

U.S. Department of Education
2016 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [X] Title I [] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Michael Minghine

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Fuller Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1975 East Cornell Drive

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Tempe State AZ Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 85283-2361

County Maricopa County

Telephone (480) 897-6228 Fax _____

Web site/URL http://www.tempeschools.org/fuller E-mail mminghin@tempeschools.org

Facebook Page

https://www.facebook.com/FullerElementary/?fref

Twitter Handle _____ ts Google+ _____

YouTube/URL _____ Blog _____ Other Social Media Link _____

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mrs. Christine Busch E-mail cbusch@tempeschools.org

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Tempe Elementary School District Tel. (480) 730-7100

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Ms. Rochelle Wells

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Part I – Eligibility Certification

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The public school has met their state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) using the most recent accountability results available for the year prior to nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) for the year in which they are nominated (2015-2016) and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2010 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, or 2015.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2015-2016) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 16 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 4 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 20 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
 - Suburban
 - Small city or town in a rural area
 - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2015 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	57	59	116
1	63	53	116
2	50	52	102
3	57	57	114
4	46	48	94
5	45	51	96
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	318	320	638

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 3 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 4 % Asian
 - 7 % Black or African American
 - 30 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 52 % White
 - 4 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2014 – 2015 school year: 11%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	38
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	31
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	69
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	611
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.113
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	11

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 4 %
25 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Bosnian, Chinese, Danish, Farsi, French, Gujrati, Hindi, Indonesian, Kannaba, Korean, Navajo, Polish, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tamil/India, Telugu, Urdu, Vietnamese, Vietnamese/Chinese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 43 %
Total number students who qualify: 280

8. Students receiving special education services: 9 %
55 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- 15 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 1 Emotional Disturbance
- 2 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 12 Other Health Impaired
- 19 Specific Learning Disability
- 28 Speech or Language Impairment
- 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 7 Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 3
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers	25
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	17
Paraprofessionals	7
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 22:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2015.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

Fuller School creates a positive environment and develops well-rounded individuals, through challenging academics and meeting needs of students individually. Children are nurtured and valued.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

PART III – SUMMARY

Fuller Elementary School is a K-5 school tucked into a neighborhood in Tempe, Arizona. We are a Title I school serving 638 students. Since opening our doors in 1977, the Fuller community has referred to our school as joining the “Fuller Family”. Our reputation of strong relationships is shared among staff, students, parents and community members and is one of the many endearing qualities of Fuller Elementary. It’s the relationships with each other that create a learning environment with high expectations and continuous growth for every child that makes Fuller Elementary shine each day!

The Fuller Family of staff, parents and community are committed to the success of every child. Fuller School staff collaborates to create an environment where children are respected, challenged and experience quality learning at their own instructional levels. Teachers work continuously in a trusting, professional environment to help every child exceed beyond their learning goals. Students understand their learning goals and strive to meet their goals with lessons designed for their own learning. Students are celebrated when they reach their goals and supported with additional strategies as needed. Fuller’s strong PTA works closely with administration and staff to foster positive relationships throughout our school.

Fuller Elementary is filled with exceptional children. Our school has a strong gifted program that supports our gifted students to learn beyond the walls of the school with virtual field trips through Google vision and Rubik’s cube competitions. Fuller Elementary supports special education students from our highly successful Resource Program, where the teachers teach an after school club on how to share learning goals while integrating technology and promoting public speaking. Students in our SEALS Program, a self-contained special education program, receive a highly structured, visually organized classroom. All students receive daily core instruction in all academic areas coupled with interventions or enrichment based on their needs. One example of the dedication of the staff is when a third grader was below grade level in math. A team of teachers worked together so the student was receiving lessons at his level. The intervention teacher worked with the student and even the teacher on special assignment worked daily with the student. Through the dedication of the staff, the student grew in their math test by 19 points and 10 points is considered one year's growth. When the student walked through the office, the library and around the school everyone was congratulating him on his success! Fuller has volunteer retirees that come to read with first and second graders to help build student success too! We all share in the learning and in celebrating the success of our students.

Fuller students work hard and are intelligent, but it’s the reputation of their great character and the commitment of the staff that attracts families and students from all across the city. More than 70% of our students are open enrollment students, with parents transporting their children to this school because of the rich tradition, culture, and emphasis on the whole child. Generations of families have come to Fuller. Parents and grandparents have lived in this subdivision for almost 40 years and their children and grandchildren have attended this school. Two Fuller teacher attended Fuller from kindergarten through sixth grade, became a teacher at Fuller, and both of their children have attended the school. Because relationships are valued and encouraged, teachers remain at Fuller for decades and continually learn to best meet the needs of all the Fuller students. Fuller is known throughout our district as having a community that is built from trust, support and an expectation of excellence from staff, students and community.

Fuller Elementary faced a difficult task for the 2011-2012 school year. Due to budgetary concerns, the Tempe Elementary School District closed a school located one mile north of Fuller. Fuller Elementary was to “merge” the two schools on the Fuller campus. Thanks to the similar values shared by the two merging communities of high expectations for every student, the merger between the two schools was highly successful. Fuller Elementary has exceeded academic expectations while nearly doubling enrollment in the span of five years.

At Fuller, “Excellence is the Expectation.” Teachers and students continue to push themselves, and each other, to be the best they can be. The Fuller staff began the school year by writing “I Believe” statements, writing what they feel in their hearts on paper to motivate and inspire each other, our students, and our

community. The activity reminded everyone of our commitment to learning, to excellence and to our students.

Fuller is known throughout the community as a school of excellence. Fuller is a “small, neighborhood school,” with a warm, inviting environment and we are so proud of our students, our teachers and our school.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Fuller Elementary School utilizes district adopted textbooks and resources aligned with the Arizona College Career Ready Standards. Each program includes specific instruction targeting foundational skills in both English Language Arts and Mathematics.

The English Language Arts program was specifically selected because of its dedication to a balance of 50/50 literature to non-fiction text. Students have the opportunity in each unit to read high interest text at varied lexile levels. The English Language Arts program has a rigorous foundational basis including strong instruction in the following components: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Comprehension, Vocabulary, and Fluency. In addition to the English Language Arts Reading program, Fuller School systemically implements both Thinking Maps and Write From the Beginning and Beyond. The integration of these two programs fully address all requirements for English Language Arts encompassed in the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards. Furthermore, student success with writing across content areas is evident as a result of these programs. In conjunction with Write From the Beginning and Beyond, teachers at Fuller Elementary School utilize the Response to Literature program provided by Thinking Maps, Inc. to allow students multiple opportunities for in-depth thinking, creativity, and exploration. To further encourage the love of reading, students at Fuller School have full access to their school library, as well as the district library of eBooks with over 4,000 titles available, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The Math program has specific instruction dedicated to building the foundation of number sense through daily routines. Strength of the Math program is a scaffolded instructional approach to include opportunities for critical thinking and independent practice. Additionally, Fuller Elementary School implements a program of Balanced Math Instruction. This balanced approach ensures computational strength to include number sense, application of mathematics (problem solving), and teaching conceptual understanding, which is the foundation of all learning in mathematics. Daily routines are a part of the methodology that strengthens student number sense.

Both the English Language Arts and Mathematics curricula include hands-on materials which provide the teacher with tools to differentiate for learners whether they are below, at, or above grade level. The strength of the program is that foundational skills are systematically and explicitly taught on a daily basis. While students acquire the needed skills through whole group and small group instruction, they practice these skills through station activities, menu activities or collaborative work time.

In order to prepare our students to become active and informed citizens in our society, social studies instruction is vital for our kindergarten through fifth grade students. Well-informed citizens will understand our political, cultural and economic interaction with the rest of society. Geographic knowledge expands the understanding of our development and identity in the world.

At Fuller Elementary School, Science and Social Studies resources are aligned with the Arizona Academic Content Standards and are integrated throughout the curriculum to ensure meaningful and real world daily connections. As students engage in STEM activities at Fuller Elementary School they develop knowledge of essential facts, concepts, people, and events as well as a grasp of reasoning, inquiry and research skills needed to understand the world around them. Furthermore, they learn how to frame and test hypotheses, develop informed opinions based on different points of view and solve problems utilizing the engineering design process.

Recent data reflects positive progress in ensuring mastery of standards for all students. An example of this data is from the 2014/15 school year compared to the 2015/16 school year. Kindergarten showed growth in mastery from 90% to 95%, 2nd grade 90% to 92%, and 5th grade 86% to 89% as measured by Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) Next composite score. In using the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) assessment data from the 2014/15 school year compared to the 2015/16 school year, there was an increase in the Mean RIT in mathematics.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Art and Music education helps to prepare young people to think creatively, learn how to work collaboratively, and to become disciplined, critical thinkers and problem solvers.

Fuller's classroom teachers integrate art across all areas of the curriculum, meeting both core curriculum standards and arts standards. Using artworks as 'text', teachers employ the Close Reading of Art. This practice supports the acquisition of language skills and deepens the knowledge of artwork. This reinforces many ELA standards.

Kindergarten through fourth grade students receive 60 minutes of weekly general music instruction. Fifth graders choose between Band, Orchestra, or Choir, and meet for one hour and 20 minutes weekly. Fifth grade Band, Orchestra, and Choir, joined by the fourth grade Choir, perform twice annually for the school and community. Additionally the entire kindergarten and fourth grade perform an original musical theater production written by the music teacher.

Through the Art Masterpiece Program, parents provide additional year long art enrichment experiences for grades K-5.

The year ends with the Celebration of Learning, where the entire school displays art which has been created throughout the year and includes performances by musical groups.

Physical Education addresses the domains of learning: cognitive skills related to the knowledge of movement; effective skills that address growth in feelings or attitudes.

Physical Education classes at Fuller School focus on a comprehensive school physical activity program. The five National Physical Education Standards are the foundation of instruction. Twice a week for 30 minute classes provide the students with the fundamental background and skills to make decisions regarding physical activity now and in the future. Additionally, lessons are designed to develop motor skills, knowledge and behaviors for active living, physical fitness, sportsmanship, self-efficacy and emotional intelligence.

Physical Education staff and Nutrition Services staff at Fuller School work together to motivate students to select healthy eating habits as part of physical education instruction.

The Physical Education program at Fuller assesses students regularly on their fitness levels.

Fuller embraces health and fitness beyond the classroom setting. They host an after school program called Kidzone, which supports a healthy eating nutritional program. Students receive instruction on how to prepare nutritionally balanced meals. Further, Fuller hosts a yearly field day and fun run. Staff members and parents volunteer to sponsor Girls on the Run. This promotes social skills, positive self image, physical activity, and engages participants in a community service project.

Fuller Elementary School currently has three Tech Cadre members in third, fourth, and fifth grades. Tech Cadre members have direct access to technology on a daily basis and it is evident through all content areas using interactive whiteboards, document cameras, laptops, and iPads. Students in these classrooms learn curriculum and standards by having immediate access to online learning, web based programs, applications, and software. The students use these variety of tools and applications to show their understanding of concepts. Critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration are the outcomes for lessons within the Tech Cadre classrooms and students are capable of creating presentations, digital stories, movies, podcasts, posters, and tutorials.

In addition to the teachers on the tech cadre, Fuller Staff has access to a computer lab, 9 computer carts containing 10 MacBooks, 6 sets of iPad Minis which can all be used to provide technology-enhanced learning experiences. These opportunities give students ownership of their learning by displaying their mastery of skills in meaningful and profound ways. In the past several years, Fuller School has been

dedicated to increasing the use of technology in their classrooms in a means that increases student achievement, applies real-world experiences, and enhances student learning across the curriculum.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Fuller utilizes a variety of instructional methods to assure that every child's needs are met. Teachers have access to instructional materials that are below, at and above grade level. Instructional blocks include time for whole group, small group and individual practice.

The 120 minute Reading Block addresses core content targeting state standards in both informational texts and literature. Additionally, explicit instruction of foundational skills are addressed. Differentiation to address individual students needs are accomplished through small group instruction while other students practice skills independently.

The Math block is approximately 90 minutes. Teachers teach core content targeted at state standards with problem solving and inquiry based practices embedded. Small group instruction is again utilized to reach individual needs. Students are well versed in utilizing mathematical tools to process, represent and demonstrate their thinking. An additional instructional method employed is Balanced Math. During the additional math time Daily Math Review is facilitated by the teacher or students. This allows for daily repeated reasoning about mathematical concepts that assures the correction of mathematical misconceptions. Students have daily math discourse with peers, addressing number sense, computation and mathematical reasoning. They receive timely and effective feedback that ends with self reflection. Students also participate in mental math exercises on a daily basis. This helps students to process and explain their mathematical thinking.

A strength of the Fuller Community is their goal of individualized teaching and learning. If students are in need of additional instruction they are provided a Tier II block with a Reading Interventionist. The interventionists target foundational skills that the students are missing and systematically and explicitly teach to fill the holes. Additionally, there are many students who require learning above the grade level standard. Fuller also participates in the Gifted Program offered by the district. The program, PACE (Promoting Actualization through Creativity and Excellence), uses Project Based Learning as the Instructional Method. There are currently 127 students in the Fuller Community who participate.

The Fuller student support team is a highly cohesive group of professional educators who are trained to meet the needs of exceptional learners. Fuller has several students who vary in range of ability and also has twice exceptional students. The Fuller intervention team and special education team work collaboratively to meet the needs of all learners. Fuller truly provides a free, appropriate, public education to all enrolled students.

Using best educational practices is a focus for Fuller and Fuller employs the use of Professional Learning Communities (PLC) to identify student instructional needs and assure mastery of the standards for all students. Staff participate in a weekly PLC where each grade level unwraps standards and talks to specific instructional strategies to teach the standards. Pre and post data from Common Formative Assessments(CFA) are reviewed to assure that every student is on the path to mastery.

4. Assessment for Instruction and Learning and Sharing Assessment Results:

Fuller School uses school/classroom, district and state assessments systematically to inform instruction and improve the achievement levels and growth of each student. At the forefront are teacher-created common formative assessments, which allow teachers from each team to work together to best meet the needs of every student on a skill by skill basis. These CFAs enable teachers to focus their instruction to their students' specific needs. During team collaboration time, grade level teams "unwrap" the standards to focus on what their students need to learn, and then build assessments from that content. Summative assessments are used at the end of an instructional unit to ascertain student growth in each area, and teachers continue to spiral review as they move on to new standards.

Fuller teachers use two district assessments regularly: DIBELS Next, a measure of students' literacy skills and the Northwest Evaluation Association Measure of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP), a measure of achievement level and growth. Both are given three times per year, at the beginning, middle, and end of year. Teachers routinely discuss scores with each student, what the scores mean, and how students can improve. Students know what their end-of-year goal is and their current score in relation to that goal. Parents are also routinely given reports, with an explanation of what each score means and how they can help their child improve. Teachers also perform progress-monitoring assessments between benchmark testing on DIBELS to determine the effect of instruction and interventions.

Fuller teachers use the unique features of NWEA MAP, a computer adaptive assessment, to pinpoint areas to increase student achievement. Each assessment is tailored to individual student's needs, delivering questions that are neither too difficult nor too easy. Scores are available the next day and provide information about the optimal level of instruction for each student. Goal scores provide information on student strengths and weaknesses in the domains and strands of the standards. Learning Statements from the Learning Continuum are used to translate a test score into properly targeted instruction for each student. Teachers review scores with each student and help them set rigorous goals for the next testing season. Students push themselves to succeed for the success of the school as well as their own success.

Fuller staff use state assessment data (AzMERIT) to obtain a broad summary of students' proficiency on content standards and to assist students to improve their performance the next year.

Our data clearly reflects our hard work. On our NWEA Math testing in 2014-15 the growth was as follows:
3rd grade: 194 Fall to 215 Spring +increased 21 growth points
4th grade: 210 Fall to 225 Spring + increased 15 growth points
5th grade: 220 Fall to 238 Spring + increased 18 growth points

Our overall highlight of NWEA math information was tremendous annual growth in all grade levels and Fuller was top in the district in most grade levels.

With our State AZMERIT testing in spring of 2015 see the results below.
Grades 3,4,5 Math: 59% passing - state average 35%
Grades 3,4,5 ELA: 60% passing - state average 35%
Clearly Fuller School soared above the state average.

Our brightest highlight of AZMERIT was in math, Fuller was 69% higher than the state average and in ELA, Fuller was 71% higher than the state average.

We are proud of our ongoing success for all students!

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

The learning community of Fuller Elementary School strives to practice excellence everyday. We believe that it is through excellence we are able to create quality-learning experiences for our students to work collaboratively with their peers and teachers. We implement the PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention System) approach to discipline. It ensures everyone on our campus is aware of the behavioral expectations so that time spent learning is maximized and academic goals can be accomplished. It reinforces character qualities such as respect and responsibility. Our teachers work tirelessly to maintain routine in their classrooms where specific procedures are in place and high expectations are non-negotiable. They believe in challenging our students to reach their capacities as learners. They guide our students to be their personal best. Our teachers are exemplary models for our students. They model kindness and respect. In doing so, a learning environment is created in which students feel safe to share their own ideas as well as honor the ideas and thoughts of others.

Throughout our academic school day, students are engaged in lessons across content areas where collaboration is mandatory. Engagement strategies are utilized to ensure all students are focused in their learning. Our kindergarten and fifth grade students participate in a Reading Buddies program. Both groups benefit from increased reading confidence as well as developing respectful friendships. During daily math instruction students are required to work together with partners and small groups to develop solutions to assigned problems. Respectful listening and participation is fostered. Our staff embraces an inquiry-based approach to learning where teachers and students work collaboratively to develop a deeper understanding within a subject area. It gives students the opportunity to teach and learn from one another.

At Fuller, our teachers are mindful of the moral imperative to educate and prepare all our students to succeed in life. Teachers are supported with feedback on instruction from the principal while he spends time in their classrooms. The gift of time is provided for planning and Professional Learning Communities during the school day so teachers can collaborate and create meaningful lessons for students is another way support is provided. The Fuller Family has high expectations for every child. Everyone on campus, from school staff to community volunteers, takes ownership in student achievement. Student success is frequently celebrated to encourage students to continue to give their personal best. Fuller truly is a loving and joyful place to learn.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The culture of Fuller is built on tradition and valued by stakeholders. Fuller students and families have pride in the school and exhibit tremendous school spirit. Fuller students wear school shirts and promote the school, but their parents, grandparents, and neighbors do too. Teachers and staff are involved in students' lives. They attend student birthday parties, musical concerts and sporting events in the evenings and weekends. Additionally, the staff adopts families during the holidays and give them food baskets, turkeys, clothing, gifts, beans, and rice. Students like to come to school and student absences are minimal. The principal, and the relationships he cultivates, sets the tone for everyone on campus.

Parents know from the first interaction in the office that Fuller is a positive, safe place to learn. The office staff greets everyone with a smile, and is truly concerned about their satisfaction. Teachers greet students individually every morning, giving hugs, high-fives or handshakes. Everyone is greeted with a hello, a smile, and a fresh start.

Students are encouraged to take risks, answer questions and reach deep in their thinking. The positive climate is evident because students do not have fear of being wrong, but ask to be challenged, and collaborate with each other instead of competing. Learning is an adventure and should be fun. As you walk through classrooms you will see students smiling, happy, engaged, communicating, and learning.

Fuller has a long history with tradition and has activities that are ingrained in its culture. These events help build positive relationships among students, staff, parents, and community members. We have after school clubs to encourage extra-curricular activities. The Fuller community looks forward to our annual events, such as PTA's Trunk or Treat, Art Walk, Book Character Parade, and Reading under the Stars. Fuller's Field Days features over 30 events, with more than 50 volunteers each day. Fifth grade students assist the K-2 Field Day, providing opportunities for mentoring and leadership. Arizona State University athletes motivate our students to do their best during assemblies. A local church recognizes the hard work of teachers and provides every classroom teacher a basket full of school supplies to start the school year. Our Experience Corps volunteers, a group of retirees in our community, each week tutors students in reading. The Experience Corps program involves trained volunteers who tutor and mentor our students who are struggling with reading.

Working together with families and the community is excellence.

3. Professional Development:

Fuller Elementary Staff is composed of veteran teachers who have extensive knowledge of Arizona College and Career Ready Standards and research based best practices. The staff utilizes the Trainer of Trainer model for professional development. Teacher leaders are identified to become trainers and are expected to train other staff members. Utilizing this model allows for more flexible scheduling of professional development as well as allowing for monitoring of implementation. The Trainer of Trainers method enables teachers to support fellow staff members in applying and reflecting on current instructional approaches implemented within core content. These approaches prove to better meet the diverse needs of 21st century students. At this time Fuller has trainers in Write from the Beginning and Beyond, Thinking Maps, Response to Literature, DIBELS Next, Close Reading, Depth of Knowledge, Daily Math Review, and Problem Solving.

Fuller Elementary Staff members have been trained on how to effectively implement Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Currently grade level teams are able to efficiently run PLCs. Professional Learning Communities provide an opportunity for collaboration among grade level teams to have professional dialogue so as to gain new ideas and expertise from one another. Through these collaborative conversations, teams are able to set common priorities. As a school community, teams make grade level and school-wide decisions, and discuss resources and instructional best practices that are available for them to utilize during instruction. In addition, teachers are able to collectively disaggregate student data from formative and summative assessments, which allows teams to make informed decisions addressing student academic needs.

Several members of the Fuller Staff are on the District Technology Cadre. They provide professional development for staff members on programs such as Wixi, Edmodo, Smartboard, Smart Notebook, Google Docs, and other 21st Century technology skills.

Professional development opportunities are not limited to on site staff development. Fuller staff participate in district level catalog classes which address specific programs, methodologies, standards, and strategies. Catalog classes based on district initiatives and rooted in best instructional practices are offered twice a week throughout the year in two hour increments.

Fuller Elementary School teachers all participated in the annual Growing As Professionals Conference in September 2015. After this day of learning, all participants took turns sharing their new learning with other staff members.

Teachers at Fuller Elementary School are continually enhancing their expertise and knowledge in order to increase student achievement. During the 2015-2016 school year, they implemented multiple opportunities for On-Demand Writing experiences for kindergarten through fifth grade. Teachers were provided additional professional development on the rubrics used to score the On-Demand Writing papers and effectively use the data to drive their writing instruction.

Fuller Elementary School enjoys low teacher turnover which has increased the overall capacity of the entire staff. As teachers learn and grow they challenge one another to higher levels. The students reap the benefit of this learning, as teachers have many strategies or practices to choose as a result of their own learning.

4. School Leadership:

The principal of Fuller Elementary does not just lead his staff and students; he inspires them. With a philosophy of always putting students first, he approaches student learning with enthusiasm and fidelity. As the instructional leader of the school, his positive approach to teaching and learning is demonstrated in his daily interactions with students, staff and community members. He is constantly encouraging teachers to try new teaching practices, while working with them to strengthen their existing skills.

He is in every classroom every day and includes himself in the instruction with no preparation whenever he can. He is there to assist students, teachers and staff. When our principal sees a need on campus, he addresses it at the earliest opportunity. He helps kindergartners open milk, he gives tours to potential students and families, and he asks high level questions of students and then listens intently to the answers. Our principal makes his presence known in every corner of the school, and always with patience and a smile. He cultivates a cooperative learning environment and sets high expectations with both students and faculty. The principal provides feedback to teachers and always takes the time to recognize the amazing things that are taking place around campus.

The leadership structure at Fuller Elementary is built around the educational philosophy that every child can and will learn when their needs are met and children learn best in an inclusive, caring environment with high expectations for all, focused on the whole child concept. This shared leadership approach has been developed under the leadership of the principal and his leadership team.

The shared leadership model empowers all the stakeholders to take on leadership roles and lead by example. The instructional team consists of the principal, teacher on special assignment, teacher representative from each grade level (K-5), special area representative, special education self-contained, special education resource, instructional coach, and interventionist with a focus on continuous academic growth and proficiency and staff professional development needs. Additionally, the social, emotional and physical needs of the whole child concept are addressed on an on-going basis through the site council, PTA, general staff meetings, and the principal's open door policy for students, parents and staff.

The grade level and special area teams have fully embraced the professional learning community concept at Fuller. Weekly team discussions are guided by the four essential questions: what learning is expected, what assessments will be used to determine what was learned, what will be done if students did not learn, and what will be done if students already know it. Teams have rich conversations based in the "what" (standards and skills) and the "how" (instructional practices and strategies). This has promoted creative thinking and problem solving allowing teachers to take risks and try new approaches. Discussion and information about teaching and learning is shared horizontally and vertically between teams and departments.

The shared leadership model includes an active parent organization, volunteers and community members. Parents, volunteers, and community members are encouraged to share their thoughts and observations regarding learning, health and welfare of the children and the functioning of Fuller through formal forums such as the PTA and Site Council and informal ways such as through the administrations open door policy and scheduled family events throughout the year.

Fuller's "Excellence is the Expectation" philosophy has been fully embraced by all stakeholders resulting in a school wide and community wide climate and culture of putting children first. This allows for the best possible outcome for each student.

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Fuller Elementary is a true model for high expectations for all students and individualized learning. Fuller is an amazing, team based, child focused school. The environment helps every student grow every day.

At Fuller we have a wide range of learners. NWEA tests given three times a year give us RIT scores that show each child's current level. It is our goal for children to make at least one year's growth, no matter their level. Fuller's students with special needs make tremendous academic growth each year, and our students in the resource program were the highest achieving resource students in Tempe Elementary School District in the 2013-2014 school year- contributing to Fuller's incredible overall growth. We have academic clubs, intervention, and enrichment programs to ensure students make their yearly growth. In addition, if a child in fifth grade tests at a sixth grade level, our teachers make it their job to expose that child to fifth grade materials at a deeper level all the way to seventh grade enrichment and extension materials so that they will make their year's growth too. As a result of this undertaking, on average, Fuller kids make the most and highest growth in the district.

Fuller teachers are able to provide rigorous academics through leveled grouping during intervention/extended time. Each student receives instruction on what they need to reach their own goals, with lower level students working to close the achievement gap and high-achieving students extending into deeper understanding and above grade-level concepts. Several grade-level teams also use the walk to read and/or walk to math model, which helps tailor instruction to a child's specific needs.

Fuller teachers push their students to reach their potential, but even the deepest understanding of concepts still requires practice and review. Reading strategies and math concepts are modeled and revisited frequently, and spiraling to keep skills fresh occurs in every classroom.

Fuller teachers challenge students' thinking. Teachers use preplanned, targeted questioning to hone in on, and build, students' depth of knowledge. Teachers try to pull the how and why behind students' answers. These strategies are employed throughout the day, especially when students respond to literature. This valuable skill allows students to be asked, and ask themselves, questions about their reading to gain a deeper understanding.

Fuller staff members challenge students to improve in every lesson, every day, and this positive attitude is infectious. Students absorb this drive to improve, causing them to challenge each other in cooperative ways, to be the best. While every staff member is responsible for every student, students also take ownership of their own and their classmates' learning.

Our vision reflects the work we strive to do each day. "It is the Fuller school family of students, staff, parents and community with high expectations and commitment to success for all, collaborate together in a loving, trusting, respectful and safe environment that provides joyful, quality learning experiences, promotes the desire for self-improvement and develops the skills necessary for continuous learning for all students."