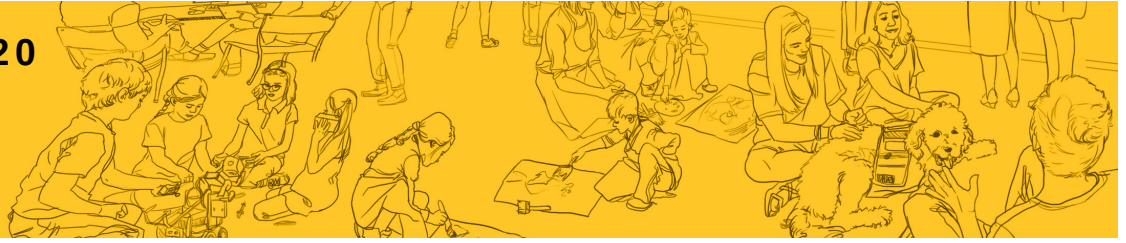


# Second Grade at Copper Trails: Teacher candidate team profile

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The second-grade team at Copper Trails School in Goodyear, Arizona, comprises one lead teacher, one certified teacher, and three teacher candidates. Together, they support 75 students total across two learning spaces.

## Introduction

Copper Trails serves more than 1,000 Avondale Elementary School District students in grades K-8. Several Copper Trails teams include MLFTC Teacher Candidates as team members, among them the second-grade team described here.

## Teacher candidates in a team-based model

A highly effective, experienced lead teacher leads the second-grade team and teaches students. The lead teacher role was created by the district in an effort to retain highly effective educators and build advancement pathways that allow those educators to continue working directly with students. The lead teacher facilitates team meetings and provides all formal coaching and support for teacher candidates. Decision-making on the team tends to be collaborative, with the lead teacher and a second certified teacher working closely together and taking input from the three teacher candidates regarding the schedule, data-driven decision-making, and lesson content.

The team engages in co-planning with different members taking leadership in different subject areas. The lead teacher and certified teacher draft the math and ELA lessons, taking input from the teacher candidates, while the teacher candidates draft the science and social studies lessons, taking feedback from the lead teacher and certified teacher.

With respect to instructional delivery, the lead teacher, certified teacher, and two of the three teacher candidates — both of whom are majoring in elementary education — work with the full roster of 75 students. The two teacher candidates, however, spend the majority of their time leading small-group instruction.

The third teacher candidate, an elementary education major with a dual certification in special education, functions much like an inclusion teacher. She ensures all students receive appropriate support through careful review of lesson plans and implementation of modifications and accommodations during the lessons themselves (e.g., providing pull-out special education services based on individualized education plan requirements). Notably, in addition to receiving coaching from the team's dedicated lead teacher, this teacher candidate receives tailored support from a second experienced educator with expertise in special education, whose role is to support all special education-focused teacher candidates at Copper Trails.

# Meeting the needs of learners

Students at Copper Trails use EngageNY's math curriculum, implement Harcourt Reading, and develop their own science and social studies curricula in-house. Within the bounds of these curricular approaches, they take a few different approaches to differentiating instruction to meet the needs of their learners:

- **Voice and choice in English Language Arts:** The team takes a workshop approach to reading and writing instruction, allowing for student voice and choice in English Language Arts. Additionally, to tailor to student interest, at the close of each day, all students choose which read-aloud they would like to engage with. Since each educator on the team facilitates a read-aloud, students always have plenty of choices.
- **Additional reading support:** Four specialized paraprofessionals push into one of the two reading classes to work with students who need more support, as determined by DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills®) and progress monitoring. The four paraprofessionals are included as part of the planning for English Language Arts small-group instruction and are accountable for implementing targeted lessons intended to meet and push students from where they are.
- **Unit-level diagnostics and progress monitoring drive math grouping:** At the start of each new math unit, results from a diagnostic assessment drive the creation of two homogeneously grouped rosters that last for the duration of that unit. Students are also moved between groups over the course of that unit based on continued progress monitoring.