



E.C. NASH ELEMENTARY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Amphitheater Governing Board
FROM: Bob Hehli
RE: Principal's Governing Board Presentation
DATE: December 8, 2015

The Amphitheater Public School District values of achievement, caring, creativity, curiosity, diligence, diversity, fairness, honesty, kindness, respectfulness, responsibility and service to the community are the guiding principles in our work at Nash Elementary School. Everything we do incorporates one or more of these values in our ongoing efforts to support the students, families, and staff of the Nash School community.

Nash Elementary School is proud to be a member of the No Excuses University Network of Schools. This is a diverse and dynamic association of like-minded schools and education organizations from across the United States. Our Network is united by the belief that ALL children, even those who live in poverty or who are learning English, can be academically successful and attend college. No Excuses Universities know they have the power to make that dream a reality.

We believe that every child deserves the opportunity to be educated in a way that prepares them for college. Our ongoing focus is to continually implement and refine the No Excuses University Six Exceptional Systems of school improvement. The Culture of Universal Achievement, the first exceptional system, is the foundation. Continual high expectations and an unwavering belief that ALL students can be successful are both critical for student success. The following five systems of Collaboration, Standards Alignment, Assessment, Data Analysis, and Interventions are constantly being worked on to ensure that we prepare our students and families for a successful future.

Our No Excuses University Three Way Commitments for staff, students and parents/guardians support the work of continually improving our Six Exceptional Systems.

Staff Commitment-The entire Nash Elementary School staff is committed to empowering all students to reach their full learning potential. Every day we will exhibit a positive attitude to model our high level of good character and integrity. We take full responsibility to work collaboratively with every student, parent and staff member to provide a positive and safe learning environment where every student will be successful academically and behaviorally. Our commitment will ensure that every Nash student is given the continual opportunity to become successful members of the school and community that they deserve to be.

Our staff revisits our Commitment statement every year. We actually have all certified and classified staff members sign our commitment as a symbol of their positive intentions and overall commitment to supporting students, families and one another.

Student Commitment-Every student at Nash understands that getting a good education is so important to their future success in life. From the first day of kindergarten to the last day of fifth grade, we will give our absolute best effort academically and behaviorally to prepare ourselves for college and the workplace. Every day we will demonstrate the Six Pillars of Good Character: Respect, Responsibility, Trustworthiness, Caring, Fairness, and Citizenship to show pride in all our choices. Our commitment will ensure that we will become successful members of the community that we deserve to be.

Parent/Guardian Commitment-Every parent/guardian at Nash understands that their child's education is critical to their future success. From the first day of kindergarten to the last day of fifth grade we will give our absolute best effort to positively support our child both academically and behaviorally. We take full responsibility to work collaboratively with the Nash staff to ensure that our child has the best learning environment at home and at school. Our commitment will ensure that our child is given the opportunity to become a successful member of the community that he or she deserves to be.

In our efforts to support our students and parents commitment to our college bound mission, one of several strategies is to expose students and families to college symbolism. To do this we have several shirts (university shirts, no excuses shirts, student of the month shirts) that we provide students and then make them part of our uniform policy. This powerful symbolism approach is an ongoing reminder about our mission, commitment, and partnership that occurs to support student success.

Nash Elementary School has 465 students. We consistently have 94% of our students attending school every day. We are a Title I school with 98% of our students qualifying for Free or Reduce Lunch. We have a mobility rate of 30%. This means about 1/3 of the students who start the year with us unfortunately will not finish the school year at Nash Elementary School. The average mobility rate the last three years was 40%. The student ethnic distribution is 73% Hispanic, 12% White, 5% Native American, 3% Black, 3% Multi-Ethnicity, 2% Asian and 2% Pacific Islander. 22% of our students qualify for Special Education Services, 16% for Gifted Services, and 16% of our students are English Language Learners.

The following is specific data of interest:

NWEA MAP (Measures of Academic Progress)

Percent of 2nd-5th Grade Nash Students Meeting Expected Growth Targets

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>
Math:	90%	92%	89%	95%	93%
Reading:	88%	85%	87%	90%	86%

Over the last five years, 85-95% of our students are meeting their MAP growth targets as measured by the NWEA MAP. We need to continue our work so that ALL students not only meet their expected growth, but exceed it as well.

AdvancED Parent Survey Data:

2013-2014

96% Strongly Agree or Agree (N=125)

2014-2015

92% Strongly Agree or Agree (N=132)

Over 90% percent of our parents that responded on our AdvancED surveys the last two years have answered with either a strongly agree or agree on the questions that support us doing a good job. We will continue to look at sending home repeated surveys and strongly encourage our parents to give feedback to guide us in our work to support their children.

Our school achievement and survey data has led us to continually work in the same school improvement areas. Our No Excuses work to continually refine the Six Exceptional Systems is ongoing. The No Excuses philosophy is to have the work we do driven by ONE singular goal, and that is the driver of all sub goals and focus areas.

Our singular goal is: Every student, without exception and without excuse, will meet or exceed the standards in reading, writing, and math. The responsibility is ours, NO EXCUSES.

To support this goal we have identified several areas for professional development that will best support students with increasing their engagement and overall achievement.

First is our work with AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination). I have attended the AVID summer institute three times, and for the last two summers in a row. We started with just 4th and 5th grade teachers several years ago but expanded our learning this past summer with a teacher representative from grades k, 1, 2 and 3. The AVID approach is really transforming from just the AVID elective at the middle and high schools to a schoolwide AVID approach to college readiness. This work aligns directly with our NO Excuses Philosophy. We have found that the AVID professional development at the elementary ranks is really about good research based instructional strategies to support students learning. We look forward to continuing this learning in the years to come to setup our students for success at LaCima and Amphi High.

Our second professional learning focus area is that of writing. We have identified through formative and summative assessments that our students need a great deal of support and help with the organization of their writing. We are using the supplemental writing tool, Step-Up to Writing, which has a strong focus on great organization strategies, especial in expository writing. Teachers will be doing common planning and lesson design as well as peer observations of their colleagues during writing instruction.

Our third area of professional learning to support student engagement and higher levels of achievement is in the area of EIE (Engineering is Elementary). Initial professional learning from grade level representatives from all grades indicated that EIE supplemental tools would allow for better integration of multiple content areas during the instructional day.

Finally, our last focus area for professional learning is the continued implementation of the i-Ready intervention program in grades 1-5 and the new learning and implementation of the Waterford Early Learning Program in Kindergarten. i-Ready has shown positive support for students receiving intervention services in grades 1, 2 and 3 the last couple years. We are expanding that to grades 4 and 5 this year and Waterford will support our kindergartners this year. Both programs have a systematic approach, with a blended model of learning emphasis of small group instruction to fill in the learning gaps for students.

Our goals and professional learning will only make good progress if we have great relationships and a positive and nurturing school environment. We do many great things to create and support that positive culture of universal achievement that is the foundation of everything that we do.

A few examples:

1. We look for positive student's behaviors each and every day. Our staff has given out 2,889 Roadrunners so far this year. We had 4,956 last year. This is a great positive communication tool as well to families about the great things students do every day.
2. We are currently underway with the Kindness Challenge 2. Our adult's model kindness and students are taking it up a notch this year. We exceeded our goal of 1,000 last year with 1,500. We are almost to our goal of 5,000 this year with a count of 4,300 just last week. Kindness is happening every day at Nash.
3. Each year we have families of our outgoing 5th graders come to school to finalize the decoration of their "family tile." Part of the work goes on during art class. These family tiles are then placed along our campus as a representation of the partnership that we have with our families to help our students be successful. We have put up 284 family tiles since I started the project when I became the principal at Nash.
4. We could not do it alone at Nash. We have several very strong community partners that support our students, families and staff. We have partnered with St. Mark's for the last 12 years. This partnerships means many things. Volunteers, funding our student snack packs and biannual donations of school supplies for all classrooms just to highlight a few areas.

In addition to St. Mark's, we have really developed our partnership with Literacy Connects of Tucson, especially our Reading Seed program. We have many volunteers that support hundreds of students annually. Our partnership went so well last year that Literacy Connects selected us from 41 schools across Tucson as the Partner School of the Year. We are very proud of this acknowledgement as it is a testament to the positive relationships that have been built over the last few years developing this new partnership.

Here is a list of additional great things about what Nash Elementary School has to offer:

- Member of the No Excuses University nationwide network since 2010
- All teachers are highly qualified
- Continuously high ratings on parent satisfaction surveys
- Focus on Arizona Common College and Career Readiness Standards
- Member of the AVID Program
- Full Day Kindergarten
- ACHIEVE Program (before and after school supplemental services)
- Art, Music, and Physical Education for all students
- Two computer labs-30 computers each
- 75 Wi-Fi connected Google Chromebooks
- Student Council-Grades 3-5
- Newly Renovated 21st Century Media Center
- SMART-Boards in all student classrooms
- Adult English Classes
- Reading Seed Volunteer Mentor Program
- Breakfast in the Classroom program for all students

- “ Ben’s Bells Kindness Campus
- “ Annual Spelling Bee
- “ Annual Science Fair
- “ Annual Book Fair
- “ Student of the Month Character Assemblies
- “ Family Tile Night
- “ Family AVID Nights
- “ Annual Community Health fair

At Nash Elementary School we will always focus our work on increasing achievement in Reading, Writing, and Math until 100% of our students meet or exceed standards. We are committed to ensuring that ALL students have the opportunity to be successful on their road to being COLLEGE BOUND!