

# CHARTER RENEWAL APPLICATION

FOR 2000 TO 2005

## INTRODUCTION

The South Shore Charter School (SSCS) is pleased to submit to the Department of Education its application for renewal as a charter school in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The SSCS marked its fourth year of operation as a K to 12 school in June 1999. Over these four years the school has grown from 150 students to 340 students and expanded its physical plant from two temporary buildings to three buildings of more permanence. The school has five levels, each with its own set of rigorous academic standards. At each level, students must meet these standards before moving to the next level. The criteria, or Level Exit Standards in SSCS vocabulary, were developed by students, parents, faculty, and the administration and are the backbone of SSCS' academic program.

Complementing the academic standards is student participation in projects. The school is committed to project-based learning where students are involved in the life of the larger community and perform meaningful work that has social utility. Project-based learning fosters SSCS' mission of promoting initiative, critical thinking, leadership, and teamwork. The school has graduated 21 students who have distinguished themselves by successfully meeting the school's academic and project-based curriculum requirements. The school starts its fifth year with a new acting head of the secondary school and a new interim chief executive officer. (see CEO resume, **Attachment I**.) The faculty is focused and eager to begin the new academic year by integrating past accomplishments with its vision of the future. That vision portrays a school committed to a comprehensive education through which students are prepared to meet the demands of college and career. This renewal application has offered the SSCS community an important opportunity to evaluate its successes and shortcomings and to project a future that meets the high expectations of students, parents, teachers, and the Commonwealth.

### I. IS THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM A SUCCESS?

*IA. Has the school made reasonable progress in meeting internally established educational goals during the term of its charter?*

Yes, the South Shore Charter School has made reasonable progress in meeting its internally established educational goals. During its first four years, the school has consistently addressed its educational goals. These goals, as defined in the school's mission, are as follows:

*SSCS Mission:* To provide each student with an education that fosters initiative, critical thinking, leadership, teamwork, communication, and promotes life skills for individual achievement in education, career, community, and life, and to disseminate our model across Massachusetts. This is to be achieved through:

1. Project-based learning within a rich, detailed curriculum;
2. Individually paced & tailored learning plans for each student;
3. Strong student involvement in governance;
4. Parent & community involvement in all aspects of the school;

## 5. Extensive use of technology by students.

The success of SSCS' academic program has been tracked in several ways. In tracking longitudinal progress the school uses the California Achievement Test. Students also take the Iowa Reading Test in the third grade and the MCAS in grades 4, 8 and 10. (Assessment using these criteria is more fully addressed below and under Section IB.) In addition to standardized testing, the school employs an evaluation strategy utilizing exhibitions of mastery and portfolios, teacher assessments of classroom performance, evaluations by external clients served by the school's projects, and school-wide activities such as science and art shows.

The school is organized around five multi-age Levels. Level I includes grades K-2, Level II serves grades 3-5; Level III, grades 6 and 7; Level IV, grades 8-10; and Level V, grades 11 and 12. Each Level has established a set of standards that must be met to proceed to the next level. (See **Attachment II**.) The exit standards were developed by the school community as a whole and approved by the Board of Trustees Education Committee and the full Board. The use of exit standards was implemented in the 1997-98 school year at Levels III, IV, and V and in 1998-99 at Levels I and II. The faculty has found the exit standards to be an extremely useful tool in defining for students and parents the kind and quality of work required to progress through the school. The standards also address a concern of the DOE site-visit team of the school's need to be more explicit about what the students are expected to learn at the end of each level. Additionally, the standards serve the school's goal of maintaining multi-age classes while assuring students make steady progress within their levels. This gives students and teachers clear goals to strive for while reducing the emphasis on lock-step grade advancement.

Two important components of the exit standards are Portfolios and Exhibitions of Mastery. Portfolios provide students with guidelines as to the type and quality of "academic products" they must produce to progress through the school. (Portfolio content is found in the exit standards see **Attachment II**.) Despite the different elements that comprise a portfolio at different levels, the process of assembling the portfolio focuses a student on the academic requirements of the level and assists the student in setting a time frame to meet those requirements.

Exhibitions of Mastery are based on a student's deep interest in a topic or issue connected to his/her project experience at SSCS. (See Exhibition of Mastery Form, **Attachment III**.) The best of the exhibitions (as judged by fellow students, teachers, and outside evaluators) are featured in an evening program attended by the school community and the best of these are awarded cash incentives and college scholarships at the high school graduation ceremony. (See list of awards, **Attachment IV**) In some instances nominated exhibitions are reviewed by the donor to ensure quality standards are met. Exhibitions are required to draw from three academic disciplines, as well as reflect knowledge gained through the student's project experience.

Although the school is generally satisfied with the exit standards, adjustments are anticipated as we monitor the success and failure of students attempting to meet these requirements. One way in which we measure the success of the standards is through feedback we receive from faculty at the next higher level. We also monitor the standards vis-à-vis the school's desire to ensure students are prepared to meet the challenges posed by the state frameworks and MCAS. In our initial review of exit standards and MCAS performance, we learned that additional structured course work was necessary in Level IV (grades 8-10). Consequently, the faculty met in workshops throughout the year to identify courses, substance, and sequence that would more optimally align SSCS curriculum with state frameworks and MCAS testing. These workshops produced a core curriculum for Levels III, IV, and V. (See **Attachment V**.) The

daily course schedule was also revised in the summer of 1999 to provide daily math and an additional period each day for courses. Originally, the concept was to master academic content in the projects. Faculty found, however, that students were not ready to gain full benefit of project based learning without more intense academic preparation.

The school's classrooms are inclusionary and student centered. Classes often take on the atmosphere of a busy office with students working on single tasks as well as in small groups. The activity level fluctuates throughout the day. We believe this model promotes life skills in our students. To the uninitiated observer the SSCS classroom environment may appear distracting, but our students know what has to be accomplished and where to find needed resources. Teacher experience with our model is important to the success of the multi-grade and individually-paced classroom.

Classroom assessment in Levels I and II, and grade 6 in Level III, is based on the national Core Knowledge Sequence (CKS). CKS was selected by the school at its inception for Levels I and II. The primary grades have been recognized by the Core Knowledge foundation as a Core Knowledge School since 1995.

The Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks were not complete when the school was established in 1995. Once the frameworks were adopted by the Board of Education, SSCS contracted an outside educational service to correlate the frameworks with the Core Knowledge Sequence. This has enabled the Level I and II faculty to begin to address content that is not covered in the CKS, and will support student performance on the MCAS. Also in response to MCAS, the faculty are supplementing the math curriculum by gradually adopting Chicago Everyday Math for grades K-5. During the second semester of the 1998-99 school year, five of our classrooms piloted this math program to determine if it could be adopted into a multi-graded classroom. Although it will be challenging, the faculty supports implementing Chicago Math and will introduce the program one grade per year.

Levels IV and V employ the Integrated Math Program (IMP). This ten-year-old program, which is funded by the National Science Foundation, is one of only five mathematics programs in the country to be given the highest rating of "Exemplary" by the U.S. Department of Education. The curriculum is very closely aligned with both the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics standards and the Massachusetts frameworks. IMP integrates algebra, geometry, trigonometry, calculus, statistics, and probability in solving "real world" problems, which helps students to apply their learning in much the same way SSCS projects encourage applied learning. Much of the material in IMP is based on open-response questions, similar to the type found in the MCAS math sections. In fact, a tenth grader recently commented that the tenth grade MCAS math was "just like IMP". While there have been some difficulties in shifting to a new program, there have been promising signs. For example, our eighth graders scored above average on the 1998 MCAS math section. Perhaps the biggest challenge has been the lack of adequate time devoted to math each year to cover a full year of IMP. This will be resolved, however, next year when the class schedule provides for a period of math every day. Two-math faculty regularly participate in IMP workshops.

Project based learning is integral to the school's mission. (See definition of project goals, **Attachment VI**.) The school utilizes an incremental approach to projects. The demands and complexity of projects increase with the levels. Projects not only provide opportunities for academic application, but also introduce students to governance and leadership. They encourage communication skills and teamwork, as well.

In Level I students are introduced to the project concept and how projects are supported by teamwork and individual responsibility. At this level the most successful projects are those where the school itself is the client. Level I students have planted and maintained a garden in front of the school. Their work, along with environmental projects from other levels, earned the school a Certificate of Excellence and a \$400 award. The students were presented the Award for Excellence in Environmental Education at the State House on April 22, 1999.

Other Level I students walked for Habitat for Humanity (raising \$200) and held clothing drives for local service organizations. These projects have often been the most passionate part of Level I students' work and have given them a chance to practice teamwork, initiative and leadership and community service that are qualities central to our mission.

In Level II students are given a greater voice in developing project timelines and goals. Because projects are meant to help students practice academic skills, the Level Coordinator may place a student in a project to address a student's need for improvement. For instance, a student experiencing difficulty in computation would be encouraged to work in the School Store Project. As in Level I the most effective projects are those where the school is client. Some of the most successful projects have been a school store, a technology group that maintains school computers, and a library project that has organized and catalogued over 2,000 volumes. The School Store Project received a grant from Youth Venture to fund product development. The Technology Project recently received \$250 from the Bill Nigreen Project Award for Improving Communications. In addition to the obvious benefits of project learning, other benefits are reaped. Students learn to take risks, make mistakes and learn from those mistakes. There are also lessons learned about conflict resolution and ethical behavior. These important life lessons are by no means limited to the younger students. Eighty-six out of ninety students rated their projects as excellent or good.

In Level III, projects are student driven. Students set goals and deadlines that serve the needs of external clients. Clients include the town of Hull, Wompatuck State Park, other South Shore organizations and communities, as well as SSCS. The Virtual Voyage Project on Level III won a Youth Venture Grant and corporate support to create a website that followed the progress of the students' voyage. The school held a successful public exposition describing the project and displaying the nautical knowledge gained. The Environmental Planning Project also won a Youth Venture Grant and worked with the Elm Research Institute to establish an elm tree nursery.

Level IV and V bring students to the point where project participation is defined by active communication, individually or in teams, with clients of the local and world community. Level IV and V students demonstrate a high level of commitment to the goals of their project, and it is this personal investment that promotes academic growth and project teamwork. The passions of individual students are fueled by goals such as traveling internationally to aid those less fortunate, designing web pages for business, or implementing a lunch program for the school. Members of projects become actively involved in the leadership and direction of their projects, working in committees and side-by-side with the project leader. Students who have connected with a project and developed the skills needed to reach its goals are rewarded with a level of expertise, experience, and often, social consciousness that is unusually high for a secondary school student. In recent interviews with students wishing to move from Level IV to Level V, the students cited their work in projects as a manifestation of the school mission: teamwork, leadership, critical thinking, and communication.

Students in Levels IV and V participated in an ESL project with Showa University, a Japanese college for women. Some of these students went on to assist Peace Corps volunteers in Slovakia to teach ESL. SSCS students received high praise from Habitat for Humanity for their work in El Salvador as did students who traveled to Bolivia to help renovate an orphanage. The Poetry Project mobilized the help of the South Shore Poets Society in sponsoring and participating in poetry competition in various South Shore locations. The Skate Board Project researched and presented a proposal before Hull town officials to build a skateboard park in Hull. Although the proposal failed, students understood better the process of government. The Dance Project was awarded a \$1,000 grant for a portable dance floor.

Faculty have noted difficulties in implementing projects. Among these are lack of engagement by some students, students being unprepared either emotionally or academically to engage outside clients, students being unable to hold high performance standards, and poor in-house project facilities due to small school size. New faculty were also challenged by the project model and needed training and an opportunity to observe successful projects in action.

The key lesson for the faculty is that despite the challenges of implementing project learning, the successes are sufficiently numerous and intense that projects should continue to be the distinguishing feature of SSCS. Although adjustments were and are being made, projects, supplemented by a strong traditional curriculum, is a model SSCS would want to share with other schools. As enrollment and resources expand and teachers gain experience, the variety and strength of projects will continue to grow and their applicability as a model will increase.

In our original charter application the school stressed technology being available to students to augment their learning opportunities. The school is pleased to report strong growth in this area. The school has a ratio of 1 Pentium grade computer for every 7 students, but more importantly, all of the computers are networked throughout the school and connected to the internet (with the secondary school connected through a Media One broadband cable). Our students are productive and prolific in their use of both the network and the internet. Also, thanks to technology projects in Levels II, III and IV, about one-third of our students are proficient in web development or desktop publishing. These same students comprise a technically capable group who help with training, computer repair and network troubleshooting. In addition, the school is the first public school in the state to become a Microsoft Office User Specialist

Training Center. This allows us to require our Level IV graduates to earn a Microsoft Office User Specialist Word 97 proficiency certificate and to offer students (and adults) the option to certify in Excel, Access, Power Pont and Outlook. Also noteworthy, the original charter spoke of using a computer tracking system to allow parents a way to track student progress from their homes. The original idea of dial-in computer access never worked; however, the school has adjusted by taking advantage of new web technologies. Beginning this year faculty will be able to post assignments over the web. The school has established a website ([sscs-ma.org](http://sscs-ma.org)) that will carry descriptions of the projects and courses, general information about the school, and will be used to post homework assignments. Finally, we must mention the significant efforts of our technically skilled parent volunteers who have participated in every aspect of planning and installing our computer network, and in the process saved the school substantial contracting fees.

Each classroom, in every level has access to special need's software. On Level I all students have access to Lexia, a software developed for dyslexia. On Level II students can access SOS, the next level of Lexia, and all students are required to use Type To Learn, a software

program recommended by our occupational therapist. On Levels III, IV, and V, Leap Frog Math and Real Life Math are used to supplement math instruction.

The school community voted to add a world language requirement to the exit standards. At present all students K-12, depending on their grade level, can choose from French, Russian, Spanish, and Japanese. Over the past two years our Russian students from Levels I, II, III, have competed against first year high-school students in the Russian Olympiada at Buckingham Browne and Nichols School. The Russian Olympiada is a national competition sponsored by the American Council of Teachers of Russian. This year SSCS won two gold medals, two bronze medals and three honorable mentions. Two SSCS projects traveled to South America and in both projects Spanish was taught and complemented by instruction in Spanish classes. SSCS will have increased capacity to teach Spanish next year with the addition of two Spanish speaking faculty. Two years of elementary Japanese are offered in the secondary school. The course includes several units on Japanese culture and history. During the 1997-98 academic year a visiting teacher from Japan helped deliver our Japanese curriculum. Students studying Japanese also have the opportunity to interact with Japanese college students from Showa University's Boston campus as part of SSCS' International Perspectives project.

The school's international student activities are related to our world language program and project learning curriculum. Visitors to our secondary school building will notice the flags of Slovakia, Japan, Argentina, Nicaragua, Bolivia, and El Salvador. These flags represent the school's international involvement over its first four years. The school hosted student groups from Slovakia, Japan, and Argentina. SSCS students traveled to and participated in community service projects in Nicaragua, Bolivia, El Salvador, and Slovakia.

When students move to Level V, they are expected to identify educational experiences that will prepare them for college and career. Regardless of a student's job interests, the school strongly believes that post-high school education is a must. In programmatic terms, this requires a Level V student to complete an internship in an area of professional interest, successfully complete two colleges courses, be accepted into a college upon graduation, and complete 50 hours of community service, 25 of which must involve the student in a political or non-profit campaign, among other requirements. Students have a modified open campus where they are allowed to have lunch off campus and be away from school for dual-enrollment courses and internships. Level V provides opportunities that allow students to reap the rewards and bear the consequences of individual choice with the support of teachers and the school community.

Twenty-one students have graduated from SSCS during its first four years. The two most recent graduating classes have had to meet the Level V exit standards. A list of SSCS alumni, including college acceptances, is given in **Attachment VII**. The number of students graduating will increase as larger classes move through the lower levels to the secondary school.

The SSCS hosts many school-wide activities. One noteworthy activity is the K-12 Art Show supported by Very Special Arts and the Arts Council. Our third show was titled, "Art in Service, Our Community's Vision." The show included student work from SSCS, the Montessori Community School, Derby Academy, and St. Coletta's Day School. Our recent Coordinated Review Audit by the DOE commended SSCS for its vision in establishing this show. In particular, they commended the celebratory festival for school-aged children with and without disabilities during which SSCS students create art and dance with learning disabled students from St. Coletta's. This festival was held in the newly renovated auditorium of Mary Jeanette Murray Bathhouse, a popular public gathering place. Other noteworthy public activities include

our Solstice Concert, Science Fair, International Festival, K-12 talent show, and Virtual Voyage Festival.

***Section I B – Has Student Performance Significantly Improved and/or Been Persistently Strong on Internal and External Academic Assessments?***

Our students have shown significant progress on the California Achievement Tests administered in the spring of every year. We now have three years of spring CAT results to begin measuring our longitudinal progress for our primary levels. The results are very encouraging. Our students in grades 2 through 5 gained 9.4 percentiles on the normal curve equivalent scale for the total battery scores. A gain of 5 or more percentiles is statistically significant. Our students made significant gains in Reading, Language Arts, Math, and Social Studies. Smaller gains were made in Spelling (4.8) and Science (3.4). (See **Attachment VIII-A.**)

The spring 1999 scores have not been received yet for Levels III, IV, and V; however, we have done a comparison of the spring 1997 and 1998 scores and these results are also encouraging. (See **Attachment VIII-C.**) Because of fluctuations in our student population from year to year at the upper levels, the comparison includes only students who were with SSCS both years and who took the CAT both years, 91 students in all. The total battery scores improved from the 51.2 percentile in 1997 to 54.4 in 1998, an increase of 3.2 percentile points. Reading (59.1 in 1998), Science (60.1), and Social Studies (61.5) are also strengths for our student body in our upper levels. Math was a weakness for our secondary students in 1997 (46.4), but showed improvement in 1998 (50.6) with an increase of 4.2. Because of differences in the way the test was administered in 1997 and 1998, we are cautious about interpreting these gains (See notes to chart), and we are looking forward to comparing the results of 1999 with those of 1997 since they will be more comparable.

**Attachment VIII-C** shows the averaged scores for non-special needs students only and for only those students with special needs in our secondary levels. Our students with special needs showed significant growth in Reading (MNCE gain of 6.4), Math (gain of 5.3), Study Skills (6.7) and Social Studies (10.5). At the same time, our non-special needs students showed growth as well. We feel these results support our full inclusion approach.

In addition to the California Achievement Tests, our third graders have taken the IOWA Reading Test required by the Commonwealth. Our third graders have scored consistently higher than those of Hull, and they have been competitive with other towns in the local area. In 1997 our National Percentile Rank was 78, in 1998 it was 76, and in 1999 it was 77.

Our students performance on the first year of the MCAS was somewhat mixed. Our fourth graders performed at close to the statewide averages on the English and Math tests. They did perform significantly better than the statewide average on the Science and Technology tests with 65% scoring in the “Proficient” range and 6% performing in the “Advanced” range. According to the *Boston Herald*, our eighth graders ranked sixth in the advanced range for English/Language Arts. They did better than the statewide averages in the Math and Science and Technology tests.

The results for our tenth grade were substandard, with 48% failing both the English/Language Arts test and the Science and Technology test. The Math results were the worst, with 74% failing. These results were lower than Hull or any of the surrounding towns, and lower than the statewide average. Many of these students came to us because they were not

satisfied or successful students in their previous schools. Of the 23 students who took the 10<sup>th</sup> Grade MCAS, eight have since left the school. Eight met the exit standards for Level IV and moved up to Level V this year (the equivalent of 11<sup>th</sup> grade). The other seven remained in Level IV as tenth graders. As a result of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade Math MCAS scores, we have increased the amount of time spent on math.

## **2. IS THE SCHOOL A VIABLE ORGANIZATION**

### ***2A. Is the School Financially Solvent and Stable?***

SSCS operates on a state fiscal year ending June 30. Financial stability has been a primary and ongoing focus of the Board. A Finance Committee was formed in our second year in reaction to concerns about cost overruns in bringing our secondary building up to code. This committee has been active since that time. After establishing a budget for the building improvements, a search was conducted to move from a clerk/bookkeeper to a Finance Director with experience in financial reporting, internal controls, public procurement and financial management. Financial reporting to the Board has been improved to show variance reports along with cash flow projections giving the Board a more meaningful, user friendly picture of financial conditions on a monthly basis. SSCS uses a computerized accrual accounting system that tracks restricted funds, uses a purchase order system, and budget line authorizations.

SSCS' FY 99 tuition revenues were \$2,093,519 giving us an average per-pupil reimbursement figure of \$6,116 based on 342 students. Our total revenues of \$2,412,324 include approximately \$63,300 of parent and project fundraising, \$2,900 in miscellaneous grants and awards \$76,900 in program fees, rental income of \$6,900, along with state entitlement and start-up grants of \$168,800.

Our operating expenditures (exclusive of depreciation) are \$2,186,123 budget expenditures. Primary focus is the school personnel line which is 70% of total expenditures. The salary scale, located within the personnel policy is based on both education and relevant experience. The Trustees have publicly committed to making the salaries as competitive as possible to surrounding school districts within the overall budget constraints. This includes looking at other financing/fund raising options for facilities, which is a major focus for the next five year charter. Category two included direct student costs at 13% of the budget. School technology, library, service contractors, equipment, academic and assessment supplies are included in this category. Parental commitment to improving library facilities has added \$18,000 to this line. In-kind donations, including 43 new computers, have improved our commitment to technology. We are Internet ready and have budgeted money to that ongoing expense category. The school has also received significant pro bono services from several professional firms, the most significant of which is legal services from Bingham, Dana.

Faculty costs make up 10% of the operating budget for a cost of \$233,000. This continues to be an area of concentration for the Trustees as loan repayment for improvements, including handicap accessibility issue, does place pressure on the budget and cash flow. Currently we hold three building leases and a playground lease. We have recently resolved our elevator installation and litigation at the secondary school, which will improve space availability for the secondary school this coming year.

Finally, office and other expenditures account for 7% of the budget. The largest line item is our interest for the line of credit as well as interest on construction loans and equipment financing. Annual audits performed first by Theodore Samet and currently by Alexander,

Aronson and Fining Co., P.C., have consistently improved the school's financial management via management letters to the Trustees with each audit. All suggestions in their management letters were immediately implemented with corrective actions i.e., segregation of duties, procurement policies, and more complex approval process.

Recent improvements include completing our fixed asset inventory and timely payments to MTRB. The system changes put in place after each independent audit strengthened SSCS's financial management systems. SSCS has diligently continued to develop consistent and acceptable business practices utilizing resources provided by the Office of Inspector General as well as the Commonwealth's Operations Services Department to obtain state contracted pricing using approved vendors.

As we move into our fifth year of the charter, the school is cognizant of past shortcomings in some administrative procedures, including our management of enrollment reporting. The Board has voted to hire an independent consultant to recommend and implement a system of enrollment verification that meets the highest standards and will use this consultant to help certify our enrollment for the school year.

**2B. Is Enrollment Stable and Near Capacity?**

Enrollment has been at or near capacity with waiting lists each year for Levels I and II . Level III, IV, and V have been at near capacity with periodic waiting lists. Levels IV and V lost the use of two floors of its three-floor building in academic year 1998-99 because the building did not have handicap access to those floors. (Access renovation is now completed and all three floors will be available in August.) This resulted in overcrowding and eventual loss of some students and a hold on accepting new students. Enrollment figures are given below:

Year	Enrollment	Applications	Communities	Withdrawals	IEPs
1995/96	150	390	13	12%	19%
1996/97	325	472	15	21%	24%
1997/98	342	419	28	13%	17%
1998/99	336	369	26	15%	14%

It is current policy to request departing students to fill out an exit form that surveys reasons for withdrawing. This policy has been in effect over the past two years. Drawing on that information, the following summarizes reasons for withdrawal.

In school year 1998-99, Levels I and II had twenty-three withdrawals or 11% of students enrolled. Reasons given were that the commute was too long or inconvenient, relocated out of area, lack of connection to hometown community, or uncomfortable with the model. All but five withdrew at the close of the school year. Level I and II parents have an ombudsman committee that personally follows-up withdrawing students.

In school year 1998-1999, Levels III through V had twenty-eight withdrawals. Reasons varied from length of commute, lack of a league sports program, moved out of area and dropped out to work and/or pursue GED.

Despite the rather hectic pace of change with respect to facilities and realignment of the curriculum, the school has shown good stability in grades K-5 and has developed a committed core of students in the upper levels, including our 21 graduates. We feel confident that our efforts

to improve facilities and strengthen the curriculum combined with the changes in administration will have a major impact on retention of students and growth in enrollment figures.

## 2C. Is School Governance Sound and Are Professional Staff Competent and Resourceful?

The SSCS is governed by a Board of Trustees. There are a maximum of 15 seats on the Board. Of the current 11 board members, seven are parents and one is a student (See **Attachment IX**.) The Board and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) receive input from students, teachers, and parents through a Primary Council and a Secondary Council. In addition there is a Student Board, Primary and Secondary Parent groups, and a Faculty/Staff Association. Since the school's establishment, the school has striven to develop a more effective governance structure and we continue to do so. The Board's decision not to renew the CEO's contract in April 1999 prompted a dialogue in the school community. This dialogue has led to more frequent communication between the Board and the SSCS community. Opening of these information channels is deemed very desirable. Movement in this direction has already begun with the Faculty/Staff Association having a slot on the Board agenda each meeting. The heads of the primary and secondary school now have open lines of communication with the Board, as well. The school's governance structure is presently under review by a committee of teachers, parents, students and Board members.

There have been recent changes in the school administration as noted above. The CEO's contract was not renewed effective June 30, 1999 and the head of the secondary school and curriculum director (this was one position) resigned effective June 30, 1999. The CEO's annual review revealed weaknesses in his performance and the Board voted not to renew his contract. An Acting Head of the Secondary School was appointed effective July 1, 1999. An interim CEO with charter school experience was appointed in July and will assume his duties in early August. The result of these changes is a school community with renewed vigor and renewed commitment to educational excellence.

The school has benefited from the stability provided by the Board and its current Chair. The issues faced by the Board have not been insignificant of late with changes in the school leadership. Two of the original Board members remain on the Board. Three additional Board members have served for two years with one member serving for three years. In the most recent academic year, with the pending change in school administrative leadership, four members resigned. Election of new members takes place in October each year at the annual meeting. Board terms are staggered to ensure stability and continuity.

Teacher commitment and stability have been important to the school's success. (Abbreviated heads of school and level coordinator resumes are provided in **Attachment X**.) All full-time primary school faculty from the 1995-96 school year continue to teach at the school. Three of the 11 full-time Level I and II faculty resigned at the end of the 1997-98 school year due to (1) moving out of state, (2) distance of commute, (3) a job at a college. At the end of the 1998-99 school year two primary school faculty left, one decided on a career change and the other was uneasy about the school's leadership changes.

In the upper levels, at the conclusion of the past academic year three full-time teachers left the school, one relocated, one accepted a position in another district and the third received his law degree and entered law as a career. At the end of the 1997-98 academic year, two full-time faculty left, one relocated to the Mid-west and one was not rehired. Plans this summer are to add one science and one social studies teacher for Level III and one social studies teacher for Levels IV/V.

Levels I and II are led by the head of the primary school who has been with the school since its inception. For the past two years Levels III, IV, and V had been directed by the secondary head of school. A new secondary head was appointed as of July 1, 1999. Faculty from all levels have been encouraged to attend professional development programs with the school covering costs of approved professional development activities. Faculty have on file at the school their professional development activities to date. Faculty from Levels I, II, and III have been receiving training on implementing the Core Knowledge Sequence and those level coordinators attended the CKS annual meeting in spring 1999. The Levels IV and V math faculty attend periodic training on how best to implement IMP. Other faculty have attended professional meetings and undertaken formal college courses. The Board approved an overall professional development plan in spring 1999.

For the 1999-00 academic year, nine of the eleven full-time teachers in Levels I and II have Masters degrees and all but two of the full time teachers in the secondary school have Masters. Eight of the eleven primary teachers are certified and all the secondary school full-time teachers are certified, except one. Several of the part-time project leaders do not have certification or a Masters, but have significant professional experience in their fields of expertise.

The teachers and the school are evaluated each year, in part, by surveys sent home for parent completion. Students also complete evaluations at the school. These surveys show satisfaction with teachers' performance and the delivery of education by the school, as well as with the school culture being conducive to learning. According to the parent surveys from the primary school, the parents were most pleased with the variety of learning opportunities, the improved writing program on Level II, safety, and responsiveness of the school to specific needs. Of the forty-two responses, forty parents rated their overall experience as good or excellent.

As one parent wrote, "What I think is most special about this school is its 'community culture' as a place of learning. This may seem obvious, since it is a school, But my son goes to school in a REAL community, where many people care about him and know him ... he feels like many people care about his learning because of the way they engage him." (Other parent testimonials are being sent with this renewal application for the reviewers' reference.)

During the first two years of the charter the Board of Trustees did not receive any official complaints. In the third year one official complaint was received regarding alleged unfair practices against a student. The Board formed a committee, investigated and wrote a response. The Board did not find that any violation of SSCS policies or state or federal laws or regulations. During 1998-99 there were three complaints filed. One was about our October enrollment report. The Board found that the complainant was missing a section of the report being compared. The second concerned our special education program and was simultaneously brought to the DOE. The DOE's investigation superceded the Board's. The third complaint was filed recently and is currently being investigated and addressed.

### **3. IS THE SCHOOL FAITHFUL TO THE TERMS OF ITS CHARTER**

#### ***3A. Have the Schools Program and Operation Been Consistent With the Terms Of Its Charter?***

The school's original charter lays out a number of student, school, and governance performance objectives as well as its stated programmatic goals. Student and governance performance objectives have been addressed in sections above. School performance goals are enumerated below with a note on their current status. The school's programmatic goals,

however, as stated in the mission of the school, are of primary importance because they reflect the school's overarching educational objectives. It is, therefore, important to reiterate the school's mission at this juncture.

*SSCS Mission:* To provide each student with an education that fosters initiative, critical thinking, leadership, teamwork, and communication; to promote life skills for individual achievement in education, career, community, and life; and to disseminate the SSCS model across Massachusetts.

Representatives of the school community gathered to review the mission's objectives and created a matrix that is reproduced as **Attachment XI**. The matrix takes each of the mission's goals and places them in the context of the school's main educational activities. From the matrix one can see the extent to which the mission's goals are interwoven into the curriculum and that their interconnectedness allows students multiple opportunities to master important educational and life skills.

The Board conducted a major survey of the full school community in the spring of 1999. The Board wished to ascertain the satisfaction level of the community and to gain information on the community's priorities for the next charter period. In brief, the survey revealed that sixty-four percent of respondents believed the school was meeting or exceeding expectations in math, seventy-one percent felt the school was meeting or exceeding expectations in history, forty-five percent indicated science was meeting or exceeding their expectations, and sixty-nine percent felt the school was meeting or exceeding expectations in language arts. Projects received a fifty-three percent or higher rating in relation to effective delivery of the school's mission. The three areas of weakness that the survey highlighted were (1) implementation of personal education plans, (2) challenging curriculum within projects, and (3) detailed curriculum in projects. As stated within this document, the school recognizes these weaknesses and is addressing them with changes in course requirements, course schedules, and teacher training.

The following listing notes each objective with an explanatory note as to how the school is meeting the objective.

1. Maintaining targeted enrollment and retention.

The school has maintained full or nearly full enrollment and has had a waiting list for specific grades each year. As noted above the loss of two of the three floors of the secondary school (which included the loss of the school store project) resulted in an attrition of students who were not replaced due to lack of classroom space. Despite this, the school's enrollment more than doubled over its four years of existence. Over the summer Level II will add an additional classroom due to enrollment demand.

2. Two-thirds of parents giving SSCS an overall positive rating.

The school has repeatedly earned 67 percent or higher parent approval in quarterly surveys.

3. All costs for the initial charter are paid over the first five years.

Current cash flow projections show that the school will cover its debts and operating expenses at the end of the five year period.

4. The SSCS curriculum will correlate with the state frameworks and with the Core Knowledge Sequence.

Levels I and II correlated the Core Knowledge Sequence (CKS) with the frameworks through an outside educational service. Faculty from the first three levels and the head of the primary school have attended workshops on implementing CKS. Teachers of Levels III, IV, and V met over the year and approved in June 1999 a core curriculum to be introduced this coming academic year. The curriculum was formatted to meet the expectations of the state frameworks and to address the demands of the MCAS.

5. Mastering curriculum in the upper levels through projects.

The faculty had expressed concern that students were experiencing difficulty in meeting the demands of projects without more extensive academic preparation. Consequently, the faculty agreed to limit participation in projects to one per student annually and to add additional course work in the mornings. As better-prepared students progress from the lower levels to the secondary school in the SSCS model, project time may be increased to reflect better student preparation.

6. Involving partner organizations in project learning.

The school has received laudatory comments from partner groups such as the Peace Corps, Habitat for Humanity, Showa University, and New England Aquarium, among others. The key to effective partnerships is: (1) they must be based on real project needs and (2) the number of partners is not as significant as the depth of the relationship in meeting a project's goals. Many of our partner organizations offer awards for exemplary work in a project.

7. Achieve a low ratio of students to computers.

The school has provided an internet-connected computer for every seven students and has established a computer lab that is used for application classes as well as a technology project.

8. Certify students in Microsoft applications.

The SSCS was designated by Microsoft as a Center for Microsoft certification. Each of our students must become Microsoft Word certified to move from Level IV to V. Next year students may elect to become certified in other Microsoft programs.

9. The school will have an extended day and year.

Over its four years, the school has always exceeded DOE learning time. In 1997-98, the primary levels were eleven percent over the state requirement and the upper levels were fourteen percent over the requirement. The school has had an extended day program on site for K-5 every year.

10. Enrolling a higher percentage of minority students than surrounding communities

In 1997-98 the school was higher than surrounding communities with eight percent minority students enrolled.

11. Diversifying and expanding SSCS public and private funding.

This has been an area of disappointment for the school. This was one of the major shortcomings cited in the former CEO’s evaluation this past year. A major priority in the new CEO’s job description is outside fundraising.

12. Students will complete prescribed number of quality journal entries each year.

Students need to meet the journal requirement to proceed to the next level. A proposal is being prepared, however, that the journal requirement be eliminated as an exit standard, and integrated instead into the projects.

Year	Attendance	Suspensions	Expulsions	Exclusions
1997/98	90%	87	1	5
1998/99	92%	42	0	2

Overall discipline is good and has been improving. The school stresses the importance of a mutually respectful community (See **Attachment XII.**) One can postulate that the high number of suspensions in Levels IV and V may reflect the enrollment of students who might have experienced academic or disciplinary problems in their former schools. There is an expected standard of behavior at SSCS that is important to the culture of the school. This message is one SSCS will continue to emphasize to all incoming students and is reinforced by the signing of a letter of expectations by both parent and student. Though not a legally binding contract, it strongly conveys the SSCS’s behavioral expectation of students and parents. (See **Attachment XIII.**)

Parent involvement is a high priority for SSCS and parent participation has been good, particularly among the lower grades. Each year parents provide periodic breakfasts and lunches for faculty and staff. Each spring parents organize and run a silent auction with a buffet dinner. This has been highly successful and has raised over \$15,000 over the past two years. In addition parents participate in the parent associations and on the primary and secondary councils. They also serve on school-wide committees such as technology, health and safety, curriculum, as well as on hiring committees.

Facilities have presented challenges. Mention has already been made of losing two floors of the secondary school. This has now been remedied with the addition of a handicap elevator. The main secondary building is a former motel and the small rooms limit some classes to 10 students, except where walls have been torn down between rooms. Some additional renovation is being done over the summer to improve classroom size and availability. Although the school has a five year option remaining on the secondary building, the Board has engaged a search firm to investigate alternative sites as the school looks forward to a renewal of its charter.

The primary school has undergone substantial renovations and is adding a classroom this summer to meet enrollment demand. The school has a twenty year lease on this building. The volunteer energy and effort of teachers, students and parents to improve facilities has been remarkable and is a key indicator of the commitment and resilience of the SSCS community.

### ***3B. Is the School Within Bounds of Applicable Statutory and Regulatory Requirements?***

1. Special Education: The SSCS just completed a program quality review of its Special Education Program. A five-member team from the Department of Education visited SSCS during the week of May 3, 1999 to evaluate our SPED program. The team commended the following program areas and indicated these programs have a significant and positive impact on the delivery of educational services to SSCS students: (1) "The staff of the South Shore Charter School have made impressive efforts in creating an inclusionary environment for students requiring special education services. ...;(2) A highlight of this project (community art exhibition) was a cooperative dance and percussion exhibition involving SSCS students and students with substantial special needs from the St. Coletta's day program and (3) Orton-Gillingham trained teachers provide reading instruction throughout all levels in the primary school. ... This practice eliminates service delivery outside of the classroom, and decreases separation of children with special needs from their peers during instructional time."

The full SPED report was predominately favorable, however we are still unable to find a Special Education Administrator. We continue to advertise in the Boston Globe and on the DOE website. We have received no applications to date from certified candidates. The Board of Trustees has committed funds and made the search a priority. The expertise of a special education administrator is crucial for SSCS to move into compliance in several specific areas highlighted in the report. We will rely on our DOE liaison to help us with our corrective action plan that will follow the release of the audit.

2. Limited English Proficiency: The school annually identifies students who have limited English proficiency. They are interviewed by bi-lingual faculty and assessments are undertaken if necessary. For one student in the secondary school, English was a second language. The student was tutored by a staff person and was a student at ESL classes at U-Mass-Boston under the state's dual-enrollment program. To further improve his English, the school enrolled him in an ESL class at Quincy College. The school provides tutoring whenever the need arises.

3. Student Learning Time: As noted above, SSCS has consistently exceeded the state requirement for learning time. Please refer to the school calendar given in **Attachment XIV**.

4. State Testing Requirements: As required by the state, SSCS students in the fourth, eighth, and tenth grades took the MCAS tests during the time frames set by the state this year and last year. The third graders take the Iowa Basic Skills Test in Reading. In addition the school administers the California Achievement Test twice annually. A proposal is being made to reduce this to once a year in the spring.

5. Student Discipline: The school student discipline process is described in **Attachment XV**. In summary students who break the code of conduct meet with their advisor and level coordinator. On Levels III, IV and V the student is given the option of having the level coordinator recommend the consequences to the head of school or going before the student judicial council on the secondary level that will make its recommendation to the head of school. The head of school will then decide the disciplinary consequences. There is an avenue of appeal to the CEO. Severe violations (such as drugs, weapons, fighting, and assault) result in immediate suspensions pending further action by the administration.

6. Health and Safety: The school employs a full-time nurse who is responsible for all grades and is on call to immediately respond to any emergencies. Most staff have been trained in

first aid and CPR. The goal is for all faculty to be certified. The school nurse provides or arranges for staff training in CPR and first aid every year. A log is kept of medical emergencies. It is standard protocol to call the parent or guardian if a child has been hurt. Student medical cards are kept on file and accessible in each school's office. When students travel, copies of their medical cards are carried by the teacher.

#### **4. IF THE SCHOOL'S CHARTER IS RENEWED, WHAT ARE THE SCHOOL'S PLANS FOR THE FIVE YEARS OF THE NEXT CHARTER?**

##### ***4A. Please Describe How Your Founding Charter Has Served the School During Its First Five Years. What Has the School Learned During the First Five Years About the Strengths and Weaknesses of its Charter, and What Changes in the Charter Does This Experience Suggest?***

The original charter has served the school and community well. Among the many defining characteristics laid out in the charter and those components that have distinguished the school and inspired the faculty are: teaching through projects, individually paced learning, the use of technology in learning, strong parental and student involvement in governance, parent support, and the flexibility to search out ways to best implement the curriculum. The school believes that among other strengths, projects present an interdisciplinary way for students to strengthen and utilize the knowledge learned under the frameworks, thus reinforcing academic mastery. Students have been truly inspired by projects and some have shown a dramatic turnaround for the better after project involvement. Clients served by projects praise the concept and the diligence of students. The Board also recognizes the difficulties of funding successful projects, and has set as a priority for the new CEO fund raising to support the schools concept of project learning. The Board is also planning to initiate a school-wide dialogue to refine the emphasis of the secondary school to match its strengths to project emphases. The new CEO's extensive high-school experience will benefit this effort.

The SSCS continues to seek ways of coupling individually paced learning with high academic expectations and excellence. The school feels it is important to offer students time to mature and change attitudes toward learning. Also charter schools are sought-after for learning opportunities not available elsewhere. Small classes translate into more individual attention and more time for teachers to develop strategies to meet individual expectations. One strategy toward individually-paced learning was the introduction of Learning Activity Packets (LAP) to balance a de-emphasis on texts. This effort resulted in a number of excellent IAPs, but it was too time intensive for teachers to create LAPS for all courses and projects and to accommodate student requests for curriculum breadth. The secondary school's reaction was to continue to endorse individually paced learning, but at the same time encourage the use of more texts and to stabilize the curriculum so teacher preparation time was more reasonable. Teachers are encouraged by this change and a full complement of resources will be available in the coming academic year.

Individually-paced education combined with multiage classrooms has worked well on Levels I and II. Most students at this age are eager to excel, and the school has a culture where academic success is "cool". To avoid the possibility that some students might slip through the cracks in a multi-age classroom, clear grade benchmarks taken from the Core Knowledge Sequence assures students meet annual goals.

Multi-age education also promotes individually-paced instruction. It allows each student to progress at his/her own pace without stigmatizing him/her for working above or below a grade level. A student may have the same teacher for 2 or 3 years promoting good communication

between student and teacher and parent and teacher. By the time the kindergartner has reached second grade he/she has been exposed to the work of the older students allowing a deeper level of understanding to take place. The second grader, on the other hand, has the opportunity to relearn previous concepts as he/she helps younger students.

Associated with individually paced learning was the secondary school policy of offering students the possibility of “incompletes” if class requirements were not met. The school was then confronted by academically talented students procrastinating and either finishing work at the last minute or not at all, and less talented academic students falling behind. To remedy the situation the time frame for finishing incompletes was limited to one quarter and the highest grade a student could attain was reduced from a “B-” to a “C-“. This policy is now in effect. Individual teachers have introduced other measures to increase student performance, for example, late homework is penalized.

Personal Education Plans were originally viewed by the school as a means to keep teachers, parents, and students abreast of student progress and student curriculum choices. However, over the first four years of the charter, other modes of communication, such as parent meetings, detailed progress reports, parent nights, and project briefings have provided a more dynamic and meaningful approach to evaluating and tracking a student’s performance. All levels will continue to allow for individually-paced learning, within appropriate limits, but personal education plans may not be implemented as originally envisioned. In Levels I and II, faculty will arrange parent-teacher goal setting meetings during which general goals will be mutually developed and set. (A sample format of a goal setting meeting is given in **Attachment XVI**.) Levels III, IV, and V have included four parent nights on the school calendar to accommodate parent interest and will meet with parents before monthly parent group meetings, a practice begun this past academic year. In addition, students have twenty minutes for individual and group advising each day.

Both project learning and individually paced learning have been the school’s unique features that incoming students and parents allude to in choosing SSCS. It is for this reason that the successes and shortcomings have been addressed here. It is also the reason the teachers and administration wish to make the right decisions in refining both to serve the educational needs of SSCS students. It is a continuing dialogue that will benefit from more teacher training and input from outside experts.

One very important component of the school’s academic assessment of students is the exit standards which are used by all levels. (Exit Standards are given as **Attachment II**.) If a student can meet the exit standards, they can move to the next level. This integrates nicely with individually-paced learning since students can accelerate through the school **or** take more time to progress. This is reinforced by using levels rather than grades which reduces the stigma of “staying back” and the pressure for social promotion. The school is pleased with the practical results of this approach, and would be an aspect of the school’s model that we would want to share with other schools. Having said that, there is a need to employ more external judging of student portfolios. This is a major goal for the school.

At present each student needs to present two exhibitions of mastery. The schools objective was to have all exhibitions externally evaluated, and in some instances they are. However, in many instances, particularly in the secondary school, they are not. The school will examine whether there are too many exhibitions required and if they comprise the true intent of mastery. The goal is to have external judging in all cases and to have this be truly an exhibition of mastery. Again this is an issue of refinement as there have been many outstanding exhibitions

that have been externally judged, and the sense of accomplishment that this brings to student, parent, and teacher is inspiring.

Level V has had very encouraging results from its participation in the state's dual enrollment program. Our satisfaction comes on two fronts. First, the academic success of SSCS students as evidenced by grades attained and secondly this being accomplished by students who never envisioned themselves taking college courses. Most of our students enroll in UMass-Boston. Two of our students were asked to participate in an honors freshman English course. A small percent have encountered problems, but the school has supported these students with scholarship money to attend Quincy College or by offering college courses at the school. This has provided a second chance for success and confidence building.

As stated earlier, SSCS has made great strides in the area of technology. The school has built a fully networked infrastructure complete with internet access, half of which is broadband, and all of which our students are comfortable using. The school has become an Authorized Microsoft Office User Specialist Testing Center offering nationally (and world) recognized certifications in Microsoft Office Products (a first for Massachusetts public schools). There are technology projects at Levels II, III, and IV which successfully train students in web development, computer repair, and network support. These students, in turn, become an invaluable resource for training others. SSCS will align its technology projects with Youth Technology Entrepreneurs (YTE) a new non-profit affiliated with the Massachusetts DOE, which has goals similar to the school's of training students in web development, computer repair, and network support. (Our Technology manager will begin YTE training in the summer of 1999.) In the coming year, SSCS will begin to use its web site to post homework assignments.

Sports, art, and music opportunities are important to students and important to student retention. Inability to satisfy student demand in these areas has been a problem, especially in the upper levels. To meet expectations requires facilities, staff, and additional funding. The secondary school is committed to gradually increasing opportunities by expanding our partnership with the South Shore Conservatory, offering limited intramural basketball and girl's softball, and offering more classes in art. Our experience shows that the need to meet and fund properly student expectations in these areas grows as the students grow. Again fundraising is necessary, as the school does not want to dilute the more traditional course offerings to meet demands for electives.

The arts are an integral part of the curriculum on Levels I and II. These levels have developed a curriculum map for covering the visual arts and are using the map to budget for a three-year purchase of supporting Art Prints. Ten percent of the student supply spending is dedicated to the visual arts. A public art show is held annually. For a fee the South Shore Conservatory offers musical instruction on site after school. Group singing is practiced daily and all students participate in a Winter Solstice Concert. Fitness classes are offered once a week.

***4B. Please Attach an Accountability Plan That Defines the School's Student and School Performance Objectives for Its Next Charter Term. Describe How These Objectives Align Themselves With the Current State Curriculum Frameworks.***

The accountability plan is annexed herewith as **Attachment XVII**.

**4C. How Will the School Evaluate and Disseminate Effective Elements of the School’s Structure or Program?**

The school will evaluate itself through periodic Board of Trustee surveys, surveys completed by parents and students, DOE initiated site evaluations, and periodic independent assessments. Standardized test scores – CAT, PSAT, SAT, and MCAS - will offer additional means to evaluate the school’s progress in meeting its commitments to students, parents, and the Commonwealth.

In the eyes of SSCS, a critical component for successful dissemination is the initiation of a more intensive dialogue among the charter schools and other public schools. This might best be accomplished through short and medium-term exchange of faculty among charter schools with encouragement from the Charter School Office. Day visits to other charter schools have been most helpful. Another means might be one week exchanges of students, with students staying at the homes of their counterparts. The point being more frequent and informal modes of dissemination would be optimal at this stage given that most charter schools are relatively young. Otherwise, it might be presumptuous of any one school to hold forth a model for others to imitate.

More specifically, the following activities will help provide avenues for dissemination. The school will disseminate its structure or program through the following avenues:

- ?? Faculty will be encouraged to seek opportunities to present at conferences and workshops.
- ?? Community members will continue to be invited into our schools for informal tours.
- ?? Community members will continue to be encouraged to volunteer. Our primary school will be participating in the Reading Institute sponsored by the Commonwealth Executive Office of Elders Affairs. This is a new initiative to train elders who will volunteer in community literary programs. These elders will then work with our primary school, helping to develop reading skills in our younger students.
- ?? Students will participate in community service opportunities so that the public can interact with our youth and formally learn more about SSCS. This year students visited nursing homes, participated in clothes drives, walked for Habitat for Humanity...etc.
- ?? The school will continue to invite the press into our school to cover programs and school functions.
- ?? SSCS website is [www.sscs-ma.org](http://www.sscs-ma.org)

**4D. What Will Be the School’s Enrollment by Grade, By Year, and In Total, During the Term of Its Next Charter?**

Primary growth will come from the advancement through the school of the lower grades. The Enrollment Projections below assume only modest any growth in facilities.

	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Level I					
Grade K	36	36	36	36	36
Grade 1	36	36	36	36	36
Grade 2	36	36	36	36	36
Level II					
Grade 3	36	36	36	36	36

Grade 4	36	36	36	36	36
Grade 5	36	36	36	36	36
Level III					
Grade 6	27	36	36	36	36
Grade 7	27	36	36	36	36
Level IV					
Grade 8	30	30	36	36	36
Grade 9	30	30	36	36	36
Grade 10	30	30	36	36	36
Level V					
Grade 11	25	25	32	36	36
Grade 12	15	15	25	36	36
TOTAL	400	418	453	468	468

***4E. What Facility or Facilities Do You Plan to Use During the Term of the Next Charter? Please submit Written Documentation That the School Remains In Compliance With All Building, Health, Safety, and Insurance Requirements, as Described in 603 CMR 1.05 (2), and That all related inspections and Approvals Are Current.***

The South Shore Charter School operates out of three locations in Hull. These three locations were renovated to meet the 1990 standard for school occupancy, consequently, our facilities exceed building and safety requirements when compared with older schools. The kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade, also know as Level I and II are located at 2A Street. The 6<sup>th</sup> and 7 grade, also known as Level III is located at 2 Samoset Avenue. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade through the 12<sup>th</sup> grade also known as Level IV and V are located at 120 Nantasket Avenue. The South Shore Charter School complies with all Building, Health, Safety and Insurance Requirements as described in 603 CMR 1.05 (2) (see attached building permits and Certificates of Liability Insurance). Please note the building permit for each location that is issued every year prior to the start of the school year is only issued after the Plumbing, Building, Health and Fire Inspector has inspected and approved that we are in compliance.

**Levels I & II** (Grades K-5): 2A Street (13,500 sq. ft. building with nearby beach, leased playground, leased playing field, and 3,000 sq. ft. gym/theater/art building.) Enclosing the outdoor porch space on the second floor for a classroom is in process. No renovations required. Library will continue to be expanded on the third floor.

**Levels III** (Grades 6 & 7): Level III will remain at 2 Samoset Avenue unless additional space contiguous to Levels IV and V becomes available. (3,000 sq. ft. building surrounded by large public open field and beach.)

**Levels IV & V** (Grades 8-12): The school is weighing options regarding the expansion of the current facility under a continued lease versus identifying an alternative site for the school.

***5. ATTACH THE RESULTS OF ANY INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE SCHOOL (STUDIES, SURVEYS, EVALUATIONS) THAT MAY SHED LIGHT ON THE SCHOOL'S PERFORMANCE DURING THE TERM OF ITS CHARTER.***

**Note: Copies of independent reviews to be provided.**