

U.S. Department of Education
2018 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. Jeffrey Abrams

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

Official School Name Franklin Junior High School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 4949 East Southern Avenue

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

Mesa AZ 85206-2759
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County__

Telephone (480) 472-2600

Fax

Web site/URL http://www.mpsaz.org/franklinjr

E-mail jdabrams@mpsaz.org

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*Dr. Ember Conley

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail ceconley@mpsaz.org

District Name Mesa Unified District Tel. (480) 472-0000

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 Mr. Ben Smith

(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. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2018 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. 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 2012 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: 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, or 2017.
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 has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.
12. 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 (2017-2018) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 57 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 10 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 7 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 74 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
 - Rural or small city/town
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2017 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

| Grade | # of Males | # of Females | Grade Total |
|-----------------------|------------|--------------|-------------|
| PreK | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| K | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 7 | 63 | 81 | 144 |
| 8 | 51 | 77 | 128 |
| 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 12 or higher | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Students | 114 | 158 | 272 |

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 3 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 3 % Asian
 - 2 % Black or African American
 - 23 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 64 % 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 2016 – 2017 school year: 3%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain.

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, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year | 2 |
| (2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year | 5 |
| (3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)] | 7 |
| (4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016 | 266 |
| (5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4) | 0.03 |
| (6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100 | 3 |

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
0 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 32 %
Total number students who qualify: 87

8. Students receiving special education services: 1 %
3 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.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>1</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>0</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>0</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>2</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 7
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 including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher. | 12 |
| Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc. | 1 |
| Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students. | 0 |
| Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc. | 1 |

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 23:1

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

| Required Information | 2016-2017 | 2015-2016 | 2014-2015 | 2013-2014 | 2012-2013 |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Daily student attendance | 97% | 97% | 97% | 97% | 96% |
| 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 2017.

| 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.

Develop highly educated and productive students in a safe and structured environment.

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

Franklin Jr. High is a parent choice school where students must apply for admission and are evaluated on four criteria: academic achievement, teacher letter of support, attendance history, and discipline history.

PART III – SUMMARY

Franklin Jr. High School is a parent choice application school in Mesa, Arizona, with a traditional model for parents who are looking for an alternative approach to education for their students. Franklin Jr. High serves students in 7th and 8th grade. It is part of Mesa Public Schools (MPS), Arizona's largest school district, educating more than 63,000 students. The school opened in August 2009 following the MPS Governing Board's support of opening a traditional junior high school for the parent community who desired a different option for their students. In the first year, 46 students began a tradition of excellence, followed by 132 in year two.

After the district's Defining the Future initiative in 2011, Franklin Jr. High was relocated to a repurposed school facility with the ability to grow the program. By August 2013, the enrollment increased to 230 students then finally to our current size ranging from 265-280 students. Through the growth process, students, teachers, staff, parents, and community members worked collaboratively building upon the traditional school philosophy to ensure high levels of academic rigor, civic engagement, individual accountability, and citizenship.

Franklin Jr. High is an open enrollment school that serves the students and families of Mesa and neighboring communities. Parents interested in registering their students must complete the application process and provide the supporting materials needed to evaluate the student based on four criteria: academic achievement, teacher letter of support, attendance history, and discipline history. Students enrolled have shown their commitment to excellence and dedication to reaching their potential. Parents and students sign an agreement to commit to the school pillars of attendance, intervention, academic effort, homework completion, behavioral expectations and guidelines, dress code, and parent committees. These pillars were developed by administration and numerous parental committees which still assist the school in maintaining continuity and consistency in the instructional efforts and school policies.

The Franklin Jr. High academic program places students on an accelerated course track in core academic areas, preparing students for the rigorous studies required to be successful in high school and beyond. All students are enrolled in honors English and social studies. Students in math and science are placed based on their academic ability which range from on grade level to two years advanced. Spanish, physical education (PE), and Computer Essentials are required class for all students. Students select from many different electives in the areas of performing arts, visual arts, career and technical education, yearbook, and health and fitness which reflect their interests, expose them to new skills, or are directly related to a future career.

The curriculum cultivates a well-rounded student through embedded lessons in character development, conflict resolution, civic learning, leadership, and student government. In addition to this, extra-curricular activities such as student council, Franklin Junior Honor Society, National Academic League, Chief Science Officer Club, Robotics teams, and interscholastic athletics allow students to become active members of the school community in decision making, school initiatives, competitions, and service oriented activities. The highly trained teaching staff work in professional learning communities (PLC) based on department, grade, and school level to discuss curriculum, student concerns, and professional development needs. This approach to PLC meetings allows teachers to understand students' strengths and weaknesses in all classes, better identify social-emotional needs of individuals, and implement instructional strategies to better align with multiple grade level standards.

Complementing the academic and extra-curricular aspects of the school is the commitment to develop student leaders in many different areas to enable individuals to take ownership of their school community and positively influence peers. In recent years, examples of these opportunities have been student led presentations about school practices at Arizona Department of Education Civic Engagement Workshops, hosting STEM Nights, peer tutoring sessions, student vs. staff athletic competitions, and the development of a compliment wall.

Additional characteristics of Franklin Jr. High include: 3rd highest ranked middle school in the state of Arizona for the 2016-2017 school year (schooligger.com), student growth percentile scores of 69 in ELA

and 88 in math, extensive teacher in-service training, technology rich instruction, diverse instructional strategies, small group and individual tutorial support, cross curricular assignments, an extensive monitoring program details each student's academic progress, citizenship which is based on firm and fair behavioral expectations that include parental involvement, and college and career ready student planning at each grade level to prepare for high school and beyond.

It is the combined commitment to these vital areas that support the entire student body in academic, social-emotional, and extra-curricular learning. Students are prepared to be successful in future academic endeavors and pursue their future goals. Their strength of character reflects the ideals of education, confidence, and competence. Franklin Jr. High's positive, caring climate enhances individual academic achievement, resulting in students' development of respect for others, pride in self, and college and career readiness.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

The Franklin Jr. High core curriculum areas include mathematics, ELA, science, and social studies. Each subject's essential learning objectives are outlined for teachers in curriculum guides which align to Arizona's state standards. The scope and sequence of learning objectives are designed to ensure all concepts are taught for each specific course during the school year. Technology is a part of the everyday learning with online resources as well as the use of Google classroom for writing assignments. The importance of the Cornell note-taking strategy is stressed and practiced in all classes. Interactive notebooks are created by incorporating assignments as well as resources to help students with their studies.

Reading/English Language Arts:

The English department uses a multi-sensory language arts approach consisting of vocabulary, writing, and reading curriculum. Literature sets, academic magazines, and textbooks consisting of short stories, quizzes, writing assignments and note-taking PowerPoints support students' ability to comprehend texts and demonstrate knowledge in a variety of forms. Comprehension strategies, including predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing, are used to ensure students have viable strategies to gain understanding. Close reading, critical thinking, speaking and listening, and finding and supporting evidence are focused on through daily instruction. Data-Based Questioning (DBQ) assignments focus on the attributes of writing including a strong thesis statement, supporting information with evidence from the texts, and organizing thoughts in a clear, concise way.

Mathematics:

Franklin Jr. High offers rigorous math classes including general 7th and 8th grade math, accelerated 7th grade math, Algebra, and Geometry. Class placement is determined by students' academic ability. Textbooks are used for primary instruction, remediation, enrichment, and assessment, and are complemented with supplemental and online resources. These are aligned to each course curriculum guide allowing teachers to draw from the best materials available by concept to assure student success. The curriculum guides outline week-by-week instructional concepts for each math course to allow teachers to deliver systematic, explicit instruction. Teachers use daily observations and formative assessments to drive instruction with the goal to always have students master foundational skills and apply enrichment type problem solving to ensure they perform at the highest level. Benchmark tests are used to track progress of students over the year and gain insight on individual needs for the increase of student achievement. Teachers may modify class lists to ensure all students are placed in the appropriate course to be challenged academically whether they are advanced or on grade level.

Science:

Students are assigned to general or honors science depending on their academic ability. Integrated science courses include earth, life and physical sciences as well as the study of the scientific process, laboratory skills, and data analysis. Textbooks, notebooks, online resources, and teacher created labs are used to support instruction. One unique trait of the science program is every student participates in the science fair. They create an investigation and use the scientific process from hypothesis to conclusion, culminating in a class presentation and school science fair. Over the past five years we have had dozens of students advance to our district and state science fairs, with one student being awarded 2nd place in Arizona.

Social Studies/History/Civic Learning and Engagement:

Franklin Jr. High offers honors social studies to all students that trace events and their effects throughout the United States history in chronological order beginning with early explorers in the 1400's through current times including global issues. An emphasis on geographic themes and concepts are incorporated as well as economics and the study of the role of government and citizenship. The performance objectives include an emphasis on critical thinking, civic engagement, economic concepts, problem solving and research skills using cross-curricular integration. Resources including textbooks, Data-Based Questioning projects, primary source databases, national archives, national museum resources, and Cornell note-taking strategies bring historical content to life and keep students engaged.

Civic engagement is embedded throughout the year in social studies and other classes and clubs. Students participate in the student government process, model congress programs, and organize service learning opportunities in school and the community. We have had over 50 service learning silver service award recipients each year for the past five years and have been labeled a Civic Engagement School of Distinction by the Arizona Department of Education.

College and Career Readiness:

Franklin Jr. High's curriculum supports college and career readiness in not only ensuring students have the foundational knowledge necessary, but are able to apply what they have learned to real life situations. Close reading strategies, accurate note taking, supporting information with viable resources and facts are vital for success beyond the secondary school classroom. Collaboration, the use of technology, critical thinking, and problem solving are traits needed in the adult workforce and communities. Civic engagement and community support rounds out the junior high experience for our students and they see firsthand how they can positively impact people in the community.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Franklin Jr. High is driven to support students in becoming well-rounded individuals and expose them to a variety of elective courses that support their core academics. A diverse array of required courses and electives are offered that provide students the opportunity to develop their skills and talents, and learn about possible post-secondary degrees and future careers.

Research supports the positive relationship performing arts has on student learning. Advanced band and orchestra are performance -oriented classes. Musical concepts and performance techniques include: rhythm/meter, pitch, scales, rudiments, music fundamentals, dynamics, articulation, ensemble skills and intonation, and improvisation and composition are reinforced through performance. Advanced mixed chorus places an emphasis on vocal and rehearsal techniques, music reading, expressive qualities, texture, form and style characteristics appropriate to the selections being performed. These musical opportunities culminate with concerts, assemblies, and community performances throughout the year that enrich the lives of students aesthetically, socially, academically and personally.

Drama is a semester elective designed to provide interested students the opportunity to advance their understanding of how to create believable characters and expressive bodies in scene work. This understanding is gained through study of pantomime, improvisation, characterization, and short scenes. Each semester class culminates with a live production where students are responsible for creating the sets, costumes and props. The visual art classes introduce and strengthen the students to basic principles and elements of design and exposes the students to a variety of media and techniques. These include drawing, painting, sculpture, and ceramics that are submitted and displayed at the school and district art shows.

Quality physical education programs are as essential as academic programs. This is a required class for all students every other day. Course content includes physical fitness training, aquatics instruction, individual and team sports, and games. The teachers promote skill development, sportsmanship, good health and body mechanics, and the value of physical exercise. In addition, students desiring more physical activity, body conditioning and aerobics are offered as semester electives. Foods for Today offers students opportunities in food selection, nutrition, equipment use and safety. Principles of food preparation are taught through cooking demonstrations and lab experiences where students learn about meal planning and hospitality. Students prepare a staff meal for their end of semester project. Project MESA, Mesa's Education of Sexual Awareness, is a required four period class of all 7th grade students instructing them on growth and development, sexual awareness, bullying, suicide, and alcohol, tobacco and drug use.

Spanish is a required course for all students which is scheduled every other day. Level A introduces 7th grade students to the basic vocabulary and grammar of the language and components of the culture of Spanish speaking countries. This class prepares students to begin to read, write, speak and understand the language. Level B enhances and refines 8th grade students' skills and prepares them for the language proficiency assessment at the end of the year. Students demonstrating proficiency on the assessment are

awarded one high school world language credit in Mesa Public Schools for each level of demonstrated proficiency.

Computer Essentials is a required 7th grade course offered over nine weeks that is designed to give every student the opportunity to develop essential computer skills. Students will become cyber savvy by learning internet safety and responsibly take advantage of online resources. To increase their productivity in other academic areas, students gain a comprehensive understanding of composing documents, spreadsheets and presentations through hands-on, real-world projects using Microsoft Office.

Additional elective courses include: Computer Programming and App Development, Woodworking Technology, Yearbook Production, Introduction to Engineering (Automation and Robotics or Design and Modeling), and online classes through Mesa Distance Learning Program. The library is a resource available daily for students to enhance their academic learning. The media center specialist assists students with researching topics and technology support with the goal of students becoming active and efficient users of information.

Physical Education, Spanish, Computer Essentials and these other elective courses positively impact our student achievement by maintaining the highest standard of instruction. Students skills and knowledge of these courses are measured through self-reflection, performance-based, research-based, and writing-based projects. These courses require students to apply foundational skills learned in the core classes to be successful.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Franklin Jr. High is a rigorous, highly-structured academic program that prepares students for college and career readiness. Teachers are extremely knowledgeable about state standards and curriculum guides that provide the framework for all content areas. Using proven instructional methods, laser-focused interventions, and formative and summative assessment data, teachers identify areas of need and strength of all students.

Instructional Methods:

A variety of instructional approaches are utilized in the classrooms to provide a balanced approach of explicit instruction, exploration, and application of skills. The instructional method chosen is dependent on a variety of factors which include: lesson outcomes, student's level of understanding, mode of assessment, and student engagement. For example, students in ELA participate in Socratic seminar activities so they can help one another understand the ideas, issues, and values reflected in historical or literary text through a group discussion format. Through this type of discussion, students practice how to listen to one another, respectfully debate, make meaning, and find common ground while participating in a conversation. Another method commonly used is problem-based learning which provides students with opportunities to solve complex, real-world problems during mathematical calculations, literary analysis, scientific experiments, and historical investigations. Students in social studies participate in station rotations where they are required to support their analysis of controversial historical questions as they rotate through five stations as they analyze primary source documents and videos. Implementing these effective instructional methods also allows for differentiated learning by challenging high achievers while supporting those in need of remediation. In addition, teachers utilize direct instruction, independent study with note-taking, and cooperative learning. Each strategy helps students develop into independent, critical learners, and brings content to life while fostering experiences that develop their problem-solving skills.

Assessments:

Analyzing and using assessment data is vital to the success of Franklin Jr. High students. In addition to AzMERIT, the Arizona state assessment, a variety of formative and summative assessments are embedded within our program. They include unit tests, online resources, and teacher created assessments. Teachers assess student learning daily to measure performance and guide instruction. They continuously monitor and adjust instruction to match student understanding. Formative assessments are designed and administered allowing teachers to reflect on instructional strategies during PLC meetings and plan intervention or enrichment activities.

Students are given online diagnostic benchmark tests in reading, writing, and math three times per year. This data is analyzed by teachers and administrators to determine each student's strengths and areas of struggle. The online resource, STARS SchoolCity, then allows teachers to differentiate assignments and lessons so lower performing students receive appropriate interventions while above level students are assigned higher level questions requiring a deeper understanding and critical thinking.

Interventions:

With the constant use of data to guide instruction and assess student levels of understanding, Franklin Jr. High has systematic interventions for students needing extra support. The most impactful intervention are the help sessions students may attend after school to receive reteaching, clarification, and peer tutoring. We pride ourselves on helping students become the best advocate for their education and initiate the need of extra support. Every teacher offers at least two, one hour help sessions per week after school. Help sessions can also be initiated by teachers to ensure that struggling students or students who were absent receive the necessary instruction. By attending help sessions, students get to see firsthand how their initiative can positively impact their achievement.

Other teacher interventions include small group instruction, modified assignments, and individual conferencing. Communication from school to home, planner checks, and conferences are used to ensure parents are aware of and able to support their students' needs at home. Franklin Jr. High students outperform the state passing average on ELA and Math assessments by 53.5% and the district average by 56%. The only subgroup with ten or more students is our Hispanic population. This subgroup's percent passing average on the state assessment was 43% higher than the state average and 50.5% above the district average. The use of data, effective teaching practices, and interventions combined with a highly-qualified staff and rigorous program go beyond meeting the needs of all our students as we prepare them for college and career.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

The Franklin Jr. High climate and culture begins with our campus being a parent choice application school. Many families seek admission to our school based on our reputation as a high performing, safe, and supportive learning institution and from positive recommendations from relatives, neighbors, and community members. Prospective parents complete an orientation process explaining the Franklin philosophy and curricular expectations including the student and parent letters of commitment. The school expectation is to greet every student, parent, staff member and community member with a smile. This process immediately establishes our climate as welcoming and creates a personal relationship with each family. Another feature that shapes our school climate is a modest, conservative dress code policy that minimizes distractions to keep the focus on learning.

Every member of our campus is equally important and contributes to our culture of learning. Our school philosophy includes the importance of intrinsic motivation for our students. Our staff strives to celebrate not only student achievement, but more importantly their effort towards achievement. The school bulletin boards showcase students' academic, written, and artistic assignments. The Franklin Junior Honor Society sponsors a "Compliment Wall" where students recognize their peers on comment cards in areas like teamwork, good deeds, and leadership. One student wrote, "You put so much work into the drama performance and it was so good and funny. Keep being a hard worker." When students are motivated by their own effort and personal growth, their self-worth is impacted positively.

The commitment by teachers to implement our school philosophy and curriculum with fidelity is the backbone of Franklin Jr. High. The promise of Mesa Public Schools and Franklin Jr. High is that "every student is known by name, strength and need and graduates ready for college, career, and community." Every core teacher instructs every student at their grade level and commits to being a club advisor or athletic coach, so they truly know each student's interests in and out of school. Support systems in place to help teachers include: Culturally Responsive Training, new teacher orientations, curriculum specific professional development, assigned mentor teachers, curriculum committees, staff advisory committees, and PLC's. Teachers' schedules are designed to maximize and protect their common planning time by not assigning any arrival, lunch, or dismissal duties. The administration's highest priority is to support teachers with any needs including instructional strategies, struggling students, behavior concerns, social-emotional strategies, and communicating with families.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Franklin Jr. High prides itself on its open-door policy and the connection the school has with families and community members. The partnership between school and home is who we are. The Franklin Junior Parent Organization is a group of parents who meet once a month with administration to help support all areas of our school. They are an integral part of the educational experience, including planning and organizing volunteers for various committees and sponsoring our quarterly student socials that include game nights and talent shows.

Community service plays a central role for many of our school clubs. Students initiate projects that benefit others through food, water, sock, and toy drives. They volunteer at Feed My Starving Children and collect Pennies for Patients. Service learning students partner with four area elementary schools to provide support to the teachers and staff at those schools. Over fifty students have received Silver Service Awards the past three years by serving over fifty hours of service in a calendar year. The biggest event is STEM Night where students plan, set up, and oversee the showcasing of their science projects while organizing guests from high schools, universities, and professional fields to expose students to future careers and opportunities in science, technology, engineering and math. These student driven activities help them understand the needs of our community and contribute in positive ways.

Former students at the high school and college level return on a regular basis to visit teachers or volunteer

their time to our school. On late start days at our district high schools, we welcome over fifty students back to visit their former teachers and staff. This has become a tradition current students look forward to when they enroll in high school. At special events such as the Franklin Jr. Honor Society induction and eighth grade promotion ceremonies, a former student is honored as the special guest speaker. The return of these former students and the service they provide speaks volumes to the positive impact Franklin Jr. High has had on their lives.

Assemblies are scheduled throughout the school year to celebrate student achievement, performing arts, and school spirit. Parents, community members, and local organizations are invited to attend our assemblies and be recognized for their contributions. For example, the winter assembly showcased our band, orchestra, and choir. It also recognized musicians earning district honor status, school and district science fair winners, athletic championships, and a teacher earning her National Board Certification.

3. Professional Development:

School and district professional development courses provide training in content areas, as well as technology, instructional approaches and methods, and social-emotional learning. Many Franklin teachers choose to attend the trainings to refine their pedagogical strategies, and explore areas for professional growth. These opportunities strengthen teachers' knowledge and skills which positively impacts daily instruction and student achievement.

Over the past five years, Franklin teachers have received professional development on topics such as data-based questioning, state standards, mathematical practices, Big Ideas math textbook and online assessments, effective writing strategies, close reading, next generation science initiative, culturally responsive training, social-emotional learning, and grading practices. The Franklin leadership team collaborates to identify topics for professional development to improve instruction and student achievement. In-service trainings are presented by the administrative team, district content specialists, the curriculum and instruction specialist, and highly effective teachers.

Over the past three years, teachers have participated in Cornell note-taking trainings, an AVID based strategy. This has become a school-wide initiative to better organize students' thoughts and give them strategies to pull important information from all types of text. The goal is for students to have the ability to create their own notes rather than copying notes. Highlighters and colored pencils are used by students to categorize information. Subjects spanning PE, Foods for Today, and Woodworking utilize this method of notetaking during the instructional phase before the hands-on experience and holds students to the same level of learning as core subjects. Student achievement has been positively impacted because greater emphasis has been placed on application and critical thinking during the note-taking process. This cross-curricular initiative has ensured high student expectation every minute of every class which has become of equal value to the teachers as well. Another commitment that has impacted student success is the writing initiative focusing on having all students write in all subject areas which has increased students' ability to effectively write about any given topic.

Teachers have participated in professional development with STARS SchoolCity, an online resource tool that aligns to the 2016 Arizona English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Standards. The SchoolCity resource allows teachers to measure and analyze student data from benchmark assessments then differentiate interventions or enrichments to meet every student's needs. Teachers and administrators at Franklin Jr. High are dedicated to continuous professional development, always evaluating current practices, and striving to better inform the instructional strategies and resources to ensure all students grow academically to reach their highest potential.

4. School Leadership:

The administration of Franklin Jr. High includes the principal and team leader (assistant principal) who are responsible for the school's vision, mission, culture of learning, school climate, and campus management. The vision of "Unprecedented Excellence in Education" and the mission "to develop a highly educated and productive community, one student at a time" is the center of all decision making to promote academic and

behavioral excellence.

The administration demonstrates values, beliefs, and attitudes that inspire others to greater levels of achievement, and treats everyone with fairness, dignity, and respect. The climate of the school can be felt when a person enters the campus. The administration sets the positive, welcoming tone for all school employees to follow. Every parent, student, community member, and staff member are greeted with a smile and an offer of assistance. This is the first step to building positive relationships among all stakeholders which takes the entire school population and makes it feel like a close family. To quote a current 8th grade student, “all students feel popular because everyone knows everyone. We are all treated with kindness.”

In addition to the administration, there are other leadership roles that contribute to the overall success of the school. The curriculum and instruction specialist guides the orientation process for new teachers, designs and leads professional development, and supports classroom teachers with instructional strategies and resources. Teacher leadership is evident with department chairs, the school leadership team, and district committee representatives. These teacher leaders plan, coordinate, problem solve, and communicate curriculum across the departments and grade levels. Shared leadership is essential to a successful school and contributes to developing future educational leaders.

A strong culture for learning ensures students achieve their highest potential. The administration focuses on the support systems in place for an equally high level of teacher instruction. They also support a growth mindset that each student’s success is possible and is everyone’s responsibility. The administrators have an open-door policy to meet with teachers formally and informally to discuss instructional strategies, behavior issues, curriculum questions, or just to share a funny story. The combination of regular classroom walk-throughs and open communication with teachers plays a vital role in the success of all teachers and students. Allocation of district funds is primarily focused on instructional assistants. This protects teacher planning time and ensures the safety and well-being of students during arrival, passing times, lunch, and dismissal.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

There are many key components to the success of Franklin Jr. High, but the single practice that has been most influential for increasing student growth and achievement is school-wide collaboration. This philosophy is embedded in the very climate and culture of our school. Teachers, staff, and administration naturally work together to share ideas, discuss best teaching practices, and support each other while students develop a collaborative approach to learning through complex, rigorous projects and activities.

All teachers take responsibility for the learning of all students. Teachers identify students' academic strengths and needs by collaborating with each other during PLC meetings organized by department, grade, and school level. This ensures horizontal articulation of standards within departments and vertical articulation through multiple course levels. Teachers collaborate by implementing cross-curricular lessons and projects each grading period where they instruct, intervene, and enrich to maximize student learning. An example of this is during Science Fair projects. The science, math, and English departments plan their lessons to support a student's hypothesis, the scientific process, collection of data, research, and organization of the results.

Team building and positive communication on campus create a school climate for high levels of citizenship, a strong work ethic, and perseverance. With guidance from the school counselor, teachers implement strategies to support social-emotional learning. They are able to build quality relationships and connections with students, which in turn makes students eager to perform at their best. The students want to do well for their teachers and themselves and will put in extra effort to accomplish a goal. Students are expected to demonstrate their knowledge at the same high level in math as in PE or music classes. This is evident with the after school help sessions that are beneficial and attended often by students who want to improve work, seek help, or just want a quiet place to complete homework.

The decision-making process is driven by always doing what is best for the students. We pride ourselves on all having a strong growth mindset for our students and in turn instill a growth mindset in them. The strong partnership between school and home ensures a shared responsibility that supports students in academics, social needs, and emotional growth. The commitment of all parents, teachers, students, and administration to support the "Franklin Way" is what makes Franklin Jr. High one of the most respected and successful schools in the district, state, and nation.