

## **Description of Plan to Monitor Student Progress, Including Diagnostic Tools Sarasota Preparatory and Fitness Academy (SPFA)**

Sarasota Preparatory Fitness Academy (SPFA) will use both summative and formative measures of evaluation to track student progress toward state, curricular, and Core Knowledge benchmarks, as well as specific benchmarks of progress for students with disabilities. We also implement an annual value added assessment regimen.

Summative assessments, as described in the educational plan of the proposed charter agreement, include all state required standardized exams, including FCAT's, kindergarten achievement tests, and other measures. The school accountability requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), as well as state laws, prescribe that all public schools take these tests to determine whether students are reaching specific academic benchmarks.

SPFA shall go above and beyond the use of summative measures to more frequently and more immediately inform teachers and school leaders of student progress to support high-quality learning. There is in fact evidence that supports the use of formative assessment measures in addition to summative measures in terms of actually increasing student learning. (Paul Black and Dylan William's, "Inside the Black Box: Raising Standards Through Classroom Assessment—Phi Delta Kappan, 1998— provides strong evidence that classroom based measures are powerful tools to improve student learning.)

Formative assessments shall be used by SPFA instructional staff to provide information to students to help them be better learners and to include opportunities for students to express their understanding of the tasks at hand, and give students feedback related to specific ways to improve learning strategies.

Moreover, SPFA's curriculum, Open Court Reading and Saxon Math, have built in formative assessment tools and curriculum based measures that occur at least weekly, and often daily. Teachers will be expected to use direct observation methods and on the spot recording of individual student performance on the Open Court and Saxon Math curricula, as well as on specific writing assignments, including daily journaling, book reports, essays, and projects. Students' academic skills shall be directly assessed using probes developed and embedded directly in the books and materials in our curriculum. Because these probes are gleaned directly from the curriculum, students can be assessed across many levels of the curriculum, and they can be checked for both speed and accuracy as appropriate.

Value-added assessments are also an integral part of the assessment plan for SPFA. Value added assessment focuses on measuring student academic gain at the level of an

individual student, a classroom, a teacher, or a school. It focuses directly on student progress. The advantages of value added assessment are four-fold:

- Focus on student progress
- Focus on equitable comparisons/means of recognizing outstanding student growth by individual teachers
- Focus on accountability by providing results that are not tied to student demographics, rather to teacher effectiveness
- Focus on diagnostics by identifying where the specific failures and successes are occurring
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We will use the Stanford-10 in our value added assessment program to pre-test students in the fall, and then again in the spring of each year, to track student progress in reading and math, as well as other subjects included in the long form of the test (Complete Battery). We specifically look to see if individual students have made at least one year's worth of academic growth throughout the course of the year (100% expected growth from fall to spring). Ideally, we are seeking more than 100% expected growth for children with special learning needs or learning gaps in specific skill areas to ensure that any potential learning gaps can be closed in a minimal amount of time.

While value added assessment is arguably a relatively new method of examining test scores, it provides a way to ensure that all students are learning and offers teachers an objective means of evaluating students. It focuses on tracking student progress during a specific period of time as opposed to absolute levels of academic achievement.

Specific to students with disabilities, SPFA will use the Kaleidoscope curriculum (part of Open Court) which also has formative diagnostics and probes built into the learning materials. We will also issue quarterly progress reports for every student with an individualized education plan (IEP) detailing specific progress toward IEP goals. IEP's for students with disabilities will be updated at least annually, in accordance with all state and federal requirements, such as IDEIA and PL 94 142.