**Student Opportunity Act Plan: SY 2021-2023**

***Salem Academy Charter School***

→ **Commitment 1: Focusing on Student Subgroups**

**Which student groups will require focused support to ensure all students achieve at high levels in school and are successfully prepared for life?**

**Student Subgroups Requiring Focused Support**

* students of color
* low income students
* English learners
* students with disabilities

**Charter School Data**

Both DESE accountability system data and our own local measures of student performance show that students of color, low-income students, English learners, and students with disabilities are performing below their peers in other subgroups. In addition, due to COVID and society in general, many of our students are struggling with mental health.

→ **Commitment 2: Using Evidence-Based Programs to Close Gaps**

**What evidence-based programs will your charter school adopt, deepen, or continue to best support the closure of achievement and opportunity gaps? What resources will be allocated to these programs?**

Beginning in FY21, SACS will adopt a number of evidence-based programs (see the “Evidence Based Program Examples” document, found here: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/commissioner/spec-advisories/soa.html> in order to close opportunity and achievement gaps for our students, as well as support their mental health needs. SACS plans to allocate fiscal and human resources to the following programs:

* Enhanced Core Instruction
* Targeted Student Supports
* Talent Development
* Conditions for Student Success

**Enhanced Core Instruction**

* Continue to implement Early College (EC) programs focused primarily on our identified sub-groups: students of color, low-income students, English Learners, and students with disabilities
  + Build a shared vision and strategic plan as well as staff capacity to execute the EC program
* Support educators to implement high-quality aligned curriculum:
  + Purchase new evidenced-based ELA curriculum (Wit and Wisdom) for grades 6-8
  + Expanded instructional coaching to support the implementation of high-quality curriculum

**Targeted Student Supports**

* Increase personnel and services to support holistic student needs
  + Hire additional school adjustment counselor to address growing student needs
  + Create leadership role in the school adjustment team to coordinate community and family support
  + Strengthened inter-disciplinary student support teams that meet regularly and make data-based decisions to support academic success and students’ mental/physical health and wellbeing
  + Engage with external consultant to help inform and build the capacity of classroom educators as well as specialized instructional support personnel to implement equitable learning environments that facilitate culturally responsive and sustaining development
* Inclusion for students with disabilities
  + Increase leadership capacity in the Special Education department to provide coaching, professional development on effective co-teaching, and on-going progress monitoring, oversight, and support
* Continue to host acceleration academies during school breaks, as well as expanded summer learning
* Dropout prevention and recovery programs
  + Hire or allocate dedicated, professional staff to work with at-risk students to improve student outcomes through support, prevention, intervention, and recovery efforts at the local level. This includes addressing chronic absence, academic and social needs, communication with families through channels including home visits, advocating for the student, and supporting college and career preparation. This work may also include “re-managing efforts specifically designed to recover students who have dropped out and to steer students who are far off track to re-engage in their own education.

**Talent Development**

* Diversify the educator/administrator workforce through recruitment and retention
  + Based on the SOA funding, in future years we may be able to provide financial assistance to district graduates, college graduates, paraprofessionals with bachelor’s degrees, and/or provisionally licensed teachers to support enrollment in approved educator preparation programs, and/or provide financial incentives such as signing bonuses, relocation assistance, and/or loan repayment reimbursement to support teacher recruitment efforts
* Implement strategies to recruit and retain educators and administrators, such as:
  + Maintain a positive student and adult culture;
  + Invest in induction, mentoring, and feedback programs for teachers;
  + Provide ongoing opportunities for relevant, embedded professional development;
  + Create career pathways for teachers to work towards teacher leadership or school leadership opportunities; and
  + Tailor efforts to retain educators who are particularly effective based on their individual needs.
* Provide access to robust and effective professional development in evidence-based practices that drive positive outcomes for students, which include supporting teachers to effectively use instructional materials; using data to facilitate and drive improvement in student learning; providing teachers with meaningful observation and feedback; improving teacher pedagogical content knowledge; leading student and staff culture; and implementing culturally responsive pedagogy.
* Build a leadership pipeline development program
  + Creating specific roles and/or structures that allows leaders-in-training the time and space to apply skills, improve practice, and add instructional leadership capacity to the building, and
  + Providing high-quality training and support for individuals in these roles
* Increase staffing to expand student access to arts, athletics and enrichment in order to provide an expanded variety of programming options (such as arts, athletics, academic-based courses, and community service) that appeal to student interest and need;

**Conditions for Student Success**

* Facilities improvements to create healthy and safe school environments, specifically air quality improvements.

**Budget information for FY21**

**Evidence-based program #1: Investing in Staffing and Building Capacity to Increase Student Outcomes**

* New Roles:
  + Assistant Director of Special Education: *targeted student support*
  + Additional Part-Time College Counselor: *targeted student support*
  + Additional School Adjustment Counselor: *targeted student support*
* Part-Time Instructional Coach: *enhanced core instruction*
* New Leadership Opportunities for Staff: *talent development*
* Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Professional Development and Consulting: *targeted student support*

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| **FY21 budget item** | **Amount** | **Foundation Category[[1]](#footnote-1)** |
| Salaries | $ 236,513.76 | Salary and Benefits |
| Stipends | $6,000 | Stipends |
| DEI Consultant | $45,000 | Professional Development |
| **Evidence-based program identified by the Department:** | | Targeted Student Support, Talent Development |
| **SOA program categories:** | | Enhanced Core Instruction |

**Evidence-based program #2: Enhanced Core Instruction**

* Adoption of 6-8 ELA Curriculum
* Continue to implement Early College programs

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| **FY21 budget item** | **Amount** | **Foundation Category** |
| Wit and Wisdom Curriculum | $11,511.82 | Curriculum |
| Early College | n/a | No students currently enrolled |
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| **Evidence-based program identified by the Department:** | | Enhanced Core Instruction |
| **SOA program categories:** | |  |

**Evidence-based program #3: Summer Learning and Acceleration Academies**

* Implementation of Summer Learning and Acceleration Academies

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| **FY21 budget item** | **Amount** | **Foundation Category** |
| Summer and Acceleration  Acceleration Academies | $12,000 | Summer and Vacation Programming |
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| **Evidence-based program identified by the Department:** | | Targeted Student Support |
| **SOA program categories:** | |  |

**Evidence-based program #4: Facility Improvements**

* Facilities improvements to create healthy and safe school environments

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| **FY21 budget item** | **Amount** | **Foundation Category** |
| HVAC and Air Filtration Upgrades | $52,707.20 | Capital Expenses |
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| **Evidence-based program identified by the Department:** | | Conditions for Student Success |
| **SOA program categories:** | |  |

→ **Commitment 3: Monitoring Success with Outcome Metrics and Targets**

**What metrics will your charter school use to monitor success in reducing disparities in achievement among student subgroups? Select from the list of Department metrics or provide your own.**

Both DESE accountability system data and our own local measures of student performance show that students of color, low-income students, English learners, and students with disabilities are performing below their peers in other subgroups. The success of these programs will result in a closing of the achievement and opportunity gaps across these subgroups.

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| 1. **Department outcome metrics:**    * ELA achievement    * Math achievement    * Four-year cohort graduation rate | **2) Custom metrics (must include targets as well):**   * + SACS Accountability Plan: 90% of students across all subgroups will demonstrate proficiency in their courses. |

→ **Commitment 4: Engaging All Families**

**How will your charter school ensure that all families, particularly those representing the student subgroups most in need of support, have the opportunity to meaningfully engage with the charter school regarding their students’ needs?**

At SACS, we are committed to ensuring that all families have the opportunity to meaningfully engage with us regarding their students’ needs. We measure increases in family engagement based on participation the following strategies:

* Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences (3 times per year)
* Bi-weekly Learning Satisfaction Surveys
* School-Family-Community Meetings (10 times per year)
* SEPAC

**Certifications:**

**By checking here, I certify that our charter school has engaged stakeholders in our community in accordance with the Student Opportunity Act**

**Please summarize your stakeholder engagement process, including specific groups that were engaged:**

Through surveys, meetings, and focus groups, we have engaged students, families, staff, and our Board of Trustees.

**By checking here, I certify that the [insert name of charter school’s] Board of Trustees voted on our Student Opportunity Act Plan.**

**Date of vote:** 1/27/21 **Outcome of vote:** Unanimous Approval

1. The foundation categories are: Administration; Instructional Leadership; Classroom & Specialist Teachers; Other Teaching Services; Professional Development; Instructional Materials, Equipment, and Technology; Guidance and Psychological; Pupil Services; Operations and Maintenance; Employee Benefits/Fixed Charges; and Special Education Tuition. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)