

Sarasota County Schools

2017-2018 Charter Renewal Application Renewal Analysis Summary for **Sarasota Academy of the Arts**

The charter renewal application process consists of a program review of the following areas of accountability: business operations and fiscal management, personnel and governance, student performance, compliance with federal and state requirements and adherence to the terms of the charter contract. A brief description of the school and summary of the review findings is presented below.

- Sarasota Academy of the Arts (SAA) charter school opened in August 2013; the current charter ends June 30, 2018. The school's Governing Board is seeking a 15-year charter extension.
- SAA currently serves over 225 students in grades K – 8. Based on the October 2017 counts, the school's student composition is as follows: 31% minority students; 6% English Language Learners; 16% Students with Disabilities, 7% ESE-gifted, and 53% on free/reduced priced lunch.
- SAA is not planning to add additional grade levels, however, enrollment may increase in subsequent years if the school expands and/or builds to increase the size of its facilities.
- SAA encourages students to "Reach for the Stars!" SAA's mission, as stated in the SAA charter renewal application's executive summary is as follows:

The mission of Sarasota Academy of the Arts is to provide kindergarten through middle school students an educational experience rich with rigorous academics based on the Florida Standards, strongly supported by visual and performing art, and set in a small family oriented environment. SAA embraces the uniqueness and diversity of its student population and believes success is measured in more than just academics, and strives to provide multiple avenues for our students to reach their goals.

School Finances and Financial Viability

The school opened in July 2013 with a full time equivalent (FTE) student enrollment/earnings of 203 in grades K-8. The school has a current student FTE of 225. The school has been timely in the submission of their required year-end audit. The audited financial statements as of June 30, 2017, indicate the unassigned fund balance

of Sarasota Academy of the Arts, Inc. was \$64,947 or 3.03% of total revenues. The total fund balance was \$169,750 as of June 30, 2017. As of 12/31/2017, year to date revenues exceeds expenditures. Sarasota Academy of the Arts has maintained an acceptable level of unassigned fund balance.

Charter school statutes require that any deteriorating financial condition must be identified in the independent annual audit. There were no disclosures in the notes to the financial statements regarding a deteriorating financial condition in the independent audit report dated June 30, 2017.

Appropriate information and supporting documentation is in place to show that the school is in compliance with the requirements of financial accounting, including evidence of financial accounting procedures, that the annual audit is consistent with GASB 34 requirements and submitted by the required date.

Student Achievement and Accountability

SAA earned a school grade of “A” in 2016-17, a noteworthy increase in performance from the B ratings in the prior two years and the C rating it received in the first year of operation. The school has shown significant improvements in student performance, especially in mathematics and English/Language Arts. SAA is to be commended for the significant increasing in learning gains for students in the lowest quartile. Overall, SAA sets high expectations for student achievement and is making progress towards meeting the high-performance goals set forth in their annual School Improvement Plan (SIP).

The school implements various methods to monitor student progress, such as weekly data chats and iReady to identify and address the needs of students. SAA participates in all district and state-required assessments and adheres to all school improvement planning and accountability reporting requirements.

Curriculum & Instruction

The educational design set forth in the application and current charter is evident in the school’s learning environment – a strong academic program delivered through the integration of the visual and performing arts and infused with technology to provide a unique student-centered learning environment. The school provides enrichment courses made possible because of their extended day schedule. Plans are in place to expand their offerings related to the arts as well as STEM courses and programs, such as robotics. The school follows the district’s approved reading plan and uses the district adopted textbooks, resource materials and digital tools. SAA supports teachers and

staff by delivering effective professional development (PD) based on the student data and the instructional needs of the teachers. 100% of SAA's staff have taken one or more of the district-offered PD.

Exceptional Student Education (ESE) and English Language Learners (ELL) Services

Based on a recent review, appropriate educational programs and support services are delivered to ESE/504 students as indicated on the students' Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plans. Teachers serving ESE are certified and trained.

SAA is providing the appropriate academic and support services for ELL students. The school delivers the Inclusion/Mainstream instructional model where ESOL students are placed in a regular classroom with an ESOL trained teacher using ESOL strategies. The January 19, 2018 school site audit/monitoring performed by district staff found the school to be in compliance with all ESOL requirements.

School-Parent Communications and other Student Support Services

The school has well-developed policies and guidelines in parent-friendly formats that keep parents informed of their students' progress, programs offered and other school-related events. SAA has received the state's Five-Star School rating four years in a row. The school recently updated the school website to enhance features and improve communication and access by parents to pertinent information. Parent satisfaction with the schools is over 90%.

The school follows the district's Code of Student Conduct and provided evidence that the school adheres to these guidelines. Health services are managed appropriately.

Human Resources

100% of SAA's teachers were rated as Effective and Highly Effective in 2016-17. Instructional staff meet the teacher certification and/or the highly qualified requirements. SAA's governing board is in the process of recruiting and hiring a new school leader to assume the role of the current principal who is retiring this year.

As per the 2017-18 Opening of School Checklist, a complete list of SAA employees is on file and all employees have been fingerprinted and have background screenings on record. SAA follows the district's teacher and principal evaluation system.

Governance

Based on a review of SAA's Governing Board agendas and meeting minutes, it appears that the governing board consistently adheres to the governance requirements of F.S. 1002.33(16)(b), 1002.33(7)(d). The board operates in the Sunshine and appropriately notices monthly board meetings.

Business Operations

The school contracts with the district for transportation and meal services. Evidence of fire, safety and health inspections are on file and meet school facility requirements. Insurance policies are on file documenting active coverage for all of the required areas of insurance. The school meets state requirements for reporting FTE data and maintains all required student attendance records and FTE documentation.

Contract Compliance

The school has consistently submitted all required documents, manuals, handbooks, as listed on the Opening of School Checklist and all state-required reports in a timely fashion.