



Executive Summary

The Osceola County School For The Arts

Osceola County School District

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Introduction

Every school has its own story to tell. The context in which teaching and learning takes place influences the processes and procedures by which the school makes decisions around curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The context also impacts the way a school stays faithful to its vision. Many factors contribute to the overall narrative such as an identification of stakeholders, a description of stakeholder engagement, the trends and issues affecting the school, and the kinds of programs and services that a school implements to support student learning.

The purpose of the Executive Summary (ES) is to provide a school with an opportunity to describe in narrative form the strengths and challenges it encounters. By doing so, the public and members of the school community will have a more complete picture of how the school perceives itself and the process of self-reflection for continuous improvement. This summary is structured for the school to reflect on how it provides teaching and learning on a day to day basis.

Description of the School

Describe the school's size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced in the last three years. Include demographic information about the students, staff, and community at large. What unique features and challenges are associated with the community/communities the school serves?

The Osceola County School for the Arts, founded in 2003, is a specialized public school located in Kissimmee, Florida. The city of Kissimmee is located approximately 20 miles from downtown Orlando. The city was first developed by ranchers but the tourism industry is now a substantial part of the economy in the area. About 40 years ago, the city experienced a period of significant growth with the development of Walt Disney World and other tourist attractions.

The Osceola County School for the Arts is a public, state-supported institution and part of the Florida Department of Education Public School System. The administrators include a principal and an assistant principal. The school follows an administration-based management style. The faculty is comprised of 46 highly qualified professionals, 57% of whom hold a master's degree. Academic and artistic area teachers form integrated teams to provide a well-rounded, rigorous tract for all student levels. All area teachers integrate academic skills within their art classes and by the same token, academic teachers integrate the arts in their lessons.

The Osceola County School for the Arts emphasizes pre-professional arts training at an accelerated and in-depth level for students with a gift for the arts. This specialized program offers seven major courses of study: Drama, Dance, Vocal Music, Technical Theatre, Creative Writing, Visual Arts, and Instrumental Music"Band and Orchestra. The school serves the needs of 900 multi-ethnic and multi-cultural student body through diverse programs and activities from 6th-12th grade. Students planning to attend The Osceola County School for the Arts are required to submit an admissions packet and participate in an audition process.

At The Osceola School for the Arts every high school student follows an individual 4-year plan that allows the student to carefully plan his/her high school curriculum based on the career and postsecondary goals and interest. The aim of the 4-year plan is to ensure that students are aware of and meet graduation requirements, meet minimum eligibility requirements for college admission, and become acquainted with the class structures of the institution. The school year (August-June) is organized into two semesters, 18 weeks each with six 90-minute class periods meeting every other day and one 50 minute class period meeting every day. Semester reviews conducted in each discipline provide students with periodic feedback Program requirements for each major may be obtained from the Guidance Office.

The Osceola County School for the Arts is a performance-driven experiential school environment and, as such, students are expected to be in attendance daily in order to be actively involved in all aspects of learning. Students are required to complete 28 credits to receive the Arts major endorsement. All students must be enrolled in at least two classes of their major each semester. In addition, high school students must remain in their original major for the full four years to receive an art endorsement in their major. Students are placed in Advanced Placement courses based on their ability and desire. Furthermore, students are given the opportunity to take dual enrollment courses in Valencia College.

Since 2003, the student population has increased steadily in size and diversity. In The Osceola County School for the Arts, 53% (a 4% increase from the previous year) of students received free and reduced lunch in 2011 - 2012 school year. The ethnic backgrounds of the student population of 520 in the 2003 - 2004 school year included 44.4% White, 43.9% Hispanic, 6.4% Black, 2.4% Asian or Pacific Islander, and 2.9% Multiracial. In comparison, the ethnic backgrounds of the student population of 814 during the 2011 - 2012 school year included 28.60% White, 55.70% Hispanic, 8.2% Black, .17% Asian or Pacific Islander, and 7.50% Multiracial creating a very diverse group culturally and economically.

School's Purpose

Provide the school's purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs. Describe how the school embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students.

The mission of The Osceola County School for the Arts is to provide a community that nourishes and nurtures the personal integrity and creative expression of our students in their pursuit of artistic and academic excellence. The Osceola County School for the Arts provides teachers an environment that encourages the art of teaching. The students are highly motivated and as such are eager to learn and to experience the best and highest instruction that can be offered. This climate is very attractive to the professional educator and as such our instructors focus intense energy on student learning at the highest level. Very little instructional time is expended on discipline issues and our staff turnover is very minimal.

Although the majority of our students are successful in their academic pursuits, it is not our intent to rest. The school has accepted the challenge to strive to meet and exceed the highest performing schools in the state. As such, all test results are evaluated and instruction is targeted based on any area that is not at a consistently high level. Our goal is to be a leader in artistic achievement and academic excellence.

Communication continues to be a school-wide goal at the school. Student planners, on-line grade reporting to parents, extensive e-mail implementation and direct contact are utilized. In addition the school utilizes IRIS (Immediate Response Information System) as a mass notification tool for both emergency and non-emergency situations. Students and staff, along with parents and guests attend a school wide recital/assembly each week. This function provides a face to face communication opportunity with the school at large and exposes students to the fine arts. Rolling announcements and audio announcements are also utilized. An online calendar has been updated and the school web page is kept current. An electronic message sign has been added to the campus and is utilized for major announcements. Instructors are encouraged to maintain contact with parents through e-mail and instructor e-mail addresses are published.

Extended day programs -after or Saturday school-- are focused on working with students who need additional assistance to master skills. These programs are offered in the area of math and language arts and target the lower quartile as well as offering preparation for SAT/ACT and AP. Assistance takes the form of individualized plans.

The Osceola County School for the Arts offers approximately 17 clubs and organizations in academics, school spirit, service, publications, performing arts, special interests. Our students also excel in obtaining superior ratings in competitions such as county and state music, theatrical, and dance festivals and competitions. In addition our students participate in academic contests including foreign language, science/ history fairs, and math challenges and are equally successful as our competition in the arts.

Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

Describe the school's notable achievements and areas of improvement in the last three years. Additionally, describe areas for improvement that the school is striving to achieve in the next three years.

The Osceola County School for the Arts received an "A" grade for the academic accomplishments of our students during the 2010-2011 school year. This is the 8th consecutive year that OCSA has received an "A" grade. Our success is due to our teachers and staff's efforts to provide amazing learning opportunities for our students. Our success is also due to our students for their focused efforts to succeed in both their arts and academic classes. Finally, our success is due to our parents for their support and encouragement to both their children and our staff.

The Florida Department of Education released the ranking of Florida schools on January 30, 2012 and the Osceola County School for the Arts is ranked as the #4 combination school for high schools in the state of Florida. This ranking is based on FCAT scores and other measures used to determine the school grade (graduation rate, percentage of students taking high level courses and their success rate, and percentage of seniors determined to be 'college ready').

The Osceola County School for the Arts was awarded Gold Medal status on May 8, 2012 by the US News and World Report magazine. On May 20, 2012 OCSA was named to both the Newsweek magazine and The Washington Post newspaper lists of BEST American High Schools. This Gold Medal and BEST American High School status signifies that OCSA is one of the BEST 400 high schools in America (out of over 22,000).

Additional Information

Provide any additional information you would like to share with the public and community that were not prompted in the previous sections.

All necessary information has previously been stated.