pursue their creative and artistic talents. In addition to offering a fine arts curriculum, AMSSM will also explore partnerships with museums, music and arts centers, dance studios, and theater groups. AMSSM will build these partnerships as a constant source of school assembly speakers, enrichment field trips, and additional positive after-school activity options to further connect students to their community and creativity.

### *Partner Organizations: Roles and Responsibilities*

In addition to partnerships, AMSSM is also working to establish relationships with any organizations that are integral parts of the immediate community they intend to serve. This includes local police and fire departments, local organizations of faith, and other local community centers. These types of organizations will work with AMSSM to generate an accurate picture of what life is like for their students outside of school so AMSSM staff can better understand students’ needs and challenges. Additionally, by involving themselves with public service-based organizations, students will receive exposure to valuable citizenship

experiences that foster a strong sense of commitment to their community and its success long-term.

Many of these community partnerships already have their own established programs that help provide positive activities and influences for students and are eager to work with AMSSM. In the selection of community partners, AMSSM analyzed most pressing demographic and academic needs of the population and aligned partnerships to needs in a matrix to ensure that there was both an AMS program and a partnership to match each need. As with all AMS schools, it is AMSSM's goal to be a community school and an integral part of building a community where everyone is focused on the success of the students. Section D, question 5 contains further details about the partnerships currently being developed with the school and the Needs Matrix.

5. A description of how the eligible applicant will solicit and consider input from parents and other members of the community on the implementation and operation of each charter school that will receive funds under AZCSP. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303(f)(1)(C)(i)(IV)*

#### **Input on the Implementation and Operation of AMSSM**

AMSSM will engage the community in a constant feedback cycle to ensure that the school's program is continuously adjusted and improved based on parent and community input. To build a community in which all stakeholders are involved in the school's development and operation, AMSSM will use surveys, focus groups, in-person meetings, a community needs assessment, a groundbreaking ceremony, monthly Parent Advisory Committee meetings, Governing Board notices, and more as detailed in this section.

### Communication with Parents and Communities

Every new neighborhood brings a unique set of parent and student preferences, community resources (or lack thereof), and family and community challenges. AMSSM has solicited and considered input from parents and the community through parent surveys, direct communication with local community leaders and organizations, and AMSSM is planning a community needs assessment event detailed further in this section during which AMS will host community leaders, groups, and parents to design and develop the program together in focus groups. AMSSM will continually communicate with parents and families and build a sustainable relationship in a supportive community where families are involved in the design and operation of their ideal school from the beginning. This community input and impact plan will be at the forefront of AMSSM's marketing and engagement strategy to gather valuable information and input that guides AMSSM toward both its academic and community goals.

With each new school community, AMS is excited to bring a blend of proven results, strong curriculum, family support programs, and the flexibility to adapt program offerings to meet community needs. Beginning in August each year, the new AMS school and its charter management organization begin AMS's formal community outreach process designed to build the foundation of a school community capable of sustainably achieving the goals outlined in the school's mission and the logic model included in this application. To date, this process has successfully established seven successful charter school communities that the AMS CMO and community leaders are proud to be a part of.

Input from Parents and Members of Community on the Implementation of a New Charter

School

The AMS CMO uses every method of outreach available including paid media advertising; direct outreach to community organizations, leaders, and businesses; door-to-door canvassing; flier posting; marketing in high traffic areas, and in-person events (all in both Spanish and English) to help spread awareness and gather an interest list of families who wish to send their children to an AMS school and be a part of AMSSM's development. In August of 2019, AMSSM's marketing and outreach team began marketing and building an interest list (with name, phone, email, grade level) that has resulted in over 350 interested parents from the nearby community. The CMO Community Outreach team then has reached out to 100% of parents via email with a detailed survey which gathers parent feedback on:

1. What aspects of the existing AMS program are most important to them (this includes everything from the Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math (STEAM) curriculum, to remediation, to before and after school care)
2. If there is anything that parents and the community wish to see at AMSSM not currently offered by AMS
3. What their prior school offered that they would like to see continue at AMS
4. What community resources parents need (including medical care, childcare, income assistance, learning English, parenting classes, application for government assistance, completing GED, etc.)
5. Whether students/parents have access to a reliable computer and internet at home
6. Parent preferences and availability for volunteering

7. Whether or not parents would be interested in participating in a focus group

The above list of questions has successfully informed the Community Needs Assessment and school design at AMS's two most recent campuses and will be used to do the same for this campus.

In addition to the above, the Community Outreach Team has already reached out to local organizations to inform them about AMSSM, as well as to ask for their opinion on local community needs and how the school and their organization can best work together. AMS is also currently circulating signage and information to community partners at afterschool and enrichment programs for children throughout the immediate area around AMSSM.

In addition to ongoing parent and community outreach efforts, AMSSM will hold its first major community event in December of 2019 for the following concurrent items: open house for registering parents; groundbreaking ceremony with media, elected officials, and all school supporters; parent focus groups; and a community needs assessment. Given the high percentage of Hispanic families and families who speak a language other than English in the home, AMSSM will have multiple staff members that speak Spanish at the event to facilitate communication with all future members of the school community.

At the event, parents will have the opportunity to interact with Board members, AMSSM and CMO staff, city council members, Town Council Members, local business and college representatives, STEAM education organization leaders, the heads of various city departments including fire and police, and a number of other supportive local organizations. This event was run successfully last year at both AMS Peoria Advanced and AMS Glendale

campuses and successfully had all parties mentioned above in attendance providing feedback on the design of the school.

The Community Needs Assessment will bring together community leaders to identify:

- Neighborhood resources
- The perceived quality of education in the area
- What schools are and are not doing well
- What partnerships currently exist with schools
- What partnerships need to exist with schools
- How families, schools, and community organizations can work together to create a safer neighborhood where all students are on track toward lifelong success built upon interest in STEM careers, and foundational skills for success in competitive high schools and colleges

In parent focus groups, the AMSSM Principal and the CMO Community Outreach Team will facilitate in-depth discussion to identify what parents are looking for from an AMS school. Although AMSSM will only hold one community needs assessment and groundbreaking ceremony, focus groups and on-on-one conversations with parents will continue at all the open houses through May 2020. While AMSSM encourages parent and community member involvement through a variety of both formal and informal means, parent focus groups provide parents and AMSSM staff a structured opportunity to get to know school and network leadership, understand the essential components of the AMS program, and truly shape their child's education.

### **Operation of the Charter School After Opening**

Following the planning phase, AMSSM will follow in the footsteps of existing AMS schools and regularly gather feedback from parents. AMSSM will also seek to recruit a member of the community, a teacher, and/or a parent to be part of the Governing Board. AMS successfully added a Board member from each community with all campuses including most recently Peoria Advanced and Glendale where two members of each community were recruited to be part of the school Governing Boards. To facilitate parent interest in attending Board meetings, Governing Board meeting notices will be posted in prominent locations in the school office to encourage parent attendance and involvement in the school's governance. AMSSM will also hold monthly Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings where AMSSM will request parent feedback on how the school can improve and facilitate the holistic success of their students. Within the first month of operation, AMSSM will send a survey to all parents asking if the school is meeting their expectations across areas including student pickup and drop-off, communication, and their general affect about how the first week went. These responses will drive the agenda of the first PAC meeting. AMSSM will send three surveys a year to parents, students, and teachers on items related to the school program and the success of the school and ongoing feedback on the operations of the campus.

AMSSM will also continue its relationship with community partners and evaluate how the school is meeting the needs identified by community members through recurring meetings and a transparent process on the needs identified and progress made in addressing the goals set by the community.

How AMSSM will Consider Input from Parents and Members of the Community

AMSSM will engage in a self-reflective process aligned with the organizational structure of the school (see Section E, Question 1) to review input, iterate upon the school's operation or programs, and successfully plan for the sustainable implementation of community driven changes. The Governing Board will maintain oversight of all changes, especially those generated via parent surveys (the Board will have timely access to all survey results). AMSSM's Governing Board is well-versed in participating in this iterative process having done so successfully for 5 existing schools in the greater Phoenix, Arizona area. Examples of how parent and community input has affected the operation or programs of existing AMS schools include:

- New resources or increased availability of existing resources from both the school and community partners
- Integration of a community college or university GED program on the school site
- Expanded hours for before and after school care
- New sports or clubs
- Modified / expanded methods of parent communication to promote more accessible engagement
- Increased availability of school leadership. For example, one campus hosts Cafecito, an opportunity for Spanish-speaking parents to speak directly with the Principal.

6. A description of how the eligible applicant will support the use of effective parent, family, and community engagement strategies to operate each charter school that will receive funds under AZCSP. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303(f)(1)(C)(i)(VI)*

### **The AMS Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Beliefs**

Regardless of how often it has been said, AMS leaders and staff are frequently heard saying “it takes a village to raise a child.”

Extensive research and two decades of experience operating AMS schools in economically disadvantaged areas has shown that the most effective schools serving students in low-income communities are successful, in large part, because of consistent involvement and engagement from parents, families, and community partners. The purpose of family engagement at AMSSM will be to make families feel like AMSSM is an extended part of their family as well as to provide ongoing opportunities to inform how the school is operated. The purpose of community engagement is to give meaningful opportunities for the community to contribute to the school generating a true connection and desire to become partners in the success of students adding to the school’s collective resources both inside and outside of the classroom.

### **Engagement Strategies Before the School Opens**

Prior to pursuing a new school site, AMS conducts extensive research of the community to ensure that the AMS program meets a specific community need beginning with general outreach asking if parents in the neighborhood are interested in an AMS school. Once the list reached 300 interested parents, AMSSM decided to move forward with marketing of the campus and further engagement of the community. s

Community outreach is performed through posting fliers, dropping off fliers at physical locations, online advertising, canvassing neighborhoods, and scheduling in-person meetings with members of the community including leaders of local business, political, faith-based, and educational organizations.

After the initial outreach, AMSSM (as noted above) distributed a survey to parents asking them why an AMS program is needed in the neighborhood and what supports and program elements and supports parents are looking for. This information is then shared with AMSSM leaders and members of the school's Governing Board who will facilitate the Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment event (which will also be the groundbreaking and first open house) with parents and community members and will inform how the school is operated. AMSSM will hold multiple open house events and ongoing parent focus groups to continue to engage the community, will schedule a pre-grand opening ceremony to allow parents to tour the school in select areas of the site (as permitted by the general contractor), will send home monthly communications to new parents about how to prepare for an upcoming year with AMSSM (along with introductions of AMSSM staff members and the AMSSM educational philosophy), and will make personal phone calls to 100% of students informing them of the Meet Your Teacher night as well as first day of school.

The AMSSM Principal will hold in-person meetings with members of the community to create strong local connections between the school and the community. The AMSSM Principal will then invite community organizations who have a strong fit with the AMSSM mission to the Community Needs Assessment event to participate in the development of the school and to inform how it will operate.

### **Engagement Strategies After the School Opens**

Several days prior to the start of the school year, AMSSM will host a Meet Your Teacher Night to put families directly into their classrooms, to tour the facility, and to interact with teachers, staff, and administrators. During this event, all aspects of the AMSSM program will be shared, school procedures will be reviewed, and parents will have the chance to ask any questions they may have remaining about the school. At this time, families will be encouraged to attend Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings, to sign up for the AMSSM Booster Club, to volunteer, and to register their children for academic clubs and sports after school. Additionally, AMSSM will invite K-2 parents in the first 2 weeks of school into class to help develop comfort with the school and staff.

### **Ongoing Engagement Strategies**

The main tools that AMSSM will use to solicit feedback from the community to inform the school's operations will be scheduled meetings with each organization throughout the year based on specifics of each developed partnership. At these meetings AMSSM and partners will set clear goals for the school and the partner organization, plan the execution of AMSSM goals, logic model, and Strategic Plan; plan for the inclusion of community members in the local school Governing Board; and schedule annual meetings with all partners focused on mutual goals of the partner organizations and AMSSM. To engage the community, AMSSM will invite employees of companies in STEM fields to speak about their professions, create opportunities for members of the community to volunteer at the school, offer field trips to STEM companies, invite members to contribute to career day, invite the community to evaluate student projects on science fair night, Scratch Day, etc.,

and host large school cultural and academic events such as Cinco de Mayo celebrations and National Reading Day.

AMSSM will use the following as the main tools with families to inform the school's operations: (1) triannual parent surveys, (2) monthly PAC meetings, (3) Annual Title I meetings, (4) informal communications with parents at events and feedback from teachers, (5) focus groups, and (6) informal small gatherings with parents and focus groups. School leadership will reflect and develop action plans with feedback from parents on a quarterly basis and will develop longer term goals to be implemented over multiple years. For parents to feel engaged in their children's education and to provide meaningful feedback on school operation's, AMSSM will implement the following engagement strategies:

- Post Governing Board agendas to allow parents to contribute to and be informed of major decisions affecting their schools
- Create volunteer opportunities through encouraging participation in all school events and informing parents of school needs such as participation at PAC Meetings, help with lunchroom and parking lot safety supervision, field trip supervision, National Reading Day, speaking in classrooms and at Career Day, etc.
- Schedule student performances at PAC meetings to increase attendance
- Regularly host fun events and cultural celebrations at the school designed to make AMSSM feel like an extension of family's homes (such as dances, movie night, carnivals, Cinco de Mayo, etc.)

- Hold home games in football, soccer, basketball, volleyball, and other sports and various academic competitions at schools such as Science Olympiad, STEM nights
- Schedule evaluations and celebration of student projects as schoolwide events such as Scratch Day and Science Fair to exhibit programming and science projects of students
- Ongoing Title I meetings to inform the community of the school's progress on Title I objectives, how the school is using Title I funds, and to request feedback on Title I programs.
- Create a welcoming environment in all parts of the school including the front office and how parents are greeted and interacted with by all staff
- Reiterate the importance of parent-teacher conferences and focusing conferences around how to interpret student data and work with their children to help their academic performance
- Decrease barriers to communication through bilingual employees, bilingual written communications, and creating less-imposing informal opportunities for parents to get together with school staff and leadership for feedback (such as Cafecito)
- Communicate regularly with parents through:
  - Newsletters to families
  - Written communication in planners and Class Dojo by teachers and phone calls
  - Facebook and letters home to parents for schoolwide communications

- Whole-school text messages and calls with bilingual announcements
- Events
- Allow visitors in classrooms when scheduled in advance

Each event, each meeting, and each survey is designed to effectively integrate parent, family, and community engagement with school operations.

7. A description of how the eligible applicant will consider and plan for the transportation needs of the school's students. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303 (f)(1)(E)*

### **Transportation and Low-Income Families – The Research**

According to a study conducted by the Federal Transit Administration in 2013, the average American low-income household spends as much as 33 percent of their income on transportation. This high cost is often due to difficult choices with poor alternatives forced upon low-income families. In their search for affordable housing, families often end up living in low-income, low-cost neighborhoods that are far away from their place of employment as well as high performing schools. AMS intentionally opens schools with a high-quality STEAM education model to serve low-income areas in need of a proven neighborhood school.

### **Transportation Plans at AMSSM**

AMSSM leadership will implement the following solutions based on need and viability to decrease barriers for participation in the AMS program. Additional plans or programs will be implemented as necessary based on future discussion with families as part of the community engagement process or as AMSSM develops more community partnerships.

- Carpool groups arranged by AMSSM based on family geographical data. AMSSM staff will compile lists of families and help coordinate the use of carpooling to alleviate the burden of multiple families commuting similar distances.
- Student ride-sharing services. AMSSM's leadership is exploring the use of student ride-sharing services that operate much like popular app-based taxi services. Given an appropriate amount of demand, AMSSM may contract with a student ride-sharing service for students and families in need who wish to participate, free of charge.
- AMSSM has already reached out to Ride Zūm, a company that currently provides transportation options for over 10,000 schools nationwide, to explore partnership in service of AMSSM students.
- As AMSSM will open in a community that serves predominantly low-income families that attend the school from within a 3-mile radius, most families will be within walking or short-driving distance from the school and have convenient access to the school. For students that walk to school from within the 3-mile radius, AMSSM will create a safe walking route and partner with the City police and traffic departments (which have already been contacted) to review that the proposed routes are clear and safe routes to and from school.
- AMS also offers before and after school care as early as 6:30 a.m. and as late as 6:30 p.m. to further accommodate families who may not be able to pick-up or drop-off their student until earlier or later hours, further reducing the burden of typically time-restricted transportation on families.

- AMSSM has a public bus stop on school grounds. AMSSM will pay for yearly bus passes for students and families in need. AMSSM will also partner with Valley Metro, the local public transportation provider, to participate in their school outreach program. This program teaches students the environmental and economic value of using public transportation along with how to safely and reliably use public transportation. Valley metro also provides free field trip transportation for elementary and middle school students traveling with their teacher to provide students with guided hands-on experience using public transportation. AMSSM has already reached out to Valley Metro to coordinate this partnership.

AMSSM is committed to partnering with parents, families, and the community to overcome any obstacle students may have in attending the AMS school of their choice, including transportation.

8. A description of the administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency including how the school's performance in the State's accountability system and impact on student achievement will be one of the most important factors for renewal or revocation of the school's charter, and how the authorized public chartering agency involved will reserve the right to revoke or not renew a school's charter based on financial, structural, or operational factors involving the management of the school. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303 (f)(1)(C)(i)(II)*

#### **Relationship with Authorizer**

The Academy of Math and Science South Mountain (formerly the Academy of Math and Science Baseline) is authorized to operate as a K-8 charter school by the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (ASBCS). ASBCS authorized the school as a second site of the Academy of Math and Science Prince (AMS Prince) under the charter Academy of

Mathematics and Science in April of 2019. However, the Arizona Department of Education recently provided clarification that an LEA cannot operate school sites with different paid calendar years. AMS Prince currently operates on a 180-day calendar year and AMS South Mountain will operate on a 200-day calendar year. Therefore, AMS is currently working with ASBCS staff to make the administrative change to move the school to the 200-day charter Academy of Math and Science Flower, operated by the charter holder Academy of Mathematics and Science South, Inc. (AMSS, Inc.), by November of 2019. AMSSM's operating term under the AMSS, Inc. contract will not expire until June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2028. The AMS Network Office will begin the charter renewal process in late 2026 with an expected approval by early 2027, which will extend AMSSM's ability to operate for an additional 15 years.

ASBCS strives to provide oversight of charter holders that is not over-reaching but recognizes and protects the public's interest. The ASBCS currently authorizes AMS South Mountain to educate up to 1100 students. AMS South Mountain will serve 832 students in its first year and scale to 1100 for its second year.

#### **Notifications and Amendments to Board**

AMSSM must submit an amendment to ASBCS as well as appropriate documentation, including but not limited to Board meeting minutes showing approval, for the following:

The Board shall provide feedback based on administrative completeness. Approval may occur at the staff level or may be forwarded to the ASBCS Board for a vote based on the then adopted Board policy.

1. Becoming an online school
2. Changing officers, directors, members, or partners of the Charter Holder
3. Changing address of charter holder
4. Changing entity name, legal status, or ownership of charter holder
5. Changing mission of charter holder
6. Changing the Charter Holder's authorized Charter Representative(s)
7. Changing a school's enrollment capacity
8. Changing grade levels served
9. Changing number of days of instruction
10. Adding a member campus
11. Adding a new school
12. Receiving exception from Arizona Procurement Laws
13. Changing the program of instruction
14. Closing a school
15. Changing a school's governing body
16. Changing a school's physical address
17. Changing a school's name
18. Increasing or decreasing the grades served at a specific school
19. Receiving exception from the Uniform System of Financial Records for Charter Schools (USFRCS)

### **Ongoing Monitoring**

The ASBCS will provide ongoing monitoring of the school's operations each year, both during the AZCSP grant period, during site-visits (including a first-year site visit to take place in the months following opening) and afterward. They will monitor the school based on its yearly academic, financial, and operational performance. ASBCS receives annual academic results for all schools under the Charter Holder from the Arizona Department of Education (for ongoing academic performance compliance) and an audit reporting package including an independent auditor's report on financial statements, audited financial position, activities and changes in net assets, cash flows, notes to the audited financial statements, and a compliance questionnaire (for use in determining the school's compliance with financial and operational requirements). If a school does not meet the standards, as outlined in following sections, disciplinary action may be taken. ASBCS also provides measures the charter holder must meet for additional expansion (enrollment cap, grades, new site, replication) separate from ongoing requirements.

The AMS charter holder and all associated charter schools and charter holders currently meet all required metrics for additional expansion. On five-year intervals, Charter Holders are required to undergo an Academic Systems Review, which will include checking if all schools under a charter have demonstrated sufficient academic progress, as well as how the school implements its state-standards aligned curriculum, a system for monitoring and acting on student data, and a professional development plan to effectively implement the curriculum, all aligned with the Charter Holder's charter contract and associated new school application.

## Changes to the Frameworks

AMS staff receive regular newsletter updates from the ASBCS and review ASBCS Board meeting minutes on a monthly basis or attend Board meetings. AMS maintains constant communication with the Board in order to ensure consistent compliance, regular feedback, and guidance with insights from the broader Arizona charter community.

The following list details several example changes the Board approved recently that AMS is accountable for:

- Charter holders must notify the board in writing whether it has a contract with an Education Service Provider on an annual basis, including the name of the provider and a detailed description of the services provided
- Each charter school must post an accessible link on its website to the charter's academic, financial, and operational dashboards provided by ASBCS
- A charter holder must report any event that is indicative of financial stress, such as tax liens or default notices, within 10 days of receipt

The Board is also currently proposing a modification to the Academic Eligibility for Expansion Requests in the Board's Academic Performance Framework and guidance in particular, to be considered during the October 15, 2019 meeting. If approved, the Board will<sup>9</sup>:

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<sup>9</sup> Arizona State Board for Charter Schools. "Agenda Item Executive Summary: Proposed Revisions to the Academic Performance Eligibility Criteria for Expansions. July 17, 2019. Accessed via: <https://asbcs.az.gov/sites/default/files/Acad%20Eligibility%20Criteria%20Expansion%20Exec%20Summary%20and%20Portfolio.pdf>

- Determine academic performance eligibility on all expansion requests, based on both a school's letter grade or confirmation the school is not designated for comprehensive support and improvement.
- A charter holder requesting a replication charter or transfer charter is eligible if the school being replicated or transferred to its own charter has an "A" or "B" letter grade in the most recent fiscal year presented on the school's academic dashboard in each of the last two years and if it also complies with the above criteria.

AMSSM was approved by the Board as a replication of the Academy of Math and Science Prince, which meets all the above criteria.

**Quality Controls Agreed to between AMSSM and ASBCS**

Under the current framework revised and adopted by the Board on February 11, 2019, ASBCS will monitor AMSSM's and related schools' academic performance based on one of two potential indicators: (1) Arizona State Board of Education's Letter Grade State Accountability System as well as state designations for school improvement and (2) School Specific Academic Goals (only applying to schools that serve over 70% SPED, ELL, or homeless students). The school improvement measure under indicator 1 takes into account (per the Every Student Succeeds Act and A.R.S. § 15-241.02) proficiency rates, subgroup performance, graduation rates, and other academic indicators. Possible ASBCS overall ratings based on both indicators for traditional schools are as follows:

- A – Exceeds Standard
- B – Above Standard

- C – Meets Standard
- D – Does Not Meet Standard
- F – Falls Far Below Standard

### **Important Factors for Renewal or Revocation of a Charter Agreement**

The ASBCS treats the achievement of students at AMSSM as “one of the most important factors for renewal or revocation” (ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303 (f)(1)(C)(i)(II)). If AMSSM does not earn at least a “Meets Standards” rating for three or more years, they will be deemed “not to have made sufficient progress” toward academic goals and will be flagged for further evaluation by the board, a regulation that applies to all charter schools. Specifically, within the Academic Performance Framework, Findings for Demonstration of Sufficient Progress will be provided to the Board:<sup>10</sup>

- If a charter school operated by the charter holder has failed to meet the Board’s performance standard for three consecutive years
- During five-year interval reviews
- When considering a charter contract renewal request submitted by the charter holder
- Upon receipt of information that a charter school operated by the charter holder has been assigned a letter grade of “F” by the Department of Education

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<sup>10</sup> Arizona State Board for Charter Schools. “Academic Performance Framework and Guidance.” As revised on February 11, 2019. Accessed via: <https://asbcs.az.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/Academic%20Guidance%20Document%20Approved%20Revised%202.2019.pdf>

- When considering disciplinary action against a charter holder that has breached one or more provisions of its charter contract or is in violation of state or federal law
- At other times, as determined by Board, if academic performance may affect ability of school to meet its charter contract or provisions of law or financial or operational performance requirements.

### **Financial Performance Framework Quality Controls**

AMSSM will be evaluated in conjunction with all other schools under the AMSS Inc. charter using the charter holder’s audit reporting package prepared by the schools’ auditors. Under the current framework approved on December 10, 2018 and the administrative rules approved on July 8, 2019, ASBCS will monitor the following financial measures (defined by their highest rating in each category—Meets Standard)<sup>11</sup>:

- *Going Concern*: No substantial doubt about the charter holder’s ability to continue is raised in the Independent Auditor’s Report or the notes to the audited financial statements.
- *Default*: Charter holder is not in default on material loans or facility agreements or both.
- *Unrestricted Days Liquidity*: 30 or more days liquidity.
- *Adjusted Net Income*: Adjusted net income is greater than or equal to \$1.

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<sup>11</sup> Arizona State Board for Charter Schools. “Financial Performance Framework.” July 8, 2019. Accessed via: <https://asbcs.az.gov/sites/default/files/FPF%20Measures%20and%20Summative%20Ratings%20Guide%20for%20Posting%20FINAL.pdf>

- *Lease Adjusted Debt Service Coverage Ratio:* lease adjusted debt service coverage ratio exceeds 1.10.
- *Average Daily Membership:* Charter holder has increase OR Charter holder has decrease of *Small: 4.99% or less, Medium: 4.99% or less, Large: 2.99% or less.*

A charter holder is determined to meet the overall financial standard for the current year if it meets the standards above. A charter holder will be designated as meeting or not meeting the Board's Financial Performance Expectations based on a Summative Financial Performance Rating as follows:

- *Good Standing:* No measures rated "Below Standard" and no more than one measure rated "Approaches Standard." A charter holder with a rating of "Good Standing" meets the Board's financial performance expectations.
- *Adequate Standing:* No measures rated "Below Standard" and two or more measures rated "Approaches Standard." A charter holder with a rating of "Adequate Standing" meets the Board's financial performance expectations.
- *Intervention:* One or more measures rated "Below Standard" or three consecutive years in "Adequate Standing." A charter holder with a rating of "Intervention" must submit information to the Board regarding the charter holder's financial performance.

*Demonstrating Compliance with the Board's Financial Performance Expectations*

Not meeting one performance standard may require follow-up depending on performance on other indicators, as determined by Board. AMSS, Inc's financial performance will be considered by the Board at the following times:

- When considering a charter contract renewal request submitted by the charter holder
- During five-year interval review
- Upon receipt of information that a charter school operated by the charter holder has been assigned a letter grade of "F" under the state accountability system
- If a charter school operated by a charter holder has failed to meet the Board's academic performance standard for three consecutive years
- Addition of a new school that is currently not in operation under an existing charter contract
- Increase in the number of students the charter holder may serve at its school(s)
- Addition of or change to an Arizona Online Instruction program of instruction
- Increase in the grade levels the charter holder is approved to serve
- Replication of an existing charter
- Transfer of a charter school from an existing charter contract to its own charter contract held by a charter holder with a different name than the existing charter holder

- Transfer of a charter school or charter contract from the current charter holder to an existing charter holder with a different dashboard
- Transfer of the charter contract from another sponsor to the Board
- When the Board makes decisions related to a charter holder’s academic performance, a charter holder’s compliance with its charter and state and federal laws, or when a new charter application package is submitted by an officer, director, partner, member or charter representative of the charter holder.”<sup>12</sup>

If a charter holder meets the Board’s financial performance expectations, they are waived from submitting financial information per the above. If not, schools must submit a financial performance response as specified in the ASBCS approved guidance document, which includes explanations for: why measure targets were not met, what has been done to fix this for the following years, and proof to support the first two responses.

**Operational Performance Framework Quality Controls**

The Arizona State Board for Charter Schools also provides operational performance oversight based on the following quality controls<sup>13</sup>:

- The school’s delivery of the education program and operation must reflect the essential terms of the education program described in the charter contract.

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<sup>12</sup> Arizona State Board for Charter Schools. “Financial Performance Framework and Guidance.” As revised on October 10, 2017. *Note: The most recent guidance revised by the Board on July 8, 2019 does not include a list of this type, so the charter operator refers to the most recently available list when anticipating financial review:*

[https://charterschoolcenter.ed.gov/sites/default/files/files/field\\_publication\\_attachment/Financial%20Guidance%20Document%20Approved%2010-2017.pdf](https://charterschoolcenter.ed.gov/sites/default/files/files/field_publication_attachment/Financial%20Guidance%20Document%20Approved%2010-2017.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Arizona State Board for Charter Schools. “Operational Performance Framework.” Accessed via: [https://asbcs.az.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/Operational%20Guidance%20Document%20Revised%2010.15.18\\_FINAL.pdf](https://asbcs.az.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/Operational%20Guidance%20Document%20Revised%2010.15.18_FINAL.pdf)

- The school must adhere to applicable education requirements defined in state and federal law.
- The school's annual audit reporting package must reflect sound operations.
- The school must administer student admission and attendance appropriately.
- The school must maintain a safe environment consistent with state and local requirements.
- The school must be transparent in its operations.
- The school must comply with its obligations to the Board.
- The school must comply with the reporting requirements of all other entities to which the charter holder is accountable.
- The charter holder must comply with all other obligations.

Each charter holder is provided one of three ratings in each of the above operational measures<sup>14</sup>:

- *Meets Standard*: Achieved when the charter holder demonstrates compliance with all metrics in the measure.
- *Does Not Meet Standard*: The charter holder has failed to comply in the manner described in "Meets Standard" expectations, the failures were material, and the charter holder has demonstrated remedies that have resulted in compliance or prompt and sufficient movement toward compliance to the satisfaction of the Board.

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

- *Falls Far Below Standard:* The charter holder failed to comply in the manner described in “Meets Standards” expectations, the failures were material, and the charter holder has not demonstrated remedies that have resulted in compliance, or the charter holder has failed to comply regardless of whether or not the charter holder demonstrated sufficient movement toward compliance. Failure(s) were material or significant to the operation of the school(s).

The Board will consider a charter holder’s operational performance throughout the term of the charter contract and in the circumstances described in the financial performance review section as above. A charter holder “Meets the Board’s Operational Performance Standard” if it receives zero “Falls Far Below Standard” ratings and no more than five “Does not Meet Standard” ratings across the entire framework. As of the latest Board review of AMSS, Inc. in 2019, the charter holder and all schools under its operation meet standards in all measures.

**Reservation of the Right to Revoke or Not Renew a Charter**

Per ARS-15 183(i)(3), the ASBCS retains the right to revoke a charter holder’s charter based on a school’s failure to maintain any quality control requirements under operational performance or financial performance.

**Assurance (Signed by the LEA Authorized Representative).**

- a) The applicant will make following information publicly available, consistently with the dissemination requirements of the annual State report card, including on the website of the school, information to help parents make informed decisions about the education options available to their children, including –
  - i. Information on the educational program;
  - ii. Student support services;
  - iii. Parent contract requirements (as applicable), including any financial obligations or fees;
  - iv. Enrollment criteria (as applicable); and
  - v. Annual performance and enrollment data for each of the subgroups of students, except that such disaggregation of performance and enrollment data shall not be required in a case in which the number of students in a group is insufficient to yield statistically reliable information or the results would reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303 (f)(2)(G)*
- b) The applicant will annually provide AZCSP such information as may be required to determine if the charter school is making satisfactory progress toward achieving the objectives.
- c) The applicant will obtain technical assistance provided by AZCSP to meet the proposed objectives. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303 (f)(2)(D)*
- d) The applicant will cooperate with AZCSP in evaluating the program assisted under this subpart.
- e) Such other information and assurances as AZCSP may require.
- f) The applicant will comply with the State's open meetings and open records laws. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303(f)(1)(F)*.
- g) The applicant shall ensure that a student's records and, if applicable, a student's individualized education program as defined in IDEA, are transferred to a charter school upon the transfer of the student to the charter school, and to another public school upon the transfer of the student from a charter school to another public school, in accordance with applicable State law. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4308*.
- h) The applicant will use financial management systems, including records documenting compliance with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award, that are sufficient to permit the preparation of reports required by general and program-specific terms and conditions; and the tracing of funds to a level of expenditures adequate to establish that such funds have been used according to the Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award. *2 CFR §200.302&303*

Tatyana Chayka

Authorized Agent

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LEA Authorized Representative

Title

*Tatyana Chayka*

10/6/2019

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**eSignature** of LEA Authorized  
Representative

Date

Academy of Mathematics and Science South,  
Inc.

10/6/2019

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Applicant Organization

Date Submitted

- **Abstract - Non-Scoring Section.** (Max 300 words)

The abstract narrative should include objectives, expected outcomes, and impacts.

AMSSM's objective is to provide all students a high-quality STEAM-based education that will produce multi-lingual, global thinkers ready to successfully enter and graduate from high quality high schools, colleges, and/or trade schools of their choice.

In support of this ultimate objective, AMSSM's interim objectives include:

- To outperform 90% of nearby schools yearly on growth and ultimately for all AMS students to be proficient on all state assessments
- To provide effective support and remediation for all students who begin the program below grade-level, so they progress to grade-level and higher proficiency within two academic years.
- To provide a well-rounded education that includes core subject rigor in language arts, advanced science and math, and strongly emphasizes good character, STEM, fine arts, and athletics.

AMSSM will continually and rigorously track and measure the progress and efficacy of its programs using multiple methods of assessment to ensure that all objectives are being met.

The expected outcome of these objectives is to produce students with an unshakable base of character and knowledge. AMSSM students shall graduate from the school as confident, capable, resilient, and career and college ready students who carry an excitement for knowledge and the confidence to use it. The long-term impact of providing students with this type of strong foundation will be an emergence of students

that grow into multi-lingual, global-thinking, high-school graduates who are college and career ready and prepared for success. These students will further grow into citizens who hold sought-after college degrees; valuable vocational expertise; and who nurture, enrich, and lead their communities.

- **Preference Points - Not Required -- Total points possible: 5 points added to the total score**

A description of how the applicant will increase high school student academic achievement and graduation by participating in dual or concurrent enrollment programs or early college high schools.

AMSSM will only serve grades kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, however, AMSSM will ultimately offer Algebra 1 and Algebra II for 8th grade middle school students. These students will then be able to enter high school with high school level math credits, giving them the opportunity to take dual enrollment classes or college classes instead of Algebra I or II. AMS schools are currently offering Algebra I to at least one class at all campuses in operation.

- **Charter Entity Founders – Total points possible: 40 points**

1. Provide a clear and concise mission statement aligned with the needs of educationally disadvantaged students - **Non-Scoring Section.** (Max 75 words)

**Mission**

Through a well-rounded education, we transform today's students into tomorrow's global visionaries. Regardless of a student's background, the AMS program ensures that students:

- With academic deficits receive intervention to achieve grade level and above proficiency.
- Receive a well-rounded STEAM education supplemented with extracurriculars.
- Receive continuous support for their emotional and physical well-being.
- Develop an interest in STEM fields and go on to attend high-performing high schools and vocational schools or Universities of their choice.

2. Describe the background of the applicant's founders/leaders and their past experience to support the successful planning and implementation of the school. *2 CFR §200.205 Non-Scoring Section.*

**Successful Planning and Implementation of AMSSM**

The AMSSM Governing Board, AMSSM planning Principal, and AMS CMO have completed numerous critical planning activities for AMSSM. Their enthusiasm and excitement for bringing the AMS program to the South Mountain area has been well received by the community. Through their hard work and dedication, AMSSM will open in July of 2020 to serve 832 students of all backgrounds ready for a rigorous STEAM education that prepares them for a promising future. The biographies of these dedicated charter professionals are included below:

Tatyana Chayka, AMS CMO, Co-CEO, Academics

*Summary Biography*

Ms. Tatyana Chayka leads the AMS network academic department on the research and implementation of impactful, relevant, and quality educational programs that transform students in at-risk communities into tomorrow's global visionaries.

AMS's program, which includes advanced science and math classes, computer science, art history and methodology, advanced English language arts classes, foreign language, and athletics, has helped many low-income students discover their passion and potential.

As the founder of the AMS school network, she has more than 27 years of education and administrative experience in both secondary and post-secondary education. In 2000, She founded AMS Prince (AMSP) in Tucson, Arizona. Her vision was to create a school which offered a superior education in mathematics and science to at-risk and under-served students who are traditionally denied the opportunity of a quality education.

Ms. Chayka has conducted research regarding student achievement which has been published by Richard Schmuck in "Practical Action Research." She has presented on grant funding at the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools Annual Conference and served as a mentor teacher for the University of Phoenix. Ms. Chayka graduated with a Master of Science in Mathematics with a focus on Secondary Education from the University of Pedagogy in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, and a Master of Educational

Administration and Supervision with a focus in Business from Arizona State University's Leadership for Educational Entrepreneur's program.

### Her Story

The Academies of Math and Science, an evolving Arizona-based charter network, started with a passion from across the world. Born and raised in Tashkent, Uzbekistan (formerly part of the USSR), Ms. Chayka earned her master's in mathematics and began her teaching career in Uzbekistan. However, as the former Soviet country became unstable, she saw a better future for her son and family in the United States of America. She and her family emigrated to the U.S. under the refugee resettlement program. Ms. Chayka applied to teach at many schools in Tucson, Arizona, but as a non-English speaker, she was unable to secure a position. Still, Ms. Chayka remained steadfast and began her pursuit of the American dream as part of the janitorial staff at a local church's preschool program.

She worked hard for several years, taking on additional roles that required little experience to bolster her growing command of the English language. Eventually, she landed a job teaching computer science and mathematics courses at Pima Community College. Later, she was hired at Alice Vail Middle School, and finally, by BASIS Charter Schools in 1999, a local charter organization that would go on to achieve remarkable success on its own accord.

At BASIS, Ms. Chayka served as the head of the mathematics department where she was able to provide a high-quality education to a diverse but primarily middle-class population. Though high-quality public schools were rare at that time in any community

in Tucson, Ms. Chayka noticed there was not a single school operating in low-income areas of Tucson that provided students a well-balanced and intellectually rigorous education designed for success in high school, college, and beyond. As her own story mirrored the experience of Tucson's low-income families, Ms. Chayka took her strong background in pedagogy and curriculum and submitted a charter application under a small district. In 2000, Ms. Chayka was granted a charter to operate her first school, the Academy of Math and Science Prince (originally called Math and Science Achievement Academy).

The school's mission was to integrate music, performance arts, and critical thinking into an accelerated program that emphasized liberal arts, math, and science with a 100% college-prep focus in an underprivileged community. The school opened on day one with a registrar, a handful of teachers, and 30 students, one of which was her son, Kim, who is now the Co-CEO of Operations and Growth and has been a member of the organizational leadership team since 2010. Within five years, Tatyana's flagship school grew to 270 students, and the small low-income community on Prince Road began to build a culture that celebrated the academic and future success of the neighborhood's kids. As such, the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools encouraged the replication of the school in South Tucson, which contained the lowest-performing schools. Ms. Chayka seized the opportunity to serve more students and families in need and began growing the single school operation into a network. In 2007, she founded the Math and Science Success Academy (MASSA), with support from key leadership at the

Raza Development Fund and founding school principal Adriana Rodriguez, who would later become the AMS Network's Superintendent.

Nearly twenty years later, Ms. Chayka's work has led to amazing academic results for 6000 students in seven low-income communities across Arizona. With the same passion as Ms. Chayka had for her first 30 students, the Academies of Math and Science continues to produce exceptional results for thousands of students. The network has been recognized as one of the highest performing charter school networks in the state serving low income populations. AMS Prince has since been recognized as a 2008 National Blue Ribbon School, an A rated school almost every year (excluding 1) since the Arizona Department of Education implemented letter grades, 2016 Charter School of the Year, a Title I High Performing Reward School, and a High Flyer in Special Education. In 2016, with the promotion of Kim Chayka to Co-CEO of Operations and Growth, Tatyana's role has evolved into overseeing the academic program of the network and studying and implementing the best practices of other networks around the country.

*Kim Chayka, Co-CEO, AMS CMO, Operations, Member - AMS Phoenix Campuses*

*Governing Board*

*Summary Biography*

Mr. Kim Chayka leads the AMS Network's operations and growth, overseeing all ancillary functions that support the critical tasks of AMS's educational program. He is currently in his 9th year with the network. Mr. Chayka is a published author with contributions ranging from newspapers, education blogs, and the Journal of School

Choice. In 2016, he received the Hammer Award from the Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry's President Glenn Hammer. The following year he received the Volunteer of the Year award from the Arizona Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with other school leaders for the work advancing pro-quality school policy and legislation in conjunction with A for Arizona. He has presented several times at the Arizona Charter School Association's Annual Conference on topics including replication and scaling, facilities development and academics, and he has led presentations at other conferences, including A for Arizona's Annual Conference and the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools' Annual Conference.

He graduated Magna Cum Laude from the Eller College of Management at The University of Arizona, majoring in Business Economics with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. Mr. Chayka is a New Schools for Phoenix Fellow, a program developed out of an Arizona Charter School Association initiative.

#### *His Story*

As a first-generation immigrant and son of AMS Founder Tatyana Chayka, Mr. Chayka developed a latent passion for education in his youth. Although his family had no assets nor wealth and spoke limited English when they arrived in the U.S., they instilled within him a belief in the American dream and that education and hard work were the path toward realizing that dream. He began his post-college career working in finance, but soon discovered that the field did not satisfy his drive to make a difference in his community. He began to search for a fulfilling career that would give him the opportunity to make his community and the world a better place.

He decided to take a temporary position at AMS while searching for a new career path. He hired and trained a replacement for himself, thinking that he may have found another path. However, as he learned more about the educational gap in many neighborhoods in Arizona and saw how AMS could make a greater difference for more students, he knew he had found a place to work where he could make the greatest contribution. All doubts of his future in education vanished when Mr. Chayka ran into a former AMS special education student that he used to tutor. He was in college (and has since graduated) and credited AMS, its program, and its teachers for providing him with the support and tools he needed to succeed in college. Mr. Chayka has heard this story from many AMS graduates. The student later told Mr. Chayka that he was beginning a career as a social studies teacher, making his commitment to AMS even stronger.

*Working Together, Their Story Continues*

By 2012, Tucson and Phoenix experienced a proliferation of several high performing charter networks including Sonoran Science, Great Hearts, and BASIS, but no large network was directly targeting at-risk neighborhoods for K-8 education. For this reason, Mr. and Ms. Chayka and the network's leadership team developed an expansion plan and were granted another charter. As the AMS team analyzed communities throughout Arizona, it became clear that Phoenix was a clear choice to truly follow the mission of the organization and reach the organization's vision of impact at scale.

Around the same time, the Charter School Growth Fund (CSGF) became interested in AMS because of its academic results. Working in conjunction with CSGF, a very supportive Board, and various educational consultants, including most notably Jim Ford,

Mr. and Ms. Chayka crafted a new growth plan tailored to rapid expansion in Phoenix. Together, they founded AMS's first campus in Phoenix, founded in 2013, the Academy of Math and Science South. The Academy of Math and Science South (now known as Academy of Math and Science Flower) is now in its fifth year of operation and is one of only a few B-rated schools in its area. This campus was the proof point for AMS leadership and the Board that AMS could rapidly expand and provide a high-quality education as a multi-market charter school network.

Five years after founding the AMSS school, the AMS leadership team had expanded from serving 130 students in Phoenix and 900 students network wide, to now serving 3500 students in Phoenix and 6000 network wide. District-wide, on AzMERIT and growth scores in 17-18, the AMS network outperformed approximately 93% of schools in their respective areas.

Mr. Chayka's belief is that the world of the future will be powered by well-rounded scholars with high character, and that's why he is committed to implementing AMS's mission at scale.

*Adriana Rodriguez, Superintendent*

Ms. Rodriguez is the AMS Network's Superintendent, has been with the AMS network for 13 years, and is responsible for the development and oversight of all AMS school principals. Adriana Rodriguez graduated with a Master of Educational Leadership degree from Northern Arizona University and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Whittier College. She holds various certifications in primary grade content areas and structured English immersion. She has been a teacher and administrator for 16 years

and is in her fourteenth year with the AMS network. She has led a session on grant funding at the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools Annual Conference in Washington, D.C.

Adriana Rodriguez's dedication to AMS students began when she was hired as a kindergarten teacher for AMS Prince, the network's flagship school. Tatyana Chayka, the founder of AMS, quickly recognized Adriana's dedication and promoted her to lead teacher. Recognizing her belief in the AMS mission and vision, she was promoted to Principal of the AMS network's second school, the Math and Science Success Academy (MASSA) founded in 2007.

As Founding Principal of MASSA, Ms. Rodriguez is a stalwart proponent of the AMS educational STEAM program, a program that prepares all students for their future, be it a university, vocational school, the military, or the workforce.

Since MASSA's inception under Adriana's leadership, MASSA has consistently maintained an A or B state academic rating and has consistently been the highest or second highest performing school by AzMERIT scores in its neighborhood. MASSA was also recently recognized by the Education Equality Index, an award given to few schools in Tucson for closing the achievement gap.

Ms. Rodriguez's keen understanding of all the facets of opening a new school, from enrollment to marketing, hiring, construction, curriculum, and establishing school procedures from the ground up, qualifies her with unique experience and a skillset to oversee and coach new AMS Principals opening new AMS schools.

Charles Woods, Planning Principal

Mr. Charles Woods serves as the Planning Principal for the Academy of Math and Science South Mountain. Mr. Woods graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Physical Education and holds a Master of Arts in Curriculum & Instruction, a Master of Arts in Educational Leadership & Supervision, and is a Certified School Safety Specialist. Mr. Woods firmly believes in the AMS mission to transform today's scholars into tomorrow's global visionaries. Mr. Woods is excited to become a part of the AMS community and build a neighborhood of supportive parents, staff, and community members that all strive to help students to achieve their potential.

Mr. Woods joins the AMS Network with 15 years of teaching and administrative experience with a data-proven track record of student success, staff development, and educational program implementation. Mr. Woods has served as a Principal, Dean of Students, and a Physical Education Teacher. As Dean of Students at Eastridge Elementary, Mr. Woods significantly reduced the number of discipline referrals leading to an increase in student Math and ELA passing rates from 55% to 65% in a single year. As Principal of Brookview Elementary, Mr. Woods was able to remove the school from the State watch list and earned recognition in the state's "Most Promising Practices" publication for climate and culture. Under his leadership, Mr. Woods helped both schools turnaround their achievement and outcomes, improving from a D to a B on the State's Accountability Rating.

Mr. Woods also brings extensive knowledge to South Mountain pertaining to best practices for zero-tolerance bullying, safety concepts in facility development, gang

intervention, non-violent crisis intervention methods, and trauma-informed practices.

He has received awards as the Teacher of the Year at Moorhead Elementary, an Outstanding Educator Award from the State of Indiana, and an Open Door Award from the American Heart Association.

Mr. Woods is thrilled to join the AMS community at AMS South Mountain. He is confident that his uncompromising belief that ALL students can learn, grow, and exceed their own expectations will establish a nurturing student-first community.

*Steven Hykes, Chief Financial Officer*

Mr. Hykes graduated with a Bachelor of Science from the University of Akron with a minor in Economics. He began his career in public accounting working in the fields of audit, tax and mergers and acquisitions for both Deloitte and PricewaterhouseCoopers. Mr. Hykes received his Certified Public Accounting license from the state in April 2015. He has a diverse background in both educational and nonprofit work, including a range of volunteer involvement. Prior to joining AMS in 2016, Mr. Hykes was Chief Financial Officer for United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona and previously worked under the CFO for TUSD.

Prior to joining AMS, Mr. Hykes served as United Way's CFO where he learned about the importance of early intervention closing the achievement gap through Arizona's First Things First program. He believes that many of society's toughest challenges can be overcome by giving every person equal access to a high-quality education and encouraging parent involvement at every step along the way. Most

importantly, he believes that a high-quality education should be free. He believes that quality schools like AMS must be located within walking distance of families and students that struggle the most. As the son of educators, he knows firsthand that education needs to be well-rounded, available for all, and designed with success beyond the classroom in mind.

Through Mr. Hykes's leadership, AMS was the first school in Arizona to issue a bond under the Arizona Credit Enhancement Program.

*Ettor Strada, Director of Special Education (SPED)*

Ettor Strada graduated Cum Laude from Tarleton State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Interdisciplinary Studies with an emphasis in Special Education. He is in his ninth year with the network. Mr. Strada served 14 years of active duty in the U.S. Army as an Infantry squad leader and Battalion Mortar Chief Computer, leadership instructor, division communication instructor, and net control station supervisor. He participated in Operation Desert Shield and combat operations in Operation Desert Storm. Prior to joining the network, he worked as a Special Education Teacher at local public schools and was an Upward Bound Instructor at Pima Community College.

Ettor Strada has been employed with the AMS network since 2009 when he started as a special education teacher at AMS Prince (AMSP). Mr. Strada has become the leader of his department serving over all AMS campuses as well as overseeing the Phoenix Regional SPED Coordinator, who works together with Mr. Strada to oversee all SPED staff. Under his leadership, AMS was recognized by the Arizona Department of

Education with a “High Flyer District of Merit” award based on the high academic progress of students with disabilities on state achievement results over a three-year period. As Co-Principal of AMS Prince, the campus received the 2016 Arizona Charter School of the Year award. Mr. Strada firmly believes that a parent’s socioeconomic and disability status should never prevent a child from receiving the same academic opportunities available to students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds.

*Steven Garbade, President, AMSSM Governing Board*

Steven Garbade has served, as President, on all Phoenix Governing Boards for the last five years. Steven Garbade is an experienced executive in the field of Information Technology with an extensive background supporting educational institutions, SMBs and large corporations. Steven holds a Master of Science in Computer Information Systems from the University of Phoenix, and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Rhode Island. He is currently the VP of IT for Manifest, a full-service marketing agency. Steven volunteers on the Governing Board with a firm dedication to helping underserved neighborhoods in need of quality educational programs. Working with AMS allows Steven to give back to the local communities by providing a superior educational alternative for students. Mr. Garbade has stated that volunteering at AMS has been one of the most meaningful things he has done in his professional career.

*Holly Marcus, Member, AMSSM Governing Board*

Mrs. Marcus was a founding Governing Board member for AMS Flower, the AMS network’s first campus in Phoenix and has served on all school Governing Boards since

2012. Holly Marcus is a licensed real estate agent with HomeSmart. Holly Marcus holds a Bachelor of Business Administration with a major in marketing from Drake University. She has nearly 20 years of experience across a number of fields in roles including a licensed real estate agent, talent recruitment professional, and manager accumulated at various companies such as Monster (a leading global online career company), Insight Enterprises (a technology solution providing specializing in networking), and within the manufactured home industry. She has served in several volunteer roles including on the Arizona Society of Human Resource Management (AZ SHRM) and on the fundraising committee of an organization dedicated to breast cancer awareness. Ms. Marcus is passionate about serving on the AMS Governing Board Phoenix Campuses because of their mission to serve students in at-risk communities. She most connects to their pursuit of excellence in educating well-rounded global citizens with a STEAM-focused education, and ensuring young citizens have relevant skill sets to be workforce ready.

*Robert Avalos, Member, AMSSM Governing Board*

Mr. Avalos has been a Board member with AMS for over three years. Robert Avalos is a commercial banker at Arizona Bank and Trust focused on middle market, non-profit, and real estate lending. He holds a Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance from New Mexico State University and has volunteer experience working in non-profits in various capacities including as a board member.

For Robert, being on the AMSSM Governing Board has personal significance. In his own words:

“The mission of AMS holds a special place in my heart. I identify strongly with many of the students in AMS schools as we have similar backgrounds and culture. Historically, many of these children often get overlooked and ultimately fall through the cracks. AMS provides these children not only opportunities, but substantially better opportunities they otherwise wouldn’t have. It is my honor to play a small role in this dynamic movement that will ultimately transform our communities.”

*Victoria Mnatsakanova, AMSSM Board Member*

Victoria Mnatsakanova was a founding teacher at AMS Flower and has been an educator with AMS for six years, having taught at three AMS campuses. Ms.

Mnatsakanova received her first degree in second language acquisition with majors in both German and English. Her second degree, a Masters in Slavic Languages, was completed at Missouri University. Her experience at MU and various other language teaching programs led her to her current position with AMS. She hopes to grow and develop the AMS foreign language program in support of her belief that foreign language acquisition is as important as music or art to the future success of her students.

In her own words: “AMS serves areas that are in the most need of highly educated, passionate professionals. Becoming a board member became a great opportunity for me to provide even more input and give more to my students, my school, and my community.”

*Dr. Jeffrey Turney, Member, AMSSM Governing Board*

Dr. Turney is currently a Police Sargent with the City of Glendale and is an experienced law enforcement and security expert with over 40 years of experience. He holds a Bachelor in Workforce Education and Development from Southern Illinois University, a Master in Public Administration and a Master in Business and Organizational Security Management from Webster University, and a PhD in Public Service Leadership, specializing in Public Safety Leadership.

Dr. Turney has served the City of Glendale Police Department in a variety of roles including as a patrol officer, domestic violence detective, patrol supervisor, and a member of the Critical Incident Stress Management Team. Dr. Turney as also serves as the Chairman of the Board for Glendale's Chamber of Commerce, Military and Veteran's Advisory Committee and sits on the Chamber of Commerce's Executive Board. Additionally, Dr. Turney was an adjunct professor at Aspen University where he taught criminal justice at a Bachelor and Master level.

*Anthony Lehn, Member, AMSSM Governing Board*

Anthony Lehn is an experienced firefighter, community program director, and facilities professional. He serves his community in Glendale and Peoria, Arizona as Senior Program Director for the Glendale/Peoria Family YMCA where he oversees efforts to bolster the community's recreation programs and extracurricular participation. Anthony graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Fire Administration from Arizona State University and is a certified Emergency Medical Technician. He also has over 30 years' experience working with youth coaching wrestling, football, track and

field, swimming, basketball, softball and soccer, and has served as an instructor for a variety of certification courses including CPR/AED, babysitting, lifeguarding, and first aid. Anthony believes kindness, honesty, respect and responsibility are the core values that make a key difference in a child’s life, especially as they move through adolescence into adulthood. He sees those values reflected throughout the AMS school environment, and he firmly believes that holding students to high expectations will provide the best opportunities for those students to advance to a quality secondary and post-secondary education.

3. Participate in a Capacity Interview<sup>15</sup> to be scheduled by AZCSP. **(15 points)**
4. Using the most recent data available, select the appropriate table below to enter the percentage of disadvantaged students in a previous school or classroom managed by the applicant that passed the state assessment. (Choose one table and only one table). *2 CFR §200.331 (b)(1)* **(15 Points)**

Table 1

Academic Year	State	School Name	Position	State Assessment used	% of disadvantaged students passing	
					Math	Reading
2018-2019	AZ	Academy of Math & Science Prince	Tatyana Chayka, Co- CEO	AZMERIT	<b>64.98%</b>	<b>59.72%</b>

AMSSM was approved as a second school site of Academy of Math and Science Prince (AMSP). The information provided in Table 1 is the average AZMERIT state assessment results for economically disadvantaged students as reported by the Arizona Department of Education in all grades that participate in AzMERIT standardized testing

<sup>15</sup> A standardized interview conducted to gauge the applicant’s actual or potential ability to perform.

(3-8). The table below includes the AzMERIT Mathematics, Reading, and the AIMS Science passing rates specifically for economically disadvantaged students in Grades 4 and 8 at AMSP.

<b>Academy of Math and Science Prince and State of Arizona Percentage of Economically Disadvantaged Students Passing AZMERIT &amp; AIMS (Science)</b>				
Entity	AMS	AZ	AMS	AZ
Grade	4	4	8	8
Math	<b>79.1%</b>	35.0%	<b>85.7%</b>	48.0%
Reading	<b>82.6%</b>	34.0%	<b>75.0%</b>	26.0%
Science	<b>92.5%</b>	59.0%	<b>90.3%</b>	56.0%

Given AMS’s STEM program focus, the data in the above table is a key piece of AMS program analysis as 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade results include the state issued AIMS Science test, represent a clear picture of AMS’s elementary and middle school programs (some 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes at AMSP accelerate into Middle School classes), and 4<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> are the two grades used in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) produced by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

Additionally, data from AMS’s 8<sup>th</sup> grade class is key for two reasons: (1) the research around student achievement in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and dropout risk and (2) this is the year in which students receive the full benefit of multiple years of the AMS program. Taken as a single school, the AMS Network of schools outperformed 93% of all K-8 schools in Arizona with comparable FRL population percentages (schools with greater than 80% FRL, based on the most recent publicly available data). For the same year (17-

18 AzMERIT) AMSP students specifically outperformed 99.68% of all schools in Arizona with comparable FRL (65%+), ranking 3 out of 634 schools.

Some magnet high-performing high schools look at the results of 8th grade students' performance on state testing as part of their criteria for accepting students into competitive programs. 8<sup>th</sup> grade is often the grade that determines the rest of the coursework that will be taken in high school and whether a student will go on to an honors or AP track, advanced programs, or be enrolled in at-grade level or remedial courses. The success of Prince's AMS programs have led to a 93% acceptance rate for students that apply to University High School in Tucson, Arizona, one of the top-rated high schools in the Country. AMS has similar success stories at all campuses, with many students going on to attend and graduate from high school and attend the college or vocational school of their choice.

5. Define the geographical and demographic community the charter school will serve; provide the supporting data on how the applicant would address the needs of the defined community; name community partners and how they will assist the planning and implementation of the school. **(10 points)**

AMSSM has conducted extensive research into the area that the school will serve to identify community demand and need for the AMS program, identify unique demographic challenges, and best prepare a school that will meet and exceed the expectations of families and community members. By establishing strong partnerships with the surrounding community and by providing the proven Academies of Math and Science program, AMSSM will address local demographic challenges and academic needs of the community in a

concerted effort to begin transforming the community from the bottom up by providing students a path to high school, college, and career prosperity.

**Distinctive Characteristics of the Targeted Community**

Area Demographics - Economic

The data below was developed using the 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. The same data sets were used for the rest of the tables in this “Area Demographics” section.

AMSSM Economic and Demographic Data	Median Household income	% Unemployment Rate	% Below Poverty Level	% Female Householder with a child under 18	% Population Commuting Via Public Transportation
AMSM 1.5 Miles Radius	\$ 43,469.49	6.46%	26.78%	24.75%	4.56%
Maricopa County	\$ 66,386.00	6.80%	12.10%	7.30%	2.30%
Arizona	\$ 61,001.00	8.00%	12.90%	7.10%	2.00%
United States	\$ 67,871.00	7.40%	12.10%	7.20%	5.10%

AMSSM’s population contains a range of concerning and challenging patterns. Although this population has a slightly lower than average unemployment rate, the area faces a significantly higher percentage of the population below poverty level, a larger single female population with children, and a much lower median household income. Usually, a population with a lower or average unemployment rate will coincide with a higher median income, however, because of the higher percentage of single working adult households, lower educational attainment in this area, and lower income jobs available without a high

school degree, the median household income is significantly below all averages. The percentage of the population below the poverty level may also indicate that households are large or have many children (which is supported by 2010 Census data, the latest available data for household size, showing there are 3.57 members per household versus 2.63 for the state of Arizona, and 2.67 for Maricopa County) indicating that families may require additional supports to work multiple jobs or increased hours to support themselves. The area is also young with a median population age of 28.1, compared with approximately 36 for Maricopa County according to 2017 Arizona Community Survey Data. AMSSM will specifically offer family supports such as an extended school year calendar, an extended school day, extended intervention programs, and free before and after school care to high need parents.

#### *Race Demographics*

In addition to the challenges faced by communities with economic struggles, there are often educational obstacles for Hispanic families who speak Spanish at home and have limited English skills. Based on the demographic data below from the 2013-2017 American Community Survey tracts, AMSSM will serve a population that is 70.17% Hispanic with 49.22% of families speaking a language other than English at home. With a significantly higher Hispanic and non-English speaking (in the home) population compared to Maricopa, Arizona, and U.S. averages, AMSSM will face challenges related to school accessibility.

AMS is familiar with serving similar populations with success. Existing AMS schools have made significant strides accommodating the needs of families with limited English skills by employing translators at all events, translating materials for parents, and employing a staff that speaks Spanish. AMSSM will operate ELL family engagement programs that offer parents

the opportunity and resources to learn English. For example, AMS Flower, a network school serving a similar population, has a program for parents each week that offers Rosetta Stone licenses, headsets, and teacher-led supplemental instruction in a computer lab. AMS Flower offered 60 hours of small group instruction to families in FY19.

Explicit phonics and comprehension instruction and intervention, especially since there may be minimal exposure to English in the household, will be crucial to the success of these families. The Open Court reading program that AMS uses is specifically designed for at-risk and ELL learners and additionally, the Corrective Reading, REWARDS, and Phonics for Reading programs in place for all struggling learners are based on design principles which work for all struggling learners including those with limited English skills.

AMSMM Household Data	<i>% of Households that Speak a Language other than English</i>	<i>% Hispanic</i>
AMSM 1.5 Miles Radius	49.22%	70.17%
Maricopa County	26.40%	30.30%
Arizona	24.90%	30.50%
United States	21.10%	17.30%

Educational Attainment Demographics

AMSSM Educational Statistics	<i>% of Population with less than a High School Diploma</i>	<i>% Bachelor's Degree or Higher</i>
AMSM 1.5 Miles Radius	31.31%	9.31%
Maricopa County	13.10%	13.10%
Arizona	13.80%	13.80%
United States	10.70%	10.70%

The community's lack of higher education degrees combined with 31.31% of the population lacking a high school diploma poses a pressing concern that AMSSM families may not have the means to provide academic support to their children. When parents have not graduated from high school or college, they are at a disadvantage in helping their children do well in school, from both an academic skills and social standpoint. Given the poverty and income statistics, the educational deficiency of the area aligns to the economic challenges the community faces.

A report on "First-Generation Students: College Access, Persistence, and Postbachelor's Outcomes" published by the United States Department of Education and the National Center for Education Statistics in 2018 confirms this challenge. The Department reported that<sup>16</sup>:

- "Compared with students whose parents had a bachelor's degree, proportionally fewer students whose parents did not enroll in college graduated from high school having completed an academically focused curriculum (16% vs. 37%)."<sup>17</sup>
- "Students whose parents did not attend college began in 4-year institutions at a lower rate than their continuing-generation peers; 26% began at public 4-year institutions compared with 33% of those whose parents attended some college and 45% of those whose parents had earned a bachelor's degree."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> United States Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. "First-Generation Students: College Access, Persistence and Postbachelor's Outcomes. February 2018. Accessed via: <https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2018421>

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 5

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 7.

- “Proportionally fewer first-generation students stayed on the persistence track (48%), [measured 3 years after the initial postsecondary enrollment], than did their continuing-generation peers whose parents had attended college (53%) or had earned a bachelor’s degree (67%).”<sup>19</sup>

As potential first-generation college students are generally less likely to graduate high school and enroll, persist, and graduate from college, exposing AMSSM students to high-performing high school, college, and career experiences, and establishing a pipeline of AMSSM students to high-performing high-schools with graduation rates at or above 90% is a central part of AMSSM’s mission.

When parents are busy (especially in single family households), they are less likely to be meaningfully and intentionally involved in the selection of a high school for their child, and often will select high schools based on proximity rather than quality. As part of AMSSM’s community outreach plan, AMSSM leadership will reach out to 100% of the high schools identified below to begin building relationships that drive AMS student success after graduation. AMSSM will schedule individual meetings to discuss each high school’s instructional philosophy, specialized programs and clubs, student expectations, and possibility for collaboration. AMSSM will also host a high school fair event to give 8<sup>th</sup> grade students the opportunity to interact with leadership from other schools and learn more about their programs.

AMSSM and the CMO team have selected the schools below for partnerships based on high school graduation rate. Although all of these schools struggle with high school

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 8.

passing rates, they reflect the best available options for AMSSM families in both graduation and AzMERIT passing rates available under these concerning economic constraints. The average AzMERIT high school passing rates in the area are 22% in reading and 21% in mathematics. The drive distances below are straight line distances and actual drive distance is 1-2 miles further with no highway accessibility making drive times 10-20 minutes in these areas. Based on the risk factors, families in the AMSSM area are far less likely to commute a great distance to attend a high-performing high school. AMSSM will also make recommendations of schools at greater distances than below and will more prominently market those to parents who are able and willing to transport their student.

<b>AMSSM Recommended High Schools</b>					
<i>Progress Tracking Sheet: October 1, 2019</i>					
<b>Name</b>	<b>District or Organization</b>	<b>Distance from AMSSM</b>	<b>AzMerit ELA % Passing</b>	<b>AzMerit Math % Passing</b>	<b>Graduation Rate</b>
<b>Arizona Agribusiness &amp; Equine Center - South Mountain</b>	Arizona Agribusiness & Equine Center, Inc.	3.3 miles	45	28	100.00%
<b>Heritage Academy Laveen</b>	Heritage Academy Inc.	3.4 Miles	47	35	100.00%
<b>NFL Yet College Prep Academy</b>	Espiritu Community Development Corp.	2.1 Miles	21	22	95.60%
<b>Desert Marigold School</b>	Valley of the Sun Waldorph Association	4.1 Miles	48	32	Not available
<b>Cesar Chavez High School</b>	Phoenix Union High School District	3.1 Miles	18	20	89.00%

**Target Student Population Data**

AMS’s experience in low income communities has shown that most of the school community’s parents will come from nearby areas. Specifically, according to the current

parent enrollment within all AMS Phoenix campuses (a total of 6000 students), AMS anticipates, based on existing year data across 7 campuses and 6000 students, that 50% of AMS students will be enrolled at a campus within a 1.5-mile radius and the average distance of families from an AMS school will be 2 miles. And, over the last few years, approximately 75% of AMS parents have enrolled from within a 3-mile radius of each AMS campus in Phoenix. This data indicates that analyses on area demographics (including economic, race, crime, and health), target student population data, crime statistics, and health data are reliable predictors of the demographics of the students and families AMSSM will serve.

The table below is a snapshot of student demographics from 17-18 Arizona Department of Education October Enrollment and AzMERIT data (most recent available) from the 3-mile radius around AMSSM’s location (1445 W. Baseline Rd., 85041 area) including The AMS School Average, Maricopa County, and Arizona of all K-8 public schools:

<i>Academy of Math &amp; Science South Mountain</i>	<b>FRL %</b>	<b>Minor %</b>	<b>Hisp %</b>	<b>Af. Am. %</b>	<b>ELL %</b>	<b>SPED %</b>
<b>AMSSM 3 Mile Radius</b>	92.8%	90.5%	78.4%	11.2%	18.4%	11.4%
<b>AMS District</b>	81.0%	83.6%	77.0%	4.8%	19.0%	6.0%
<b>Maricopa County</b>	48.5%	59.1%	44.5%	6.6%	7.1%	11.1%
<b>Arizona</b>	49.4%	61.9%	45.6%	5.4%	7.3%	12.0%

Apart from the higher SPED % and African American student population, the AMS network serves a similarly high-risk population and achieves at rates significantly higher than AMSSM 3 Mile Radius, Maricopa County, and Arizona. While the AMS network SPED % average in the past has been below 10%, the AMS Peoria Advanced campus that opened on

July of 2019 currently has approximately 9% students enrolled in SPED programs and has not had any challenges addressing the increased SPED demand other than needing to adjust the program staffing to support the larger population. AMSSM’s program has been adjusted to include additional SPED instructional staff and the added cost of additional student diagnoses and therapist time, student supports, and additional free after school instruction/care.

Regarding the increased percentage of African American students in the target population, AMSSM teachers will ensure that culturally relevant programs and practices are implemented into the school that reach the larger than average African American student population (such as through adding culturally relevant trade books in the ELA program that meet Common Core guidelines for text selection).

*Crime Statistics*

Based on violent crime indexes, the AMSSM community faces higher incidence of violent and property crime compared to state and national averages. The Federal Bureau of Investigation shares statistics for the relevant areas based on an index, with 0 representing the safest and 100 representing the most dangerous as compared with all neighborhoods in the U.S., as summarized in the table below<sup>20</sup>.

<i>Area</i>	<i>Violent Crime Index</i>	<i>Property Crime Index</i>
U.S Average	22.7	35.4
AZ Average	27.9	42.5
Phoenix Average	37.5	52.8
AMS South Mountain Zip - 85041	<b>54.8</b>	<b>65.2</b>

<sup>20</sup> Violent crime indexes are compiled via bestplaces.net based on Federal Bureau of Investigation and Uniform Crime Reports data. Example: <https://www.bestplaces.net/crime/city/arizona/phenix>

An analysis of both violent and property crime indexes reveals that AMS South Mountain residents are victims of violent and property crime at much higher rates than Arizona, United States, and Phoenix. The Property Crime Index score of 65.2 indicates that there may be additional student stressors related to inadequate or unstable home environments and neighborhoods. The high rate of violent crime at 54.8 as well indicates that student and school safety will need to be a top priority for the school. Violent crime includes murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault and property crime includes burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson.

Consequently, AMSSM staff and school leadership will partner with the Phoenix Police Department - South Mountain Precinct (1.8 mile drive from the school) in a collaborative effort to build a safe, inclusive school community that positively contributes to efforts to reduce the incidence of both violent and property crime in the school's immediate zip code. AMSSM will also establish further facility safety measures to improve security described later in this section.

#### Health Data

The Department of Health and Human Services states that "a person's ability to access health services has a profound effect on every aspect of his or her health." Some of the aspects of health that the Department lists include overall physical, social, and mental health status, prevention of disease, detection and treatment of illnesses, quality of life, preventable death, and life expectancy. A primary challenge noted by the Department that the AMSSM community may face is that even when health care is available, there are significant obstacles for families that cannot afford to pay for care. According to the most

recent updates on the Department of Health and Human Services website, the targeted community for AMSSM is in an area currently experiencing shortages in primary care health professionals, and mental health professionals. According to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 19.2% of the population in those tracts were without health insurance, as compared with 11.7%, 12.2%, and 12.3% for the United States, Arizona, and Maricopa County, respectively.

<b><i>Uninsured Population</i></b>			
<b>Zip Code</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2015</b>
<b>Arizona</b>	12.20%	13.60%	15.00%
<b>Maricopa</b>	12.30%	13.70%	15.20%
<b>AMSSM Zip</b>	19.20%	21.70%	23.00%

Adult economic productivity is decreased by illness, disease, and lack of insurance, with students/kids being even more susceptible to disease. All these factors decrease student attendance. AMSSM has reached out to local social service agencies as described further in this section to help families close this gap. AMSSM hopes to drive progress regarding healthcare access by matching parents in need with community partners services that meet this need.

**Existing and Potential Partners**

AMSSM identified the most pressing demographic and academic needs of the school community and designed a plan and student needs matrix using AMS programs and community partners to holistically improve the climate, culture, educational achievement, and family engagement for the site. AMSSM has leveraged existing site or network partnerships and incorporated new partners to address AMSSM area need. AMSSM has

connected via email, phone call, and/or in person meeting with 100% of the community partners listed in the table below. Leadership can visibly assess multiple ways the community and AMS will work together to address each challenge and prioritize programs to facilitate sustainable success.

All the partners described in this section have been or will be invited to the AMSSM Community Comprehensive Needs Assessment event and groundbreaking ceremony that will take place in December of 2019. At the event, partners will be able to interact with the school population and promote services to gain imperative data on how to best work with families and the school. AMSSM community partners will also be invited to participate in schoolwide celebrations, tours of the campus, career days, PAC meetings, and student presentation of work days (such as Scratch Day and Science Fair). In addition to the first rounds of parent surveys being conducted in September through November, the Community Comprehensive Needs Assessment event will be an essential guide informing AMSSM planning staff about which community partnerships will best serve families. The following organizations represent local organizations in the area that AMSSM will work with:

The partnerships and programs highlighted in light green are existing or already established.

AMS and Partners Meeting Student Needs Matrix												
Type	Green=Established Partnership/Program   No Change=Contacted	Demographics of Population					Academic Needs					
		Crime/Safety	Health	Single householder with child	Transportation	Academic Attainment/Achievement	FRL	ELL	SPED	Attendance	Enrichment	Family Engagement
AMS	AMS - Attendance Outreach					X	X			X		
	AMS - Before and After school care			X	X							
	AMS - Cafeito Program					X		X				X
	AMS - Carpool Outreach Program			X	X		X			X		X
	AMS Essentials - Best Teaching Practices					X	X	X	X	X		
	AMS - Exceptional Student Services Support					X	X		X			
	AMS - Extended day Remediation- 4PM-5PM			X	X	X						
	AMS - Extracurricular Offerings- Language/Arts					X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	AMS - High School Outreach Program					X						X
	AMS - Parent and Family Technology Resources			X		X	X				X	X
	AMS - Parent Satisfaction and Input surveys						X					X
	AMS - Title III/ELL Program- Rosetta Stone/Tech							X	X			X
	AMSA Planning Office- Physical Location				X	X	X	X	X			X
Educ.	ASU - American Dream Academy			X		X	X				X	X
	ASU - Field Trip and Research Program					X					X	
	GCU - Teacher Placement					X	X					
Enrichment	Arizona Capital Museum					X					X	
	Arizona Science Center					X	X				X	
	Arizona Worm Farm					X					X	
	Boys and Girls Clubs of America		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
	Corona Ranch and Rodeo Grounds										X	
	Girls Who Code					X					X	
	Infiniscope - Virtual STEM Learning					X					X	
	Junior Achievement					X	X				X	
	Lees ATA Martial Arts			X							X	
	Mystery Castle			X							X	
	Prenda Code Club					X					X	
	STEM-Elation Family Nights					X					X	
	YMCA			X	X	X	X		X		X	X
Faith Based	Life Church of God	X		X			X					X
	South Mountain Baptist Church	X		X			X					X
Fire and Safety	Phoenix Fire Department	X	X								X	X
	Phoenix Police Department- Canine & Special Vehicle Unit	X									X	X
	Phoenix Police Department- South Mountain Precinct	X										
	Phoenix Police Department- Community Relations	X	X								X	X
	Phoenix Regional Police Academy	X									X	X
Gov.	Councilman- District 8- Carlos Garcia	X	X			X	X				X	
	Department of Economic Security		X	X	X		X					
	Phoenix City Hall	X									X	
	Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County	X									X	
Parks and Rec	Cesar Chavez Library						X				X	X
	El Prado Pool Muriel Smith Recreation Center						X				X	X
	Muriel Smith Recreation Center											
	Phoenix Parks and Rec- South Division Office	X					X				X	X
	Rio Vista Center											
	Roosevelt Pool						X				X	X
	Salvation Army Ray and Joan Kroc Center	X		X	X	X	X				X	X
	South Mountain Community Center		X			X	X	X			X	X
South Mountain Community Library					X		X			X		
South Mountain Youth Center												
Societal	7th Street Food Pantry and Outreach		X	X			X				X	X
	Arizona Humane Society Campus for Compassion					X					X	X
	Borderlands Produce Rescue		X				X					
	Care Counts- School washer/dryer set ups		X	X			X		X			
	CPES	X	X	X			X				X	X
	Flinn Foundation											
	Helping with all My Heart		X	X			X					
	ICM Food and Clothing Bank					X	X					X
	Journey Services		X	X			X					X
	MARC Community Resources		X	X			X		X			
	Notre Dame Americorp					X						
Service	SCE Community Office		X	X			X					
	Society of St Vincent De Paul						X			X	X	
	Teach for America					X						
	TMobile for Government- tech provider			X			X					X
	Travis L Williams Family Services Center		X	X	X	X	X					X
	Trans.	Ride Zum - Rideshare service				X				X		
Valley Metro	X			X					X		X	

AMSSM is in touch with traffic, fire, and police for the review of drop-off and pickup procedures, CPR training for staff, review of campus safety (security and emergency) plans, and active shooter training. AMSSM leaders have also contacted elected officials including State District Representatives and City Council Members, and have booked a meeting with District 8 Councilmember Carlos Garcia. AMSSM will actively pursue discussions with District 8 and Phoenix leadership to further explore potential partnerships and the opportunity to collaborate with local government in events and regular programs. The Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County located 6.5 miles away from the school has offered field trip opportunities for AMSSM students to supplement their development of civic responsibility skills and understanding.

AMSSM Planning Leadership have contacted various providers of afterschool programs including sports centers, STEM organizations, and the YMCA. Targeted students needing additional intervention are asked to attend remediation time from 4pm-5pm daily in house for Title I support. AMS also employs afterschool providers after 4:00 p.m. to offer students more options for different activities, different strategies for transportation, and to reduce teacher and staff load. The area around AMSSM has many parks and recreation offerings to help underserved families. The YMCA offers before and after school programs, can organize youth sports, and offers clubs and swim lessons with YMCA transportation from the school site to their facility. They also have a Teen Leaders Club for middle school students to learn character, ethics, and problem-solving skills.

AMSSM has contacted the Muriel Smith Recreation Center, the Rio Vista Center, the South Mountain Community Center and has met with the Salvation Army Ray and Joan Kroc

Center and Phoenix Parks and Recreation South Division Office. These organizations provide enrichment opportunities and sports classes with scholarships and transportation available to assist families as well as connect families to immediate community resources.

AMSSM has reached out to the Cesar Chavez Library and the South Mountain Community Library to provide students and families an additional place to study, and for library staff to potentially participate in community events such as during National Reading Day.

### Health and Wellness Resources

Based on the health insurance data above, the partnership with the Travis L. Williams Family Services Center will be a key referral resource for AMSSM families. The center offers emergency financial assistance, case management for mental health issues, a Head Start childcare program, and transportation assistance. Another partner, Jewish Family Services, has supported existing AMS families with mental health and outreach counseling services for 2 years, and CPES provides these same services only 1 mile from the school.

AMSSM will also reach out to reputable sex and social emotional education service providers to offer students matriculating from the AMS program into high school with social emotional support choices that will reduce the risk of dropout.

### Academic Achievement and Enrichment

A central guiding tenet has continuously propelled AMS: “It takes a village to raise a child.” AMS solely targets underserved, low-income neighborhoods—the places that lack a foundational school capable of providing a high-quality K-8 education. AMS’s success is a team effort between families, AMS Board and staff, and countless partners outside the

immediate AMS team including the Arizona Charter Schools Association, the program offices behind the state Charter School Program grants, other organizations as previously detailed, and non-AMS schools that are part of the AZCSP and A for Arizona cohort.

In order to ensure that the new school has ample high-quality talent, AMS has an existing partnership with Teach for America across several campuses in Phoenix including last year's startup campuses and is hoping to continue with placement of TFA corps members at AMSSM. AMSSM leadership also recently met with Notre Dame AmeriCorp who provides instructional assistants and teachers in the Phoenix area. For more information on the effectiveness of Teach for America teachers based on research, please see Section F, Question 4.

AMSSM will also partner with Junior Achievement, an existing partner at other AMS campuses, to provide students real-life experience integrating economics, workplace skills, and finance to see what it is like to be adults working in various businesses through their program BizTown. AMSSM will participate in their classroom program that brings business and industry professionals to classrooms to teach students a comprehensive STEM, business, and personal finance curriculum.

Additionally, AMSSM leaders have reached out to existing AMS partners Girls Who Code and Prenda Code Clubs to extend their partnership to the school to facilitate student interest and success in coding.

### How Partners Will Assist with the Planning and the Implementation of the School

The community partners outlined in this section serve a critical function in AMSSM's planning and implementation. By establishing partnerships early in the planning cycle, AMSSM will ensure that partners are involved in the planning, customization, and implementation of the program. The AMSSM Principal, Board, and CMO staff will hone and establish partnerships based on increased understanding of needs.

At the Community Needs Assessment event planned for December of 2019, the identified community partners and families will work together to identify resources in the neighborhood, the perceived quality of local education, what schools are and are not doing well, what partnerships currently exist with schools, what partnerships need to exist with schools, and how AMSSM and community organizations can work together to create a safer neighborhood with students on track toward gaining in interest in STEM careers, building the foundational skills of students for success in competitive high schools and colleges, and ultimately, transforming the neighborhoods these students come from.

In addition to the above event, the AMSSM Principal, the AMSSM Board, and CMO leadership and Board will have ongoing group and one-on-one conversations with community partners about how to work together to identify and serve the academic needs of the AMSSM community.

**Academic Needs of the Community**

<i>Academy of Math &amp; Science South Mountain</i>	<b>Pass Math %</b>	<b>Pass ELA %</b>	<b>Growth Points</b>	<b>Total Points</b>
<b>AMSSM 3 Mile Radius</b>	26.6%	25.4%	33.2	61.8
<b>AMS District</b>	49.3%	43.0%	45.3	83.6
<b>Maricopa County</b>	44.0%	43.0%	38.4	75.0
<b>Arizona</b>	41.0%	41.0%	37.6	75.7

<i>Academy of Math &amp; Science South Mountain</i>	<b>FRL %</b>	<b>Minor %</b>	<b>Hisp %</b>	<b>Af. Am. %</b>	<b>ELL %</b>	<b>SPED %</b>
<b>AMSSM 3 Mile Radius</b>	92.8%	90.5%	78.4%	11.2%	18.4%	11.4%
<b>AMS District</b>	81.0%	83.6%	77.0%	4.8%	19.0%	6.0%
<b>Maricopa County</b>	48.5%	59.1%	44.5%	6.6%	7.1%	11.1%
<b>Arizona</b>	49.4%	61.9%	45.6%	5.4%	7.3%	12.0%

The above data is from Arizona Department of Education SY18 AzMERIT data and 17-18 enrollment data. Pairing these data sets together demonstrates that AMSSM is accustomed to dealing with the at-risk population in the AMSSM community. The current academic performance of students in a 3-mile radius of AMSSM is significantly lower than the Maricopa and Arizona average in percentage of students passing the AzMERIT in both subjects likely due to the high ELL population, lower language exposure, and the high percentage of families speaking a language other than English in the home. As the data shows, the AMSSM community has significant academic needs. Given that AMS has served a similar population successfully before, AMS is confident that AMSSM’s focus on instruction,

rigorous curriculum, and targeted intervention will set students of all backgrounds on the right track to achieving at or above grade level performance, and yearly growth above state averages.

As a district, the AMS school average outperformed all but 1 of 28 schools (96.43%) in this neighborhood by 2018 AZ Merit aggregate math and ELA passing percentage and outperformed all but 3 of 28 schools (89.29%) in total growth points in a 3-mile radius around AMSSM’s address of 1445 W. Baseline Road.

2018 AZMerit and A-F data (latest available)		Comparison Groups
<b>% of Schools Outperformed within 3 miles - AzMERIT</b>	96.72%	This sample includes any school within 3 miles of any AMS school.
<b>% of Schools Outperformed within 3 miles - Growth Points</b>	96.72%	This sample includes any school within 3 miles of any AMS school.
<b>% of Schools Outperformed within 3 miles of AMS South Mountain - AzMERIT</b>	96.43%	This sample includes schools in a 3-mile radius around AMSSM
<b>% of Schools Outperformed within 3 miles of AMS South Mountain - Growth Points</b>	89.29%	This sample includes schools in a 3-mile radius around AMSSM

AMS performance is defined as the average of each school's composite AzMERIT score.

Based on the demographic and academic data of the incoming school population, students will enter the AMSSM program with academic performance lower than the average for Maricopa County and Arizona as a whole. AMS performance on state assessments and

growth demonstrates capacity to truly affect these populations and improve the overall quality of education in disadvantaged communities in Arizona.

With proven academic programs and supports and extensive experience over two decades serving similar communities, AMSSM is confident that the school will overcome any barrier related to opening a new school in a struggling community.

### **Challenges the Charter School Will Face**

Building a comprehensive school community presents challenges and barriers to growth that require significant planning and the capacity to immediately establish strong academic programs and family supports. Possible challenges at AMSSM include student safety, student attendance and motivation, transportation, adequate home learning environment, community partners that lack the appropriate resources to help families, parent participation and engagement, and like all new schools, facility occupancy concurrent with reaching targeted student enrollment. Given that the AMS network has opened schools in neighborhoods with similar demographics and challenges, the CMO is confident that AMSSM will creatively meet these challenges with community driven solutions.

### **Student Safety**

The high crime risk identified presents a significant challenge to learning. Students in low income areas with higher crime statistics are more prone to home challenges that may manifest as violent or unsafe behavior. A basic tenant of the socio-emotional learning model is that if students do not feel safe, they cannot learn. AMSSM will be constructed with the following safety features:

- An exterior opaque perimeter fence around the entire site as the school is located on a busy street with heavy work and industrial traffic
- A fence that encloses the inside perimeter within the parking lot with exit only gating
- Single point of entry into the school through the front with access point controls with electronic buzzers to prevent unauthorized entry and allow control from the front desk
- Emergency button for staff that immediately calls 911 in lobby
- A parking lot with significantly longer queue lengths than required by the City and with carefully designed pickup and drop-off points to maximize student safety and reduce pedestrian crossing of traffic
- Security cameras capturing all exterior entry points and hard to see areas within the school campus and within the school monitored by all administrators

AMSSM will employ a safety plan that requires all visitors to scan their state issued identification through the Raptor Tech software (which searches various databases for criminal offenses), wear name tags and check in at the front, employs the use of frequent patrols throughout campus by staff, and is vigilant about student safety. Pickup and drop-off numbers will be assigned with bar codes or RFID tags that will be scanned by school staff at pickup (or with another unique identifier used such as a unique number and other identifier such as the student's and parent's names) to ensure only authorized personnel pickup children, and the school will maintain alerts and notify staff of any adults who are specifically on watch and not authorized to pick up or interact with a child. Local Police departments will

assist with pickup and drop-off plans, the school safety plan, will be hired in the first few days of school to assist with traffic flow, and will train staff or contribute to the existing active shooter response policy. Fire drills, emergency evacuation procedures, and lockdown and active shooter drills will be practiced monthly or as required by law. The school will maintain relationships with local Police Departments and invite patrol officers to use an office within the school for paperwork, increasing the active presence of a law enforcement officials and habituating students and families to the idea that a law enforcement official is an ally in the aid of a stable community.

AMSSM school leadership will develop and the CMO leadership will approve a duties roster for the entire campus for all times of the day when students are not in classrooms to ensure adequate supervision of students. The PBIS program; schoolwide expectations for student behavior in transitions; required mandatory reporting of and training in spotting possible child abuse; training of staff in high-engagement instructional strategies, SEL and positive-based classroom management and instructional methodologies including restorative practices, identification of students that are at risk for self-harming, and how to respond effectively and safely restrain students that have severe challenges will all contribute to a safe school environment.

### *Student Attendance and Motivation*

By creating a school culture where students have fun and feel inspired, valued, and connected, students will want to come to school every day. AMS students are in school significantly longer than in nearby schools, work significantly harder during the day, and have significantly more homework (up to two hours per day in middle school). To make such

challenges surmountable, the AMSSM Principal will leverage every tool in the AMS program to make school fun and engaging:

- A positive staff and student culture with a welcoming student-first environment that students want to be a part of with zero-tolerance for bullying
- A wealth of extracurriculars, academic clubs, and sports that grab student interest (over 14 at each existing AMS campus - the school will survey students/parents on what extracurriculars they prefer and inform them that all sports require a minimum GPA and attendance %)
- High engagement, high quality instruction and positive-based classroom management techniques from staff that show they care each day
- A school with community comradery and pride created through a PBIS framework; character education; morning meetings; student announcements; sports and academic competitions, movie nights, school dances, and other events focused on imbedding the school in the community and everyday lives of families; awards ceremonies and frequent celebrations of success in classrooms, during school assemblies, and PAC meetings. ,

In addition to creating a positive school culture that promotes and rewards attendance, AMSSM's attendance plan includes interventions by administrators when class attendance falls below 95% including the development of schoolwide procedures and attendance conferences with parents by leaders to discuss the importance of attending school.

Transportation

AMSSM is situated in a densely populated residential neighborhood in the South Mountain area. A high percentage of the population in the school’s vicinity uses public transit (4.56%) likely due to the increased availability of bus stops, low-income householder earners, and high poverty levels in the immediate area.

Parents in the AMSSM community likely work multiple jobs, longer hours, and/or face other challenges arranging for child pickup every day. AMSSM will assist parents by coordinating carpools and coordinating paid ride sharing for families to get their children to school. AMSSM has also reached out to Valley Metro, an existing partner, to plan for purchasing yearly bus passes for families and students paid for by the school. AMSSM has a Valley Metro bus stop on site and has chosen a location next to a residential street with a cross walk, ultimately for making the school more safely accessible for students who walk to and from school. Paired with extended hours for before and after school programs, AMSSM will ease transportation challenges for the target population.

Bus Routes Near AMS Baseline				
Location	Bus/Route Number	Walking Time from School	Distance from School	Connections:
Baseline Rd and 15th Ave	77	1 min	400 ft	Bus 8; Bus 19

Adequate Home Learning Environment

AMSSM must take family resources and needs into account when implementing their program. Low-income families and students present a variety of additional challenges associated with single parent households, households that lack high school or college degrees, or other factors that can result in a lack of income and therefore reduced parent

involvement or an inadequate home learning environment. These challenges often include not being able to afford childcare or other family services in cases where parents have limited time to spend with children while working multiple jobs. Not all families have a quiet space with a dedicated computer and stable internet connection for homework and study. As such, AMS provides reduced-cost before and after-school care for children from as early as 6:30 a.m. to as late as 6:30 p.m. Students and families will also be able to use AMSSM's technology and classroom resources to work and study early in the morning or late into the evening. AMSSM is also exploring a partnership with T-Mobile to provide parents and students that do not have access to a reliable computer and internet at home with a laptop and highspeed data plan at no cost to them. The implementation of this partnership will depend on need. AMSSM will encourage parents and families to both shape and take advantage of these resources and AMSSM facility resources.

#### *Partners that Lack the Resources to Help Families*

In AMS's experience, it is common that community organizations lack the resources to adequately help families in need, are overcommitted to helping organizations or schools, and rely on inconsistent fundraising and grants. If AMSSM encounters a community partner that lacks resources, the school will leverage existing on-site infrastructure to help the partner serve the community, such as allowing partner organization staff to operate a program or provide a service using school facilities. Additionally, AMSSM will value partnerships with partners that can provide critical local insight, even if their resources are lacking. AMSSM will also work with the CMO's grant writing team should a joint-funding opportunity arise between the school and a community partner.

Despite this challenge, AMS's track record, number of students served, and strong infrastructure will help AMSSM secure partners with available resources.

### Parent Engagement and Involvement

Inviting families and local entities to help identify their specific needs is an essential step when creating the AMSSM culture of community engagement and shared responsibility for student education. Parent engagement begins well ahead of the school's opening, typically one full year before the school opens its doors to students. AMSSM already compiled an interest list of over 350 interested parents and families. AMSSM and CMO planning staff plan to carefully monitor the growth of the interest list and compile commonly identified needs. Survey responses from parents citing the community and family needs are available upon request.

Given the educational attainment demographics and the enthusiasm in parent responses to date, AMSSM is excited to see that the community recognizes the need for stronger educational programs. Still, many families do not have experience participating in an active school community, especially a new one. AMS will make a clear path for parents to participate in the school's operation through a blend of formal and informal engagement opportunities advertised via multiple forms of communication (digital, in-person, physical materials, and any additional upon request). AMSSM is dedicated to listening to and identifying parents across all levels of engagement in surveys, interest list queries, and translated material to remove language barriers.

AMSSM will participate in AMS's Cafecito program, a monthly event designed solely for Spanish speaking parents to ask questions and create community. The school will also

circulate anonymous surveys to specifically engage these parents of ELL Students to respond with concerns or constructive criticism and to communicate if they are having trouble supporting their student or participating in the school community.

AMSSM hopes to engage families in a program that provides comprehensive instruction on how to participate in their child's education and provide them an avenue to begin early planning for their student to succeed in high school and beyond. AMSSM is in discussion with Arizona State University's American Dream Academy (ADA) to bring their academy to the school site. ASU's website states that through the ADA program "families gain the tools and confidence to join forces with schools and communities to make sure their children have successful academic careers and prepare for a university experience." With strong mission alignment between ASU, ADA, and AMSSM, leadership will pursue this partnership and others like it with other nearby colleges and institutions of higher education.

AMSSM encourages parents to volunteer and help facilitate the organization of school and community events such as Trunk or Treat, carnivals, and cultural celebrations. AMSSM parents will also be invited into classrooms, on field trips, to student recitals, student athletic events, and academic competitions. AMS has observed that parent involvement in extracurriculars often leads to a significant increase in classroom and curricular engagement, a powerful tool that AMSSM will readily leverage for academic success.

### Facility Construction

Though AMSSM does not anticipate problems related to facilities construction as financing for the facility is secured and construction will begin in the coming months, the CMO is confident that a decade long track record of successfully completing construction of new school facilities on time and on budget will provide a strong foundation to remedy any potential problems.

Over the past two years, AMS has successfully constructed, enrolled, and opened schools for a total of 3,000 new AMS students at three new schools, the largest of which opened with over 1100 students in its first year. AMS Desert Sky also had a strong first year during the 18-19 school year, opening with 950 students and expanding to 1348 students in its second year with the construction of a secondary building to further meet community demand for the AMS program. Still, facility development for schools of this size is a challenge that represents risks the AMS CMO does not take lightly.

These challenges are being met by:

1. Starting early. AMSSM has over 3 months of additional construction time, more than any AMS school has had in the past.
2. Hiring contractors that have a history of performing charter school fast pace construction and good references. AMSSM has hired CHASSE who have successfully constructed large scale charter and public schools on time.
3. Engaging the architect's consultants at construction milestones to help in review and construction management

4. Having weekly onsite OAC (owner, architect, contractor) meetings that update schedule. The Contractor will also provide 3-week look ahead schedules.
5. The CMO's Director of Facilities will be on site most of the time to participate in construction management, so decisions will not delay construction. AMS has also hired Nations Group as primary project management. Nations Group successfully managed the AMS Desert Sky project and has an extensive track record of successful school construction projects.

#### AMSSM Student Recruitment Process, Criteria, and Challenges

Although the AMS CMO has a track record of leading campuses to hitting their enrollment targets (having done so at every campus since its first campus in Phoenix), every community is different. AMSSM will track enrollment targets on a monthly basis. The AMS network team has historical data on how many students should be enrolled per month to be successful. The initial interest list and survey is also a historically effective tool to measure the risk of opening a school. Based on the number of responses and enthusiasm from parents in the community to date, AMSSM is confident that the school will comfortably enroll up to its ASBCS approved cap in its first year. AMSSM is on track to have well over 600 parents and students on an interest list by December when the school begins hosting larger scale community events to drive interest and potential program adjustments suited to local needs.

With over 350 parents already on the interest list as of October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019, AMSSM will continue to utilize all channels of marketing to reach enrollment targets as well as to reach the most underserved and at-risk youth in the communities through a variety of means including use of Spanish speakers in outreach staff, all materials in both English and Spanish,

advertising at places frequented by the most at-risk students (as detailed in earlier sections), online advertising, local enrollment and school info events, canvassing, and hosting at least 8 open houses over the next 10 months.

### **Community Understanding as a Tool for Growth**

By identifying, analyzing, and understanding the academic and demographic school factors in the community and establishing clear plans to address them as seen in the Needs Matrix, AMSSM is confident that the establishment of a high-quality AMS school capable of overcoming these challenges will spur a neighborhood upward spiral that drives school competition, improves academic outcomes for both AMS students and other students, attracts more families and businesses to the area, reduces crime, and transforms a struggling community into a successful one.

### **Governance – Total points possible: 25 points**

1. Describe how the charter school will be governed and managed. An organizational structure chart shall be submitted.

### **Overall School Governance and Management**

AMSSM will be governed by a Governing Board, managed by the AMS Charter Management Organization (CMO), AMS Impact Group, and led by a School Principal. To operate effectively, the Governing Board, CMO, and school leadership will each have their own unique roles and responsibilities within the scope of school management and governance for the purpose of creating a locally adapted, advanced, and well-rounded STEAM program that both remediates and accelerates students. Ultimately, through

partnership of all stakeholders, AMSSM will put students on the path to graduating from high-performing high schools, securing high-paying technical and STEM careers, and usher in significant neighborhood revitalization in the immediate and surrounding areas of the school.

Clear roles and responsibilities ensure that nothing is left to chance with students or the community and that the appropriate parties are held accountable. Additionally, AMS has a detailed succession plan for each of the parties outlined below that ensures the quality of the education at AMSSM remains the same or improves in the event of a change in employment or membership on the Board.

AMSSM will operate under the existing Academy of Math and Science Flower charter held by the non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, Academy of Mathematics and Science South, Inc. (AMSS, Inc.). AMS has one Governing Board for all schools in the greater Phoenix area. AMS recruits local board members to represent the local community of each AMS school. As AMSSM expands its efforts into the community, the school will seek and onboard additional board members from the immediate school community as AMS has done in previous communities including most recently Glendale and Peoria with local Board recruits Dr. Jeff Turney and Anthony Lehn. AMSSM has a Governing Board made up of a variety of local community members as well as existing Governing Board members in Phoenix to benefit from a network of success. AMSS, Inc. has a management agreement in place with the AMS CMO which provides comprehensive management services to AMSS, Inc. and all other AMS schools under different charters.

Although the Principal will report school results and progress to both the Governing Board and the CMO, the Board will oversee the school through the CMO, generally interfacing with the Co-CEOs for their respective functions in operations or academics, and the Principal will report directly to the Superintendent on a daily basis. The AMS CMO will be responsible for carrying out the objectives and initiatives collaboratively set in line with local community and family needs. As the AMS CMO has a track record of successful replication of the AMS school model, Governing Board members and the CMO will work collaboratively to manage objectives and results in congruence with the AMS mission.

**Governing Board Responsibilities:**

The Governing Board's responsibilities include acting as a public body subject to open meeting law and the Board's bylaws including conflicts of interest policies where no individual may act in isolation without the sanction or delegation of the entire Governing Board. The responsibilities of the Governing Board are as follows:

- A. Act as a steward of public funds and in the public and local community's best interest through effective governance practice, manage any potential conflicts of interest, regular monitoring of the overall program, safe, effective, efficient operation of the school, representing the public and staying alert to and responsive of public concerns, and other functions as below
- B. The CMO will propose the school budget and vendor selections of all vendors for expenses over \$50,000, subject to feedback and revisions as requested by the

Governing Board. The Board will provide final approval for all budgets and vendor selections.

- C. Recruit and elect qualified Governing Board members that make up a well-rounded skillset composed of local stakeholders, and ensure a succession plan is in place for all Board members and positions
- D. Approve the annual budget submitted to the ADE, instructional calendar, and verify the alignment of curriculum between the charter and the school as well as state standards, and other items as required now or in the future by state law under Title 15 and others that apply
- E. Ensure compliance with the authorizer through monitoring the CMO, charter dashboards on ASBCS, and deliberate on decisions requiring approvals from Board as required now or in the future by the authorizer
- F. Review audits for findings and hold the CMO accountable to action plans for any remediation, if necessary
- G. Plan of annual and long-term academic and operational goals of the school including development of a Strategic Plan along with an associated Logic Model in conjunction with the CMO and Principal
- H. Monitor the annual and long-term academic and operational goals of the school, the performance of the Principal and CMO, and the fidelity of implementation of the AMS program consistent with the local community's needs
- I. Greenlight or pause the school's and CMO's continued growth

- J. Design and approve policy across all operational areas including the student handbook, accounting policy, human resources policy, enrollment policy, etc.
- K. Engage new partners for the benefit of the school and to better understand the needs of the community, acting as a representative of the school in external functions, and fundraising
- L. Approve large expenses over \$50,000 per the accounting policy and act as a construction and finance committee for new finance and construction
- M. Contribute in areas based on individual work history, skills, and background
- N. Ensure compliance with open meeting law ARS 32-4801 and 38-431 and Board requirements in ARS 15-183
- O. Ensure a high level of knowledge in the AMS instructional program, responsibilities of a Board member, and compliance with all laws attending training as necessary

**School Leader Responsibilities:**

The Principal's responsibilities are as follows:

- A. Act as the head leader on campus ensuring safety of all students and a high-level of instruction in all classrooms with brisk pace, high depth of knowledge questions, high engagement, and high expectations for all students
- B. Work in conjunction with the CMO and Governing Board to tailor the AMS program to local and community needs
- C. Provide feedback on the school budget with submission to Board finalized by CMO and approved by the Board

- D. Execute the Strategic Plan and Logic Model on a day-to-day basis under the supervision and coaching of the Superintendent and under the guidance of the policies established by the Governing Board,
- E. Serve as the chief liaison to local partners that meet parent needs
- F. Report to the CMO and Board updates of progress on a regular basis, usually monthly
- G. Manage all aspects of daily school operations, including implementation of the AMS program (as outlined in this grant) with complete fidelity including advanced STEAM, remediation programs, extended day instruction, before and after school programs, partnerships and parent engagement, extracurriculars, advanced high school placement, exposure to STEM careers, etc.
- H. Create an exceptional student and teacher culture
- I. Hire, supervise, retain, compensate, and coach all local staff and teachers.
- J. Ensure that all professional development is differentiated based on staff needs but follows the mandated CMO teacher training and common instructional and classroom management philosophies and practices
- K. Engage parents and community partners on a regular basis for the betterment of student outcomes
- L. Ensure the safety of students through vigilance and working with the network to create effective and safe procedures throughout campus
- M. Communicate school needs to local IT staff and local facilities staff who report to the Chief Information Officer and

*Specific Responsibilities of the Principal, Grant Planning Phase:*

- A. Shadow Principals rotating through all AMS campuses to learn all duties expected of acting Principals for a period of no less than three months.
- B. Work with the AMS CMO team to create a marketing and outreach plan and critical path for opening AMSSM on time for the first day of school on July 30, 2020
- C. Partner with community members and understand the needs of families to ensure the AMS program will be successful and to provide feedback to CMO and Board on potential AMS program augmentations or where families need additional supports
- D. Work with the CMO Academic Department to secure all necessary training and curricula for the AMSSM teaching staff
- E. Provide progress updates on school launch to CMO, to the Governing Board on all academic and non-academic school goals
- F. Work with the AMS CMO Academic Department to confirm all supplies and technology necessary for the school
- G. Develop all school operational procedures and delegate duties among administrative staff with approval by the CMO

**AMS Charter Management Organization (CMO) Responsibilities:**

The CMO's responsibilities are as follows:

- A. Provide all back-office functions for the efficient, solvent, and effective operation of the school including accounting, grants, student information systems, legal,

media and press, advocacy, HR, teacher recruitment, student marketing, facilities management, IT, and design and development of the common elements of the academic program

- B. Ensure a high level of academic, operational, and financial performance, clean yearly audits, compliance with all required laws, the authorizer, ADE, and all other entities for the continued operation of the school and preservation of the 501 (C)3 status of the corporation
- C. Work with the Board to develop a Strategic Plan and Logic Model aligned to the overall mission and existing scope of the school's charter contract as authorized by the state including the development of an CMO and school-level succession plan and assist the Board, as requested, with the Board's succession plan
- D. Develop training for the Board and coordinate all Board meetings as instructed by the Board to ensure the ability of all Board members to fulfill critical functions
- E. Ensure the AMS model is implemented with full fidelity including advanced STEAM, remediation programs, extended day instruction, before and after school programs, partnerships and parent engagement, extracurriculars, advanced high school placement, exposure to STEM careers, etc.
- F. Meet the goals of the school and focusing on the means by which the annual and long-term school goals will be achieved through the supervision of the school Principal and holding the Principal accountable to the implementation of the program
- G. Develop dashboards and KPIs in all academic, financial, and operational areas

- H. Monitor key metrics and report progress on a regular basis to the Board
- I. Coach and supervise school leaders based on observations and school data including achievement and survey, ensuring data is being used to inform decision-making at the campus level, and development of interim action plans in conjunction with the Principal for the achievement of short-term goals
- J. Assist in the customization of the program suited to local needs including further development of community outreach strategies
- K. Develop common training of new teachers and leaders as well as supporting school leaders for development of further training as necessary

#### **Responsibilities Summary of Key Positions at CMO**

In anticipation of growth, the AMS CMO has significantly expanded its staff to include approximately 40 staff members, many of whom are former campus employees with in-depth knowledge of AMS programs, who help to implement the AMS model at all campuses, including AMSSM. The following is not a complete list of responsibilities for each position nor all positions, but an executive summary of the duties of key personnel.

#### **CMO Co-Chief Executive Officer of Academics, Tatyana Chayka**

- A. Lead the design and delegate the implementation of program innovations impacting all campuses
- B. Supervise, coach, hire, and evaluate the SPED Director and Superintendent and Director of Academics and serve as a coach to the Principals alongside with the Superintendent

- C. Work together with the Board to develop the Logic Model and revise and update the Strategic Plan as appropriate
- D. Report to the Board and take directions on initiatives and plans to improve schools
- E. Study, network with, and learn from other high-performing charter and other networks across the country to ensure the AMS network continues to be one of Arizona's highest performing charter school networks in low income communities
- F. Engage every campus, maintaining an active presence on campus, and frequently monitoring and evaluating progress on each campus to ensure AMS CMO and Board policies always reflect local needs
- G. Implement all academic responsibilities at an exceptional level as contractually obligated by the management contract for the operation of high-performing charter schools
- H. Work with the AMSSM Board to develop and uphold the AMSSM mission, vision, and principles and create a culture of excellence and community in parents, students, and families
- I. Account for academic outcomes in contractual agreement with AMSS, Inc.

*CMO Co-Chief Executive Officer of Operations and Growth, Kim Chayka*

The Co-CEO of Operations responsibilities are as follows:

- A. Oversee the successful operations at all existing campuses and the successful execution of all growth efforts
- B. Supervise, coach, hire, and evaluate the Chief Information Officer, Chief Financial Officer, the Director of Talent, and the Director of Marketing and Outreach

- C. Report to the Board and take direction on initiatives and plans to improve schools
- D. Work together with the Board to develop the Logic Model and revise and update the Strategic Plan as appropriate
- E. Implement all operational and financial responsibilities at an exceptional level of results as contractually obligated by the management contract for the operation of high-performing, financially viable, compliant school campuses
- F. Lead the development of policies working in conjunction with the Board
- G. Ensure corporate compliance for the AMSS, Inc. 501(c)3
- H. Lead the AMS CMO by developing growth plans for approval by the Board including leading executive and director level teams to create finance, construction, and marketing plans
- I. Serve as the chief liaison to the authorizer and ensure the acceptance of all major amendments
- J. Work with the Board to ensure open meeting law and compliance with other obligations of the Board per the authorizer, state, and federal law
- K. Lead political advocacy and responses to media with Superintendent; acts as figurehead, maintaining and developing relationships with community, authorizers, legislators, regulators, donors, financial institutions, and media
- L. Ensure the Governing Board has dashboards in all areas of school operation to make timely and informed decisions

AMS Superintendent

- A. Supervise, coach, hire, and evaluate the Principals with regards to their implementation of the AMS model in existing schools as well as the school launch at AMSSM
- B. Ensure that the academic program developed by the AMS network is implemented with fidelity at each school site
- C. Monitor the academic and non-academic program compliance regulations required by the Arizona Department of Education, the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools, and the federal government
- D. Ensure regulatory and legal compliance for EL students and the Federal school lunch program at all campuses
- E. Maintain an unparalleled school culture by coaching School Principals on effective school leadership practices with an emphasis on campus presence and dedication to the principles and values of AMS
- F. Assist with political advocacy and responses to media in collaboration with the Co-CEO of Growth and Operations to develop relationships with community, authorizers, legislators, regulators, donors, and media
- G. Ensure campuses are trained and are receiving adequate support in all programs and instructional technology
- H. Approve the delegation of duties and operational plans, training, and execution of plans at each school site including pickup and drop-off, visitor policy, attendance policy, duties rosters, etc.

Chief Financial Officer

- A. Ensure schools stay financially solvent, pass annual audits with no material findings, and meet all lender and bond debt covenants
- B. Supervise, coach, hire, and evaluate all CMO financial personnel, Director of Facilities, the Director of Human Resources, and the Director of Grants
- C. Work together with the Co-CEOs and Board to develop financial models that support high-performing charter schools, retention of teachers, and the financial solvency of all schools, as well as the CMO
- D. Oversee the forecasting and reporting of accurate, timely projections (including annual state budgets and multiple year proformas) for all schools in order to ensure the solvency and financial strength of all campuses and the CMO, development of all budgets, and budget presentations with the Board
- E. Work with legal in conjunction with the Superintendent, as necessary, on all high risk or sensitive HR issues
- F. Serve as the “developer” or “owner’s representative” tasked with completing financing and construction on time at all new campuses
- G. Develop budgets in conjunction with School Principals regarding discretionary budget items
- H. Ensure that the accounting policy including cash handling and inventory procedures is followed at all campuses

Chief Information Officer

- A. Supervise, coach, hire, and evaluate all IT staff including the Director of Student Information Systems, Network Administrators, and local school IT staff
- B. Develop policies for and ensure the integrity, preservation, and security of all data on all school networks by employing physical means such as firewalls as well as appropriate software and configurations including antivirus, encryption, patching, etc.
- C. Ensure clean annual audits on attendance compliance requirements
- D. Develop policies for and oversee users in Windows, Outlook, and all major software applications requiring significant configuration
- E. Oversee the deployment of access point controls, security systems, technology infrastructure, and delivery and configuration of technology for all new campuses including printers, student laptops and Chromebooks, and teacher laptops
- F. Manage website settings as necessary working in conjunction with the Marketing Team
- G. Work with the AMS CFO to develop technology maintenance, inventory, and requisition policies and to approve technology plans and execution for all new campus construction
- H. Ensure a high level of responsiveness from the IT team to all campuses through regular meetings with the IT team and by using a ticketing system
- I. Ensure school student data is reported accurately and timely for payment of schools by state and other entities such for Title I, IDEA, and other programs

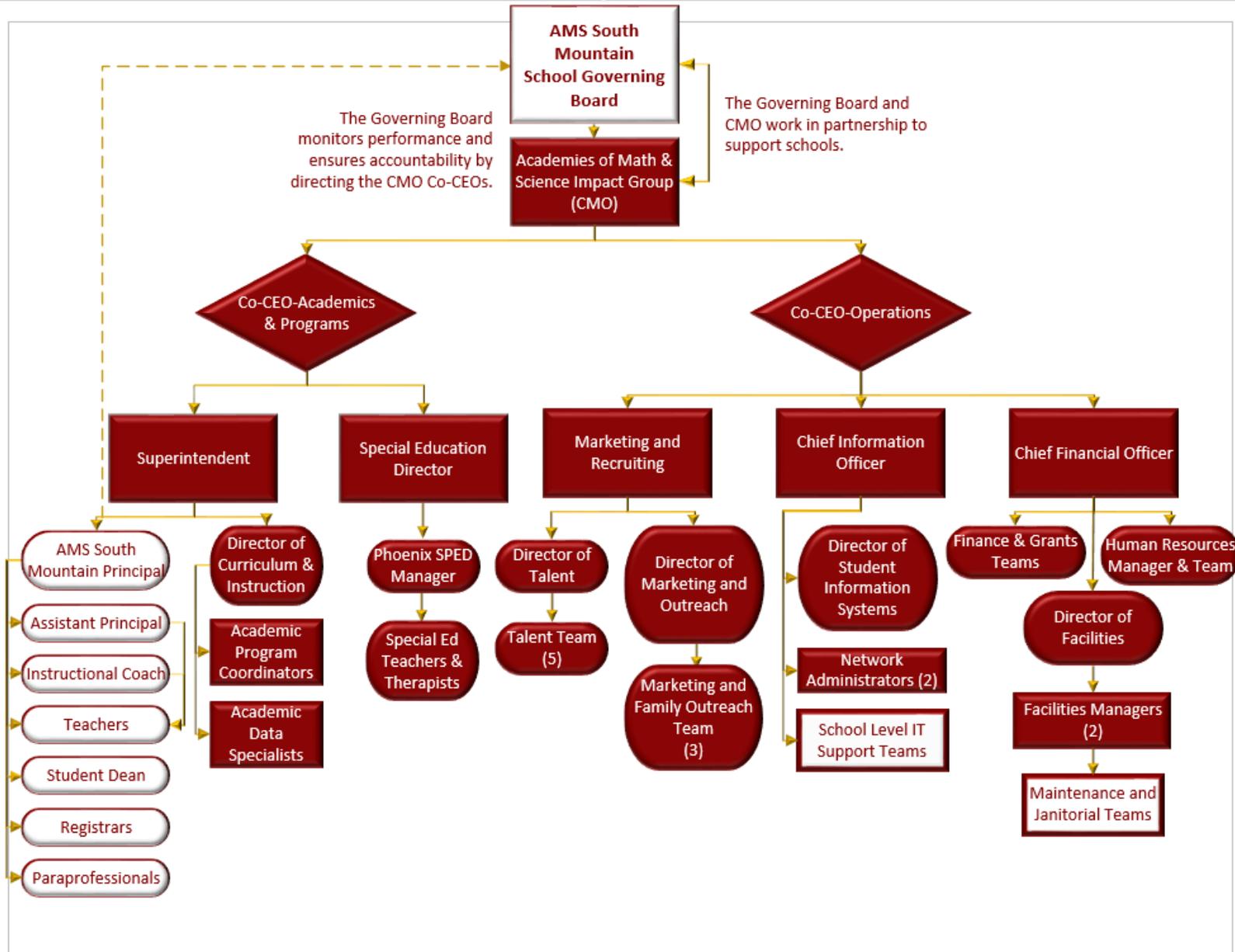
- J. Develop training for technology throughout the back-office organization for all new systems working with all departments
- K. Oversee all custom application development including API and custom links for HR, talent, recruitment, student information, and other systems

Special Education Director

- A. Supervise, coach, hire, and evaluate the special education coordinator, special education teachers, and all hired and contracted SLPs and other therapists at all schools
- B. Ensure all SPED students have access to and ability to succeed in AMS's program and receive appropriate hours and instruction as defined in their IEPs and 504 plans
- C. Work together with the SPED staff, as necessary, in the crafting of IEPs, 504 accommodation plans, etc.
- D. Work together with the CFO during annual audits for all SPED compliance items
- E. Ensure compliance with IDEA, ADA, 504, and all state and authorizer requirements
- F. Develop and oversee the implementation of the Special Education Policy, systems, and tools including everything from special education curriculum to special education professional development
- G. Work and consult with legal as appropriate to protect the interest of the school and students



Arizona Charter Schools Program  
Arizona Department of Education



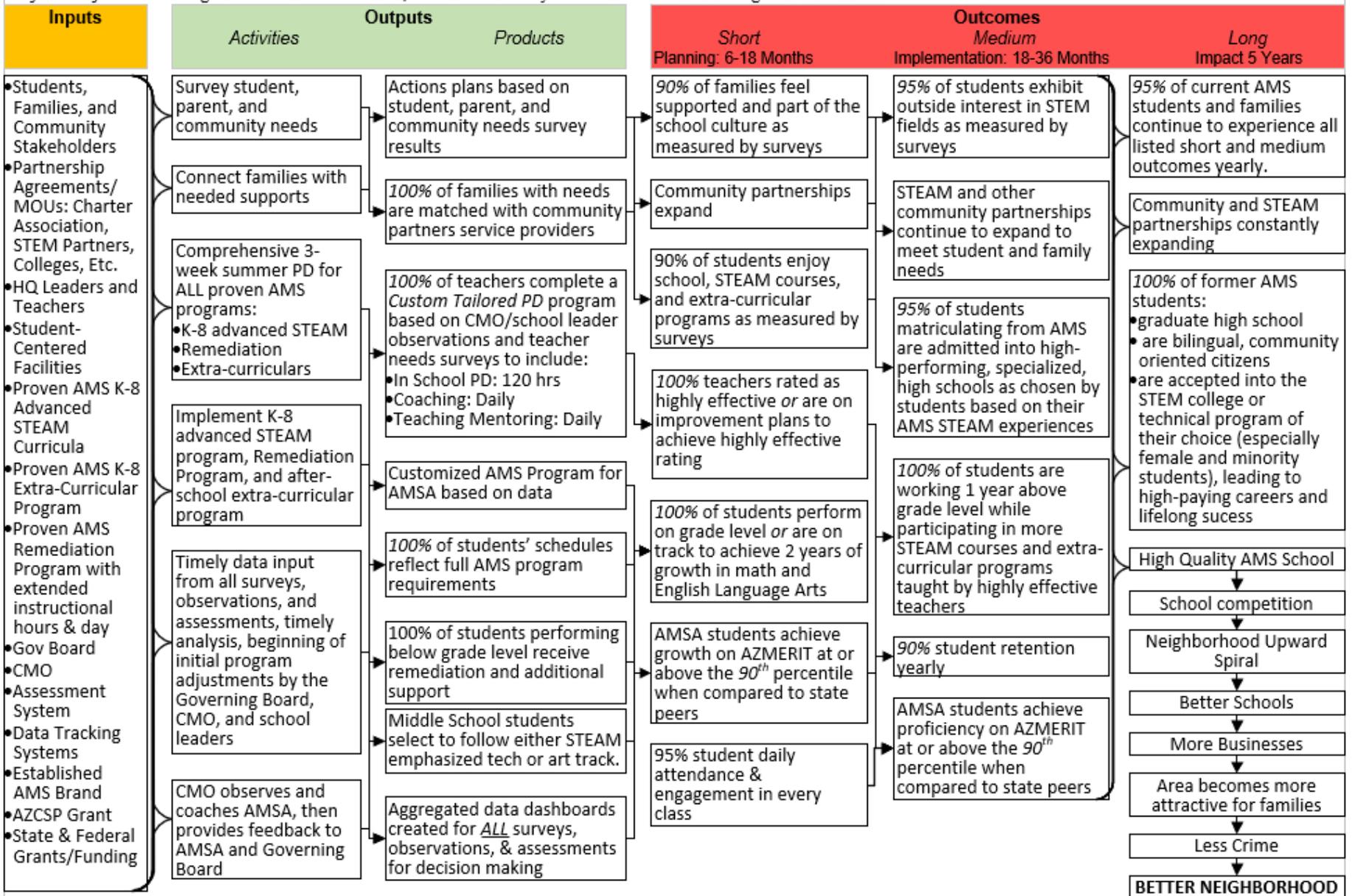


Arizona Charter Schools Program  
Arizona Department of Education

2. Describe how the governing authority will create and monitor the strategic planning and implementation of the school using the logic model template provided. See the Logic Model Components Definitions in “Terms to Know”  
<https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=5bbd2fff1dcb250b9035198c>

### Arizona Charter Schools Program Logic Model

Project's Objectives: Through a well-rounded education, we transform today's Scholars into tomorrow's global visionaries.



**Assumptions:** state & fed funds, qualified teaching candidates & retention, student retention, partners who have resources, parent engagement in community and school, effectiveness of program with new student population

**External Factors:** potential recession & impact on funding, political risk for charters, family mobility based on socioeconomic factors, incoming student achievement scores, and adequacy of resources and learning environment at home

### **Logic Model Narrative**

The Logic Model above is a one-page, causative summary model of how a new AMS school structures its' goals, accountability, and impact. The Logic Model was developed in a joint effort by the Governing Board and the AMS CMO in conjunction with updating the Board's former Strategic Plan. Both the Logic Model and the Board's Strategic Plan are formally approved by the Governing Board. The Logic Model will ensure that the AMS CMO and school leadership continue to implement what has made AMS successful over the last 20 years, as well as provide the Governing Board a roadmap of success. The model is a useful summary of what has made AMS successful and how AMS will continue to reach success in the new community at AMSSM.

### **Inputs**

#### **Students, Families, and Community Stakeholders**

Parents, students, and families will directly help AMSSM customize the AMS program to fit their unique needs through participation in surveys, meetings, parent-teacher-student conferences, and other avenues of communication. Community stakeholders include local elected officials and city staff and departments; business, civic, STEM partner leaders and their organizations; social services organizations; and charity organizations and various other non-profits. AMSSM will communicate with these stakeholders initially via surveys and the Comprehensive Needs Assessment event, community surveys, and during the year through the various methods described in earlier sections of the grant including but not limited to PAC meetings, focus groups, additional surveys, yearly meetings to discuss progress towards goals with community, and other methods with families including Class Dojo, letters, calls,

etc. Community stakeholders, especially those with critical insight into student and family needs, will participate in the customization of the AMS program to fit the needs of the community.

Partnership Agreements/MOUs:

AMSSM has already developed local partnership agreements or is in the process of formalizing agreements with various partners within the community that will help meet the needs of families and students in need of support due to a lack of resources. Additionally, AMSSM will have many partners in order to ensure education offered is at the highest level possible including the Arizona Charter School Association, A for Arizona, AZCSP office (these first three are especially key for sharing best practices), TFA, and many others as highlighted throughout this grant. By serving as a haven that connects families with support services, AMSSM families will feel more supported, welcome, and part of their local community.

High-Quality (HQ) Leaders and Teachers

Great teachers and leaders are paramount to the successful implementation of the AMS model.

The Proven AMS K-8 Advanced Steam Curricula, Extracurricular Program, and Remediation

Program

AMSSM will operate the AMS brand of proven academic, remediation, and extracurricular programs that are proven to lead to student success in low-socioeconomic areas. All staff will begin their AMS careers with a three-week professional development program prior to the start of school to learn the foundation of each AMS program. AMSSM teachers will receive critical training on how to utilize the AMS curricula and AMS resources

to best serve the needs of the school. Once the foundation of knowledge is in place, and once AMSSM has received appropriate community feedback on how to best adjust the program, AMSSM school leaders, the AMS CMO, and the AMSSM Board will use community data to customize the AMS program based on local needs. Customization of the AMS program varies from campus to campus and is entirely based on local needs. Examples of unique adaptations at AMS campuses include: local extracurricular offerings based on student cultural backgrounds and interests, Cafecito (an informal gathering of Spanish-only speaking parents with the Principal in addition to regular PAC meetings), providing parents computer labs during afterschool who do not have technology at home, providing parents and students laundry services for their uniforms, and organizing food and clothing drives for students and families in need.

#### *Governing Board and CMO*

The Governing Board monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of school programs based on data provided by the CMO. Born from the Board's Strategic Plan, the Logic Model is used as a foundational document that guides CMO accountability and AMSSM efforts in support of the school's mission. The CMO, reporting to the Board, oversees the school by coaching and supervising the Principal and ensuring that the school operates in compliance with Governing Board directives and that the school's operation maintains complete alignment with proven foundational AMS programs.

#### *Data Tracking Systems*

The CMO designs and implements data tracking systems to accurately keep track of data from surveys, teacher observations, and student assessments. This data is used to

create dashboards, KPIs, and outcomes (aligned to Logic Model) that effectively summarize program results to help guide the Governing Board, CMO, and school leaders in making program adjustments to best suit the needs of the students and community.

*AZCSP Grant and State/Federal Funding and Grants*

A public school cannot operate a successful program without appropriate funding. As described in Section A, funds from the grant will aid in planning and implementation activities related to engaging families and the community while building a school that meets their needs, as well as provide the school with critical start-up supplies as allowable. A full description of AMSSM's proposed AZCSP budget can be found in Section G of this application. Further funds, such as state equalization and Title 1, are used to keep programs in operation moving forward.

**Outputs**

Each new AMS school produces a variety of proven program products in the execution of AMS's standardized, community-driven objectives during the new school planning period. These outputs are designed to help the school develop a customized program for the community in which it resides.

*Survey Results, Action Plans, and Partnerships*

Survey results from students, parents, and the community provide valuable information that will help AMSSM customize the AMS program to meet a range of local needs. In recognition of any school's ability to help improve an entire neighborhood, AMSSM will work with local families to connect them with community partners that may also meet any needs that AMSSM cannot provide alone. This service as a community liaison will be

offered to both students and their families, and those who do not attend the school but stand to benefit from the school's connection to a variety of community service providers. AMSSM will strive to foster a sense of community that extends beyond enrolled students and families, further providing students with a community centered around growth and success.

### AMS Program Products

AMS programs are built upon a strong foundation of academic and non-academic success. By enrolling in AMS's minimum program and curriculum requirements, AMSSM students will participate in the full AMS program. The well-rounded AMS program does not require students to opt-in or pay for additional programs or classes to receive its full benefit. Due to the prevalence of student engagement and attendance issues in socioeconomically disadvantaged populations, student engagement and attendance are heavily addressed by the basic AMS program from the very first day of school. One example of AMS's emphasis on engagement begins in middle school when middle schoolers choose to participate in a technology or art track, both with a STEAM focus. AMS recognizes the importance of a well-rounded education but strives to involve student interest in their own education to build accountability and increase engagement. And, regardless of track, AMS middle school students still participate in at least one or more classes from the other track to maintain a well-rounded experience.

As the AMS network expanded, it became evident that the program needed to be specifically customized to meet the needs of each new community that it serves. By providing AMSSM staff with the foundational knowledge of all the AMS programs and survey data from all stakeholders, AMSSM planning staff become experts in how to use the programs to best

serve the needs of the community. AMSSM's Planning Principal has also served as the Principal of existing AMS school serving a similar student population and will bring keen insight on best practices to achieve academic success in underserved communities with locally adjusted programs.

### *Data-Driven Decision-Making*

Successful charter school networks, such as AMS, have realized from the beginning that an effective school must also serve as a diagnostician in the education of its students. Data derived from student, parent, and community surveys, observations of teachers and programs, and student assessments provide valuable information when making program decisions that benefit the school. AMS Data is collected and summarized in dashboards so that it can be correctly interpreted by school leaders. Schools use this data to diagnose any challenges, work with the CMO to develop solutions, and seek approval of any program solutions or adjustments from the Governing Boards. This data-driven decision model is ongoing, based on the regular surveys, assessments, and observations conducted within the school, and serves as a constant reminder that a school can always improve its program to provide the best education possible to all students.

### **Outcomes**

The outcomes described in the above Logic Model resonate at the heart of AMS's mission and history. AMS's founder, Tatyana Chayka, opened the Academy of Math and Science Prince with just 30 students to provide students from a low-socioeconomic background the same opportunities that students from high-socioeconomic backgrounds

receive. These outcomes have evolved as the network has grown, but still serve as the heart of what each AMS school strives to achieve every single day.

### Short-Term Outcomes

Within the planning stage and opening of AMSSM, it is important to make sure that student, parent, and community needs are appropriately addressed. A hungry, cold or hot, or ill child will find it difficult to attend school and learn. AMSSM will work to alleviate these challenges by connecting families with community partners that can help meet their needs so that their children can effectively learn and feel included in school culture.

Recognizing that it takes highly effective educators to really make an academic difference in the lives of students who are academically behind, all staff are either already skilled enough to be rated as highly effective or are on track to becoming highly effective. The combination of helping families and students have their needs met, employing effective teachers, along with implementing a customized academic program proven to help students increase academic growth, leads to student success. This growth is one of the most important indicators AMSSM will focus on during its planning and early implementation periods.

### Medium Outcomes

The medium outcomes continue to emphasize the growth of students, meeting the needs of students and families through community partnership, and the academic program, but move forward to focus on what can further be achieved after the first year of the school has been complete and the school begins its next academic year. The emphasis on academic success now includes proficiency and students are further encouraged to see high-schools

and outside experiences that will further their interest in the variety of sustainable careers offered under the STEAM designation.

### Long-Term Outcomes

Long-Term outcomes for AMSSM begin with emphasizing and building upon the short- and medium-term outcomes. However, these outcomes include each AMSSM student's future beyond graduation from the AMS program. Both AMS's own experience and educational research show that most collegiate plans are made during a student's 8th and 9th grade year of schooling. As such, AMSSM hopes to provide an education that instills a lifelong love of learning and STEAM interest that will drive each student's success and enjoyment in high school and beyond. The outcome of achieving this goal is that AMSSM students grow up to be worldly citizens who give back to their communities, turning their once low-socioeconomic neighborhoods into safer, more productive neighborhoods rife with opportunity and growth.

### Assumptions

The AMS Network of schools, the AMS CMO, and the AMSSM Governing Board know that the success of AMSSM's programs depends upon assumed resources that existing AMS schools have utilized to produce successful schools. All involved parties have established contingency plans to ensure that any assumption that is proven incorrect or any resource that is made unavailable can be accounted and compensated for. For example, if parent engagement within the school is not as high as assumed, there are strategies in place to increase family engagement. Or, if the school's financial portfolio decreases in outlook, AMS maintains a \$700,000 line of credit and inter-company borrowing as necessary.

### **External Factors**

External factors affecting the successful operation of a school are expected, especially when operating schools that depend upon different sources of funding. Similar to the assumptions, AMSSM will operate with contingency plans in place to address external factors that may inhibit the school's ability to deliver its program and impact to the school community. For example, incoming student achievement scores are addressed from the moment a student is enrolled. Placement tests are given to students to ensure that they are placed in the of the academic programs that most effectively serves their needs.

3. What is the succession plan for governing body members and key school leadership to sustain the school's mission?

AMS carries out succession planning in several ways within the organization including cross training of all staff on every function within the organization and employing a pipeline of leaders at the staff and governance level to effectively oversee policy decisions, govern, and manage AMS schools.

### **The AMSSM Governing Board**

The initial Governing Board at the AMSSM campus shall be seven members. Ongoing efforts are being conducted for the recruitment of additional Board members to bring any additional skillsets required to properly serve the new school community. With the opening of the new school site Academy of Math and Science South Mountain and the Academy of Math and Science Avondale in the same year, the AMS Phoenix Schools Governing Board will consistently monitor Board effectiveness to quickly

identify skill gaps that may hinder the Board's ability to deliver on school objectives. For the opening of two new school sites for the 19-20 school year (AMS Glendale and AMS Peoria Advanced), AMS recruited a local Senior Program Director of the YMCA and a Glendale Police Sergeant to expand existing Board knowledge specifically in community programming and school safety, both from a facilities and disciplinary standpoint. The existing seven members of the AMSSM Governing Board will evaluate community needs and ongoing demographic research in the consideration of further membership directly from the AMSSM community. The AMS CMO and Governing Board will communicate clear roles and responsibilities to existing and potential Board members to ensure that succession or further recruitment does not lead to a decrease in Board performance.

*Responsibilities of the President of the Board*

The President of the Board presides over meetings, sets the agenda, and forms committees related to finance, academics, facilities, or as appropriate. The President of the Board is responsible for leading the Board when working with the CMO and Principal in the development of the Board's strategic plan. This plan is outlined in the associated Logic Model for which the Board holds the CMO accountable. This critical role is cross trained to all Board members by requiring regular attendance of Board members at all board meetings. Any committees formed are required to have a minimum of two members in order to ensure the redundancy of knowledge develops across the responsibilities of the committee. The AMS model has been, whenever possible, to hold Board meetings with all Board members present to ensure that all members are equally informed and able to provide specialized input on agenda items.

## **Governing Board Recruitment and Development**

AMS recruits a Board with diverse skillsets, ideally with enough Board members to ensure ample overlap of all skills. The AMS CMO, working alongside the AMSSM Board, accomplishes this by maintaining a Board Skills Matrix and ensuring that all Board members recruited and up for election meet a critical need within the AMSSM Board. AMSSM will continue to recruit Board members until appropriate redundancy is achieved. The AMSSM Board will build a pipeline of community partners that can be drawn upon if sudden changes in membership or the need for succession is accelerated.

Although AMS schools usually have willing community members that met the needs of new schools, the AMS has a total of 7 committed Board members. This large membership base can be leveraged for the benefit of a school in need as has been the case in the past.

AMSSM Board Members are responsible for increasing Board membership on an as needed basis and encouraged to bring new applicants with diverse talents and skills to the board for consideration.

Board members are recruited by:

- Building relationships with the upper management of local companies and with faculty and staff of higher educational institutions. New contacts are invited to tour AMS schools and to meet the current Governing Board and key AMS leadership who present program design and results.

- Specifically building relationships with business, education, and non-profit leaders. AMS Governing Boards research, identify, meet, and recruit community members through one-on-one outreach and at community events.
- Contacting professional colleagues of existing board members
- Posting Board openings at each school, on the AMS website, and in other public places listing the specific qualities and backgrounds of desirable candidates.
- Networking at local community and education events.

### **Screening of Governing Board Members**

When a potential board member is identified, the candidate will undergo a comprehensive application process. The candidate will submit a resume or curriculum vitae and interview with at least one existing board member. Recruits who pass the first interview will join a board meeting for a group interview in which they will give their background and discuss their qualifications. The Governing Board interviewers complete a board member criteria worksheet during the interview. If the applicant meets the required criteria, the Governing Board will vote on the approval of the board member at the next meeting, allowing ample time for full consideration of the candidate.

Questions and requests during the interview will include the following:

- How does your personal philosophy on education match the school's?
- Provide a brief summary of what you view as the present-day challenges in education relating to policy, funding, aims of education, effectiveness of existing schools, and any other challenges you see.

- How many hours can you commit to AMS per week?
- How will you improve the educational program and/or the financial management of the school? Be specific in terms of skills you bring and activities you plan to engage in.
- Please discuss specific experiences within each area of expertise on the Board Evaluation Framework. Please discuss your prior commitments to similar organizations.
- Please discuss anything which is not already in your resume or cover letter that may be directly relevant to your potential position on the Board.

#### **Training of the Governing Board**

All new Board members are trained within the first year of their membership in all critical aspects of the AMS program. Board members are required to read and familiarize themselves with the Board strategic plan and Logic Model and existing local needs and partnerships in place. Additionally, the AMS CMO provides training in the governance of AMS schools according to the AMSS, Inc. bylaws to all new members. And, Board members are sent to various trainings and workshops including those provided by the Arizona Charter School Association on effective governance or training which can be held on an AMS campus provided by the Arizona Ombudsman on Open Meeting law. Further training also includes or covers the following:

- Retreats scheduled around key conferences
- The roles and responsibilities of a non-profit board and its members

- Role of the Corporate Board versus the role of the Governing Board
- AMSSM academic program in the detail necessary for an external party to evaluate the program
- Existing policies in place at the schools including student manual, accounting, and HR
- Team-building activities and exercises

The training requirement ensures effective succession and that the Board can execute its duties with no member's resignations negatively impacting the Board.

#### **Succession Plan for the Governing Board**

The AMSSM Board Succession Plan has several components to ensure that the Board always maintains a membership base with the appropriate skills and mission alignment to advocate for the school's mission, outcomes and impact, improvement efforts, and can effectively monitor progress.

For a succession plan to be effective, newly recruited Board members must be immediately effective. AMSSM has adopted a formal Board Evaluation Criteria that the Board will use to evaluate all new members for election. Among other questions or factors that may be evaluated as organizational needs dictate, the Board will ensure that all applicants meet critical skill needs according to a Board Skills Matrix, have the appropriate temperament to mesh with the rest of the Board and serve AMS communities, and share a deep personal commitment to at-risk communities and an advanced STEAM education as the path to prosperity.

The foundation of AMSSM's Governing Board is based on the current board's networking effort to recruit possible future board members to create a pipeline of Governing Board candidates that have demonstrated interest in AMS school governance. This strategy ensures that the school and Governing Board are continuously aware of possible future board members who possess the common or an exceptional set of AMS Governing Board skills in anticipation of any Governing Board membership changes. Continuity of skill sets enables the governing board to continue to oversee the school and ensure the mission is being met.

To help maintain the integrity of the Board, all Governing Board members entering retirement from the board are encouraged to select successors while still holding their titles. However, AMS recognizes that unexpected board member retirements may occur, and all AMS Governing Boards are always made up of at least two board members with overlapping skill sets and knowledge of school governance. Furthermore, any current Governing Board member performing key functions for a school will be required to cross train at least one existing board member on those duties to ensure that the continuation of the AMS program is uninterrupted.

As previously mentioned, when new board members are elected, AMS contracts with vendors or consultants to train new members. New members are sent to relevant conferences to ensure all board members are equipped with the appropriate Governing Board skill sets.

### **Succession Plan for the Charter Management Organization**

The CMO maintains succession plans similar to the AMS Governing Boards. All key leaders within the CMO perform specific, clearly communicated duties. And, at least one other person within the CMO has been cross trained on each leader's specific duties and can step into the role of any leader should a leader's transition with or without notice.

The Co-Chief Executive Officer of Academics has cross-trained the AMS Superintendent on all duties pertaining to the role of Co-CEO of Academics. In turn, the Superintendent has cross-trained the Director of Curriculum and Instruction to step into the role of Superintendent should the need ever arise. Various members of the academic team are cross trained in select duties performed by the Director of Curriculum and Instruction and together, can perform the director's duties until a new director is appointed.

The Co-Chief Executive Officer of Operations and Growth has cross trained the Chief Financial Officer on all duties pertaining to the role of Co-CEO of Operations and Growth. In turn, the Chief Financial Officer has cross-trained the Finance Manager to step into the role of Chief Financial Officer should the need arise. Various members of the finance department are crossed-trained in select duties performed by the Finance Manager and together can perform the finance manager's duties until a new manager is appointed.

Cross-training of all key personnel within the CMO ensures that the management of AMSSM will continue with full support from the CMO at all times. This ensures that the

school's mission can continue uninterrupted despite any personnel changes occurring within the CMO.

### **AMSSM Leadership Succession**

#### **Pipeline**

AMS maintains a pipeline of leaders ready to take the helm of leadership within any AMS school. Each AMS school has one or two Principals and one or two secondary leaders, the Assistant Principal(s), who is(are) capable of stepping into the position of Principal at any school within the AMS network. Should any Principal, even a planning Principal, move on to another position, an Assistant Principal is available to fulfill their duties. Each school also has a lead teacher or an instructional coach on staff, trained and capable of stepping into the position of Assistant Principal at any AMS school. The continuation of the critical role of the Principal and Assistant Principal in all AMS schools ensures that the academic program at any AMS school is never interrupted. Effective leadership redundancy ensures that established schools and planning schools can maintain their ability to deliver on school objectives.

#### **Professional Growth for Leaders**

All Assistant Principals, Deans, and Instructional Coaches attend bi-weekly leadership meetings to address instructional challenges at schools and provide ongoing development of leadership. Additionally, all of these positions attend a two-week leadership retreat designed to develop leadership skills as well as increase knowledge and implementation of AMS programs. AMS Principals attend all of these as well and meet one-on-one with the Superintendent and Co-CEO of Academics for ongoing development

according to their progress on the core competencies of an AMS Leader in the Principal Evaluation Framework.

### Cross Training

A valuable strategy in ensuring continuity in school operation is the cross-training of any and all key personnel. It is an AMS expectation that at least two staff members can be considered masters of important functions, creating a staff that is highly cross trained in all important operations and functions within a school. This increases the likelihood that when positions become vacant that they will be filled internally with qualified personnel. AMSSM leadership and staff will use AMS developed manuals for all crucial areas of school operation. When a key person is replaced, the succession will be optimized by:

- Providing detailed position responsibilities, expectations and evaluation procedures
- Providing manuals for areas of responsibility
- Providing a comprehensive week-by-week calendar
- Providing training for areas of new responsibility
- Allowing time to shadow someone familiar with responsibilities

4. Describe how the charter school that is considered a local educational agency under ARS§15-181 will comply with sections 613(a)(5) and 613(e)(1)(B) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. *ESEA, Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303(f)(1)(A)(iii)(III)*

## **AMS IDEA Compliance**

Students with a disability, as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), are entitled to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). As a public charter school in the state of Arizona, AMSSM will meet the provisions of FAPE by providing special education services to qualified students in accordance with all state and federal regulations at no cost to the student or family. Students who qualify for special education services under IDEA will be provided with services by a state certified special education staff. Students suspected to have a disability will be evaluated by a qualified examiner. The determination of eligibility is made by the Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation Team (MET) through the use the information obtained by the examiner and other sources. The Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation team consists of parent(s), special education teacher(s), general education teacher(s), qualified examiner(s) or persons qualified to interpret evaluation results, and an agency representative. Students who are already eligible for special education receive services once they are identified to the school as a student with a disability.

### **Child Find**

The purpose of Child Find is to identify those students with possible disabilities and those students in need of Special Education Services. AMS Child Find policies are reviewed annually and revised as needed. If a concern about a possible disability is noted with a child either through the observation period, academic progress, social interactions, behavior, or previous school records, parents are notified within 10

calendar days of the screening. Screening for all new students occurs within 45 calendar days of the first day of that student's enrollment date.

*Evaluations:* This process begins with the gathering of relevant functional, developmental and academic information as provided by appropriate staff members, parents and qualified licensed educational professionals.

*IEP Development:* If a student is found to be eligible for and in need of special education services during the eligibility process, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will be developed within 30 calendar days of the date the student was found eligible for Special Education. The IEP team will consist of the parent(s), a special education teacher, at least one general education teacher, a person to interpret the information, and a school/district administrator.

*IEP Implementation:* Special education services will be provided to the student as outlined in the IEP. The IEP will be given to all general education teachers who have a vested interest in the student.

#### *MET Re-evaluation*

The MET (eligibility process) will be conducted at least once every three years. However, if the student has a change of situation, if the parent or the school feel there is new information regarding the student's eligibility, a meeting may be called at any time by the parent or the school.

#### *IEP Review and Revision*

The qualified student's IEP will be reviewed and revised at least once annually. However, parents or the school may call an IEP meeting before the annual review date

to discuss progress, make changes, create addendums, or adjust the accommodations or modifications.

### Prior Written Notice

A Prior Written Notice (PWN) will be provided to the parents after every meeting they attend as part of the IDEA process (MET, IEP), and prior to the provision of any new services.

### Procedural Safeguards

Procedural Safeguards are offered to parents at least annually. Procedural Safeguard documentation explains to parents their rights and the rights of their student throughout the special education process. This document also provides information to the parent/guardian on the process for filing a Due Process complaint with the State Education Agency. Contact information for state agencies that provide support and training for the parents is also provided in this document.

Special Education Services will be provided in one of the following formats:

- *Full Inclusion with Collaboration* – Students who receive special education services will have access to the general education curriculum in the general education classroom setting with specialized instruction provided by the general education teacher. The special education teacher and the general education teacher will consult during the planning phase in order to ensure proper accommodations and modifications are addressed in the lesson plans.
- *Full Inclusion with Direct Services* – Students who receive special education services will receive access to the general education curriculum in the general

education classroom with the support of special education staff members during direct instruction and independent practice.

- *Majority Inclusion with Specialized Support Outside the General Education*

*Classroom* – Students who receive special education services will receive access to the general education curriculum in the general education classroom for the majority of the day. However, they will be pulled out for small group/individual instruction during the independent practice portion of general education classroom lessons.

#### Related Services

Related services such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, or any other specialized need, will take place in a location separate from the student's non-disabled peers. When special education students spend time with a related service provider, they will not be held liable for any information provided in the general education classroom. The general education teacher will provide any and all missed information to the student upon their return.

AMS supports Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for all qualified students. AMS fully understands that students may require a wide range of educational placements. There are plans and procedures in place in order to ensure that LRE is provided to all students who receive services. If a qualified student requires services that the school does not have readily available, the Special Education Director will be responsible for securing those services from an outside agency.

AMS maintains fully certified special education teachers and related service providers. Special education staff members work closely with general education teachers to ensure that students in need of special education services are supported by strategies to help them overcome their difficulties in all areas of their education. Special Education staff regularly share strategies with the entire school staff in order to support students identified for special education services and students who do not qualify but require additional assistance.

**Leadership – Total points possible: 25 points**

1. What process is in place or will be in place to develop challenging curriculum including supplemental curriculum aligned with the state standards that meets the unique needs of disadvantaged students?

**Creating a Curriculum to Meet the Unique Needs of Disadvantaged Students**

Creating curriculum to meet the needs of economically disadvantaged students requires that the three types of social capital necessary for the successful navigation of life be interwoven into a student’s academic experience. These three types of social capital – education, social, and cultural – are crucial for students to internalize and develop so that they can translate their ambitions into creative, productive achievements over the course of their lives (VanTassel-Baska, 2017)<sup>21</sup>.

Creating an AMS curriculum that meets the needs of all students and incorporates a balanced emphasis on academic, socioemotional, and cultural learning requires

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<sup>21</sup> VanTassel-Baska, Joyce. “Curriculum Issues: What Makes Differentiated Curriculum Work?” *Gifted Child Today* 40, no. 1 (January 2017): 62–63.

understanding community needs, conducting ongoing research on best practices, studying pockets of excellence within AMS, trying new ideas and experimenting at the classroom level with high performing teachers, studying other high performing networks and districts serving similar populations, constantly evaluating the results of each school, and adjusting programs and supports as necessary. To do so, the items selected in the AMS curriculum require:

- Congruence with AMS mission and AMS Program Essentials
- Prevalence of field-tested data (not just research-based) supporting the efficacy of each program, and ideally the use of the program in high-performing public school and charter systems
- Congruency with AMS’s instructional pedagogy requiring structured learning, clear objectives, and high-engagement instructional practices
- Detailed instructional design with a focus on mastery, and spaced, massed and cumulative practice
- High level of teacher support for teachers of all experience levels including resources for alignment to state standards
- Content accuracy

The first criteria for creation of the program is critical in new school success. The AMS Network has identified has common elements of the program that have been successful from campus to campus and community to community. These elements are part of how AMS schools achieve high-perform

ing success with consistency and how AMS differentiates itself from other networks. These items are referred to as the “AMS Program Essentials” and include: (1) 14+ extracurriculars, sports, and academic clubs (developing a well-rounded student), (2) an extended school day, (3) STEAM programs, (4) tiered intervention systems based on student need, (5) components of its parent involvement, and various other program assets described throughout this application. No AMS school’s curriculum may conflict with the AMS mission nor these Program Essentials.

### The AMS Program

To align the AMS curriculum to the above items and Arizona standards, AMS looks to the National Common Core standards which have greatly influenced Arizona standards. Programs that were originally developed for the National Common Core standards have historically had close alignment to Arizona College and Career Ready Standards (AZCCR) across Mathematics and ELA specifically. Nevertheless, there is no guarantee of alignment in the future. A compounding problem for schools who look to the National Common Core is that some of the best curricula are not rewritten nor designed with state level standards in mind. Although curriculum crosswalks in use at AMS will always demonstrate alignment, in actual practice there may be gaps within individual grade levels. Therefore, AMS uses the following process to ensure that the selected curriculum always aligns with state standards:

1. The AMS Network will ensure that there is majority alignment in standards for every program selected within each grade level. When there is a majority alignment, AMS develops Pacing Guides incorporating other resources, programs, and curriculum as necessary to ensure that growth is optimal.

2. When there is not majority alignment, the AMS Network will develop detailed Pacing Guides incorporating supplementary resources specifically created to address standards into the curriculum, such as Study Island. Or, the AMS Network will pursue other curriculum with superior standards alignment if it meets criteria described throughout this section.

### **Creating, Implementing, Evaluating, and Revising the AMS Curriculum**

#### **Systematic and Sustainable Implementation of Curricula**

As the AMS network will grow to 9 campuses this coming year, each school's curriculum and programs must be implemented nearly identically (adjusted for community needs where necessary) in order to ensure that AMS can provide training, support to all campuses, and easily diagnose and assist in fixing problems. The AMS Network's Academic Team, most of whom are previous school leaders and AMS teachers who know the AMS programs well and have received numerous years of publisher training, will lead all new teacher training at all schools. Although the network will at times utilize publisher training (almost always during summer due to the high demand upon network personnel time), most of the training and all of the support during the year is provided by the network, which is a sustainable practice that reduces costs to the network and school.

To ensure program success and sustainability through teacher training, the AMS network will focus on training leaders *and* teachers by requiring that school leaders attend all curriculum training, a 2-week summer professional development specifically for AMS school leaders reviewing the entire AMS program and requirements. School leaders also receive a detailed manual with a description of AMS instructional programs and expectations of how

effective leaders must operate to effectuate AMS's proven success in disadvantaged communities. On a bi-weekly basis, all AMS Principals meet with the Superintendent for ongoing coaching and feedback, and will receive additional coaching and feedback from other personnel as they monitor the campus for program fidelity. This process ensures that school leaders are prepared to supervise curriculum implementation from day 1.

#### *Monitoring and Feedback to Ensure Implementation with Fidelity*

The AMS Network has a detailed Principal Evaluation framework that is used to monitor the implementation of the AMS curriculum. For a detailed list of those items, please see Section F, Question 5. The Network Superintendent oversees network academic personnel and maintains a dashboard of progress in all of the school's curricular expectations, which are monitored and tracked on a monthly basis with data from: classroom observations (such as alignment of schedule and general program fidelity), a centralized database for lesson plans that allow network personnel to monitor adherence to curriculum requirements and state standards, assessments (unit, benchmark, NWEA, etc.) surveys from teachers and leaders about their competence and confidence with programs, etc.

AMS Academic Department personnel issue feedback to the Principal on a weekly basis on network observations across all areas of the school program. Principals engage in one-on-one meetings with the Superintendent on a bi-weekly basis for additional feedback, in addition to their participation in the all-AMS leader meetings. Finally, school leaders from different campuses frequently meet and visit other AMS campuses in a community of practice dedicated to creative problem solving.

#### **Evaluation and Revision of the Curriculum**

Evaluation of the curriculum is aligned to clearly defined and measurable expectations for student learning and occurs at following intervals:

1. Daily formative assessments and unit assessments. For example, a failure to reach 80% mastery may indicate that a student was not placed at the correct level or that the student has learning gaps that require reteaching or targeted remediation.
2. For subjects not covered on AzM2 (AzMERIT), the AMS network will ensure that each school has at least a “B” average on those subjects in each grade level.
3. Benchmark and NWEA MAP data: The AMS Network has identified that as long as a campus consistently has approximately 65% of its students meeting growth targets that the campus will outperform 90% of all schools in its area as well as statewide relative to the disadvantaged subgroups.
4. Each year, AzM2 (AzMERIT) passing scores in ELA and Math should increase by 5% yearly and student growth percentiles should average at least 65% to attain appropriate passing scores
5. In 2 or 3 years at most, the AMSSM target is that 100% of students will be performing at or above grade level.
6. In 3-5 years at most, the AMSSM campus should be at the top 90% of the area or state relative to subgroup.
7. 95% of AMS students should develop a greater interest while being at AMS in STEM careers and 95% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders should indicate intent to attend a high-performing high school continuing their advanced education from AMS.

8. As necessary based on proposed changes to state standards approved and adopted by the State Board for Education

Should a campus fail to meet any of the factors above, the following will be considered in the decision of whether the curriculum should be revised:

1. Was the failure to meet this standard localized to a teacher, grade level, multiple but not all grade levels, or the entire school?
2. Were there any changes to the test or standard or any unusual events at the school or network level that could have precipitated the result?
3. Is there sufficient staff, student, and family buy-in into the program?
4. What were the campus's scores on the implementation of the curriculum and adherence to the school schedule?

Depending on responses to the above questions, the AMS Network will provide school leader support and training on how to achieve program results, prevent operational challenges from inhibiting student success, encourage staff buy-in, and provide targeted guidance on the implementation of programs. If the AMS Network determines that the program itself is the issue via systematic failure that cannot be explained by the factors above and if the factors above cannot be remediated, then the AMS Network will collaborate with school leadership and teachers (possibly from multiple schools), parents, the Board, and the community to drive necessary changes to the curriculum through a root cause analysis conducted in surveys, focus groups, and schoolwide meetings. The AMS Co-CEO of Academics will make a final recommendation to the Board for approval for any curriculum or program adjustments.

Regardless of the outcome of any year, AMS schools consistently strive to improve the program through regular reflection by the school leader, ongoing surveys and meetings with all stakeholders, and a Spring leadership retreat.

The above processes ensure that the AMS curriculum can be changed as needed, but only after careful research, consideration, and discussion among all key stakeholders.

### **Description of the Current AMS Curriculum and Alignment with Standards**

From their first day of kindergarten to their last day of eighth grade, AMS students conduct labs and research projects, take technology courses and learn programming and engineering, perform in drama and music recitals, play instruments, program and build robots, create art in multiple forms of media, learn to speak a foreign language, and by the time they get to middle school, they explore various careers in STEM fields of study, all while participating in a curriculum that reinforces AMS' core values of strong character. This rigorous curriculum is delivered to students using evidence-based instructional strategies proven to increase learning retention.

### **AMSSM Curriculum Description**

#### *AMS Curriculum Alignment to State Standards*

The primary curriculum for math, Saxon (K-8), and reading, Open Court (K-5) and Collections (6-8), have program crosswalks that demonstrate alignment to AZCCR state standards and Write Source has additionally been correlated to Common Core State Standards. The AMS Network has created pacing guides for K-8 for math and science incorporating lessons that develop standards that need greater coverage using Study Island lessons as a primary resource. By the time the school opens, the AMS network will have completed full pacing

guides for implementation in reading and writing as well. At present, ELA teachers are required to create an Annual Plan during the summer and submit all lesson plans on a weekly basis including one writing and one reading lesson from Study Island, which supplement the state standards. AMS Teachers have already completed this for the 18-19 school year and AMSSM teachers may pull from successful Study Island lesson plans that other teachers have already aligned.

Study Island is a supplementary curriculum for math, ELA, and science used to ensure full alignment and coverage of state standards, a resource for reteaching materials to help students master AMS benchmarks, and is used in conjunction with the NWEA MAP as an intervention tool to teach students foundational skills developed from the MAP's learning path recommendations in math and ELA.

In all other subjects, teachers align to state standards through Annual Plans to ensure all state standards are covered during the year. AMS teachers also have the ability to utilize the curriculum at other grade levels, if necessary, to remediate or accelerate a specific student or class.

### Reading

The following is the summary of the AMSSM reading program:

- Standard Reading K-5: Open Court – reading, supplementary writing
- Standard Reading 6-8 Collections – reading, supplementary writing
- Standard Reading K-8: High-quality trade books – supplemental reading
- Supplemental Reading 3-5: Corrective Reading

- Supplemental Reading 6-8: Rewards Reading
- Supplemental Reading K-2: Phonics for Reading
- Supplemental Reading 3-8: Study Island Online

### *Open Court*

In use at all AMS schools, Open Court is a comprehensive language program that includes decoding, comprehension, and writing utilizing systematic and explicit instruction delivered through high-engagement methodologies. Beginning in Kindergarten, students read, listen to, and analyze classical and modern literature and poetry, narrative, expository, and persuasive texts. Book selections are filled with authentic literature, science and social studies informational texts, and real world scenarios that act as anchor texts for teaching students the valuable cognitive comprehension strategies of inferring, predicting, connecting, summarizing, and visualizing, help students to build reading comprehension through greater knowledge across key content areas, and aid in socioemotional skills. As students matriculate through the AMS program, the reading focus includes more non-fiction text.

### Writing

Programs and textbooks for standard and supplemental writing curriculum include:

- Standard and Supplemental Writing K-2: Write Source and Open Court Language Arts
- Standard Writing 3-5: Write Source
- Standard Writing 5-8: Write Source
- Supplemental Writing 3-8: Warriner's Handbook and Study Island

The primary curriculum, Write Source, includes daily grammar, sentence-level, and paragraph-level instruction across narrative, persuasive, and expository modes at all grade levels. Language arts teachers assign students an extended writing assignment weekly, generally with opportunities for students to peer-review in the first week, and to finalize the paper in the second week. The expectation for each grade level is that writing pieces will be appropriate in length (up to 20 minutes for Kindergarten and increasing up to the full period as well as multi-week projects and papers) and will have followed the writing process from pre-writing to publishing. The program also helps students develop the skills to edit and revise both their own work and their peers work, a critical skill in any field. This curriculum is structured using a variety of instructional strategies that support cooperative learning and project-based practices.

Connecting to the broader AMS program, STEM topics are incorporated throughout the writing program. For example, in K-3, students participate in the development of a classroom science project that is entered into the school's science fair. Part of this process requires students to write a grade-appropriate science report to submit alongside their science project. From Kindergarten and up, students learn to use their writing skills to document the scientific process in science projects and how to conduct grade-level appropriate research using technology resources. In grades four and up, all students use their writing skills to write science reports for their own personally created science projects, expanding their writing and research skills to any scientific exploration of their choice.

### Mathematics

Programs or textbooks for standard and supplemental math curriculum include:

- Standard Math K-2: Saxon K, Saxon 1, and Saxon 2
- Standard Math 3-5: Saxon Intermediate 3, Saxon Intermediate 4, Saxon Intermediate
- Supplemental Math K-5: AMS Geometry
- Standard Math 6-8: Saxon Course 1, Saxon Course 2, Saxon Course 3, Saxon Algebra 1, Saxon Geometry, Saxon Algebra 2
- Supplemental Math 3-8: Saxon Adaptations and Study Island

Saxon Mathematics is an explicit, systematic math curriculum selected due to its use in other high-performing networks, its track record of success in the AMS school network (20 years of results), its focus on repetition, focus on cumulative practice as a lever for long term mastery, focus on foundational mathematical skills, and clear explanation of content.

The program has the structure and supplementary teacher resources to allow any capable math teacher to provide excellent instruction to students who either in need of remediation or in need of acceleration at a young age. The program includes hands-on STEM investigations that occur after every ten math lessons such as surveys of their chosen topics to learn how to collect, organize, display, and interpret data in scientific research.

The only supplemental program added to Saxon Mathematics is a network created geometry program for grades K-5. An evaluation of the full program identified that AMS students required further lessons in geometry to support their development in the Saxon program. Additionally, the fields of architecture, engineering, and design require a strong grasp of geometry.

## Social Studies

Programs or Textbooks for social studies curriculum include:

- K-5: Houghton-Mifflin Elementary Social Studies
- 6-8: Discovering our Past, A History of the World, and Discovering our Past, A History of the United States

AMS believes that a quality social studies curriculum offers students a comprehensive education that prepares them for contemporary critical thinking. Students must learn a large body of critical historical knowledge; they must seek to understand the values that drive human behavior; they must reflect on content applicability to modern times; and they must become involved in the process to identify and propose solutions to contemporary problems.

The study of cultural artifacts of past civilizations, opportunities to collect data based on surveys about current events, and many other hands-on activities that incorporate STEM based opportunities for learning cultural is embedded throughout the social studies curriculum. Students create projects that include student-designed surveys, data graphs, cited research, written narratives, and engineering and art projects such as scaled dioramas, posters with student-created interpretations of technological products that have contributed to human progress (or life generally) in different time periods, and other forms of art to demonstrate the knowledge they have acquired of how societies have risen to prominence and fallen. The program emphasizes these facets as critical pieces of cultural, governmental, economic, and historical understanding. In addition to teaching historical content, students spend one period a week on the current pressing political, economic, and social issues of their community and country. AMS has found that program relevance in this regard, especially at

the local city or state level motivates students to view knowledge as a living, evolving concept that is constantly applicable to their own context.

### Science, Technology, and Engineering

Programs or Textbooks for the science curriculum include:

- Standard K-5 Science: Singapore's My Pals Are Here International Edition
- Standard 6-8 Science:
  - Earth Science: It's About Time, Earth Science Series
  - Biology: CPO Life Science
  - Chemistry: AMS created Middle School Curriculum
  - Physics: CPO Physical Science and CPO Physics a First
- Supplemental Science K-8: Study Island Online

AMS uses *My Pals Are Here: International Edition (MPAH)* to teach elementary science.

AMS chose this program for its clarity in instructional presentation as well as focus on content.

In the era of No Child Left Behind, many science programs became overly focused on assisting in reading instruction. This program does quite the opposite, focusing entirely on science content. Proof of the program's effectiveness resides in the fact that Singapore Math, the publisher of MPAH, regularly scores towards the top in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS).

Middle school science classes mimic the format of high school classes. Each middle school student learns in separate earth science, biology, chemistry, computer science, engineering, and physics classes which tie together concepts from different courses and real

world integrations. Each scientific field has its own curricular focus and integration methodology with the broader AMS program or other fields.

AMS also participates in Science Olympiad, a crucial part of the curriculum that establishes a competitive spirit behind learning science knowledge at each campus.

### *Technology / Digital Citizenship*

- Standard K-5 Technology: K5 Technology Curriculum
- Standard 6-8 Technology: AMS-designed
- Standard K-5 Digital Citizenship: Code.org
- Standard 6-8 Digital Citizenship: Common Sense Education

The AMS K-5 Technology Curriculum has explicit and teacher and student-friendly instructions to teach students a range of topics beginning in Kindergarten. The program begins with basic mouse, keyboard, and internet safety skills, and progresses to learning internet research skills and the utilization of complex tools and various functions in Excel, Google Sheets, Word, PowerPoint, Google Slides, and various other commonplace professional programs.

The 6-8 technology curriculum is based on a Pacing Guide created by AMS along with resources for each portion of the year either developed by AMS or available online.

Each AMS student's digital citizenship progresses from a focus on understanding the importance of keeping certain type of information safe and how to keep that information safe to activities which focus on real challenges and digital dilemmas students such as inappropriate content, being a change agent and successfully confronting cyber-bullying, overuse of digital

and social media and its effect on relationships, the effect of large-scale data, and online relationships.

Technology is integrated throughout the curriculum in project requirements and in many final pieces of writing beginning as early as first grade. Students in grades 6-8 focus on developing research projects across multimedia in Adobe, Macromedia, Microsoft, and Google products, use computers for research, and use technology in order to assist with learning such as using Study Island.

### Engineering

- Standard K-5: Integrated engineering projects in Saxon and Teach Engineering
- Standard 6<sup>th</sup>: AMS-designed Engineering/Computer Science Program
- Standard 7<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> Engineering: Project Lead the Way Gateway (PLTW)

Teach Engineering is a standards-based collection of hands-on lessons and activities developed by University faculty and graduate students from over 70 institutions and K-12 teachers partnered with engineering colleges. Additionally, every 10<sup>th</sup> lesson Saxon has application materials specifically focused on engineering. Teachers will utilize Teacher Engineering.org to integrate projects into the curriculum in math and science, which will vary depending on student progress and readiness.

The 6<sup>th</sup> grade program is a collection of projects in computer science engineering integrated into science and math put together by the AMS network team and includes an introduction to project-design thinking. In 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will work through PLTW's middle school engineering program which explores highlight innovative fields of the time, including topics in design and modeling, automation and robotics, app creation, computer

science for innovators and makers, energy and the environment, flight and space, green architecture and climate change technology (both preventative and analytical), and medical technology.

Students will use both computer science and engineering skills to design and program robotics in PLTW, Lego Robotics, and in other projects based on student and community interests. A core part of the AMS program includes a robotics club afterschool (Vex or First Lego/Robotics) that often yields high parent engagement.

### *Computer Science*

- K-5 Computer Science: Code.org
- Standard 7<sup>th</sup> Computer Science: CS Discoveries from Code.org
- Standard 8<sup>th</sup> Computer Science: AMS-designed Project-Based Specialized Course of Study

Once students have the prerequisite technology skills, students will have a weekly opportunity to work through the K-5 curriculum developed on Code.org to prepare them for AMS's rigorous program in middle school. Additionally, students at all grade levels will have the opportunity to program Lego and various other robots.

CS Discoveries covers programming, physical computing, HTML/CSS, and data with a focus on students designed websites, apps, games, and physical computing devices.

Additionally, the following languages may also be used and incorporated into the curriculum as at other AMS schools: RPG Maker MV, Minecraft, Alice, Ruby, Scratch, or similar programming software; and basics of various programming languages such as Visual Basic, Java, Python, and others.

After school programs will continue to foster AMS student computer science interest and instruction via a computer science club chosen by a teacher/families based on interest and possibly a Girls Who Code club, an established partner.

### Foreign Languages

Students attend foreign language classes, typically Russian or Mandarin, twice a week to immerse themselves in their chosen language classes. Material selection is determined by proven foreign language educators that have been specifically selected to provide foreign language instruction to AMS students. These AMS specialists have found a consensus in that students learn best through repeated practice and exposure to the language. Investigating the AMS Foreign Language program has led to a strong focus on instructional texts that teach language in a communicative approach based on immersion, and integration of physical movement and response to reinforce content learning.

### Fine Arts: Piano, Guitar, Choir, Music Theory, Visual Art, and Art History

Students attend piano or guitar, choir, music theory, visual art and art history classes two or more times throughout the week. Material selection is determined by the art and music specialists specifically hired to provide music or art instruction. These expert educators have found that repeated instruction and practice is crucial in helping AMS students acquire the skills that allow them to showcase their talents to the public through recitals or community art exhibits.

A significant body of educational research confirms the need for AMS' fine arts curriculum. In 2012, a team of researchers on behalf of the National Endowment for the Arts published an analysis of four major longitudinal studies sponsored by the United States Federal

Government on fine arts engagement in socially and economically disadvantaged children.

They reported the following core findings that affirm AMS’s commitment to a well-rounded fine arts program:

- “Socially and economically disadvantaged children and teenagers who have high levels of arts engagement or arts learning show more positive outcomes in a variety of areas than their low-arts-engaged peers...these outcomes extend to school grades, test scores, honors society membership, high school graduation, college enrollment and achievement, volunteering, and engagement in school or local politics.”<sup>22</sup>
- “At-risk [and low-SES] teenagers or young adults with a history of intensive arts experiences show achievement levels closer to, and in some cases exceeding, the levels shown by the general population studied.”<sup>23</sup>

Given that AMSSM will serve a significant population of economically disadvantaged students (low-SES), AMS’s fine arts program will be critical to meet the student population’s needs and achieve academic growth in alignment with the school’s mission.

### Character Education Program

Programs or Textbooks for the character curriculum include:

- Standard Program K-8: AMS Character Traits
- Supplemental Curriculum K-8: Teaching Resilience to Children

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<sup>22</sup> Catterall, J. S., Dumais, S. A., & Hampden-Thompson, G. (2012). The arts and achievement in at-risk youth: Findings from four longitudinal studies. Washington, DC: National Endowment for the Arts. 24. <https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/Arts-At-Risk-Youth.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.,

The AMS-developed character program was developed with research from Daniel Goleman, Steven Covey, and Martin Seligman on what social, emotional, and mental-habits are essential to help students possess more grit, be happier, work more effectively with others, and be generally more successful. These traits include:

Cause and Effect	Mindfulness	Faults and Forgiveness
Emotional Control	Citizenship	Altruistic Accountability
Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation	Compassion and Generosity	Helping Others and Cooperation
Accepting Change	Finding Joy, not Jealousy	Kindness and Selflessness
Effort	Positive Attitude	Diligence
Respect	Perseverance	Responsibility and Trustworthiness
Honesty	Courage and Fortitude	Hard Work
Friendship	Confidence	Gratitude and Cheerfulness

The AMS Character Program is designed to specifically provide student pathways to excellence based on various character traits that can be adopted academically and socially. Teachers introduce one or two traits each week using the AMS Character Program by using the book *Teaching Children Resilience*, prominent quotes relating to each character trait from recognizable figures, an example of each trait in use in simple and complex situations, and written student reflections on what each trait means to them or their behavior, guided discussions, or practice through skits with classmates. Additionally, teachers guide the development of student character by being proficient in PBIS, using teaching strategies that support socioemotional learning in the classroom, positive restorative practices, by building student-first classroom culture, and integrating character values throughout all core subjects. AMS teachers integrate each character trait as often as possible to reinforce understanding.

According to the research of Wolfgang Althof and Marvin W. Berkowitz (2006), this sort of education that intertwines academics, citizenship, morals, and character is essential for “schools and school programs that foster good people and good citizens.”<sup>24</sup> They elaborate that the core purpose of any character education should be “a combination of knowledge about society, skills for participation in society and dispositions to engage constructively in public efforts to promote the common good.”<sup>25</sup> Althof and Berkowitz (2006) define this combination as having four key parts: “civic and political knowledge...intellectual skills...social and participatory skills...[and] values, attitudes, and dispositions with motivational power.”<sup>26</sup> Each of the above AMS traits fall into one of these four categories in an effort to teach students the character skills to guide them both morally and toward their own goals, and to teach the “capacity to move beyond one’s individual self-interest and to be committed to the well-being of some larger group of which one is a member.”<sup>27</sup>

The program has been successful in reducing student referrals and suspensions across the network, increasing academic success by building student self-accountability for learning, and establishing a community invested in one another, proving that a character education intertwined with academics is an effective strategy to support disadvantaged students.

### Extracurricular Programs

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<sup>24</sup> Althof, Wolfgang. Berkowitz, Marvin W. “Moral Education and character education: their relationship and roles in citizenship education.” *Journal of Moral Education*, Vol. 35, No. 4. December 2006. p. 495-518.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 501.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*,

Extracurricular programs at the school are tailored to student interests; however, all AMS schools have a baseline foundation of clubs to support their STEAM education. These clubs must number at least 14 at each campus and consist of the following:

- Student council to give students structured representation in the school's operation and programs, and to reinforce the importance of self-advocacy
- Clubs that focus on engaging students in civic action and community service
- Robotics Club (and competitions) / Computer Science Club
- Science Olympiad
- Sports teams for all grade levels (typically basketball, soccer, football, and volleyball)

Extracurricular programs and sports often motivate a large segment of the student body. Participation in both is contingent upon receiving a C average or better and having no Ds in any core subjects.

#### Extended Instructional Time

All schools in the network (except AMS Tucson schools) operate on a 200 instructional day school year. Monday through Thursday students will be in school from 7:40 to 3:55 pm. On Fridays, students will be dismissed at 1:00 pm for teacher professional development and common planning. Additional periods will be incorporated into the students' math, reading, writing, and occasionally science hours so that all students have built-in time in their schedule to participate in remediation or acceleration where needed.

Pursuant to A.R.S § 15-901, a student in the state of Arizona must enroll in an instructional program that meets or exceeds a required number of annual instructional hours specified per grade. The following table outlines state minimum instructional hours compared to AMS's extended instruction calendar.

Instructional Hours per Year		
Grade Level	AZ	AMS
K	346	<b>1312</b>
1	712	<b>1312</b>
2	712	<b>1312</b>
3	712	<b>1494</b>
4	890	<b>1494</b>
5	890	<b>1494</b>
6	890	<b>1494</b>
7	1068	<b>1494</b>
8	1068	<b>1494</b>

Compared to the state minimum instructional hours per year, a student who attends an AMS school in Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade will have participated in:

- 77% increased instructional time
- 6.93 additional full-length school years (compared to the AZ average of 809.7 minimum hours per year over 9 years)

Further analysis of several schools near AMSSM reveals that the school will be only one of several to offer an extended school day and the only to offer an extended school year. AMS is one of few school districts in the state of Arizona to offer a 200-day school year which extends learning time and reduces the burden of parents to purchase childcare during the summer. Twenty additional school days compared to the standard 180-day calendar, and one

extra hour each school day facilitates the AMS program's goals to remediate and accelerate students while simultaneously supporting families.

### Homework

Homework at the Academies of Math and Science is an essential part of the school program that reinforces and extends learning initiated in the classroom, serves as a tool for teachers to assess student understanding of classroom instruction, communicates the idea that learning does not end in school, instills good work ethic in students, and increases student initiative and accountability for their own learning. AMS teachers are required to assign students an appropriate amount of homework daily (which varies from grade to grade) in reading, math, writing, grammar, and current events. Students in grades 4 to 8 are required to complete semester homework projects as well.

### A Proven Curriculum

Over the past 20 years of serving disadvantaged communities in Arizona, the Academies of Math and Science have constantly iterated upon and improved the above AMS curriculum, alignment processes, and standards (both state and internal). As demonstrated by the academic data included in Section D, Question 4, this curriculum has proven results in remediating, accelerating, and improving the academic outcomes of K-8 students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. AMSSM will continue the AMS tradition of a well-rounded curriculum centered on holistic student growth that becomes the foundation of success in high school, college, and beyond.

2. What process is in place or will be in place to design and implement instructional practices aligned with the curriculum to meet the unique needs of disadvantaged students?

### **Designing and Implementing Effective Instructional Practices**

As demonstrated by the demographic data outlined in this application, the new school will have disadvantaged students with parents that are less educated, have less time to help their child with school or guide them in their personal lives, may have unstable and unsafe home lives in at-risk communities, or may have a negative cultural understanding of learning and education. Given the projected 92% FRL for the school and the low academic performance of the area, students may struggle with the very nature of learning. In order to not be left behind, students at AMSSM will need to make significant progress in a short amount of time. As such, the AMSSM curriculum and its delivery must be culturally and socially relevant.

AMS has designed and implemented a standardized system of teaching and practices with proven efficacy in disadvantaged populations based on the following selection criteria:

1. Address common challenges in low-SES populations related to problem behaviors stemming from unstable home environments, knowledge gaps, low confidence or self-efficacy, lack of safety and trust, cultural disconnection from the school (minority subgroups make up for a disproportionate percentage of low-income students)
2. In use at other high-performing networks, schools, or school districts primarily serving disadvantaged youth or comparable populations

3. Sustainable, systematic, and able to be trained in teaching staff, but still allows flexibility so that teachers can adjust to unique student needs
4. Alignment with the AMS curriculum, purpose, and mission

The teaching systems in use at AMS schools are empirically tested and validated for effectiveness in at-risk student populations. AMSSM will utilize a mixture of Direct Instruction (an interactive and thoughtful method of instruction applied to all subjects based on the work of Siegfried Engelmann that was proven to be effective in Project Follow Through, the nation's largest educational research study), high-engagement instructional techniques such as Teach Like a Champion, socioemotional learning-informed strategies, positive behavior reinforcement as part of an overall PBIS framework, structured cooperative learning (influenced heavily by Kagan Structures, the work of Johnson and Johnson, and Robert Slavin), and project based/inquiry learning (in particular for STEM) following the successful practices of the Expeditionary Learning model. Other tools, models, and resources will be incorporated from the investigation of best practices from other high performing charter school operators, the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model, *The Skillful Teacher* by Jon Saphire, *CHAMPS* by Randy Sprick, *Love and Logic* by Jim Fay, prominent peer-reviewed publications, and other resources aligned with the AMS educational philosophy.

Stepping into an AMS classroom, an observer will see evidence of these teaching systems. Nearly every teacher begins class with a review, a presentation of varied models matching lessons to objectives posted on the board, asking higher order questions, showing evidence of preparation by moving seamlessly from topic to topic,

scaffolding knowledge, reframing mistakes for students into learning opportunities, facilitating rapid topic transitions, minimizing student downtime, keeping 100% on task for at least most of the observation, providing specific feedback and error correction, teaching to mastery, expecting students to give precise answers, encouraging students to take risks, constantly checking for understanding with random selection and group methods, and maintaining classroom management expectations primarily through the recognition of positive behavior.

AMS instructional methodologies:

- Require frequent student response
- Expect more out of students
- Positively address student behavior by building trust and safety
- Raise self-efficacy of students
- Require teachers to teach to student mastery (building knowledge and self-efficacy)
- Require teachers to be more prepared so that learning gaps can be anticipated and planned for
- Require teachers to incorporate more personal information about students and from their culture

*Alignment with Curriculum and Purpose*

As previously mentioned, AMS selects instructional methods to match the curriculum and the curriculum is selected following the mission and purpose of the school: “Through a well-rounded curriculum, to transform today’s scholars into

tomorrow's global visionaries." A visionary must have a breadth of knowledge, must think independently, and possess strong emotional and social skills. Although AMS programs push teachers to become masters of fast-paced, high-engagement teacher-directed instruction, AMS also incorporates inquiry and project-based methods of instruction to ensure students develop responsibility for their own learning through student-lead research, self-instruction and study, real-world projects and applications of science, technology, engineering, computer science, social studies, and writing. These methods are well-suited for STEM education as they create a much higher interest in STEM fields (a goal of the school is that 95% of students will develop a greater interest in STEM fields and will want to pursue continued study). Project-based methods at the school incorporate state and school-curriculum standards and objectives and address how students will master those objectives by completing each project.

#### *Systematic and Sustainable Implementation of Instructional Methodologies*

As AMS has expanded, the AMS Network has continued to standardize practice to ensure that the network can support a growing body of AMS leaders, teachers, and students. The standardization of best practices by systematically distributing and providing training on those practices in conjunction with the AMS Essentials are the foundation of AMS's sustainable implementation of instructional methodology. The AMS Network attempts to promote school leaders from within the network (including promoting Lead Teachers to Instructional Coaches, Instructional Coaches to Assistant Principals, and Assistant Principals to Principals) or to only hire from networks with

similar teaching methodologies to reduce the burden of training and decrease the amount of necessary time to implement methodologies with fidelity.

The AMS Network Office assists new campuses, new school leaders, and new teachers by providing comprehensive training prior to the start of each year. Every level of school staff is required to attend training to further ensure that school leaders can become masters of AMS methodologies alongside teachers. The AMS Network office observes classrooms with leaders and provides feedback to leaders to norm expectations to enhance implementation and the AMS school leaders frequently observe other schools to learn from each other. The AMS Network office is currently working on a video library of all of AMS's trainings and individual teachers demonstrating competency with each of the AMS Essentials. AMS uses a range of instructional methodologies across all network schools and AMS success is built upon plentiful resources and constant guidance that ensures the success of every teacher.

Prior to each school year, new AMS teachers receive 3 weeks of summer training on instructional methodologies and returning teachers have 2 weeks to refresh their understanding and use of instructional practices, work on advancing their technique, and plan for the new year.

#### *Ongoing Coaching and Monitoring to Ensure Implementation*

Administrators and representatives from the AMS Network Academic Team regularly visit classrooms at each school and evaluate the use of the instructional practices using a common rubric. The common rubric also includes the evaluation of

AMS teacher alignment with the school's pacing and curriculum guides, and the use of supplemental curriculum materials, such as Study Island.

The process of evaluating and adjusting instructional practices is ongoing. All administrators and academic team members are trained on the use of a common AMS instructional program rubric. All observers use the common rubric as they walk through classrooms observing the implementation and use of AMS Essentials and meeting with teachers one-on-one to provide immediate feedback. Other feedback methods may include peer observations, video self-reflection, video reflection by other teachers, and directed professional development on Friday driven by teacher observations.

The classroom observation data feeds immediately into an online database and can be displayed in a dashboard by the AMS Network allowing the CMO to monitor the success of each school teacher by teacher. Based on need, the AMS Network deploys resources, time, additional staffing, and additional professional development to areas with high need. Distribution of resources can be as localized to a single teacher, grade level, subject, or to an entire school. Additionally, the AMS Network maintains a list of teachers tiered by their mastery of AMS instructional methodologies, which has further increased the ability for AMS to train and support leaders and conduct training to increase the implementation of AMS Instructional Methodologies. This list has also facilitated the establishment of a community of practice in which AMS can internally generate more and more meaningful professional development, especially to new schools.

### Evaluation and Adjustment of Instructional Methodologies

AMS teachers are provided a diverse range of tools for classroom success. Given the pressing demographic and academic challenges of the communities AMS serves, teachers often require more than one methodology or tool to reach an individual student. AMS teachers are required to master a broad spectrum of methodologies and maintain a firm grasp on when to use them and how to leverage them for student success and well-being. AMS considers this expectation to be a crucial aspect of the instructional system—when teachers are truly masters of the craft, it is unlikely that the teacher or the school will become ineffective with new or unique student needs.

To evaluate the instructional methodology's effectiveness, AMSSM will first evaluate whether it has failed on any of the measurable student outcomes taken at the various intervals below:

1. Daily formative assessments and unit assessments. For example, a failure to reach 80% mastery may indicate that a student was not placed at the correct level or that the student has learning gaps that require reteaching or targeted remediation.
2. For subjects not covered on AzM2 (AzMERIT), the AMS network will ensure that each school has at least a "B" average on those subjects in each grade level.
3. Benchmark and NWEA MAP data: The AMS Network has identified that as long as a campus consistently has approximately 65% of its students meeting growth targets that the campus will outperform 90% of all schools in its area as well as statewide relative to the disadvantaged subgroups.

4. Each year, AzM2 (AzMERIT) passing scores in ELA and Math should increase by 5% yearly and student growth percentiles should average at least 65% to attain appropriate passing scores
5. In 2 or 3 years at most, the AMSSM target is that 100% of students will be performing at or above grade level.
6. In 3-5 years at most, the AMSSM campus should be at the top 90% of the area or state relative to subgroup.

Then, AMSSM will evaluate (a) whether or not there has been a recent change to the state standards of teacher evaluation requiring any changes to the AMS methodology, (b) whether AMSSM has recently changed curriculum, and (c) whether or not there has been a change to the state standards requiring a change in curriculum.

Changes to a-c may merit adjustments to the instructional methodology.

Failure to reach measurable outcomes 1-6 may signify the need to change methodology.

If the curriculum and other parts of the school design are in use at other high-performing schools serving similar populations but fail to generate strong outcomes at AMSSM. If failure occurs in this regard despite the fact that AMS Network and AMSSM Leadership have rated AMSSM teachers as effective based on the evaluation standards included further in this application, AMSSM and the AMS Network will perform a root cause analysis to ensure:

- There were no unusual events that could have precipitated such a result (such as a test administration error or a school emergency leading to poor performance)

- That the data being reported from the state is accurate, and that there are no errors in any of the observable data
- That teachers followed the school schedule and all of the curriculum was covered with mastery shown on unit tests

Provided none of the factors above are identified, it becomes clear that the curriculum and other components of the school are effective, but the instructional methodologies have failed to yield consistent results. By selecting instructional methodologies and curriculum in use at high-performing schools, AMSSM reduces the chance that instructional methodologies fail, decreases variability of outcomes, and increases the chance that the AMS Network and AMSSM leadership can quickly identify and remedy problems.

Besides a major issue that may precipitate a change in the instructional methodologies, AMSSM may change methodologies for reasons including:

- *The desire to constantly improve:* No matter how good something is, AMS can always improve.
- *Effect on morale:* A methodology may be effective but stressful on staff, be restrictive of teacher autonomy, or is unpopular. Whenever a substitute with equal impact is available, it will be chosen.
- If students become much more advanced in their course of study over time, AMS teachers will explore new programs and reduce the of teacher-directed instruction

Over the past twenty years, ongoing improvement in the above process has resulted in a rigorous system to design, implement, evaluate, and adjust instructional methodology with proven results in disadvantaged student populations. Formalizing and standardizing this process has resulted in consistent, sustainable, and systematic implementation of AMS's proven programs across 7 schools serving 6000 students.

3. What process is in place or will be in place to develop a comprehensive academic assessment system to measure the performance of disadvantaged students?

AMSSM fervently believes that all students deserve a quality education with high academic expectations. Although AMSSM's projected Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) population is over 90%, AMSSM is confident that students can and will make well above state average academic growth by participating in the AMSSM STEAM program. A comprehensive assessment system is a vital part of the school's plan to modify instruction to ensure all students achieve academic growth.

#### **Comprehensive Assessment System**

As part of the Academies of Math and Science network, AMSSM will capitalize on the established and robust Academies of Math and Science network's comprehensive assessment system. The AMS network's comprehensive assessment system, as described below, provides AMS educators reliable, valid, bias free information capable of helping all stakeholders communicate and act upon student data, and systematically analyze and adjust curriculum, and instruction.

The AMS assessment system uses a variety of assessments designed to provide a clear picture of student knowledge, skill, and growth over time to teachers, administrators, families, and students. With the use of the AMS assessment system, educators will consistently have a clear picture of student progress and their needs. AMS teachers will be able to reliably identify gaps in learning, plan for reteaching, and schedule remediation promptly so that students are always on the most effective path to achieving above grade level performance on future assessments.

### Placement Assessments

Results of placement tests will be used to inform whether students will be informed in a number of corrective and remedial programs including Corrective Reading, REWARDS, Phonics for Reading, will inform the number of hours of ELA and math instruction the student will receive, and will inform whether or not a student is ready to work one year above grade level in ELA and math (a common practice at AMS schools).

As of October 2019, families of more than 500 students have already expressed their interest in enrolling at AMSSM. While these students may be economically disadvantaged and academically underserved (as demonstrated in previous sections of this application), they are eager for a new educational opportunity. AMSSM will begin administering placement tests to prospective students in December 2019. The resulting assessment data will be used to form class lists that best meet the needs of the students. No student will be denied enrollment based on assessment data. Placement Assessment procedures are summarized below:

- *Kindergarten*: A two-part assessment including an internally created tool to evaluate writing, behavior, motor skill readiness, alphabetic knowledge, reading readiness, and an age appropriate Saxon math inventory are administered.
- *First Grade*: Saxon Math K-2 Inventory Placement Test and the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) for Early First Grade are administered.
- *Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Grades*: The NWEA Screening: Math 2-5 AZ 2016 assessment is used to evaluate student math skills. Reading skills are evaluated using the NWEA Screening: Reading 2-5 AZ 2016 online assessment.
- *Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Grades*: The NWEA Screening: Math 6+ AZ 2016 online assessment is used to evaluate student math skills. Reading skills are evaluated using the NWEA Screening: Reading 6+ AZ 2016 online assessment

### Formative Assessments

To meet the objective of creating an environment for above average academic growth in disadvantaged populations, AMSSM will identify Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) for each student. The Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) defines the ZPD as "the sweet spot where instruction is most beneficial for each student—just beyond his or her current level of independent capability." A variety of formative assessments will aid AMSSM educators in finding each student's "sweet spot." Once identified, learning experiences will be tailored to promote growth and

increased student self-confidence. Ongoing formative assessments will be the heart of the AMSSM's evaluation system as well as part of the learning process.

### Classroom Assessments

Daily classroom assessment takes many forms, including informal measures, such as Exit Tickets, Observations, Gallery Walks, Project Status, and Assignments. Ongoing informal assessment guides the teacher's daily responses to student learning opportunities and allows staff to take immediate and individualized corrective action as needed.

The curriculum AMSSM will prescribe utilizes weekly assessments to inform instruction. All ELA and math programs incorporate curriculum publisher designed formative assessments into their week. AMS teachers use data from these assessments to inform instruction and track student mastery.

### Supplemental Formative Assessments

AMSSM will use Study Island, a research based, state-standards aligned web service for classroom use that assesses student acquisition of the skills and knowledge necessary to demonstrate mastery of Arizona State Standards. Study Island is validated by the Marzano Research Group and had been proven to promote significant growth with only thirty minutes a week. AMSSM's schedule will include weekly Study Island time to ensure that students receive the most benefit from the program.

To further support formative assessment in the classroom, the Academies of Math and Science has developed a Standards Based Item Bank containing thousands of items. The items were purchased from two main sources: AIRways and SchoolCity. The

Arizona Department of Education contracts with AIRways to create the state mandated AzMERIT (now AzM2) exams. SchoolCity is an organization that provides standards-based item banks and assessments to school districts across the United States. Items purchased from AIRways and SchoolCity mimic the AzMERIT tests in both question types and rigor.

The Academies of Math and Science Item Bank houses the items purchased from the vendors in the network's online standards folders. Every math standard for grades 3-8 has a folder with items that assess a student's ability to meet the standard. Teachers access eight items per week that correspond to the daily lessons and use the items to formatively assess if students meet the lesson standards.

Reading passages and corresponding standards-based items are also sorted into grade level folders for grades 3-8. The item bank provides an equal number of literature and informational texts so that teachers can assess all standards in a continuous manner.

Teachers use data gathered from student's responses to the item bank questions to further inform their instruction. This tool provides teachers with yet another method to assess whether students are learning the skills and knowledge necessary to demonstrate mastery of state standards.

### Interim Benchmarks

The AMSSM benchmarking system, designed by the AMS network to assess both the curriculum content taught and mastery of state standards, produces data regarding individual and collective student growth and facilitates the evaluation of the

effectiveness of teaching practices, programs and initiatives. Data from Interim Benchmarks will be used by AMSSM to inform instruction, develop teaching plans, track students in need of remediation, and project whether a student, class, or the school is on track to achieving established proficiency benchmarks.

AMSSM will administer the AMS Network benchmark assessments five times per year via the online School City assessment system. The first and fifth benchmarks are comprehensive assessments created by the SchoolCity team. The second, third, and fourth benchmarks are internally created by the AMS Network through SchoolCity and are cumulative benchmarks. The middle benchmarks are correlated to AMS' ELA and Mathematics curriculum pacing calendars. Each benchmark tests the standards that have been taught to date. The assessment results are then uploaded into the SchoolCity database, providing AMS teachers immediate results. The immediate data gives insight into individual student, class, and school progress toward meeting the state standards that have been taught to date. These internally created benchmarks are vital to evaluating student progress. Benchmark results are collated with other data points to plan and implement interventions that foster student academic growth in core content areas for students who do not demonstrate content mastery. This data also serves to inform and evaluate program effectiveness.

As the variety within the assessment system illustrates, AMS not only values but employs frequent data points to find the "sweet spot" of each student's development. Therefore, teachers and administrators can reliably generate differentiated individualized responses to student assessment results in the form of targeted

interventions. The assessment system also provides the opportunity for frequent reflection and updating of programs and initiatives, and timely data regarding teacher effectiveness.

### Summative Assessments

Summative assessments evaluate student mastery of standards. Mid-term and end-of-course curriculum summative assessments, nationally normed benchmarks and end of year state-mandated assessments allow AMS teachers to plan instruction for the following semester or year more effectively. The results from these summative curriculum assessments help teachers identify any additional skills that should be reviewed in the subsequent quarter.

### End-of-Course Assessments

All AMSSM courses will administer end-of-course exams to evaluate student academic growth and mastery of standards. Having end-of-course data to compare to nationally normed and state-mandated test scores also assists AMS and network staff in evaluating the efficacy of instructional materials, programs, and interventions.

### Nationally Normed Tests

Like other AMS schools, AMSSM will participate in the Northwest Evaluation Association's (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing program. The NWEA MAP test is administered during the first week of the academic year and assesses each student's mathematics proficiency and reading level. The results from the first MAP test provide normed baseline data about each student's current academic condition in two core content areas. The MAP test is also adaptive and provides

information about each child's current knowledge and skills as well as what they are ready to learn next.

The winter administration of the NWEA MAP assessment provides norm-referenced reports to AMS schools about student academic growth. Besides providing another data point to assess student needs, mid-year administration affords school staff the opportunity to predict proficiency on upcoming state mandated assessments. Informed mid-year intervention and program adjustments are critical when fostering the type of academic growth that AMS values.

End-of-year NWEA MAP test administration is the final part of the summative assessment cycle for AMS schools as the final MAP assessment occurs after the state-mandated AzM2 testing window. The results of the final MAP assessment will inform a complex analysis of overall yearly student growth and mastery, which will be used to facilitate the discussions of necessary curriculum, interventions, or instructional methods adjustments.

#### State-Mandated Assessments

AMSSM students in grades 3-8 will take the Arizona mandated assessment, AzMERIT. Students in grades 4 and 8 will also be administered the AIMS Science exam. All of Arizona's mandated tests assess student mastery of grade-level standards and measure student academic growth.

#### **Valid, Reliable, and Bias-Free Assessments**

While summative assessments represent powerful tools to quantify student learning, they must be valid, reliable, and bias-free to elicit accurate information and

data. AMS only uses assessments that meet these criteria, including internally developed assessments.

NWEA MAP

The NWEA website states that they conduct norming studies every three years to ensure that the comparisons reflect current standards and demographics. Additionally, they continually work to refine their best-in-class research model to make NWEA norms more accurate. Schools in forty-nine states use NWEA MAP tests, representing ten million students tested. The large sample size increases the validity and reliability of the assessments.

AzM2 (formerly AzMERIT)<sup>28</sup>

Each year the American Institute of Research (AIR) researches and compiles a report for the Arizona Department of Education (AZED) regarding the AzMERIT/AzM2 assessment system. The report is available on the public AZED website. A primary responsibility of the report is to validate the reliability, efficacy, and bias-free nature of the AzMERIT. In their most recent report, AIR noted that the developer of the assessments employed the principles of universal assessment design to minimize the impact of “construct-irrelevant factors” in assessing student achievement. The seven principles of universal design are applied in the process of test development:

- Inclusive assessment population
- Precisely defined constructs

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<sup>28</sup> As of the upcoming school year, the Arizona Department of Education has renamed the AzMERIT test to AzM2.

- Accessible, non-biased items
- Amenability to accommodations
- Simple, clear, and intuitive instructions and procedures
- Maximum readability and comprehensibility
- Maximum legibility

Also, the AIR report noted that the AzMERIT tests provides a range of accessibility tools and accommodations to reduce barriers for virtually all students.

### **Systematic Analysis of Assessment Data and Data Driven Responses**

The final element of AMSSM’s comprehensive assessment system is the systematic analysis of assessment data to ensure that data-driven responses to assessment occur in a timely and effective manner. All levels of AMSSM staff including administrators will be adequately trained on the systematic analysis of assessment data. AMSSM will constantly aim to ground academic decisions in appropriate data analysis in partnership with AMS Network Office academic analysts as described below.

### **School Level Analysis**

Teachers at AMSSM will have immediate access to student data after each assessment administered as part of the comprehensive assessment system. Grade level Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings will occur weekly to discuss data and collaboratively develop classroom strategies to immediately affect student academic growth.

AMSSM Instructional Coaches and Administrators will have immediate access to school-wide assessment data. School-wide access will allow school leaders to view student, class, grade level, and whole school progress toward meeting academic objectives. Leaders will be able to mentor, support, and monitor programs and initiatives to support teaching and paraprofessional staff to best meet the needs of the students.

AMSSM teachers will meet with building leaders every 3 weeks. The purpose of the meeting is to develop and support data-based re-teaching plans. These academic conferences between teacher, instructional coaches, and administrators provides a sense of community and support as everyone at the school shows their investment in student academic growth.

#### Student Level Analysis

AMS Teachers will conduct structured data meetings with students and guide them through self-assessment of their data so that students can reflect on their developing knowledge, predict their progress related to learning objectives, and work with their teacher to choose strategies that increase student ownership of their progress. AMS teachers will schedule regular data conversations and teach students on the use of associated data tracking tools. Weekly SchoolCity formative assessments will allow students to assess learning against measurable targets and understand teacher feedback on additional learning required to surpass their own expectations. By implementing a feedback loop on their own progress, students begin to understand what constitutes quality in their learning and work, see how their own learning style and

actions in the classroom can drive their academic progress, and take accountability for their growth. Students will review Study Island, NWEA, and formative assessments.

### Network Level Analysis

The Academies of Math and Science Network employs data and curriculum specialists who compile data produced by the comprehensive assessment system. The network will support AMSSM by analyzing their data holistically. The holistic analysis is complex and designed to achieve in-depth analysis while freeing up the school to focus on school culture and the day-to-day education of the student body.

Holistic analysis always uses multiple assessments. A diverse range of assessment allows the network to produce a more accurate picture of a student's progress and growth. Network level analysis results in a structured list of students who stand to benefit from acceleration or intervention programs across the curriculum's core and elective subjects. Recommendations and training for acceleration or intervention materials accompany the analysis. The network also assists with scheduling interventions as needed.

4. What process is in place or will be in place to recruit, select, and hire quality educators?

### **Recruitment Processes and Methods**

The Academies of Math and Science utilize a comprehensive, intentional recruiting process which has led to successful, high-quality staffing of over 350 school positions (including teachers, administrators, and support staff) at 7 schools serving over 6000 students. Although AMS as a network will be hiring 35% more teachers this year due to

school growth, AMS is currently on track to maintain completion as a result of a steadily increasing candidate pool by over last year.

### Timeline

In order to access to the best teaching candidates, AMS begins recruiting in October for the following school year. Network wide, AMS plans to have 75% of teachers hired by the end of March, 90% of teaching positions filled by the end of April, and all teaching jobs staffed by the end of May. In recent years of expansion, AMS has typically met these goals, with the exception of a few remaining openings after May. The entire recruiting, selection, and hiring process detailed below typically takes between 1-4 weeks to fill an open job. Each step from interview to onboarding paperwork is completed with the utmost priority once an ideal candidate has been identified to decrease the chances of losing a candidate to another organization.

### Job Descriptions

AMS starts any and all recruiting efforts with specific definitions of the qualifications for open role(s) and a carefully designed job description. The recruiting team works with school leaders to determine specific needs and qualifications for each open position. In order to attract mission aligned candidates from the beginning, all job descriptions emphasize the AMS mission to provide a well-rounded, high-quality education to students in disadvantaged communities. In addition to typical information such as qualifications and benefits, job descriptions also include questions prompting candidates to self-reflect on desired qualities and values for an AMS teacher, such as, “Are you fiercely dedicated to helping at-risk students forge their way to a college education?” To stand out in the

competitive job market, AMS job descriptions also refer to the organization's growth and frequent promotion opportunities, AMS's history of academic success and awards, instructional methodologies, and curriculum.

### Partner Organizations

AMS works with various organizations and institutions that offer teacher preparation programs, including Teach for America and a range of local Colleges of Education. AMS has a partnership agreement with Teach for America to place corps members at multiple AMS campuses in Phoenix. Teach for America is supportive of AMS's growth plans and is eager to place more teachers at AMS schools. Teach for America also offers the option to directly contact their alumni, which AMS utilizes on a regular basis.

Longstanding peer-reviewed research and examination of TFA teacher results in the classroom published by the Institute of Education Sciences, the U.S. Department of Education, the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), and AMS's own experience, provide a compelling case for TFA partnership at AMSSM. In an article on the impact of TFA on student achievement, Glazerman et. al (2006) write that TFA teachers generally "produce higher student test scores than the other teachers in their schools" even when compared to "veterans and certified teachers."<sup>29</sup> Antecol et. al (2013) affirmed this conclusion several years later based on data from the Mathematica Policy Research group, writing that an analysis of TFA results provides strong evidence of a "positive and statistically

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<sup>29</sup> Glazerman S, Mayer D, Decker P. Alternative routes to teaching: The impacts of Teach for America on student achievement and other outcomes. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*. 2006; 25(1):75-96.

significant effect of TFA across the math achievement distribution.”<sup>30</sup> Still, AMS continues to monitor the effectiveness of a TFA partnership not only through internal evaluation of TFA teacher results, but through consistent monitoring of ongoing research.

In the *Journal of Educational Effectiveness*, Emily K. Penner (2016) reports that “TFA teachers with minimal training” are more effective at “pushing their highest-performing students forward and supporting students with weak, developing math skills.”<sup>31</sup> The U.S. Department of Education, the Institute of Education Sciences, and the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) support the aforementioned findings as demonstrated below in a summary report published in 2016<sup>32</sup>:

Outcome domain	Rating of effectiveness	Improvement index (percentile points)		Number of studies	Number of students <sup>a</sup>	Extent of evidence
		Average	Range			
<b>Mathematics achievement</b>	Positive effects	+4	-1 to +8	6	65,324	Medium to large
<b>Science achievement</b>	Potentially positive effects	+7	na	1	36,104	Small
<b>Social studies achievement</b>	No discernible effects	+3	na	1	6,051	Small
<b>English language arts achievement</b>	No discernible effects	+1	-2 to +2	5	53,595	Medium to large

na = not applicable

<sup>a</sup> The reported sample sizes may count some individual students more than once because some studies examined data from multiple school years.

AMS is eager to bring an existing TFA partnership to AMSSM for the 2020-21 school year. TFA’s mission and efficacy, especially in their chosen context to improve educational opportunities in underserved or low-performing neighborhoods, aligns closely with AMSSM’s mission. Given the finding that TFA teachers have positive

<sup>30</sup> Antecol H, Eren O, Ozbeklik S. The effect of Teach for America on the distribution of student achievement in primary school: Evidence from a randomized experiment. *Economics of Education Review*. 2013a; (37):113–125.

<sup>31</sup> Penner, Emily K. “Teaching for All? Teach for America’s Effects across the Distribution of Student Achievement.” *Journal of Educational Effectiveness* 9 (vol. 3) p. 259-282 (2016).

<sup>32</sup> What Works Clearinghouse, U.S Department of Education, Institute of Educational Services. “WWC Intervention Report: A summary of findings from a systematic review of the evidence, Teacher Training, Evaluation, and Compensation – Teach for America. August 2016. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED568903.pdf>

effectiveness ratings in mathematics and science, AMSSM will advocate for the placement of TFA teachers in those subjects to increase the likelihood that TFA hires are best able to leverage their own program training and the AMS program for the maximum benefit of AMSSM students.

The AMS recruiting team also performs a mass outreach to Deans and Career Services departments at several 4-year universities' colleges of education twice a year. As AMS continues to grow and build relationships with colleges across the country, many are willing to offer on-campus recruitment opportunities as well. AMS already participates in these career fairs and other in-person events at the Arizona colleges, and pursues chances to speak about employment opportunities at the end of lectures in college of education classes. AMS also has agreements in place with Arizona State University, University of Arizona, Grand Canyon University, and Pima Community College to offer student teaching and practicum placement opportunities at AMS campuses to current college of education students. AMS hopes to build exposure, build a pipeline of qualified and passionate educators, and establish a reputation as an ideal employer for future educators.

#### *Other Avenues of Recruitment*

In addition to the recruitment strategies above, the AMS Talent department regularly posts ads, maintains a career webpage on the network's website, attends various career fairs, and has instituted a referral program so that current employees are incentivized for making employee referrals. The AMS strategy is to be in as many places as possible online.

### **AMS Application Process**

Candidates submit an initial application that includes a resume and cover letter or writing sample, in addition to three professional references and a few simple questions, such as preferred school location if hired, desired salary, and available start date. All job advertisements direct candidates to the job description and application on the careers page of the AMS website so that all candidate materials are captured and stored in an online applicant tracking system shared among recruiters and hiring administrators.

### **Resume Evaluation**

Given AMS's commitment to excellence in all areas of operation, the AMS recruiting team consistently employs cutting edge strategies to increase resume volume and maintain selectivity. Generally, AMS receives anywhere between 1000-3000 resumes per month depending on the time of year. Once a candidate applies through the applicant tracking system, the application is immediately received by the AMS recruiting team. The recruiting team reviews all applications as soon as possible, typically within 1 to 2 business days for priority positions. Exceptional candidates are frequently scheduled for same-day or next day interviews. When reviewing applications, the recruiting team considers the following criteria, in order of importance:

- *Education and Certifications:* A Bachelor's Degree (at minimum) is required, and an Education major in K-5, is preferred. For middle school teachers, a degree in either education or related to their specialty (such as English Composition for ELA teachers, or Mathematics for Math teachers) is required. For elementary teachers,

degrees in Child Development, Family Studies, Social Work, and similar fields are highly preferred second to education degrees. All teaching certifications, especially Arizona licenses, are highly preferred for all teachers, but not required.

- *Teaching Experience:* Candidates must have at least one year of relevant experience, (although AMS prefers at least 3 and ideally 5) which can include student teaching, teaching jobs, social work, tutoring, counseling at summer camp, leading after school clubs, and volunteer work having to do with children. For middle school and specials positions, a year of experience teaching those subjects is required.
- *Resume and Writing:* Candidate resumes should be up to date, include relevant details (i.e. dates of employment and subjects taught), and have consistent and clean formatting. The writing quality, from grammar and spelling to conventions and word choice, should be decent for all teaching roles to ensure sufficient communication abilities, and must be superb for any teachers who teach English Language Arts at any grade level.
- *Work History:* Candidates should have stayed at least 2 years in 75% of their most recent jobs. Important criteria to consider includes whether the candidate leaves schools mid-year and if the candidate tends to move states frequently.

#### *Applicant Assessments, Interviews, and Sample Lesson*

Applicants are evaluated across various metrics such as writing skills, mission alignment, prior job stability, and written content assessments in their areas of specialization. Suitable candidates are scheduled for an interview with a school Principal.

To ensure each new team member is a quality fit for the organization, all candidate interviews include specific questions related to motivation, personality, and values; technical competence; team skills; problem solving abilities; and prior evidence of success. AMS teams pay special attention prior workplaces that the candidate has loved, disliked, and the biggest challenges candidates have faced. The answers to these questions frequently inform fit with AMS.

As the final part of any interview, teaching candidates are asked to conduct a sample lesson after receiving the teacher evaluation worksheet. If a candidate successfully completes a quality demo lesson and is approved by the school Principal for immediate or future hire, AMS network leadership conduct a confirmation interview that measures short, medium, and long-term fit with AMS. These interviews are generally conducted by one of two AMS Co-CEO's, AMS Superintendent, or Director of Curriculum and Instruction. Teaching positions excluding entry level support staff are subject to network level veto, although the AMS network will never require a leader to hire a candidate. Confirmation interviews with network leadership are conducted within 1-2 business days and are a top priority. Through this process, AMS finds intelligent and motivated candidates who love teaching, have the fortitude to work long and flexible hours, are quick learners, and have work ethic and values that will mesh well with the school's instructional philosophy.

#### Approval Process

Upon request for approval, the school Principal or the AMS recruiting team conducts a comprehensive reference check with a minimum of three professional

references, one or more of which is a supervisor such as a former Principal, Assistant Principal, Superintendent, or Instructional Coach at a prior school. Once a candidate's references are checked, the hiring Principal must submit an approval request to the network's superintendent through the applicant tracking system. The superintendent reviews all offer approval requests, typically within 2 business days of receipt, and approves, denies, or approves with conditions or revisions. Revisions can range from salary adjustments, request for a third interview by another school or network leader or, a request for supplemental professional development in the candidate's appropriate subject area paid for by AMS. If the offer request is approved, the Principal reaches out to the candidate to make the offer, typically over the phone if possible, to maintain a more personal yet professional connection with the teacher.

### Hiring

The AMS Network Office employs fulltime Human Resource managers who work to on-board all staff. The HR manager collects all required personnel information to ensure employees can be compensated on time, performs reference and background checks, assists all employees with signing up for health insurance and other employer-provided benefits, and ensures the school maintains documentation of each teacher's qualifications, including proof of appropriately certified status and valid fingerprint clearance card status. This person also works with the finance team to ensure legal compliance with all aspects related to employment and subsequently oversees compliance of HR files during audits.

The Director of Talent oversees the pacing of completion of hiring to ensure that all AMS schools are on track to filling all open positions and completing all processes by June 15 for each school year. To ensure efficiency fidelity, and reliable tracking in the AMS CMO hiring and onboarding processes, the CMO employs a variety of intake systems, such as SmartSheet and CRM, and solutions such as ADP's applicant tracking system.

### Training - Instructional Staff

In order to ensure the AMS adopted curriculum and instructional practices program is reliably implemented effectively, AMS provides several different forms of training and professional development. New teachers undergo three weeks of training before the start of the school year. This training includes hands-on learning and application of the school's instructional procedures (AMS Essentials) and practices as well as curriculum specific training for the school's core subjects and various other school expectations related to human resources, attendance tracking, grading, parent and student communication, culture, and deadlines.

Every teacher receives an instructional manual, which serves as the basis for all teacher training throughout the year. Each school also has an instructional coach who continuously mentors and educates teachers, performs classroom observations, and provides additional training on an as-needed basis during planning periods and professional development days.

Teachers have planning time to allow them to observe each other's classrooms to both absorb and refine practices across the school. Teachers also meet weekly in

professional learning communities (PLCs) within their grade level to review and discuss lesson plans and teaching strategies to best overcome any challenges or to improve upon existing success. School leaders informally observe and provide feedback to teachers weekly. Professional development and PLCs are held Fridays following a half day for students. Teachers meet with Principals bi-weekly to receive feedback on performance, set goals, and go over the use of data to inform instruction. Evaluation of teachers occurs at least twice per year after time and training has been provided to learn the school's expectations.

5. What process is in place or will be in place to monitor and measure educator effectiveness?

#### **Monitoring Principal Effectiveness**

The AMS comprehensive framework for monitoring and measuring educator effectiveness begins by monitoring the effectiveness of each school's educational leaders, particularly the school Principal. The framework for establishing strong founding Principals begins prior to the school's opening each year. AMSSM Principals will participate in this process from the moment they are hired during the planning phase and beyond the school's first day of instruction.

AMS Principals participate in a summer institute focused on AMS' educational program, curricula, teaching methods, assessment systems, school operations, procedures, legal compliance expectations, and achievement expectations. All programs, curricula,

methods and expectations are based upon documented success substantiated by research evidence, empirical observation, and empirical testing.

In addition to training, all AMS Principals participate in bi-weekly educational leadership meetings that focus on improving network schools. Under the leadership of the AMS Superintendent, principals select crucial areas to address during each meeting and work together to develop and implement solutions, address concerns, and continue their professional development as educational leaders.

AMS Principals participate in leadership conferences, conduct research that is relevant to the populations the network serves and participate in PLC book studies. They report back on relevant information and any empirical and quantitative school and assessment data they have gathered on the implementation of new strategies within their school so that the data can be evaluated as a team and potentially integrated across the network.

The AMS Superintendent will also conduct regular school site visits to evaluate whether principals are meeting performance standards, or if one AMS principal is exceeding in such a capacity that merits the full analysis and potential network-wide application of their practices at the next Principal meeting.

For the first year of AMSSM's implementation, the AMS Superintendent and other network Principals will visit the school more frequently, often on a monthly basis. Informal school site visits between school site leaders provide information on a wide range of contributions made by the Principals. School site visits may range from observing how a Principal interacts with others, to observing programs, or shadowing an administrator.

Additionally, the new AMSSM Principal will participate in AZCSP Instructional Rounds, which, in AMS' experience, is extremely effective in getting school leaders to think more openly about their educational practices outside of the AMS framework. Interacting with other educational leaders provides external feedback that is critical for improvement as both a school and network.

### **Measuring Principal Effectiveness**

Principals are evaluated on both the growth and well-being of their students, and the growth and well-being of their schools. The Academies' comprehensive framework for monitoring and measuring Principal effectiveness consists of evaluating Principals across a variety of areas of school operation focused on improving student outcomes and metrics related to overall operations and compliance. The evaluation standards below are grounded in current research and empirical evidence from nearly twenty years of experience operating schools in low-income areas. The design of the framework was created to align with the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders and was influenced by best practices at other high-performing CMOs as well as the Leverage Leadership model developed by Uncommon Schools. Student data, PowerSchool Reports, various data sheets, school and community survey data, and Superintendent and other network personnel observational data are evaluated twice per school year and quantitatively assessed based on the standards below:

- *Standard 1: Mission, Vision, and Core Values*
  - Developing, advocating, and enacting a shared mission, vision, and core values
- *Standard 2: Ethics and Professional Norms & Equity and Cultural Responsiveness*

- Acting ethically and according to professional standards
- *Standard 3: Equity and Cultural Responsiveness*
  - Striving for equity of educational opportunity and culturally responsive practices
- *Standard 4: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment*
  - Developing and supporting intellectually rigorous and coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- *Standard 5: Community of Care and Support for Students*
  - Cultivating an inclusive, caring, and supportive school community
- *Standard 6: Professional Capacity of School Personnel*
  - Developing the professional capacity and practice of teachers & all staff
- *Standard 7: Professional Community for Teachers and Staff & Culture*
  - Fostering a professional community of teachers and staff upholding school culture
- *Standard 8: Family and Community Engagement*
  - Engaging families and the community in meaningful and mutually beneficial ways
- *Standard 9: Operations and Management*
  - Managing school operations and resources
- *Standard 10: Continuous School Improvement*
  - Ensuring continuous improvement across multiple areas of school operation

Per A.R.S § 15.189.06, the system is designed to improve student and teacher performance and includes 33% of its evaluation outcomes as student academic achievement data and is adopted by the Governing Board yearly. The criteria below show what is required for success to be awarded the max points. The AMS Network has developed a rubric to evaluate each of the success criteria on a scale of 0-3 with different point weighted values. The Governing Body will make the final determination of weightings but will be proposed as follows by standard number – Academic Achievement 33% (and the remaining 66% divided across the standards). The AMS Network constantly strives to improve to increase alignment with the goals of the school, the Logic Model and Board Strategic Plan, and to create a simple (but comprehensive) framework designed to continually support AMSSM leaders to maximize student outcomes. The AMS Principal Evaluation Framework has been proven to be effective at establishing and identifying strong leaders at existing AMS schools. The following is the AMSSM Principal Evaluation Framework, which will be proposed and adopted at the Board’s discretion:

Standard	Criteria Description	Success Criteria at Max Points	Acceptable Samples/Evidence
Academic Data	Academic Achievement	90% of students meet or exceed their target growth on NWEA	Benchmark Results Reports and NWEA Results Reports
Academic Data	Academic Achievement	Outperforms 90% of nearby schools on growth on AzMERIT and maintains or increases average growth percentiles across all grade levels	AzMerit Results
Academic Data	Academic Achievement	% of proficient students on AzMerit increases by 5% in ELA and Math	AzMerit Results
Standard 1	Values	90% of teachers believe the leader embodies AMS Network Values - Humble, Constantly Improving, Leadership, Energy, Ally, Deepen, Discipline	Teacher Surveys
Standard 1	Mission	90% of teachers and parents believe that AMS is reaching the mission of the school in providing an advanced, well-rounded STEAM education to students accelerating advanced students and catching up students with deficiencies	Teacher and Parent Surveys
Standard 1	STEM Careers and College	95% of students are interested in continuing STEM education in high school and possibly pursuing a STEM career and believe they will go on to a STEM technical education program after high school or college	8th Grade Student Surveys
Standard 1 Standard 3 Standard 5	PBIS	PBIS - In place and properly implemented a collaboratively-developed (PBIS Matrix included), including accountability card and AMS behavior chart	Each school has and is following PBIS matrix, documented meeting with staff, interviewing school employees, field observations
Standard 1 Standard 7	Leadership	90% or more of the teachers show 90% or more overall satisfaction in teacher surveys concerning the leader	Teacher Survey Results
Standard 1 Standard 7	PD	90% of teachers rate all professional development provided by leader as relevant and effective and coaching as relevant and effective. PD is planned at least three weeks in advance; Agenda distributed to faculty at least two days in advance. Faculty are given a chance to add agenda items.	weekly PD electronic evaluation & onsite visits
Standard 2, Standard 3	Teacher affect	90% of staff feel proud to work at AMS (feel a sense of belonging)	Teacher Surveys
Standard 2, Standard 3, Standard 5	Student Affect	90% of students in surveys feel a sense of belonging at AMS, feel that AMS staff cares about them, and feel safe in the school	Student Surveys

Standard	Criteria Description	Success Criteria at Max Points	Acceptable Samples/Evidence
Standard 4	AMS Essentials: Classroom Management	95% of teachers demonstrate effective classroom management as measured through on-site observations	Data from Classroom Management Forms
Standard 4	AMS Essentials: Instructional Practices	AMS Essentials are observable in 90% of classrooms observed	Data from Observation SmartSheets and notes during school visits conducted by network
Standard 4	Curriculum and Pacing	100% of teachers use network curriculum and follow pacing calendar within 4 lessons including Study Island requirements or have a catchup plan in place to ensure course completion by end of year	100% of teachers
Standard 4	Schedules and Interventions	100% of classrooms follow network approved schedule and minutes, intervention programs follow district schedule, include 100% of students identified for intervention, student grouping and use approved material (will sample at least 10% of campus)	10% of ELA and 10% of Math groups observed and reviewed on Educlimber
Standard 4	Data-driven instruction	100% of core subject teachers will have 5 week reteaching plans within two days of receiving Network Item analysis	Written Reteaching Plans-10% of teachers are sampled
Standard 4	Curriculum Fidelity	95% of teachers follow, with fidelity, publisher and network program directions for Saxon, Open Court, REWARDS, Corrective Reading Write Source, and Collections	Field observations, lesson plans, homework posting (10% sampling)
Standard 4	Student Presentation of Work	100% of students participate in an outside of school presentation of learning, competition, or performance once per semester each subject	Student registration forms for competitions, or other proof, such as teacher records or admin records
Standard 4	Benchmark Testing	Greater than 95% of students complete the Benchmark, NWEA, and AzMERIT on time	Benchmark Results Reports for timely completion
Standard 4	Well-rounded, STEAM Program	Each school has comprehensive extracurricular activities and before and after school care 6:30 am - 6:30 pm program to include a total of 14 - sports, gymnastics, martial arts, science olympiad, robotics, computer, math and language art competitions, foreign language club, art club, student council, music/choir and year book	Registration forms, EA roster & schedule
Standard 5	Attendance	Attendance procedures are followed, inclusive of the attendance interventions and campus has >95% attendance rate	Reports from PowerSchool
Standard 5, Standard 8	Student Retention	90% of student retention	PowerSchool Report

Standard	Criteria Description	Success Criteria at Max Points	Acceptable Samples/Evidence
Standard 6	Observation and Feedback Cycle	100% of teachers will be observed at least once per week. After each observation school leader will meet with teacher and identify glows and grows and 100% of teachers have one-on-ones with school leaders at least bi-weekly focused around their performance and framework from one-on-ones from First, Break All the Rules as measured by teacher surveys.	Coaching form (Observation Goal Setting Form) that principals are using for meetings and coaching observations after post-meeting, Teacher Surveys
Standard 6	Observation and Feedback Cycle	100% of academic conferences will take place once every three weeks and will vary based on activity of PLCs. Discuss reteaching plan and its progress along with areas the teacher is working on based on observations.	Observations of academic conferences by the academic team; academic conference summary forms
Standard 6	Teacher Development	100% of teachers have goals to work towards, 100% of teachers are effective or put on improvement plans put in place as needed.	Goal worksheets/coaching worksheets used during walk-through, saved coaching sheets in SharePoint, Teacher Tier sheet
Standard 6, Standard 7	Teacher Retention	90% of teachers are retained (accounting for uncontrollable reasons)	Teacher Roster
Standard 7	Mentorship	100% of Tier 3 teachers are assigned a mentor (with a track record of success in classroom), mentor program is implemented with fidelity, and 90% of teachers feel that the mentor program is helpful in improving their performance	Mentoring Worksheets
Standard 8	Parent Communication	100% of communication timelines completed and met: timelines for entire year communicated to parents by August, reports cards sent on time, monthly newsletter communications to parents, all announcements for key school events sent in advance, parent teacher conferences are scheduled and held, parent and student surveys are distributed, website updates monthly	Student planners, report cards, D&F reports, interviews of school personnel, copies of documents sent reviewed bi-weekly principal meetings, attendance sheets
Standard 8	High-performing High School Partnerships	95% of students surveyed 8th graders will be attending one of the recommended high schools or another high performing high school	8th Grade Student Surveys
Standard 8	Community Partners	The leader brings additional resources into the school through maintaining and building new partnerships that align with the academic program	Network observations
Standard 8	One-on-one Parent Relationships and Communication	100% of parents will get phone call or Class Dojo communication from homeroom teacher once per month	Call log maintained by homeroom teachers and Class Dojo and Parent Surveys

Standard	Criteria Description	Success Criteria at Max Points	Acceptable Samples/Evidence
Standard 8	Parent Satisfaction	90% or more of the parents turning in survey show 80% or more overall satisfaction	Parent Survey
Standard 8	Schoolwide Community Events	Schoolleader holds at least one schoolwide event at campus a month (not including sports games) in addition to PAC. Parents are given schedule of events for an entire year start of year. At least 30% of parents attend monthly.	Parent sign-in sheet; parent calendar; agendas; family counts from PowerSchool
Standard 8	School Culture and Environment and Communication	90% of parents feel that the school environment is welcoming to parents (survey), new and existing parents can reach the school for urgent issues same day or in all other cases within 24 hours, and are welcomed when stepping onto campus and lobby (survey tours)	School observations; Log of follow-up calls and surveys to tours, Parent Survey
Standard 9	ADE Reports	100% timely completion of requirements and submission into PS of NCLB (97% returned), 45 day screens, identification of EL, placement, and AzELLA test and retest, SPED (45 day screens and IEPs), Teacher Input Application, IAP	Copies of reports or links to uploaded reports in PowerSchool and Pearson and ADE
Standard 9	AzMERIT Compliance	100% compliance with all requirements of AZMerit test including 95% tested, proctors training, ordering and shipping materials	Attendance Sign-In Spreadsheet, Signed Test Agreement, TIDE (materials)
Standard 9	Effective Management of School Financial Resources	NSLP - Pass administrative review without fiscal action, process applications within the timeframe (10 days), balances are maintained, Cash Handling - Procedures are followed by front desk and staff 100% of times observed.	Program reports from MealTime, Receipts in PowerSchool and Balances Deposited in Bank, Network Observation
Standard 9	Student Safety	Fire drills & emergency lockdown and active shooter drills (when the principal times the fire drill) are recorded monthly	Principal Monthly Report and Fire drill and Emergency Lockdown binder
Standard 9	Placement Testing	100% of new students are placement tested and placed according to placement test rubric. Combined.	Review of placement test spreadsheets
Standard 9	Enrollment	Enrollment goals are met @ 97% capacity, 100% of parents on waiting lists called within 24 hours	PowerSchool Reports & CRM
Standard 9	Student Safety	Adequate supervision 100% of times observed of students during pickup/dropoff, during school, lunch, afterschool activities	Network Observations
Standard 9	Hiring of Staff	95% of interviews following highly effective teacher hiring procedures & urgency in filling roles with talent team rating school leader as highly responsive	Talent team survey, Scorecard and Newton Reports
Standard 9	Delegation of Duties	Clear roles and responsibilities in the administrative and front office team	Roles and Responsibilities Spreadsheet or Job Descriptions

Standard	Criteria Description	Success Criteria at Max Points	Acceptable Samples/Evidence
Standard 9	Student Safety	Pickup and dropoff procedures are safe and executed within 30 minutes	Network observations
Standard 9	Health of Students and Staff	Student and staff injuries handled and reported according to network procedures & Nurse Procedures 100% compliance with 100% meeting Immunization Requirements	Student and Staff Injury Reports, Immunization Report Power School
Standard 9	Student Safety	Visitor policy enforced at all times with 100% of visitors signing in and with tags	Visitor Binder and Network Observations
Standard 9	All data entered correctly into PS by 5th day of enrollment (NCLB, EL, SPED, Race, Ethnicity)	100% compliance with enrollment policy and requirements of registrars (placement test, enrollment, withdrawal documentation and PS uploads, charter counts, integrity errors)	Spot checking enrollment using PS Reports and the enrollment withdrawal log, Placement Sheet
Standard 10	Continuous Improvement	School leader submits improvement plans (with analytical insight following key school levers, root cause analysis, solutions, and SMART) across 100% operational areas, collaboratively developed with staff, for campus after each student, staff, and parent survey within two weeks of results	Improvement Plans Generated
Standard 10	Continuous Improvement	School leader develops an annual plan (with analytical insight following key school levers, root cause analysis, solutions, and SMART) for school improvement across all operational areas during prior to July 1	Improvement Plans Generated
Standard 10	Continuous Improvement	School leader demonstrates responsiveness to feedback and shows growth and a desire to lead one's own growth coming prepared to one-on-ones with specific focuses of development, goals for the campus, and adjusting plans based on new benchmark results, survey results, etc.	Network Observations, One-on-ones, Improvement Plans

Principals are rated semi-annually and given a summary effectiveness rating based on their performance as follows:

- *Highly Effective:* 90 - 100% of total available points
- *Effective:* 80 - 90% of total available points
- *Developing:* 60 - 80% of total available points
- *Ineffective:* Less than 60% of total available points

100% of Principals rated developing or lower will be assigned a mentor (typically a successful AMS Principal at another school) and will be assigned an Improvement Plan.

### **Monitoring Teacher Effectiveness**

The Principal or other school leaders (Assistant Principals, Instructional Coaches) lead the monitoring of teachers at each school. School leaders hold conferences before and after observations, perform weekly informal observations, hold data meetings with teachers every

two weeks, conduct bi-weekly one-on-one meetings with teachers focused on professional growth and developing a relationship with the teacher, and they evaluate the teacher formally twice throughout the year. School leaders employ an AMS Network created tool that tracks all observations across the AMS Essentials.

Additionally, school leaders observe and monitor (with additional sampling by AMS Network Personnel for evaluation of the principal) teachers in a variety of settings for various professional responsibilities outside of the classroom (such as the teachers extracurricular and community involvement, lesson plans and Annual Plans, and each teacher's Data Analysis Sheets following assessment benchmarks).

AMS teachers are also monitored by peer teacher observations, mentor and lead teachers, and instructional coaches; conduct self-review of their performance on video and are reviewed by other teachers and leaders on video; and discuss performance in teacher teams and whole-school professional development meetings.

### **Measuring Teacher Effectiveness**

Teachers are evaluated twice per year based on two metrics: (1) academic achievement (including NWEA % of students meeting growth and % of students passing AzMERIT) and (2) meeting instructional expectations across 6 teacher standards as identified in this section.

### **Academic Achievement**

Academic Achievement (33% of overall Score) is evaluated by the following:

- *K-2 Teachers*: NWEA math and ELA % meeting growth targets for all classes taught

- >75% → 100% of points
- >55%-75% → 80-100% of points
- 45-55% → 60%-80% of points
- <45% → 0%-60% of points
- *Math and ELA Teachers, Grades 3-8:*
  - Same scale as K-2 based on NWEA math and ELA % meeting growth targets, respectively, and AzMERIT math and ELA SGPs for all classes taught
- *All Other K-8 Teachers:* NWEA math and ELA % meeting growth targets, respectively, and AzMERIT math and ELA SGPs schoolwide
  - Same scale as K-2 based on NWEA math and ELA % meeting growth targets, respectively, and AzMERIT math and ELA student growth percentiles.
- *4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade science Teachers:*
  - Same scale as K-2 based on AIMS Science % passing

The common, evidence-based instructional strategies in which all teachers are trained on are referred to as the AMS Essentials. These instructional strategies, such as using strategic questioning, bell to bell teaching, and maintaining high engagement during lessons using specific Direct Instruction techniques, all support effective learning for disadvantaged students.

Teaching Standards and Objectives

AMS Principals evaluate teachers on the following standards: planning and

preparation, classroom management and procedures, classroom academic and behavioral expectations and culture, other professional responsibilities, and team culture.

Teachers are scored on a 0-3 scale on each objective under each standard: (3) all, (2) most, (1) some of the item, or (0) not demonstrated. Each of the items are equally weighted and contribute to 66% of a teacher's overall evaluation.

In construction of the AMS Instructional Standards for teachers, the AMS Network constructed items that require performance from the teacher as well as observing student behavior to ensure that learning is approached with a balanced perspective with a healthy focus on students as learners. The AMS Essentials as well as the AMS Teaching Standards and Objectives were built following 20 years of practice at AMS, observing other high performing school systems, research on the use of high-engagement instructional techniques and effective classroom management systems, and influence by various researchers and practitioners such as Randy Sprick (CHAMPS), Robert Slavin (Success for All), Siegfried Engelmann (for his work in designing Direct Instruction methodologies and program that AMS uses and adapts across the school), and the work of Doug Lemov and the teaching taxonomy he developed in *Teach Like a Champion*. The following list below is a majority of the objectives covered under the AMS Teacher Standards and Objectives (which are also known as the AMS Essentials):

- Planning and Preparation
  - *Addressing Individual Student Needs*: Submitted lesson plans consistently break down complex tasks and address individual student learning styles and needs, current skill, personal interests, and background.

- *Instructional Outcomes:* Instructional outcomes are consistently clear and written to specifically address student learning; they are two-part and facilitate measurable methods of assessment. Outcomes and objectives are clearly explained to students. The teacher consistently incorporates essential questions, exemplars, and relevant rubrics into the lesson so students can articulate lesson expectations, and ideally predict their own performance.
- *Lesson Plan Components:* Lesson plans consistently include an anticipatory set and review of previous lessons, two-part objective statements, information inputs that activate prior knowledge throughout the review of sub-skills, teacher modeling, checking for understanding, guided and independent practice, continuous corrections and feedback, and closure.
- *Curriculum Fidelity:* Schedules, methods of instruction, program guide directions, required minutes, and publisher assessments are implemented with fidelity.
- *Data-driven Planning:* The Teacher is prepared for data meetings with complete Data Analysis Worksheets showing initiative with keen insight on rationale for student errors, high leverage standards, and an action plan. Additionally, data from student assessments is consistently used to inform lesson planning, make lesson plan adjustments, and modify instruction and teacher preparedness.

- Instructional Practices, Lesson Delivery, and Engagement

- *Depth of Knowledge:* Teacher consistently engages students on levels 3 and 4 and not just 1 and 2.
- 100% of students are on-task and engaged with assigned activities or lessons. Teacher adjusts pedagogical approaches as necessary to ensure that 100% of students are engaged in the lesson
- *Differentiates Teaching and Scaffolds:* Teacher teaches at multiple levels of depth of knowledge strategies, differentiates instruction, scaffolds content as necessary, and uses small groups or other formats if necessary.
- *Cold calling:* The teacher has a clearly established procedure in place to randomly cold call on students that do not raise their hands. The teacher consistently and randomly selects the names of the students using popsicles sticks, name tags, etc. The teacher always allows to think before and after a question is posed; the teacher can choose to repeat the question more than once.
- *Note-taking:* For grades 3 and higher, it is consistently evident that the teacher has explicitly taught note-taking skills. For grades 4 and higher, the teacher has explicitly taught Cornell note-taking skills and it is consistently evident that this note-taking strategy is being utilized. For all note-taking activities, the teacher consistently employs note-taking strategies during instruction, is very clear about what students need to copy or write down, and consistently ensures that notes include key ideas and a summary. For grades

K-3, the teacher consistently communicates to students to copy what is on the board for any note-taking activities.

- *Group Response:* The teacher consistently and frequently asks the entire class to actively respond and show understanding using visual engagement strategies such as white boards, hand signals, etc.
- *Strategic Questioning:* The teacher consistently calls on students with various levels of performance (ideally identified based on prior assessment data) to gain understanding of the entire group's learning and maintains the expectation that students should deliver answers in complete sentences.
- *Exit Tickets:* The teacher consistently utilizes exit tickets for a quick check of understanding and consistently uses exit ticket information to identify what needs to be reviewed at the start of the next lesson. Exit tickets include the questions of “what did you learn?” and “what questions do you have?”
- *Classroom Management and Procedures - CHAMPS:* The teacher addresses Conversation, Help, Activity, Movement, Participation, and Success for 100% of activities and students follow.
- The teacher has posted positive and clearly defined classroom rules. 100% of students follow classroom rules.
- *AMS PBIS Accountability and Behavior Management System:* Teacher consistently utilizes AMS PBIS Accountability Card (Grades 5-8) for praise and behavior correction (including enforcement of disciplinary consequences) or a

visible behavior management system aligned with the AMS Teacher Manual and PBIS requirements (Grades K-4)

- *Preventative and Discrete Corrections:* Teacher corrects behavior in the least disruptive way, for example: behavioral narration, proximity, non-verbal intervention.
- *Classroom Routines:* The teacher has developed procedures for asking for help, turning in assignments, passing materials to the class, to go to the restroom, finishing work early, asking for writing utensil, etc. that 100% of students follow.
- *Noise Level and Silent Attention:* 100% of students follow the communicated noise level and the teacher maintains silent attention before giving instructions or teaching.
- Classroom Academic and Behavioral Expectations and Culture
  - *Academic Content:* Lessons are aligned to the lesson plan submitted to and reviewed by the AMS Network Academic Team 90% of the time. Deviations from lesson plans are observed to be productive and further engage students productively.
  - *No Opt-out:* The teacher ensures that 100% of students answer even if they do not know the right answer, prompts each student with questions to guide them toward answers, ensures that each student has an opportunity to say the answer as well as why they missed it.

- *Try Again:* For any questions or routines that the students miss, the teacher makes sure to encourage 100% of students to keep trying until they get it right.
- *Bell Work:* Students immediately sit down and begin working on bell work the minute they step through the classroom door.
- *Material Readiness:* 100% of students have materials ready at the start of the bell (writing utensil, notebook, planner, water bottle, etc.) and everything else put away
- *Behavior Narration and Recognizing Positive Behavior:* The teacher utilizes behavioral narration and recognizes positive behavior to establish a positive atmosphere in the classroom prior to correcting students on any errors academic, behavioral, or otherwise.
- *3:1 Ratio:* The teacher maintains at least a 3:1 positive to corrective comment ratio with each student and the class as a whole.
- *Positive Reframing:* The teacher finds frequent opportunities to communicate that all students can succeed in the class, encourages effort, reframes failure as one step closer to success and a necessary part of the learning process.
- *Urgency:* The teacher consistently seeks to decrease time in between transitions and encourages students to be efficient.
- *Endurance:* The teacher notices when students take breaks and encourages them to keep going, keep working, and overcome difficulty. The teacher helps students enjoy hard work and overcoming difficulty.

- *Inviting Learning Environment:* The classroom has prominent displays of student work, items about the teacher and content subjects, and feels generally inviting.
- *Neat Learning Environment:* The classroom is neat with backpacks under desks or hung in a designated area, student desks only contain requisite lesson or learning materials, no trash or supplies on floors in visible areas unless clearly designated for supplies, no physical obstructions between desks that restrict teacher or student movement or create, and desks are situated in an orderly pattern.
- Other Professional Responsibilities
  - *Student Safety:* The teacher never leaves students unattended and student safety is visibly a top priority.
  - *Maintenance of Student Records:* The teacher's system for maintaining information in their gradebook on student completion of assignments, student progress, and noninstructional records is consistently effective and completed on time.
  - *Substitute Preparation:* The teacher consistently has a substitute folder in a visible place, with at least three days of substitute plans and copies of handouts.
  - *Lesson Plan Submission:* Weekly lesson plans are consistently submitted in the designated online folder for their school and subject prior to the beginning of the following week. Lesson plans are consistently revised if there are any

changes to plans during an instructional week. All supplemental material is consistently uploaded as well.

- *Regular Parent Communication:* The teacher consistently checks planners and writes grades or feedback in student planners at least once a week and communicates with families via Class Dojo, phone, and documents at least once a month.
- *Professional Parent Communication:* The teacher consistently responds to family concerns with professionalism and cultural sensitivity no matter the circumstance.
- *Relationship with Colleagues:* The teacher's relationships with colleagues are consistently characterized by mutual support and cooperation and the teacher takes initiative in assuming some leadership responsibility among the faculty.
- *Promoting a Culture of Professional Inquiry:* The teacher consistently takes an active (sometimes leadership) role in promoting a culture of professional inquiry and consistently participates in grade level teams and PLC's. The teacher consistently participates and contributes to in-house professional development.
- *Teacher Volunteering:* The teacher consistently volunteers to participate in school events and district projects and makes substantial contributions by assuming a leadership role in at least one aspect of school or district life that positively impacts the school.

- Team Culture
  - *Constantly Improving*: The teacher actively seeks feedback by asking for it from others, has a level demeanor to both positive and negative feedback, is self-reflective and works on their own perceived weaknesses, and has the belief in themselves that they can become better. The teacher contributes to a schoolwide culture of teacher self-efficacy.
  - *Initiative*: The teacher sets goals for themselves and takes on projects without being asked to make the campus and/or their teaching better.
  - *Standards*: The teacher believes that every student can learn and become successful and that the teacher can be successful with any class.
  - *Energy*: The teacher is energetic and positive and lifts other staff members up.
  - *Ally*: The teacher seeks to work with other teachers and staff to collaboratively create solutions to problems.
  - *Deepen*: The teacher creates a close connection with all staff by seeking to understand, showing empathy and support, and seeks to be understood last.

#### Teacher Evaluation Scoring

Academic achievement accounts for 33% of a teacher's evaluation and the instructional expectations above account for 66%. Teachers are provided a summative effectiveness rating based on the following:

- *Highly Effective*: 90 - 100% of total available points
- *Effective*: 80 - 90% of total available points

- *Developing:* 60 - 80% of total available points
- *Ineffective:* Less than 60% of total available points

100% of teachers rated developing or lower will be assigned a mentor as well as an Improvement Plan. This metric is evaluated in Principal Effectiveness in Standard 6: Capacity of school personnel. Each teacher must have measurable goals to work toward and formal and informal observations must show implementation of the AMS Essentials.

#### *Educator Accountability*

Based on twenty years of experience and constant research, the AMS Network has proven that the above Principal and Teacher monitoring and measuring framework is effective across a variety of teaching styles, student and community needs, is particularly effective in improving the educational outcomes of disadvantaged students. By providing both qualitative and quantitative expectations, AMSSM teachers and their Principal will grow alongside students in a flexible but rigorous framework designed to allow creative educators to flourish.

6. What process is in place or will be in place to engage leaders and instructional staff members in reflective self-assessment and school-wide assessment to identify areas for continuous improvement that aligns with the school's mission?

#### **Collaborative and Ongoing Process for School Leader and Staff Self-Assessment**

As is standard AMS practice, the entire school community will be involved in a feedback cycle that facilitates the continuous improvement of AMSSM's program to achieve the school's mission.

### Staff Assessment

School leaders and instructional staff will regularly engage in self-reflection during Friday staff meetings; school leader, lead teacher, and peer observation; reflection in teacher teams; professional learning communities (PLCs) during half-day and all-day professional development; parent and staff surveys; Principal and Assistant Principal-led professional development meetings with staff to assess school needs; monthly Principal and assistant-Principal data reviews; and monthly Principal and Assistant Principal general feedback meetings; and through regular networkwide monthly Principal meetings to discuss network needs.

Each Friday, AMSSM will hold school staff meetings to address any immediate concerns or developments that have arisen, to maintain communication with teachers and continuously align needs with collaboratively designed improvement plans. Teacher teams and PLCs will meet weekly to adjust curricula as needed, assess student data and behavioral concerns, address teacher instructional needs, and to provide mentoring support to new teachers. For each meeting, administrators and teachers will develop and adhere to formal agendas so that time is spent effectively assessing and reflecting on essential topics that most affect student growth and achievement. Community meeting agendas will also include the discussion, assessment, and reflection on student achievement and community concerns. School community meetings will conclude with a

structured question and answer section to help teachers and administrators work through specialized challenges.

### School Wide Assessment

Each school within the AMS network engages in a cycle of continuous improvement through planning, implementation, reflection, and feedback cycles. All school stakeholders use a comprehensive needs assessment (CNA) that incorporates community and staff feedback regarding the school's day to day operations, individual self-reflection for teachers, academics, staff leadership, and administration. The CNA is based on six traits identified by ADE within highly effective schools: effective leadership, effective teaching, use of time, effective curriculum, climate and culture, and family engagement.

To analyze the results of the comprehensive needs assessment, teachers, administrators, community members, and all other key stakeholders work together to identify the specific lowest scoring areas for improvement. By providing a quantitative foundation via rating systems incorporated into the AMS CNA, AMSSM will strive toward clearly measurable improvement over time. Teams consisting of key stakeholders will use the results of the CNA to develop a school-wide Integrated Action Plan (IAP) that addresses these key areas for improvement. The plan will include measurable, time specific goals so that the Governing Board, AMS CMO, and AMSSM leadership continually generate actionable results. The CNA, root cause analysis conducted following the CNA, and resulting action steps allow the site to concisely identify the appropriate action steps and outcomes that will generate positive improvement in the

program against the six traits seen in highly effective schools. All AMSSM stakeholders will reflect on the plan at the beginning and end of each semester to adjust action steps and priorities to consistently drive and define the whole AMS school program.

In addition to the IAP at each school, AMSSM will break into grade level teams to meet with administrators on a monthly basis and reflect on academic data from assessments, administration observations, team observations, and parent observations. Team meetings will involve the analysis of data collected from all assessment systems; peer reviews and feedback from lead teachers and school leaders; surveys, and parent communication. Each team will then develop and document goals based on the latest data. Goal progress and new student data will be reviewed on a monthly basis to ensure that goals and action steps always reflect current student and community needs.

#### *School Leader and Staff Reflection and Assessment*

Both staff and school leaders must also reflect and act upon the community's assessment of their performance. AMS schools distribute surveys three times per year to students, parents, and the community the school serves. Sent to students, parents, and community partners, the surveys request feedback on the operation of the school, the effectiveness of the school's efforts to meet the needs of the community, the effectiveness of the academic program, and many more questions that allow for the expression of the community's opinion. The survey results are then compiled and shared with school leaders and the staff so that they may reflect upon and develop strategies for improvement that align with both school's mission and community input. Prior to the summer of each school year, the Principal is required to reflect on the year

and come up with a list of improvements by each operational area. School leaders also work together to come up with a common list of areas that the school Network may want to consider as a whole. Principals are required to execute the same in one-on-one sit down with the Superintendent and Co-CEO of Academics.

#### *School-Wide Reflection and Assessment*

For new schools like AMSSM, the process of reflection and assessment will begin during professional development prior to the start of the school year. After staff have been trained by curriculum publishers, CMO academic team members, and school administrators will have the opportunity to provide direct feedback during a survey session designed to identify where the teachers or the school needs further support or resources.

#### *Accountability, Sustainment, and AMSSM Mission Alignment*

The aforementioned processes allow staff and school leaders to sustain their commitment toward the AMSSM school mission. Through continual self-assessment, participation in PLC groups, collaborative professional development with their AMS colleagues and chosen mentors, and the implementation of new action steps to address identified needs, each AMSSM staff member will constantly build their ability to support students and the community. Although AMS maintains high standards in the selection of school leaders and school staff, it is a network expectation that teachers and administrators grow alongside their students each year. Their efforts are documented as part of their final evaluations, instilling the importance of accountability for the growth of their students, school, and their own craft.

**Budget Form and Narrative – Total points possible: 10 points**

A description of the eligible applicant’s planned activities and expenditures of subgrant funds to support the activities of opening and preparing for the operation of new charter schools, or replicated high-quality charter schools, or expanding high-quality charter schools. If the applicant plans to open its school on August 1, 2019, Planning and Implementation expenditures must be identified as such in the Budget Narrative. If the applicant plans to open its school on August 1, 2020, all expenditures are Planning and need not be identified as such. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303(f)(1)(C)(i)(V)*

General expenditure guidance (See AZCSP website for a more guidance on allowable expenditures): costs must be reasonable, necessary, and allocable to meet the objectives of the grant. Activities: Preparing teachers, school leaders, and specialized instructional support personnel, including through paying the costs associated with— (A) providing professional development; and (B) hiring and compensating, during the eligible applicant’s Planning period specified in the application for subgrant funds that is required under this section, one or more of the following: (i) Teachers. (ii) School leaders. (iii) Specialized instructional support personnel. (2) Acquiring supplies, training, equipment (including technology), and educational materials (including developing and acquiring instructional materials). (3) Carrying out necessary renovations to ensure that a new school building complies with applicable statutes and regulations, and minor facilities repairs (excluding construction). (4) Providing one-time, startup costs associated with providing transportation to students to and from the charter school. (5) Carrying out community engagement activities, which may include paying the cost of student and staff recruitment. (6) Providing for other appropriate, non-sustained costs related to the activities described in subsection (b)(1) when such costs cannot be met from other sources. Also, salaries are covered only during the Planning period.

**Planned Activities and Expenditures of Grant Funds**

**Planning Activities**

**Planning Principal**

As of October 2019, AMSSM has identified a Planning Principal from within the AMS network’s existing school leadership that will transition to planning duties full-time. The Planning Principal of AMSSM will be responsible for a myriad of duties that are

critical for the successful establishment of a new charter school. The AMSSM Planning

Principal will:

- Lead all student recruitment efforts (including canvassing neighborhoods and dropping off fliers), summer teacher professional development, and serve as the primary representative of AMSSM and the AMS network in all community events, outreach efforts, and communication with local families and students.
- Establish community partnerships across a wide range of service providers and institutions and adapt community partnerships to family-communicated needs.
  - Lead the Community Comprehensive Needs Assessment event to ensure that the school will address community needs and ensure that necessary program adjustments are properly implemented prior to the first day of school.
- Oversee student placement in the appropriate classes through the use of NWEA data (which will not be used as a criteria for admission)
- Assist families with enrollment paperwork and respond to parent and family inquiries regarding any aspect of the school's operation or the AMS program.
- Assemble a team of high-quality educators capable of exceeding community expectations by conducting interviews to fill vital school positions such as Assistant Principal, Dean of Students, Instructional Coach, lead teachers, teachers, and paraprofessionals.

- Collaborate with AMS network staff in marketing, grants, compliance, academics, and facilities on a regular basis to ensure that planning and implementation align with the school’s mission and ASBCS requirements.
- Complete additional administrative and leadership related duties as necessary to prepare for the opening of the school, or as listed in Section E, Question 1.

The Planning Principal’s salary allocation with benefits is listed in the included line item budget below. The budget is written with the understanding that the Principal’s salary is only eligible for AZCSP reimbursement beginning on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020.

Registrar

The task of admitting and enrolling over 800 students for a brand-new school is a daunting task for any charter operator, but one that AMS has a proven track record of executing. As such, AMSSM will hire and train a registrar as soon as the planning process is fully underway, typically in December or January. The Registrar will be responsible for:

- Maintaining a database of information on interested students and their families,
- Admitting and enrolling students,
- Managing lottery procedures and afterwards first-come, first-served enrollment in compliance with state and federal law,
- Providing information about AMSSM to interested families,
- Acting as a liaison between the school and the community when school leaders are unavailable, and

- Completing other administrative duties as necessary to prepare for the opening of the school.
- Canvass neighborhoods under the direction of the Planning Principal.

Community Outreach Team

The Community Outreach Team will consist of a Community and Outreach Coordinator and a Parent Marketer recruited from an existing AMS school. The school Community and Outreach Coordinator will help the Principal organize events such as the Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment event, enrollment events for families within the community, and a groundbreaking ceremony with support from the AMS Network Office as needed. The Team will also assist the Registrar and families with the admissions process, help to supervise student placement assessments, and process final enrollment information. This team also works together as a marketing canvassing team, visiting local businesses frequented by families in the community to inform them about the upcoming opening of AMSSM and related enrollment events. In addition to sharing the Coordinator's duties, the Parent Marketer will specifically focus on parent outreach, answering parent inquiries, and will have an increased portion of their time allocated to interfacing with parent groups both in the enrollment office and at events. The estimated cost for the services provided by the Community Outreach Coordinator Team for AMSSM is listed in the budget.

The Registrar and Community Outreach/Enrollment Coordinator salary allocation with benefits is combined in the line item budget below. The Community Outreach Team's budget allocation is listed separately. All staff will be supervised by the AMSSM

Planning Principal, and adherence of funds to appropriate uses will be overseen by the CMO.

*Instructional Technology, Supplies, and Curriculum*

The budget also includes the purchase of student laptop computers, supplies, and curriculum for use upon implementation. In support of the new school site, AMSSM will purchase laptop computers for use in the pre-assessment of new students so that they can be placed in the appropriate academic program (students in AMS work at or above grade level depending on placement) and have schedules which reflect the appropriate amount of remediation. Afterwards, the student laptop computers will be critical to support AMS's STEAM curriculum upon implementation.

Student supplies and curriculum listed in this line item (6600) will include a range of essential items that every school needs, such as desks, paper, miscellaneous instructional materials, leveled classroom library books, curriculum from previously identified publishers, etc.

**Implementation Activities**

In order to deliver on AMSSM's program mission and objectives, AMSSM teachers will need to be thoroughly trained in all AMS programs and have the capacity to effectively implement proven AMS programs beginning on the very first day of school. Prior to the opening of the school, AMSSM teachers will participate in a rigorous three-week professional development program. This professional development program is proven to establish early teacher effectiveness in the use of the AMS program. The

estimated cost of providing high-quality publisher professional development during the three-week program has been allocated in the budget to help cover the cost

Implementing the AMS program with fidelity.

**AZCSP Cost Objectives Timeline**

If funded, AMSSM will execute all necessary activities in the following timeline as part of the planning and implementation described in this section related to the expenditure of subgrant funds to support the new charter school:

- *12/11-13/2019*: AMSSM will register with the Arizona Department of Education’s School Finance Team, establish the school in Grants Management, and submit a timely General Statement of Assurances. If this registration is complete prior to AZCSP’s established program dates, AMSSM will reach out to the Arizona Department of Education at least one week prior to ensure that all requirements are met.
- *1/20/20*: AMSSM and CMO Grants staff will submit a detailed funding application in the AZCSP Program’s Grants Management Enterprise System (GME) for approval by the AZCSP Program Director. AMSSM and CMO staff will ensure alignment with the program’s objectives, the school’s mission, and the contents of this application. Any changes to the line items included in this application will be discussed with the AZCSP Program Director and approved prior to any spending once the AZCSP 2021-25 Year 1 fiscal year begins.

- *1/29/2020*: AZCSP Grants Management Funding Application Approval. AMSSM will await feedback from AZCSP program staff regarding the submitted funding application and ensure prompt communication and responses to any feedback.
- *2/1/2020*: AZCSP 2021-25 Year 1 begins. AMSSM will be eligible to begin expensing items to the AZCSP Grant. AMSSM will begin executing cost objectives related to planned grant spending as proposed in this application and in the approved funding application sent to the Program Director via GME. AMSSM and CMO staff will ensure 100% compliance with program objectives and request assistance from the AZCSP team when proposing changes to the budget.
- *2/1/2020 - 7/30/2020 (First Day of School)*: AMSSM and CMO staff will execute the school's planning and program objectives in anticipation of the first day of school. AMSSM leadership and CMO staff will ensure the timely and compliant payment of salaries and purchase of supplies, including laptop computers, student supplies, and curriculum listed in the line item budget below at least two months before the first day of school. AMSSM leadership and CMO staff will submit reimbursement requests to AZCSP and ADE immediately or at least bi-monthly.

#### **Maintaining Financial Sustainability After the Grant**

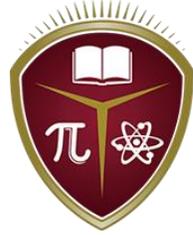
After AZCSP funding has been expended during the planning phase, there are safeguards in place to make sure that there is adequate funding to sustain the school. The AMS network utilizes inter-company borrowing to allocate resources to the company that contains the new sites while still making sure that each charter holder

within the AMS network still complies completely with the charter authorizer's requirement of maintaining 30 days cash on-hand. Even though it has never been utilized, the network also maintains an open \$700,000 line of credit to sustain the new school's operations until the first state aid payment is received.

LINE ITEMS DESCRIPTION			
Function Code	Object Code	Description	Budgeted Amount
<b>Instruction 1000</b>			
Salaries	6100		0.00
Employee Benefits	6200		0.00
Purchased Professional Services	6300	Publisher Provided Professional Development for Teachers	\$15,000.00
Purchased Property Services	6400		0.00
Other Purchased Services	6500		0.00
Supplies	6600	Student Laptop Computers: \$40,957.00 Student Supplies and Curriculum (includes ELA/Math curriculum and leveled library books): \$97,243.00	\$138,200.00
Other Expenses	6800		0.00
<b>Support Services 2100, 2200, 2600, 2700</b>			
Salaries	6100		0.00
Employee Benefits	6200		0.00
Purchased Professional Services	6300		0.00
Purchased Property Services	6400		0.00
Other Purchased Services	6500		0.00
Supplies	6600		0.00
Other Expenses	6800		0.00
<b>Support Services - Admin 2300, 2400, 2500, 2900</b>			
Salaries	6100	Planning Principal: \$40,000.00 Registrars & Community Outreach Team: \$40,000	\$80,000.00
Employee Benefits	6200	Benefits @ 21%	\$16,800.00
Purchased Professional Services	6300		
Purchased Property Services	6400		0.00
Other Purchased Services	6500		0.00
Supplies	6600		0.00
Other Expenses	6800		0.00
<b>Operation of Non-Instructional Services 3000</b>			
Salaries	6100		0.00
Employee Benefits	6200		0.00
Purchased Professional Services	6300		0.00
Purchased Property Services	6400		0.00

Other Purchased Services	6500		0.00
Supplies	6600		0.00
Other Expenses	6800		0.00
<b>Capital Outlay</b>			
Capital Assets	190		0.00

**Max points possible: 100 points + 5 optional preference points**



**Petition Response Question:**

Please let us know why you're interested in AMS and why do you think that this neighborhood needs a school like AMS?

**Parent Petition Reply #1:**

We are interested in sending him there because we wanted to make sure he receives the best education possible. The South Mountain area really needs a school like this to give children in the community more of a chance at a successful life. Our area is known more for violence and crime than it is for education and this school could really make a difference! I am excited to learn more about your school and hopefully send my son there. Thank you for your time!

**Parent Petition Reply #2:**

I love the idea of a school that focuses on the students and their needs, and really celebrates their individuality. We moved to South Mountain from a very small Northern Arizona town, and we do not know the area very well yet, but we are excited to jump into a school where communication and collaboration with us (the parents) is a priority! I am so excited that you are opening near us and hopefully my son will be attending!

**Parent Petition Reply #3:**

I really like the curriculum and the structured way of teaching. It would be great to have a new school in south mountain.

**Parent Petition Reply #4:**

Thank you, I've heard nothing but good things about this school, so I feel super comfortable enrolling my daughter for her first year ever if school there. I'm sure she will learn and achieve a better education with AMS. I feel like it would benefit us and everyone around the new location to have a school closer to us and be able enroll our children.

**Parent Petition Reply #5:**

I have a 7 year old son currently in second grade. He is really advanced in math and truly enjoys the subject. I feel enrolling him in the AMS could really help him grow and improve his skills. I had been contemplating the possibility of enrolling him in one of your other locations, but they are all far from us, so having a school near us would be awesome!  
I appreciate you putting us in your waiting list.

