

**2005-2006 Arizona Educational Foundation A+ Schools Program
CERTIFICATION SHEET**

Level: X Elementary Previous A+ School
 Yes X No

Name of Principal: M. Beth Hill
(As you wish it in the official records)

Official School Name: Kyrene del Cielo Elementary School
(As you wish it in the official records)

School Mailing Address: 1350 N. Lakeshore Dr. Tel. (480) 783-2100
Street/P.O Box

Address: Chandler, AZ 85226-7208 Email Address: bhill@kyrene.org
City Zip

I have reviewed the information in this package, including the eligibility requirements, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate. If my school is recognized as an A+ School, the contents of this application may be made available to the public.

_____ Date _____
(Principal's signature)

Name of Superintendent: Dr. Maria Menconi

District Name: Kyrene School District #28 Tel. (480) 783-4000

District Mailing: 8700 S. Kyrene Rd
 Tempe, AZ 85284-2108
City Zip

I have reviewed the information in this package, including the eligibility requirements, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's signature)

Name of School Board President: Rich Zawtocky

I have reviewed the information in this package, including the eligibility requirements, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(School Board President's signature)

**Submit application by 5:00 p.m., February 3, 2006 to: Arizona Educational Foundation
6155 E. Indian School Rd., Suite 100 Room #106
Scottsdale, AZ 85251**

Additional School Information

If your school is selected to receive a site visit, the review panel members will need directions to your school and will need to know dates that will present potential conflicts, Please complete the following:

Kyrene del Cielo Elementary 1350 North Lakeshore Drive Chandler, Arizona 85226-7208
School Name Address City&Zip

M. Beth Hill (480) 783 2100 bhill@kyrene.org
Principal's Name Phone Email

Detailed travel directions indicating surface streets that lead to your school: Take Interstate 10 South toward Tucson to the Warner exit. Travel east on Warner past Rural until you reach Juniper which is one block west of McClintock. Turn right, south, on Juniper and travel until you reach Lakeshore, about four blocks. The school will be on your right. Go into the parking lot and the office is located on Lakeshore on the far south side.

Calendar Information:

Time school buses begin arriving in the morning: 7:15 AM

Time classes begin: 7:45 AM

Time classes dismiss: 2:35 PM

Wednesday early release dismiss: 12:35 PM

Spring break dates: March 13-17, 2006

Standardized testing dates: April 3-13 AIMS Grades 3 – 5, Terra Nova Grade 2; April 3 - 28 CASS Writing Grade 2 and 4; April 27 & 28 CASS EOG Grades 2 – 5; May 4 & 5 MSS EOG Grades 1 – 5.

Early release, overnight or all day field trips or other out-of-the-ordinary activities planned for the period of March 6 – April 14, 2006; indicate grade levels affected:

- March 8 Early Release - Parent Teacher Conferences
- March 9 12:30 PM PTO Meeting
- March 13-17 No School - Spring Break
- March 23 Grade 3 Musical 6:15 PM – Grade 4 Musical 7:15 PM
- April 13 12:30 PM PTO Meeting

Preparation of School Self-Assessment

Representatives of all relevant stakeholder groups (including administrators, teachers, other school staff, students, parents, and community representatives) should be involved in the preparation of the School Self-Assessment. List the individuals involved in preparation.

Name	Position/Title
Debra Maloney, M. Kay Umberson Beth Hill, Susan Doyle	Primary Authors/Editors
M. Beth Hill	Principal
Susan Doyle	Assistant-Principal
Stephanie Calabretti, Tarsha Perkins	Pre-School Teachers
Amy Boyce, Erin Collins, Lori Dohse, Tracy Fernantez, Becky Lull, Jannette Vanney	Kindergarten Team
Janifer Haddock, Kristen Holstad, Druann Letter, Amy Reid, Melinda Vibber	Grade 1 Team
Susan Bryant, Kathy Cota, Ursula Galhouse, Natalie Richardson, Brenda Rubacha, Karen Smeltzer,	Grade 2 Team
Debra Maloney, Lorraine Manley, LaRinda Saylor, Janiece Walsh, Cindy Whitaker	Grade 3 Team
Judy Austin, Laurie Gonzales, Wendy Henes, Alicia Klassen, Ellen Shamah	Grade 4 Team
Dottie Lloyd, Greg Reid, Kim Tygret, Anthony Zarbo, Barb Zsorey	Grade 5 Team
Maureen Sousae	Art Teacher
John Olgin	Building Supervisor
Carol Lang	Extended Resource
Kay Umberson	Music Teacher
Valerie Flowers, Jennifer Slater	Gifted Teacher
Cheryl Klepper, Edee Zwiefelhofer	Health Assistant
Bonnie Everett	Literacy Specialist/Academic Interventionist
Moira Turner	Media Specialist
Tom Bryant, Michelle Linhares-Stephens	Physical Education Leader
April Farrell	PTO President
Annette Flegenheimer, Sarah Imadali	PTO Vice President
Ann Burnes	Secretary
Anna Blocher Rubin, Joan Howard, Barb Jones	Special Education
Tencha Winiker	SEI Teacher
Karen Casciani, Sandy Osborne, Heather Van Leuven	Speech Pathologists
Lee Campbell, April Farrell, Denise Marshall	Site Council Parent
Nancy Hooke	Site Council Community Representative
Aaron Flegenheimer	Student Council President
Hannah Pfotenhauer	Student Council Secretary
Bus Driver Mose Tamplin	Transportation

PART I - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

DISTRICT: Kyrene School District #28

1. **Total number of students (pre K-12) enrolled in the district:** 18,888

2. **Number of schools in the district:** 19 Elementary schools
 6 Middle schools
 0 Junior high schools
 0 High schools

25 **TOTAL**

3. **District Per Pupil Expenditure:** \$5,315.00

SCHOOL: Kyrene del Cielo Elementary School

4. **Category that best describes the area where the school is located:**

- Urban or large central city
- Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area
- Suburban
- Small city or town in a rural area
- Rural

5. 18 **Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.**
NA If less than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?

6. **Number of students enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school building:**

Pre-K	<u>192</u> *	5 th	<u>134</u>	10 th	<u>0</u>
1 st	<u>113</u>	6 th	<u>0</u>	11 th	<u>0</u>
2 nd	<u>115</u>	7 th	<u>0</u>	12 th	<u>0</u>
3 rd	<u>111</u>	8 th	<u>0</u>		
4 th	<u>122</u>	9 th	<u>0</u>	TOTAL:	<u>787</u>

*Includes Preschool Speech

7. **Racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school:** 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
12 % Asian, Native Hawaiian, Other Pacific Islander
7 % Black or African American
12 % Hispanic or Latino
68 % White

787 or 100% Total

8. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 18.7 %
 (This rate should include the total number of students who transferred to or from different schools between October 1 and the end of the school year, 42, divided by the total number of students in the school as of October 1, multiplied by 100.)
9. Limited English proficient students in the school: 3 %
22 Total Number

Number of languages represented: 7

Specify languages: Korean, Spanish, Arabic, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Russian, and Punjabi

10. Students who participate in free/reduced-priced meals: 9 %
68 Total Number
11. Students receiving special education services: 13 %
101 Number Served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

<u>0</u> Deaf	<u>7</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blind	<u>1</u> Seriously Emotionally Disturbed
<u>2</u> Hard of Hearing	<u>21</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>5</u> Mentally Retarded	<u>46</u> Speech Impaired
<u>0</u> Multihandicapped	<u>1</u> Visually Handicapped
<u>0</u> Orthopedically Impaired	<u>18</u> Autistic

12. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below.

Number of Staff

	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>35</u>	<u>6</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>8</u>	<u>5</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>4</u>	<u>9</u>
Support staff	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>
Total number	<u>55</u>	<u>29</u>

13. Describe any significant changes in the data reported in items 1-12 that have occurred during the past five years and explain why the changes occurred (use additional page if necessary).

- The population count changed in the regular classroom three years ago when the Kyrene District passed an override which significantly lowered class size in grades Kindergarten and One. A literacy specialist and an Academic Intervention Specialist were also added to the school faculty.
- Overall our population has become much more transitory with families moving away when their children are grown. Cielo's population was projected to shrink from 785 to 709 or less last year. Due to boundary exceptions with parents requesting Cielo, the population is holding its own at 787.
- A total of 32 students have been tested for English Language Proficiency at Cielo during the current school year. This number includes returning students who are re-evaluated every year, as well as the new students to the school. Ten of the new students whose Home Language Questionnaire indicated that a primary language other than English was spoken at home tested as English Language Proficient, and were identified as such, while six new students were identified as Limited English Speakers, and were placed in the program. Thirteen returning students were tested—two of them came from other schools in the district, and eight of them met the criteria for exiting the program.

Currently, there are 22 placed English Language Learners in the Cielo SEI, or Structured Immersion Program. This number includes eight returning students who exited the program, but are kept on the list for a period of two years after they re-classify for monitoring purposes. Seven different languages are represented in this group, which is an obvious indicator of the ethnic diversity in the Kyrene School District in general, and in Cielo School in particular.

PART II – SUMMARY

Kyrene del Cielo Elementary School is an “Excelling” school located in Chandler, AZ. We have proudly worked in partnership with the surrounding community since 1982. Cielo teachers have demonstrated pride and ownership in educating over 18,000 students during these years. High standards and accountability set the bar for student achievement within a truly supportive and nurturing environment.

Vision and Mission – Cielo’s mission embraces the philosophy that all teachers will provide a secure learning environment where individual students will acquire a life-long quest for knowledge while working to achieve at their maximum potential. Providing for individual student needs is the core of our mission. Cielo teachers believe that it is their job to encourage students at each milestone as they direct them along their educational journey.

Traditions and Milestones – Cielo’s mascot is Freddie the Firebird. He is a symbol of strength and courage and a visual reminder of “Firebird Pride”. Freddie welcomes every student to Cielo during the annual assembly held the first week of school. He sets the stage for the school’s Character Education Program and reminds students of our motto: *“Do The Right Thing.”* Other traditions in place include Welcome Wagon for new parents, Fall Turkey Trot and family barbecue, Holiday Adopt-a-family, Grandparents’ Day, Sock Hop, and Celebration of Learning Night. Cielo School is regarded as a high-achieving, premier school within the district as evidenced by consistently high test scores and low teacher turnover. It is home to over 200 open enrollment students in spite of declining enrollment at other schools within the district.

Community, Students, and Facilities – Cielo School is located within an upper middle-class neighborhood that includes both single-family homes and apartments. Many parents are employed at nearby ASU, Motorola, or Intel. The school also contains many international families, and their children have frequent opportunities to travel outside of the United States. The school facility is well maintained and great pride is reflected in its appearance. The building and grounds crew is proud of the sculptured turtle that greets visitors as they enter the parking lot. In addition, Cielo supports two state-of-the art computer labs, a large media center, two music rooms, and one art room. The multi-purpose room serves as the cafeteria, a physical education gymnasium and contains a stage for school performances. In addition, Cielo supports a literacy fluency lab and a full literacy library.

Strengths, Key Indicatives, and Accomplishments – Cielo attributes its success to the following:

- **Ownership/Teamwork:** Everyone who touches Cielo; the parents, the teachers, the custodians, the secretaries, and the administration all possess a high degree of ownership when it comes to Cielo. We understand our purpose, we know whom we serve, and all take personal responsibility for the goals that need to be accomplished. We are connected through common goals and truly appreciate the unique talents that each brings to the organization. “The Cielo Team does create the dream.”
- **Quality Teaching, Learning:** Cielo teachers believe that all students can learn . . . maybe not in the same way or at the same rate, but all students can achieve. Teachers plan together, share lessons/materials, and dialogue about best ways to develop each student’s individual potential. Student progress is monitored frequently so that extra attention and adjustments can be made to ensure that all children are moving forward.
- **Character Education and Life Skill Program** – Students receive instruction and are active learners in developing strong character and values needed to become productive citizens.
- **Individual Student Support** – Many support systems are in place to assist students who are not mastering learning targets. These programs are individualized and provide increased learning time.

PART III – Cielo Elementary School Mission Statement

Our purpose is to provide a secure, informative, and creative environment for students, staff, and the community; to gain a positive concept of self and acceptance of others; to acquire a life-long quest for knowledge and achieve maximum potential as independent thinkers; and to encourage everyone to participate in the decision-making process.

Cielo School Goals and Objectives 2005 - 2006

- Goal # 1:** Students will increase proficiency level on district math assessments by 3%.
Grades 1-4
Students will increase proficiency on the numeration strand based assessment score by 3% or better.
Grade 5
Students will increase proficiency on the numeration strand based assessment score by 6% or better.
- Goal # 2:** Students will demonstrate growth in reading. 77% of students grade K will perform at benchmark level measured by DIBELS. 85% of grade 1 students will perform at the benchmark level as measured by DIBELS.
Students in grades 2-5 will increase overall proficiency in Reading 3% or better as measured by district reading assessments.
- Goal # 3:** Students will demonstrate growth in writing.
Students in K-5 will maintain or increase their level of performance as measured by the district rubrics using writing prompt assessments with a focus on specific traits at each grade level.
- Goal # 4:** Students will increase their skills and knowledge of technology.
Cielo Teachers will provide learning opportunities for students on computers within the classroom setting as well as in the school's computer lab.
Cielo Teachers will utilize a curriculum map for grade level technology.
- Goal # 5:** Students will increase social skills through participation in character education. Staff, parents, and the school council will establish a school-wide character education program for students in K-5, which includes kindness, responsibility, cooperation, respect, safety, and integrity.
- Goal # 6:** Students will be provided a safe school environment. The school safety team will review the school safety plan each year for overall effectiveness. The school safety team will also critique campus safety procedures and provide feedback and recommendations as needed. All students and staff will participate in monthly safety drills.
Accommodations are made for students with special needs i.e.) assisted transportation, medication on the health office cart, etc.

Cielo teachers are committed to the belief that each and every person contributes to the achievement of our school goals. On going dialog and open communication contributes to a broad knowledge base of what is currently happening within the school. Accomplishments are outwardly acknowledged and areas for improvement are discussed within the group of professionals at scheduled faculty meetings.

PART IV – LEARNING CENTERED SCHOOLS CRITERIA

Student Focus and Support

Describe your student population. Specify academic and non-academic needs, how you identify and meet those needs. Indicate student participation rates in programs & services.

Learning-Centered School – Cielo’s students come first. Staff provides a safe, supportive, successful learning environment, utilizing a balance of academics, arts, physical development, and cognitive and emotional wellness. Differences are celebrated here, and the community works in partnership with the school in order to make the best decisions for all children.

Identifying and Meeting Academic Needs – Cielo School strives daily to meet the diverse needs of all students so that no child is left behind. The staff believes that all students will excel; therefore, diverse needs and academic levels must be addressed. The yearly School Improvement Plan is the academic road map that keeps all students, teachers, and parents on track. Annual measurable goals are set forth in reading, math, and writing. Yearly progress is monitored by the school council and data analyzed for needed revision each year based on student performance.

In order to meet the academic needs of Cielo’s student population, there are several strategies in place to first identify what those students’ needs are and how they will be met. The student-teacher ratio is 16.5 compared with the state average of 18.3. Teachers work collaboratively to utilize many different sources of information from a variety of means. For example, administrators and teachers thoroughly examine students’ previous school records and the school administrator meets individually with most new parents. During the first week that teachers report back in August, time is set aside for the entire staff to analyze the testing data from the previous school year. Each grade level is provided averaged “end of grade level” test results in reading, writing, and math. Teachers then review the data that is provided for each individual student in their new regrouped classes and list those students by name that falls into the categories of Novice learner, Partially Proficient learner, or Proficient learner. As the year progresses, teachers meet individually with their supervisor (at least three times per year) to review the instructional plans/strategies that are being used with these students to ensure that students are moving forward and that progress is being made.

This initial analysis of student progress sets the stage for the writing of the annual School Improvement Plan. All summative and formative goals within the plan are a result of careful data analysis and identified targets. Each grade level selects an anticipated percentage of growth for each goal and participates in the writing of the “action plans” for the identified goals. The School Improvement Plan is a continued focus throughout the school year. Staff development is planned to support the goals and teachers are also encouraged to write professional growth goals to address the targets in the SIP as well.

All students, K-5, are assessed individually three times per year in reading through both a Benchmark and a DIBELS Assessment that indicate a reading level in fluency, comprehension, and phonics. In addition, students in K-3 are given a High Frequency Assessment based on the Dolch Sight Words. This past fall, K-3 serviced 68 students; 66 were serviced in the winter and those who meet the criteria will participate in the spring. The past five years of data on Stanford 9 and AIMS testing has provided an excellent and continuous working model and means of tracking student growth over time. This data is used by individual teachers to lesson plan for their differentiated instructional groups. In classrooms, teachers use a variety of assessment tools that include anecdotal records, observations, video-taping, Book Company, and teacher-made assessments to monitor student progress.

Child Study Teams play an important role in supporting classroom teachers with recommendations for students who need a differentiated learning plan. They review the past

progress of students, many with special needs and speech and language concerns. They give suggestions on how to adjust classroom learning if placement in the resource room is not required. This Child Study Team is comprised of resource room teachers, the school psychologist, K-3 teachers, a classroom teacher, the academic intervention specialist, the principal, and vice principal. Approximately 30–35 CST's are conducted every year. Teachers often have small groups in their classrooms which further aid differentiated instruction. The uninterrupted math and language arts time blocks allow teachers and staff the opportunity to fully implement this instruction. Special education is truly “special” at Cielo. The special education population is fully included wherever possible at every level; this includes all special areas (PE, music, and art). Teachers welcome special needs students into their classrooms with support from resource teachers who assist with necessary interventions, resulting in a successful learning experience for all students. These interactions not only enrich the lives and learning of our special education students, but all students. The friendships and respect these students experience transfer from Cielo to the middle school and beyond.

“You have not lived a perfect day, even though you have earned your money, unless you have done something for someone who will never be able to repay you.” -- Ruth Smeltzer

Cielo's gifted resource program is designed to provide academic assistance to students who demonstrate programming needs beyond those that the regular classroom can address in specific content areas. In grades K-2, the gifted resource specialist works with the classroom teachers to support the development and implementation of differentiated curriculum through a consultative model. In grades 3-5, eligibility is determined through the administration of the *Cognitive Abilities Test* and through careful consideration of other important educational data. Students identified may attend a gifted resource class daily during the uninterrupted time block for that curriculum area. Appropriate grade-level and accelerated objectives are addressed. Currently, 39 (3-5 grade) students receive language services, and 53 (3-5 grade) students receive math services.

There are many beneficial research-based programs used at Cielo to differentiate instruction. Using data and teachers' recommendations, identified students in all grades receive individual language arts and math instruction during the day or after school. Small groups in language arts range from 3-6 students. Instruction is provided and supervised by the literacy specialists. Trained literacy paraprofessionals and classroom teachers also provide math instruction on a daily basis to those students who need extra assistance. This added assistance lowers class size and provides more focused instruction.

Cielo also has a Reading Lab for grade 4 and 5 students who qualify for additional instruction. *Read Naturally* is research-based and enables students to become fluent readers. The three components are: teacher modeling, repeated reading, and progress monitoring. The students read non-fiction passages at their level. The teachers monitor their progress in fluency and comprehension. Students in grades 1-3 and who qualify are asked to join the “Readers Are Leaders” club. They are responsible for R.A.H, Read At Home, and a sheet for recording books read outside of school. They graduate when they reach the benchmark for their grade level. *“In the Readers Are Leaders Club’ I can learn and read!”* said one student. Students who continue to struggle in reading have the opportunity to extend their reading skills in the summer. The reading lab is open to students in grades 2-4 while K-1 students receive leveled reading books to take home, keep, and read again and again. Twenty Cielo students enjoyed this privilege last summer.

Approximately 20 Kindergarten students per year receive support from the *Waterford Early Reading* computer program that is individualized and self-paced. The scope and sequence of the program includes print concepts, phonological awareness, and letter recognition.

The SEI, *Structured English Immersion*, program is designed to increase English Language Proficiency and the academic achievement of ELL students. Students are offered the opportunity to work in small groups with a certified SEI teacher. The goal of the SEI program in the Kyrene

School District is to provide support services for ELL students through direct instruction or on a consultative basis. A complete evaluation process includes assessments in oral language, writing, and reading. ELL students are reevaluated frequently and may later be reclassified as English proficient students.

Identifying and Meeting Non-Academic – The well-being of students is paramount and is one of the school goals. From drying tears to bandaging cuts with care, our knowledgeable health office assistants spend time not only healing sores but also assisting hearts. They are knowledgeable about all students with health issues. They discreetly make the staff aware of particular student needs and provide the staff training as needed. For example, in the case of four students, pertinent staff attended a mandatory meeting where they were provided with information and training regarding this health condition. The health office also administers daily medications, provides health screenings, orders supplies, and updates student health files. They track immunizations online and keep a daily log of health office visits and issues and record changes in student care plans. The care plans are coordinated and written by the district regional RN in conjunction with the student’s doctor, the health assistant, the classroom teacher, and the parent. Parents are critical team members and keep all school personnel informed about the child’s medication and health issues.

Cielo bus drivers take excellent care of the students. One bus driver states, *“On behalf of the transportation department that services your school, I wish to extend to you our gratitude for the outstanding efforts, leadership, friendly professionalism, personal caring, and support you have displayed. As we all know, children are the future and one can tell the care and attention these students receive from your school. Kyrene del Cielo is one of the best elementary schools I have been associated with.”* Bus drivers come into the school each morning and have coffee with staff. They also participate in the Friday “Pay Day” Breakfast. Their partnership is valued and appreciated.

In Arizona, water safety is a huge issue. Water Safety concern was heightened statewide through the efforts of a Cielo parent/teacher, and an *Arizona Water Safety Day* was created in partnership with Mesa Community College. All first grade students attend this event. It aligns with the school goal of safety and benefits the larger community as well as Cielo families. It has made a real difference in our state in drowning prevention according to research funded by SRP and conducted by Ellison Research.

Cielo invites Chandler police officers to school to promote safety awareness regarding strangers and emergency evacuation and lock-down procedures. They walk the grounds and hallways with the safety chairperson to strengthen Cielo’s safety procedures. Chandler firemen come to Cielo in October to promote fire safety awareness and teach ways to escape from fires. Kindergarten through second grade students enjoy these lively presentations while learning valuable information.

“I feel blessed to have had the opportunity for my children to attend Kyrene del Cielo. It is a very friendly, welcoming environment for both children and their families. The staff is very professional yet nurturing and attentive to the needs of each student. Academically, the high testing scores reflect the hard work and dedication of the teachers and staff. Most importantly, I feel that the faculty maintains a safe and secure campus for the students.” (Comment from Cielo parent who is also a fireman)

Our custodians and building manager strive for excellence in the beauty of our learning environment, which also affects the success our children have in school. Their attitude is professional yet warm and welcoming at Cielo. They assist with projects such as moving instruments to the high school for performances, Turkey Trot, and D.A.R.E. Graduation. They respond immediately whenever needed. They go above and beyond by giving of their free time, often arriving at 5:00AM to assist with a special school activity. They will do whatever it takes for the benefit of the children and they provide an additional source of kindness and care to all.

Meeting the Social, Emotional, and Leadership Needs – A district-wide grant; “Kyrene Safe Schools and Healthy Students” is a three-year grant program awarded to the Kyrene School

District in August of 2003. The grant offers three main prevention programs to the students and families of Cielo. One of the core prevention programs is called *Creating Peaceful Families*. Through this program, students have the opportunity to participate in prevention groups. A prevention specialist from Jewish Family and Children's Service facilitates these groups, which focus on developing social skills. The school psychologist works collaboratively with them to ensure student well-being. Twenty Cielo students are currently being serviced. The specialist has visited five classrooms with more scheduled, and given presentations to students on specific topics. She also meets with families to link them with community resources and offers teacher and parent trainings on topics such as character education in the home and helping ADHD students to be successful.

Another core prevention program funded by the grant is the Second Step Violence Prevention Program. It is a comprehensive support system for guidance and counseling available to all teachers. Prevention Specialists from Youth Evaluation and Treatment Center, train teachers and staff on how to implement the curriculum in the classroom. The Second Step program teaches Cielo students empathy, problem-solving skills, and anger management.

"We have two children with different approaches to school and schoolwork who had the benefit of elementary education at Cielo. Throughout our Cielo experience, teachers were knowledgeable, professional, and motivated to meet the needs of their students. These are the marks of any good school. What sets Cielo apart is the staff's consistent ability to challenge students and encourage them to excel, leaving them well prepared for future educational challenges. This consistency of high expectations clearly begins with the Principal, Beth Hill." (Cielo Parent)

Student Participation Rates in Programs and Services – Cielo offers a variety of extra-curricular programs and services to provide students more opportunities for growth and enrichment. These programs range from academic and intellectual pursuits to opportunities for support or just fun!

What's your hobby? Art? Music? Chess? Cielo has a class for you! Students can attend an after-school *Young Rembrandts* class which meets once a week. This class offers an opportunity for students to increase art knowledge and production and has a current enrollment of 20. Many of these students work on projects that will be displayed during *Celebrate Learning Night* a special evening which highlights a year's work from Cielo's grade 1-5 art students, as well as displays which illustrate student talent in science, reading and language, math, music, and social studies. Is music you thing? All students in grades 1-5 sing, dance, and play instruments on stage during evening performances for their families and friends. Grade 5 even performs with the Middle and high school chorus yearly at a local high school. If that's not enough, 5th graders may try-out for Marimba Masters which meets during lunch once a week. Thirty students learn to play a variety of percussion and Orff instruments, and they perform for a variety of school functions, such as D.A.R.E. graduation and *Experience Kyrene* throughout the school year. Kindergarteners have rhythm too! These pint-sized Perlman's perform for their parents in a musical show and tell during the day at the end of each school year. Checkmate! Cielo's chess club meets once a week for interested K-5 students, and current enrollment reflects 32 miniature Bobby Fischer's.

After-school programs are not just for those who excel. Mathemagic is a program offered to those students who struggle with math and are determined – through district MSS and grade-level assessments – to be "at risk." Five teachers provide magical math instruction currently for 44 students in grades 1-5, inspiring them to increase proficiency while fostering a more positive attitude toward math.

Feel a yen to cultivate a skill you possess? How about the spelling bee, morning announcements, or even student council? Zealous spellers can compete at the school, district, state, and national level. If they have all the right letters! Budding Barbara Walters' and Ted Koepfel's can begin their careers with Cielo's student-led video announcements which highlight school news and events and are presented daily. Could Cielo be educating a future mayor, governor, senator, or

President? The Student Council (STUCO) provides opportunities for students to develop leadership skills and participate in decisions affecting students. They meet bi-monthly to discuss activities and improvements for the school and plan fundraisers such as nights at Skateland, Valentine-grams, and teacher nights at McDonalds. They have also partnered with the Foundation for the Blind to interact with and support their student population, and they support the Kyrene Family Resource Center which aids families in need in the community. At the end of each year, STUCO provides a “gift” to the school, such as playground equipment and an amphitheatre. There are currently 35 student council members.

Need to burn off some steam (or Calories?) Come to Turkey Trot and/or Water Day! Turkey Trot arrives just in time – the day before Thanksgiving. This is the school’s fun run and barbeque. All parents and family members are invited to don their jogging shoes and join their children for a run before a special cook-out lunch which the custodians, cafeteria staff, and PTO all help to prepare. It’s a blasé; just ask the turkey! Water Days occur in May. It’s an end-of-the-year physical education frolic. One half of the day is primary grades, the other I for intermediate. Both groups enjoy a day of water sports competition and fun?

The final program benefits working families. Children who require after-school care can attend Kids’ Club on the Cielo campus. A supervisor and counselors provide homework help, fun activities, and snack in a positive, safe environment. Current enrollment is 120 K-5 students.

B. School Organization and Culture

Tell how the culture of your school exemplifies a learning community. Provide specific examples of sustained and caring relationships among all individuals. Describe the campus safety and security programs and strategies that are in place.

Cielo’s culture embodies the notion of inclusion, student engagement, parent involvement, high expectations, and a strong sense of belonging for all.

A close connection to all members provides an effective avenue for communication and assists all decisions within the school. The entire parent community is given several opportunities throughout the year to comment about practices, curriculum, and school events. A “Talk Back To Us” form is included in the first newsletter of the year that asks parents to provide feedback on the “Parent Curriculum Night” that is held the first week of school. All parents who request a phone call by the principal are then contacted the second week of school by the principal. Notes are recorded and shared with staff and School Council members. All suggestions for improvement are closely scrutinized.

Additionally, all parents are considered members of the PTO and are invited to attend monthly meetings. An average of 25 parents attend the meetings. There is an agenda item each month that allows time for the Principal to share information and answer parent questions. This informal discussion time is purposely included to allow any parent the time to interact and share ideas with the administration.

In collecting data for this application we invited members of the PTO and School Council to share their thoughts about Cielo’s Culture. Their responses are exciting:

“School is my child’s home away from home. It is where fostering of life skills and academic influence occur when I am not able to physically be there for her. Knowing that my thoughts and concerns are warranted and respected by the staff and administration at Cielo gives me much comfort in sending my child away for eight hours of her day. My child is a precious commodity and the Cielo Community respects this.” (Cielo Kindergarten Parent)

In addition to the PTO whose main purpose is fund raising and school events, the School Council also provides another avenue for communication. This 10 member group is elected by their peers that they represent, i.e.) parents elect parents, teachers elect teachers, etc. The council’s

purpose is school improvement. This group meets monthly to oversee and spend Tax Credit funds and to review school goals and the implementation of the School Improvement Plan. The Council is driven by the desire of the parents, staff, and community for Cielo to continue its tradition of excellence in student achievement and personal success. They take pride in Cielo's continuing "Excelling" school label. At Council meetings school programs are presented and reviewed for effectiveness. New programs such as Cielo's Character Counts Program have been developed. One highlight of the program is the monthly Character Café. Approximately 30-50 students who have been caught demonstrating one of the six character traits are invited to have lunch on stage with the Principal and Assistant Principal. Parents created a welcoming back drop for the Café. Tables are set with table cloths and attractive centerpieces. They also provide ice-cream treats for the students each month. Individual student pictures are taken and displayed on the "Do the Right Thing" bulletin board in the front office. The following comments by the students reflect their feelings about the Café:

"When I'm at the Character Café I feel special." (Grade 4 Student)

"Character Café Rocks." (Grade 5 Student)

Communication is viewed at Cielo as a critical element to our positive school culture so every opportunity is valued. A Parent Satisfaction Survey is conducted each spring. The data is electronically collected and the results are shared with staff and parents at a public meeting. This reflective input helps to guide decisions about curriculum, homework, school programs, and events.

Collective and reflective inquiry is also a regular part of grade level and staff meetings. Teachers spend time together as grade level teams and with administrators to study grade level achievements, learning patterns and areas for focus. For example, last fall all teachers received District Math, Reading and Writing scores along with the AIMS results and then wrote formative and summative goals for each area.

In the classroom students are also encouraged to self-assess and identify their own learning needs in specific content areas. For example, students may participate in a pre-test and then record the skills that they have either mastered or not. They can then check off their accomplishments in the future and self-monitor their own progress.

There are many additional committees and events that enhance Cielo's Culture. We have a Social Committee that plans fun activities for Staff such as parties, bi-monthly Pay Day Breakfasts, showers, etc. The principal also provides opportunities for staff recognition at each faculty meeting. Teachers can nominate their colleagues for going "above and beyond" . . . the principal presents them with an individual certificate and gift and places their name on a special bulletin board in the staff lounge. Teachers are also individually recognized by the Principal on their birthdays in addition to providing special breakfasts during the holiday time and during Teacher Appreciation Week. The administration also supports an open-door policy and encourages individual comments and visits without an appointment from staff members as well as parents.

The following comments from students are the best indicators of Cielo's positive climate.

"My parents and I think this school and staff are the greatest." (Grade 3 Student)

"This school has changed my life. I have made new friends and I have been getting better at all subjects."
(Grade 3 Student)

"School is fun because I meet new friends' everyday." (Grade 5 Student)

"The climate is good and I appreciate the weekdays more than the week-ends." (Grade 5 Student)

Sustained and Caring Relationships Among All Individuals – "Firebird Pride" has been building positive character traits in Cielo students for over ten years. These traits of responsibility, integrity, kindness, respect, cooperation, and safety help to foster better overall school behavior. Programs such as the "Book of Winners" and "The Firebird of the Week" provide a consistent method for recognizing students for their efforts. Proud Principal Awards are also given out by the

Principal for academic achievements as well. Student names are then published in the school newsletter, the Firebird Focus.

Attempts to foster adult to child interactions are accomplished through the following events and programs.

The Holiday Adopt-A-Family Program – Over sixteen Cielo families were identified for assistance this past December. Cielo students and parents collected toys, food, gift-cards, and clothing items for each family. Students helped to wrap the items and even assisted with the delivery to some of the families.

Art Masterpiece. Parent volunteers come into each classroom and present information on a particular work of art and the artist.

After School Assistance – Several teachers assist with Math Magic. This is an after school program provided to students who are struggling with math. Over forty students participate each year. In addition, several teachers assist students. One teacher keeps her struggling kids twice a week after school and personally tutors them. Another teacher provides additional time for Art during the lunchtime. Any student who desires may go to her room to work on art projects. This is a particular benefit to those students who do not prefer physical activity or games during lunch recess. Another teacher identifies a strength in each of her students and has them model it for others. For example, the one student who could play jazz cymbals modeled it for her 4th grade peers and she assisted her classmates at the learning center.

There is also strong support for one another within the staff. We have supported one another through student deaths, family illness, births, serious illness, and even the death of a staff member last year. We prepare meals, provide child care, transportation, a shoulder to cry on. We are truly a family.

Campus Safety and Security Programs and Strategies – All faculty at Cielo is trained in and adheres to safety policies and procedures that are developed at the district level. District personnel have collaborated with various city and state agencies to ensure the most current and safe emergency response methods. Kyrene del Cielo has a safety committee that stays abreast of new information regarding safety and provides that information to staff members on possible emergency issues. Protecting the student population is an obvious priority.

Staff members or duty teachers carry walkie-talkies for office communication. Parents who wish to remove their child from campus prior to dismissal are required to check-in at the office, and no child is allowed to leave campus without first notifying the office. Any visitor to the campus must also sign-in at the office and obtain a blue visitor nametag. Students are taught that all non-staff members must wear this blue nametag. If a student or staff member spots a “stranger”, the office is immediately notified and staff on duty addresses the issue.

The first day of each school year, PTO supervise students at the buses so that they can learn routines and rules and arrive home on the correct bus.

Each classroom is equipped with a safety backpack, which holds necessary information and supplies that may be needed in case of emergency. When staff members are on duty, they are required to wear bright orange vests to signify their presence and to be identified as staff in case of an emergency or safety concern. Safety backpacks, which were donated by local businesses and the PTO, contain written procedures for each area of emergency: fire, toxic fumes, bomb threat, and shelter in place, lock downs, and evacuations. They also contain class rosters including current home address, phone number, and method of after-school transportation, school-wide medical concerns lists indicating severe and dangerous health issues, first aid kits, water, and additional supplies.

The backpacks utilize a color-coding system that is implemented in all safety drills mentioned above. When school drills are practiced, teachers are required to hold up one card, which corresponds with the location of their students (green=all students accounted for; yellow=extra

students who belong to another teacher; or red=missing students). This system allows administration to quickly survey the campus and locate any lost or missing students. Drills are practiced each month and have continuously received an “all clear/safe” status. A relationship has been created with a nearby high school and church to utilize their facilities in case of an extended evacuation time.

Cielo’s school organization and culture exemplifies a strong learning community. It excels in caring relationships among individuals, and has a defined security program that is updated as necessary.

C. Challenging Standards and Curriculum

Describe the Core Curriculum and include a brief description of each area. Describe one other content area or program of your choice. Describe your process for continuous curriculum renewal; tell who is involved in the process.

The Cielo community proudly celebrates a legacy of diverse and quality programs and services. Through careful and constant monitoring of state and district standards, research on best practices, and relevant and engaging integrations, Cielo demonstrates a heritage of challenging learning experiences for all students. The teachers utilize both formal and informal assessment results and data to guide instruction, as well as to monitor and adjust it. All teachers are very familiar with district and state standards, as well as teaching to different intelligences, Madeline Hunter, cooperative learning, and collaborative teaching. They consistently utilize these strategies and ideas to meet the learning needs of our diverse student population.

Language Arts – Cielo has an uninterrupted language arts block of 75-90 minutes daily. Teachers implement the Kyrene district curriculum which is aligned to Arizona state standards. Students are individually assessed at the beginning of the year, and as the year continues to determine placement for reading instruction and eligibility for additional support services. Some students will receive support from gifted or special education resource teachers. Other students receive the additional support of K-3 reading instruction with the literacy specialist and/or trained paraprofessionals, on top of regular classroom instruction. Because of the smaller group instruction, differentiation and individualization are much easier to implement. This allows instructors to meet student needs. Reading and writing improvement are two of the main goals in the School Improvement Plan, and teachers develop assessments within their grade levels to focus on identified areas of improvement.

Additionally, classroom teachers and special area teachers meet and plan to incorporate reading, writing, listening, and speaking into the special area teachers’ instructional time. The PE teacher requires students to describe a key component of a movement to a partner, explain the difference between intensity and frequency in exercise to the class, and/or discuss strategies to solve a problem as a team. In addition, certain classes are involved with Physical Fitness Testing and the different physical tests for the components of fitness. They are asked to explain in writing with an Activity Log what they are doing outside of PE classes that might affect these different fitness components. Students are also expected to be able to design, graph, and label an assignment in the computer lab that deals with this subject. The art teacher explains, *At the beginning of every new lesson in every grade I do a presentation. At that time, students learn the history, vocabulary words, procedure, and objectives to meet. They are asked to read the white board in their grade area every time they come into the classroom. They are asked questions regarding the history and the objectives of the project as a review to make sure everyone understands what is expected of them. In addition, students are given a written quiz at the end of each semester over art history and key words for evaluation.*

Cielo primary teachers have participated in intensive curriculum development programs that encompass teaching methods based on the latest research and practice, including brain-based research training that was attended by second grade teachers. The teachers found these new developments in how the brain works and learns to be beneficial to student engagement, as well as retention and application of knowledge.

The primary grades have an extensive reading program that balances early literacy learning. It develops high-level literacy habits and skills by incorporating oral language development, phonological skills, and both guided and independent reading and writing. This focus helps to build a strong literacy base for all young readers and writers. As previously mentioned, the K-3 Literacy Program supports classroom teachers, and their recent acquisition of a library of 75 hardbound books per classroom further enhances literacy immersion.

All teachers continue the focus by incorporating the Six Trait Writing Model, Daily Oral Language, Readers' Theatre, Writers' Workshop, and other instructional strategies. Students have many opportunities to exhibit their language arts talents in such venues as the Halloween play, the spelling bee, the poetry contest, and the 5th grade musical. All teachers work together to support an integrated and powerful language arts program, ensuring that students develop into strong, fluent, successful readers and writers.

Math – In addition to reading and writing, math improvement is the third main goal of the School Improvement Plan. Kyrene adopted a new math curriculum last year, and math instruction is comprised of: student reasoning, communication strategies, manipulatives, and technology which are all used to make connections with real life problem-solving situations. As with language arts, teachers have uninterrupted time blocks for math that allow the special education and gifted resource students to receive individualized instruction. In response to parent input, Cielo utilized 301 funds to add a part-time teacher for the purpose of gifted instruction in math and non-verbal reasoning. Special area teachers also incorporate math into their curriculum. For example, the music teachers incorporate numeration, computation, story problems, and place value into their lessons as a natural part of understanding beat, rhythm, and reading music.

The goal in math is to develop a firm understanding of mathematic strategies, concepts, and algorithms. In 2004, all teachers were trained in the new math curriculum and the new math adoption. Eighty percent of the teachers attended the Scott Foresman *Investigations* training, and two district in-services have been conducted (2004 & 2006) in subsequent *Investigations* training. Additionally, Cielo teachers in all grade levels have been trained in Discrete Mathematics, Hands-on Equations, and Algeblocks, and several teachers attended the NCTM National conferences in 2004 and 2005. Two fully equipped computer labs support math instruction at all levels, and are open to all grade levels. Smart Boards are commonly used by a staff well-trained in their benefits. Kyrene's mathematics curriculum is directly aligned to recommendations made by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, and Cielo also utilizes the math support program, Mathemagic which serves approximately 50 K-5 students each year requiring extra help. They meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays after school from 2:45 to 3:45 for instruction, support, and fun.

Science – Science at Cielo is a hands-on process closely aligned with the state standards. The instructional methods used in classrooms provide opportunities for students to investigate science during free exploration, trial and error, and evaluation of what they have learned using the scientific process. Kindergarteners plant beans, grow rock crystal gardens, and observe live animals such as fish, worms, and mice. Sometimes they simply explore the environment by taking walks outside, collecting things, and recording sounds. First graders study rocks and collect examples of different sizes, shapes, and colors. They then make lists of descriptive words for the rocks. They also make sand sculptures and study the effects of adding water to sand as well as the separation of sand and silt. Third graders germinate seeds and then track the process of how stems, roots, seed coats,

and leaves are formed. They also study the science of sound by creating simple musical instruments and determining pitch by the length of an object or where the string is plucked on a guitar. Fourth graders devise team projects dealing with magnets and electricity. They will choose and create their experiment, make a display board with the steps and materials involved, and perform the experiment for classmates and parents at their own “Expo Night.”

Additionally, grades 3-5 have Lego kits available to address those students gifted in non-verbal areas. All classrooms use the computer labs and available technology such as Smartboards for interactive science experiences. In May, Cielo 4th and 5th graders travel to San Diego to experience an oceanographic adventure through the wonders of Seaquest. This is a much-loved science tradition at Cielo that students not only learn from, but also remember for years.

Performing Arts – Music: focus, fun, food for the brain! Music has focus: it is balanced, comprehensive, and sequential. The process of curriculum renewal is ongoing. Participants on the 2001 Kyrene District Music Curriculum Committee and 2002 Textbook Committee included Cielo parents, district administrators and a Cielo music teacher. The musical elements are delineated for each grade and numerically correlated with all of the National and Arizona State Standards. These standards are taught with the aid of teacher-made curriculum maps. Assessments include teacher-made rubrics, checklists, videotaping and a nighttime performance for every child grades 1-5. Music portfolios are assembled which contain proof of reading music, improvisation, composition, critique writing, rhythm and math integration. Ongoing peer assessment is utilized for quick formative skill checks.

Music is fun with a unique, motivating, and caring learning environment that has high expectations for respectful behavior and quality performance. Risk-taking, facilitative leadership, and creativity are highly valued in a manner that empowers the students. Differentiation for students with special needs is encouraged, supported, appreciated, and included in every class and program. Buddies are used to assist, to facilitate growth, and to provide inclusion. Singing songs, playing ethnic instruments, moving, and listening to music from various countries creates awareness and knowledge of diverse cultures within our school.

The Cielo music team consists of two highly trained music teachers one of which is Nationally Board Certified. She is also a trainer for the National Orff Music Association and serves as the district mentor for all music teachers. Each class grades 1-5 meets twice a week for 30 minutes, Kindergarten meets once a week. Two spacious 1,450 sq. ft. music rooms with a retractable wall and two storage rooms are all adjacent to the stage. The music teachers integrate with the classroom subject areas, as in the Desert study or Water Cycle in Grade 4. For example: math and music features fractions for note names, six trait writing with music critiques, and writing with music composition. Arizona, a topic in social studies, was a portion of the 4th grade performance last year. All of this integration supports the school goals and the grade level curriculum. Kindergarten has “informances” during the day for parents. Cielo parents also assist music after hours with the Kyrene Music and Fine Arts Association, an advocacy group for the Arts, of which a Cielo music teacher is a member.

The Visual Arts – Colorful kids! The Visual Arts Program at Kyrene del Cielo is colorful, vibrant, and very stimulating as is every single piece of artwork created in the art room during the forty minutes students meet each week.

Throughout the curriculum, objectives progress from one grade level to the next starting at 1st grade through 5th grade. The objectives are aligned with the state standards. Although some objectives recur at more than one grade level, the content, instruction, student outcomes, assessments, and sophistication are expanded and layered. This curriculum is renewed every six years in the Kyrene District. Individual creativity is encouraged and modifications are minimal because activities are designed in such a way to invite uniqueness. To further support students, the art room

is always open. Students and their parents know they are welcome before school, at lunchtime, and after school. This is to encourage work completion, to relieve the pressure of due dates, and to emphasize taking time to complete their work. The program makes enriching connections between art and other curricular areas. First grade science units in earth studies are carried over to make clay pots. In fourth grade, students use Native American designs to create Navajo rugs in conjunction with Arizona studies. Third graders use pattern and geometric shapes in Origami to enhance math lessons. This and other integration supports school-wide goals. Students have the opportunity to exhibit their art works in three major art shows during the school year which are open to the public. The district's boardroom is enhanced by student artwork on a monthly basis and there is a major display at the District Art Show in April in collaboration with other district schools. In addition, school walls are adorned on Celebrate Learning Night with each child represented several times. Parents are invaluable at this time of year. They organize and display the students work, making the hallways shine. It is truly inspiring when every child, of all abilities, proudly shows off his/her creations to parents, grandparents, and friends.

Workplace skills – Cielo incorporates organizational skills for all students into daily curriculum. Every grade level employs a cluster of workplace skills starting in primary with pocket homework folders and weekly progress calendars and expanding to binders and agendas in fourth and fifth grades. Cielo students develop time-management and organizational skills necessary to become independent learners and students with integrity. All classrooms as well as the library and cafeteria utilize helpers as a means to encourage students to work both individually and as part of a team. Oral presentation and leadership skills are practiced and refined through morning media productions, student council membership responsibilities, daily flag raising and lowering, library and office workers, and attendance runners. These hands-on opportunities engage students in job responsibilities and create the cooperative and collaborative awareness necessary to become effective citizens.

Social Studies – Cielo's Social Studies curriculum focuses on understanding the relationship of people in society. The students' study begins with an emphasis on themselves and their role in family, school community, and the country. Hands-on learning activities are frequently planned with the schools' librarian who provides support with research and technology. First grade students made and mailed Flat Stanley to friends and family throughout the country. This was used to teach map skills. All 2nd graders participate in an annual Native American Festival. Selected 3rd grade students studied historical characters of the world and presented a living Wax Museum at our spring Celebration of Learning. Fourth grade students are studying historical fiction. This is also a focus of the Career Ladder plan for their teachers. Students are conducting research and comparing life today with life during the territorial days. Field trips to places such as Pioneer, the Mining Mineral Museum, Heard Museum, or Rawhide also provide realistic experiences for the 4th grade students. A life-like montage of colonial history brings history to life for our 5th grade students each spring. Ben Franklin, in authentic costume presents historical information to all 5th grade students in front of an enticing visual backdrop. This program, "History in Motion" is truly a memorable experience for students. Another 5th grade learning activity allows students to recreate specific historical scenes, such as the Boston Tea Party and then film it. The film is added to their class movie which is based on Social Studies events. These reenactments include props and wardrobe and require a great deal of imagination on the part of the students. All grade levels find technology connections with social studies units and themes. A diversity strand is addressed at each grade level. Gifted and talented students explore the life and times of the Middle Ages and travel to the Renaissance Festival. Students of all grades benefit from parent presentations and classroom peer sharing of unique heritages and histories. Music and art easily center programs around social studies as well as various cultures.

Technology – The Technological edge: growing, changing, transporting our students to the forefront, and remaining there is one of Cielo’s goals as voted on by the school council. The importance of technology is recognized, as well as the excitement it generates in children. The Kyrene District - which included Cielo teachers, parents, and administrators brainstormed and created a unique technology curriculum for each grade level. It is aligned with the Arizona State Standards. At Cielo, this sequential curriculum is aided via two computer labs with added computers in the classrooms.

A technology committee reports the latest news, purchases, and professional growth to each grade level. For example, this year a new district grading system, Easy Grade Pro, was taught to the teachers. **KTTP** (Kyrene Technology Teaching Program) grants are being utilized at 2nd, 3rd, and 5th grades this year, with the goal of adding an additional grade level each year. The grant provides each teacher with five laptop computers, a scanner, and a Proxima for student and teacher use. A large number of teachers have completed the **INTEL Teach to the Future** and **Project Venture**, which gave students and teachers additional classroom computers. Training and staff development has resulted in quality sequential instruction provided by district personnel and a highly qualified librarian who serves as the school’s troubleshooter and provides assistance. In addition, teacher technology expertise allows for differentiation in each class. Some classes incorporate technology during the year with student-made PowerPoint presentations (one class even made an “imovie”). Virtual field trips increase collective experiences and enable all students, including those gifted and talented, to expand the scope of their skills. Students also integrated technology and writing skills through a letter campaign to American servicemen and women in Iraq. They integrate technology, social studies, and language arts skills by researching, creating, and presenting information about a famous American and his/her contribution to society using Power Point. In addition, they collect data, organize it, and create a graph to illustrate climate in certain areas of Arizona using Excel. With a graphic organizer program, such as Inspiration/Kidspiration, material is organized and expressed, while ideas, opinions, or concepts learned in various subject areas are categorized. Students integrate social studies and language arts by creating a newsletter expressing a colonist opinion of the British control in the colonies before declaring independence. All learning styles are addressed through technology coinciding with Howard Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences.

Technology and the library are at the heart of the school. Technology at Cielo encompasses all students Kindergarten through fifth Grade. Smart Boards, digital cameras, printers, and scanners are all available with TV’s in every room. All students have access to the Internet but there are boundaries. Rules are taught for e-mail etiquette, etc. . . Written parental permission must be obtained prior to student usage. Special needs students have ample access to the computer. Adaptive technology is used in classrooms with disabled students. This includes Intel Talk with an adaptive keyboard whereby students learn basic concepts, numbers, letters, colors, and money. Those students who are from other cultures benefit from this international tool as well. ELL students utilize websites that translate English to Spanish, Korean, and other languages. Cielo technology reinforces homework assignments by placing them online. Cielo offers grading programs to facilitate what has been mastered, analyze areas of concern, and review overall student progress.

The school technology goals have a broad range. District administrators, parents, community members, and teachers at individual schools formulate suggestions. A technology committee meets regularly to update and rethink the goals. The committee turns those goals into targets for each grade level. (In-service is provided as needed.) Technology is a powerful tool that heightens student interest, enthusiasm, and awareness for learning.

Comprehensive Health and Physical Fitness – Cielo’s health and physical education programs are comprehensive and inclusive. Kindergarteners attend PE once a week for 30 minutes and all other grade levels attend twice a week for a total of 60 minutes. Special needs students are

included effortlessly and naturally. If they require the support of an aide, then one is provided. Some students are chosen to be peer aides and it is a coveted responsibility. The PE teachers instill the motivation and concepts crucial to life-long fitness for all Cielo's students.

Firebird Pride helps to set the backdrop in PE of responsibility, safety, and respect. PE teachers want students to explore movement forms and achieve movement competence. They want them to be challenged creatively whatever their individual skill levels. They also want students to value physical activity and a healthy lifestyle so much so that they share PE information and activities with their parents. Utilizing Firebird Pride, as well as teaching to multiple intelligences and employing differentiation where necessary, enables all students to learn to the best of their ability. Students are expected to follow all rules and procedures to be safe. Adequate equipment is provided so that students can work at their own pace with their own piece of equipment without being rushed or failing to meet the objective. Individual differences are respected in PE and the *Golden Rule* is stressed. Students in PE read and listen to directions. They keep fitness activity logs and participate in fitness tests. Music is utilized both as a backdrop and as a roadmap for instruction. Movement is paramount. Cielo PE offers something for everyone.

A healthy lifestyle is not just addressed in PE class; it is also found in K-5 curriculum. First grade students receive hands-on training in both fire and water safety. In the fall, Chandler firefighters come to our school and provide training for students (K-2) in avoiding fire, escaping fire, and "stop, drop, and roll." Students have the opportunity to practice and ask questions in a fun and informative environment. In the spring, first graders attend an all day water safety seminar at Mesa Community College that is put on in conjunction with the fire department. All aspects of pool safety and drowning prevention are conveyed on a level that the children understand. On a lighter note, these students conduct "toothpaste tests" and write paragraphs on the proper brushing technique. They also write persuasive letters to their parents about their choice of toothpaste.

Second graders at Cielo learn the dangers of germs. One activity includes handling a slice of potato after recess with unwashed hands. They then wash with soap and water and handle another piece of potato. The two "samples" are watched for several days, and students are amazed and "grossed out" by the amount, color, and texture of bacterial growth on the "unwashed" slices. It's a truly "hands-on" experience.

Cielo 5th graders focus on nutrition, self-image, physical and emotional needs, and body systems. Additionally, these students are made aware of the effects and dangers of cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs on their body through the efforts of our DARE program and officer. The fifth grade health curriculum reflects the realities that students need to be aware of as they transition to middle school.

Three fun activities that support the PE and health curriculum are Turkey Trot, Water Day, and the 5th grade student/faculty kickball game. These are days of fun exercise that include the entire school and their families. Students can show off their athletic prowess or just burn off some steam; parents and teachers can too!

Heartbeat of our Curriculum: Character Counts Education-skills for students – "Firebird Pride" has been building positive character traits in students for over ten years. These traits of **responsibility, integrity, kindness, respect, cooperation, and safety** help to foster better overall school behavior. During the 2001-2002 school year, the School Council decided to take a closer look at the "Firebird Pride" program and examined its effectiveness in influencing student behavior. The evaluation indicated there was a desire and need to add a character education curriculum that focused on the already successful five character traits. While increasing visibility of the program, the Character Counts committee added, "Integrity" as another trait to the "pride" list. Staff members consistently reinforce these traits. Students who display these character traits and are observed, "doing the right thing," are recognized with an award. "Do the Right Thing" was the

motto adopted to promote this multi-faceted approach to character education at Cielo School. During the course of the year, various events and activities are conducted for families to support and encourage the use of these positive character traits. This “Firebird Pride” not only helps to foster better overall school behavior, but also sets a strong foundation of trust and caring within the school. At the beginning of the year, a school-wide assembly is held to reinforce the importance of the character traits. Music teachers have composed songs for all the character traits, and the students sing them with pride. The school librarian has designated a special area where books and articles can be found that highlight the character traits. Once a month, all students who are nominated by the staff and awarded with a Book of Winner’s Award attend the Character Café. The principal and vice principal are present at the café, and lunch is served. These same students also sign the Book of Winners, and receive special certificates, a “Do the Right Thing” pin, and ice cream! Student pictures are taken and hung on the “Wall of Fame” by the school office.

Process of continuous curriculum renewal –

District Process – Cielo School implements the adopted Kyrene District Curriculum for all subject areas. A systematic, ongoing process for curriculum development and revision is well in place. All curriculum committees involve parents, teachers, curriculum specialists, and even students when appropriate. The District Curriculum and Assessment Department oversees these processes and ensures that timelines are followed. Many Cielo teachers and parents have served on these committees. Cielo currently has a teacher who sits on the District Curriculum Council, the Writing Committee, the Tradebook Committee, and the Social Studies Committee. These curriculum areas are all under current revision.

School Site Process – As stated above all Cielo teachers implement the adopted District Curriculum that has been approved by the Governing Board.

Analyzing the curriculum is an on-going process at Cielo. In August, the staff meets for a day to examine student achievement on AIMS, CASS, and MSS assessments. The students are separated by Novice, Partially Proficient, or Proficient in the areas of math, reading, and writing. After determining areas of need, each team then focuses on goals and discusses strategies and materials to support those areas. During the 2004-2005 school year a need was discovered for a focus on phonetic elements in grades 1 and 2, and reading strategies in grades 3, 4, and 5. In math, there was a need to focus on measurement, geometry, and data analyses. Teachers conducted workshops on the staff development day in October. Research for teaching Phonics and Phonemic Awareness was reviewed and learning strategies were highlighted to better teach vocabulary in the classroom. Instructors from Mesa Community College presented research and ideas to staff on how to effectively teach measurement and geometry in the classroom as well. This year (2005-2006) the focus was on implementing the new Math Curriculum. The October Staff Development Day was spent working in grade level teams. Strategies for implementation and differentiation were shared. Special education and gifted teachers joined the grade level teams in order to ascertain that “all” students needs were addressed.

In addition, our weekly “early dismissal day” allows teachers on-going opportunities to meet and discuss best practices for implementing and assessing instruction.

Cielo teachers are passionate about student achievement and are committed to doing whatever it takes to ensure that learning takes place.

D. Active Teaching and Learning

Describe your teaching practices and show how they support student learning.

“The cohesiveness of the teachers is phenomenal. They plan together and really work to help each child succeed. They pour their hearts into what they do and obviously love it,” a parent relates.

Cielo teachers strive to provide challenging learning experiences for all students. With teachers skilled in diagnosis and differentiation of curriculum and instruction, Cielo students consistently meet and exceed academic expectations as measured by district, state, and national standards.

All teachers have received training in critical thinking strategies, the Six Traits of Writing, and teaching math through *Investigations*. This training is passed on to students in a variety of ways throughout the different grade levels. Additionally, different Cielo teachers attend a variety of trainings and workshops every year and share the information and knowledge gained with their colleagues. Some of these workshops have included: *Scaffolded Inquiry* for science instruction and *Brain-based Learning and Integrated Thematic Instruction*, as well as workshops on professional learning communities, literacy, reading strategies, and math applications.

These learning strategies help Cielo teachers to provide interesting and meaningful learning experiences for their students. The kindergarteners, for example, have a “corner store.” They create grocery lists, complete with prices and quantities, as they play. Next month, a post office will be added, and in the spring, a veterinarian and science center is planned. These “businesses” act as literacy centers in addition to providing an opportunity for dramatic play. Second grade students have also created a store. They brought in 100’s of empty boxes and containers. They then categorized them, put prices on them, and went shopping! They figured out how much to spend and made correct change. They then put their purchase in “A, B, C” order, built 3-D towers, and measured them. These students definitely got their money’s worth!

Third grades students utilized the world as their classroom. Using personal inflatables and a globe, they determined what percentage of the earth was land and what percentage was water. They explored the concept of hemisphere: north, south, east, and west; and they finger-traced the equator, prime meridian, longitude, and latitude. They didn’t forget about math either. To learn two dimensional shapes, third graders practiced naming various figures and their essential characteristics. Student teams next created these shapes using twist ties and straws. They shared the name of each figure as they placed it on a poster for display. They then chose to challenge each other to find and name these figures in classroom objects. To learn three dimensional geometric shapes, students created 3 dimensional paper shapes and then created a geometric museum by bringing articles from home and sharing the names of the shapes they brought. Students used this knowledge of geometric shapes to explore congruency, symmetry, perimeter, area, and volume.

Fifth grade students paired with a buddy for scientific inquiry. They used their knowledge of aerodynamics to make paper airplanes stay aloft longer and/or fly further. Each pair created two separate planes (one for distance and one for loft time). The planes were thrown 10 times and loft times and distances were measured. Students graphed the results on Excel and calculated a mean average. They then created graphs and data tables and mounted them on poster board along with a picture of the respective planes and a write-up of the investigation, including conclusions. This experiment also utilized the internet for background information on the basic aerodynamic principles. All of these activities are examples of how critical thinking is incorporated into daily lessons designed around the curriculum at each grade level. Teachers also provide students with the opportunity to work individually, with a partner, or in a small group setting to achieve the learning objective. For example, one fifth grade teacher grouped students based on their individual preferences for completing a project on photosynthesis. Students met together, reviewed the learning content/information, and together planned a presentation to the class that would demonstrate their knowledge. One group created a visual diagram, another performed a skit, while yet another developed a factual poem.

Cielo teachers are constantly monitoring and adjusting to ensure student success. First grade teachers give math pre-tests every Friday. This enables them to group those students with a good

grasp of the concept and provide them with extension and enrichment activities. Those students who might be struggling with the concept are serviced in a group wherein remediation activities are provided.

Students also help each other. Second graders routinely share their strategies for solving math problems with their classmates. This allows the children to see different ways of solving problems and it consolidates the students' understanding of their own strategies. After the practice and these discussions, students are allowed an activity from the "math menu," a game or activity that reinforces the prior learning.

Cielo teachers differentiate; they stress critical thinking skills and provide hands-on learning opportunities for their students. They provide a variety of student projects for instruction and they allow students the ability to choose activities and assignments. They also keep up to date in their own learning. They reflect on current research by reading professional journals such as *Educational Leadership*, the *National Council of Teachers of Math Journal*, and a variety of professional educational books and journals. They share and discuss this information with their colleagues, and they utilize the concepts for the educational benefit of their students.

E. Professional Community

Cielo staff builds professional community by involving parents in the daily educational process. Parents assist with reading groups, Art Masterpiece which impacts the entire K-5 student body, and tutoring during lunchtime which typically serves 20-30 students per year. This strongly supports student learning.

The staff at Kyrene del Cielo models the life-long learning process that it instills in students. The teachers are highly qualified and dedicated to practicing the best teaching methods. The custodial staff also supports the belief of providing a professional community. The Cielo maintenance team writes, *"Most of the training for maintenance is made available through the Kyrene District Office. Mandated computer schooling is given. Classes are offered on electrical procedures and locksmithing to continually keep our maintenance staff updated."*

When teachers are hired at Kyrene del Cielo, the interviews are conducted as a team. The appropriate grade level is given the opportunity to give input based on their needs. This provides a visual model of support to the new staff member. In addition, the district offers a week of training at the beginning of the school year to new employees. Content specific classes are accessible as well to support new teachers in the classroom. A mentor is provided to newly hired teachers, regardless of prior teaching experience, to explain curriculum, assist with classroom management, and share the Kyrene beliefs and traditions to ensure success. The mentor meets with new teachers as needed. She also recommends workshops offered by the district that might prove beneficial to individual teachers. One Cielo mentor reports:

"The purpose of the mentor program is to engage in dialogue and offer experienced teacher training for the new teachers of Kyrene School District. The mentor teacher program benefits the new teachers by giving them an on-going monthly training, answering their questions as needed throughout the school year, and promoting a special bond between them and school staff."

This year, Cielo moved to a district wide early release day every Wednesday in order to educate, motivate, and encourage teachers' professional growth. Some days are designated for teachers' collaboration and planning. Others are for school or district-wide staff development. The Staff Development Committee that consists of staff members and the Academic Interventionist plan the district days. In October, 2004 Cielo and the neighboring regional schools, Brisas and Sureño, met to dive into the new math program. Just as students are asked to work in a variety of groupings, consider their own reasoning, and communicate about mathematics orally, so were the teachers.

They collaborated across and within their own grade levels to discuss the most effective practices to reach all students. Eighty teachers created, discussed, and constructed games and activities to enhance their students' mathematical knowledge. In the afternoon, the emphasis was on Six-Trait Writing, creating class web pages, or building reading fluency. Cielo's knowledgeable staff taught these classes. Topics were chosen to support School Improvement Plan goals. This January, Brisas, Sureño, and Cielo came together again so that all teachers could share a math investigations lesson with colleagues, thereby increasing every one's repertoire of lessons.

At the bi-monthly staff meetings, a portion of time is dedicated to Professional Development. A staff member(s) is asked to give a presentation on the latest workshop attended, share effective teaching practices, or review the latest research. Kyrene del Cielo's highly skilled teachers are a huge asset. Each grade level meets formally during the month. This is a time for collaboration, sharing, and lesson planning. Differentiation, individualized instruction, assessment tools, classroom management, implementation of new curriculum, and team building are regular topics of discussion. Teams are expected to deliver minutes to our building principal after each meeting. Teachers of all experience levels are also encouraged to visit and observe within their grade level classrooms or cross-grade level rooms for collaboration and sharing of ideas. The administration at Kyrene del Cielo strongly supports this valuable time of observing the teaching practices of others.

One hundred percent of the staff has taken advantage of the courses Kyrene School District offers. These classes include curriculum-based courses in reading, math, and technology, as well as instructional delivery, classroom management, assessment, Six-Trait Writing, and differentiation. In addition, many of Kyrene del Cielo teachers have advanced degrees: 33 % have a bachelor's degree while 67% have their Master's degree or higher. This compares to the state average of 56% and 42% respectively.

Two more opportunities for professional growth include Career Ladder and the individual Professional Growth Plan. Career Ladder is supported through legislative funding. This plan has been proven to promote student growth through teacher-made, authentic assessments, and 31 teachers currently take part in Career Ladder. Each staff member writes a goal for improvement to implement his/her Professional Growth Plan. This Plan could entail attending conferences related to student growth and achievement or dealing with students' social and emotional well-being for example. It could also involve researching, or sharing ideas with colleagues on improving student achievement. The Professional Growth Plan must also be related to the school's mission and goals. In addition, Proposition 301, along with district funds, provides opportunities for the staff to attend workshops and conferences. Staff development is a priority for Kyrene del Cielo. Each staff member shares his PGP with his/her supervisor doing individual conferences and evaluations.

Regular opportunities also exist for staff to modify curriculum to meet students' needs as long as those modifications stay within the parameters of Kyrene and Arizona State Standards. Modification of curriculum is seen daily in the classroom as sub-objectives are identified, or if students do not master given targets. Additionally, teachers are encouraged to increase learning activities and supplement whenever possible. A sample of this would be the second, third, and fifth grade teams joining of KTTP, Kyrene Teachers With Technology Project, enhancing their ability to utilize technology in the classroom. The music teacher has achieved National Board certification and has met with educators in Russia to share ideas. Others teach at the college level, and many student teachers learn from Cielo's excellent staff.

An Arizona State University education supervisor stated, "*Kyrene del Cielo has a high reputation. Many students want to be placed for their training at Cielo. Beth Hill is a strong leader who runs a tight ship.*"

F. Leadership and Educational Vitality.

Describe how leadership moves your school toward its vision. Define the instructional leadership role and describe how it is implemented. Tell how the leadership engages internal and external stakeholders in the decision-making.

Strong leadership moves our school toward its vision. Cielo has outstanding, caring leaders who believe and support the staff. Cielo's Principal and Assistant Principal work as a well-oiled team and confer on all matters. They are regarded as highly influential and are responsible for all activities that occur within the school. Their leadership sets the tone of the school, the climate for teaching, the level of professionalism and guides the morale of the teachers. They keep our school's mission of **"Providing for individual student needs"** in the forefront. This belief is used to set high expectations and to set challenging goals for all students.

The administration is highly trained in identification of Effective Teaching and Learning Strategies. They are both certified as Highly Qualified Evaluators, (Levels I – IV). The Principal is the district's Mentor Principal and is responsible for providing training and support to all school administrators across the district. At the school level our administrators provide individually scheduled opportunities with all teachers to meet and confer about effective teaching strategies. All teachers have written Professional Growth Plans and are encouraged to engage in learning activities that will help them to develop their individual areas of focus. On a team level, teachers are directly involved through a variety of school-based committees. These committees meet once or twice a month to identify goals, develop work plans, and set directions for the purpose of the committee. Although the work of these committees varies, they share a common purpose in working toward the accomplishment of the school's mission and goals. Administration works closely with the committee chairs to monitor progress and to gather input and direction when decisions need to be made. For example, all teachers were given a written survey to guide the school and the region in our staff development efforts. Their input was reviewed and all future training will involve cross-grade level meetings, a focus on effective practices for teaching Reading and Math, and training on the new Writing and Science curriculum.

All stakeholders are key to Cielo's continued success. Input received from parents through surveys and meetings indicated a need to increase gifted education for students. This input guided the expenditure of 301 funds and an additional part-time teacher was hired this year. This effort provided additional support for students identified as excelling in mathematics. This is the first year of implementation; its effectiveness will be evaluated at the end of this school year.

This administration strongly believes that all voices should be heard. Teachers are empowered to speak for themselves rather than through a representative. To promote this, all major decisions are discussed at faculty meetings. Teachers have voted on a myriad of topics such as when to hold faculty meetings, what prompts to use for student writing samples, how to effectively utilize teacher work days, and the best methods for providing differentiated math instruction. Teachers also assist with the hiring of new staff and the placement of students into the next grade level.

Administrators assist teachers as well. One teacher reports *"Our Principal gets things done at the district level."* When instructional materials are needed for student differentiation the administration obtains them. They attend parent-teacher conferences, IEP meetings, and all school events. They also bring a sense of appreciation and fun. On the first day of school, every staff member receives a personal hand-written note with a candy bar prior to the start of the day. They model the importance of always speaking positively and honestly; their genuine caring attitude is pervasive and infectious.

1). Looking back over the last five years, what has contributed most to the overall success of your school?

Over the past five years, the largest contribution to the overall success of Cielo School is the addition of the Reading/Literacy Specialist and the Academic Intervention Coordinator. These new coordinators and programs have had a direct impact on student learning and achievement. Students are identified early for needed interventions and can now be given the extra support crucial to accomplishing their grade-level objectives. All students K-5 are assessed three times a year using the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). The DIBELS assessment tests Kindergarten students in initial sound fluency, letter naming fluency, phoneme segmentation fluency and nonsense word fluency. The first grade students are assessed in letter naming fluency, phoneme segmentation fluency, nonsense word fluency, and oral reading fluency. Second grade students are assessed in nonsense work fluency and oral reading fluency. Third, fourth, and fifth grade students are assessed in oral reading fluency. The DIBELS assessment is based on two kinds of research; research on the prediction of reading difficulty in young children and research on what is taking place in the minds of people who are learning to read. After the first assessment in August, students are ranked based on need and placed in the K-3 program for additional reading support. Each student who places at the “Intensive” level is assessed weekly to determine their strengths and weaknesses. Each student who places in the “Strategic” level is assessed bi-monthly to determine their strengths and weaknesses. Their progress is also communicated directly to their classroom teacher by the Academic Intervention Coordinator. Both teachers and parents want students to reach their fullest academic potential while developing a strong work ethic. The results have been an increase in overall reading achievement and a significant decrease of non-fluent readers in grades K-3.

2). What are the major educational challenges your school will face over the next five years?

The changing family structure is one of Cielo’s most significant challenges. Stay-at-home moms are rare; most families have two working parents. The number of single parent families has risen and a of children are being raised by their grandparents. The turnover rate for student enrollment has substantially increased as well. This has had an impact on parent-involvement and home support.

Teacher shortage is a reality. The numbers of applicants for teaching positions have decreased significantly over the past two years. It is indeed a challenge to replace experienced veteran teachers who are now retiring. It is increasingly difficult to find qualified teachers for such specialized areas as preschool and special education.

School Safety continues to be an area that requires careful attention and time. Since the tragedy of September 11, parents have heightened concerns about school safety. This campus is considered an “open campus” since it is not completely fenced. Increased time is spent on safety drills, all of which impact instructional time.

Declining district enrollment and inadequate state and federal funding presents challenges for all stakeholders. Lowered enrollment means less money for all district schools. We have had to utilize outside sources such as Tax Credit Monies and the PTO to provide for assemblies, field trips, and playground equipment.

Each year presents new challenges to overcome. The challenges have also provided the opportunity for all stakeholders to work together to resolve them. Many creative ideas that resulted from brain storming opportunities at staff and parent meetings have been implemented.

3). How do you address the challenges presented by *No Child Left Behind* and Arizona LEARNS Achievement Profiles?

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) directs states to hold schools accountable for student success and set reachable goals. Cielo is proud to boast that parents have been involved in goal setting for over 15 years. The School Improvement Plan is written annually, each area of the School

Improvement Plan focuses on increasing student achievement. Continuous assessment by teachers ensures that all students are moving toward mastery of their grade level curriculum. Ongoing assessment also ensures that additional support can be provided “early” for any student that isn’t demonstrating appropriate growth in Reading, Writing, or Math.

At the district level an advisory committee was formed that consisted of parents, district, and school administrators, teachers, and support staff. This group was charged with examining the current district-wide use of entitlement money received in order to determine the appropriate expenditure of funds related to NCLB.

AZ Learns Profile – In 2005, Cielo was identified as an “Excelling” school, based on our Achievement Profile. In addition, we achieved Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). We feel grateful for accomplishments that reflect the continued hard work of the teachers. One parent wrote, *“I feel incredibly blessed having my three children raised through Cielo. Credit starts with the long-standing leadership of Beth Hill, an incredibly skilled principal who motivates an amazingly dedicated staff to strive for excellence in themselves and in their students. Combine that with an active PTO, a little light-heartedness, and lots of fun, and you have a winning environment for children to learn, grow, and experience life the way kids should.”* (2004)

G. School, Family, and Community Partnerships. Provide specific examples of activities or projects in which you collaborated with community organizations. Describe how your school involves families in their children’s education. Tell which non-school entities use your facilities.

Specific Examples or Projects in which Cielo Collaborates with Community Organizations.

Recognizing the value of community involvement, Cielo has fostered close relationships with many community organizations. These include Motorola, Intel, Bashas’, Fry’s, and Albertson’s. Cielo has been the recipient of expertise, equipment, money, and personal support. Cielo’s relationship with Intel has resulted in computer and software donations, as well as technical support and financial assistance (matching grant for volunteer hours). Intel volunteers have come to Cielo and instructed students on careers in engineering. Two Intel parents also donated their time in setting up two new computer labs within the school. This greatly expedited the process for student access to the computers. Intel’s *Teach to the Future* program has benefited teachers with training on new computer applications for classroom use, as well as software usage, and follow-up training for those teachers who have completed the program. The teachers then train students in computer applications that might one day encourage careers in computers, engineering, graphic art, or writing. This technology also aligns with our school goal. Other corporate examples include Motorola’s matching program and tax credit, Bashas’, Fry’s, and Albertsons receipts for education and the Scrip Program. These corporations enjoy the patronage of Cielo families, and Cielo receives percentages of the revenue generated. General Mills Box Tops Program and Campbell Company’s Label Program also provide materials for Cielo.

As evidenced by support for Cielo’s Fall Harvest Festival that was held in the fall of 2004, no less than 200 community business and professional members donated time, products, services, and money. Additionally, 120 parent volunteers, 41 alumni/National Junior and National Honor Society students, 33 teachers and staff, and 26 chairpersons planned and manned the Festival with proceeds benefiting Cielo.

In partnership with the City of Chandler, Kyrene District invites Chandler police officers to teach drug awareness, fire prevention, safety awareness, Stranger Danger, and emergency evacuation/lock-down procedures.

Cielo parents lead a group of over 200 district-wide parents, in support of arts, music, dance, drama, orchestra, band, and chorus in the Kyrene District. This Kyrene Music and Fine Arts Association meets regularly, provides grants, sends newsletters, and supports a yearly district-wide

Arts Honors Festival. Cielo parents spearhead this active group and continue to speak for the arts in order to meet the needs of students.

Chandler Mayor Boyd Dunn's Task Force for Early Literacy enhances Cielo's measures to "leave no child behind." Twelve members were appointed by the City Council and make up the members of the Mayor's Literacy Task Force for Chandler, which helps ensure that all children in the Chandler community start school ready to learn and that a wide variety of affordable fee-based parent programs are available.

The Arizona Commission of the Arts funded a \$1,500 grant to the Writer in Residence Program as part of their commitment to making quality arts experiences available to all Arizona citizens. PTO matched the grant bringing the total to \$3,000. The writer, Laraine Herring, was in residence at Cielo for two years. (2002-2004)

Two Cielo teachers received a grant, *The First Teacher Project*, through the Arizona Community Foundation. Training was provided Arizona State University. Cielo teachers then presented parenting classes to parents of children up to five years old incorporating the latest brain research. There was no cost to parents and approximately 30 participated in each session beginning in September. The grant compensated the facilitators and classes were advertised to the public through the Student Services newsletter, "Community Connection," that is delivered to all households in Kyrene District in September and January.

Cielo teachers prepare the teachers of tomorrow by mentoring student teachers from surrounding universities. Cielo's principal has also been a guest speaker at Mountain Pointe High School, home to The Future Teachers of America Club, on more than one occasion.

Research supports the idea that children learn more when families are engaged in their children's education; based on Cielo's commitment to the whole child parents are encouraged to volunteer their time and talent at school. Volunteers are provided with identification badges, training on instructional support equipment, access to all workrooms, and materials that may be needed for their volunteer job. Parents and grandparents work as Homework Helpers or with Lunchtime Math for students in grades 3-5. Parent volunteers train to become Art Masterpiece facilitators for all classes. When the outside temperatures reach 100 degrees, parent volunteers provide indoor lunchtime games so students can avoid the heat. Thousands of volunteer hours are contributed each year to the classrooms and front office, as well as through numerous PTO activities/events.

Cielo encourages parents and families to view student work and enjoy interesting learning experiences during Celebrate Learning that is held in the spring. Families are invited to attend Spring Sports Day, as well as the annual Turkey Trot. In January, Grandparents' Day is celebrated with lunch and special classroom activities.

Cielo's PTO and the Safe Schools Council from TJFS (Tempe Jewish Family Services) presented literature and teaching strategies to parents at PTO meetings (Fall 2004). Parents received training on how to recognize "bullying" in October of 2005. An additional parent information night is planned for February 2006; the topic will be information on The Second Step Program that is used with students K-6. Regular classroom teachers use this curriculum in an attempt to improve the social and emotional skills of all Cielo students.

Cielo involves families by encouraging attendance, communication, and participation at Meet the Teacher Night, Curriculum Night, Kindergarten Orientation, Parent/Teacher Conferences, and by completion of the Parent Satisfaction Surveys at year's end.

Communication is important in involving families in their children's education. Cielo teachers create open lines of communication with parents to ensure involvement and success. Newsletters, as well as classroom web sites, provide important information and highlights for parents and provide two-way communication. Staff and teachers make every effort to reply to e-mail and telephone messages within 24 hours. Many teachers use weekly or monthly communication to

support academic and social progress. Teachers and parents are given updated phone and e-mail lists to ensure easy access to all teachers.

Cielo publishes “The Firebird Focus,” which is sent home monthly. This newsletter provides current calendar information and suggestions as well as ideas for enhancing learning at home, showcases learning events within the school, and provides another link of communication between the school and the families. The Focus frequently includes two-way communication such as the Diversity Survey, which affords parents the opportunity to share their heritage and culture. The principal also sends home “parent alerts” on goldenrod paper to apprise families of any emergency situation or critical information.

Annual Parent Satisfaction Surveys are carefully analyzed. The data reveals how Cielo is perceived by the parent community. This survey influences the School Improvement Plan and goals. The teachers are made aware of any concerns and revisions are made as a result of feedback from the parents. Parent input and communication helps Cielo grow and flourish. Cielo teachers are the gardeners who plant seeds of greatness and nurture the growth of students. They cannot do this if the roots at home are not firmly planted. The parents and the teachers must work together. “Good seeds do grow in a strong culture.”

Parents also participate in an evening fall forum to evaluate the effectiveness of the after school Kid’s Club Program.

Some students excel in activities not offered during the day; so opportunities are provided outside of the school day to help develop special talents. Cielo facilities are used by a large number of non-school entities such as Chess Club, which meets weekly in two classrooms. A Cielo student recently won the top trophy and honors at the final chess competition held in the spring for all participating clubs in the area. Young Rembrandts (drawing) and yoga classes are also offered once a week after school. Cub Scouts have used the facility for their pack meetings, as have other community organizations.

Soccer, baseball, softball, T-ball, and basketball teams sponsored by various sports groups such as San Tan Soccer and YMCA regularly use the fields, baseball diamonds, and basketball courts. These areas are scheduled on a large calendar in the hallway near the principal’s office.

Cielo principal, Beth Hill, was instrumental in getting the CHIC (Center for Hearing Impaired Children) program here at Cielo. Prior to using Cielo facilities, CHIC facilities were located on the west side of Phoenix. Families who are in need of this early intervention program for their hearing-impaired children can now come to a more convenient location at Cielo School.

H. Indicators of Success

1). The A+ Review Panel will examine the assessment data for SAT 9’s and AIMS tests provided in your current Arizona School Report Card. Explain special circumstances affecting all indicators. Explain how data have been used and interpreted to improve programs, practices, and learning.

Cielo students generally score above the district averages on the End-of-Grade Level Reading and Math assessments. This also holds true for their performance on the State AIMS measure. In fact, AIMS proficiency score for Reading and Math (2005) fell in the range of 88-91% proficiency for grades 3-5. This past school year Cielo achieved the highest proficiency in these areas for the past four years.

Cielo teachers, administrators, and community celebrate these high proficiency ratings in spite of the following circumstances that certainly affect the indicators:

- Cielo’s student mobility rate at 18.7% has significantly increased from the previous years. For almost 20 years, teachers had the luxury of teaching to a stable population. As this mobility

occurs and possibly increases, teachers are challenged with developing alternative teaching strategies while maintaining high test scores.

- Over 100 students now reside in apartments that were built in the Cielo area. This, too, has led to increased mobility.
- There are less stay-at-home moms. Many mothers now juggle careers while also caring for their families; this has rapidly changed the picture of the Cielo community. With both parents working, there are fewer parents available to assist in the classroom or to help their child after school. Cielo's after-school child-care program currently serves 130 students.
- Special education students are required to participate in AIMS and although some adaptations can be made, their test scores are reflected in the overall grade level performance and are counted in AYP/MAP.
- There are 22 placed ELL students in the Cielo SEI (Structured English Immersion) class, and seven languages are represented in that group. This is an increase over previous years. Since all instructional decisions are based on student performance, needs assessment data is critical and significant time is spent during the first week in August analyzing test data.

Each grade level is provided averaged "end of grade level" test results in reading, writing, and math. Teachers then review the data that applies to their new regrouped classes and list those students by name that fall into the categories of Novice, Partially Proficient, or Proficient learner. In addition to the analysis of the previous year's data, alternative teacher assessments are used to establish current performance levels for students. All data is compared and teachers construct grade level curriculum maps around the identified student needs within the curriculum.

The individual progress data that is kept by the teachers is also revisited during grade level meetings. This way, individual students' needs can be met by modifying instruction and materials to address the child's area of need. Many instructional groupings are fluid within the classrooms in order to meet the changing needs and success of each child as well.

Individual student progress data is also shared with parents during Parent Teacher Conference, student agendas and mid-term progress reports.

As mentioned earlier, Cielo has many support programs in place for students who need extra assistance. Yearly assessment data is used to evaluate the effectiveness of these programs and refinements are made as needed.

At-risk students are continually monitored throughout the year and additional services such as after-school tutoring in math, reading assistance in K-3 or the fluency lab is added to their instructional program. Child Study Teams are the in-house mechanism used to meet and review individual student needs and progress.

2). Describe the alternative assessment(s) of student performance you use. Be sure to include a brief description of these assessments so someone not familiar with these forms of assessment can interpret the results; explain how you interpret and use the results of these assessments.

The National Reading Panel recommended five essential components of literacy instruction. They are phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy) is an alternative assessment used to monitor the five components.

Another assessment is Letter/Sound Identification. This individual assessment allows a teacher to gather data on a child's alphabetic knowledge, letter identification and sound/letter correspondence. Reviews of this assessment will show the teacher the child's preferred mode for identifying letters, the letters that the child confuses, and unknown letters. The High Frequency Words assessment is also valuable. The teacher assesses the child's ability to correctly read the most

common words in the English language. “Instant Words” are the most common words in English, ranked in frequency order. The first 25 words make up about a third of all printed material. The first 100 words make up about half of all written material. These words lay the foundation for learning more complex vocabulary words.

Running Record Assessments, that the teachers also utilize three times a year, help determine the instructional reading level of the child, identify his/her strengths and needs, reading strategies utilized, and help the teacher plan for future instruction. The instructional learning level or “zone of proximal development” is the distance between the child’s actual development and his/her independent potential development.

The Literacy Specialist visits Kindergarten classes in November and December to work with all students to master phonemic awareness skills. October, 2004 the gifted teacher trained the 3rd through 5th grade teachers in the latest research and practice of vocabulary instruction. The Literacy Specialist invited Dr. Timothy Rasinski to instruct all Kyrene school district teachers in fluency. One hundred twenty Kyrene teachers, including Cielo’s, met on a hot day in June to collaborate and learn effective strategies in fluency.

Cielo School administers the Kyrene District Communication Arts Support System (CASS) and Mathematics Support System assessments (MSS) in the spring of each year. The following data outlines specific grade level progress on district curriculum for math and reading.

(CASS-EOG) Communication Arts Support System Reading (April)

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2005 District
Grade 2	56%	81%	83%	90%	85%
Grade 3	56%	80%	79%	80%	77%
Grade 4	61%	82%	83%	80%	78%
Grade 5	54%	84%	84%	84%	83%

(MSS) Mathematics Support System (April)

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2005 District
Grade 1	80%	89%	90%	91%	87%
Grade 2	54%	82%	80%	86%	82%
Grade 3	62%	75%	79%	79%	73%
Grade 4	69%	73%	74%	77%	74%
Grade 5	50%	67%	73%	72%	73%

Student writing is assessed using the six-trait writing rubric to ensure a fair measurement. Areas included are: ideas, sentence fluency, voice, conventions, word choice, and organization. All teachers were trained on this assessment tool including special area teachers who also support the Cielo’s School Improvement Plan. Summative goals, by grade level, are written and measured three times per year. One teacher per grade level is responsible for collecting and reporting the data to administrators during the assessment periods in August, January, and April. Assessment results are shared with the School Council.

Music and Art alternative assessments include student portfolios that consist of art products and computer-generated music compositions in printed form as well as artifacts from the school year that demonstrate student growth. These portfolios are sent home at the end of the year. Student performance in music is videotaped which includes pre/post testing. General Music Performances, that include all students’ grades 1-5, remain a strong indicator of yearly student growth from one year to the next.

3). Our data (percentages) for the past 5 years for:

	2004-05	2003-04	2002-03	2001-02	2000-01	1999-2000
Daily Student Attendance	96.43%	97.32%	97.78%	96.57%	97%	97%
Daily Teacher Attendance	94.85%	94.3%	95.1%	93%	94%	95%
Teacher Turnover Rate	6.71%	4%	0%	6%	8%	6%
Promotion Rate	99%	99.73%	99.87%	99.34%	99.73%	99.87%

4). Provide a list and description of awards or recognition received by your school, staff or students that are most indicative of your success. Limit description to 10 or fewer and explain the reasons for your choices; indicate the year in which each was received.

Kyrene del Cielo School believes that every child has a gift and strength to celebrate. Those strengths are encouraged whether in test scores, the arts, technology, P.E., or individual character.

1. Kyrene del Cielo has been labeled “Excelling” for the last three years.
2. One teacher received National Board Certification in 2002. This program has been proven by multiple studies (Arizona 2004) to enhance teaching skills through reflecting, videotaping, and writing which also raises student test scores and promotes professional growth in all areas of curriculum.
3. One teacher and the principal received the “Down Syndrome Teacher and Principal of the Year Award” in 2003. They were nominated by a Cielo student. Special needs students add a richness to Cielo, affording the opportunity to gain further awareness of others, while teaching tolerance, sensitivity, and empathy. One music teacher was elected and served on the National Board of Trustees of the American Orff Schulwerk Music Association as Professional Growth chair. (2000) Research shows that the arts represent the main mode of learning for some students.
4. Twenty-four teachers have been awarded Intel Teach to the Future, K1TP, and/or Project Venture grants. These are directly tied to the school technology goal and keep Cielo on the cutting edge of the latest innovations in technology. (2002-2004)
5. One teacher qualified as a People to People Ambassador to Russia in education (2003). This is a community outreach program, which highlights the importance of diversity in a global economy. The knowledge gained was shared with other teachers and resulted in formation of the Diversity Committee. (2004)
6. Two teachers applied for and received grants for the First Teacher Project. They provided information for parents of preschool age students (birth – 5 years) on methods and activities to promote brain growth during these crucial developmental years. (2001-2002)
7. The Character Café represents ongoing monthly awards for those students who demonstrate acts of kindness, responsibility, respect, safety, cooperation, and integrity during the school day. (2002-2006) Students eat lunch on the stage with the Principal and Assistant Principal where they can be seen by their peers in front of the hand-painted backdrop. This is a coveted award, as the students chat with their administrators and enjoy ice cream treats.
8. Two teachers have been nominated for Disney Outstanding Educator Award. (2005)
9. The World Unity Poster contest, which B’nai B’rith sponsors each year to promote and encourage world unity, has been won by two Cielo students. (2000 and 2001)
10. Over 264 Cielo students have earned the Presidential Award for Excellence since 1999. (1999-2005)