

State College of Florida Collegiate School – Venice Charter Application

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The District Board of Trustees of the State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota, is seeking to replicate the high school component of the SCF Collegiate School – Bradenton on its Venice campus. The mission of the SCF Collegiate Schools is to provide an opportunity for students to earn their Associate in Arts degree upon their high school graduation. Students enroll in the collegiate schools with the ability to fully dual enroll in their junior and senior years following the Accelerated College Program, offering at least sixty credits to complete the college degree.

SCF Collegiate School-Bradenton opened in the fall of 2010, with 6th and 7th grade. It has grown by a grade level or more since then to incorporate grades 6 to 12, graduating its first class of 50 students with their AA degree in 2014. The graduates in spring of 2018 will be the fifth cohort of students who will complete the program. The high success rate of graduates, with an almost perfect graduation rate and most students earning their AA degree, may be attributed to the program goals of an assigned academic coach for every student. In most cases the academic coach is an instructor and the ‘go-to’ person with a role of an advocate for students. They are there to guide them through their academic career at the Collegiate School. As the students meet criteria for the Accelerated College Program in their junior year, allowing them to be fully dual enrolled on the SCF College campus, the role of the coach is reassigned to the college advisor, who works closely with the certified counselor.

The role of the coach, and the support that the coach offers to the students, is the primary reason students find their way through the SCF Collegiate School. In the Accelerated College Program, the coach’s role doubles as an advisor so students have college advising and guidance to follow through with their goals to graduation and beyond. The coach is supported in a team teaching model allowing for frequent collaboration between teachers. The curriculum framework is designed with input from the certified counselor and integrates four major guidance standards including personal/social development, college and career readiness, academic success and multiculturalism. The priorities in the coaching courses are different by grade and have been developed and revised based on the history of students needs and predicted needs for the future. The model of academic coaching in a small school environment allows for more support, including visibility of students’ academic and social and personal hurdles, increased communication with parents and the ability to react swiftly to acute situations.

The SCF Collegiate School-Venice intends to mirror the successful environment of the SCF Collegiate School-Bradenton, now in its 8th year. The new charter will endeavor to continue the high success rates from its sister school, which has continually earned a ‘A’ grade from the Florida Department of Education and has more recently been awarded the National Blue Ribbon for 2016. Student success rates in the challenging program are high because all stakeholders are working towards the same goal - to earn a degree upon graduation in the Accelerated College Program. The school culture of support, paired with the high expectations of academic rigor, has been a winning formula for motivated students to complete the program. The duplication of the high school on the Venice campus will fulfill a need where the students who may be underrepresented in a collegiate environment would have additional support and more time to reach goals of the Accelerated College Program during their high school career.

The anticipated student population for SCFCS-Venice is predicted to eventually come from the North Port area. The population of high school students is rapidly growing, yet the area is populated by households in a financial bracket significantly lower than Venice and Englewood. Enrollment in the collegiate charter would be an opportunity for families to benefit from the savings of a tuition-free Associate degree. Additionally, the population of residents who have graduated with a bachelor's degree or higher in North Port is proportionally lower than the surrounding areas. Areas with lower incomes and lower graduation rates suggest many first-generation families, defined by neither parent graduating with a baccalaureate degree. SCF Collegiate School-Bradenton has been successful with its specific goal to reach to first generation households because it provides a partner to families to navigate the detailed and complicated world of higher education. SCF Collegiate School-Venice will strive to offer the same support to residents of south Sarasota. The charter will allow all students in the area to be served with an institution that will welcome them to a college campus in 9th grade, which offers them time to be comfortable and knowledgeable about life on campus. Students will have resources to be successful in an environment of increased academic rigor, which is needed to successfully complete the program. Students will have support to increase their academic and social capacity to be successful at a four-year institution following graduation.

The collegiate charter is a department of the State College of Florida and the foundational principals of the mission of the community college - to provide engaging and accessible learning environments that results in student success - are weaved into the foundation of the k-12 school. The college provides additional resources on campus for students, as well as an administrative foundation for the operational needs of the charter. When possible, the charter follows the policies and procedures of the college and gains insight from their expertise. There is an advantage to work with the college as the charter employees have been in conversations and committees from the Title IX team to online accessibility with the E-Learning team to collaboration with the Library team on research initiatives. The charter will be supported by the continued relationship with colleagues in many areas including upper administration, human resources, finance, legal, business offices, information technology, e-learning, admissions and facilities. In addition to the resources available on campus, students also will have access to college faculty, which may open doors to research and volunteer opportunities on campus and the community.

Overall, students attending the SCF Collegiate School-Venice have the opportunity to enroll in a small school environment on a college campus, while following a rigorous course load that is first preparing them for the college environment, and then immersing them in it. The students are monitored closely and advised with their assigned coach and college advisor, who is able to answer their questions and concerns about their program at the high school and beyond. The SCF Collegiate School-Venice intends to provide another path for dual enrollment for students that is beyond a typical high school experience in Venice and the surrounding areas, for a nontraditional student. The support provided is a necessary component of a rigorous program that assists students from all backgrounds whose goal in high school includes earning an Associate degree.