

**Sarasota County Schools  
2017- 2018 Charter School Application Process  
Preliminary Review Summary – April 12, 2018**

**Dreamers Academy Charter School Application**

On February 1, 2018 the district received the application for the Dreamers Academy to open a K-5 charter school in Sarasota County in 2019-2020. The school will open with approximately 288 students and grow to 576 students by year five.

- The Dreamers Academy proposes to offer a Dual Language Two-Way Immersion (DL-TWI) educational program. Students will become bilingual and biliterate in English and Spanish, learn cross-cultural skills, and attain high levels of academic success.
- The DL-TWI program will serve a K-5 student population of 70% English Language Learners (ELL) with Spanish as the home language and 30% non-ELL with English as the home language.
- To start, the school will implement a “hybrid” DL-TWI model. The entering Kindergarten cohort in 2019-20 (comprised of 70%-30% ELL, non-ELL ratio) will be in the DL-TWI program as they progress through the grade levels. Grades 1-5 students will receive a traditional program and continue through grade 5.
- A school site has not yet been identified. The applicant is considering a location in the north or central Sarasota area.
- The core of the Dreamers Academy’s governing board consists of local community members with knowledge and experience in education, school administration, business and finance. Strong evidence of support for the school is provided by local community agencies, organizations and parents.

The Sarasota County Charter Review Committee (CRC) preliminary evaluation findings are based on the extent to which the charter school application addressed the evaluation criteria required to meet each of the standards, as specified in the state *Florida Charter School Application Evaluation Instrument*. This document presents a summary of key findings and excerpts from the initial evaluation report entitled *Charter Review Committee Analysis and Initial Findings – April 10, 2018*, which is a separate report and not included with this document. This document provides the following information:

- Table 1 (*below*): Preliminary ratings summarized by program area  
 Page 2, 3: Summary of key and significant findings from initial CRC evaluation  
 Page 4: Chart of ratings for each of the 22 standards  
 Page 5: Brief description of Sarasota’s charter review process and next steps

**Table 1. Preliminary Ratings Summary for Dreamers Academy Application**

<b>I. Educational Plan Standards 1 – 9</b>	<b>II. Organizational Plan Standards 10 – 15</b>	<b>III. Business Plan Standards 16 – 22</b>	<b>Preliminary Ratings Total</b>
22% Meets 22% Partially Meets 56% Does Not Meet	50% Meets 33% Partially Meets 17% Does Not Meet	57% Meets 43% Partially Meets 0% Does Not Meet	41% Meets 32% Partially Meets 27% Does Not Meet

Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%.

## **Dreamers Academy Charter Application: Initial Evaluation Findings**

The Dual Language Two-Way Immersion program (DL-TWI) is research-based and well established. The Dreamers Academy program uses Spanish and English for literacy and content development. Students classified as English Language Learners (ELL) and native English speakers become proficient in their native language and learn to master a second language, and thus become bilingual and biliterate. All teachers for all subjects (to include math, science, language arts and social science) will be bilingual (English and Spanish) instructors.

Please note that the information presented here does not cover all of the 22 standards in the application; rather, the focus of this summary is on those standards that most directly pertain to teaching and learning, services for special populations, student admissions and equal access, and the school's financial viability.

### **Educational Plan**

The application failed to meet the majority of the standards in the educational plan, including:

- **Educational Program Design:** The learning environment, structure and how the learning environment supports DL-TWI is not fully addressed. The application addresses the approach to the model but lacks specificity as it pertains to the implementation in the actual learning environment.
- **Curriculum:** The description of the school's curriculum lacks essential detail. Insufficient evidence is provided to ensure that students will be prepared to achieve the Florida standards. How students who are below grade level will be engaged in the curriculum is not adequately addressed. The application fails to describe any curricular choices made to date or any proposed curricular choices for the DL-TWI curriculum. Little information is provided regarding what core subject areas will be offered.
  - **Focus on Reading:** The application does not provide sufficient essential information to determine if the school will have a sound reading plan. The applicant states that the school will follow the district's reading plan, however, no explanation is provided as to how the DL-TWI program will align with Sarasota's reading plan.

**Performance Goals:** The application does not provide measurable goals in all of the essential academic areas. Although the school's mission is to strive for high academic student outcomes, without clear goals, the committee is not able to determine if the school will hold high expectations for student academic performance. The school's mission-specific educational goals and targets relate to dual language literacy (speaking, reading and writing) in both English and Spanish. The proposed assessment is reliable and valid, however, no measurable goals or targets are specified.

- **Services for Students with Disabilities (SwD):** The application minimally addresses the strategies and supports the school will provide, including supplemental supports and services, and modifications and accommodations to ensure the academic success of students with disabilities.
- **Services for English-Language Learners (ELL):** The information presented pertains more to the delivery of the DL-TWI model rather than the delivery of instruction and services for ELL students. An understanding of the ESOL program and state requirements is not evident.

- **Target Population:** The school's proposed enrollment policies and procedures are unclear. The lottery process is not described in a manner that assures an open and fair enrollment and admissions process, especially given the school's plan to have 70% ELL Spanish speakers and 30% non-ELL native English speakers.

### **Organizational Plan**

For the most part, the application meets or partially meets the standards. Questions related to student enrollment and admissions are noted.

**Student Recruitment and Enrollment:** The enrollment, admissions and whether or not target/preference criteria will be used for non-TWI students (i.e., "traditional program") in grades 1-5 in Year 1 is not addressed. It is not clear how the school will know in advance (during the application process) if the student is a Spanish speaker, an English speaker or bilingual. Therefore, it is not clear how the weighted lottery can be conducted in order to achieve the desired 70% ELL native Spanish speakers and 30% native English speakers proportion of students.

### **Business Plan**

The application meets or partially meets school operations-related standards, including facilities, transportation, food service. Concerns regarding the financial viability of the school are noted.

**Budget:** The Charter Revenue Estimate Worksheet contains several errors that may negatively impact the anticipated revenue. There is no discussion of the school's contingency approach and plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated.

**Sarasota County Public Schools  
2017-2018 Charter School Application Process  
Charter Review Committee (CRC) Ratings**

Applicant: Dreamers Academy

Charter School Application Section	Preliminary CRC Rating
<b>I. Educational Plan</b>	22% Meets 22% Partially Meets 56% Does Not Meet
1. Mission, Guiding Principles and Purpose	Partially Meets
2. Target Population and Student Body	Does Not Meet
3. Educational Program Design	Does Not Meet
4. Curriculum Plan	Does Not Meet
5. Student Performance, Assessment and Evaluation	Does Not Meet
6. Exceptional Students	Partially Meets
7. English Language Learners	Does Not Meet
8. School Culture and Discipline	Meets
9. Supplemental Programming	Meets
<b>II. Organizational Plan</b>	50% Meets 33% Partially Meets 17% Does Not Meet
10. Governance	Meets
11. Management and Staffing	Meets
12. Human Resources and Employment	Partially Meets
13. Professional Development	Does Not Meet
14. Student Recruitment and Enrollment	Partially Meets
15. Parent and Community Involvement	Meets
<b>III. Business Plan</b>	57% Meets 43% Partially Meets 0% Does Not Meet
16. Facilities	Partially Meets
17. Transportation	Meets
18. Food Service	Meets
19. School Safety and Security	Meets
20. Budget	Partially Meets
21. Financial Management and Oversight	Partially Meets
22. Start-Up Plan	Meets
Addenda A, A1 and B (not applicable)	-
<b>Initial Ratings Summary – All Standards (1-22)</b>	41% Meets 32% Partially Meets 27% Does Not Meet

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%.

Note: These are not considered the final ratings. Preliminary ratings are based solely on CRC's review of the written charter application submitted on February 1, 2018. The "CRC Analysis and Initial Findings – Dreamers Academy Charter Application" report dated April 10, 2018 provides the CRC's analysis and findings.

## Summary of the Sarasota County review and evaluation process conducted for the February 1, 2018 Charter School Applications

The district Charter Review Committee (CRC) followed the evaluation criteria specified in the *Florida Charter School Application Evaluation Instrument* to analyze and evaluate the degree to which the standards in the application were met, partially met, or not met. The CRC based their determination on the applicant's proposed educational, organizational, and business plans as described in the state-required *Model Florida Charter School Application*.

Preliminary findings and ratings based on the CRC's review and analysis of the original application are provided in a report entitled *Charter Review Committee Analysis and Initial Findings – April 10, 2018*. The results are divided into three categories: 1) Strengths, 2) Deficiencies/Concerns/Weaknesses, and 3) Areas in Need of Additional Information and/or Clarification. The applicant is provided an opportunity to review the report and respond to the CRC's questions and requests for clarification by April 18, 2018. However, the applicant is not permitted to amend the application or correct significant deficiencies identified in the original application.

At the April 17, 2018 School Board Work Session, the proposed school's governing board will meet with the School Board of Sarasota County to discuss the application and the preliminary review findings. The majority of the school's founding or governing board members should be in attendance and participate in the discussion. If the school will hire a management company or ESP, representatives of the ESP may attend/participate, however, the expectation is that the school's governing board will address any concerns and answer questions that arise during the Board Work Session.

The applicant is offered the opportunity to participate in the CRC Clarification/Capacity Interview on April 24, 2018. The purpose of the interview is to provide the applicant with an opportunity to clarify any remaining or outstanding questions. In addition, the interview process is used to corroborate information provided in the application in order to confirm that the school's founding/governing board members have knowledge of the application and have the capacity to establish a charter school in Sarasota County.

Subsequently, the CRC will meet again to complete the evaluation and determine final evaluation ratings. Considering all information presented in the original application, in the written responses to the CRC's questions, and the oral responses provided by the applicant during the School Board Work Session and the Clarification/Capacity Interview Session, the CRC will arrive at the final ratings for each standard through a majority vote.

The final report, *Charter Review Committee Final Evaluation and Ratings* will reflect the CRC's comprehensive findings and final ratings following the state's evaluation tool format. The School Board will take action to approve or deny the application at the May 15, 2018 School Board meeting.

If the application is denied, the applicant has the right to appeal the Board's decision to the State Board of Education within 30 days of receipt of the district's official notice. If the Board approves the application, the district will begin the process of negotiating the contract, called the charter, for Board approval.

Questions regarding the charter application review process may be directed to the Office of School Choice and Charter Schools at 941-927-9000, extension 32262.