



# LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD

## **Pilot Review of Charter Schools Kandy Stripe Academy**

**LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD STAFF**

**EVERGREEN SOLUTIONS, LLC**

**DECEMBER 2012**

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# **Pilot Review of Charter Schools**

## **Kandy Stripe Academy**

**Legislative Budget Board Staff**  
**Evergreen Solutions, LLC**

**December 2012**

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## LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD

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January 18, 2013

Ms. Judy Mayfield-Scott  
Executive Director  
Kandy Stripe Academy

Dear Ms. Mayfield-Scott:

The attached report reviews the management and performance of Kandy Stripe Academy's educational, financial, and operational functions.

The report's recommendations will help Kandy Stripe Academy improve its overall performance as it provides services to students, staff, and community members. The report also highlights model practices and programs being provided by Kandy Stripe Academy.

Some of the recommendations provided in this report are based on state or federal laws, rules or regulations, and should be promptly addressed. Other recommendations are based on comparisons to state or industry standards, or accepted best practices, and should be reviewed to determine the level of priority, appropriate timeline, and method of implementation.

The Legislative Budget Board engaged Evergreen Solutions, LLC to conduct and produce this review, with LBB staff working in a contract oversight role.

The report is available on the LBB website at <http://www.lbb.state.tx.us>.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ursula Parks".

Ursula Parks  
Director  
Legislative Budget Board

cc: Ms. Cassandra Anderson  
Ms. Veronica Allen  
Mr. Donald Flenoy  
Mr. Tracy Jackson  
Mr. Craig Johnson

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Kandy Stripe Academy's school performance review notes 8 commendable practices and makes 21 recommendations for improvement. This Executive Summary highlights the charter school's significant accomplishments and recommendations. The purpose of a management and performance review is to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of various areas of a charter school's operations and provide recommendations that can help improve these processes. Some recommendations in this report are based on state or federal laws, rules, and regulations, while others are based on comparisons to state or industry standards, or accepted best practices. A copy of the full report is available at [www.lbb.state.tx.us](http://www.lbb.state.tx.us).

### **SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- ◆ Kandy Stripe Academy (KSA) and its leadership team are strongly supported by KSA families through active participation and involvement in school activities. One particularly successful initiative is the Dedicated and Disciplined Scholars (DADS) for Education program. DADS for Education was established in spring 2010 to give fathers the opportunity to assist through volunteer activities, including monitoring the hallways, providing traffic control before and after school, assisting with minor maintenance, teaching grade 8 students about computer technology, and reading to pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students. DADS for Education meets as a committee on the third Saturday of every month to continually find ways to serve the school. This initiative has been a wonderful experience for the students, as they get to see fathers closely involved in KSA. The KSA board, school leadership team, and teachers are committed to ensuring that parents are active participants in their children's education and the daily life of the school.
- ◆ KSA's close working relationship with special education staff from Houston Independent School District (HISD) provides a solid foundation for its efforts to comply with state and federal requirements related to identification, evaluation, eligibility, and the provision of services to students with disabilities. Students with disabilities enrolled at the school are identified, evaluated, and provided special education and related services as described in their individualized education programs (IEPs) by HISD staff assigned to serve students onsite at KSA. All KSA students with disabilities are served in an inclusion setting within the general education classroom. One-on-one or small-group therapy, such as language or speech therapy, may be provided in a pullout setting for short periods. Both regularly scheduled and as-needed communication occurs between HISD special education staff and KSA administrators and teachers. HISD staff support KSA and ensure that the needs of students with disabilities are being met, and problems or concerns are addressed in a timely and efficient manner. The responsive and interactive communication system is critical for providing this support.
- ◆ KSA's instructional leadership fosters a culture of commitment among teachers and families that provides a nurturing and supportive environment for all students. Parents of KSA students expressed appreciation for the school's leadership team and teachers. They were particularly positive about the small class sizes, individualized attention provided to each student, and close personal bonds that exist among staff and families. Teachers and school leaders welcome parents as active participants and enlist their assistance in providing academic and behavioral support to their children. The collaborative environment at KSA creates a sense of commitment among school leaders, teachers, and families that supports the school and its students.
- ◆ KSA has taken considerable steps to secure its facilities with monitoring devices and other control measures. Key individuals have hand-held radios for effective communication, which can be used in cases of emergency and during safety and security activities. The campus has also installed cameras in classrooms and other locations. The use of cameras enhances security as it relates to building access. HISD worked with each of its schools, including charters, to provide an initial allocation of cameras for security and safety purposes. KSA expanded the use of cameras more extensively to enhance the safety and security of its

campus. Cameras are monitored at the front office, the executive director's office, and also at the home of the executive director. KSA established an effective process to secure its main entrance into the building. All campus visitors must ring a bell to gain access into the front office. Once a visitor is cleared to enter, they must sign-in on the campus log, show a proper ID, and obtain a visitor pass. The campus requires visitors to return their ID badge and sign out of the building when leaving. KSA established a verification process for parents or guardians picking up children that requires them to sign an authorization form. KSA's efforts to increase the security features at the campus are providing a safer learning environment for the students and staff.

## SIGNIFICANT RECOMMENDATIONS

### CHARTER ORGANIZATION, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- ◆ **Establish a Shared Decision-Making Committee (SDMC) in accordance with HISD guidelines for the purpose of reviewing the school's educational goals, objectives, and major classroom instructional programs.** KSA does not have a functioning SDMC. In 1992, HISD established and approved a campus-level planning and decision-making process that includes the creation and maintenance of an SDMC at each school to review the educational goals, objectives, and major districtwide classroom instructional programs. Each SDMC is expected to involve professional and non-professional staff, parents, community members, and business representatives in establishing performance objectives for each academic excellence indicator adopted in the Texas Education Code (TEC). The purpose of the committee is to identify problems; define aligned campus and district goals; formulate campus policy; help monitor and shape campus direction; ensure implementation of decisions; analyze data and monitor implementation of the school improvement plan; address and present issues for discussion; and recommend resolutions and professional development plans. In accordance with HISD standard practice, the committee should consist of professional staff members, of which at least two-thirds are classroom teachers and one-third other campus-level professional staff; at least two parents of students currently enrolled selected by the KSA parent organization; two community members;

and one business representative. In addition to the required annual meeting, the KSA SDMC should establish a schedule for regular meetings.

- ◆ **Develop a strategic plan to be used as a management tool to support effective governance and ensure successful implementation of the school's mission, vision, and values.** KSA does not have an effective strategic plan in place to guide the school. KSA board members and administrators reported that the board participates in discussions on the school's overall mission and goals, and makes recommendations or suggestions for improvement. However, there is not a comprehensive long-range plan for the school to meet established goals in designated areas. KSA conducted a comprehensive needs assessment based on the results of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS), Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data, and teacher surveys. From the results, a school improvement plan was developed to address goals in the areas of science and math achievement, increasing parental involvement at two separate school-wide events, and establishing an inviting, respectful school culture and climate. At the time of the review, the work completed to develop the school improvement plan represents a start to a strategic plan, but does not address the full range of potential topics (such as expansion, program growth, or fiscal and operational health). In addition, the school improvement plan does not include all of the critical elements essential for accountability, including prioritization of budget resources and performance measures for ongoing monitoring by the board. The board, executive director, and principal should coordinate efforts with the SDMC, using it as the foundation for developing a comprehensive plan that addresses the school's highest priority strategies for the next three to five years. A comprehensive strategic plan will encompass all aspects of school operations, including academic, operational, and financial, in addition to strategic objectives. For each goal, the plan should include the resources necessary (and allocated), clear staff responsibilities and timelines, performance indicators, and fund requirements.

**EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY**

- ◆ **Establish processes for reviewing the content and implementation of its science and mathematics curricula across all grade levels on a regular basis.** KSA lacks effective processes for conducting ongoing collaborative instructional planning and for monitoring the implementation of the adopted curriculum. KSA staff does not meet formally on a regular basis to conduct horizontal and vertical curriculum and instructional planning. Failure to conduct regular formal horizontal and vertical planning can lead to inconsistent interpretation and implementation of the curriculum both within and across grade levels resulting in gaps in student knowledge. In addition, there is not a formal lesson plan format or review and approval system in place at KSA. The lack of a standardized lesson plan format and a formal review and approval process makes monitoring implementation of the approved curriculum difficult. This could result in instruction that is not aligned with the scope and sequence and the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), and that does not adequately prepare students for state assessments. KSA should establish processes for reviewing the content and implementation of its science and mathematics curricula across all grade levels on a regular basis. A standard lesson plan format should be developed and lesson plans should be reviewed regularly by administrators and instructional leaders for alignment with the curriculum and scope and sequence. Content and implementation reviews should be completed by administrators along with teachers grouped horizontally and vertically during collaborative planning sessions.
- ◆ **Design and implement a structured, comprehensive, school-wide data disaggregation and Response to Intervention (RtI) framework.** KSA does not implement a structured, comprehensive, school-wide data disaggregation and RtI process. There is not a formal system in place for analyzing aggregate student performance data to drive instructional changes. Although KSA uses performance data to identify individual student needs, the school fails to use the RtI process to assess the effectiveness of instruction and interventions. KSA's lack of a process for using aggregate student data to identify and address systemic gaps in its core curriculum and interventions contributes to student performance in science

and mathematics that is below the state average. KSA should design and implement a structured, comprehensive, school-wide data disaggregation and RtI framework. The process should include ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of core instruction provided to all students and supplemental instruction or interventions provided to selected students or groups of students. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and interventions, student progress should be monitored through frequent assessments. Performance data should be collected at least weekly for students receiving supplemental instruction or interventions. Collaborative planning teams should analyze student performance data at the school, grade, and classroom level. If the data indicates that students have not mastered a concept, instructional methods should be revised and the material presented again.

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

- ◆ **Develop written procedures for critical business and accounting processes and activities, including procedures when contracting with consultants.** KSA does not have current, documented internal policies and procedures for the school's accounting functions and processes. Critical functional knowledge of specific positions is not documented in the form of procedures describing how to perform financial and accounting functions, and to what extent processes are performed by internal KSA staff, external consultants, or HISD personnel. Interviews indicated KSA staff know what to do and how to do it because of HISD training, consistent technical assistance from HISD charter school office personnel, and the benefits of working in a small office. Also, much of KSA's day-to-day functions are performed from experience. Other functions, such as bank reconciliations, are performed by consultants. Written policies and procedures are critical components of institutional memory and continuity, and are an important component of internal control because they provide a permanent record of critical functions and processes; directions for performing critical departmental tasks; a reference for existing employees; a training tool for new employees; and uniformity and continuity of transaction processing when regular employees are unavailable and tasks must be performed by individuals not familiar with

the processes. Development of written procedures can be addressed through an organized, systemic approach. Critical processes should be identified and placed on a schedule showing when procedures for that function will be documented. The executive director should instruct the principal and business manager to document the steps in their respective responsibilities. Documentation of their processes can be accomplished incrementally while they are being performed during the normal work routine.

- ◆ **Ensure that the school's budget is developed in accordance with priorities established in its planning process and outlined in continuous progress reports.** KSA's continuous improvement planning goals are prepared annually by the school and submitted to HISD. Goals established in this improvement plan represent goals for the school's continuous improvement, and as such, should drive budgetary priorities. The school lacks budgetary planning documentation that shows a clear link between budgetary planning and KSA's expected outcomes. KSA submits documents to HISD for the school's annual reports. From those reports, goals are established to address areas of weakness. An Executive Summary of the school's Continuous School Improvement Planning Goals is developed at the end of each school year to address the next school year. While this report establishes a framework for continuous improvement with goals and expected outcomes, there is no connection to the school's budget. Instructional materials to help achieve expected outcomes are included in the report with no funding source identified. Documentation linking school priorities established in the planning process to the budget is a tool to communicate what is important to the school. A school's budget should be developed in accordance with priorities established in its strategic planning process and outlined in its continuous progress reports. School staff should work with all stakeholders, including the school and local communities, to gather input and feedback on school priorities and desired outcomes. The executive director should work with staff to ensure that the budget is planned considering expected outcomes from the planning and continuous processes. When allocating resources, the executive director should communicate to the board and community the

relationship between the use of resources and desired outcomes.

## OPERATIONS

- ◆ **Establish and implement a comprehensive energy conservation program and practice to maximize energy efficiency at their campus.** KSA has not implemented a comprehensive energy conservation program and practice. There is no ongoing communication with staff and teachers to develop and maintain energy awareness. It was noted through interviews and onsite observations that some energy conservation signs were placed in the elementary wing of the building, but they were not visible throughout the entire facility. KSA stopped placing conservation signs in the building and has not implemented any communication efforts with staff for energy conservation awareness. Energy saving light sensors were evident in some, but not all, of the classrooms and offices on the campus, and no comprehensive recycling program or policy has been identified. According to interviews with staff, there is minimal ongoing analysis of utility costs at KSA to support efforts to monitor aspects of a comprehensive energy conservation program at the campus. KSA utility bills are automatically sent to HISD for processing, and HISD charges KSA according to the utility bills and usage incurred at the school. Without a comprehensive energy program, KSA is unable to identify opportunities to efficiently operate their facility and save money that could be allocated to the classroom. KSA's executive director should appoint a primary contact for establishing an energy conservation program and communicating with HISD's Facilities Management and Operations Department to identify resources that are available to assist KSA as an external charter school with HISD. KSA should initially consider identifying two to three areas to focus on when developing their plan. For example, if KSA conducts a formal analysis of energy-related costs, setting a goal and implementing practices to reduce these costs by 5 percent would be a step in improving their energy conservation efforts.
- ◆ **Develop and implement a formal disaster recovery plan document to address key actions necessary after an emergency event.** KSA lacks a formal disaster recovery plan to resume operations after an emergency. The campus did not have any type of

formally implemented disaster recovery plan to be used after an emergency event. The only identified and documented recovery related activity for KSA deals with evacuation components, such as fire drills or emergency plan drills. In addition, there is no plan for how to restore operations to allow the school to continue functioning effectively at a different physical site, if needed. The need for a formal disaster recovery plan is greater given that KSA is located in the Houston area, which has been impacted by major flooding and hurricanes over the years. Without a disaster recovery plan, KSA may have to delay school operations after an emergency. KSA's leadership should establish a timeframe to discuss the factors to be considered in establishing a disaster recovery plan. HISD and the Texas School Safety Center are options KSA should consider for conducting preliminary research. A team should be designated to collaborate and develop the plan and present it to KSA's leadership for approval and implementation.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

- ◆ Kandy Stripe Academy (KSA) is an external campus charter school of the Houston Independent School District (HISD) located in Harris County. It was established as a secular private school in 1968 through JAA Enterprises, Inc., a domestic for-profit corporation doing business as Kandy Stripe Academy (KSA).
- ◆ The Executive Director/Owner is Judy Mayfield Scott, and the Principal is Cassandra Anderson. In school year 2000–01, KSA contracted with HISD to provide educational services to middle school students previously enrolled in HISD schools that were identified by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) as low-performing. The contract between HISD and the charter school is reviewed annually.
- ◆ In school year 2011–12, KSA had an enrollment of 427 students from pre-Kindergarten (pre-K) through grade 8 reflecting the following demographics:
  - 96 percent African American;
  - 4 percent Hispanic/Latino; and
  - Less than 1 percent White.
- ◆ Beginning in school year 2012–13, KSA has one campus and is no longer providing grades 6 through 8.

- ◆ In school year 2011–12, approximately 82 percent of students were economically disadvantaged, 34 percent were at-risk, and just over 1 percent were identified as limited English proficient (LEP).
- ◆ Under the state accountability system, the charter school received an *Academically Unacceptable* rating for school year 2010–11 from TEA based on the science scores on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) for all students and the African American and economically disadvantaged subgroups.
- ◆ Under the accountability provisions in the No Child Left Behind Act, all public school campuses, school districts, and the state are evaluated for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). KSA met AYP for school year 2010–11. KSA's preliminary 2011–12 results indicate that it Missed AYP for performance in reading and mathematics.
- ◆ The charter school is served by the Regional Education Service Center IV (Region 4) in Houston.
- ◆ The district is represented by State Senator Rodney Ellis and State Representative Garnet F. Coleman.

## FINANCIAL DATA

- ◆ Total Budgeted Operating Expenditures (2011–12) were \$2,695,453.
- ◆ Per Pupil Budgeted Operating Expenditures (2011–12) were \$6,313.
- ◆ Budgeted Operating Expenditures Spent on Instruction (2011–12) was 95.6 percent.
- ◆ 2012 FAST (Financial Allocation Study for Texas) Rating: 3 Stars (23 percent composite progress percentile + low spending index).

The chapters that follow contain a summary of the charter's accomplishments, findings, and numbered recommendations. Detailed explanations for accomplishments and recommendations follow the summary and include fiscal impacts.

Each chapter concludes with a fiscal impact chart listing the chapter's recommendations and associated savings or costs for 2013–14 through 2017–18.

Following the chapters are the appendices that contain the results from the charter surveys conducted by the review team.

Some of the recommendations provided in this report are based on state or federal laws, rules or regulations, and should be promptly addressed. Other recommendations are based on comparisons to state or industry standards, or accepted best practices, and should be reviewed to determine the level of priority, appropriate timeline, and method of implementation.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There was no fiscal impact as a result of the 21 recommendations in the performance review.

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **CHARTER LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION, AND MANAGEMENT**

**KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY**

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# CHAPTER 1. CHARTER LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION, AND MANAGEMENT

Charter schools were established in Texas in 1995 with the intent of ensuring fiscal and academic accountability without undue regulation of instructional methods or pedagogical innovation. Chapter 12 of the Texas Education Code (TEC) provides for the following classes of charter schools:

- home-rule school district charters established and operated in accordance with subchapter B;
- campus or campus program charters authorized by school districts in accordance with subchapter C, including schools or programs administered and staffed by district employees as well as schools or programs operated through contract with outside providers; and
- open-enrollment charters authorized by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) in accordance with subchapter D or, if operated by a public college, university, or junior college, authorized by the TEA in accordance with subchapter E.

The purposes of charter schools, as stated in TEC, are to:

- improve student learning;
- increase the choice of learning opportunities within the public school system;
- create professional opportunities that will attract new teachers to the public school system;
- establish a new form of accountability for public schools; and
- encourage different and innovative learning methods.

In 1996, Dr. Rod Paige, former Superintendent of Schools for Houston Independent School District (HISD), outlined “a new beginning” for HISD that focused on four key issues: accountability, best efforts, choice, and decentralization. This initiative included the establishment of campus charter schools. HISD operates two basic types of charters schools:

- Internal Charters—Run by HISD administrators, housed in HISD facilities, and staffed by HISD employees, the district pays each internal charter school principal and teacher directly for their services. These schools are under the supervision of one of the district’s five regional offices. Internal charters include:

- campus charters, in which an entire existing campus submitted a petition signed by the majority of parents and teachers to the HISD Board of Education to request charter status;
  - program charters, in which only a portion of an existing traditional school is chartered—a sort of “school within a school”; and
  - cooperative program charters, also known as “clusters,” in which the same program is operated at multiple locations.
- External Charters—Run by an outside agency or community-based organization, housed at non-HISD facilities, and staffed by non-HISD employees, HISD pays the agency (i.e., contractor) for services provided. These schools are under the supervision of HISD’s Chief of Schools. The delivery of instruction is driven by a Letter of Agreement (contract) between the entity and HISD. The terms of the contract delineate every aspect of school policy and are subject to annual review. “Community-based” charters fall under this category.

Pursuant to TEC Section 11.157, independent school districts in the State of Texas have the authority to “contract with a public or private entity for that entity to provide educational services for the district.” In May 1998, HISD expanded its educational contracting program with private schools to include options for students attending schools identified by the TEA as low-performing. This policy allowed students in grades 1 to 8 who failed to meet the district’s promotion standards the choice of attending a private school. JAA Enterprises, Inc., a domestic for-profit corporation doing business as Kandy Stripe Academy (KSA), was a secular private school established in 1968. KSA met the criteria for participation in the program and entered into an agreement with HISD in July 2000 to serve middle school students.

The following year, KSA was authorized as an external campus charter school by HISD pursuant to TEC Section 12.0521, Alternative Authorization. As such, the school operates pursuant to the authority of the HISD Board of

Education and reports to the district’s Chief of Schools. The HISD Office of School Choice website states:

Our charter schools operate with the approval of the HISD Board of Education and within the jurisdiction of HISD. Although they are not regulated the same way as other HISD schools, they are accountable for showing measurable results in return for exemption from some of the restrictions that apply to the traditional public schools. Accountability is the key factor behind the superiority of HISD charter schools.

The contract between HISD and JAA Enterprises, Inc. is reviewed annually. The contract provides a description of the program to be provided by KSA, including the specific obligations of KSA and HISD; the federal and state performance standards that must be met; the term of the agreement and procedures for termination and compensation; reporting and evaluation requirements; a statement that KSA is an independent contractor and not deemed for any

purposes to be employees or agents of HISD; assurances regarding student records; insurance requirements; and property rights, among other considerations. A summary of each party’s obligations is provided in **Exhibit 1–1**.

Campus charter schools are within the jurisdiction of the district’s school board rather than a charter governing board such as those required for open-enrollment charters. The KSA governance structure, as described in its charter application, is shown in **Exhibit 1–2**.

**EXHIBIT 1–1  
CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN HISD AND JAA ENTERPRISES, INC. – SELECTED OBLIGATIONS**

| KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY  | HISD  |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide educational services at KSA sites approved by HISD.</li> <li>• Accept payment under the terms of the Agreement as full payment for a student’s tuition.</li> <li>• Maintain standards established by the TEA and State Board of Education rules for: instructional staff, including education, credentials, training; awarding of course credit; bilingual and special education services; and student records.</li> <li>• Ensure compliance with HISD, state, and federal requirements.</li> <li>• Use state-adopted textbooks and curriculum that incorporates the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).</li> <li>• Prepare students for and administer designated standardized assessments.</li> <li>• Provide information to HISD for performing criminal background checks; remove and refrain from hiring staff who do not meet the standards of HISD.</li> <li>• Administer all student disciplinary actions in accordance with HISD and KSA codes of student conduct and state and federal law.</li> <li>• Promptly notify HISD of any student who may be a student with a disability.</li> <li>• Request assistance from HISD for testing, grade reporting, promotion standards, and any other mandatory HISD procedures at no cost to KSA.</li> <li>• Implement and comply with the approved charter and any HISD policies and procedures not specifically addressed in the charter.</li> <li>• Identify an administrator with the authority to make decisions for KSA and who will represent KSA.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide school choice information to eligible HISD students.</li> <li>• Provide non-budgetary TAAS* preparation texts to KSA at no cost when requested.</li> <li>• Allow KSA to apply for targeted TAAS* funds as appropriate.</li> <li>• Monitor the performance and services provided by KSA.</li> <li>• Monitor the preparation and maintenance of HISD/KSA record requirements.</li> <li>• Assist in facilitating KSA teacher/staff participation in HISD staff development activities, classroom visitations, and observations at no additional cost to HISD.</li> <li>• Provide transportation for HISD students enrolled in KSA from capped/overcrowded schools as designated in the Agreement.</li> <li>• Provide district-adopted state textbooks at no cost to KSA and at no additional cost to HISD.</li> <li>• Provide student desks and other appropriate furnishings as currently available at no additional cost to HISD as requested by KSA.</li> <li>• Permit KSA to participate in the district’s bid costs for building and property maintenance and upkeep at no additional cost to HISD.</li> </ul> |

\*Agreement identifies the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) as the state-mandated assessment; this test was replaced in 2003 by the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), which was replaced in 2012 by the State of Texas Assessment s of Academic Readiness (STAAR).

SOURCE: Agreement between Houston Independent School District and JAA Enterprises, Inc., August 1, 2011 through July 31, 2012.

**EXHIBIT 1–2  
KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**



SOURCE: Kandy Stripe Academy Application.

The membership proposed in the charter for the KSA board includes parents, community members, and business, government, and educational leaders. Members of the board are selected based upon demonstrated competence in the following areas:

- commitment to the goals of the school;
- willingness to protect and advance the interest of the school and its students through contacts with business and government; and
- willingness to work tirelessly for KSA and to provide wise counsel through the planning and early years.

Documents provided by the school list the KSA board members by name and role (**Exhibit 1–3**).

**EXHIBIT 1–3  
KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

| NAME                | POSITION                                     |
|---------------------|--|
| Judy Mayfield-Scott | Board Chairperson and KSA Executive Director |
| Cassandra Anderson  | Principal                                    |
| Veronica Allen      | Board Member                                 |
| Donald Flenoy       | Board Member                                 |
| Tracy Jackson       | Board Member                                 |
| Craig Johnson       | Board Member                                 |

SOURCE: Kandy Stripe Academy, 2012.

The executive director serves as the chairperson of the board and sets its agenda. The authority of its members and KSA leadership within the organizational structure as stated in the charter application include the following:

- the board, the executive director, and the principal will govern KSA;
- the principal will select and recommend teachers and ensure that KSA has a shared decision-making committee (SDMC) on campus;
- the executive director will have veto power;
- the principal will have veto power;
- the principal will report directly to the HISD superintendent, and be advised by the KSA board;
- the principal will oversee implementation and supervision of the charter at KSA;
- the KSA board and the principal have autonomy with regard to the instructional program and personnel approval; and
- other HISD operations and support procedures will be utilized at KSA.

**Exhibit 1–4** shows the administrative management structure of KSA in its day-to-day operations as described in the charter application.

**EXHIBIT 1–4  
KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**



SOURCE: Kandy Stripe Academy Application.

The roles and responsibilities of the principal as stated in the original charter application are to:

- be responsible for the daily operation of the school, including staff management and evaluation;
- inform the chair of the board on any matters affecting the well-being of the school;
- sit as chairperson on the Shared Decision-Making Committee (SDMC);
- coordinate annual parent organization meetings;
- arrange for annual external program review; and
- initiate program modifications.

### ACCOMPLISHMENT

- ◆ KSA and its leadership team are strongly supported by KSA families through active participation and involvement in a full range of school activities.

### FINDINGS

- ◆ The KSA board does not operate as a fully functioning board with all attendant policies, responsibilities, and obligations.
- ◆ KSA's management structure does not support efficient and effective administrative practices.
- ◆ KSA does not have a functioning Shared Decision-Making Committee.
- ◆ KSA does not have an effective strategic plan in place to guide the school.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ **Recommendation 1: Reconstitute the board and develop fully articulated policies and procedures that will provide for effective operation and evaluation of the school.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 2: Establish a management structure that ensures efficient and effective administrative practices are implemented in a fair and unbiased manner.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 3: Establish a Shared Decision-Making Committee in accordance with HISD guidelines for the purpose of reviewing the school's educational goals, objectives, and major classroom instructional programs.**

- ◆ **Recommendation 4: Develop a strategic plan to be used as a management tool to support effective governance and ensure successful implementation of the school's mission, vision, and values.**

### DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENT

#### FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

KSA and its leadership team are strongly supported by KSA families through active participation and involvement in a full range of school activities. The KSA board, school leadership team, and teachers are committed to ensuring that parents are active participants in their children's education and the daily life of the school.

One particularly successful initiative is the Dedicated and Disciplined Scholars (DADS) for Education program. Low achievement and high dropout rates of students from predominantly African-American and Hispanic neighborhoods were a driving concern of the group's leadership. When board members realized that many fathers simply did not feel as comfortable doing typical school volunteer work as mothers, DADS for Education was established in spring 2010 to give fathers the opportunity to assist in more familiar ways. Now fathers frequent the school on a regular basis. Their volunteer activities include monitoring the hallways, providing traffic control before and after school, assisting with minor maintenance, teaching grade 8 students about computer technology, and reading to pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students.

In September 2011, a special open house was held with over 80 fathers in attendance. The fathers shared their professional backgrounds with students in the classrooms. Events of the school were discussed and fathers were asked to become volunteers at the school to support teachers and administrators. In addition, in October 2011, both the HISD superintendent and the HISD board president were invited to the KSA campus to speak and to answer questions dealing with budget cuts, larger class sizes, recent closing of three schools in the area, and the role of charter schools in HISD. Last year over 100 fathers participated in "Bring Your Dad to School" Day.

Fathers meet as a committee on the third Saturday of every month, and continually find ways to serve the school. This initiative has been a wonderful experience for the students, as they get to see both mothers and fathers closely involved in KSA.

During interviews with the review team, parents described extensive volunteer participation within classrooms and throughout the building. Several parents had older children who had attended KSA, and some who attended it themselves when it was a private school. They expressed a strong sense of community and support for the school and its teachers.

## DETAILED FINDINGS

### **BOARD POLICIES, ROLES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES (REC. 1)**

The KSA board does not operate as a fully functioning board with all attendant policies, responsibilities, and obligations. No documented board policies exist under which to operate in the areas of member recruitment, retention, and dismissal; board authority and role in school operations, including the hiring and firing of staff; conflict of interest; nepotism; and general policy development.

When asked about KSA board policies, the executive director indicated that there are policies, but a written copy was not available, and noted that campus charter schools are not required to have governing boards. Discussions with board members indicated that they do not have clearly established roles and responsibilities consistent with those generally associated with governing boards. One board member who is also a parent reported visiting the school on a regular basis. He stated that he saw his role on the board not only as encouraging parent engagement, but also serving as a “presence” and bringing a “sense of safety and security” to the school by going into classrooms and walking the hallways to ensure there are no disciplinary incidents.

Board activities mentioned by the executive director, principal, and board members included monthly meetings that involve discussion of the overall mission of the school, its goals, and suggestions for attaining them; interviewing teachers and sitting in on annual teacher evaluations; and reviewing and approving school policies, such as the student code of conduct adapted from the HISD code. Board meetings are informal, and the agenda is set by the executive director, who serves as the board chairperson. Administrators and staff consistently reported that the executive director has final authority over all decisions made by or on behalf of KSA, and that neither the board nor the principal can act without her agreement. This contradicts the statement in the original charter application that “the KSA board and the principal have autonomy with regard to the instructional program and personnel approval.”

Comprehensive policies and procedures that delineate the way a board will function and conduct business are critical for effective oversight and leadership of a school. The ability of the KSA board to effectively operate is weakened by lack of methods and protocols defining the relationships between and among the board and the executive director. In addition, in situations where board members are also parents of students in the school or are related to staff members, boundaries and roles may be unclear without policies.

KSA should reconstitute the board and develop fully articulated policies and procedures that will provide for the effective operation and evaluation of the school. The policies should establish clear roles for the board and include well-delineated lines of authority and communication. KSA should ensure that its policies and procedures are consistent with those of HISD. At a minimum, policies should address board member recruitment, retention, and dismissal; board authority related to hiring and firing of staff, including compensation consideration; conflict of interest and nepotism; and other aspects of general school policy. The policies should also address the process for monitoring and evaluating the academic progress of the school to ensure it achieves and maintains a minimum rating of academically acceptable in the state’s accountability rating system.

Since the time of the review team’s onsite visit, KSA reported that it is in the process of developing policies and procedures to implement in school year 2012–13 in the areas of board member recruitment, responsibilities, and removal. The charter school is also attempting to better define a board member’s role in school operations related to staff hiring and firing, compensation, and conflict of interest.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### **SCHOOL MANAGEMENT (REC. 2)**

KSA’s management structure does not support efficient and effective administrative practices. The ability of the KSA board and school administration to effectively operate is put at risk by the familial relationships among board members, school administrators, teachers, and other school staff.

The organizing group of initial incorporators for KSA in 2000 was comprised of Ms. Mayfield-Scott, executive director; Ms. Anderson, principal; three KSA parents (an English teacher in Aldine ISD, an HISD coordinator, and a nurse); a counselor in HISD; an academic advisor/instructor

at Texas Southern University; and KSA’s accountant. Over time, board members have been replaced.

Based on documents provided by KSA during the onsite visit and information obtained through interviews and other sources, at least eight board members, administrators, teachers, or other school staff are related by consanguinity or affinity. For example, KSA’s executive director, Ms. Mayfield-Scott, is the mother of the school’s principal, business manager, the plant operator, and a first grade teacher. In addition, the spouses of the business manager and the first grade teacher are members of the KSA board. It is unclear from the administrative management flowchart in **Exhibit 1–4** whether the principal directly supervises non-instructional positions such as the registrar, business manager, and plant operator, or if the Executive Director functions in that role. However, as principal, Ms. Anderson does supervise teachers, including her sister.

With regard to the applicability of laws and rules to campus charter schools, TEC Section 12.055 states:

A campus or program for which a charter is granted under this subchapter is subject to federal and state laws and rules governing public schools, except that the campus or program is subject to this code and rules adopted under this code only to the extent the applicability to a campus or program for which a charter is granted under this subchapter of a provision of this code or a rule adopted under this code is specifically provided.

Regarding the extent to which laws related to issues such as conflict of interest and nepotism apply to campus charter schools as publicly funded entities, the review team determined that Texas charter school statutes may not directly address this issue. During interviews with the review team, HISD staff responsible for district charter schools indicated that this was not an issue they would routinely address with charter schools.

As part of the review process, 20 teachers at KSA completed surveys soliciting their impressions of the school. Selected items with implications for KSA’s management, including the effectiveness of the board, the executive director, and the principal with regard to organization and management are provided in **Exhibit 1–5**.

Of particular significance is that fewer than half of the teachers who responded reported that the superintendent (headmaster) is an effective leader or that the school is efficient in its administrative practices and in providing services to the school; 85 percent indicated that school salaries are not competitive with similar positions in the job market; only 15 percent agreed that the qualifications needed for promotion are clearly stated; and 50 percent disagreed with the statement that the school has a fair and timely grievance process. These responses from teachers support the review team’s concerns regarding the potential for inequities in KSA’s management structure that may be a result of consanguinity and affinity.

**EXHIBIT 1–5  
KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY TEACHER SURVEY – SCHOOL ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT, MAY 2012**

| STATEMENT  | SA/A COMBINED | NO OPINION | D/SD COMBINED |
|--|---------------|------------|---------------|
| School board members understand their role as policy makers and stay out of the day-to-day management.     | 60.0%         | 30.0%      | 10.0%         |
| The superintendent (headmaster) is an effective leader.*   | 42.1%         | 36.8%      | 15.8%         |
| The school administration is efficient in providing services to our school.                                | 42.1%         | 21.1%      | 36.8%         |
| Our charter school administration is efficient.  | 44.4%         | 11.1%      | 44.5%         |
| Most administrative practices in our charter school are highly efficient and effective.                    | 35.0%         | 20.0%      | 45.0%         |
| School salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.                                  | 10.0%         | 5.0%       | 85.0%         |
| The school states qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.*                 | 15.0%         | 40.0%      | 40.0%         |
| Employees are rewarded for superior performance or are counseled about less than satisfactory performance. | 20.0%         | 40.0%      | 40.0%         |
| The school has a fair and timely grievance process.  | 20.0%         | 30.0%      | 50.0%         |

SA/A Combined – “Strongly Agree” and “Agree” responses combined; D/SD Combined – “Disagree” and “Strongly Disagree” responses combined.

\*Does not sum to 100 percent because one or more respondents selected “not applicable” for this item.

SOURCE: Review Team Survey, May 2012.

The original charter application contains conflicting or confusing statements regarding some reporting relationships. For example, the narrative statement that the principal reports directly to the HISD superintendent does not align with the governance structure shown in **Exhibit 1–2**, and the administrative management flowchart in **Exhibit 1–4** does not reflect all of the staff in the school. In addition, the charter application provides veto power to both the executive director and the principal. Lack of clarity regarding lines of authority and communication can negatively impact school operations.

State nepotism laws are contained in TEC, Chapter 573. Anti-nepotism laws prohibit a governmental entity from hiring certain close relatives of a public official. The nepotism statutes prohibit a public official from appointing, confirming the appointment of, or voting on the appointment of a close relative to a paid public position. Close relatives include someone who is related within a prohibited degree by birth (i.e., consanguinity or relationship by blood) or by marriage (i.e., affinity). The extent and conditions under which the state's conflict of interest and nepotism laws apply to open-enrollment charter schools are provided pursuant to TEC Section 12.1054 and 12.1055. Within HISD itself, policies prohibiting or controlling nepotism and conflict of interest are provided in policies entitled DK (LOCAL); Assignment and Schedules and DBD2 (REGULATION): District Practice and Procedures Regarding Conflict of Interest Requirements for Administrative Employees, among others.

Each of the laws and policies referenced here clearly reflects concern for the potential of an individual to benefit unfairly from familial or other relationships in situations where public funds are involved. Unlike private business relationships in which families and friends can freely engage in mutually beneficial financial or other arrangements, public sector relationships must be free of real or perceived conflicts between public duty and personal or private interests. Although KSA's charter was granted under HISD authority, during interviews with the staff from the HISD Charter School Office and KSA administrators, they reported that the district's oversight activities are focused primarily on observed school operations and not on issues such as board activities or organizational structure.

Both within an organization and from a public perception point of view, potential for conflict of interest or nepotism is important to consider because confidence in the integrity of an organization is vital. Parents, teachers, community members, and other parties with an interest in public

education should have a level of trust and confidence that the charter school is open, fair, and unbiased in its relationships. The principal reported that board members interview teachers and sit in on evaluations with the principal each year. In a situation such as exists at KSA, it is difficult to determine how issues such as salary, job assignment, promotion or retention of staff, and performance evaluation and accountability are dealt with without consideration of the potential benefits to individuals through familial relationships.

KSA should establish a management structure that ensures efficient and effective administrative practices are implemented in a fair and unbiased manner. This change will address possible risks to the school that could arise from conflicting interests between the best interests of the charter school and potential for personal benefit to individual family members. Specific concerns to be addressed include ensuring that:

- salaries and benefits are comparable and equitable, both within the school and in consideration of prevailing salaries for and benefits for similar sized and located schools;
- sufficient checks and balances are in place to prohibit ineffective, inefficient, or inappropriate use of school funds or resources;
- clear lines authority and communication are established that include HISD, the school's board and administration, teachers, and all other staff; and
- staff evaluation procedures are unbiased, objective, fair, equitable, and sufficient to hold all staff accountable for achieving rigorous outcomes.

The revised management structure should be established concurrently with the reconstitution of the board and development of policies and procedures by the new board members and school administrators.

KSA has indicated that it is reviewing the organizational structure at the charter school in an effort to make it a more structured chain of command that is similar to a business/corporate model of organization.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**SHARED DECISION-MAKING COMMITTEE (REC. 3)**

KSA does not have a functioning Shared Decision-Making Committee (SDMC). In its original charter application, KSA stated that “the Shared Decision-Making Committee will be established according to state and local school board guidelines,” that the administrative flowchart included an SDMC, and that one of the principal’s stated duties was to serve as the SDMC chairperson. However, in interviews with the review team, the school’s administration reported that there is not an SDMC in place, as they are optional for charter schools.

An HISD document entitled *Elementary Guidelines 2011–12, Section I, Waivers*, states that HISD schools operate under a site-based-management concept with each school having an SDMC that functions as one of its key structural components. This same document states that “charter schools that operate under a proposal must identify, in their proposal or addendum, the local and/or state policies that they are waiving. Charter schools are expected to follow all local and state policies which have not been specifically waived.” When asked to provide a copy of its charter proposal and related documents, only the original charter application and contract with HISD were provided. There is no evidence that the original application was amended to preclude an SDMC, and Section I.A.18 of the contract between KSA and HISD states that KSA will “implement and comply with the approved charter and any HISD policies and procedures not specifically addressed in the charter...”

In 1992, HISD established and approved a campus-level planning and decision-making process that includes the creation and maintenance of an SDMC at each school to review the educational goals, objectives, and major districtwide classroom instructional programs. Each SDMC is expected to involve professional and non-professional staff, parents, community members, and business representatives in establishing academic and other performance objectives for each academic excellence indicator adopted in the TEC. SDMCs were authorized to fulfill the following responsibilities:

- implement all pertinent campus-level planning processes;
- develop recommendations for the school budget;
- submit recommendations for the school curriculum;
- recommend changes in the school’s staffing patterns;

- develop and approve the campus staff development plans;
- develop, review, and revise the school improvement plan for the purpose of improving student performance for all student populations (after principal approval of the school improvement plan, the SDMC presents the plan to staff for approval);
- review and make recommendations regarding the school’s organizational structure; and
- establish procedures to periodically obtain broad-based community, parent, and staff input.

The SDMC must meet at least annually to discuss the performance of the school and the school’s objectives. The discussion and decisions must be documented and then disseminated to appropriate school and district personnel as well as to be made available upon request for public review.

Notwithstanding the importance of implementing an SDMC in accordance with its charter agreement with HISD, there is significant value in implementing a comprehensive and systematic process to guide school improvement. As explained in HISD’s SDMC training description, the purpose of the committee is to identify problems; define aligned campus and district goals; formulate campus policy; help to monitor and shape campus direction; ensure implementation of decisions; analyze data and monitor implementation of the school improvement plan; address and present issues for discussion; and recommend resolutions and professional development plans. Each of these items represents a critical component in school improvement.

KSA should establish a Shared Decision-Making Committee in accordance with HISD guidelines for the purpose of reviewing the school’s educational goals, objectives, and major classroom instructional programs. In accordance with HISD standard practice, the committee should comprise professional staff members, of which at least two-thirds are classroom teachers and one-third other campus-level professional staff; at least two parents of students currently enrolled selected by the KSA parent organization; two community members; and one business representative. In addition to the required annual meeting, the KSA SDMC should establish a schedule for regular meetings.

As the chairperson of the SDMC, the principal should collaborate with the board to identify individuals to serve on the committee, ensuring that it comprises professional and

non-professional staff, parents, community members, and business representatives.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**STRATEGIC PLAN (REC. 4)**

KSA does not have an effective strategic plan in place to guide the school. In interviews with the review team, KSA board members and administrators reported that the board participates in discussions on the school's overall mission and goals, and makes recommendations or suggestions for improvement, but there is not a comprehensive long-range plan for the school to meet established goals in designated areas. When asked about the school's strategic plan in the survey administered as part of this evaluation, administrators strongly agreed that the "charter school's strategic plan guides daily decision-making," but that strategic planning is "adequate" or "needs some improvement." In contrast, only 38.9 percent of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the strategic plan guides daily decision-making, 27.8 percent had no opinion, and 33.4 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed. Twenty percent of teachers reported the school's strategic planning needs major improvement, 30 percent reported it needs some improvement, and 50 percent reported it is adequate.

KSA conducted a comprehensive needs assessment based on the results of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS), Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data, and teacher surveys. From the results, a school improvement plan was developed to address the following identified goals:

- science and math achievement will increase to 75 percent for all student groups and 75 percent of all students will be at or above grade level for school year 2011–12;
- increase parental involvement to 250 parents at two separate school-wide events for school year 2011–12; and
- establish an inviting respectful school culture and climate with 90 percent approval of all parents, students, and faculty.

At present, the work completed to develop the school improvement plan represents a start to a strategic plan, but does not address the full range of potential topics (such as expansion, program growth, or fiscal and operational health).

The school improvement plan also does not include all of the critical elements essential for accountability, including prioritization of budget resources and performance measures for ongoing monitoring by the board.

Strategic planning is a process through which individuals knowledgeable about and intimately involved with an organization conduct an analysis of the organization's strengths, weaknesses, position within the external environment, and opportunities for improvement in order to develop a long-range plan for continual improvement. Without a long-range plan there is no assurance that long-term priorities will be identified and addressed, and that student achievement goals will be met and maintained.

A strategic plan should be a living document that is linked to the school's budget so the board of directors and school leaders can appropriately prioritize and allocate financial resources to ensure the plan is successfully implemented. A comprehensive strategic plan will encompass all aspects of school operations, including academic, operational, and financial, in addition to strategic objectives. For each goal, the plan should include the resources necessary (and allocated), clear staff responsibilities and timelines, performance indicators, and fund requirements.

KSA should develop a strategic plan to be used as a management tool to support effective governance and ensure successful implementation of the school's mission, vision, and values. The board, executive director, and principal should coordinate efforts with the Shared Decision-Making Committee, using it as the foundation for developing a comprehensive plan that addresses the school's highest priority strategies for the next three to five years. Periodically, and not less than annually, the plan should be revisited to assess progress, identify barriers, and revise goals, strategies, or action items as needed.

**Exhibit 1–6** provides some proposed steps for developing a comprehensive plan.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**EXHIBIT 1–6**  
**STEPS IN THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS**

| <b>STEP</b>   | <b>PURPOSE</b>   |
|---|--|
| 1 Vision  | Reflect on KSA's vision statement. Does it echo the current overarching expectation of what the school should be? Revise if needed.  |
| 2 Mission   | Reflect on KSA's current mission statement. Does it echo the intended purpose for the school? Revise if needed.  |
| 3 Values  | Reflect on KSA's core values. Do they reflect the principles that guide the school's internal operations and relationships with external entities? Revise if needed.   |
| 4 Strategies  | Identify and prioritize the most important strategies or areas of focus for the school (e.g., fund development; student achievement; expansion; climate; professional learning).   |
| 5 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis | Identify strengths and weaknesses (internal factors) and opportunities and threats (external factors) to explore possibilities for new efforts and solutions to problems.  |
| 6 Goals   | Identify specific goals designed to assist the school in accomplishing its mission. Goals should reflect a desired outcome three to five years out, depending on the content (e.g., three years for student achievement; five years for expansion). One to three goals per strategy/priority are recommended to avoid overextending capacity.  |
| 7 Objectives  | Identify measurable steps to achieving the goal. Three to five are recommended.  |
| 8 Action Plan   | For each objective, develop a detailed action plan. The plan should include specific action items or tasks to be completed; resources to be allocated; the name or title of the responsible party; a timeline for implementation and completion; and outcome(s) that will be used to evaluate progress. The action plan provides the day-to-day steps for implementing the overall strategic plan. |
| 9 Evaluation  | Establish a schedule for periodic status reporting and assessment of progress. The committee should meet at least annually to identify which objectives and goals have been met, identify obstacles, and identify solutions, if needed. Strategy/priority-specific workgroups should meet and communicate on a more frequent basis to ensure the plan remains on track.                            |

SOURCE: Created by the Review Team, 2012.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Some of the recommendations provided in this report are based on state or federal laws, rules or regulations, and should be promptly addressed. Other recommendations are based on comparisons to state or industry standards, or accepted best practices, and should be reviewed to determine the level of priority, appropriate timeline, and method of implementation.

| RECOMMENDATION  | 2013-14    | 2014-15    | 2015-16    | 2016-17    | 2017-18    | TOTAL                              | ONE                              |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
|   |            |            |            |            |            | 5-YEAR<br>(COSTS)<br>OR<br>SAVINGS | TIME<br>(COSTS)<br>OR<br>SAVINGS |
| <b>CHAPTER 1: CHARTER LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION, AND MANAGEMENT</b>  |            |            |            |            |            |                                    |                                  |
| 1. Reconstitute the board and develop fully articulated policies and procedures that will provide for effective operation and evaluation of the school.   | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0                                | \$0                              |
| 2. Establish a management structure that ensures efficient and effective administrative practices are implemented in a fair and unbiased manner.  | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0                                | \$0                              |
| 3. Establish a Shared Decision-Making Committee in accordance with HISD guidelines for the purpose of reviewing the school's educational goals, objectives, and major classroom instructional programs. | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0                                | \$0                              |
| 4. Develop a strategic plan to be used as a management tool to support effective governance and ensure successful implementation of the school's mission, vision, and values.                           | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0                                | \$0                              |
| <b>TOTALS-CHAPTER 1</b>   | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b>                         | <b>\$0</b>                       |



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# **CHAPTER 2**

# **EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY**

**KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY**

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## CHAPTER 2. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

Kandy Stripe Academy (KSA) is an external campus charter school of the Houston Independent School District (HISD) located in Harris County. HISD includes both external and internal charter schools, which report to the district's Chiefs of Schools. As an external charter school, KSA provides instruction to HISD students in accordance with a Letter of Agreement, or contract. In accordance with its contract with HISD, during school year 2011–12 KSA served eligible students from pre-Kindergarten (pre-K) through grade 8. The average daily attendance of KSA cannot exceed 480 full-time-equivalent (FTE) students at the main campus and 80 FTE students at the pre-K site. KSA is a school of choice, so it does not have a specific attendance boundary; students are drawn from the Houston area and may reside within or outside of HISD boundaries. All students are approved for attendance on an in-district or out-of-district transfer. If HISD has the need to send additional students, KSA serves them on a space-available basis.

The KSA contract with HISD describes the school's educational program as providing “an integrated across-the-curriculum approach to learning by incorporating higher-level and critical thinking skills through various methodologies and connecting academia and classroom activities to real world and practical living.” The program is intended to emphasize “cooperative learning, fine arts, character education, conflict resolution, reading and writing across the curriculum, organizational and study skills, and technology.” KSA strives to provide a program that is student-centered, authentic, developmental, and holistic and work in partnership with families and the community to achieve this goal.

In school year 2011–12, the KSA student population was approximately 96 percent Black/African American, four percent Hispanic/Latino, and less than 1 percent White. Approximately 82 percent of the students were classified as economically disadvantaged and 34 percent were classified as at risk. Fewer than 2 percent of the students were identified for special education services and just over 1 percent were classified as limited English proficient (LEP). As a public school with a high number or percentage of economically disadvantaged students, KSA receives targeted federal funds through Title I of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act. These funds are provided to school districts

for dissemination to individual schools that meet district-established criteria for Title I schools and are used to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic content and student academic achievement standards.

**Exhibit 2–1** shows KSA's enrollment over the past four years. The school has maintained a consistent overall enrollment between 427 and 435 students after experiencing a single-year increase of approximately 10 percent (38 students) in school year 2009–10. However, in school year 2011–12 there was a notable increase in pre-K enrollment and a notable decrease in middle school enrollment. KSA requested an amendment in its charter contract with HISD to serve pre-K through grade 5 only. Beginning school year 2012–13, grades 6 through 8 will no longer be provided.

As a campus charter school, KSA operates with the approval of the HISD Board of Education and within the jurisdiction of HISD. Although not required of a campus charter school, KSA has a board of directors. The school's management is overseen by an executive director, who in turn oversees the principal. Teachers report to the principal.

KSA was one of 19 HISD schools to earn an Academically Unacceptable (AU) rating for school year 2010–11 from the Texas Education Agency. In addition to the state accountability system, under the federal accountability provisions in *No Child Left Behind*, all public school campuses, school districts, and states are evaluated for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). KSA's results for school year 2010–11 indicate that the school met AYP. KSA's preliminary 2011–12 results indicate that it Missed AYP for performance in reading and mathematics.

**EXHIBIT 2-1  
KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY ENROLLMENT  
SCHOOL YEARS 2008-09 TO 2011-12**

| GRADE LEVEL                  | 2008-09    | 2009-10    | 2010-11    | 2011-12    |
|------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| <b>Pre-Kindergarten</b>      | <b>44</b>  | <b>65</b>  | <b>67</b>  | <b>82</b>  |
| <b>Elementary</b>            |            |            |            |            |
| Kindergarten                 | 48         | 50         | 58         | 62         |
| First                        | 43         | 46         | 38         | 46         |
| Second                       | 37         | 40         | 46         | 39         |
| Third                        | 43         | 36         | 34         | 39         |
| Fourth                       | 40         | 45         | 36         | 32         |
| Fifth                        | 32         | 31         | 38         | 29         |
| <b>Total – Elementary</b>    | <b>243</b> | <b>248</b> | <b>250</b> | <b>247</b> |
| <b>Middle School</b>         |            |            |            |            |
| Sixth                        | 42         | 45         | 39         | 33         |
| Seventh                      | 39         | 38         | 43         | 32         |
| Eighth                       | 24         | 34         | 36         | 33         |
| <b>Total – Middle School</b> | <b>105</b> | <b>117</b> | <b>118</b> | <b>98</b>  |
| <b>Total – Pre-K – 8</b>     | <b>392</b> | <b>430</b> | <b>435</b> | <b>427</b> |

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency Student Enrollment Reports, 2008-09 to 2011-12.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ◆ KSA's instructional leadership fosters a culture of commitment among teachers and families that provides a nurturing and supportive environment for all students.
- ◆ KSA's close working relationship with special education staff from HISD provides a solid foundation for its efforts to comply with state and federal requirements related to identification, evaluation, eligibility, and the provision of services to students with disabilities.
- ◆ Prevention of bullying behavior is enhanced by the use of an anti-bullying pledge.
- ◆ KSA implemented a mobile technology system to support student behavior monitoring and streamline the process for documenting student behavior.

## FINDINGS

- ◆ KSA lacks effective processes for conducting ongoing collaborative instructional planning and for monitoring the implementation of the adopted curriculum.

- ◆ KSA's teacher appraisal system lacks a comprehensive process for conducting teacher observations and providing timely, actionable feedback.
- ◆ KSA does not implement a structured, comprehensive, school-wide data disaggregation and response to intervention (RtI) process.
- ◆ KSA does not implement a comprehensive, data-driven system of professional development.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ **Recommendation 5: Establish processes for reviewing the content and implementation of its science and mathematics curricula across all grade levels on a regular basis.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 6: Develop a systematic, continuous process for conducting observations, linking lesson plan reviews to the observation process, providing actionable feedback to teachers regarding their performance, and then reevaluating progress.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 7: Design and implement a structured, comprehensive, school-wide data disaggregation and RtI framework.**

- ◆ **Recommendation 8: Develop and implement a comprehensive plan for effective professional development based on identified student and staff needs.**

## DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### **SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

KSA's instructional leadership fosters a culture of commitment among teachers and families that provides a nurturing and supportive environment for all students. Through interviews with parents and staff, and observing interactions among staff and students throughout the day, it was evident that close personal relationships are promoted and that students benefit from supportive relationships within the school.

In survey responses and interviews with the review team, parents expressed appreciation for the school's leadership team and teachers. They were particularly positive about the small class sizes, individualized attention provided to each student, and close personal bonds that exist among staff and families. Several families have had multiple children attend the school over the years, both in its current status as a public charter school and as a private school. Some parents reported having attended KSA and spoke positively about the experience.

KSA has consistently met standards for reading, writing, and social studies. When prompted to discuss their impressions of the quality of instruction and classroom management at KSA, parents reflected on the personalized instruction and support their children receive; the principal's calm yet firm approach to behavior management that is seen as both effective and non-punitive; the extent to which teachers and school leaders welcome parents as active participants and enlist their assistance in providing academic and behavioral support to their children; and the enduring sense of commitment among school leaders, teachers, and families to support the school and its students.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

KSA's close working relationship with special education staff from HISD provides a solid foundation for its efforts to comply with state and federal requirements related to identification, evaluation, eligibility, and the provision of services to students with disabilities. With regard to special education services, the contract between HISD and KSA states that the school will:

- ...promptly notify designated HISD personnel and complete all appropriate forms and paperwork in the

event that any Kandy Stripe teacher or staff suspects that a particular HISD student in the program may have a disability which may qualify him/her for special education services. Any such student shall be referred for testing through normal HISD procedures to determine if the student is qualified for special education services.

HISD and KSA staff reported that, as an HISD campus charter school, students with disabilities enrolled at the school are identified, evaluated, and provided special education and related services as described in their individualized education programs (IEPs) by HISD staff assigned to serve students onsite at KSA.

At the time of this review there were six special education students enrolled in KSA. All KSA students with disabilities are served in an inclusion setting. Special education services and support are provided by the HISD special education teacher within the general education classroom. One-on-one or small-group therapy, such as language or speech therapy, may be provided in a pullout setting for short periods. Both regularly scheduled and as-needed communication between HISD special education staff and KSA administrators and teachers are available to support the district's response to the needs of KSA students with disabilities and their teachers. The review team observed a consultation and planning meeting between HISD and KSA. The constructive support and open communication between HISD and the school that had been reported by the KSA principal and staff during interviews were evident in the observed interactions.

Special education programs must adhere to detailed and rigorous requirements. Students with disabilities must be identified and evaluated within stringent timelines. An appropriate and legally compliant IEP must be developed for each student who requires one. Special education and related services must be provided based on each student's unique needs and not administrative convenience. Students receiving special education services must be provided a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. Schools must also inform families of and assist in implementing procedural safeguards unique to parents of students with disabilities.

It is often challenging for entities such as charter schools and small districts to stay abreast of all the procedural requirements while also ensuring that the substantive, more qualitative aspects of each student's needs are being met. Even in instances in which the school assumes responsibility for

special education services, poor communication or inadequate supports can cause challenges.

The HISD special education staff and KSA administrators and teachers described an effective, functioning system for identifying and serving special education students. HISD staff support KSA and ensure that the needs of students with disabilities are being met and problems or concerns are addressed in a timely and efficient manner. The responsive and interactive communication system described by both parties and observed by the review team is critical for providing this support.

### **ANTI-BULLYING INITIATIVE**

Prevention of bullying behavior is enhanced by the use of an anti-bullying pledge. The Texas Education Code, Section 25.0341, defines bullying as written, verbal, or physical action that physically harms a student or their property, causes a reasonable fear of injury, or creates a threatening environment for a student.

According to the Texas Education Code, Section 37.001, the student code of conduct in all public schools must “prohibit bullying, harassment and making hit lists and ensure that district employees enforce these prohibitions.” The statute further defines harassment as threatening to cause harm or injury to another student, taking action that harms a student’s physical or emotional health, making lists of targets for serious injury with specific weapons, or engaging in sexually intimidating conduct.

The KSA Student Code of Conduct and the Parent/Student Handbook address bullying and other behaviors that will not be tolerated. In addition, upon enrolling in KSA, each student is interviewed by the principal who reviews the Parent/Student Handbook and Code of Conduct with the student. The principal ensures that all students and parents understand the expectations and the resulting consequences for noncompliance. Both students and parents must sign statements of understanding. As part of the culture of KSA, the administration has incorporated an Anti-Bullying Pledge into its daily activities for students to recite after the Pledge of Allegiance and the Texas Pledge. The Anti-Bullying Pledge serves as a reminder of their commitment to avoid engaging in bullying and to reinforce being respectful of each other. **Exhibit 2–2** displays the KSA Anti-Bullying Pledge.

### **EXHIBIT 2–2 KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY ANTI-BULLYING PLEDGE**

This is for me...  
 My friends today...  
 And my friends tomorrow.  
 I think being mean stinks...  
 I won’t watch someone get picked on  
 Because I am a do something person...  
 Not a do nothing person.  
 I care.  
 I can help change things.  
 I can be a leader.  
 In my world there are no bullies allowed.  
 Bullying is bad...  
 Bullying bites...  
 Bullying bothers me.  
 I know sticking up for someone is the right thing to do.  
 My name is [your name]...  
 And I won’t stand by.  
 I will stand up.

SOURCE: Kandy Stripe Academy, 2012.

### **MONITORING STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

KSA implemented a mobile technology system to support student behavior monitoring and streamline the process for documenting student behavior. In January 2012, the school began using ConductMonitor technology. This software allows teachers to document student behavior in seconds using any mobile device that has access to the Internet. This system records attendance, calculates student conduct grades for each grading cycle, and prepares reports without further intervention from teachers, thus reducing teacher workloads. The principal can view the real-time behavior status and conduct grade of all students and view up-to-date behavior statistics for the entire school from a mobile device. The software also provides a free Internet application for parents to view the real-time behavior of their child. KSA has received considerable attention for its initiative to use new mobile technology in the classroom to document student behavior.

In its Parent/Student Handbook, KSA indicates that students are expected to recognize their responsibility to abide by the rules of the school. The handbook states “discipline is the following of school rules and regulations, which are necessary for the orderly operation of the school community. Discipline is the training that develops self-control, character, orderliness, and efficiency.” Implementing this system has allowed KSA to track and enforce the handbook policy on discipline. KSA’s efforts to enhance its student behavior monitoring process lead to a safer learning environment for its students.

## DETAILED FINDINGS

### **CURRICULUM MONITORING AND INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING – SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS (REC. 5)**

KSA lacks effective processes for conducting ongoing collaborative instructional planning and for monitoring the implementation of the adopted curriculum. KSA staff does not meet formally on a regular basis to conduct horizontal and vertical curriculum and instructional planning. In addition, there is not a formal lesson plan format or review and approval system in place. As a result, student performance in some core areas has been below state standards.

KSA obtained a rating of Academically Unacceptable (AU) under the state accountability system for school year 2010–11 based on the science scores on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) for all students and the African American and economically disadvantaged subgroups. Before 2011, KSA had achieved a rating of Academically Acceptable each year from school years 2003–04 to 2009–10. However, student performance in mathematics as well as science was significantly below the state and district average across grade levels for several years.

**Exhibit 2–3** shows the percentage of students meeting the standard for mathematics, reading, writing, and science in grades 3 through 8 for school years 2007–08 to 2010–11.

Curriculum decisions are made by the principal and the executive director. The principal reported that KSA has always implemented the same state-adopted curriculum used in traditional HISD schools. This was reiterated by teachers, although during the course of interviews the specific series, materials, or resources being used were not identified. In the area of science, HISD significantly enhanced its curriculum for school year 2011–12. The substantive changes are reflected in **Exhibit 2–4**, a summary document made available to teachers on the HISDConnect Curriculum website. In the area of mathematics, the content of the scope and sequence documents used by HISD in grades three, five, seven, and eight during school year 2011–12 were updated in September and November of 2011. None of the KSA staff interviewed during the onsite visit referred to HISD’s recent revisions to science and mathematics curricula, so it is not clear whether KSA used the updated documents.

HISD contracted with Margaret Kilgo, an educational consultant with extensive experience in Texas, to conduct a series of workshops on the relationship between the state curriculum, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and Student Expectations, and the State of Texas

Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) and End-of-Course assessments. Several representatives from KSA participated, and the principal reported that it was helpful in focusing staff on critical components of the curriculum.

Instructional planning and curriculum management were described by KSA teachers as occurring through grade-level team meetings conducted every other week. Teachers stated that both within- and across-grade communication occurs and that informal discussions are held among teachers in which they share effective practices or solicit input from their peers. Teachers reported that one of the aspects of working in a charter school, and KSA in particular, that they found most rewarding was the flexibility and autonomy allowed within individual classrooms. Teachers feel confident about the quality and appropriateness of their instruction. However, given the standardized assessment results presented earlier in **Exhibit 2–3**, there is concern regarding the extent to which KSA’s designated curriculum for mathematics and science is being implemented with fidelity.

The principal reported that KSA has consistently used the same curriculum as HISD, even before becoming a public charter school. Acknowledging the significance of the AU rating, particularly given the lack of progress over time in mathematics and science, the principal stated that staff would be asked to spend time during the summer of 2012 engaged in intensive data analysis and reviewing and revising the mathematics curriculum as it is implemented at KSA. However, it was reported that funds would not be available to provide stipends for this work.

As part of the review process, surveys were administered to 22 teachers and 3 administrators at KSA. Twenty-two responses were received, for a response rate of 88 percent (22 of 25). With regard to fidelity of implementation of the curriculum, just over 68 percent of respondents indicated that teachers are encouraged to suggest programs and materials that they believe would be effective. More than 18 percent, or almost one in five respondents, disagreed with the statement that curriculum guides are available for all grades and subjects. These responses support the potential for inconsistent instruction, which may or may not align with the TEKS, across classrooms within the school.

Failure to conduct regular formal horizontal and vertical planning can lead to inconsistent interpretation and implementation of the curriculum both within and across grade levels resulting in gaps in student knowledge. The lack of a standardized lesson plan format and a formal review and

**EXHIBIT 2-3  
TAKS PERFORMANCE BY STATE, DISTRICT, AND SCHOOL  
SCHOOL YEARS 2007-08 TO 2010-11**

| YEAR/GRADE     | MATHEMATICS |      |            | READING |      |            | WRITING |      |      | SCIENCE |      |            |
|----------------|-------------|------|------------|---------|------|------------|---------|------|------|---------|------|------------|
|                | STATE       | HISD | KSA        | STATE   | HISD | KSA        | STATE   | HISD | KSA  | STATE   | HISD | KSA        |
| <b>2010-11</b> |             |      |            |         |      |            |         |      |      |         |      |            |
| 3              | 88%         | 86%  | 91%        | 90%     | 87%  | 88%        | -       | -    | -    | -       | -    | -          |
| 4              | 89%         | 89%  | <b>56%</b> | 86%     | 84%  | 81%        | 91%     | 90%  | 92%  | -       | -    | -          |
| 5              | 86%         | 86%  | <b>47%</b> | 87%     | 84%  | 69%        | -       | -    | -    | 86%     | 86%  | <b>53%</b> |
| 6              | 83%         | 83%  | <b>63%</b> | 85%     | 81%  | 84%        | -       | -    | -    | -       | -    | -          |
| 7              | 81%         | 81%  | <b>56%</b> | 86%     | 84%  | 80%        | 93%     | 92%  | >99% | -       | -    | -          |
| 8              | 80%         | 79%  | 70%        | 89%     | 87%  | 82%        | -       | -    | -    | 79%     | 78%  | <b>58%</b> |
| <b>2009-10</b> |             |      |            |         |      |            |         |      |      |         |      |            |
| 3              | 87%         | 84%  | 76%        | 92%     | 90%  | 85%        | -       | -    | -    | -       | -    | -          |
| 4              | 89%         | 88%  | <b>39%</b> | 86%     | 82%  | 73%        | 92%     | 92%  | 79%  | -       | -    | -          |
| 5              | 86%         | 86%  | <b>55%</b> | 86%     | 81%  | 87%        | -       | -    | -    | 88%     | 88%  | <b>67%</b> |
| 6              | 83%         | 80%  | <b>60%</b> | 86%     | 81%  | 77%        | -       | -    | -    | -       | -    | -          |
| 7              | 82%         | 79%  | <b>49%</b> | 86%     | 82%  | 81%        | 95%     | 93%  | >99% | -       | -    | -          |
| 8              | 81%         | 76%  | <b>56%</b> | 91%     | 88%  | 91%        | -       | -    | -    | 78%     | 74%  | <b>56%</b> |
| <b>2008-09</b> |             |      |            |         |      |            |         |      |      |         |      |            |
| 3              | 86%         | 83%  | <b>45%</b> | 90%     | 86%  | <b>50%</b> | -       | -    | -    | -       | -    | -          |
| 4              | 88%         | 87%  | <b>41%</b> | 86%     | 83%  | <b>58%</b> | 92%     | 92%  | 79%  | -       | -    | -          |
| 5              | 86%         | 85%  | <b>52%</b> | 85%     | 80%  | 84%        | -       | -    | -    | 85%     | 85%  | <b>42%</b> |
| 6              | 82%         | 76%  | <b>44%</b> | 93%     | 87%  | 88%        | -       | -    | -    | -       | -    | -          |
| 7              | 82%         | 78%  | <b>53%</b> | 87%     | 81%  | 79%        | 94%     | 90%  | 97%  | -       | -    | -          |
| 8              | 82%         | 75%  | <b>52%</b> | 95%     | 91%  | 96%        | -       | -    | -    | 73%     | 67%  | 57%        |
| <b>2007-08</b> |             |      |            |         |      |            |         |      |      |         |      |            |
| 3              | 85%         | 79%  | <b>56%</b> | 89%     | 83%  | 75%        | -       | -    | -    | -       | -    | -          |
| 4              | 87%         | 84%  | <b>48%</b> | 85%     | 79%  | 73%        | 93%     | 91%  | 91%  | -       | -    | -          |
| 5              | 86%         | 84%  | <b>57%</b> | 85%     | 79%  | 76%        | -       | -    | -    | 82%     | 82%  | <b>62%</b> |
| 6              | 83%         | 74%  | <b>61%</b> | 94%     | 88%  | 81%        | -       | -    | -    | -       | -    | -          |
| 7              | 80%         | 71%  | <b>45%</b> | 88%     | 83%  | 73%        | 93%     | 87%  | 95%  | -       | -    | -          |
| 8              | 79%         | 69%  | <b>50%</b> | 95%     | 89%  | 94%        | -       | -    | -    | 69%     | 61%  | 89%        |

NOTE: Shaded cells in bold font indicate results that are 20 or more percentage points lower than the state average.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System Campus Reports, 2007-08 to 2010-11.

approval system makes monitoring implementation of the approved curriculum difficult. This could result in instruction that is not aligned with the scope and sequence and the TEKS, and that does not adequately prepare students for state assessments.

Established practice in education supports the use of data to assess what students are learning and the extent to which students are making progress toward goals. To be truly

effective, however, data analysis must go beyond using data to identify what the students know and can do. It must include a deeper analysis of why students achieve differently, how students learn differently and what is impacting a student's learning or a teacher's teaching.

According to *Using Student Achievement Data to Support Instructional Decision Making* by the Institute of Education Sciences (September 2009), applying a problem solving/

**EXHIBIT 2-4  
COMPARISON OF HOUSTON ISD CURRICULUM DOCUMENTS – ELEMENTARY SCIENCE  
SCHOOL YEARS 2010-11 AND 2011-12**

| CURRICULUM DOCUMENTS 2010-11   | CURRICULUM DOCUMENTS 2011-12  |
|--|---|
| <p>9-week Cycle HAPG (Horizontal Alignment Planning Guide)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organized in Learning Focuses</li> <li>• Includes Time Allocations</li> <br/> <li>• Assessment Connections</li> <br/> <li>• Instructional Considerations</li> <br/> <li>• Instructional Strategies</li> <li>• Resources</li> <br/> <li>• English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS)</li> <li>• N/A</li> <li>• Objective Symbols                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Power Objective Ⓟ</li> </ul> </li> <br/> <li>• Connections to Literacy Leads the Way Strategies</li> </ul> <p>Vertical Alignment Matrix (VAM)</p> <p>Scope and Sequence Document</p> <p>Assessment Calendar</p> <p>Assessments that included interim assessments (IAs) and middle of year assessments (MOYs)</p> | <p>9-week cycle Planning Guide with two levels: Framework Planning Guide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organized in units and lesson sets</li> <li>• Includes Recommended Time Allocation with flexible days which can be used within the nine-week cycle to accommodate campus schedules, differentiated instruction, extended learning time, and assessment days</li> <li>• Assessment Connections that include English and Spanish formative assessments for each unit</li> <li>• Instructional Considerations including Instructional Accommodations for Diverse Learners</li> <li>• Instructional Strategies/Activities</li> <li>• Resources listed twice (within the Instructional Strategies/Activities section and under Resources)</li> <li>• English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS)</li> <li>• College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS)</li> <li>• Objective Symbols                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Power Objective Ⓟ</li> <li>◦ STAAR Readiness Standards Ⓜ</li> <li>◦ STAAR Supporting Standards Ⓢ</li> <li>◦ Process Skills PS</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Connections to Literacy Leads the Way Strategies</li> </ul> <p>Vertical Alignment Matrix (VAM) that shows connections to STAAR readiness and supporting standards</p> <p>Detailed Scope and Sequence Document that shows all the TEKS targeted by Units and Lesson Sets</p> <p>Pacing Calendar</p> <p>The frequency of assessments to be determined</p> |

SOURCE: HISDConnect Elementary Science Lead Teachers, New Curriculum Documents 2011-2012.

progress monitoring approach to analyzing student data enables schools to make instructional changes aimed at improving student achievement, including:

- prioritizing instructional time;
- targeting additional individual instruction for students who are struggling with particular topics;
- more easily identifying individual student’s strengths and instructional interventions that can help students continue to progress;
- gauging the instructional effectiveness of classroom lessons;
- refining instructional methods; and

- examining school-wide data to consider whether and how to adapt the curriculum based on information about student strengths and weaknesses.

KSA should establish processes for reviewing the content and implementation of its science and mathematics curricula across all grade levels on a regular basis. A standard lesson plan format should be developed and lesson plans should be reviewed regularly by administrators and instructional leaders for alignment with the curriculum and scope and sequence. Content and implementation reviews should be completed by administrators along with teachers grouped horizontally and vertically during collaborative planning sessions. Horizontal planning groups should include all teachers within a given grade level. Vertical planning groups should exist for each core subject and should include a teacher from

each grade level that can share the curriculum for that subject and explain how it is being implemented in their respective grade.

Conducting both horizontal and vertical collaborative planning sessions will allow teachers and administrators at KSA to evaluate on an ongoing basis whether the curricula are being consistently and effectively taught across all grade levels. During horizontal and vertical planning, KSA staff should review any revisions that have been made to the HISD curriculum and identify components of KSA's curriculum that warrant updating. When evaluating the implementation of science and mathematics curricula, horizontal and vertical planning groups should review written curricula, planning guides, teacher lesson plans and student work products. Particular attention should be focused on the following:

- By grade level
  - To what extent does the stated curriculum align with the TEKS and the STAAR?
  - To what extent is the HISD Curriculum Planning Guide used as a tool for ensuring instruction is aligned with grade level TEKS?
  - To what extent are the gaps in knowledge and skills identified through item analysis of recent TAKS results and ongoing progress monitoring of student performance targeted in grade level curriculum plans?
- By teacher
  - To what extent do lesson plans align with and incorporate targeted content?
  - To what extent are enrichment and supplemental activities designed to improve student learning and performance with regard to targeted content?
  - To what extent are lesson plans implemented as written and instruction provided in a way that meets the expectations of the school regarding student engagement, active learning and instructional environment?
  - What barriers to instruction or student learning are evident during classroom observations and through teacher reflection?

Frequent horizontal and vertical collaborative planning sessions will also allow teachers and administrators at KSA to

evaluate on an ongoing basis whether the current curricula are meeting the needs of its students and teachers, or whether supplemental materials should be used to enhance instruction. If a decision is made to select supplemental materials, Regional Education Service Center IV (Region 4) may be enlisted to provide guidance. Potentially useful resources from Region 4 include:

- Supporting STAAR Achievement: Targeting the TEKS and Readiness Standards;
- Emerging Mathematics Series;
- Region 4 Mathematics Collaborative;
- Gateways to Science, STAAR Edition;
- Annual Region 4 Science Conference; and
- Science Academies for Grades K–4.

KSA reported that since the time of the onsite visit the school has incorporated ancillary classes, such as physical education and art, into their instructional day. This provides teachers with time to meet for common planning. According to KSA, teachers in pre-K through grade 2 receive 30 minutes of planning time twice a week. Teachers in grades 3 through 5 are given 45 minutes of common planning time four days each week. During this time, teachers meet with their grade level teams to review student work, share best practices, and plan together using the school year 2012–13 HISD planning guide and scope and sequence. Teachers in grades 3 through 5 also meet with the instructional coordinator each Monday to review assessment results and determine whether the instructional calendar needs to be modified. In addition, teachers across grade levels meet every other week to plan.

KSA indicated that they have developed instructional calendars for each grade level and subject. KSA also created frameworks for mathematics, science, and reading instruction that outline non-negotiable best practices that teachers are expected to use during each part of the lesson cycle. The school has adopted a problem-solving model and set of common problem-solving strategies for mathematics and has implemented a Gradual Release of Responsibility Model of instruction for all subjects.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. Additional fiscal resources may be required depending on the school's decision regarding its curriculum needs.

### **TEACHER OBSERVATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONAL OVERSIGHT (REC. 6)**

KSA's teacher appraisal system lacks a comprehensive process for conducting teacher observations and providing timely, actionable feedback. There is not an established systematic feedback mechanism in place at KSA beyond that provided through the annual review. Structured formative evaluations are not conducted on a regular basis. Observation rubrics aligned with campus improvement goals are not being used to conduct formative evaluations and systematic communication regarding observations is not occurring with teachers before and after the observation process. This limits opportunities to improve teacher effectiveness and could contribute to KSA's limited progress in mathematics and science.

Staff reported that teachers are formally evaluated annually and board members sit in on their evaluations. Interview respondents reported that additional opportunities for informal evaluation and communication occur throughout the year. For example, the principal is frequently in classrooms to conduct brief informal visits, targeted "mini-walkthroughs," and longer guided observations. Observations may be scheduled in advance for a specific purpose, or may be unscheduled at the discretion of the administration.

A peer system was implemented during school year 2011–12 to provide additional support to teachers. Teachers are encouraged to request an observation by the principal or a peer teacher if they feel the need for guidance as they work with a particular student or content area. In addition, KSA uses a video monitoring system to allow the principal and the executive director to monitor all classrooms, both from the school building and from home. If a concern is noted regarding instruction or classroom management via the monitors, the administration will follow up with the teacher in question.

The KSA administration has enlisted the assistance of the National Center for Urban School Transformation to work on improving the school's teacher evaluation and observation procedures. The consultant visited the school on a monthly basis during school year 2011–12, modeling successful observation and feedback strategies and guiding the principal to provide effective feedback. The principal reported that this was helpful, and she is continuing to focus her efforts on providing more structured and systematic feedback to teachers as part of ongoing instructional oversight and teacher evaluation procedures.

Although KSA has made efforts to improve certain aspects of its observation process, the school has not developed a structured, systematic formative evaluation system. Frequent evaluations followed by timely, constructive feedback and opportunities to participate in targeted professional development allow teachers to continually revise and refine their methodology. KSA's lack of a structured evaluation process hinders improvements in teacher effectiveness. As a result, consistent progress in student performance in mathematics and science has not been achieved.

Both formative and summative evaluations are essential for improving teacher effectiveness and ensuring schools consistently provide high quality instruction in a supportive learning environment. Summative evaluations often receive the most attention, as they are closely associated with significant career events such as decisions regarding salary, tenure, or dismissal. In contrast, formative evaluations are intended to provide educators with feedback on how to become better teachers—whether by increasing student engagement, providing more effective instruction, limiting disruptive behaviors, or any number of other methods that lead to improved student outcomes. Observations and lesson plans are two very useful tools for implementing an effective ongoing formative evaluation process. An effective formative evaluation system provides teachers with actionable feedback to improve their performance and identifies professional development opportunities to assist their efforts. A feedback loop that provides opportunities for teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional interventions they implemented is critical to professional development.

KSA should develop a systematic, continuous process for conducting observations, linking lesson plan reviews to the observation process, providing actionable feedback to teachers regarding their performance, and then reevaluating progress. Existing HISD tools can be modified as needed to reflect the unique nature of charter schools in general and KSA in particular. As part of this process, KSA should conduct more frequent and more structured classroom observations and develop structured rubrics for observations.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (REC. 7)**

KSA does not implement a structured, comprehensive, school-wide data disaggregation and response to intervention (RtI) process. Teachers use student performance data

gathered from benchmark exams to monitor individual student progress and identify students for interventions. KSA provides before- and after-school tutorials, Saturday school, and pullout instruction in reading, mathematics and science for struggling students. However, aggregate data is not used to assess the effectiveness of core instruction or interventions. As a result, KSA is unable to identify and address systemic gaps that may exist in the instruction being delivered.

KSA uses the services of a private consultant to assist with disaggregation of student data. Since receiving the AU rating, administrators, teachers, and the consultant have spent time reviewing data and conducting a longitudinal analysis of student performance in science. With the support of the principal and the consultant, teachers use benchmark exams to assess student performance and identify students to participate in tutorials or pullout instruction. The district has relied on Title I funding to support a private provider to come to the school three times per week to provide intensive pullout instruction and Saturday tutorials. Teachers also conduct tutorials before and after school. Some additional funds are available to support teacher tutorials, and some are provided on a volunteer basis.

However, during interviews with the review team, it was reported that there is not a structured system in place for analyzing aggregate student performance data. KSA also lacks a process for using aggregate data to drive instructional changes focused on improving the academic performance of all students and student groups. Despite the significant amount of data analysis reported by staff, only 55 percent of school personnel who responded to the review team survey agreed that “teachers/teacher groups use data to tailor learning experiences for individual students/student groups.” It is also notable that 32 percent of teachers and administrators reported having “no opinion” regarding this item, when they are the groups who would be participating in the data analyses. Focusing RtI primarily at the individual student level is not an effective strategy for identifying deficiencies in the content or implementation of core curriculum (Tier 1) and supplemental interventions (Tiers 2 and 3) that are the foundation of the school’s educational program.

According to the *2008–09 Response to Intervention Guidance* from the TEA Division of Curriculum, RtI is the practice of meeting the academic and behavioral needs of all students through the implementation of high-quality instruction and scientific, research-based, tiered interventions aligned with individual student need. RtI requires frequent monitoring of

student progress to make results-based academic and/or behavioral decisions and the application of student response data to important educational decisions.

The Texas RtI framework comprises three tiers as follows:

- **Tier 1: Core Instruction**—Teachers use high-quality core class instruction aligned with the TEKS in which about 80 percent or more of the students are successful. This tier is the crucial foundation of the RtI instructional model.
- **Tier 2: Small Group Intervention**—Students are identified for individual or small group intervention in addition to core class instruction. This level includes scientific, research-based programs, strategies, and procedures designed and employed to supplement, enhance, and support Tier 1 activities. District-established standard protocol matches appropriate intervention strategies to specific student needs. Tier 2 addresses the needs of 10 percent to 15 percent of the students.
- **Tier 3: Intensive Intervention**—Students who have not responded adequately to Tiers 1 and 2 receive specific, custom-designed individual or small group instruction (designed using a problem solving model) beyond the instruction in Tier 1. This level of intervention is aimed at those students who have identified difficulties academically or behaviorally. Tier 3 addresses the needs of 5 percent to 10 percent of the students.

The following excerpt from the *Guiding Tools for Instructional Problem Solving* (GTIPS) manual produced by the Florida Department of Education effectively summarizes the ideal educational conditions for promoting student achievement. These conditions provide the foundation for a problem-solving/RtI framework that, consistently and appropriately implemented, will support KSA’s efforts to maximize student achievement:

1. Highly effective personnel deliver scientific, research-based instruction and evidence-based practices.
2. Curriculum and instructional approaches have a high probability of success for most students.
3. Instruction is differentiated to meet individual learning needs.
4. Reliable, valid, and instructionally relevant assessments include the following:

- Screening Measures – Assessment tools designed to collect data for the purpose of measuring the effectiveness of core instruction and identifying students needing more intensive interventions and support;
  - Diagnostic Measures – Formal or informal assessment tools that measure skill strengths and weaknesses, identify skills in need of improvement, and assist in determining why a problem is occurring;
  - Progress Monitoring Measures – Ongoing assessment conducted for the purposes of guiding instruction, monitoring student progress, and evaluating instruction/intervention effectiveness;
  - Formative Measures – Ongoing assessment embedded within effective teaching to guide instructional decisions; and
  - Summative (Outcome) Measures – Assessments typically administered near the end of the school year to give an overall perspective of the effectiveness of the instructional program.
5. Ongoing, systematic problem solving is consistently used, from enrollment to graduation for all students, to make decisions across a continuum of student needs.
  6. Student data are used to guide meaningful decision making.
  7. Professional development and follow-up coaching with modeling are provided to ensure effective instruction at all levels.
  8. Actively engaged administrative leadership for data-based decision making is inherent to the school culture.
  9. All students and their parent(s) are part of one proactive and seamless educational system.

**Exhibit 2–5** illustrates the cyclical and interactive nature of a three-tiered RtI model in which data from all students and all curricular areas are continuously reviewed to ensure optimum effectiveness school-wide.

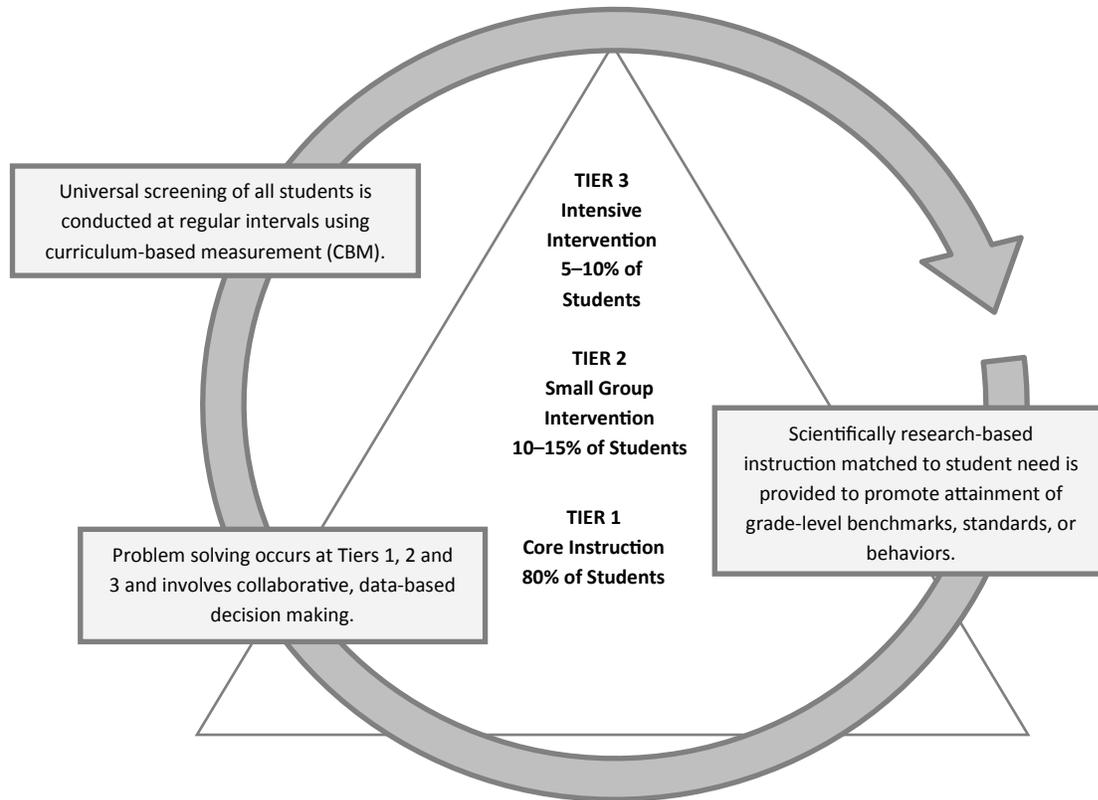
Although KSA uses performance data to identify individual student needs, the school fails to use the RtI process to assess the effectiveness of core instruction and interventions.

Effective RtI models examine data on how the total group of students and subgroups of students are performing. For example, core, whole-group instruction is considered effective if at least 80 percent of students are successful on assessments aligned with the objectives being taught. If the student passing rate is less than 80 percent, teaching practices should be evaluated and modified to ensure that high-quality, research-based instruction that is effective for the majority of students is being provided. The same standard is also used to evaluate interventions provided at Tier 2 and Tier 3. KSA's lack of a process for using aggregate student data to identify and address systemic gaps in its Tier 1 core instruction and Tier 2 and 3 interventions contributes to student performance in science and mathematics that is below the state average.

KSA should design and implement a structured, comprehensive, school-wide data disaggregation and RtI framework. The process should include ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of core instruction provided to all students at Tier 1 and supplemental instruction or interventions provided to selected students or groups of students at Tier 2 and Tier 3. In order to evaluate the quality of instruction and interventions, student progress should be monitored through frequent assessments. Performance data should be collected at least weekly for students receiving Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions. Collaborative planning teams should analyze school-, grade-, and classroom-level science and mathematics data, and consider the following questions presented in the Florida Department of Education's GTIPS manual:

- Are students provided with well-delivered, scientific, research-based core instruction? What is the research base? Is it applicable to the student demographic of this school or classroom? What is the evidence that instruction was well-delivered and in accordance with the requirements of the curriculum?
- What assessment tools or processes are used to identify instructional needs and the students' response to instruction or intervention?
- Is the core instruction/support effective? What percent of all students are achieving standards, benchmarks, or behavioral expectations? What percent of students in subgroups are achieving standards, benchmarks, or behavioral expectations? If addressing an individual student's needs, what percent of students in the subgroup are achieving benchmarks, standards, or behavioral expectations (If fewer than 80 percent, this is evidence that the core curriculum, as implemented is not effective)?

**EXHIBIT 2-5  
RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION THREE-TIERED MODEL**



SOURCE: Review Team, 2012.

- If core instruction is not effective, is the curriculum appropriately matched to the needs of the students? Is support provided for implementation fidelity?
- To what extent is the school-based leadership team engaged in Tier 1-level problem solving in order to increase the effectiveness of core instruction or behavioral supports?
- How are parents and students involved or engaged in supporting effective core instruction and behavioral supports?
- What is the decision rule to determine if student(s) will require supplemental and more intensive, individualized intervention or support?

KSA reported that since the time of the onsite review the school has developed RtI frameworks for each subject. The frameworks list the best practices teachers are to use during

each tier of instruction. The frameworks indicate that students selected for Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions receive 30 additional minutes of small-group instruction and are administered two additional assessments on targeted skills each month.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (REC. 8)**

KSA does not implement a comprehensive, data-driven system of professional development. Staff development is either mandated for all teachers or is selected by the individual teachers based on their own interests. In addition, there is not a school-level system for tracking professional development participation, nor are there requirements for the amount of professional development that teachers are expected or encouraged to complete. The lack of a systematic process for addressing professional development that uses

teacher and student data to determine areas of need, identifies targeted professional development that addresses those needs, and evaluates the effectiveness of participation limits KSA's ability to achieve long-term improvements in student performance in mathematics and science.

HISD has board policies related to professional development for teachers and principals. According to HISD personnel, external charter school teachers are also expected to attend the required state-mandated hours for professional development each year. As with all charter schools, special education and bilingual/English as a second language teachers must hold the applicable certification. Other teachers must be highly qualified in core academic areas in accordance with *No Child Left Behind*, but need not be certified. However, as stated in its Teacher Employment Agreement Contract and reiterated by the principal and teachers during interviews with the review team:

[KSA] encourages each teacher to obtain a teacher certification in an accredited program. In exchange for the training, tutelage, and time provided by [KSA] for each teacher to obtain a teacher certification, the teacher promises to fulfill in good faith as consideration a two (2) year commitment as a teacher to [KSA].

The original charter proposal provided to the review team stated that “KSA will provide parents with a school handbook, which includes teacher qualifications and professional development requirements (45 hours each year).” It is not known whether this is intended to reflect current policy; however, an undated copy of the *Kandy Stripe Academy H.I.S.D. Charter School Parent/ Student Handbook* did not include any reference to either teacher qualifications or professional development requirements for teachers. In addition, during interviews with the review team, teachers stated that there are no requirements regarding minimum professional development hours in which KSA staff must participate; decision rules for determining what specific professional development programs would be appropriate or effective for a given individual; or systems for tracking and evaluating professional development experiences.

As a campus charter school of HISD, KSA has access to the professional development opportunities provided by the district. Representatives from HISD reported that all KSA teachers are encouraged to attend professional development sessions scheduled by the district. All principals in the district, including principals of external charter schools, receive Academic Memos each week to inform them of upcoming professional development opportunities. If HISD

teachers are paid a stipend for attending a professional development workshop, external charter school teachers also receive a stipend. In addition, HISD staff indicated that all external charter school employees who register for HISD professional development are assigned identification numbers, known as T-Numbers, so that they can be tracked in the E-Train system used by the district. The E-Train database provides a detailed transcript that includes the titles of workshops and the number of hours attended. These transcripts can be printed at any time and HISD has encouraged external charter school principals to keep detailed E-Train transcripts and other professional development records on hand.

In interviews with the review team, teachers and the KSA principal reported extensive opportunities for and participation in both school- and district-sponsored training on the use of data for instructional planning, science, and reading. It was reported that one of the teachers had been identified as demonstrating notable potential as a science teacher, and as a result was invited to participate in an intensive training program through Region 4. With few exceptions, though, staff were unable to state with any level of detail the type or content of formal professional development in which they had participated, nor provide examples of how they have been able to apply lessons learned from the professional development to their classrooms.

As part of the review process, 20 KSA teachers completed surveys soliciting their impressions of the school. With regard to professional development, more than one-third of respondents indicated that professional development needed some improvement or major improvement. In addition, of the 19 teachers who responded to the item regarding staff development, 31.6 percent, or almost one in three, did not feel that the staff development program at KSA is relevant to their positions.

KSA does not have a process in place for teachers and staff to collaboratively review all available data and identify teacher-specific areas of need on which to target professional development. In addition, there has been no formal analysis of the actual impact of trainings on teacher instructional practices or student achievement. A review of student performance data from school years 2007–08 to 2010–11 reveals that there has been little improvement in science and mathematics during that time. This pattern of performance suggests that the professional development activities that have been implemented to target science, mathematics, and general data-based instructional decision-making have not

been effective in bringing about the substantive change needed to influence student learning outcomes.

Teachers are faced with increasingly rigorous and challenging expectations for meeting the developmental, academic, and social and emotional needs of their students. The students themselves present with a range of unique strengths and needs. Even the best prepared teacher candidates find themselves faced with situations they had not expected, had not planned for, and for which they are not prepared. All teachers (certified and non-certified, graduates of university-based teacher preparation programs or credentialed through alternative routes, experienced or novice) have the potential to become more effective if provided with high-quality professional development opportunities. The establishment of clear expectations for ongoing professional development represents a first step toward meeting this need. The purpose of a comprehensive plan that requires continuous development as an education professional is to ensure that students are provided with highly effective instruction in classrooms designed to maximize student achievement and performance.

As with RtI at the student level, teacher interventions in the form of targeted professional development must be based on both the specific area of need and the identified root cause of that need. Sometimes data analysis reveals gaps in student content skill sets, other times it reveals gaps in teacher pedagogical skill sets. For example, in an elementary school setting with a single teacher responsible for all instruction, if student expectations involving problem solving and higher level thinking are weak in the area of mathematics, it is likely more content-specific instruction in mathematics methodology is required. In contrast, if these skills are weak across all subjects, it is likely that the teacher would benefit from instruction in teaching and modeling these processes from a more global perspective.

Useful information related to job-embedded professional development is provided in the April 2010 issue brief entitled *Job-Embedded Professional Development: What it is, Who is Responsible, and How to Get it Done Well* published collaboratively by the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, the Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center, and the National Staff Development Council. Examples of authentic professional development that can be implemented within schools without additional costs for substitutes or travel include:

- Individual Professional Growth/Learning Plans—  
Under the guidance of a lead teacher or administrator,

teachers develop their own professional growth plans and track their growth in a competency area.

- Lesson Study—Teachers prepare and implement a lesson to demonstrate a specific teaching and learning goal while other teachers observe and document what they see. After the lesson, the teachers meet to discuss strengths and recommendations for improvement. Based on the feedback, the lessons can be implemented again and the process repeated to continually refine the quality of instruction.
- Mentoring—Matching teachers of the same content area, establishing a common planning time, providing for observations of actual classroom teaching, and structuring time for further collaboration. Mentoring can be a powerful tool for both mentor and mentee.
- Portfolios—Teachers assemble lesson plans, student work, reflective writing, and other materials that are used to prepare for teaching or are used directly in the classroom. The act of developing the portfolio can be a powerful learning activity in itself, as can presenting it to a group of peers or meeting with a coach to review it.
- Professional Learning Communities—Teachers collaborate to analyze their practice and discuss new strategies and tactics, testing them in the classroom and reporting the results to each other.
- Study Groups—Similar to book clubs, teachers meet in small groups or as a faculty and generate topics for study related to school improvement goals or student data and then read and react to educational research or other literature on teaching and student learning.

TEA offers Concept to Classroom, a series of free, self-paced workshops covering a wide variety of education topics. These workshops can apply toward professional development credit. A letter to administrator, syllabus, rubric, and list of criteria are provided with each workshop for participants requesting credits from their districts for successful completion. Topics include:

- After-school Programs – From Vision to Reality;
- Assessment, Evaluation, and Curriculum Redesign;
- Constructivism as a Paradigm for Teaching and Learning;
- Cooperative and Collaborative Learning;

- Inquiry-based Learning;
- Interdisciplinary Learning in Your Classroom;
- Making Family and Community Connections;
- Tapping into Multiple Intelligences;
- Teaching to Academic Standards;
- WebQuests; and
- Why the Net? An Interactive Tool for the Classroom.

Because of the complex nature of educational systems, it is often difficult to attribute change in a given student's performance at some point in the future to his or her teacher's participation in professional development at some time in the past. As a result, the most common form of evaluation is a survey or questionnaire, administered immediately after a training session, asking the participant's opinion regarding the helpfulness of the session, its applicability to the participant's current work, and the likelihood the participant will implement the lessons learned. This method of evaluation is somewhat helpful in identifying professional development that is clearly ineffective, but it is less accurate with regard to identifying professional development that truly is effective in influencing long range student outcomes.

An extension of the immediate survey method of evaluation involves following up with participants a certain amount of time after the training. At this time, they will have had an opportunity to apply the skills they learned in the training. It is hoped participants will respond honestly regarding the extent to which they changed their instruction because of what they learned. Within a contained setting like a district or school, this can be further, and more accurately, assessed through direct observation by a principal, mentor, peer teacher, or coach. It also can be assessed through guided reflective writing exercises.

The first two levels of evaluation are designed to measure change in teacher behavior. The third and most challenging level involves measuring changes in student behavior (e.g., academic performance; engagement; compliance with classroom rules). The number of variables influencing student performance is immense, making even correlational assessments uncertain. However, in many cases, a high-level analysis of performance, or changes in performance, among students whose teachers have participated in a particular training and continue to implement the specified intervention

or methodology with fidelity, can be very useful in identifying programs with the greatest potential for positive impact.

KSA should develop and implement a comprehensive plan for effective professional development based on identified student and staff needs. As a first step, a needs assessment should be conducted by a stakeholder team of administrators, teachers, and advisory board members. Alternatively, KSA may choose to contract with an independent educational consultant with expertise in the planning and evaluation processes related to professional development to conduct this assessment. The assessment should identify specific needs and prioritize them in order of significance and potential for impact. For example, items with the potential to improve student performance in science or mathematics will have a higher priority than items with the potential to improve student's writing. Based on the results, the team should set a reasonable number of attainable and measurable goals for meeting the highest priority needs. To the extent possible, professional development options should reflect the full range of opportunities, from formal courses to job-embedded authentic experiences to self-directed independent modules. Lastly, the system should be designed to include explicit evaluation procedures to ensure selected methods are effective and appropriately aligned with targeted needs.

KSA should incorporate into its professional development plan explicit procedures for collecting data aligned to the school's identified measurable goals and use those data to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the professional development. Measures should include the full range of impact levels, including but not limited to, the following:

- number of participants;
- costs in terms of time, resources, and funds;
- immediate impressions of potential impact, including identification of most valuable components and suggestions for improvement;
- subsequent self-reporting of implementation and perceived effect;
- documentation of implementation through naturally occurring artifacts (i.e., existing work samples or assessment data rather than additional assessments or measures administered solely for this purpose);
- observations to verify deliberate practice and fidelity of implementation; and

- review of student outcome measures to identify trends or other evidence of effect.

A recommended resource for developing the evaluation component of a comprehensive system of professional development is *Does It Make a Difference? Evaluating Professional Development*.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. If KSA chooses to contract with an outside

consultant, costs will vary based on whether the consultant provides the professional development in addition to assisting the district in developing a comprehensive plan that includes evaluation tools. Expenses can be contained by utilizing existing free or low-fee professional development resources available through HISD, Region 4, TEA, or current KSA staff.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Some of the recommendations provided in this report are based on state or federal laws, rules or regulations, and should be promptly addressed. Other recommendations are based on comparisons to state or industry standards, or accepted best practices, and should be reviewed to determine the level of priority, appropriate timeline, and method of implementation.

| RECOMMENDATION  | 2013-14    | 2014-15    | 2015-16    | 2016-17    | 2017-18    | TOTAL<br>5-YEAR<br>(COSTS)<br>OR<br>SAVINGS | ONE<br>TIME<br>(COSTS)<br>OR<br>SAVINGS |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|---|---|
| <b>CHAPTER 2: EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY</b>  |            |            |            |            |            |   |   |
| 5. Establish processes for reviewing the content and implementation of the science and mathematics curricula across all grade levels on a regular basis.  | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0   | \$0                                     |
| 6. Develop a systematic, continuous process for conducting observations, linking lesson plan reviews to the observation process, providing actionable feedback to teachers regarding their performance, and then reevaluating progress. | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0   | \$0                                     |
| 7. Design and implement a structured, comprehensive, school-wide data disaggregation and Rtl framework.   | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0   | \$0                                     |
| 8. Develop and implement a comprehensive plan for effective professional development based on identified student and staff needs.   | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0   | \$0                                     |
| <b>TOTALS-CHAPTER 2</b>   | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b>                                  | <b>\$0</b>                              |

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# **CHAPTER 3**

# **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

**KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY**

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## CHAPTER 3. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Charter schools face the task of carefully balancing the dual demands of educating children while balancing their budgets with available resources. Now more than ever, charter schools must demonstrate innovative teaching methods and identify resourceful means of obtaining better value. Success depends on their ability to establish innovations in the delivery of academic services and manage business affairs wisely and efficiently. Sound financial management, asset and risk management, and purchasing techniques provide some of the tools charter schools need to meet that challenge. These functions are collectively referred to as business services.

Financial management ensures that charter schools receive and manage revenue from varied sources; develop balanced budgets for effective spending; and issue timely, accurate, and relevant financial reports. Asset and risk management uses efficient banking structures to manage cash and liquidity; employs a variety of cash management techniques; maximizes investment earnings; ensures the health and wellbeing of school employees; reduces the risk of loss from unforeseen, catastrophic events; and safeguards fixed assets. Effective procurement practices ensure that the “right” goods are acquired, at the “right” time, in the correct quantities, at the “right” price, all in accordance with state and local purchasing regulations and guidelines.

Financial management plays a major role in charter school activities and touches every aspect of school operations. Effective financial management involves developing budgets to monitor spending, controlling costs, and establishing accountability while ensuring that actual financial results are properly captured, categorized, recorded, and reported as a measure against the budget.

Section 1.1 Financial Accounting and Reporting Structure of the TEA Special Supplement to the Financial Accountability System Resource *Guide for Charter Schools* (FASRG) states:

The purpose of financial accounting and reporting by charter schools is to accumulate and provide information to facilitate decision making by various user groups. Certain requirements have been established requiring charter schools to maintain proper financial accounting and reporting systems. In addition, principles and policies to ensure uniformity in accounting have been developed.

Kandy Stripe Academy’s (KSA’s) financial, risk, and purchasing functions are under the supervision and oversight of the executive director. The executive director has two direct reports—the principal and the business manager—who assist with business and finance functions. KSA’s staff performs basic accounting functions such as onsite payroll time keeping, supply ordering, and HISD reporting.

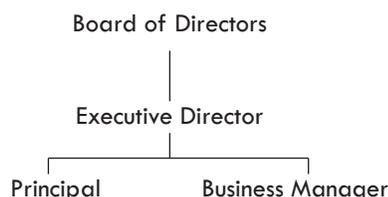
The school also uses contracted accounting services. KSA contracts with an external accounting service for certain financial transactions such as payroll disbursements and reconciliation, bank statement reconciliation, financial statement preparation and preparation of Internal Revenue Service (IRS) reports. In addition to the contracted accounting service support, KSA gets support from HISD. HISD provides numerous support services such as assistance to KSA personnel with the preparation and submission of financial reports; reviews or audits as required; analysis of charter school contracts; and monitoring of financial activities.

**Exhibit 3–1** provides an overview of the business services organization.

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### EXHIBIT 3–1 KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY SCHOOL BUSINESS SERVICES ORGANIZATION SCHOOL YEAR 2011–12

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SOURCE: Kandy Stripe Academy Business Department.

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Kandy Stripe Academy was established in 1968 as a family-owned child care center, and in 2001 became an HISD charter school. The mission of KSA is to provide comprehensive educational programs using research-based best practices. KSA programs are designed to increase student interest in academics and to promote good citizenship through instruction in conflict management and character education. The rights and responsibilities of KSA are set

forth in an annually updated contract between HISD and KSA.

JAA Enterprises, Inc. is a Texas corporation incorporated in February 1992. JAA Enterprises, Inc., doing business as Kandy Stripe Academy, operates through HISD. JAA Enterprises, Inc. operates as a Sub Chapter S corporation and taxable income passes through to the owners of the company.

**Exhibit 3–2** shows the Audited Income Statement of JAA Enterprises, Inc. for the year ended December 31, 2010. The total expenditures, as reported in KSA’s audit report, are \$2,354,052 relative to revenues of \$2,562,363 for a total net income for the year of \$208,311.

The school’s primary source of revenue is from reimbursements received from HISD based on the average daily attendance (ADA) of students enrolled in the charter school multiplied by the dollars allocated per student in accordance with the charter contract between JAA Enterprises, Inc. (doing business as Kandy Stripe Academy) and HISD. In accordance with the charter contract, KSA invoices HISD monthly for the student average daily attendance funding.

Section VI of the charter contract between HISD and KSA requires an annual audit of its accounts. The contractual requirement reads in part:

In compliance with Public Law 111-117 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2010 and Section 12.059(7) of the Texas Education Code, CHARTER will, at its own expense, have its fiscal accounts audited annually by a certified or public accountant holding a permit from the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy. The audit must be completed by November 15th of each year and said audit report shall be submitted to the Chief Financial Officer of the Houston Independent School District.

KSA’s external auditor is Earl E. Allen, Jr., P.C., a Certified Public Accountant. KSA’s latest audit report indicated an unqualified opinion that the school’s financial statements are an accurate representation of the school’s financial condition.

**EXHIBIT 3–2  
JAA ENTERPRISES, INC.  
DBA KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY  
INCOME STATEMENT – AUDITED  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010**

| <b>REVENUE</b>                                    |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| Net Operating Income                              | \$2,562,363        |
| <b>Total Revenue</b>                              | <b>\$2,562,363</b> |
| <b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>                         |                    |
| Salaries and Wages                                | \$1,155,579        |
| Rent  | 268,931            |
| Insurance   | 214,885            |
| Operating Supplies                                | 181,312            |
| Repairs and Maintenance                           | 155,886            |
| Payroll Taxes                                     | 95,048             |
| Awards  | 34,149             |
| Property Taxes                                    | 44,610             |
| Office Expense                                    | 37,203             |
| Consultants                                       | 23,680             |
| Contributions                                     | 22,700             |
| Utilities   | 19,264             |
| Professional Fees                                 | 18,943             |
| Permits and Licenses                              | 16,966             |
| Depreciation                                      | 14,703             |
| Equipment Rental                                  | 13,341             |
| Telephone   | 10,021             |
| Interest Expense                                  | 9,592              |
| Vehicle Expenses                                  | 7,907              |
| Advertising                                       | 4,759              |
| Security Services                                 | 2,238              |
| Meals and Entertainment                           | 1,088              |
| Dues and Subscriptions                            | 758                |
| Travel  | 252                |
| Penalties   | 237                |
| <b>Total Operating Expense</b>                    | <b>\$2,354,052</b> |
| <b>Net Income</b>                                 | <b>\$208,311</b>   |
| <b>Retained earnings at the beginning of year</b> | <b>\$216,688</b>   |
| <b>Retained earnings at end of year</b>           | <b>\$424,999</b>   |

SOURCE: KSA Business Office, May 2012.

## ACCOMPLISHMENT

- ◆ KSA reports 100 percent universal employee participation in the direct deposit of payroll disbursements.

## FINDINGS

- ◆ KSA does not have current, documented internal policies and procedures for the school's accounting functions and processes.
- ◆ KSA lacks sufficient budgetary evidence to ensure maximum use of public funds for priorities of the school's planning process.
- ◆ KSA lacks adequate documentation for donations to the school.
- ◆ KSA does not have adequate documentation for loans of assets to the school.
- ◆ KSA lacks adequate segregation of duties for certain critical financial transactions.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ **Recommendation 9: Develop written procedures for critical business and accounting processes and activities, including procedures when contracting with consultants.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 10: Ensure that the school's budget is developed in accordance with priorities established in its planning process and outlined in continuous progress reports.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 11: Strengthen financial controls to properly account for donations to KSA.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 12: Establish documentation to help ensure a proper accounting of furniture, equipment, and other materials on loan to the school.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 13: Improve segregation of duties for certain critical financial transactions.**

## DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENT

### DIRECT DEPOSIT

KSA reports 100 percent universal employee participation in the direct deposit of payroll disbursements. All KSA employees have been using direct deposit for the last two years. Direct deposit of payroll disbursements at KSA was

instituted as a labor efficiency and as a convenience to employees. First, the principal met with the teachers to discuss establishing direct deposit on payroll distributions. The principal then met with the contractor responsible for processing payroll to ensure the viability of establishing such a system. To start the process slowly, KSA first made direct deposit voluntary on the part of employees. Even on the volunteer basis, all but approximately four employees chose deposit initially. After the second month, the remaining employees chose to participate in the direct deposit process. The employees support the direct deposit on payroll disbursements. KSA intends to maintain this service to its employees.

Direct deposit of payroll disbursements benefits both the school and the employees. Direct deposit simplifies the payroll processing for the school and makes banking more timely and convenient for employees. Disbursement acknowledgements are more efficient than distribution of payroll checks at the school.

Direct deposit expedites the availability of funds to employee bank accounts, and eliminates the need for the employee to travel to the bank to make a deposit. For the school, it greatly reduces the chances of a paycheck being lost or stolen, and it makes it easier to track payments since they go directly into another bank account.

## DETAILED FINDINGS

### ACCOUNTING POLICY AND PROCEDURES (REC. 9)

KSA does not have current, documented internal policies and procedures for the school's accounting functions and processes. As an HISD charter school, KSA benefits from the HISD policies, but KSA lacks documented policies and procedures unique to the school's internal expectations and operations. HISD policies and procedures guide the school's finance and accounting transactions relative to the district interface. For instance, the school functions under the district's policies and procedures for certain financial transactions such as the submission of reports, requests for reimbursements, and warehouse orders. Also, as an external charter school, HISD provides support to the school such as:

- assistance to charter school personnel related to the preparation of financial reports;
- desktop reviews/audits to ensure compliance in accordance with local, state, and federal regulations and guidelines for student funding;

- analysis of charter school contracts and student data to assist charter school personnel in processing ADA and reimbursement invoices; and
- monitoring of financial activities including, but not limited to purchases, reimbursement invoices, textbooks, fixed assets, food services, consultant contracts, grants, and transportation (bus schedules and special trip activities) for charter schools.

HISD support and policies/procedures provide valuable guidance for school expectations and transactions. No written internal KSA financial policies or procedures were presented to the review team. Interviews indicated staff know what to do and how to do it because of HISD training, consistent technical assistance from the HISD charter school office personnel, and the benefits of working in a small office. School policies and procedures unique to the school, documented and communicated, are key components of a strong system of internal control. Knowledge of critical processes is important for consistent financial accountability and transparency. Written policies and procedures are critical to ensuring that accounting and finance operations are executed correctly and timely.

Much of KSA's day-to-day functions are performed from experience. For example, the business manager performs financial functions such as the completion of Title I fund reimbursement requests, management of revenues, and ordering and management of supplies based on training by the HISD charter school officer. Certain functions, such as bank reconciliations, are performed by consultants.

Yet internally, critical functional knowledge of specific positions is not documented in the form of procedures describing how to perform financial and accounting functions, and to what extent processes are performed by internal KSA staff, external consultants, or HISD staff. Such procedures include:

- processing and recording accounts receivable and cash receipts;
- purchasing and accounts payable;
- processing payroll;
- monitoring daily cash and investment balances;
- journalizing bank reconciling items;
- preparing and entering journal vouchers;

- tracking and maintaining budget amendments and transfers;
- performing general ledger maintenance including reconciliation of asset and liability accounts; and
- preparing Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) financial data submissions.

Written policies and procedures are critical components of institutional memory and continuity. Effective written policies and procedures are an important component of internal control because they provide:

- a permanent record of critical functions and processes;
- directions for performing critical departmental tasks;
- a reference for existing employees;
- a training tool for new employees; and
- uniformity and continuity of transaction processing when regular employees are unavailable and tasks must be performed by individuals not familiar with the processes.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) provides a *Special Supplement to the Financial Accountability System Resource Guide for Charter Schools* which provides detailed guidance on requirements specific to charter schools. Section 1.5.5 entitled *Accounting Policies and Procedures* discusses policies and procedures as critical elements of a strong system of internal control. **Exhibit 3-3** outlines TEA recommended financial-related components of a comprehensive manual. Recommended components lacking at KSA include critical aspects such as:

- budgeting process including the tracking and maintaining of budget amendments;
- accounting reports prepared for management decision-making;
- documentation of a segregation of key responsibilities and duties; and
- individuals authorized to initiate, approve and record transactions.

KSA should develop written procedures for critical business and accounting processes and activities, including procedures when contracting with consultants. Development can be addressed through an organized, systemic approach. Critical processes should be identified and placed on a schedule

**EXHIBIT 3–3**  
**FINANCIAL COMPONENTS OF COMPREHENSIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
**UPDATE 5.0**

**1.5.5 Accounting Policies and Procedures**

An important element of a strong system of internal control is a charter school's accounting policies and procedures. These may be included as part of a comprehensive manual that identifies the charter school's administrative, accounting, business, contractual, financial, legal, operating, payroll, personnel, and programmatic functions. The accounting policy and procedures manual is an important means of establishing a strong control environment and should be strictly adhered to by charter school personnel. A sound accounting policy and procedures manual can provide numerous benefits including:

- Providing internal controls and safeguards;
- Providing timely reporting on the status of funds; and
- Allowing systematic disbursements to maximize available funds.

At a minimum, the accounting policy and procedures manual should include discussion concerning:

- The budgeting process including preparation, amendment, and board approval;
- The accounting reports prepared for management and the governing body of the charter school;
- The review and approval of the annual financial and compliance report by the governing body of the charter school;
- The issuance and appropriate use of credit and/or debit cards including the reimbursement process and approval of expenditures;
- The control and confidentiality of accounting, business, contractual, financial, legal, operating, payroll, personnel, and program records;
- The release of accounting, business, contractual, financial, legal, operating, payroll, personnel, and program records to the general public pursuant to open records statutes;
- The data and/or reports needed to ensure that state and federal reporting requirements are met (e.g., PEIMS, Single Audit, expenditure reports);
- The duties performed by administrative and/or business office personnel with particular emphasis on the segregation of key responsibilities and duties;
- The individuals authorized to initiate, approve, and record transactions;
- The procedures to be followed for the different accounting, business, contractual, financial, legal, operating, payroll, personnel, and programmatic transactions conducted on behalf of the charter school by employees of the charter school, the charter holder, and/or affiliates of the charter holder;
- The charter school's chart of accounts with particular emphasis on compliance with and accurate use of the account codes discussed in the Special Supplement To Financial Accounting and Reporting;
- The charter school's purchasing functions with an emphasis on compliance with state and federal statutes and regulations; and
- The types of documents (e.g., purchase requisition, purchase order, invoice, receipt, utility billing statement) required for the disbursement of funds.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency's Special Supplement to the Financial Accountability System Resource Guide for Charter Schools, 2012.

showing when procedures for that function will be documented. The executive director should instruct the principal and business manager to document the steps in their respective responsibilities. Documentation of their processes can be accomplished incrementally while they are being performed during the normal work routine. Procedures could be documented in as many sessions as required consistent with the established schedule.

The executive director should ask the business manager to devise a template to facilitate the documentation of procedures and to ensure consistency with HISD expectations. Internal procedures should be documented and communicated among staff so the school personnel have a clear understanding of functional expectations and a clear system of internal control is established, as a guide. This approach is beneficial because documented procedures and

related policies provide a roadmap of instructions to ensure accuracy, completeness, and transparency of financial transactions.

Since the review team's onsite visit in May 2012, KSA has started the process of updating documentation for its accounting procedures and should have it completed in school year 2012–13.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**BUDGET PLANNING (REC. 10)**

KSA lacks sufficient budgetary evidence to ensure maximum use of public funds for priorities of the school's planning process. KSA's continuous improvement planning goals are prepared annually by the school and submitted to HISD.

Goals established in this improvement plan represent goals for the school’s continuous improvement, and as such, should drive the budgetary priorities. The school lacks budgetary planning documentation that shows a clear link between budgetary planning and KSA expected outcomes.

KSA submits documents to HISD for the school’s annual reports. From those reports, goals are established to address areas of weaknesses. An Executive Summary of the school’s Continuous School Improvement Planning Goals is developed at the end of the year to address the next school year. This report includes:

- Information
  - Demographics
  - Mission, Vision, Values
- Comprehensive Needs Assessment
- Inquiry Process and Analysis
  - Academic Strengths
  - SMART Goals
- Quality Design and Planning
  - Program
  - Processes for Intervention
  - Professional Development
  - Partnerships

- Continuous Improvement Monitoring and Evaluation
  - Common Assessments
  - Authentic Assessments

While this report establishes a framework for continuous improvement with goals and expected outcomes, there is no connection to the school’s budget. Instructional materials to help achieve expected outcomes are included in the report with no funding source identified. Documentation linking school priorities established in the planning process to the budget is a tool to communicate what is important to the school.

**Exhibit 3–4** shows the school’s 2011–12 budgeted expenditures for the general fund and all funds for each function and program. As can be seen, instruction accounts for 95.61 percent of the operating expenditures while school leadership is 2.91 percent. Obviously, 95.61 percent is a substantial investment in the instructional function. Documentation correlating expenditures to priorities in the school’s continuous improvement initiatives is important but not evident. Interviews with staff indicate that the principal and executive director meet with teachers to determine the best use of funds. Such discussions are an important step in a comprehensive strategic planning process.

A school’s budget should be developed in accordance with priorities established in its strategic planning process and outlined in its continuous progress reports. For example, a

**EXHIBIT 3–4  
KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY  
2011–12 BUDGETED FINANCIAL DATA BY CAMPUS**

| SCHOOL CAMPUS: KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY | DISTRICT: HOUSTON ISD |          |                |                    |          |                |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------|----------|----------------|
| FUNCTION                            | GENERAL FUND          | PERCENT  | PER STUDENT    | ALL FUNDS          | PERCENT  | PER STUDENT    |
| Instruction (11,95)                 | \$2,577,217           | 95.61    | \$6,036        | \$2,577,217        | 95.61    | \$6,036        |
| Instructional Res/Media (12)        | 5,446                 | 0.20     | 13             | 5,446              | 0.20     | 13             |
| Curriculum/Staff Develop (13)       | 12,729                | 0.47     | 30             | 12,729             | 0.47     | 30             |
| Instructional Leadership (21)       | 7,852                 | 0.29     | 18             | 7,852              | 0.29     | 18             |
| School Leadership (23)              | 78,324                | 2.91     | 183            | 78,324             | 2.91     | 183            |
| Guidance/Counseling Svcs (31)       | 7,103                 | 0.26     | 17             | 7,103              | 0.26     | 17             |
| Social Work Services (32)           | 344                   | 0.01     | 1              | 344                | 0.01     | 1              |
| Health Services (33)                | 6,438                 | 0.24     | 15             | 6,438              | 0.24     | 15             |
| <b>Total Operating Expenditures</b> | <b>\$2,695,453</b>    | <b>*</b> | <b>\$6,313</b> | <b>\$2,695,453</b> | <b>*</b> | <b>\$6,313</b> |

\*Percentages do not add to 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Public Education Information Management System, 2011–12.

school should consider in its budgetary planning process items such as:

- maximization of resources for school academic improvements;
- financial health including a desired fund balance; and
- expected outcomes from the resources invested.

The executive director and board should ensure that the school's budget is developed in accordance with priorities established in its planning process and outlined in continuous progress reports. School staff should work with all stakeholders, including the school and local communities, to gather input and feedback on school priorities and desired outcomes. The executive director should work with staff to ensure that the budget is planned considering expected outcomes from the planning and continuous processes. When allocating resources, the executive director should communicate to the board and community the relationship between the use of resources to desired outcomes (e.g., discussing and documenting specific funds allocated toward school priorities such as tutoring, supplies, technology to meet the goal to improve math and science scores).

Since the onsite visit, KSA reported that it is amending the budgetary planning process to include input from school parents, faculty, and HISD district officials and performance measures to examine how well actual performance meets planned priorities.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

#### **FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING CONTROL (REC. 11)**

KSA lacks adequate documentation for donations to the school. Interviews with school staff found that the executive director consistently makes donations to the school in the form of payments to employees (such as lunchroom workers and cleaning personnel). At the time of the onsite visit, no records were available documenting the amounts of donations. Such donations are a cost of delivery of charter school services, yet are not accounted for in the financial records. A complete, accurate accounting of costs associated with school services is important for transparency and consistency in reporting.

TEA sets forth the purpose of financial accounting and reporting by charter schools as to accumulate and provide information to facilitate decision-making by user groups. The elements of financial accounting for statements are those

items derived from the general ledger accounts maintained by the charter school in its financial accounting system, including cash donations.

The executive director should strengthen financial controls to properly account for donations to KSA. The executive director should work with KSA's accounting service to compile the amounts, purposes, restrictions (if any), and recipients of donations from all sources including teachers, community members, board members, employees, corporations, and local businesses. Such donations should be included in the accounting records. Any expenses associated with the donations should be documented for proper accounting for reporting purposes.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

#### **ASSET LOAN DOCUMENTATION (REC. 12)**

KSA does not have adequate documentation for loans of assets to the school. At the time of the onsite visit, much of the furniture at KSA was "on loan" to the school by the executive director. No records were available to document the ownership of the furniture. The school maintains the property records for capital asset purchases through HISD. HISD records and tags capital items purchased with public funds and annually updates the capital inventory. HISD annually provides an inventory listing for the school to update and return to the district for its records. **Exhibit 3-5** provides an excerpt from one of the inventory listings from HISD. As the exhibit shows, documentation is maintained on pertinent identifying information such as the acquisition date and purchase order number, standard and additional descriptions, original cost and asset control number, and the specific room location of the asset.

Section XIII, entitled Rights in Property, of the charter contract between KSA and HISD says in part:

All title to Kandy Stripe supplies, equipment, and records shall remain the sole property of Kandy Stripe. All title to HISD furnished supplies, equipment, furniture, materials and/or textbooks shall remain the sole property of HISD.

The co-mingling of furniture without proper documentation of ownership creates confusion about which assets were purchased with public funds and which are on loan. Subsidiary records indicating item details and ownership are important to protect assets of both KSA and HISD and minimize ownership dispute.

The executive director should work with the business manager to establish documentation to help ensure a proper accounting of furniture, equipment, and other materials on loan to the school. The business manager should use the format used by HISD (**Exhibit 3–5**) to account for publicly purchased assets as a resource to develop an accounting for assets on loan to the school. Such accounting for assets on loan to the school should be maintained to help ensure documentation of proper ownership of assets.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**SEGREGATION OF DUTIES (REC. 13)**

KSA lacks adequate segregation of duties for certain critical financial transactions. A proper segregation of duties can be challenging for small charter schools, such as KSA, because there are fewer employees to perform tasks. In small charter schools, employees have multiple responsibilities and tend to operate in a more informal, personal manner. Because of the risk involved, however, and the fact that the school is a steward of public resources, it is important to remain vigilant to ensure that segregation of duties exists and is operating effectively. Several areas of operation at KSA lack such segregation.

Areas of concern include:

- Lack of transfer documentation for food service collections – Cash for reduced and paid lunches is collected at the point of lunch sale and taken to the main office in a cash register type drawer without related documentation from the cafeteria cash accounting system. Without independent written

documentation of the amount of money at the point of collection, KSA staff have no control totals for reconciliation. The money is counted and recorded but is not substantiated with a register tape, student listing or roll, or meal counts. Lack of substantiating dollar amounts creates uncertainty of any questioned lunch receipts.

- Lack of segregation from related parties – Related employees, parent and sibling daughters, oversee and supervise other relatives. **Exhibit 3–6** shows excerpts from Texas Education Agency Policy 1.8.2.1 on nepotism.

**EXHIBIT 3–6  
EXCERPT FROM TEA POLICY 1.8.2.1  
NEPOTISM**

TEC 12.1055 states that Chapter 573 of the Government Code does not apply to a charter school if it is rated acceptable or higher pursuant to Chapter 39 of TEC for at least two of the preceding three school years. However, if the charter school is rated academically unacceptable for at least two of the preceding three school years, then Chapter 573 of the Texas Government Code applies.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Special Supplement to the Financial Accountability Resource Guide, Charter Schools, School Financial Audits Division, page 25.

A proper segregation of duties is a critical component of internal control because it ensures that no one person has complete access to a process or function that would allow them to both perpetuate and conceal improper activities. Financial and accounting functions are best controlled when authorization is independent from processing and approval.

**EXHIBIT 3–5  
HISD FIXED ASSET LOCATION CONTROL LISTING  
EXCERPT FROM FEBRUARY 27, 2012 PRINTOUT AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2011**

| ACQ DATE | P.O. BOX NO | STANDARD DESCRIPTION | ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION   | QUANTITY | ORIGINAL COST | ASSET NO.   | ROOM NO. |
|----------|-------------|----------------------|--------------------------|----------|---------------|-------------|----------|
| 3/2006   | 4501028662  | Comp Equip-Monitor   | V7650 CRT 17 INCH        | 1        | 136.00        | 10008000209 | 20       |
|          |             | Manufacture: HP      | Serial No.:              |          |               |             |          |
| 08/2006  | 45010705555 | Comp Equip-Monitor   | L1706 FLAT PANEL 17 INCH | 1        | 149.00        | 10000831122 | 16       |
|          |             | Manufacture: HP      | Serial No.: CN6231c27    |          |               |             |          |
| 08/2010  | 4501621161  | Comp Equip-Monitor   | L1719 Flat PANEL 17 INCH | 1        | 189.00        | 1000093921  | 16       |
|          |             | Manufacture: HP      | Serial No: CN009RKX      |          |               |             |          |

SOURCE: KSA Business Office, May 2012.

Independence is suspect among related party transactions. Cash collections, such as food service, are best controlled when collection is distinct from reporting and accounting. Related party transactions are best controlled, in appearance and fact, when independent of each other. Controls for segregation of duties are imperative for prudent management of financial transactions.

In 1992, the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO) issued Internal Control – Integrated Framework (Framework) to help businesses and other entities assess and enhance their internal control systems. The Framework consists of the following five components:

- risk assessment—is the identification and analysis of relevant risks to achievement of the school’s objectives. All organizations face a variety of risks from external and internal sources.
- control activities—are policies and procedures that help ensure management directives are carried out and include a range of activities such as approvals, authorizations, verifications, reconciliations, reviews of operating performance security of assets and segregation of duties;
- control environment—sets the tone of the organization and influences the control consciousness of its people and includes factors such as integrity, ethical values, management’s philosophy and attention of the board;
- information and communication—is a framework communicated in a form and timeframe that enables people to carry out their responsibilities and includes internal and external stakeholders; and
- monitoring—assesses the quality of performance over time.

Determining whether an organization’s internal controls are effective involves judgment resulting from an assessment of whether the five components are present and functioning effectively without material weakness.

KSA should improve segregation of duties for certain critical financial transactions. The COSO best practice framework should be used as a baseline for evaluating and improving the existing internal control structure. Controls for accounting transactions, such as for food service collections, should be improved by a better segregation. Related parties should not supervise or approve related financial transactions. The school’s executive director and board should adapt the

framework to the school’s circumstances and continually monitor adherence to the five components as the school’s internal control environment changes and evolves. The expectations of the school’s leadership will help set the tone for a proper control environment. The executive director should work with the business manager to establish compensating controls such that transactions are, as much as possible, properly segregated and controlled. For example, relatives within the same transaction processing should have an interruption in the control chain. As for food service collections, the cash drawer should be reconciled at the point of sale (prior to transfer for deposit) to an independent source such as the number of meals served.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Some of the recommendations provided in this report are based on state or federal laws, rules or regulations, and should be promptly addressed. Other recommendations are based on comparisons to state or industry standards, or accepted best practices, and should be reviewed to determine the level of priority, appropriate timeline, and method of implementation.

| RECOMMENDATION                         |   | 2013-14    | 2014-15    | 2015-16    | 2016-17    | 2017-18    | TOTAL                    | ONE TIME                 |
|--|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
|  |   |            |            |            |            |            | (COSTS)<br>OR<br>SAVINGS | (COSTS)<br>OR<br>SAVINGS |
| <b>CHAPTER 3: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT</b> |   |            |            |            |            |            |                          |                          |
| 9.                                     | Develop written procedures for critical business and accounting processes and activities, including procedures when contracting with consultants. | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0                      | \$0                      |
| 10.                                    | Ensure that the school's budget is developed in accordance with priorities established in its planning process.                                   | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0                      | \$0                      |
| 11.                                    | Strengthen financial controls to properly account for donations to KSA.   | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0                      | \$0                      |
| 12.                                    | Establish documentation to help ensure a proper accounting of furniture, equipment, and other materials on loan to the school.                    | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0                      | \$0                      |
| 13.                                    | Improve segregation of duties for certain critical financial transactions.  | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0                      | \$0                      |
| <b>TOTALS-CHAPTER 3</b>                |   | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b>               | <b>\$0</b>               |

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# **CHAPTER 4**

# **FACILITIES MANAGEMENT**

**KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY**

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## CHAPTER 4. FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Useful, well-maintained, up-to-date, and cheerful learning environments can help reinforce positive attitudes and performance by students, teachers, and administrators. For example, high indoor air quality and thermal comfort can improve concentration and learning. Facilities that are neither overcrowded nor underutilized provide an educational community where team work, cooperation, and other positive attributes can be practiced and promoted. Clean facilities with attention to hazardous materials management help maintain a level of appreciation and respect for the buildings of a charter campus. Facilities that provide a visible energy conservation program promote staff and student involvement while ensuring opportunities to reduce costs.

Engaging in facilities planning is essential to support educational programs and student needs. Facilities planning should be based on:

- educational programmatic requirements;
- student growth or decline;
- optimum utilization of existing facilities;
- funding and leasing considerations; and
- a clear understanding of the safety and security needs of the educational setting.

Additionally, facilities planning should include accurate student demographic information to ensure facilities are located in appropriate geographic areas, designed to optimum capacity, and expandable if necessary.

Preventive maintenance and timely repairs are performed to ensure that facilities are in working order and provide an atmosphere conducive for learning. Custodial operations provide for the general cleanliness and daily upkeep of facilities. Grounds operations ensure that the school yards are properly groomed and maintained. An energy management/conservation program should be implemented that is focused on monitoring energy costs and usage and establishing energy conservation practices.

Kandy Stripe Academy (KSA) is located in Houston Independent School District (HISD). In school year 2011–12, KSA served 427 students in grades pre-Kindergarten (pre-K) through grade 8 in the Fairchild school

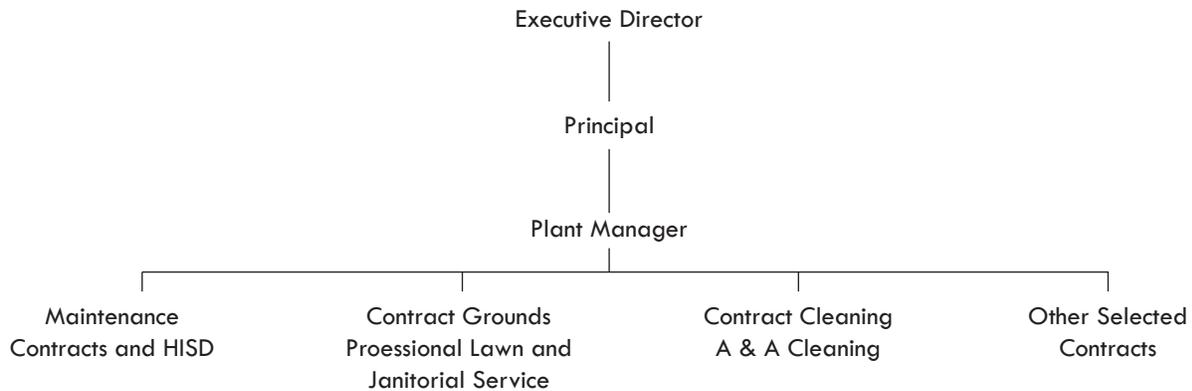
building leased from HISD. This facility is located at 8701 Delilah, in Houston (Harris County), Texas.

As an external HISD charter school, KSA maintains a formal leasing agreement with HISD for the continued use of its school facility. In general, KSA is responsible for all regular, routine, and everyday maintenance. Major repairs that are estimated to exceed \$100,000 become a basis for collaborative negotiation between KSA and HISD regarding fiscal and implementation accountability. During the review, the term of the lease agreement was from August 1, 2011 through July 31, 2012. KSA facilities are supervised by the onsite plant manager. The plant manager reports to the principal and collectively they have direct contact with the executive director in dealing with contracted services for the campus. The executive director directly negotiates all contracts for the campus while the plant manager oversees the campus's maintenance and custodial operations.

**Exhibit 4–1** presents the organizational structure and functions of the KSA operations at the time of the review team's onsite visit in May 2012. KSA has outsourced contracts to address maintenance, grounds, pest control, and custodial requirements for the campus. KSA has contracts with A&C Cleaning to provide floor care for the facility; Professional Lawn and Janitorial Service Company to provide lawn maintenance services; Namco Manufacturing to provide floor cleaner, trash bags, surgical gloves and selected other supply items; and ECOLOGY and ABC Home and Commercial Services to provide pest control services for the campus.

**Exhibit 4–2** shows total square footage at KSA.

**EXHIBIT 4-1  
KSA OPERATIONS ORGANIZATION  
SCHOOL YEAR 2011-12**



SOURCE: Kandy Stripe Academy Administration, May 2012.

**EXHIBIT 4-2  
TOTAL SQUARE FOOTAGE AT KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY**

**KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY  
FACILITY UTILIZATION: MAIN CAMPUS**

| AREA                        | SQUARE FOOTAGE |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Administrative              | 1,657          |
| Auditorium Platform         | 532            |
| Auxiliary Spaces            | 867            |
| Bathroom                    | 1,318          |
| Classrooms                  | 20,458         |
| Computer Lab                | 1,484          |
| Exploratorium               | 739            |
| Food Preparation            | 1,494          |
| Interior Circulation        | 5,531          |
| Media Center                | 1,488          |
| Nurse Office                | 288            |
| Storage                     | 337            |
| Student Dining              | 4,187          |
| Teacher Planning            | 451            |
| <b>TOTAL SQUARE FOOTAGE</b> | <b>40,831</b>  |

SOURCE: Kandy Stripe Academy Administration, May 2012.

**ACCOMPLISHMENT**

- ◆ KSA’s oversight of the custodial and maintenance contract has resulted in clean and well-maintained facilities.

**FINDINGS**

- ◆ KSA lacks a formal documented facilities master planning process.
- ◆ KSA has not implemented a comprehensive energy conservation program and practice. Without a comprehensive energy program KSA is unable to identify opportunities to efficiently operate their facility and save money that could be allocated to the classroom.
- ◆ KSA has not established a formal plan or written guidelines for ensuring that the indoor air quality (IAQ) is at an acceptable level that contributes to a healthy environment for staff and students.
- ◆ KSA does not have a hazardous materials management plan.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- ◆ **Recommendation 14: Develop a more formal and collaborative facilities planning process.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 15: Establish and implement a comprehensive energy conservation program and practice to maximize energy efficiency at their campus.**

- ◆ **Recommendation 16: Develop a formal plan and/or written guidelines for maintaining acceptable levels of indoor air quality.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 17: Implement a hazardous material management plan to comply with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements for properly informing employees exposed to such materials in the work place.**

**DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENT**

**CLEANLINESS AND PROPER MAINTENANCE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES**

KSA’s oversight of the custodial and maintenance contract has resulted in clean and well-maintained facilities. KSA implements proper cleaning and maintenance processes that contribute to a clean learning environment. The review team noted that the facility is free of graffiti; the majority of outside grounds are mowed; and floors inside are well maintained, clean, and free of excessive clutter.

The effective use of a cleaning service contract has allowed KSA to adequately maintain its facilities. The cleaning service provides major summer floor resurfacing throughout the facility (strip-wax-buff). The cleaning service also provides monthly floor care to maintain the facility. The plant manager is responsible for overseeing the cleaning contract and remains at the facility with the cleaning crew during cleaning

time. Signs around the facility supported an emphasis on keeping the environment clean and acceptable for learning.

Survey results show that stakeholder groups view KSA facilities as clean, well maintained, and sufficient for the educational needs of the students. **Exhibits 4–3, 4–4, and 4–5** display survey results supporting these conclusions.

**Exhibit 4–3** shows that 90 percent of teachers and staff indicated that the campus is kept clean. This exhibit also shows that 100 percent of parents who responded to the survey also felt the campus is kept clean. Employees who work in the facilities are positive about their environment and the community perception supports the same impression.

**Exhibit 4–4** shows that 74 percent of teachers and staff stated the campus facility is well maintained while only 26 percent have no opinion or disagreed. Ninety-five (95) percent of all parents responding supported the opinion of teachers and staff while only five percent of the parents disagreed. All those surveyed had a positive perception of how the facilities are maintained.

**Exhibit 4–5** shows that 75 percent of teachers and staff felt that emergency maintenance situations are handled promptly. Another 25 percent either have no opinion or disagreed. Likewise, 80 percent of parents strongly agreed or agreed with this statement. Based on both responses, it would appear there is a positive perception that emergency maintenance is handled promptly.

**EXHIBIT 4–3  
KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY SURVEY  
SCHOOL CLEANLINESS**

| SURVEY RESPONDENTS                                     | STRONGLY AGREE | AGREE | NO OPINION | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE | N/A  |
|--|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|------|
| <b>Survey Question: “Our Charter School is Clean.”</b> |                |       |            |          |                   |      |
| Teachers/Staff   | 65.0%          | 25.0% | 0.0%       | 10.0%    | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| Parents  | 57.4%          | 42.6% | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |

SOURCE: Review Team Survey, May 2012.

**EXHIBIT 4–4  
KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY SURVEY  
FACILITIES MAINTENANCE**

| SURVEY RESPONDENTS   | STRONGLY AGREE | AGREE | NO OPINION | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE | N/A  |
|--|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|------|
| <b>Survey Question: “Our Charter School is Well Maintained.”</b> |                |       |            |          |                   |      |
| Teachers/Staff   | 52.6 %         | 21.1% | 15.8%      | 10.5%    | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| Parents  | 53.1%          | 42.2% | 0.0%       | 4.7%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |

SOURCE: Review Team Survey, May 2012.

**EXHIBIT 4–5  
KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY SURVEY  
EMERGENCY MAINTENANCE**

| SURVEY RESPONDENTS   | STRONGLY AGREE | AGREE | NO OPINION | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE | N/A  |
|--|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|------|
| <b>Survey Question: “Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.”</b> |                |       |            |          |                   |      |
| Teachers/Staff   | 30.0%          | 45.0% | 20.0%      | 5.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| Parents  | 47.5%          | 32.8% | 16.4%      | 1.6%     | 1.6%              | 0.0% |

SOURCE: Review Team Survey, May 2012.

KSA’s processes and effective management of their maintenance contract has contributed to a clean and well-maintained facility.

**DETAILED FINDINGS**

**FACILITIES MASTER PLANNING (REC. 14)**

KSA lacks a formal documented facilities master planning process. At the time of the onsite visit in May 2012, KSA operated at two campuses, including a pre-K location and the leased HISD main campus. The main campus site also has four portables, including two classrooms for fourth grade and two classrooms for an after-school program for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century grant. In accordance with the lease agreement, HISD approved KSA’s recommendation to close the pre-K campus and eliminate middle school grades beginning in school year 2012–13. As of school year 2012–13, KSA only operates at the main campus location.

As an external HISD charter school, KSA maintains a formal leasing agreement with HISD for the continued use of its school facility. In general, KSA is responsible for all regular, routine, and everyday maintenance. Major repairs that are estimated to exceed \$100,000 become a basis for collaborative negotiation between KSA and HISD regarding fiscal and implementation accountability. The July 20, 2011 lease between KSA and HISD incorporates the following key components (not all inclusive) related to facilities management:

- KSA facilities must meet all district, local, state, and federal ordinances and the average daily enrollment is not to exceed 480 full-time equivalent students.
- KSA agrees to maintain facilities in accordance with local ordinances, state and federal law, district policy, and all applicable laws.
- KSA’s approximate rent under the agreement equals \$18,018 per month. In addition, the lease states that

the lessee will reimburse the lessor for the total cost of all utilities on a monthly basis.

- KSA shall be responsible for grounds and building maintenance through the lease term. KSA shall keep the parking areas, driveways, sidewalks, and grounds in a clean and sanitary condition.
- KSA is responsible for all capital repairs and expenditures up to a total amount of \$100,000. KSA must provide receipts and related documentation satisfactory to lessor to support all capital repair expenditures.
- All improvements, build-out, additions, or deviations made by KSA must be approved in writing by HISD’s chief operational officer.
- KSA is allowed to use the kitchen equipment onsite for school meals only and only where qualified for national school lunch purposes, and only so long as KSA contracts with HISD for meal service through HISD’s food service operator.
- KSA shall employ at the school’s expense a plant operator certified and licensed in accordance with applicable governmental or HISD requirements.
- HISD will provide student desks and other appropriate furnishings. KSA will be accountable for any lost or damaged textbooks, equipment, furniture, or other materials that are not returned to HISD.
- HISD will permit the charter school, when appropriate, to participate in the district’s bid costs for building and property maintenance and upkeep at no additional cost.

**Exhibit 4–6** shows the school’s building inventory. Space utilization drawings and square footage were provided for the main campus and each portable.

**EXHIBIT 4–6**  
**KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY BUILDING INVENTORY**  
**SCHOOL YEAR 2011–12**

| FACILITY                           | BUILDING                                    | YEAR MAIN BUILDING BUILT                           | SQUARE FEET       |
|------------------------------------|---|--|-------------------|
| Main Campus Building               | Previously HISD Fairchild Elementary School | Built in 1960. In 2001, leased facility from HISD. | 40,831            |
| Fourth Grade Portables (2)         | Two Portables (behind Main Campus)          | Not provided                                       | 759 per classroom |
| After-School Program Portables (2) | Two Portables (behind Main Campus)          | Not provided                                       | 759 per classroom |

SOURCE: Kandy Stripe Academy Plant Manager, May 2012.

Based on interviews, the review team determined that the process and scope for facilities master planning is an informal process directed by the executive director with selected staff. Annual discussions are coordinated by the executive director with staff to discuss the facility in general with an emphasis on space utilization for the upcoming year as well as needed facility enhancements or other changes. The planning process for closing the pre-K campus and eliminating the middle school involved discussions among key staff and the executive director. The decision to close the pre-K campus was made to allow for effective management of a single educational facility.

At the end of each school year the plant manager inventories the textbooks and furniture. This position also identifies internal and external items that require repairs. However, while onsite the review team observed that the portable classrooms did not have operating restroom facilities for the students and staff to use. In addition, the air conditioner was not operating in one of the portable classrooms.

A formal facilities master planning process represents a blueprint for effective daily decision-making and a road map for future facility and maintenance considerations. This process typically represents a formal way to establish the necessary documentation for all stakeholders and any potential funding approval authorities. The key outcomes of an effective facilities master planning process include:

- a capacity analysis for the charter's campus utilization which should reflect the campus instructional programs;
- a more comprehensive process for reviewing and considering the technology capabilities within the existing campus;
- a multi-year overview that considers the community demographics and growth potential which will impact potential student growth;

- at least a five-year enrollment forecast of students by grade and program to be factored into the plans for future renovations or enhancements;
- an estimated source or sources of funding that should be tied to the facilities needs and anticipated expenditures;
- an overall analysis of the campus to determine its best use based on the mission of the charter school and its capacity to meet its educational priorities in the short term and long term;
- an overview of any important information related to state and federal compliance issues or concerns that must be considered; and
- an extensive analysis of the charter's campus facilities regarding condition and educational functionality.

In 2009, the Austin Independent School District (AISD) set out to develop a comprehensive, long-range facility master planning process. The goal of the AISD plan is to maximize graduation rates and academic achievements within adequate and equitable facilities for all students across the district. AISD describes the process as follows:

The Facility Master Plan (FMP) establishes the framework for a flexible, annual process. It is a tool used to make future decisions about district facilities to ensure academic success for all students across the district. One component of the FMP, and updated annually as Board-identified priority initiatives are updated, is the Annual Academic Facilities Recommendations (AAFR). These recommendations are shaped by the annual academic expectations and operational needs. The FMP process includes an outreach and communication program whereby families and community stakeholders will be engaged in local workgroups to identify district-wide solutions in alignment with Board priorities and district goals.

AISD has developed a dedicated website that provides information on the framework, process results, and questions and answers related to the facilities planning process, located at <http://www.austinisd.org>.

KSA has a responsibility to HISD, as one of its external campus charter schools, to coordinate its plans in accordance with the lease agreement. Failure to properly plan and consider the facility needs could possibly affect the status of the lease agreement with HISD if activities are not properly addressed, with a potential unanticipated major cost to KSA.

KSA should develop a more formal and collaborative facilities planning process. As an external charter school for HISD, KSA has the availability of working with HISD facilities staff to enhance its facilities planning process. The management team of KSA, the executive director, principal, and/or Plant Manager should initially engage in the following steps:

1. The executive director should contact the HISD facilities planning department to discuss options for HISD to provide support in establishing a master plan framework.
2. The management team should determine what KSA sees as its five-year plan for growth and potential funding.
3. The management team should establish a formal collaborative assessment process to address any state or federal compliance issues.
4. The management team should establish a formal process and analysis of the educational functionality of the facilities in relation to KSA's objectives.

Although some tasks are performed related to facilities planning and maintenance, documentation or formal planning to track actions taken to improve would assist the school in budgeting and planning for potential facilities repairs outside of day-to-day maintenance and assist KSA in meeting the requirements of the lease agreement. HISD has an effective facilities planning process that can be accommodated to meet the needs of KSA. The Texas Charter Schools Association and its Quality Framework process along with the Texas Education Agency Charter School Division are additional resources to provide support.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. There should be no additional costs to the campus for taking steps to work with HISD and other state agencies to secure available resources to support the efforts to

implement a more effective and formal facilities planning process.

#### **ENERGY CONSERVATION PROGRAM (REC. 15)**

KSA has not implemented a comprehensive energy conservation program and practice. Without a comprehensive energy program KSA is unable to identify opportunities to efficiently operate their facility and save money that could be allocated to the classroom.

During interviews and onsite observations the review team learned that KSA has not implemented some energy conservation practices to maximize energy efficiencies. Energy saving light sensors were not evident in all of the classrooms and offices throughout the facility. A comprehensive recycling program or policy was not identified. There is no ongoing communication with staff and teachers to develop and maintain energy awareness. It was noted in an interview and through additional observation that some energy conservation signs were placed in the elementary wing of the building but they were not visible in the entire facility. KSA stopped placing conservation signs in the building and has not implemented any communication efforts with staff for energy conservation awareness.

Most facilities, including charter campus sites, incur utility expenditures which represent a significant cost to the operation. KSA utility bills are automatically sent to HISD for processing and HISD bills KSA according to the utility bills and usage incurred at KSA. No information was provided related to utility expenditures for the campus. According to interviews with staff, there is minimal ongoing analysis of utility costs at KSA to support efforts to monitor aspects of a comprehensive energy conservation program at the campus. Heating, cooling, electric lights, and sufficient power for equipment (copiers, information system hardware, cleaning equipment) are essential in today's educational environment. Consequently, schools are advised to take all reasonable measures to reduce energy use without compromising human comfort or the ability to perform teaching and learning activities.

Energy management or conservation programs cover not just electricity, but also incorporate conservation of water, recycling and waste removal. Since KSA is linked to HISD contractually, the school uses various resources developed by the district such as its emergency preparedness plan. HISD is an energy conscious district which has an effective energy conservation program. As noted on the HISD website, "The district is committed to saving energy and resources. Since

January 2012, Construction and Facility Services has saved 13.5 million kilowatt hours—enough energy to power 13 elementary schools for an entire summer.” HISD developed an energy initiative called the Green School Challenge website to engage schools to do their part to reduce energy, conserve water, and recycle. As part of the website, HISD provides sites with access to a School Audit and Education Worksheet to support sites in conducting energy, water and recycling assessments of their school campus.

HISD also has detailed policies addressing energy conservation. For example, policy CL1 (REGULATION) addresses services provided within the district. The tasks of this policy include but are not limited to:

- providing support services and assistance to principals in developing energy conservation programs;
- scheduling, modifying, and controlling air conditioning and heating services for schools through a computer controlled energy management system. The program is initiated through campus or school principals’ requests;
- providing technical support to schools or campuses requiring replacement of inefficient heating, ventilating, or air conditioning equipment and lighting systems;
- sending monthly utility consumption reports to principals; and
- conducting energy audits on an as-needed basis.

Texas Education Code, Section 44.902, on *Long-Range Energy Plan to Reduce Consumption of Electric Energy* states “(a) The Board of Trustees of a school district shall establish a long-range energy plan to reduce the district’s annual electric consumption by five percent beginning with the 2008 state fiscal year and consume electricity in subsequent fiscal years in accordance with the district’s energy plan.” Although this code may not directly apply to charter schools, the need to have an energy conservation program is an effective business practice and can help schools save dollars with quality practices.

With the advent of increased costs for energy to provide fuels for HVAC systems and other related activities, schools have established numerous and varied methods for increasing efficiencies in energy consumption and reducing operating costs. Energy management methods range from sophisticated, centralized computer control of HVAC systems and other energy consumption devices to simple manual procedures

for turning thermostats down and lights off during periods of minimal building or room utilization.

The Texas State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) provides several programs and resources that school districts can use to develop an energy management program and formal policy to promote energy usage awareness. SECO’s Schools/Local Government Energy Program assists schools and school districts, housed in public facilities, in setting up and maintaining effective energy efficiency programs. SECO provides preliminary energy assessments of facilities, energy management training workshops, technical support in designing new facilities, and onsite training for student energy awareness projects. At no cost, SECO provides the Energy Education Curriculum Program that promotes energy conservation and efficiency through education.

The SECO Energy Education Curriculum Program’s goal is to increase teacher awareness of alternative energy in their communities and to improve their understanding of the nature and extent of energy resources, energy conservation, and efficiency, the economic and environmental effects of energy use, and alternative energy technologies. SECO also recommends best practice elements for an energy management program that include a mission statement, ongoing monitoring and distribution of facility-specific energy bills, documents reasonable achievable savings targets for annual energy consumption and costs, and documents energy related tasks for custodial, maintenance, and administrative staff.

KSA should establish and implement a comprehensive energy conservation program and practice to maximize energy efficiency at their campus. Although the extent to which KSA can access some of the services provided to other HISD facilities is unclear, the experience of HISD in its successful energy conservation efforts is a valuable resource for KSA to establish the proper foundation and communication processes of an energy conservation program.

The executive director should appoint a primary contact for establishing an energy conservation program and communicating with HISD’s Facilities Management and Operations Department to identify resources that are available to assist KSA in this area. KSA should effectively engage teachers and staff in the ongoing process and incorporate effective communication to all stakeholders to increase awareness of energy conservation efforts. The primary contact for the program should establish the

necessary framework for a comprehensive approach to energy management. It is recommended that an ongoing formal analysis of all energy-related costs be incorporated into the process. While energy conservation programs include a wide array of topics, KSA should consider initially identifying two to three areas to focus on when developing their plan. For example, if KSA conducts a formal analysis of energy-related cost, setting a goal and implementing practices to reduce these costs by 5 percent would be a step in improving their energy conservation efforts.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. Forming a partnership with HISD may enhance this effort given that KSA can learn from HISD experiences how to maximize the campus resources while establishing an effective program that can be readily sustained.

#### **MAINTAINING INDOOR AIR QUALITY (REC. 16)**

KSA has not established a formal plan or written guidelines for ensuring that the indoor air quality (IAQ) is at an acceptable level that contributes to a healthy environment for staff and students. The review team learned through campus observations and several onsite interviews that KSA does not have guidelines that are readily known and shared to identify acceptable IAQ. The building that KSA leases from HISD was constructed in 1960 which presents a concern regarding IAQ. One parent response to the district survey indicated that there was mold in the classrooms.

Chemicals used in cleaning a school facility as well as treatment for other issues, such as pests, can also impact air quality. The ABC Home and Commercial Services pest contract indicates that the pest management program is basically a regular inspection which monitors monthly activity in selected areas and provides both exterior and interior treatment for pests. Nothing in the contract or in interviews revealed that the treatment would be controlled to avoid causing air quality concerns. According to the plant manager, annual asbestos reviews are conducted by an outside consultant. If any issues related to IAQ surfaced as a result of this annual asbestos review, HISD would provide the necessary guidance for correction. The HISD Facility Services website identifies several areas of interest in relation to IAQ, including integrated pest management (IPM), Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) management planning, asbestos rules, EPA guidelines, and environmental programs. While HISD addresses IAQ, the lack of a formal plan and practice at KSA puts the campus at risk of exposing students and staff to potential hazardous airborne substances.

Within the material on the HISD Facility Services website related to IPM are facts related to why an effort to maintain acceptable IAQ is important for schools. The material indicates that one in four children in cities have asthma and that cockroaches, dust mites, and pesticides are prime causes and triggers. According to the 2006–07 Texas Asthma Call Back Survey, more than 30 percent of children with asthma who had attended school within the past 12 months missed at least five days of school due to asthma related issues. The U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) also reports that chronic asthma conditions are the leading cause of school absenteeism. In addition to the asthma triggers identified on HISD’s website, EPA also identified mold and moisture as a trigger.

Although this does not apply directly to charter schools, the Texas Occupation Code, Section, 1951.212 indicates that each school will:

- adopt an IPM program;
- designate an IPM coordinator;
- only use licensed pesticide applicators;
- post indoor application notifications 48 hours in advance; and
- post outdoor application notifications at time of treatment and keep posted as required.

Texas school IPM rules further indicate that a school IPM program must contain these elements:

- a school board adopted policy;
- monitoring program to determine when pests are present and to justify corrective action;
- preferential use of lower risk pesticides and the use of non-chemical control measures;
- a system for keeping records;
- a plan to educate and inform school employees about their role in the program; and
- written guidelines that identify thresholds.

The *Planning Guide for Maintaining School Facilities*, developed by the National Center for Education Statistics in conjunction with the Association of School Business Officials, is an excellent resource for all elements of school facilities. It is available at <http://nces.ed.gov>. In this reference guide, the ‘four horsemen’ of school facilities maintenance are discussed, including IAQ, asbestos, water management,

and waste management. Schools may find themselves with IAQ issues because they fail to respond to warning signs. The guide provides reasonable actions to undertake to be proactive in relation to IAQ. The guide addresses the common indoor air pollutants and potential sources of IAQ contaminants. The potential sources include:

- fresh air;
- odors from dumpsters;
- lab and workshop emissions;
- cleaning process emissions;
- insects and other pests;
- insecticides and pesticides;
- furnaces and fuel lines;
- underground sources such as sewer lines; and
- HVAC equipment.

Critical incidents are not the preferred method of learning about environmental regulations that apply to a school campus. Schools must take a proactive approach to learn about their responsibilities from regulatory agencies, state departments of education, and other professional associations. Although charter schools are not governed by these same regulations, any effort charter schools make to establish IAQ guidelines as an effective business practice is promoting a healthy environment for its students and staff.

The Carrollton-Farmers Branch Independent School District developed the TEAMS (Tools for Schools, Energy, Asbestos, Moisture Management, Safety and Security) approach to managing the school environment for IAQ. The El Paso Independent School District responded to mounting IAQ concerns by implementing IAQ Tools for Schools guidance from the Environmental Protection Agency (Reference <http://www.epa.gov>.)

KSA should develop a formal plan and/or written guidelines for maintaining acceptable levels of IAQ. Since HISD will assist KSA in the event of asbestos related issues, KSA should discuss with HISD the possibility of gaining access to additional services related to IAQ. The IAQ Tools for Schools Framework provides a common language to describe drivers of IAQ program success. KSA should implement the IAQ Framework in coordination with HISD guidance. HISD’s website for Facility Services also provides an IAQ Complaint Form developed by the Texas Department of State Health

Services (TDSHS). **Exhibit 4–7** identifies the six key drivers to deliver effective school IAQ management programs.

**EXHIBIT 4–7  
INDOOR AIR QUALITY FRAMEWORK SIX KEY DRIVERS**

**THE FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL INDOOR AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT: SIX KEY DRIVERS**

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Organize    | Develop Systematic Approach                |
|             | Identify Existing Assets                   |
|             | Design Standard Operating Procedures       |
|             | Empower an IAQ Leader                      |
|             | Build an Effective Team                    |
|             | Create Champions                           |
| Communicate | Secure Senior Buy-In                       |
|             | Share Your Goals                           |
|             | Make IAQ Meaningful                        |
|             | Be Transparent & Inclusive                 |
| Evaluate    | Communicate Results                        |
|             | Solicit Feedback                           |
|             | Capture Return on Investment               |
| Assess      | Walk the Grounds                           |
|             | Listen to Occupants                        |
|             | Use Technology                             |
|             | Determine a Baseline                       |
|             | Keep Customers Satisfied                   |
| Act         | Identify and Prevent Risks                 |
|             | Educate Staff About IAQ to Change Behavior |
|             | Train Occupants to Address IAQ Risks       |
| Plan        | Address the Source of Problems             |
|             | Prioritize Actions                         |
|             | Put Goals in Writing                       |
|             | Start Small                                |
|             | Work in Stages                             |
|             | Plan for the Future                        |

SOURCE: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, May 2012.

In addition to the Key Drivers, the *Framework* outlines six technical solutions to define the most common issues that schools must address to effectively manage IAQ risks. **Exhibit 4–8** identifies the technical solutions.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**EXHIBIT 4–8  
INDOOR AIR QUALITY (IAQ) FRAMEWORK: SIX TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS**

**THE FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL INDOOR AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT: SIX TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS**

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Quality HVAC                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inspect HVAC systems regularly</li> <li>Establish a maintenance plan</li> <li>Change filters regularly and ensure condensate pans are draining</li> <li>Provide outdoor air ventilation according to AHERA Standard or local code</li> <li>Clean air supply diffusers, return registers, and outside air intakes</li> <li>Keep unit ventilators clear of books, papers, and other items</li> </ul>  |
| Control of Moisture/Mold           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct routine moisture inspections</li> <li>Establish mold prevention and remediation plan</li> <li>Maintain indoor humidity levels between 30 percent and 60 percent</li> <li>Address moisture problems promptly</li> <li>Dry wet areas within 24 to 48 hours</li> </ul>   |
| Strong Integrated Pest Management  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inspect and monitor for pests</li> <li>Establish an IPM plan</li> <li>Use spot treatments and baits</li> <li>Communicate with occupants prior to pesticide use</li> <li>Mark indoor and outdoor areas treated with pesticides</li> </ul>  |
| Effective Cleaning and Maintenance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct routine inspections of school environment</li> <li>Develop a preventative maintenance plan</li> <li>Train cleaning/maintenance staff on protocols</li> <li>Ensure material safety data sheets (MSDS) are available to staff</li> <li>Clean and remove dust with damp cloth</li> <li>Vacuum using high-efficiency filters</li> <li>Walk the grounds</li> </ul>   |
| Smart Materials Selection          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain products inventory</li> <li>Develop low-emitting products purchasing and use policies</li> <li>Use only formaldehyde-free materials</li> <li>Use only low-toxicity and low-emitting paint</li> <li>Select products based on product rating systems</li> <li>Use the least toxic cleaners possible (only those approved by the district)</li> </ul>   |
| Aggressive Source Control          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct regular building walkthrough inspections</li> <li>Test for radon; mitigate if necessary</li> <li>Implement a hazardous materials plan (use, label storage and disposal)</li> <li>Establish a school chemical management and inventory plan</li> <li>Implement Smoke-Free policies</li> <li>Establish an anti-idling school bus policy</li> <li>Use walk-off mats at building entrances</li> <li>Conduct pollutant-releasing activities when school is unoccupied</li> </ul> |

SOURCE: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, May 2012.

**HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MANAGEMENT (REC. 17)**

KSA does not have a hazardous materials management plan. During onsite observations and interviews, the review team found that KSA does not have a plan in place and lacks appropriate federal right-to-know information sheets, signage and necessary material for staff and others who work with hazardous materials while on campus. The outside contractor for custodial services is responsible for ordering and maintaining the hazardous material supplies, but the final responsibility resides with the campus. Primary use and access to these types of supplies resides with the contractor, but the supplies are housed at the KSA campus site.

Improper handling and storage of hazardous materials can result in scenarios that can cause adverse effects to human and animal health as well as the environment. The U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) includes all workers exposed to hazardous chemicals in all industrial sectors. The standard is based on a simple concept that employees have both a need and a right to know the hazards and the identities of the chemicals they are exposed to when working. Staff also needs to know what protective measures are available to prevent adverse effects from occurring. The HCS pre-empts all state or local laws which relate to an issue covered by HCS without regard to whether the state law would conflict with, complement, or supplement the federal standard, and without regard to whether the state law appears to be “at least as effective as” the federal standard. There are an estimated 650,000 existing hazardous chemical products and new ones introduced every day.

Chemical manufacturers and others must convey the hazard information they learn from their evaluations by means of labels on containers and material safety data sheets (MSDS). All employers are expected to have a hazard communication program to get the information to their employees through labels on containers, MSDS and training. Chemicals used by the custodial or maintenance contractors may need to be noted on MSDS to verify that proper procedures for their use, storage, and disposal have been properly followed. No potentially hazardous material should be brought into a school campus without being properly labeled and having an MSDS on file. A school campus is responsible for ensuring that its contractors take appropriate measures to ensure compliance with all safety regulations.

The TDSHS’s *Texas Guide to School Health Programs* (May 2009) recommends that schools keep copies of current

MSDS’s easily accessible to “minimize exposure to people.” As one best practice, the Mesquite Independent School District chose to deploy 3E Company’s online-MSDS, which ensures that all MSDS’s are up-to-date and available 24/7. The district chose to eliminate the binder requirement and subscribe to an online, 24/7 service specializing in MSDS information as well as a 24/7 hotline for assistance and questions. These online service providers offer the advantage of adding information to MSDS as new information becomes available on chemicals stored in the system.

KSA should implement a hazardous materials management plan to comply with OSHA requirements for properly informing employees exposed to such materials in the work place. The KSA plant manager should schedule a visit to HISD Facilities Services to review the MSDS process and hazardous materials management plan to determine if KSA can use any of their existing resources. KSA should also develop and maintain an up-to-date binder of MSDS related to hazardous materials exposed on the campus property. The up-to-date binder must be available for employee access for their right to know what they may be exposed to and what remedies are available from the charter school. Custodial closets should also have appropriate signage and MSDS availability for employees and workers.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. The first course of action should be to take advantage of the HISD relationship and the district’s expertise with regard to these requirements. There might be additional costs if KSA should decide to pursue the services of an online MSDS provider to address the need for MSDS documentation.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Some of the recommendations provided in this report are based on state or federal laws, rules, or regulations, and should be promptly addressed. Other recommendations are based on comparisons to industry standards, or accepted best practices, and should be reviewed to determine the level of priority, appropriate timeline, and method of implementation.

| RECOMMENDATION  | 2013–14    | 2014–15    | 2015–16    | 2016–17    | 2017–18    | TOTAL                              | ONE TIME                 |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
|   |            |            |            |            |            | 5-YEAR<br>(COSTS)<br>OR<br>SAVINGS | (COSTS)<br>OR<br>SAVINGS |
| <b>CHAPTER 4: FACILITIES MANAGEMENT</b>   |            |            |            |            |            |                                    |                          |
| 14. Develop a more formal and collaborative facilities planning process.  | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0                                | \$0                      |
| 15. Establish and implement a comprehensive energy conservation program and practice to maximize energy efficiency at their campus.                               | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0                                | \$0                      |
| 16. Develop a formal plan and/or written guidelines for maintaining acceptable levels of indoor air quality.  | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0                                | \$0                      |
| 17. Implement a hazardous material management plan to comply with OSHA requirements for properly informing employees exposed to such materials in the work place. | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0                                | \$0                      |
| <b>TOTALS–CHAPTER 4</b>   | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b>                         | <b>\$0</b>               |

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# **CHAPTER 5**

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

**KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY**

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## CHAPTER 5. SAFETY AND SECURITY

Traditionally, most school safety actions involve the safety of students and staff as well as the campus property. Historically, safe and secure schools typically entailed surrounding schools with fences to provide safe zones. Today's environment requires a more balanced and comprehensive approach of prevention, intervention, enforcement, and recovery to develop a more effective safety and security program. Safe and secure schools require identifying threats and vulnerabilities, developing plans to minimize risk, and then implementing the plans. Schools provide safe environments through building access management, identification processes, fire protection, communication systems, crisis management/disaster planning, playground safety, and overall building and grounds safety.

The Texas School Safety Center's (TxSSC) Emergency Operations Planning Guide (EOP), as well as many leading experts, identifies some common principles Texas schools should consider when developing comprehensive school safety policies and procedures, including:

- taking an All-Hazard Approach as the causes of emergencies can vary greatly, but the situational demands do not;
- using available guidance and planning materials from the TxSSC, which publishes written state standards approved by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), for school emergency planning;
- using a team approach; just as a coordinated emergency response depends on teamwork, good emergency planning requires a team effort;
- involving school leadership and seeking continued support to make emergency planning a priority task;
- building on documents that already exist, as even old emergency plans that are not current may be a good place to start in developing a new plan;
- seeking assistance from the TxSSC and Texas Association of School Boards (TASB), which provide advice and assistance regarding emergency planning and review emergency planning documents; and
- taking advantage of training opportunities offered through the Texas Division of Emergency

Management's (TDEM) Training and Exercise Unit which offers a course in emergency planning intended primarily for school emergency management personnel.

Kandy Stripe Academy (KSA) is sensitive to the safety and security needs of its facilities. The plant manager is the primary contact person for safety and security concerns of the school. Since KSA has a lease agreement with Houston Independent School District (HISD) for their facility, safety and security activities are coordinated between the two entities as necessary.

KSA has reinforced its security monitoring activities by purchasing and installing extra security cameras beyond what was recommended by HISD. KSA used HISD to perform annual safety and security assessments to highlight any gaps and/or concerns. The KSA plant manager has the primary day-to-day responsibility for safety and security activities and environment of the campus. The principal is also involved in coordinating safety supporting activities. Both the principal and plant manager maintain a working relationship with the local City of Houston police and emergency agencies as well as the HISD police staff.

KSA leases its campus from the HISD. The existing campus was one of HISD's prior elementary school sites. KSA's lease agreement outlines responsibilities of the lessee related to safety and security of the facility. Specific components of the lease that address safety and security include:

- Any and all of the security of any kind of KSA, KSA's employees, agents, customers, invitees, contractors, the premises, or any personal property thereon shall be the sole responsibility and obligation of KSA.
- KSA shall make no unlawful or extra hazardous use of the premises.
- HISD shall have entry into all parts of the premises at all reasonable hours for the purpose of inspecting and protecting same.
- KSA shall be allowed to utilize, as outlined in the lease, cabling and technology infrastructure equipment owned by HISD.

- KSA will maintain automobile liability, general liability, professional liability, and workers' compensation insurance in amounts required by HISD.

KSA has developed both formal and informal safety and security policies and plans that incorporate reasonable elements of prevention, intervention, and enforcement. A sample of the policies and procedures include visitor policies; periodic safety inspections by HISD; campus safety plans; and use of the HISD Emergency Preparedness Plan.

### ACCOMPLISHMENT

- ◆ KSA has taken considerable steps to secure its facilities with monitoring devices and other control measures.

### FINDINGS

- ◆ KSA's emergency plan and practice is not comprehensive and lacks necessary components which could ensure proper implementation when an emergency situation occurs.
- ◆ KSA lacks a formal disaster recovery plan to resume operations after an emergency event. Without a disaster recovery plan, KSA may have to delay returning to school after an emergency which could impact student learning.
- ◆ KSA does not formally evaluate its safety and security plans and programs to ensure the effectiveness of implementing these measures when needed.
- ◆ KSA employees are not required to wear identification badges, contributing to a less effective security process.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ **Recommendation 18: Enhance its emergency plan to include additional potential emergency situations, the necessary corresponding checklists, as well as the emergency telephone numbers and backup communication provisions.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 19: Develop and implement a formal disaster recovery plan document to address key actions necessary after an emergency event.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 20: Establish a formal plan and process to annually evaluate its safety and security programs.**

- ◆ **Recommendation 21: Establish a policy and practice requiring employees to wear identification badges at all times while on campus.**

### DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENT

#### MONITORING DEVICES AND CONTROL MEASURES

KSA has taken considerable steps to secure its facilities with monitoring devices and other control measures. Key individuals have hand-held radios for effective communication, which can be used in cases of emergencies and safety and security activities. The charter school has installed cameras in classrooms and other necessary locations. The use of cameras enhances security as it relates to building access. HISD worked with each of its schools, including its charters, to provide an initial allocation of cameras for security and safety purposes. KSA expanded the use of cameras more extensively to enhance the safety and security of its campus. Cameras are monitored at the front office, the executive director's office, and also at the home of the executive director. KSA has the option of having HISD also monitor the cameras, but the added costs to incorporate this feature would be at the expense of the campus; thus, KSA chose not to implement this feature.

KSA has added strobe lighting and horns as added security features to selected areas of the campus. The extra cameras, special lighting, and horns are KSA enhancements beyond the standard security devices typically found in a small facility. At the time of the onsite review, KSA was in the process of installing a new fire alarm system, since the prior alarm system was not acceptable. Since the onsite review, KSA has completed the installation of this system. KSA has implemented a cell phone free zone along with a requirement that students will be required to come to school with clear backpacks.

KSA also uses a special code to identify that someone is on campus who is not supposed to be there. Teachers are instructed to keep a low profile; a public announcement buzzer is located in each classroom to notify the office when necessary.

KSA established an effective process to secure its main entrance into the building. Based on onsite interviews and observations, it was noted that all visitors must ring a bell to gain access into the front office. Signage on the outside of the building directs visitors to come to the front office as a means of entering the facility. The staff in the front office can see who is at the main entrance before allowing individuals to

enter. Once a visitor is cleared to enter, they must sign-in on the campus log, show a proper ID, and obtain a visitor pass. The campus requires visitors to return their ID badge and sign out of the building. KSA established a verification process for parents or guardians to be authorized to pick up children by requiring each parent or guardian to sign an authorization form.

The campus is completely fenced and entrance to the facility leads to the main entrance. All other entrances are secured and locked, and requires someone to open the door to allow entrance into the building. The campus has a key-control system coordinated with HISD. KSA's efforts to increase the security features at the campus is providing a safer learning environment for the students and staff.

## DETAILED FINDINGS

### EMERGENCY PLANS (REC. 18)

KSA's emergency plan and practice is not comprehensive and lacks necessary components which could ensure proper implementation when an emergency situation occurs. At the time of the onsite visit, KSA had fire and disaster plan evacuation drawings posted in each classroom and strategically around the campus. The evacuation drawings display where each room is to evacuate. The document uses a red line and a blue line to separate the building and the portables into a reasonable method of evacuation. However, the evacuation drawings reviewed appeared to be hand drawn instead of typed, which would be easier to comprehend. Other emergency related drawings observed around the building were also based on the hand-drawn version. Since the onsite visit in May 2012, KSA administration indicated that the hand-drawn signs have been replaced with clear computer-generated evacuation plans.

An Emergency Plan (EP) was provided to the review team. This plan is a single, double-sided sheet with only cursory information for emergencies. The plan addresses the following categories of emergencies:

- Evacuation;
- Reverse Evacuation;
- Lockdown (interior and exterior);
- Shelter in Place;
- Severe Weather;
- Drop, Cover, and Hold; and

- Medical Emergencies.

KSA staff indicated they engaged in emergency preparedness activities several times a year to address the categories outlined as emergencies in their plan. However, the EP checklist is incomplete to address numerous common categories of emergencies faced by schools in today's environment, such as natural disasters, bomb threats, and school shootings, to name a few. Additionally, the EP checklist does not address procedures for evacuating students with disabilities.

According to KSA's plant manager, school fire drills are conducted on a regular basis and no specific issues or shortcomings have been identified. Emergency preparedness drills are conducted several times a year to ensure staff and students are aware of the requirements of the plan. The campus has not identified any issues or concerns during these limited exercises. A review of the *Monthly Fire & Disaster Exit Drill* report forms from August 2010 to April 2012 verified that the fire drills are conducted. The drills are rated either very good, satisfactory or poor. There were a few instances of incomplete forms. Some of the incomplete forms were either lacking an administrator's signature or did not provide a recommendation for corrective action when a drill was not "very good."

The existing EP is narrow in scope. The EP has some components of a checklist which simplifies implementation of emergency procedures for staff. However, as noted in the U.S. Department Of Education Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools' *Practical Information On Crisis Planning: A Guide For Schools And Communities* (January 2007), referenced in the Texas School Safety Center's 2008–2011 *District Audit Report – Findings on Safety & Security in Texas School Districts*, a best practice emergency plan should also include information on the following:

- natural disasters (earthquake, tornado, hurricane, flood);
- fires;
- chemical or hazardous material spills;
- bus crashes;
- school shootings;
- bomb threats;
- student or staff deaths (suicide, homicide, unintentional, or natural);

- acts of terror or war;
- outbreaks of disease or infections; and
- information on emergencies unique to the school.

In addition to these categories, it is useful if the EP checklist includes emergency contact numbers and provisions for backup communication with faculty, HISD, and emergency agencies, which are not currently part of the material shared with KSA staff.

Providing an incomplete EP for teachers and staff to reference in an emergency could cause a major crisis that could have been prevented with a comprehensive EP. Additional emergency categories address the reality of today's environment, and contact emergency numbers and provisions for backup communications are critical to the process.

The TxSSC provides numerous free resources to improve emergency plans. These free resources include:

- school facility safety and security audit toolkits;
- school facility safety and security audit survey templates for teachers, staff, students, and parents;
- interview guides for a school facility safety and security audit;
- report templates for a school facility safety and security audit;
- training for a school district facility safety and security audit;
- list of best practices for school safety and security standards;
- emergency operations planning (EOP) guides and checklists; and
- training on other topics such as gang awareness, suicide prevention, digital wellness, and school violence, to name a few. The center has approximately 25 trainings scheduled through the end of 2012. A complete list of upcoming trainings can be reviewed on the web at <http://www.txssc.txstate.edu/K12/schedule> (Note: The Texas School Safety Center allows charter school representatives to attend trainings being delivered at nearby public school districts at no charge; however, at this time, the center is not able to provide onsite training to charter schools).

KSA should enhance its EP to include additional potential emergencies, the necessary corresponding checklists, as well as the emergency telephone numbers and backup communication provisions. The plant manager should also use some method of tracking the drills that occur to include at a minimum the date, time of the drill, and the response time it took for staff and students to complete the drill.

The executive director, principal, and plant manager should discuss the most feasible process to outline the additional requirements as specified and incorporate into the existing EP. Once updated EPs are drafted, procedures should be discussed with local fire authorities, law enforcement agencies, and other local agencies as appropriate and include procedures for evacuating students with disabilities.

The revised EP should be distributed to teachers and staff, and posted at other key locations on campus, prior versions should be discarded. Further discussion with community agencies as well as HISD should be scheduled once KSA establishes a course of action.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

#### **DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN (REC. 19)**

KSA lacks a formal disaster recovery plan to resume operations after an emergency. Without a disaster recovery plan, KSA may have to delay school operations after an emergency.

During onsite interviews, follow-up communications, and extensive review of documentation, it is evident the campus lacks any type of formally implemented disaster recovery plan to be considered after an emergency event. The only identified and documented recovery related activity for KSA deals with evacuation components such as fire drills or EP drills. However, there is no plan for how to restore the school operations back to normal to allow the school to continue operating effectively in a different physical site, if needed. KSA was unable to provide an example of past actions, such as during the hurricane of 2008 which impacted the Houston area.

Research indicates that schools are increasingly more susceptible to experiencing a crisis that adversely affects large numbers of students and faculty. Schools today are facing new types of trauma and emergencies that were almost nonexistent 20 years ago, including hostage-taking, sniper attacks, murders, terrorist activities and bomb scares to name a few. These types of situations cause an aftermath of issues

difficult to predict. The more direct the exposure to the event, the higher the risk for emotional harm, which requires post-intervention planning to assist students and staff to recover from the physical, psychological and emotional trauma associated with traumatic events. A disaster recovery plan provides immediate help and referral procedures for those in need.

Weather-related emergencies require a different set of recovery considerations. Unpredictable weather situations can cause wind or water damage to buildings and computer-related operations. Recovery plans must consider an alternative location to establish the continuance of the education process and the necessary support functions to conduct business. In addition to weather, consideration must be given to the recovery steps necessary to deal with a major fire that could destroy a building or a major portion of the facility. Schools must have contingency plans on how to continue to conduct business if the facility is no longer available for educational purposes either short term or long term. All disaster or crisis situations must be considered in the recovery plan so that the campus is prepared to deal with situations that might arise. Disaster planning is more than dealing with response activities; it is also being prepared for recovery situations regardless of the crisis or disaster. Finding the school in the middle of a crisis recovery without a plan and engaged in problem solving is not the appropriate situation in which to make decisions that affect students and faculty, and could have unintended consequences.

KSA should develop and implement a formal disaster recovery plan document to address key actions necessary after an emergency event. Leadership must establish a time, during school year 2012–13, to discuss the factors to be considered in establishing a recovery plan. Access to HISD and to the Texas School Safety Center are options the school should consider to do preliminary research to determine if either organization has readily available material and/or suggestions and support to develop a comprehensive recovery plan. Once the school has prepared and completed its background research, the campus should designate the appropriate individuals to collaborate and develop the plan and have it approved by school leadership. Once the school has an acceptable plan, it should be approved by the board, communicated to staff, implemented, monitored and updated on an annual basis.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### **EVALUATION OF SAFETY AND SECURITY PROGRAMS (REC. 20)**

KSA does not formally evaluate its safety and security plans and programs to ensure the effectiveness of implementing these measures when needed. Based on interviews conducted onsite and a review of provided documentation, the KSA campus has no formal in-house process to evaluate the effectiveness of its existing safety and security programs.

During 2011, the HISD Police Department conducted a Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) assessment of KSA. CPTED assessment is based on the premise that the proper design and effective use of the building environment can lead to a reduction in incidence and fear of crime, and an improvement in the quality of life. The Crime Analysis section of the CPTED assessment entitled ‘Formative Assessment and Safety Audit of KSA’ indicated that the campus-based HISD Police Uniform Crime Report (UCR) reported by the school indicated no incidents for these categories:

- larceny theft;
- curfew and loitering laws;
- disorderly conduct;
- drug abuse violations;
- simple assaults;
- sex offenses;
- vandalism; and
- all other offenses.

This process for assessment of KSA areas of safety and security conducted by HISD’s Police Department is limited in scope. The CPTED assessment was part of an annual HISD process and part of HISD’s lease agreement activities for KSA. Each year, HISD conducts a “walk-around” to follow-up on the prior assessment. The report is shared with the principal and it is up to the campus to implement any recommendations. Many areas of the report were marked N/A (not applicable) because the assessment was conducted at night and some of the activities were not performed because of lack of accessibility. The assessment can be conducted either at night or during the day.

This assessment was conducted in two categories: site and building exterior and building interior. Some of the exterior areas determined that KSA needed to address were parking lot signs, no trespassing signs, and drug free zone signs. The

report indicated that the school had not posted “no trespassing” signs pursuant to state law and local regulations. While onsite, the review team did not observe “no trespassing” signs as recommended in this report. The report also highlighted the need to improve exterior lighting and camera surveillance for the parking lot and the portables. KSA has taken steps to implement the actions related to the cameras in the parking lot and portables.

KSA uses the HISD emergency preparedness plan referred to as ‘the red book’, as its primary source and guide for emergency preparedness. The red book includes emergency procedures for many situations, with sections on:

- Emergency Information for Parents;
- Emergency Response Preparedness Procedures for HISD Principals and Work-Location Supervisors;
- Emergency Response Preparedness Procedures for HISD Employees;
- Understanding and First Response to National Security Alert Codes;
- Shelter-in-Place Procedures for Principals, Teachers, and Parents; and
- Shelter-in-Place Procedures for Work-Location Supervisors.

Although HISD conducts the CPTED assessment at KSA, the process is not a replacement for the need for KSA to have a formal plan and process to annually evaluate its safety and security programs. The school conducts fire drills and evacuation drills, and it is important to determine any weaknesses identified during the drill or exercise or in an actual emergency. Although no issues have surfaced to date, it is an important part of the process to make sure that the campus has a plan and it is implemented to document safety and security issues to improve the results while enhancing safety and security for children and staff. These weaknesses must be factored into the process and plan to avoid any unplanned negative consequences that might impact the safety of staff or students. Schools that annually conduct a self-assessment of their safety and security plans and practices are more readily prepared to respond in the event of a crisis or emergency because they have learned what works.

KSA should establish a formal plan and process to annually evaluate its safety and security programs. In addition to the evaluation conducted by HISD’s Police Department, KSA should conduct its own evaluation of the school’s safety and

security programs, and develop a more thorough understanding of the total effectiveness of the process. HISD has an effective process as it relates to safety and security. KSA should seek guidance from HISD when determining a means to meet campus needs and accomplish an effective evaluation of the safety and security programs. Working with HISD should make the process efficient to implement, and HISD may already have internal processes for reviewing safety and security programs KSA can adapt with modifications. If additional resources are needed, KSA administration should consider using TxSSC resources as a source of reference to capture important key elements of what the campus should be reviewing and evaluating annually.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

#### **IDENTIFICATION BADGES (REC. 21)**

KSA employees are not required to wear identification badges, contributing to a less effective security process. The campus has an effective access process for students, parents, and visitors, but falls short of implementing an effective access and control process by failing to require staff to wear identification badges. During onsite interviews and observations, the review team found that employees are not required to wear identification badges. The school established an effective entrance and access process for campus visitors but failed to include a similar process for staff. The administration indicated that they would implement this staff requirement during school year 2012–13.

Failure to include staff in the security access and control process sends the wrong message to the rest of the stakeholders who expect everyone to be participants in school safety and security. Key control is only one of many methods for controlling building access. Individuals who are authorized to be on a campus facility should be clearly identifiable, even from a distance, and that is one of the primary purposes of requiring everyone to wear an identification badge. Schools that require staff to wear identification badges require them to be worn at all times while on the campus and when participating in off campus activities with students. Staff members who do not wear their badges as required are subject to some type of disciplinary action. Requiring staff to wear identification badges contributes to effective safety and security practices.

KSA should establish a policy and practice requiring employees to wear identification badges at all times while on

campus. The principal should establish a policy to communicate with staff the expectation regarding the use of identification badges for staff. The plant manager should be tasked as a primary contact person for non-compliance and follow-up with the principal. The plant manager should designate a time for staff to get their identification badges

prepared and issued. The process used for issuing other badges can easily be applied to staff once the decision is made to comply with the practice.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## FISCAL IMPACT

Some of the recommendations provided in this report are based on state or federal laws, rules, or regulations, and should be promptly addressed. Other recommendations are based on comparisons to industry standards, or accepted best practices, and should be reviewed to determine the level of priority, appropriate timeline, and method of implementation.

| RECOMMENDATION   | 2013-14    | 2014-15    | 2015-16    | 2016-17    | 2017-18    | TOTAL                              | ONE                              |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
|  |            |            |            |            |            | 5-YEAR<br>(COSTS)<br>OR<br>SAVINGS | TIME<br>(COSTS)<br>OR<br>SAVINGS |
| <b>CHAPTER 5: SAFETY AND SECURITY</b>  |            |            |            |            |            |                                    |                                  |
| 18. Enhance its emergency plan to include additional potential emergency situations, the necessary corresponding checklists, as well as the emergency telephone numbers and backup communication provisions. | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0                                | \$0                              |
| 19. Develop and implement a formal disaster recovery plan document to address key actions necessary after an emergency event.  | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0                                | \$0                              |
| 20. Establish a formal plan and process to annually evaluate its safety and security programs.   | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0                                | \$0                              |
| 21. Establish a policy and practice requiring employees to wear identification badges at all times while on campus.  | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0        | \$0                                | \$0                              |
| <b>TOTALS-CHAPTER 5</b>  | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b>                         | <b>\$0</b>                       |



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# **APPENDICES**

**KANDY STRIPE ACADEMY**

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# ADMINISTRATOR SURVEY

Completion Rate = 66.7 Percent

N = 2

Note: Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

## A. DEMOGRAPHICS

|   | LESS THAN 2 YEARS | 2 TO 5 YEARS | 6 TO 10 YEARS | 11 TO 15 YEARS | 16 YEARS OR MORE |
|---|-------------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| 1a. How long have you been employed by your charter school? | 0.0%              | 0.0%         | 0.0%          | 0.0%           | 100.0%           |

|  | 1 TO 5 YEARS | 6 TO 10 YEARS | 11 TO 15 YEARS | 16 YEARS OR MORE |
|--|--------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| 1b. How long have you been employed as an administrator in this capacity at your school? | 0.0%         | 0.0%          | 0.0%           | 100.0%           |

## B. SCHOOL ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

| SURVEY QUESTIONS   | STRONGLY AGREE | AGREE  | NO OPINION | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE | N/A  |
|--|----------------|--------|------------|----------|-------------------|------|
| 2. School board members understand their role as policymakers and stay out of the day-to-day management.           | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 3. The superintendent (headmaster) is an effective leader.   | 50.0%          | 50.0%  | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 4. The school administration is efficient in providing services to our school.                                     | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 5. The morale of administrative staff is good.   | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 6. Our charter school administration is efficient.   | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 7. Our charter's strategic plan guides daily decision making.  | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 8. Most administrative practices in our charter school are highly efficient and effective.                         | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 9. Faculty and staff who do not meet expected work standards are held accountable for improving their performance. | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 10. Our charter school communicates with parents in a timely manner.   | 50.0%          | 50.0%  | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 11. The extent to which our charter school shares information with the community and media is sufficient.          | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 12. Charter school salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.                              | 0.0%           | 50.0%  | 0.0%       | 50.0%    | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 13. Our school has an effective employee recruitment program.  | 0.0%           | 100.0% | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |

**B. SCHOOL ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)**

| SURVEY QUESTIONS   | STRONGLY AGREE | AGREE  | NO OPINION | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE | N/A  |
|--|----------------|--------|------------|----------|-------------------|------|
| 14. The staff development program relevant to my position is effective.  | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 15. I receive an annual personnel evaluation.  | 50.0%          | 50.0%  | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 16. Our school states qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.                  | 0.0%           | 100.0% | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 17. Employees are rewarded for superior performance or are counseled about less than satisfactory performance. | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 18. Our charter school has a fair and timely grievance process.  | 0.0%           | 100.0% | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 19. Our charter school's health insurance package meets my needs.  | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |

**C. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY**

| SURVEY QUESTIONS  | STRONGLY AGREE | AGREE  | NO OPINION | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE | N/A    |
|---|----------------|--------|------------|----------|-------------------|--------|
| 20. Education is the main priority in our charter school.   | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| 21. Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective. | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| 23. Our school provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.  | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| 24. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.   | 50.0%          | 50.0%  | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| Our charter school has effective educational programs for the following:                                      |                |        |            |          |                   |        |
| a) Reading  | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| b) Writing  | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| c) Mathematics  | 0.0%           | 100.0% | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| d) Science  | 0.0%           | 100.0% | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| e) English or Language Arts   | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| f) Computer Instruction   | 50.0%          | 50.0%  | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| g) Social Studies (history or geography)  | 50.0%          | 50.0%  | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| h) Fine Arts  | 0.0%           | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 100.0% |
| i) Physical Education   | 0.0%           | 100.0% | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| j) Business Education   | 0.0%           | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 100.0% |
| k) Career and Technology Education  | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| l) Foreign Language   | 0.0%           | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 100.0% |
| 25. Our charter school has effective programs for the following:  |                |        |            |          |                   |        |
| a) Library Service  | 0.0%           | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 100.0% |

**C. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY (CONTINUED)**

| SURVEY QUESTIONS  | STRONGLY AGREE | AGREE  | NO OPINION | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE | N/A    |
|---|----------------|--------|------------|----------|-------------------|--------|
| b) Honors/Gifted and Talented, and Advanced Placement Education   | 0.0%           | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 100.0% |
| c) Special Education  | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| d) Head Start and Even Start  | 0.0%           | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 100.0% |
| e) Dyslexia   | 0.0%           | 0.0%   | 100.0%     | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| f) Student mentoring  | 0.0%           | 100.0% | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| g) Literacy   | 50.0%          | 50.0%  | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| h) Drop-out Prevention  | 0.0%           | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 100.0% |
| i) Summer school  | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| j) Alternative Education  | 0.0%           | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 100.0% |
| k) "English as a second language"   | 0.0%           | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 100.0% |
| l) Career counseling  | 0.0%           | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 100.0% |
| m) College counseling   | 0.0%           | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 100.0% |
| 26. Teacher turnover is low.  | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| 27. Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.  | 50.0%          | 50.0%  | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| 28. The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.   | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| 29. Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.   | 0.0%           | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 100.0% |
| 30. Teachers/teacher groups use data to tailor learning experiences for individual students/student groups. | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |
| 31. Our charter school can be described as a "good places to learn."  | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%   |

**D. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT**

| SURVEY QUESTIONS  | STRONGLY AGREE | AGREE  | NO OPINION | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE | N/A  |
|---|----------------|--------|------------|----------|-------------------|------|
| 32. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning. | 0.0%           | 100.0% | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 33. Our charter school is clean.  | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 34. Our charter school is well-maintained.  | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 35. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.  | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 36. Our charter school has sufficient space and facilities to support instructional programs.       | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 37. Charter school facilities are available for community use.                                      | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 38. Our charter school has an effective energy management program.                                  | 100.0%         | 0.0%   | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |

**E. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND PURCHASING**

| SURVEY QUESTIONS  | STRONGLY AGREE | AGREE | NO OPINION | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE | N/A   |
|---|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|-------|
| 39. Site-based budgeting is used effectively.   | 100.0%         | 0.0%  | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%  |
| 40. Funds are allocated fairly.   | 100.0%         | 0.0%  | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%  |
| 41. Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.                           | 100.0%         | 0.0%  | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%  |
| 42. Our school's financial reports are easy to read and understand.                                   | 50.0%          | 0.0%  | 50.0%      | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%  |
| 43. Our charter school's financial reports are readily available to parents and community members.    | 0.0%           | 0.0%  | 50.0%      | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 50.0% |
| 44. Because of effective internal controls, our charter school is safe from abuse or misuse of funds. | 100.0%         | 0.0%  | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%  |
| 45. Our charter school's contract management is efficient and effective.                              | 100.0%         | 0.0%  | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%  |
| 46. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor so I get what I need when I need it.    | 100.0%         | 0.0%  | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%  |
| 47. Our charter school acquires high quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.              | 100.0%         | 0.0%  | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%  |
| 48. Students are issued textbooks in good shape and in a timely manner.                               | 100.0%         | 0.0%  | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%  |

**F. SAFETY AND SECURITY**

| SURVEY QUESTIONS  | STRONGLY AGREE | AGREE | NO OPINION | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE | N/A  |
|---|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|------|
| 49. Gangs are not a problem in our charter school.  | 100.0%         | 0.0%  | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 50. Drugs are not a problem in our charter school.  | 100.0%         | 0.0%  | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 51. Vandalism is not a problem in our charter school.                                       | 100.0%         | 0.0%  | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 52. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.       | 100.0%         | 0.0%  | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 53. A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and our charter school. | 100.0%         | 0.0%  | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |

**G. OVERALL OPERATIONS**

| CHARTER SCHOOL OPERATION         | SHOULD BE ELIMINATED | NEEDS MAJOR IMPROVEMENT | NEEDS SOME IMPROVEMENT | ADEQUATE | OUTSTANDING | DON'T KNOW |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------|-------------|------------|
| a) Strategic Planning            | 0.0%                 | 0.0%                    | 50.0%                  | 50.0%    | 0.0%        | 0.0%       |
| b) Curriculum Planning           | 0.0%                 | 0.0%                    | 50.0%                  | 0.0%     | 50.0%       | 0.0%       |
| c) Facilities Planning           | 0.0%                 | 0.0%                    | 0.0%                   | 0.0%     | 100.0%      | 0.0%       |
| d) Budgeting                     | 0.0%                 | 0.0%                    | 0.0%                   | 0.0%     | 50.0%       | 50.0%      |
| e) Financial Management          | 0.0%                 | 0.0%                    | 0.0%                   | 50.0%    | 50.0%       | 0.0%       |
| f) Asset Management              | 0.0%                 | 0.0%                    | 0.0%                   | 50.0%    | 50.0%       | 0.0%       |
| g) Risk Management               | 0.0%                 | 0.0%                    | 0.0%                   | 50.0%    | 50.0%       | 0.0%       |
| h) Program Evaluation            | 0.0%                 | 0.0%                    | 0.0%                   | 100.0%   | 0.0%        | 0.0%       |
| i) Instructional Coordination    | 0.0%                 | 0.0%                    | 0.0%                   | 100.0%   | 0.0%        | 0.0%       |
| j) Student Support Services      | 0.0%                 | 0.0%                    | 0.0%                   | 50.0%    | 50.0%       | 0.0%       |
| k) Federal Programs Coordination | 0.0%                 | 0.0%                    | 0.0%                   | 50.0%    | 50.0%       | 0.0%       |
| l) Instructional Technology      | 0.0%                 | 0.0%                    | 50.0%                  | 50.0%    | 0.0%        | 0.0%       |
| m) Professional Development      | 0.0%                 | 0.0%                    | 0.0%                   | 100.0%   | 0.0%        | 0.0%       |
| n) Facilities Maintenance        | 0.0%                 | 0.0%                    | 0.0%                   | 0.0%     | 100.0%      | 0.0%       |
| o) Custodial Services            | 0.0%                 | 0.0%                    | 0.0%                   | 0.0%     | 100.0%      | 0.0%       |
| p) Safety And Security           | 0.0%                 | 0.0%                    | 0.0%                   | 0.0%     | 100.0%      | 0.0%       |

**H. GENERAL QUESTIONS**

| SURVEY STATEMENT   | EXCELLENT | GOOD | FAIR | POOR | DON'T KNOW |
|--|-----------|------|------|------|------------|
| 54. I think the overall quality of education in our charter school is: | 100.0%    | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0%       |

| SURVEY STATEMENT   | IMPROVING | STAYING THE SAME | GETTING WORSE | DON'T KNOW |
|--|-----------|------------------|---------------|------------|
| 55. I think the overall quality of education in our charter school is: | 100.0%    | 0.0%             | 0.0%          | 0.0%       |

| SURVEY STATEMENT                                    | HIGHLY EFFICIENT | ABOVE AVERAGE IN EFFICIENCY | AVERAGE IN EFFICIENCY | LESS EFFICIENT THAN MOST OTHER CHARTER SCHOOLS | DON'T KNOW |
|---|------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--|------------|
| 56. The overall operation of our charter school is: | 0.0%             | 100.0%                      | 0.0%                  | 0.0%   | 0.0%       |



# TEACHER/STAFF SURVEY

Completion Rate = 90.9 Percent

N = 20

Note: Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

## A. DEMOGRAPHICS

|   | LESS THAN 2 YEARS | 2 TO 5 YEARS              | 6 TO 10 YEARS | 11 TO 15 YEARS        | 16 YEARS OR MORE |
|---|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| 1a. How long have you been employed by your charter school?   | 15.0%             | 60.0%                     | 15.0%         | 10.5%                 | 0.0%             |
|   | TEACHER           | SUPPORT STAFF             |               |                       |                  |
| 1b. Position at school:                                       | 100.0%            | 0.0%                      |               |                       |                  |
|   | ELEMENTARY SCHOOL | MIDDLE/JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL | HIGH SCHOOL   | MULTIPLE GRADE RANGES | OTHER            |
| 1c. What school level is the campus on which you are located? | 35.0%             | 25.05                     | 0.0%          | 35.0%                 | 5.0%             |

## B. SCHOOL ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

| SURVEY QUESTIONS   | STRONGLY AGREE | AGREE | NO OPINION | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE | N/A  |
|--|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|------|
| 2. School board members understand their role as policymakers and stay out of the day-to-day management.           | 10.0%          | 50.0% | 30.0%      | 10.0%    | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 3. The superintendent(headmaster) is an effective leader.  | 5.3%           | 36.8% | 36.8%      | 0.0%     | 15.8%             | 5.3% |
| 4. The school administration is efficient in providing services to our school.                                     | 5.3%           | 36.8% | 21.1%      | 36.8%    | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 5. Our charter school administration is efficient.   | 11.1%          | 33.3% | 11.1%      | 38.9%    | 5.6%              | 0.0% |
| 6. Our charter school's strategic plan guides daily decision making.   | 11.1%          | 27.8% | 27.8%      | 27.8%    | 5.6%              | 0.0% |
| 7. Most administrative practices in our charter school are highly efficient and effective.                         | 5.0%           | 30.0% | 20.0%      | 40.0%    | 5.0%              | 0.0% |
| 8. Faculty and staff who do not meet expected work standards are held accountable for improving their performance. | 25.0%          | 50.0% | 15.0%      | 10.0%    | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 9. The schools communicates with parents in a timely manner.   | 10.5%          | 36.8% | 42.1%      | 10.5%    | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 10. Our charter has a sufficient number of volunteers to help student and school programs.                         | 5.0%           | 10.0% | 10.0%      | 65.0%    | 10.0%             | 0.0% |

**B. SCHOOL ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)**

| SURVEY QUESTIONS   | STRONGLY AGREE | AGREE | NO OPINION | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE | N/A   |
|--|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|-------|
| 11. School salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.                                  | 0.0%           | 10.0% | 5.0%       | 25.0%    | 60.0%             | 0.0%  |
| 12. The school has an effective employee recruitment program.  | 5.0%           | 25.0% | 35.0%      | 10.0%    | 25.0%             | 0.0%  |
| 13. The staff development program relevant to my position is effective.  | 5.3%           | 42.1% | 15.8%      | 26.3%    | 5.3%              | 5.3%  |
| 14. I receive an annual personnel evaluation.  | 15.0%          | 60.0% | 10.0%      | 0.0%     | 10.0%             | 5.0%  |
| 15. The school states qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.                  | 5.0%           | 10.0% | 40.0%      | 20.0%    | 20.0%             | 5.0%  |
| 16. Employees are rewarded for superior performance or are counseled about less than satisfactory performance. | 10.0%          | 10.0% | 40.0%      | 20.0%    | 20.0%             | 0.0%  |
| 17. The school has a fair and timely grievance process.  | 5.0%           | 15.0% | 30.0%      | 20.0%    | 30.0%             | 0.0%  |
| 18. The school health insurance package meets my needs.  | 10.5%          | 31.6% | 26.3%      | 15.8%    | 5.3%              | 10.5% |

**C. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY**

| SURVEY QUESTIONS  | STRONGLY AGREE | AGREE | NO OPINION | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE | N/A   |
|---|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|-------|
| 19. Education is the main priority in our school.   | 40.0%          | 40.0% | 15.0%      | 5.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0%  |
| 20. Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective. | 25.0%          | 40.0% | 10.0%      | 20.0%    | 5.0%              | 0.0%  |
| 21. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.   | 10.0%          | 35.0% | 25.0%      | 20.0%    | 0.0%              | 10.0% |
| 22. Our school provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.  | 25.0%          | 40.0% | 15.0%      | 15.0%    | 5.0%              | 0.0%  |
| 23. The curriculum guides are effective tools.  | 20.0%          | 40.0% | 15.0%      | 20.0%    | 0.0%              | 5.0%  |
| 24. The school has effective educational programs for the following:  |                |       |            |          |                   |       |
| a) Reading  | 25.0%          | 55.0% | 10.0%      | 10.0%    | 0.0%              | 0.0%  |
| b) Writing  | 25.0%          | 45.0% | 15.0%      | 15.0%    | 0.0%              | 0.0%  |
| c) Mathematics  | 10.0%          | 60.0% | 15.0%      | 15.0%    | 0.0%              | 0.0%  |
| d) Science  | 15.0%          | 50.0% | 10.0%      | 20.0%    | 5.0%              | 0.0%  |
| e) English or Language Arts   | 20.0%          | 55.0% | 10.0%      | 15.0%    | 0.0%              | 0.0%  |
| f) Computer Instruction   | 10.5%          | 47.4% | 5.3%       | 26.3%    | 10.5%             | 0.0%  |
| g) Social Studies (history or geography)  | 15.8%          | 47.4% | 15.8%      | 21.1%    | 0.0%              | 0.0%  |
| h) Fine Arts  | 0.0%           | 15.0% | 20.0%      | 35.0%    | 15.0%             | 15.0% |
| i) Physical Education   | 5.0%           | 25.0% | 10.0%      | 35.0%    | 25.0%             | 0.0%  |
| j) Business Education   | 0.0%           | 20.0% | 30.0%      | 25.0%    | 15.0%             | 10.0% |

**C. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY (CONTINUED)**

| <b>SURVEY QUESTIONS</b>   | <b>STRONGLY AGREE</b> | <b>AGREE</b> | <b>NO OPINION</b> | <b>DISAGREE</b> | <b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b> | <b>N/A</b> |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------|
| k) Career and Technology Education  | 10.0%                 | 35.0%        | 20.0%             | 25.0%           | 5.0%                     | 5.0%       |
| l) Foreign Language   | 0.0%                  | 0.0%         | 15.0%             | 35.0%           | 25.0%                    | 25.0%      |
| 25. The school has effective programs for the following:  |                       |              |                   |                 |                          |            |
| a) Library Service  | 0.0%                  | 5.0%         | 5.0%              | 40.0%           | 30.0%                    | 20.0%      |
| b) Honors/Gifted and Talented, and Advanced Placement Education   | 0.0%                  | 5.0%         | 10.0%             | 35.0%           | 30.0%                    | 20.0%      |
| c) Special Education  | 5.0%                  | 5.0%         | 5.0%              | 50.0%           | 15.0%                    | 20.0%      |
| d) Head Start and Even Start  | 10.0%                 | 20.0%        | 25.0%             | 20.0%           | 5.0%                     | 20.0%      |
| e) Dyslexia   | 0.0%                  | 15.0%        | 25.0%             | 30.0%           | 10.0%                    | 20.0%      |
| f) Student mentoring  | 5.0%                  | 30.0%        | 25.0%             | 20.0%           | 15.0%                    | 5.0%       |
| g) Literacy   | 5.0%                  | 30.0%        | 20.0%             | 30.0%           | 10.0%                    | 5.0%       |
| h) Drop-out Prevention  | 10.0%                 | 10.0%        | 25.0%             | 20.0%           | 10.0%                    | 25.0%      |
| i) Summer school  | 20.0%                 | 50.0%        | 10.0%             | 10.0%           | 5.0%                     | 5.0%       |
| j) Alternative Education  | 10.5%                 | 5.3%         | 31.6%             | 26.3%           | 5.3%                     | 21.1%      |
| k) "English as a second language"   | 0.0%                  | 15.0%        | 30.0%             | 15.0%           | 15.0%                    | 25.0%      |
| l) Career counseling  | 0.0%                  | 10.0%        | 30.0%             | 20.0%           | 5.0%                     | 35.0%      |
| m) College counseling   | 0.0%                  | 10.0%        | 30.0%             | 20.0%           | 5.0%                     | 35.0%      |
| 26. Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.                                      | 5.0%                  | 20.0%        | 50.0%             | 5.0%            | 15.0%                    | 5.0%       |
| 27. Teacher turnover is low.  | 5.0%                  | 30.0%        | 25.0%             | 20.0%           | 15.0%                    | 5.0%       |
| 28. Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.  | 5.0%                  | 50.0%        | 15.0%             | 20.0%           | 10.0%                    | 0.0%       |
| 29. The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.   | 21.1%                 | 36.8%        | 10.5%             | 26.3%           | 5.3%                     | 0.0%       |
| 30. Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.   | 0.0%                  | 15.0%        | 25.0%             | 30.0%           | 20.0%                    | 10.0%      |
| 31. Teachers/teacher groups use data to tailor learning experiences for individual students/student groups. | 20.0%                 | 30.0%        | 35.0%             | 15.0%           | 0.0%                     | 0.0%       |
| 32. Our charter school can be described as a "good place to learn."   | 20.0%                 | 30.0%        | 25.0%             | 20.0%           | 5.0%                     | 0.0%       |

**D. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT**

| <b>SURVEY QUESTIONS</b>   | <b>STRONGLY AGREE</b> | <b>AGREE</b> | <b>NO OPINION</b> | <b>DISAGREE</b> | <b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b> | <b>N/A</b> |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------|
| 33. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning. | 10.5%                 | 15.8%        | 42.1%             | 21.1%           | 5.3%                     | 5.3%       |
| 34. Our charter school is clean.  | 65.0%                 | 25.0%        | 0.0%              | 10.0%           | 0.0%                     | 0.0%       |
| 35. Our charter school is well-maintained.  | 52.6%                 | 21.1%        | 15.8%             | 10.5%           | 0.0%                     | 0.0%       |
| 36. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.  | 30.0%                 | 45.0%        | 20.0%             | 5.0%            | 0.0%                     | 0.0%       |

**D. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)**

| SURVEY QUESTIONS  | STRONGLY AGREE | AGREE | NO OPINION | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE | N/A   |
|---|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|-------|
| 37. Our charter school has sufficient space and facilities to support its instructional programs. | 35.0%          | 35.0% | 15.0%      | 15.0%    | 0.0%              | 0.0%  |
| 38. Our facilities are open for community use.  | 15.0%          | 30.0% | 25.0%      | 15.0%    | 0.0%              | 15.0% |
| 39. Our charter school has an effective energy management program.                                | 15.0%          | 30.0% | 30.0%      | 10.0%    | 0.0%              | 15.0% |

**E. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND PURCHASING**

| SURVEY QUESTIONS   | STRONGLY AGREE | AGREE | NO OPINION | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE | N/A   |
|--|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|-------|
| 40. Site-based budgeting is used effectively.  | 5.0%           | 0.0%  | 45.0%      | 10.0%    | 15.0%             | 25.0% |
| 41. Funds are allocated fairly.  | 5.0%           | 0.0%  | 35.0%      | 15.0%    | 25.0%             | 20.0% |
| 42. Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.                        | 10.0%          | 20.0% | 45.0%      | 0.0%     | 15.0%             | 10.0% |
| 43. The school's financial reports are easy to read and understand.                                | 5.0%           | 5.0%  | 40.0%      | 5.0%     | 15.0%             | 30.0% |
| 44. The school's financial reports are readily available to parents and community members.         | 5.0%           | 10.0% | 45.0%      | 0.0%     | 20.0%             | 20.0% |
| 45. Because of effective internal controls, our school is safe from abuse or misuse of funds.      | 10.0%          | 10.0% | 45.0%      | 5.0%     | 15.0%             | 15.0% |
| 46. The school contract management is efficient and effective.                                     | 5.0%           | 25.0% | 45.0%      | 5.0%     | 10.0%             | 10.0% |
| 47. The school provides teachers and administrators appropriate materials in a timely manner.      | 5.0%           | 15.0% | 30.0%      | 30.0%    | 20.0%             | 0.0%  |
| 48. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor so I get what I need when I need it. | 5.3%           | 10.5% | 42.1%      | 26.3%    | 15.8%             | 0.0%  |
| 49. The school acquires high quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.                   | 5.0%           | 5.0%  | 40.0%      | 25.0%    | 10.0%             | 15.0% |
| 50. Students are issued textbooks in good shape and in a timely manner.                            | 5.0%           | 15.0% | 20.0%      | 35.0%    | 25.0%             | 0.0%  |

**F. SAFETY AND SECURITY**

| SURVEY QUESTIONS                               | STRONGLY AGREE | AGREE | NO OPINION | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE | N/A  |
|--|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|------|
| 51. School disturbances are infrequent.        | 10.5%          | 57.9% | 10.5%      | 15.8%    | 5.3%              | 0.0% |
| 52. Gangs are not a problem in this school.    | 60.0%          | 40.0% | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 53. Drugs are not a problem in this school.    | 60.0%          | 40.0% | 0.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |
| 54. Vandalism is not a problem in this school. | 55.0%          | 40.0% | 5.0%       | 0.0%     | 0.0%              | 0.0% |

**F. SAFETY AND SECURITY (CONTINUED)**

| <b>SURVEY QUESTIONS</b>   | <b>STRONGLY AGREE</b> | <b>AGREE</b> | <b>NO OPINION</b> | <b>DISAGREE</b> | <b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b> | <b>N/A</b> |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------|
| 55. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers. | 40.0%                 | 20.0%        | 25.0%             | 5.0%            | 0.0%                     | 10.0%      |
| 56. Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.            | 30.0%                 | 15.0%        | 35.0%             | 0.0%            | 5.0%                     | 15.0%      |
| 57. A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the school.   | 40.0%                 | 40.0%        | 20.0%             | 0.0%            | 0.0%                     | 0.0%       |
| 58. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.                    | 20.0%                 | 15.0%        | 20.0%             | 30.0%           | 15.0%                    | 0.0%       |
| 59. Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.                                    | 30.0%                 | 45.0%        | 15.0%             | 5.0%            | 5.0%                     | 0.0%       |

**G. OVERALL OPERATIONS**

| <b>CHARTER SCHOOL OPERATION</b>  | <b>SHOULD BE ELIMINATED</b> | <b>NEEDS MAJOR IMPROVEMENT</b> | <b>NEEDS SOME IMPROVEMENT</b> | <b>ADEQUATE</b> | <b>OUTSTANDING</b> | <b>DON'T KNOW</b> |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| a) Strategic Planning            | 0.0%                        | 20.0%                          | 30.0%                         | 50.0%           | 0.0%               | 0.0%              |
| b) Curriculum Planning           | 0.0%                        | 15.8%                          | 42.1%                         | 31.6%           | 10.5%              | 0.0%              |
| c) Facilities Planning           | 0.0%                        | 15.0%                          | 30.0%                         | 40.0%           | 5.0%               | 10.0%             |
| d) Budgeting                     | 0.0%                        | 25.0%                          | 20.0%                         | 30.0%           | 0.0%               | 25.0%             |
| e) Financial Management          | 0.0%                        | 20.0%                          | 15.0%                         | 30.0%           | 5.0%               | 30.0%             |
| f) Asset Management              | 0.0%                        | 15.0%                          | 5.0%                          | 35.0%           | 5.0%               | 40.0%             |
| g) Risk Management               | 0.0%                        | 10.0%                          | 5.0%                          | 40.0%           | 10.0%              | 35.0%             |
| h) Program Evaluation            | 0.0%                        | 10.5%                          | 15.8%                         | 47.4%           | 5.3%               | 21.1%             |
| i) Instructional Coordination    | 0.0%                        | 15.0%                          | 25.0%                         | 55.0%           | 5.0%               | 0.0%              |
| j) Student Support Services      | 0.0%                        | 15.0%                          | 40.0%                         | 35.0%           | 5.0%               | 5.0%              |
| k) Federal Programs Coordination | 0.0%                        | 11.1%                          | 11.1%                         | 33.3%           | 5.6%               | 38.9%             |
| l) Instructional Technology      | 0.0%                        | 25.0%                          | 25.0%                         | 30.0%           | 15.0%              | 5.0%              |
| m) Professional Development      | 0.0%                        | 10.0%                          | 30.0%                         | 40.0%           | 20.0%              | 0.0%              |
| n) Facilities Maintenance        | 0.0%                        | 15.0%                          | 5.0%                          | 35.0%           | 40.0%              | 5.0%              |
| o) Custodial Services            | 0.0%                        | 0.0%                           | 5.0%                          | 45.0%           | 40.0%              | 10.0%             |
| p) Safety And Security           | 0.0%                        | 0.0%                           | 10.0%                         | 55.0%           | 25.0%              | 10.0%             |

**H. GENERAL QUESTIONS**

| <b>SURVEY STATEMENT</b>  | <b>EXCELLENT</b> | <b>GOOD</b> | <b>FAIR</b> | <b>POOR</b> | <b>DON'T KNOW</b> |
|--|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 60. I think the overall quality of education in our charter school is: | 15.0%            | 50.0%       | 30.0%       | 5.0%        | 0.0%              |

| <b>SURVEY STATEMENT</b>  | <b>IMPROVING</b> | <b>STAYING THE SAME</b> | <b>GETTING WORSE</b> | <b>DON'T KNOW</b> |
|--|------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 61. I think the overall quality of education in our charter school is: | 65.0%            | 25.0%                   | 0.0%                 | 10.0%             |

**H. GENERAL QUESTIONS (CONTINUED)**

| <b>SURVEY STATEMENT</b>                             | <b>HIGHLY EFFICIENT</b> | <b>ABOVE AVERAGE IN EFFICIENCY</b> | <b>AVERAGE IN EFFICIENCY</b> | <b>LESS EFFICIENT THAN MOST OTHER CHARTER SCHOOLS</b> | <b>DON'T KNOW</b> |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| 62. The overall operation of our charter school is: | 10.0%                   | 5.0%                               | 65.0%                        | 10.0%   | 10.0%             |

# PARENT SURVEY

Completion Rate = 15.3 Percent

N = 65

Note: Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

## A. DEMOGRAPHICS

|   | 0 TO 5 YEARS | 6 TO 10 YEARS | 11 YEARS OR MORE |
|---|--------------|---------------|------------------|
| 1. How long has your child attended the charter school? | 77.4%        | 20.8%         | 1.9%             |

## B. SCHOOL ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

| SURVEY QUESTIONS  | STRONGLY AGREE | AGREE | NO OPINION | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE | N/A   |
|---|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|-------|
| 2. School board members understand their role as policymakers and stay out of the day-to-day management.            | 24.6%          | 27.9% | 27.9%      | 3.3%     | 1.6%              | 14.8% |
| 3. The superintendent (headmaster) is an effective leader.  | 38.1%          | 38.1% | 14.3%      | 3.2%     | 3.2%              | 3.2%  |
| 4. The school administration is efficient in providing services to our school.                                      | 36.1%          | 49.2% | 6.6%       | 4.9%     | 0.0%              | 3.3%  |
| 5. The charter school's financial reports are easy to read and understand.  | 15.9%          | 25.4% | 27.0%      | 6.3%     | 1.6%              | 23.8% |
| 6. The charter school's financial reports are readily available to parents and community members.                   | 20.0%          | 23.3% | 30.0%      | 6.7%     | 6.7%              | 13.3% |
| 7. The charter school communicates with parents in a timely manner.   | 32.8%          | 41.0% | 8.2%       | 4.9%     | 4.9%              | 8.2%  |
| 8. Charter school facilities are available for community use.   | 25.4%          | 28.8% | 23.7%      | 5.1%     | 3.4%              | 13.6% |
| 9. The charter school has a sufficient number of volunteers to help with student and school programs.               | 27.6%          | 29.3% | 15.5%      | 19.0%    | 5.2%              | 3.4%  |
| 10. The charter school's administration is efficient.   | 38.1%          | 39.7% | 11.1%      | 7.9%     | 1.6%              | 1.6%  |
| 11. The charter school's strategic plan guides daily decision making.   | 37.7%          | 31.1% | 16.4%      | 3.3%     | 4.9%              | 6.6%  |
| 12. Most administrative practices in the charter school are highly efficient and effective.                         | 38.7%          | 33.9% | 22.6%      | 0.0%     | 3.2%              | 1.6%  |
| 13. Faculty and staff who do not meet expected work standards are held accountable for improving their performance. | 34.5%          | 32.7% | 18.2%      | 1.8%     | 5.5%              | 7.3%  |

**C. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY**

| SURVEY QUESTIONS   | STRONGLY AGREE | AGREE | NO OPINION | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE | N/A   |
|--|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|-------|
| 14. The charter school provides a high quality education.                    | 34.5%          | 44.8% | 6.9%       | 8.6%     | 1.7%              | 3.4%  |
| 15. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.                    | 26.8%          | 26.8% | 19.6%      | 7.1%     | 1.8%              | 17.9% |
| 16. The charter school has effective educational programs for the following: |                |       |            |          |                   |       |
| a) Reading   | 37.7%          | 49.2% | 6.6%       | 4.9%     | 0.0%              | 1.6%  |
| b) Writing   | 36.1%          | 47.5% | 6.6%       | 6.6%     | 0.0%              | 3.3%  |
| c) Mathematics   | 36.1%          | 49.2% | 4.9%       | 8.2%     | 0.0%              | 1.6%  |
| d) Science   | 32.2%          | 50.8% | 6.8%       | 6.8%     | 0.0%              | 3.4%  |
| e) English or Language Arts  | 35.0%          | 51.7% | 6.7%       | 5.0%     | 0.0%              | 1.7%  |
| f) Computer Instruction  | 29.8%          | 52.6% | 8.8%       | 5.3%     | 0.0%              | 3.5%  |
| g) Social Studies (history or geography)                                     | 32.1%          | 50.0% | 7.1%       | 7.1%     | 0.0%              | 3.6%  |
| h) Fine Arts   | 29.8%          | 43.9% | 10.5%      | 8.8%     | 1.8%              | 5.3%  |
| i) Physical Education  | 22.8%          | 43.9% | 12.3%      | 12.3%    | 1.8%              | 7.0%  |
| j) Business Education  | 10.7%          | 32.1% | 26.8%      | 8.9%     | 1.8%              | 19.6% |
| k) Career and Technology Education   | 9.4%           | 35.8% | 24.5%      | 9.4%     | 1.9%              | 18.9% |
| l) Foreign Language  | 5.6%           | 29.6% | 29.6%      | 11.1%    | 3.7%              | 20.4% |
| 17. The charter school has effective programs for the following:             |                |       |            |          |                   |       |
| a) Library Service   | 18.9%          | 35.8% | 17.0%      | 13.2%    | 3.8%              | 11.3% |
| b) Honors/Gifted and Talented, and Advanced Placement Education              | 17.5%          | 31.6% | 22.8%      | 10.5%    | 1.8%              | 15.8% |
| c) Special Education   | 21.8%          | 21.8% | 29.1%      | 10.9%    | 3.6%              | 12.7% |
| d) Head Start and Even Start   | 16.9%          | 35.6% | 28.8%      | 5.1%     | 0.0%              | 13.6% |
| e) Dyslexia  | 12.5%          | 19.6% | 37.5%      | 3.6%     | 1.8%              | 25.0% |
| f) Student mentoring   | 14.5%          | 27.3% | 30.9%      | 7.3%     | 1.8%              | 18.2% |
| g) Literacy  | 18.2%          | 36.4% | 20.0%      | 7.3%     | 0.0%              | 18.2% |
| h) Drop-out Prevention   | 19.3%          | 29.8% | 24.6%      | 5.3%     | 3.5%              | 17.5% |
| i) Summer school   | 22.8%          | 35.1% | 21.1%      | 0.0%     | 1.8%              | 19.3% |
| j) Alternative Education   | 11.1%          | 31.5% | 33.3%      | 5.6%     | 0.0%              | 18.5% |
| k) "English as a second language" program                                    | 9.4%           | 15.1% | 34.0%      | 11.3%    | 0.0%              | 30.2% |
| l) Career counseling   | 7.3%           | 20.0% | 30.9%      | 10.9%    | 3.6%              | 27.3% |
| m) College counseling  | 9.1%           | 27.3% | 27.3%      | 7.3%     | 1.8%              | 27.3% |
| 18. Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.       | 35.9%          | 29.7% | 12.5%      | 10.9%    | 4.7%              | 6.3%  |
| 19. Teacher turnover is low.   | 28.3%          | 26.7% | 26.7%      | 6.7%     | 5.0%              | 6.7%  |
| 20. A substitute teacher rarely teaches my child.                            | 35.0%          | 55.0% | 5.0%       | 3.3%     | 0.0%              | 1.7%  |
| 21. Classrooms are seldom left unattended.                                   | 33.3%          | 39.7% | 7.9%       | 12.7%    | 3.2%              | 3.2%  |

**C. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY (CONTINUED)**

| <b>SURVEY QUESTIONS</b>   | <b>STRONGLY AGREE</b> | <b>AGREE</b> | <b>NO OPINION</b> | <b>DISAGREE</b> | <b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b> | <b>N/A</b> |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------|
| 22. Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.   | 45.2%                 | 48.4%        | 4.8%              | 0.0%            | 0.0%                     | 1.6%       |
| 23. Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.   | 35.9%                 | 23.4%        | 4.7%              | 17.2%           | 9.4%                     | 9.4%       |
| 24. Students are issued textbooks in good shape and in a timely manner.                                     | 29.0%                 | 37.1%        | 6.5%              | 11.3%           | 4.8%                     | 11.3%      |
| 25. Teachers/teacher groups use data to tailor learning experiences for individual students/student groups. | 29.5%                 | 41.0%        | 18.0%             | 4.9%            | 3.3%                     | 3.3%       |
| 26. The charter school can be described as a "good place to learn."   | 44.4%                 | 41.3%        | 3.2%              | 4.8%            | 4.8%                     | 1.6%       |

**D. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT**

| <b>SURVEY QUESTIONS</b>  | <b>STRONGLY AGREE</b> | <b>AGREE</b> | <b>NO OPINION</b> | <b>DISAGREE</b> | <b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b> | <b>N/A</b> |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------|
| 27. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff, and the board provide input into facility planning. | 32.8%                 | 31.1%        | 13.1%             | 13.1%           | 3.3%                     | 6.6%       |
| 28. Our charter school is clean.   | 57.4%                 | 42.6%        | 0.0%              | 0.0%            | 0.0%                     | 0.0%       |
| 29. The charter school is well-maintained.   | 53.1%                 | 42.2%        | 0.0%              | 4.7%            | 0.0%                     | 0.0%       |
| 30. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.   | 47.5%                 | 32.8%        | 16.4%             | 1.6%            | 1.6%                     | 0.0%       |
| 31. The charter school has sufficient space and facilities to support the instructional programs.    | 46.8%                 | 41.9%        | 6.5%              | 3.2%            | 1.6%                     | 0.0%       |

**E. SAFETY AND SECURITY**

| <b>SURVEY QUESTIONS</b>  | <b>STRONGLY AGREE</b> | <b>AGREE</b> | <b>NO OPINION</b> | <b>DISAGREE</b> | <b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b> | <b>N/A</b> |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------|
| 32. Students feel safe and secure at school.                       | 57.1%                 | 38.1%        | 1.6%              | 1.6%            | 1.6%                     | 0.0%       |
| 33. School disturbances are infrequent.                            | 46.9%                 | 37.5%        | 7.8%              | 1.6%            | 3.1%                     | 3.1%       |
| 34. Gangs are not a problem in this charter school.                | 60.9%                 | 35.9%        | 3.1%              | 0.0%            | 0.0%                     | 0.0%       |
| 35. Drugs are not a problem in this charter school.                | 60.9%                 | 35.9%        | 3.1%              | 0.0%            | 0.0%                     | 0.0%       |
| 36. Vandalism is not a problem in this charter school.             | 56.3%                 | 37.5%        | 4.7%              | 1.6%            | 0.0%                     | 0.0%       |
| 37. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct. | 46.9%                 | 42.2%        | 3.1%              | 4.7%            | 3.1%                     | 0.0%       |
| 38. Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.                 | 41.3%                 | 39.7%        | 6.3%              | 7.9%            | 4.8%                     | 0.0%       |

**F. OVERALL OPERATIONS**

| CHARTER SCHOOL OPERATION         | SHOULD BE ELIMINATED | NEEDS MAJOR IMPROVEMENT | NEEDS SOME IMPROVEMENT | ADEQUATE | OUTSTANDING | DON'T KNOW |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------|-------------|------------|
| a) Strategic Planning            | 6.8%                 | 10.2%                   | 16.9%                  | 22.0%    | 23.7%       | 20.3%      |
| b) Curriculum Planning           | 6.8%                 | 8.5%                    | 10.2%                  | 27.1%    | 28.8%       | 18.6%      |
| c) Facilities Planning           | 6.9%                 | 6.9%                    | 6.9%                   | 22.4%    | 20.7%       | 36.2%      |
| d) Budgeting                     | 6.9%                 | 6.9%                    | 8.6%                   | 12.1%    | 6.9%        | 58.6%      |
| e) Financial Management          | 7.1%                 | 8.9%                    | 10.7%                  | 12.5%    | 7.1%        | 53.6%      |
| f) Asset Management              | 6.9%                 | 5.2%                    | 8.6%                   | 12.1%    | 13.8%       | 53.4%      |
| g) Risk Management               | 6.9%                 | 5.2%                    | 3.4%                   | 15.5%    | 12.1%       | 56.9%      |
| h) Program Evaluation            | 6.9%                 | 8.6%                    | 8.6%                   | 20.7%    | 15.5%       | 39.7%      |
| i) Instructional Coordination    | 5.4%                 | 7.1%                    | 10.7%                  | 23.2%    | 19.6%       | 33.9%      |
| j) Student Support Services      | 6.8%                 | 8.5%                    | 15.3%                  | 27.1%    | 25.4%       | 16.9%      |
| k) Federal Programs Coordination | 1.7%                 | 5.2%                    | 13.8%                  | 19.0%    | 12.1%       | 48.3%      |
| l) Instructional Technology      | 5.0%                 | 8.3%                    | 6.7%                   | 26.7%    | 15.0%       | 38.3%      |
| m) Professional Development      | 3.4%                 | 5.1%                    | 8.5%                   | 27.1%    | 16.9%       | 39.0%      |
| n) Facilities Maintenance        | 7.0%                 | 3.5%                    | 7.0%                   | 31.6%    | 35.1%       | 15.8%      |
| o) Custodial Services            | 6.7%                 | 3.3%                    | 1.7%                   | 35.0%    | 36.7%       | 16.7%      |
| p) Safety And Security           | 3.3%                 | 1.7%                    | 5.0%                   | 35.0%    | 35.0%       | 20.0%      |

**H. GENERAL QUESTIONS**

| SURVEY STATEMENT   | EXCELLENT | GOOD  | FAIR  | POOR | DON'T KNOW |
|--|-----------|-------|-------|------|------------|
| 39. I think the overall quality of education in the charter school is: | 44.3%     | 34.4% | 19.7% | 0.0% | 1.6%       |

| SURVEY STATEMENT   | IMPROVING | STAYING THE SAME | GETTING WORSE | DON'T KNOW |
|--|-----------|------------------|---------------|------------|
| 40. I think the overall quality of education in the charter school is: | 35.9%     | 27.1%            | 11.9%         | 5.1%       |

| SURVEY STATEMENT                                    | HIGHLY EFFICIENT | ABOVE AVERAGE IN EFFICIENCY | AVERAGE IN EFFICIENCY | LESS EFFICIENT THAN MOST OTHER CHARTER SCHOOLS | DON'T KNOW |
|---|------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--|------------|
| 41. The overall operation of the charter school is: | 45.2%            | 12.9%                       | 33.9%                 | 3.2%   | 4.8%       |