

Charter Schools Program Non-SEA Planning, Program Design, and Implementation 2011

Abstract

SACS charter sets high expectations for the responsibilities and performance of board members in providing governance and oversight of the school's program components. In order to promote governance capacity, SACS will become an associate member of the New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA). As an associate member, members of the board of trustees for SACS will have access to services and resources specific to their roles and responsibilities as public school officials. The NJSBA provides direct services such as policy and legal consulting, board evaluation, strategic planning, superintendent (Lead Executive Officer) evaluation, and contract/salary guide assistance.

All board members, along with the charter school's Head of School, will attend the New Jersey School Boards Association *New Member Orientation*. During this orientation and training, board members will explore the responsibilities and boundaries of their authority as well as the mechanisms of school governance. In addition they will learn and understand the mandates of the Sunshine Law and the School Ethics Act, the fundamentals of policymaking, school finance, collective bargaining, curriculum, and evaluating the Head of School. Board members will also have the opportunity to discuss issues with experienced board members and NJSBA staff. Completion of the course will satisfy the requirements of the School Ethics Act (N.J.A.C. 6A:11-3.1(d)).

Activities conducted during the planning period will focus on designing, implementing, and addressing attributes of the academic program in preparation of the arrival of students for the 2012-2013 school year. To ensure that the policies, procedures, and resources necessary for the school's academic program are in place before students arrive, the Head of School and School Principal will collaborate during the planning period of the Federal Grant Program to integrate the instructional and administrative systems, procedures, policies, and resources that will support academic achievement in an organized, consistent, and cohesive manner. Resources from language instruction institutions including the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages will be used in shaping and evaluating our educational plan.

The Head of School and the School Principal will address various elements of the school's academic infrastructure including teacher assignments for efficacy of instruction, formalizing for adoption by the board school-wide discipline policies and procedures, reviewing/refining curriculum design and alignment to NJCCS, reviewing/refining the school's Assessment Plan, determining professional development needs and scheduling training, visiting other charter school models with demonstrated success, and determining communication and outreach strategies to SACS community.

The governance and academic program components of SACS that are planned and implemented as the result of activities funded through the Federal Charter School Planning Grant, will never benefit school stakeholders unless the school facility is physically capable to receive students by September 2012 and the fiscal program component of the school remains financially solvent throughout the planning and implementation phases. Federal Planning Grant funding will be used for implementing the fiscal management mechanisms that support effective internal controls needed for accurate accounting of financial resources and compliance with state statutes and administrative code, and utilize the time prior to Opening Day to establish environments conducive to learning by preparing classrooms for students and organizing administrative offices for information management and procedural effectiveness.

Shalom Academy Charter School, in cooperation with local community organizations, will host a series of open-house meetings and receptions in the community in order to attract a cross-section of students. These meetings will focus on informing the community and prospective students and their families about the new public charter school. With the aid of our current and future community contacts, we will conduct these meetings in diverse sites, including local schools, early childhood centers, civic group offices, faith centers, libraries, and housing projects. When possible, a local community leader will introduce a Shalom Academy Charter School representative and have on hand bilingual Spanish/English and Hebrew/English interpreters for presentations.

After our first year of operation, the best outreach and recruitment officers will be members of our parent and student body, as well as our network of community partners. Parent, students, and community representatives will work together with Shalom Academy Charter School staff to recruit future Shalom Academy Charter School families. In addition to continuing the practice of utilizing diverse settings for informational meetings, Shalom Academy Charter School will set up visiting days and in-school open house opportunities, where potential families can observe classes, meet students and teachers, ask questions of the school leader, and obtain the name of a current parent who will be available for any additional questions the potential applicant might have.