

**Sarasota County Schools
2016 – 2017 Charter School Application Process
Summary of Final Evaluation – October 21, 2016**

Athenian Academy Application for a High-Performing Charter Replication

On July 28, 2016 the district received the application from Athenian Academy, Inc. to replicate a high-performing charter school pursuant to s. 1002.331, F.S. The applicant must provide evidence that the proposed school meets the statutory requirements of being a substantially similar replication of the high-performing school and evidence that the organization or individuals involved in the establishment and operation of the proposed school are significantly involved in the operation of the high-performing school that is being replicated.

- The high-performing charter school to be replicated is the Athenian Academy Pinellas school located in Clearwater, Florida.
- The Athenian Academy school model has a multi-lingual approach focused on Greek and Spanish language, culture and customs as well as an emphasis on creating global citizens who are self-disciplined and intrinsically motivated towards high academic achievement.
- The proposed school will open in 2017-18 with an enrollment of 254 K-8 students in year one and up to 640 students by year 5. The plan is to build a school in the area of S. Beneva Road (north Sarasota).
- The school's governing board will contract with a third-party Educational Service Provider (ESP), Theopisti, LLC, to provide comprehensive education services and business management services.

The district Charter Review Committee (CRC) evaluated the extent to which the charter school application addressed the criteria required to meet each of the standards as specified in the *Florida Charter School Application Evaluation Instrument*. The CRC also evaluated the degree to which the proposed school would substantially replicate the Pinellas high-performing school. This document presents a summary of key findings and excerpts from the comprehensive final evaluation report entitled *Charter Review Committee Final Evaluation and Ratings – October 21, 2016* report, which is not included with this document. The CRC's final ratings by program area is provided below followed by a summary of key findings. On page 3, the *Charter Review Committee Ratings* chart provides separate ratings for each of the 22 standards as well as for the High-Performing Replication and ESP standards. A brief description of Sarasota's charter review process is presented on page 4.

Charter Review Committee Final Ratings Summary for Athenian Academy

I. Educational Plan Standards 1 – 9	II. Organizational Plan Standards 10 – 15	III. Business Plan Standards 16 – 22
11% Meets 56% Partially Meets 33% Does Not Meet	17% Meets 67% Partially Meets 17% Does Not Meet	14% Meets 71% Partially Meets 14% Does Not Meet

Addendum A1: High-Performing Replication (1 Standard)	Addendum B: Education Service Providers (1 Standard)	Final Total
Does Not Meet	Does Not Meet	13% Meets 58% Partially Meets 29% Does Not Meet

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

High-Performing Replication Application

The application does not meet this standard for several reasons, including:

- The applicant does not present compelling evidence that it has the capacity to open and operate a successful school in Sarasota.
- The applicant indicates that it seeks to open a school in Sarasota County because they were contacted by a builder/land developer rather than evidence of demand for the school or intended support from the community.
- The application lacks a comprehensive and detailed description of the school's educational design (within the application) and does not support how the proposed Sarasota school will be substantially similar to the high-performing school in Pinellas which is being replicated.
- The operations and business plan for the proposed Sarasota school are considerably different from that of the Pinellas school to be replicated.

Educational Plan

The application failed to meet 78% of the standards in the educational plan, including:

- Curriculum: the application does not provide a clear and coherent framework for teaching and learning, therefore it raises the question if it will enable students to attain Florida standards and receive a year's worth of learning for each year enrolled and/or be appropriate for students below, at, and above grade level.
- Performance goals: the application does not provide measurable goals in all of the essential academic areas and, the goals that are included in the application do not reflect high expectations for student academic performance.
- Services for Students with Disabilities (SwD) and English-Language Learners (ELL): the responses do not sufficiently demonstrate an understanding of the requirements to serve SwD and ELL students in order to meet their educational needs.

Finance and Budget

The application failed to meet this standard for several reasons, including:

- The budget projections do not support all key aspects of the application, specifically, the components of the educational program and the staffing plan.
- The projected sources of revenue are not documented or verified, therefore, the committee is unable to evaluate the financial viability of the proposed school.

Education Service Provider (ESP)

The application does not meet this standard for several reasons, including:

- The applicant failed to provide a rationale for contracting with the ESP or how the ESP was selected other than contracting for management services in 2013. There is no evidence that the ESP has been or will be successful in operating a high-quality charter school in Sarasota.
- Given the extent of ESP services and the structure of the ESP organization, the "arm's length" relationship between the governing board, the school, and the ESP is questionable. The current Pinellas school business manager (Theopisti, LLC president) is also the registered agent for Athenian Academy, Inc., which is clearly a conflict of interest.
- The terms, conditions, grounds and procedures by which the ESP agreement may be renewed and terminated, and a plan for continued operation of the school in the event of termination are not addressed.

**Sarasota County Public Schools
2016-2017 Charter School Application Process
Charter Review Committee (CRC) Ratings**

Applicant: Athenian Academy Charter School of Sarasota

Charter School Application Section	Preliminary CRC Rating	Final CRC Rating
I. Educational Plan	11% Meets 56% Partially Meets 33% Does Not Meet	22% Meets 22% Partially Meets 56% Does Not Meet
1. Mission, Guiding Principles and Purpose	Partially Meets	Meets
2. Target Population and Student Body	Does Not Meet	Does Not Meet
3. Educational Program Design	Partially Meets	Partially Meets
4. Curriculum Plan	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet
5. Student Performance, Assessment and Evaluation	Does Not Meet	Does Not Meet
6. Exceptional Students	Does Not Meet	Does Not Meet
7. English Language Learners	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet
8. School Culture and Discipline	Partially Meets	Partially Meets
9. Supplemental Programming	Meets	Meets
II. Organizational Plan	17% Meets 67% Partially Meets 17% Does Not Meet	0% Meets 100% Partially Meets 0% Does Not Meet
10. Governance	Partially Meets	Partially Meets
11. Management and Staffing	Partially Meets	Partially Meets
12. Human Resources and Employment	Partially Meets	Partially Meets
13. Professional Development	Meets	Partially Meets
14. Student Recruitment and Enrollment	Does Not Meet	Partially Meets
15. Parent and Community Involvement	Partially Meets	Partially Meets
III. Business Plan	14% Meets 71% Partially Meets 14% Does Not Meet	29% Meets 57% Partially Meets 14% Does Not Meet
16. Facilities	Partially Meets	Partially Meets
17. Transportation	Partially Meets	Partially Meets
18. Food Service	Partially Meets	Meets
19. School Safety and Security	Does Not Meet	Partially Meets
20. Budget	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet
21. Financial Management and Oversight	Meets	Meets
22. Start-Up Plan	Partially Meets	Partially Meets
Addenda		
Addendum A1: High-Performing Replication	Does Not Meet	Does Not Meet
Addendum B: Education Service Providers	Does Not Meet	Does Not Meet
Ratings Summary – All Standards (1-24)	13% Meets 58% Partially Meets 29% Does Not Meet	17% Meets 50% Partially Meets 33% Does Not Meet

Due to rounding percentages may not add to 100%

Note: Preliminary ratings are based on CRC's review of the July 28, 2016 charter application. Final ratings are based on the evaluation of the initial application together with the applicant's written response (submitted September 22, 2016) to the *CRC Analysis and Initial Findings* report and the October 7, 2016 Clarification /Capacity Interview.

Summary of the Sarasota County review, analysis and evaluation process conducted for the Athenian Academy – Sarasota High-Performing Charter Replication Application

The district Charter Review Committee (CRC) followed the evaluation criteria specified in the new 2016 *Florida Charter School Application Evaluation Instrument* to analyze and evaluate the degree to which the standards were met, partially met, or not met. The CRC based their determination on the applicant's proposed educational, organization, and business plans as described throughout the state-required *Model Florida Charter School Application* and in reference to the existing Athenian Academy Pinellas school as the intended school to be replicated.

Preliminary findings and ratings were based on the CRC's review and analysis of the original application submitted by Athenian Academy, Inc. on July 28, 2016. The applicant was provided an opportunity to review the *Charter Review Committee Analysis and Initial Findings – September 15, 2016* report and respond to the CRC's questions and requests for clarification. However, the applicant was not permitted to amend the application or correct significant deficiencies identified in the original application.

At the September 20th School Board Work Session the Athenian Academy governing board met with the School Board of Sarasota County to discuss the application and the preliminary review findings. The applicant also participated in the CRC Clarification/Capacity Interview on October 7, 2016. The purpose of the interview was to provide the applicant with an opportunity to clarify any remaining or outstanding questions. In addition, the interview process was 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 reconvened 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 each applicant during the October 7, 2016 Clarification/Capacity Interview Session, the CRC arrived at the final ratings for each standard through a majority vote.

The final report, *Charter Review Committee Final Evaluation and Ratings – October 21, 2016*, reflects the CRC's comprehensive findings and final ratings following state's evaluation tool format. The School Board will take action to approve or deny the application at the November 1, 2016 School Board meeting.