

July 29, 2004

Commissioner David Driscoll  
Massachusetts Department of Education  
350 Main Street  
Malden, MA 02148

Dear Commissioner Driscoll,

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.

Since its founding in 1995, SSCS has met its obligation as a pioneering institution with spirit, conviction, and great success. We have forged a proud identity built on outstanding academics complemented by an experiential learning program. We employ committed teachers who relish the opportunities to create and make a difference. Our graduates are fine young adults and aware citizens. The SSCS community is active and engaged.

Next year SSCS will begin its tenth year on a new campus. This achievement demonstrates not only our viability as a regional institution but the credibility of charter schools. We will be at full enrollment for the first time and will deliver our program within a modern facility equipped with the amenities that will find SSCS becoming a regional hub for academic and cultural activities.

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.

Sincerely,

Michael T. Munhall  
Executive Director

## **OUR MISSION**

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

## **OUR MISSION**

*(Proposed for the 2005-2010 charter term subject to DOE approval.)*

South Shore Charter School inspires students to achieve their potential in academics, career, and life. This is accomplished with an innovative curriculum that addresses the learning styles of the individual student, complemented by a real-life experiential learning program, within a community that encourages serves, leadership, and respect.

## **Our Philosophy**

- Promote life skills for individual achievement in education, career, community, and life;
- Foster relationships between students, staff, and parents that are respectful and caring;
- Nurture the development of a civil community and supportive and safe learning environment through small multi-grade classrooms;
- Maintain low student/teacher rations by hiring dedicated, talented teachers who provide opportunities for individualized guidance and instruction;
- Cultivate in students the ability to become independent learners, to take risks, and to apply academics to their life experiences;
- Produce active, engaged thinkers and communicators who value teamwork and leadership through cooperative and collaborative learning and teaching;
- Support multiple-intelligence learning through project-based and performance-based assessment;
- Encourage parents, students, and teachers to serve the school community and beyond;
- Ask students to explore and develop talents and interests outside the classroom;
- Create an environment in which the best education occurs through administrators, parents, staff, teachers, and trustees working together to pursue common goals.

## **Executive Summary**

South Shore Charter School (SSCS) marked its ninth year of operation as a K-12 institution in June 2004. SSCS is an innovative, diverse, and challenging public school that continues to meet its obligations to the Commonwealth, the charter school movement, our families, and our students.

Embarking on what will be its third charter term, SSCS is poised to realize its vision of becoming a vibrant, regional school. A challenging curriculum, increasing enrollment, the acquisition of a permanent campus that will support 468 students, a blossoming athletics program, and greater regional prominence shows that SSCS is making tremendous progress.

Numerous indicators – matriculation into the high school, attendance rates, and performance on internal and external assessments demonstrate that the academic program is a success. SSCS has graduated 65 students who have distinguished themselves by successfully meeting the school's curriculum requirements. The school's newest Accountability Plan will further focus and intensify the program and its outcomes will continue to prove that SSCS is competitive.

SSCS is a viable and stable institution. The purchase of a new campus and the obligations of ownership show the maturity of SSCS. Finances are strong, enrollment has reached the cap for the first time in school history, and the governance structure provides the school with a number of committed leaders who share a vision for the future.

The school's model has proven exceptionally durable. Our program of a strong core curriculum complemented by an experiential learning program is defining. SSCS shares its best practices with the wider community and is moving towards becoming the regional institution that was intended by its original charter.

South Shore Charter School is proving that a small school, unyielding in its dream and driven by dedicated teachers and parents, can deliver an education that imparts the life skills that shape thoughtful citizens.

## I. ACADEMIC PROGRAM

### ***1A. Has the school made reasonable progress in meeting internally established Accountability Plan goals regarding the success of its academic program?***

SSCS has made reasonable progress in meeting internally established Accountability Plan goals regarding the success of its academic program. The school is organized into six Levels – Level I (K-2), II (3-4), III (5-6), IV (7-8), V (9-10), and VI (11-12) – and employs a multi-age, multi-grade model that builds maturity and exposes multiple intelligences. These Levels were reconfigured into its current arrangement in 2003. The change was made to improve academic performance and to have the final years of a Level align with the MCAS in grades 4, 6, 8, and 10. Overwhelmingly, 96% of the SSCS community feels that the school offers a balanced academic program.

During the past four years, the Board of Trustees, administration, and faculty have worked vigilantly to put students on the path towards achieving three distinct goals as articulated by the 2000 Accountability Plan. Each of these goals is described in detail below.

#### 1. All students will develop the essential skills of initiative, critical thinking, teamwork, and communication.

The school's performance standards and assessments include project participation and successful completion of project requirements and goals, opportunities to take initiative and assume leadership within projects, successful completion of Exhibitions of Mastery (a public presentation) as required for respective Levels, and completion of required community service hours.

Each Level has established a set of standards that must be met in order to be promoted to the next Level. (See Attachment E.) Exit Standards were developed by the school community as a whole and approved by the Board of Trustees Education Committee and the full Board. These Exit Standards were implemented during our last charter and the standards have been revised during this charter as issues such as grade realignment or MCAS testing have been recognized. 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.

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. Despite the different elements that comprise a portfolio at different Levels, the process of assembling the portfolio focuses a student on the academic requirements 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. The best high school exhibitions (as

judged by fellow students, teachers, and outside evaluators) are featured in an evening program attended by the school community. Exhibitions are required to draw from three academic disciplines as well as reflect knowledge gained through the student's project experience.

2. All students will master essential academic skills.

The performance standards for this goal include an understanding of Exit Standards, passing grades in the upper Levels, and successful completion of portfolio requirements. Students must meet or exceed the "Needs Improvement" score for MCAS or successfully complete the MCAS in order to graduate. High school students must pass two college courses in order to graduate, achieve Microsoft User Certification, and reach SAT scores suitable for college acceptance. 78% of the community believes technology supports student achievement. 95% of our community believes that Exit Standards are detailed and set "clear rigorous and minimum academic standards." Internal assessments are more fully discussed in section 1B.

3. All students will demonstrate active engagement in their education.

Student attendance rate is consistently strong, which we believe demonstrates an investment in education both on the part of students as well as their families.

	2001	2002	2003	2004
Attendance rate, Grades 1-12	94%	91%	93.3%	93.5%

SSCS will continue to stress attendance, as well as the importance of nutrition and a healthy lifestyle, to all of its students as vital ingredients for learning.

Our classrooms are inclusive 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 may appear distracting, but our students know what has to be accomplished and where to find needed resources. The success of the multi-grade, individually-paced classroom is largely determined by teacher experience with our model. SSCS mentors new teachers so that classes will reflect the ideals of the program.

SSCS has been working towards a differentiated curriculum during the term of this charter. We encourage teachers, through professional development and mentoring, to include various modalities of learning into their classes. We believe in developing goals and essential questions before a unit of study is taught, and design assessment tools that allow for different modes of learning. The 2003-2004 professional development theme of "Assessment" found SSCS examining how to evaluate student learning in a variety of methods. This study has developed a greater variety of teaching methods in the classrooms. Students are given options for the demonstration of

knowledge attained. Creative students find outlets in art, acting, and writing while more regimented minds are assessed on technical achievements. In this way, we accommodate the unique styles and abilities of our students without compromising our need to assess progress.

Another measure by which we see student participation is in regards to projects. There are usually four or more projects offered at each Level. Students choose their own projects, thus giving them the opportunity to find a topic of interest, play to their strengths, and still develop their overall abilities.

Community service is integral to the curriculum of the school. Each Level has an Exit Standard component that outlines the number of hours of community outreach students must perform. The school's weekly newsletter, *The Update*, announces service opportunities for young people in the region. Overall community service has improved during this charter from a 78% participation rate in 2001 to 93% in 2004.

Every year K-8 students develop a Science Fair presentation as one of two required Exhibitions of Mastery. The best projects from 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are selected to go to the Regional Middle School Science Fair to represent the school. South Shore Charter School students have consistently performed well at this regional event. In 2004, two 7<sup>th</sup> grade students and an 8<sup>th</sup> grade student team placed at the Regional Middle School Science Fair. One 7<sup>th</sup> grader received a 1<sup>st</sup> place and nomination for the national Discovery Channel Young Scientist challenge; another 7<sup>th</sup> grader, 3<sup>rd</sup> place; and the 8<sup>th</sup> graders a 3<sup>rd</sup> place team award. Three students went on to compete with 165 students from around the state at the Massachusetts State Middle School Science Fair where a 7<sup>th</sup> grade student received an Honorable Mention and an 8<sup>th</sup> grade student team received a 2<sup>nd</sup> place.

There are only two areas in the annual Satisfaction Survey that dip below 80% support. Only 78% of the community feels there is cohesiveness in our K-12 program. This return is due in large part to the geographic separation of the grades in three buildings stretched over two miles in Hull. The 2004 Strategic Plan (Attachment C) called for the unification of the school as one of the top 21 goals for the next three years. The school's new building (opening September 2004) will allow there to be greater interaction between the grades, with inter-Level and cooperative project partnerships being formed. This sentiment also has to do with unstable leadership in the upper grades as compared to the long-term tenure of the Primary School Principal. This situation will be corrected over the next few years with the installation of a single K-12 Principal beginning in Summer 2004.

The other area where community agreement is less than 80% is in the area of technology. The question in the survey asks if a student-to-computer ratio of 3.8:1 is satisfactory. 73% of respondents agreed with this statement. When such a significant number of community members feel there is something wrong with an area of the program, the administration and Board of Trustees acts. As a result, in the last two years SSCS increased its technology budget by 50% and sought vendors who could provide the school with upgraded equipment at reduced prices. We found several

sources and the school anticipates continually upgrading old equipment and expanding the number of computers in the school. The new building will have a large computer lab and the access to the Internet will be by a T1 line.

As experiential learning is integral to the school's mission it is worthwhile to view "projects" in the context of the school's realization of its programmatic goals. (See Attachment VI for definition of project goals.) The demands and complexity of projects increase through the Levels. Projects not only provide opportunities for academic application, but introduce students to governance and leadership. Projects encourage communication skills and teamwork and realize the school's mission of teamwork, leadership, critical thinking, and communication. (Refer to section 3A for more on projects.)

In recognition of the challenges faced by new and veteran faculty in implementing projects, the school prepared *A Project Toolkit: How to Create, Manage, and Sustain Experiential Learning Projects* as a resource guide. The school disseminated this valuable tool to practitioners and interested parties consistent with a Charter School Dissemination Grant and our continuing obligation to share best practices.

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

***1B. Has student performance significantly improved and/or been persistently strong on internal and external academic assessments?***

SSCS students continue to demonstrate their competitiveness through external assessments and, just as important, their exceptional talents as measured by the school's internal tools.

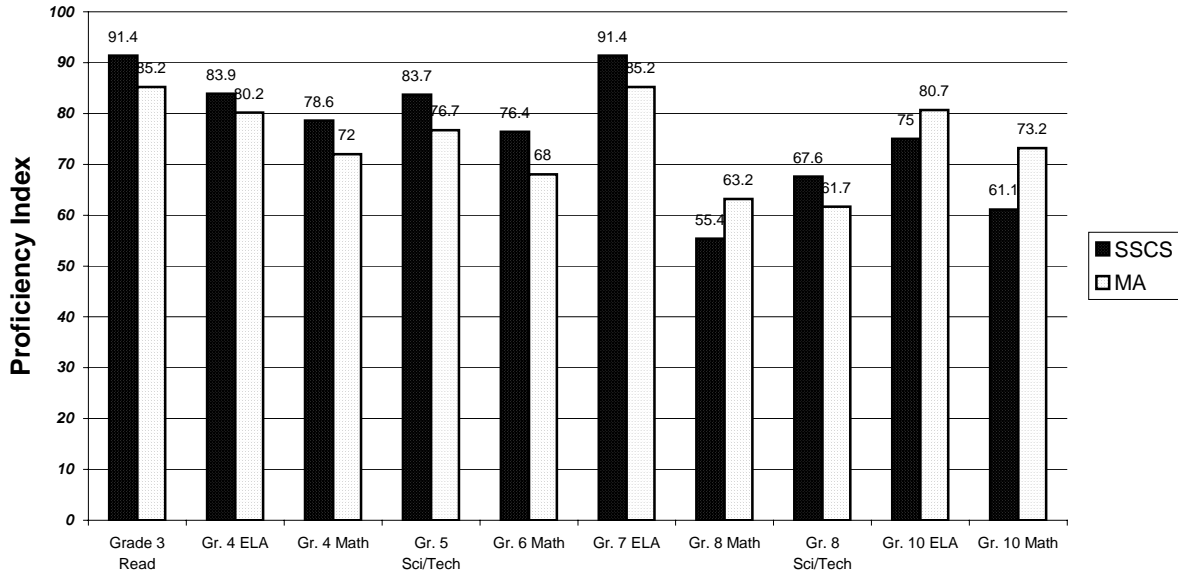
Summary of External Assessments: 2003 MCAS

South Shore Charter School administers two external standardized tests every year: the Terra Nova Achievement Tests are administered to grades 1 through grade 12 every Fall and the MCAS state tests are administered in the Spring to grades 3-10.

For the 2003 MCAS exams the state reported a Proficiency Index (PI) for each school by test. This index is more readily applicable to comparisons between schools. This score is computed according to a method outlined in the MCAS Score Reports. Using this value makes direct comparison with previous years difficult, as this index is not available for previous years. Figure 1 shows that the students in the lower grades scored better than the statewide PI on the MCAS exams, while the students in the high school grades score lower than the statewide PI, particularly on the Math exam. This is

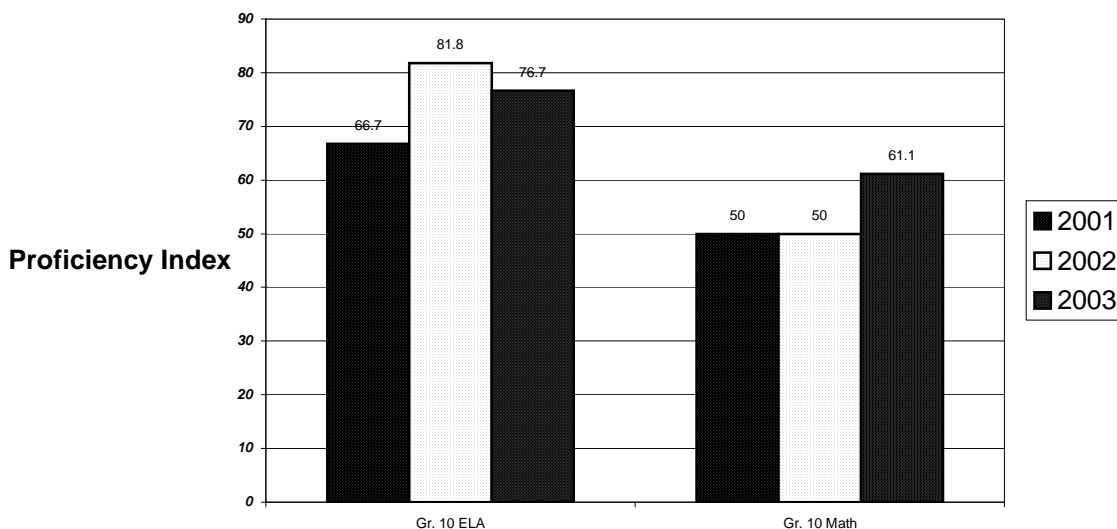
similar to the trend seen in previous years when average scores were used as the basis for comparison.

**Figure 1: 2003 MCAS - SCS and State**



High school scores continued to climb. This year's group of 10<sup>th</sup> graders did better than previous groups at SCS, although the English for 2003 showed a slight drop versus 2002. The PI used for the years 2001 and 2002 was computed from state reported data according to the PI scoring guidelines and may be slightly different than a state computed PI. It is offered here as an approximate comparison with previous years data.

**Figure 2: Grade 10 MCAS 2001-2003**

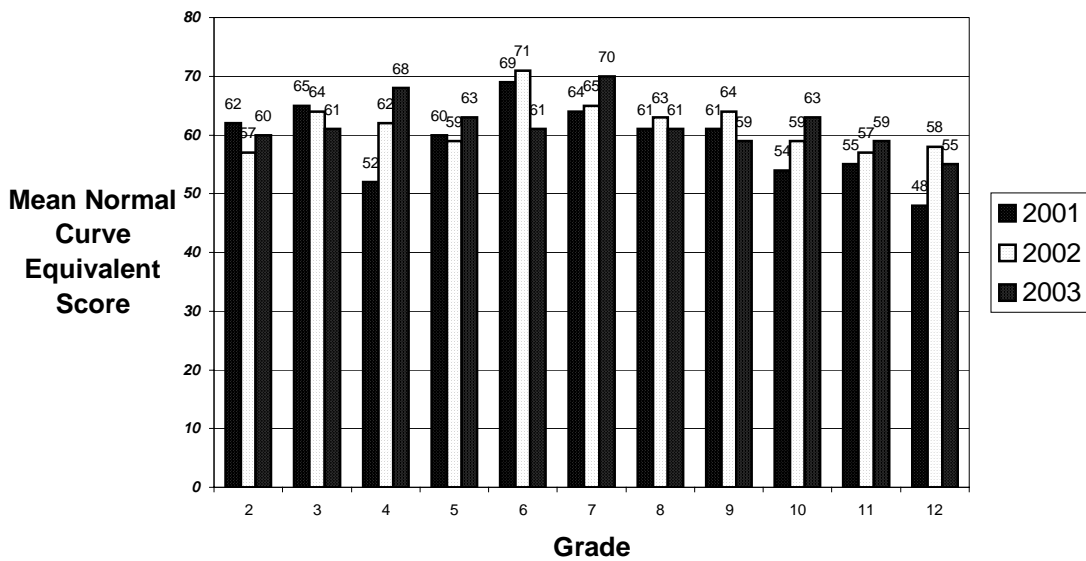


The use of a PI makes cohort comparisons more difficult until this index has been in place for a few years. What is encouraging is that Primary School students performed better than the statewide PI on their respective MCAS tests. At the high school, Grade 10 groups scored lower than the statewide PI in ELA and Mathematics. This result is due mostly to the type of student SSCS has attracted to the high school in the past three years. Typically, these students have experienced academic and/or emotional difficulty at other schools. When this current MCAS data is taken together with the Terra Nova scores reported below and previous MCAS data based on average scores, it indicates that the success of the Secondary School continues to hinge on its ability to retain more SSCS elementary students when they reach high school age as well as its ability to attract more successful students from other schools.

#### Summary of External Assessments: Terra Nova

In general, SSCS students rank above the national average on the Terra Nova. The best quantitative measure that the Terra Nova provides of the program's effectiveness is the comparison of groups of students who have taken the Terra Nova tests each year. The results from three years of the Terra Nova can be seen below. The "Total" score is a composite score combining the results from the Reading, Language, and Math tests. Only those students who took the Terra Nova in the previous year are included in these results.

**Fig. 4 Terra Nova Testing 2001-2003**



The Mean Normal Curve Equivalent is used in longitudinal studies and is similar to the Mean National Percentile, which cannot be used for year-to-year comparisons. This graph indicates that most groups improved their composite scores from one year to the next. Only in grades 7, 8, and 10 was there a decline in scores from their groups previous year's tests. For example, the Grade 7 group scored a composite score of 70 versus a score of 71 when the group was in Grade 6. When comparing this year's grade to last year of the same grade, results are mixed. This is due to the changing population entering the school from year to year and the fact that with a small population the addition of 1 or 2 students during a year can make a difference in the mean composite scores. The general trend towards improvement for students who continue in the SSCS program is encouraging, and echoes the findings of previous longitudinal studies of the results of the CAT5 over the earlier 4 years.

The following chart provides the subtest results for the same groups of students, including results for the Science and Social Studies subtests that are not figured into the Total scores. The results in these subtest areas show a trend similar to that found in the composite test results in that scores continue to improve for those who remain in the program.

**I. Terra Nova Scores for Cohort of Students Who Took the Tests in the Fall of 2001 - 2003**

Mean NCE	(N)	Reading			Language			Math			Total (Reading + Language + Math)			Science			Social Studies		
		2001	2002	2003	2001	2002	2003	2001	2002	2003	2001	2002	2003	2001	2002	2003	2001	2002	2003
Grade 2	28	62	53	58	70	49	53	56	67	66	62	57	60	NA	60	65	NA	60	63
Grade 3	23	64	61	58	58	59	58	70	68	64	65	64	61	63	63	64	65	64	67
Grade 4	30	51	61	66	50	58	66	55	64	70	52	62	68	58	57	70	56	61	69
Grade 5	29	59	58	62	58	56	60	62	58	63	60	59	63	59	58	61	59	59	62
Grade 6	22	68	72	62	69	69	58	66	69	58	69	71	61	69	74	62	67	70	59
Grade 7	37	65	65	72	61	65	72	61	62	63	64	65	70	61	61	66	61	65	72
Grade 8	32	65	66	65	63	60	59	56	60	60	61	63	61	63	65	62	68	67	62
Grade 9	25	65	66	59	63	65	58	55	59	57	61	64	59	58	62	60	60	64	63
Grade 10	15	55	57	62	54	64	68	53	56	56	54	59	63	55	61	51	59	61	56
Grade 11	9	58	56	57	55	63	58	52	51	59	55	57	59	50	58	62	53	59	58
Grade 12	6	56	62	55	46	60	59	51	51	49	48	58	55	65	62	59	65	66	51

Not included in any of the previous figures are the scores of students who were new to SSCS this past year. These scores are appear below:

Mean Scores of Students New to SSCS in 2003-2004

Mean NCE	(N)	Reading	Language	Math	<b>Total</b>	Science	Social Studies
Grade 2	4	65	64	74	<b>72</b>	65	68
Grade 3	1	27	33	20	<b>26</b>	39	30
Grade 4	2	59	47	49	<b>52</b>	58	65
Grade 5	1	36	35	47	<b>40</b>	65	41
Grade 6	4	53	57	51	<b>55</b>	53	45
Grade 7	4	53	48	35	<b>45</b>	51	56
Grade 8	0						
Grade 9	10	45	48	46	<b>46</b>	41	43
Grade 10	1	61	75	76	<b>72</b>	60	63

The average scores of the new students in the upper grades tended to be lower than the averages of the groups of continuing students in the upper grades with the exception of the one new tenth grade student. This indicates that it continues to be a challenge at the upper Level to attract students who have had success academically at their former schools and come to SSCS for some of its unique features like its service learning projects, its internships, and the opportunities to earn college credits simultaneously with high school credit. Teachers and others using rubrics, tests, portfolios, group work, and individual presentations perform internal assessment.

Student Performance on Internal Measurements

SSCS employs an assortment of assessment tools. These tools include student grades, progress reports, Exhibition of Mastery scoring rubrics, and employer exit interviews as well as documentation of community service hours and feedback from students through annual surveys. The primary internal assessment system, however, is Exit Standards. Students must satisfy Exit Standards for each Level and include requirements for passing core courses based on student grades, meeting project goals, achieving certain scores on standardized tests, and presenting a rubric-evaluated portfolio that meets defined standards as well as requirements for arts, science and technology, and community service.

During the course of the charter it became clear that the absence of a grade between C- and F was placing some students in a difficult situation. After review and discussion in the Education Committee, our grading policy was changed to include a D grade.

Using the 2000 Accountability Plan for results, students have become increasingly successful at reaching passing grade requirements in Exit Standards in order to be promoted to the next Level. The chart below demonstrates this improvement.

	2001	2002	2003	2004
Percentage of students meeting passing grade requirements for promotion	Level I – 94% Level II – 100% Level III – 90% Level IV – 65% Level V – 94%	Level I – 84% Level II – 90% Level III – 97% Level IV – 67% Level V – 100%	Level I – 88% Level II – 100% Level III – 90% Level IV – n/a Level V – 100%	Level I – 100% Level II – 100% Level III – 98% Level IV – 98% Level V – 53% Level VI – 100%

*Note:* The Level V students not meeting Exit Standard requirements will complete those elements during the next two years of high school.

Similar to the improvements in student grades, the rate of completion for portfolios demonstrates student commitment to this programmatic requirement.

	2001	2002	2003	2004
Percentage of students meeting portfolio requirements for promotion	Level I – 94% Level II – 100% Level III – 96% Level IV – 64% Level V – 94%	Level I – 100% Level II – 100% Level III – 80% Level IV – 80% Level V – 100%	Level I – 96% Level II – 100% Level III – 93% Level IV – n/a Level V – 100%	Level I – 98% Level II – 98% Level III – 100% Level IV – 100% Level V – 75% Level VI – 100%

Furthermore, 100% of Level VI (VI in 2004) students met the technology standard in each of the last three years. All graduates over the term of this charter have successfully met all graduation requirements, including their earning acceptance to an institution of higher learning.

Student access to technology has improved during this charter. The Satisfaction Survey indicates that the community feels there has been improvement in technology with 88% believing that the access in 2004 is 32% better than it was in 2001.

	2001	2002	2003	2004
Access to technology supports student learning	56%	75%	67%	88%

Finally, SSCS prides itself on maintaining low teacher-student ratios. A consistent goal of the school has been to limit each classroom to no more than 18

students. This number has not always been manageable given the school’s attempts to reach full enrollment and the need to accept students in grades where there were additional applications. Nevertheless, every effort is made to keep the numbers as low as possible and balance enrollment between the Levels. As enrollment reaches 36 students in each grade, as our enrollment plan calls for, the necessity to adjust class size will diminish.

## II. ORGANIZATION VIABILITY

### ***2A. Has the school made reasonable progress in meeting internally established Accountability Plan goals regarding organizational viability?***

#### Leadership

SSCS has made remarkable gains towards establishing an organizational structure and leadership team that shares a common vision for the school’s future. As it prepares to move into its permanent home for the 2004-2005 school year, SSCS maintains a streamlined, flexible, and effective organization that will carry the school over the coming years. SSCS has emerged from the challenges of the last five years a stronger, focused, and mature institution.

During the 2000-2005 charter term, SSCS faced difficult periods in leadership. 2002 was the toughest year for the school in this regard. This conclusion is reflected in the school’s satisfaction survey during this charter. On the question of “SSCS provides clear and stable leadership,” those in the school community agreeing with that statement were as follows:

	2001	2002	2003	2004
SSCS provides clear and stable leadership	81%	49%	86%	92%

After the interim Executive Director resigned in 2001, this administrative position remained unfilled for more than one year. Dissatisfaction with this situation was reflected in the 49% agreement that the school possessed strong leadership.

In Summer 2002, a new Executive Director was appointed. The rebound in community opinion about leadership increased dramatically and this perception has only grown in 2004. The Executive Director is entering his third year and leads an administrative team that includes a K-12 Principal, Assistant Principal, Learning Services Director, Business Manager, and Director of Development. As the school consolidates its operations into one building, this administrative model provides flexibility and leadership presence.

During this charter term the approval of the Board as “strong and stable” fluctuated. In the absence of an Executive Director, the Board became more involved in the daily operations of the school. The school community believed this to be detrimental to the direction of the school and expressed its discontent in our survey:

	2001	2002	2003	2004
Agree there is a strong and stable Board	63%	35%	85%	82%

In response to this uncertainty in leadership, and the understanding that the school cannot succeed without an Executive Director, the Board took action. The new bylaws contain a provision for the Board to appoint an interim Executive Director whenever there is a vacancy in that position for more than one month.

### Facilities

Another area that has been a challenge for the school over this charter term has been adequate facilities. The Board confidently addressed this issue in the last year. Throughout its nine year in Hull, SSCS had been located in temporary and rented facilities – a former restaurant, bank, aquarium, and motel. While these buildings met code regulations, they were inadequate learning environments.

The Board created a Facilities Taskforce manned by SSCS community members to explore alternative accommodations. The Taskforce hired Dwight Berg of New Schools in California to assist with financing. The Taskforce explored several possibilities and was leaning towards construction at the reclaimed South Weymouth Naval Air Station, though ultimately withdrew consideration in light of environmental concerns about the property.

With a mandate to find a new facility, the newly-installed Executive Director and Business Manager undertook a search and located 100 Longwater Circle, a former corporate headquarters nestled in a wooded business park. With the assistance of Mr. Berg, a deal to purchase the building for \$5.5 million was completed. The National Cooperative Bank and Development Corporation, with loan guarantees from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, financed the acquisition. Minor code modifications were completed in January and February 2004 and the high school moved into the building on March 1, 2004.

As a result of this acquisition, community approval of facilities has increased dramatically over the term of the charter:

	2001	2002	2003	2004
Agree that SSCS has secured adequate facilities to meet our student's needs	63%	43%	39%	86% (with many comments on the approval of the future facility)

A \$2.2 million loan secured through Boston Private Bank in May 2004 will finance the renovations that will prepare the building to open to K-12 in September 2004. In all, the Board's decisive action resulted in our ownership of a beautiful building that will allow SSCS to expand and grow as it meets the demands of its charter.

## Faculty

SSCS has a stable record of teacher retention during this charter term. The issue of retention is a priority agenda item for the Board. The school has attracted a strong cadre of teachers who enjoy and feel ownership in the school and the learning environment. Several teachers have been with the school since its earliest years. Teachers cited additional schooling, family relocation, the need for a higher salary, and plans to make a career change as reasons for their leaving SSCS. In 2003, leadership undertook an effort to raise the stature of the secondary school program by hiring more highly qualified teachers.

Returning teachers	2001	2002	2003	2004
K-8	15/17	17/18	14/17	16/20
9-12	8/11	11/11	8/11	10/11

The Personnel Taskforce, with direction from the Board, examined the faculty's salary and benefit package for FY05. This new salary scale, outlined in the personnel policy, is based on both education and relevant teaching experience. The Board remains committed to making faculty salaries as competitive as possible. For FY05, the Board approved faculty salary increase to 100% of the salary grid originally proposed by teachers for FY03. The Committee will study and review the existing faculty salary step grid and recommend changes in compensation as well as increasing overall faculty salaries for FY06 consistent with school resources and revenues.

## Governance (Refer to section 2D)

The governance model the school established in 1995 is something that the community holds dear. The voice that students and parents have in the school is important and many consider it a defining characteristic of SSCS.

	2001	2002	2003	2004
Agree that SSCS includes students, faculty, and parents in its democratic model	93%	70%	92%	91%

Even in times of trial, especially during 2002, the belief in the underlying structure of the school remained strong. Over the term of the next charter, SSCS can be expected to refine this structure and remain flexible in order to reflect the ever-changing nature of the school, its needs, and its resources.

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

SSCS operates on a fiscal year ending June 30. The financial stability of the school is one of the Board's top priorities and will be a critical determinant as the school grows into its new facility. In order to monitor the school's finances, the Finance Committee meets regularly in advance of Board meetings to review in detail the finances of the school and to discuss all financial issues related to the school. The Finance Committee works with the Executive Director and Business Manager in establishing the

fiscal year operating budget. During Board meetings, the Finance Committee Chair, with assistance from the Business Manager, presents the overall financial condition of the school by reviewing cash flow, comparing the budget against actual expenditures, and examining the balance sheet. SSCS utilizes Quickbooks Pro to record all business activities and reporting.

In April 2000, a full time Staff Accountant was hired to assist the Finance Director in facilities management, procurement, payroll, and general accounting tasks. In order to fund higher salaries for faculty, beginning July 1, 2002, the Board reorganized the Business Office by eliminating the Finance Director position and creating a full time Business Manager position. The Business Office is currently staffed with a part time Staff Accountant and part time Building Maintenance Manager. In August 2002 the consulting company of Daniel Dennis & Company LLP was hired to review the Business Office structure and made recommendation on how to improve office efficiencies. In August 2002, the Board hired a full time Executive Director to oversee the daily activities of the school as well as find a permanent campus.

After years of conservative budgeting and cash reserving as well as sound guidance from financial consultants at New Schools and Public Economics, SSCS realized its long-held goal of unifying the school on one campus and purchased a new facility in Norwell, Massachusetts. This new campus is centrally located within our service region and will allow the school to reach its enrollment cap of 468 students.

SSCS and South Shore Charter Educational Foundation incurred three distinct financial obligations in 2003-04 in order to finance the acquisition and renovations for the new facility as well as ensuring sufficient cash flow to support operating activity and pre-construction expenses related to the new facility. SSCS received approval from the DOE to relocate to Norwell as well as the ability to borrow money over a longer term than our charter. These financial obligations are summarized below:

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| (1) Credit Facility: | Revolving Line of Credit  |
| Lender:              | Boston Private Bank and Trust Company   |
| Borrower:            | SSCS  |
| Terms:               | Variable-rate revolving line of credit under which the School can borrow up to \$500,000 to cover operating expenses. The school may draw on the line of credit which is automatically repaid in full, with interest, from each quarterly receipt of Commonwealth tuition revenues.   |
| (2) Credit Facility: | \$5.5 million Taxable Loan  |
| Lender:              | National Cooperative Bank and Development Corporation   |
| Borrowers:           | SSCS and Foundation   |
| Terms:               | 30-year term loan (2-year interest only and 28-year fully amortizing) with interest rate reset quarterly at the "Farmer Mac Rate" plus 0.75%. SSCS and Foundation jointly borrowed \$5.5 million to pay for a portion of the acquisition and transaction costs for a permanent facility. The permanent facility is owned "fee simple" by the Foundation and leased to the School under a long-term lease that effectively vests beneficial ownership to SSCS. |

(3) Credit Facility: \$2.0 million tax exempt bonds  
Lender: Boston Private Bank & Trust Corporation  
Borrower: SSCS  
Terms: 10-year term loan (2-year interest only followed by 25-year amortization with bullet due after 10th year) with interest rate of 5.13% for initial 5 years. SSCS borrowed \$2 million to reimburse a portion of acquisition cost and pay for facility renovation and related soft costs.

SSCS's FY04 tuition revenues were \$2,973,666 giving us an average per-pupil reimbursement figure of \$8,251 based on 360.42 FTE students. Our operating expenditures (exclusive of depreciation) are \$3,224,925. The primary operating expenditures are personnel costs, which are 66% of total expenditures.

Direct student costs, which include school technology, library, service contractors, equipment, academic and assessment supplies, are 11% of total expenditures. In-kind donations, including new office and classroom furniture, 50 new computers, a network switch, and books have improved our program. The school also receives significant pro bono services from several professional firms.

Occupancy costs make up 15% of the operating expenses for a cost of \$492,503. This increase from prior years is due to the acquisition of the new campus and operating an additional building. Currently we hold two leases: while assuming the lease for the new facility, the school is in the process of negotiating out of its last lease in Hull which is set to expire June 30, 2005.

The school performs annual audits in accordance with Government Auditing Standards. During 2001, the school adopted GASB statement No.34, "Basic Financial Statements and Management's Discussion and Analysis for State and Local Governments." Audits are conducted by Alexander, Aronson, Fining & Co., P.C. Each audit has consistently improved the school's financial management via management letters to the Trustees that accompany each audit. Every suggestion in these management letters is taken under advisement and implemented with corrective actions. SSCS continues 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 SSCS enters its tenth year, leadership is cognizant of the need to fulfill our financial obligations related to the financing of our new facility as well as improving faculty salaries. Looking forward, the school will perform and implement the following efforts to ensure its financial stability and solvency:

- (1) Continue to generate conservative budgets;
- (2) Implement all recommendations as made in our annual audit by meeting all financial obligations consistent with the terms of our loans as required by our lending institutions;
- (3) Seek additional sources of revenue. In May 2003, SSCS hired its first Director of Development to assist the school in finding additional resources to fund

- new programs as well as supplement existing programs. Diverse fundraising through donor cultivation, events, and grants will ensure a measure of fiscal independence from the volatile funding formula. The Director of Development will be instrumental as the school embarks on its first capital campaign, a two-year, \$1 million effort to offset building renovations. The Business Office will look at other possibilities of generating revenue such as renting space to colleges or offering programs to offset operating expenses.
- (4) Remain an active member of the Massachusetts Charter School Association. Our Executive Director will remain a member of the Association’s Board and the school will prepare budgets, particularly in regards to proposed funding formula changes, consistent with the political and legislative realities as shared with us by the Association.

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

SSCS has been at or near the capacity of its facilities during the term of its second charter. Limitations of building size and Hull’s remote location prevented the school from growing to its full capacity of 468 students. Although the school maintained sufficient enrollment to fund its program, waitlists were small and applications were minimal. The 53,000 square foot building, once renovated, will house 468 students adequately.

The announcement of the move to Norwell dramatically changed the activity of the school’s applications and admissions. SSCS will be at its enrollment cap of 468 for the first time in its history in 2004-2005 and will have a waitlist in most grades. The chart below demonstrates the change in interest in the school.

	<b>FY2000</b>	<b>FY2001</b>	<b>FY2002</b>	<b>FY2003</b>	<b>FY2004</b>	<b>FY2005</b>
<b>Student Enrollment</b>	352.75	355	334.05	334.05	360.42	468 (projected)
<b>Wait List</b>		0	35	2	35	227
<b>Number of Applications</b>		110	134	90	103	452
<b>Withdrawals</b>	54	51	91	51	80	

Additional advertising and increased press coverage were factors in the increased number of applications. A 339% increase in applications exceeded all expectations. It is noteworthy that despite the school’s relocation 10 miles away, Hull students, who comprise 50% of the school’s overall enrollment, will remain with SSCS. Despite the move, there is a consistent rate of withdrawals of Hull students as compared to prior years. In 2002, when the school faced leadership challenges, we experienced a higher percentage of withdrawals than in the upcoming “move” year. There is every reason to expect that future interest in the school will either be sustained or grow.

The 2004 Strategic Plan (Attachment C) calls for considerable attention to be put into retention and recruitment. Three of the Plan's top 21 goals focus on marketing and enrollment. Since the adoption of the Plan by the Board of Trustees in November 2003, all three goals have been met. There will be on-going opportunities to increase public awareness of SSCS and charter schools in general as the school continues its dissemination and public relation activities, reaches new project clients and organizations, cultivates new friends through its increasing attention to development, and excites new enrollees and their families about the SSCS culture.

A significant percentage of the enrollment increase will benefit the high school, which is growing from 73 students to 125. Increasing enrollment and course and activity offerings at the high school are additional goals reflected in the Strategic Plan. For several years, the Board felt the school's location and physical building in Hull limited the high school's growth and viability because it was not a centralized location or a desirable building. The current high school enrollment lends credibility to those theories on why there had been low enrollment. There is discussion that in order to ensure the long-term viability and identity of the high school that a niche must be created to set SSCS apart. (We already consider the Core Knowledge Sequence, projects, and our small class sizes at K-8 as differentiating SSCS from other public and private schools.) Early indications are that fine arts could be this specialty. In concert with our experiential learning projects and a solid college-preparatory program, SSCS's high school will emerge as a beacon of learning.

## ***2D. Is the School's governance sound and its management systems effective to implement the mission of the school?***

The Strategic Plan calls for attention to be drawn to school governance. Three top goals include: (1) increase the effectiveness of the Board; (2) improve communication in the governance structure; and (3) clarify and revise policies regarding SSCS governance roles of the Board, the Executive Director, faculty, parents, and students. As discussed below, the Board's Governance Committee is in the process of improving the effectiveness of the Board through evaluation and policy change.

### Board of Trustees

SSCS is governed by a Board of Trustees. There is a maximum of 15 seats on the Board. Currently the Board includes parents of current and former students, a high school student, ex officio faculty, and professionals from outside the school community. The Board reorganized its committee structure of multiple committees and on the recommendation of the Executive Director in 2002 created the Governance, Finance, and Development Committees as well as the Facilities and Personnel Taskforces.

The Board takes its policymaking authority seriously. Over the term of the charter, Board committees have diligently addressed the policies of the school, implemented reform when required, and taken aggressive steps to shape the school's present and future. The Board updates personnel policy as state and federal laws and benefits programs changes and has addressed technology use, rewritten the bylaws,

reorganized the administration, and purchased a new facility. The Board took a lead on the future direction of the school with the initiation of the Strategic Plan. This Plan will guide the school into its next charter term. In keeping with the SSCS mission, the planning process incorporated extensive feedback from all elements of the school including administration, faculty, Board, parents, and students along with external contributors.

Similarly, the Board has performed its oversight responsibilities effectively. A case in point would be the process for the purchase of our new campus. While the Facilities Taskforce, alongside the Executive Director and Business Manager, did the majority of the work on the purchase, the Board took action to approve important steps that would commit the school to any financial obligations. At each meeting where there was an approval to be made the Board had full and lively discussions about the necessity and appropriateness of the decision. Except where executive sessions were necessary, the Board solicited the input from the school community. Board committees conduct a thorough review of the financial, legal, and growth aspects of the school. Each committee gives a report at regular Board meetings. Members of the school community are invited to be on the Board committees in a nonvoting capacity.

The Personnel Taskforce is also undertaking a complete review of the Personnel Handbook. The Handbook is out of date and incomplete and a new Handbook will help both staff and administration. As the school grows and consolidates its program into one building there will be many items to reconsider and modify. The Board is committed to making SSCS the strongest and most effective school it can be and believes a thoroughly vetted Personnel Handbook will be an asset.

At each Board meeting, members are asked to provide feedback about the conduct of the meeting in an effort to streamline the process. The current Board chair has made changes to the meetings in an effort to reduce their length. An agenda and supporting documents are mailed to each Trustee the Friday prior to each Wednesday meeting; these packets include previous minutes, committee reports, financial statements, a report from the Director of Development, and the Executive Director's State of the School. This packet has helped move meetings along more expeditiously with meetings rarely exceeding two hours. The management of the meeting by the chair has also helped with the efficiency of the meetings and the Board's goal is to go to bimonthly meetings.

### Administration

The Board hired the current Executive Director in 2002 and has done an admirable job in ceding daily operations to him. The Board Chair is in regular contact with the Executive Director and, while often making suggestions for major decisions, leaves the final decision to the Executive Director.

The administration has seen significant change during this charter. When the current Executive Director took office in August 2002 the school was coming off a year of considerable disruption. The goal of the administration that year was to make the school more responsive to its community and restore trust in the school's leadership. The Satisfaction Survey between 2002 and 2003 showed a 21% improvement (from 69%

to 90%) that SSCS provided a responsive family partnership. Today 92% of the community feels the school has stable leadership and 90% of the community feels that the school's leadership provides regular open communication.

The Board evaluated the Executive Director's performance at the end of his first year. The Board was not satisfied with the evaluation process: members felt their was too great a range on which to rate his performance and had difficulty in reaching consensus on various aspects of his work. The Personnel Taskforce in revising the evaluation and will propose a plan for Fall 2004. Furthermore, the Governance Committee has been working to create a self-evaluation process for the Board itself.

In May 2002 the Secondary School Principal resigned and his successor left the school the following June. In May 2003 the school's first Director of Development was hired and a new Secondary School Principal was hired in July 2003. In Spring 2004 the Primary Principal, a nine year SSCS veteran, announced she was leaving to head the Benjamin Franklin Charter School and the Learning Services Coordinator announced her appointment as SPED Director for Carver Public Schools.

The academic leadership of the school has been consolidated into one K-12 Principal position assumed by the current Secondary Principal. An Assistant (teaching) Principal was appointed at the same time. The Learning Services Program is under the direction of the long-standing Director of Learning Services. The administrative team for 2004-2005 is seasoned and professional and we believe that this configuration will be more effective in meeting the demands of the school being in one facility.

In 2002 SSCS began to update and formalize its teacher evaluation program. The school sent the Primary Principal to Research for Better Teaching (RBT) in Summer 2003 to gain additional insights into teacher evaluation. Since then the school's principals have developed a modified RBT plan on which each teacher is evaluated annually. In addition, every teacher develops a Professional Development Plan that is reviewed annually with his/her supervisor. This Plan asks teachers to assess the progress they made in the previous year toward their goals, set three new goals for the current year, and map out how they will use their \$300 professional development allocation.

The arrangement of the Levels changed in 2003-2004:

	Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV	Level V	Level VI
1995-2002	K, 1 & 2	3 & 4	5, 6 & 7	8, 9 & 10	11 & 12	
2003 - present	K, 1 & 2	3 & 4	5 & 6	7 & 8	9 & 10	11 & 12

Many decisions had been made based on the availability of space as opposed to what was developmentally appropriate. In 2003 the Levels were changed from five to six to reflect MCAS testing years and to limit the size of any Level, with the exception of our youngest students, to two grades. Exit Standards were better defined and made consistent between the Levels.

## The School Community: Families and Faculty

The school has made strides in becoming a more inclusive community by better defining the vehicles through which the community may be involved in the direction of the school. As a result, the roles of the various constituencies are undergoing change. The Executive Director initiated a change in the structure of an informal All Parents Group (APG) to a more formal Parent Association (PA). The new PA has a process of leadership election and representation that was not in place with the All Parents Group. Consistent input from class representatives should give the parents a fuller role in the decision making process.

Beginning in 2004-2005, students will have monthly meetings with the Executive Director to ensure constant communications between students and the administration. In addition, the Executive Director and other lead administrators will have regular morning coffees with parents from each grade.

The Board has an open dialogue with the community and the Faculty & Staff Association (FASA) and Parent Association (PA) representatives are placed on the Board's meeting agenda. A Board member attends each Parent Association meeting to introduce the Trustees to the PA and maintain a free flow of information. The faculty is focused and eager to begin the next charter term in a permanent building.

### **III. FAITHFULNESS TO THE TERMS OF THE CHARTER**

#### ***3A. Has the school made reasonable progress in meeting internally established Accountability Plan goals regarding faithfulness to terms of the charter?***

There are two components of the SSCS academic program: core curriculum and experiential learning projects. The core curriculum of English/Language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and Spanish are presented to every student in all grades. Art, music, technology, and community service are vibrant parts of the program. During the current charter term, SSCS endeavored to align the entire curriculum with the Massachusetts Frameworks. In grades K-8 the Core Knowledge Sequence is aligned with the state. In grades 9-12 the process is ongoing and will be completed within two years. In 2002, the school's Executive Director initiated a curriculum mapping process that be completed in Fall 2004. This process will aid the school's curriculum leaders and faculty in understanding the strengths of the program and guide us as we address its weaknesses.

The curriculum is currently enhanced with programs such as the John Collins Writing Program, The Network, Inc. (Writer Marks, Developing Writing and Thinking Skills, and High School Writing Projects), Shakespeare in Our Schools, Orton Gillingham-based instruction, The Landmark School method of notetaking, and Project Read Workshops. Currently half of our staff is trained in the social competency program Open Circle and we anticipate that all staff will be trained in this social skills program. Our goal is to integrate and implement these programs across all Levels

through aggressive professional development efforts. The school has allocated \$300 per faculty member to be dedicated for this purpose in addition to other professional development resources.

Experiential learning projects make SSCS unique. Our 2000 Accountability Plan goal of having every student participate in a project was met each year of the charter. SSCS has provided over 20 projects across Levels for every year of our term. These learning opportunities have different outcomes:

Level I: Our youngest students are introduced to the project concept and learn that successful projects are realized through teamwork as well as individual responsibility. At this Level the most successful projects are those where the school itself is the “client” for which services are provided. Projects have often been the most passionate part of Level I student’s work and provide them a chance to practice teamwork, initiative, leadership, and community service that are central qualities of our mission.

Levels II & III: Level II and III students collaborate and are given a greater voice in developing project timelines and goals. Projects practice the skills of writing business letters, creating budgets, completing job applications, designing graphs, and producing time lines. Students master technology skills that are linked to Exit Standards and must complete at least one Exhibition of Mastery that is directly related to their project. Students learn to take risks, make mistakes and learn from those mistakes. Lessons are learned about conflict resolution and ethical behavior.

Level IV: Level IV projects are student-driven. Students set goals and deadlines that serve the needs of external clients. Students are expected to take a more active role in determining the direction of the project than in earlier Levels. The Project Leader acts like a coach, so teamwork and leadership become vital elements for a successful, rewarding project. Level IV projects do not always have a singular focus. Some students in the Environmental Interpretation Project, for instance, manage a recycling program while others run an educational program with their partner organization, New England Wildlife Center. All students give an Exhibition of Mastery which addresses essential questions related to the work of their project.

Levels V & VI: High school projects bring students to the point where participation is defined by active communication, individually and in teams, with clients of the local and global community. Level V and VI 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 international travel to aid those less fortunate, designing web pages for businesses, implementing a lunch program for the school, and creating “Main Street” banners. 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 social consciousness that is unusually high for a secondary school student. In recent interviews with students wishing to move from Level V to Level VI, the students cited their work in projects as a motivating factor in their SSCS experience.

We are very proud of our Learning Services Program (Special Education). The teachers, tutors, and aides who support all of our students, not solely those with special needs, are highly qualified and dedicated. Their work has found many of our students succeeding in accessing the curriculum and developing confidence in academic and social settings. All statutory and regulatory mandates are met in delivering these services to students. In addition, the Learning Services staff works closely with classroom teachers to improve their abilities to reach students of different learning styles. Learning Services offers after-school professional development workshops on various topics to address needs including “Awesome Adolescence,” “Autism,” and “Treating Children and Adolescents with Traumatic Loss.” The team of Title 1 aides supports the learning of reading and math with students in the lower grades.

Community Service is an integral part of the SSCS culture and program. Whether as individuals or in class, all students are required to assist organizations in the wider community. In fact, most of the projects have a community development theme and some are almost exclusively based on community support. For example, the World Build Project works with Habitat for Humanity and travels to El Salvador to construct homes for the poor. AIDS Action Committee, Holly Hill Farm, Home for Little Wanderers, Hull Animal Rescue League, New England Aquarium, New England Wildlife Center, and UNICEF are some of the other agencies that SSCS students support.

Teachers are continually improving their professional abilities through our professional development program. Over the term of the charter we have maintained this funding allotment at between \$161/student (2004) to \$167/student (2001). While this funding has been difficult to maintain, the professional development support has allowed teachers to earn graduate degrees, additional certifications, and attend conferences and workshops in their subject areas. In 2002-2003 the school began setting a theme for the year’s dedicated professional development days to focus attention on important issues. That year the theme was “Assessment” and in 2003-2004 we focused on “Projects.” Monies were allotted to bring in speakers on these subjects and teachers were given opportunities to share their knowledge on the topics with their colleagues.

The internal assessment system at SSCS is primarily oriented around the Exit Standards. The school requires students to satisfy Exit Standards for each level, which include requirements for passing core courses based on student grades, meeting project goals, achieving certain scores on standardized tests, presenting a rubric-evaluated portfolio that meets pre-defined standards, as well as requirements for Arts, Science and Technology, and Community Service.

During the past four years the students have worked towards several performance goals in the area of external testing. The MCAS and Terra Nova results for

the SSCS students as documented in section 1B of this application show the progress the school and its students have made over the last four years. Our technology Exit Standard of certification as a Microsoft User is a goal that all high school students have attained prior to graduation.

***3B. Have the school's program and operation been consistent with the terms of its charter?***

SSCS has worked diligently to see that it fulfills its charter in spirit and deed. We have presented a curriculum to each student that through the core classes and projects gives each student the opportunity to show initiative, become a critical thinker, demonstrate leadership and teamwork and become a strong communicator. We have endeavored to give them life skills that will be transferable for them in education, career, and life. We have done this in an environment that fosters student input into the culture of the school.

While the project-based program is no longer as pervasive in the school's curriculum as it was in the early years of the school, it is still is a keynote of the school's identity. To that end the school has gone to considerable lengths recently to improve projects and their delivery. In 2003-2004, through the Charter School Dissemination Grant, SSCS retained the assistance of Boston College to study the efficacy of high school projects. Through interviews and surveys, our Project Director (who also serves as our Director of Development) ascertained the strengths and weaknesses of projects from staff and students and created a *Project Toolkit* to assist teachers, new and veteran, in the implementation of the projects.

Teachers work with students and parents each year to create an Individual Learning Plan for each student. In the lower Levels parents take a more active role in the creation of these plans; in the high school student and advisor create a Plan that is reviewed by the student's parent. These Plans help the student, teacher, and parent meet individual goals of the Exit Standards for the current Level.

Another hallmark of SSCS is the role that students play in the governance process of the school. A student is a voting member of the Board of Trustees. Further, students are involved in their classrooms, Level town meetings, the hiring of teachers and administrators, school council, student board, judicial board, and other committees and taskforces. Major decisions are often taken to the students to ascertain their view on the issue prior to making a final decision, including policy, governance, and the school mascot. 91% of the community feels that the school provides a democratic model that includes students in an honest fashion. Similarly, parents are involved in many ways in the governance process. From a class parent to a Trustee, parents are involved in the life of the school. 94% of parents feel satisfied with the amount of time and commitment they give to the school.

Technology is an area of the program that is a source of frustration for teachers, students, and the administration. While the school has a 3:1 student-to-computer ratio and has made efforts to upgrade its hardware, technology remains an ongoing issue.

Nearly a quarter of the community does not feel that technology is where it should be for student learning. In the new building a wireless networking system will be used and there will be a T1 line for Internet use. The school has found sources for refurbished computers that has cut the expense for hardware. Nevertheless, technology permeates classrooms to a greater extent in recent years with students frequently designing Power Point presentations in class and projects webpages for their projects.

***3C. Has the school made efforts to disseminate models for replication and best practices to the public?***

SSCS has always taken very seriously its obligation to share its model and best practices within the field and with other parties. Dissemination is an opportunity for SSCS to participate – and lead where possible – in the discussion about policy, governance, and other facets of our schools. The 2002-2003 Site Visit Report by the DOE stated, “SSCS has made significant efforts to disseminate best practices including a variety of faculty, administrator, Trustee, and student presentations at other schools, colleges and conventions.”

SSCS actively participates in the Massachusetts Charter School Association as one way of meeting our mission. The Executive Director and the school’s previous Primary School Principal were members of the MCSA’s Board. Teachers and administrators have been selected year after year to share Best Practices at the Association’s Annual Conference.

The school is active with many organizations. Organizations where SSCS staff or Trustees have spoken, consulted, or mentored include:

- Level II Community Service Day
- Rising Tide Charter School
- Weymouth Rotary Club
- Lesley University
- Bridgewater State College
- Exemplary Whole School Model Dissemination Program
- Charter School Dissemination Grant (2003-2004)
- Cambridge College
- Mystic River Charter School
- Southeastern Charter School Consortium
- MGH Institute of Health
- Core Knowledge National Conference
- Pioneer Institute
- National Association of Retired Executives
- South Shore Chamber of Commerce

In addition, SSCS has successfully tapped into the media and conducted numerous interviews with press outlets on matters specific to the school and charter schools in

general. Articles have been printed in newspapers such as *The Boston Globe*, *The Patriot Ledger*, *The Mariner* newspapers, *New York Times*, and *The Hull Times*.

For the next charter term, SSCS intends to be more active regionally with area schools, colleges, educators, businesses, civic organizations, and professional organizations. Based in our new, centralized facility we are making plans to host regional meetings and conferences and to reach out to all the towns in our region. SSCS has gained credibility with the region as a result of its building purchase and the overwhelming response to its program. We will build on this reputation to enhance education for all students in the area.

***3D. Is the school within the bounds of applicable statutory and regulatory requirements?***

To our knowledge, SSCS is in compliance with all statutory and regulatory requirements in programs and operation. Statutory requirements pertaining to No Child Left Behind and its associated entitlement grants have been met. According to the NCLB Report Card, SSCS is making adequate yearly progress in faculty and student achievement.

The 1999 Coordinated Review stated that SSCS “implemented” all statutory requirements consistent with applicable special education legislation and regulations. The school’s Special Education program is referred to as the Learning Services Program. We do this to signify its role in addressing the needs of all students while at the same time directing the majority of its efforts in working with students on Individual Education Plans (IEP) and 504 Plans. No SSCS student has been deemed limited English proficient.

Learning services are comprehensive and include a special education administrator, certified special education teachers, and a speech pathologist. Most instruction is delivered in an inclusion setting with the integration of therapies. Where warranted, students are given one on one and small group instruction. An average of 50 students received learning services consistent with the goals of their IEP and based on the recommendations of the Learning Services team. In addition, we accommodate 13 students who are on 504 Plans. The Learning Services Program will be audited during the 2004-2005 school year.

***3E. What changes have been made to your charter during this term?***

The school’s charter has been modified in one way during this charter term. The Board of Education approved the location change to Norwell in 2003 prior to the purchase of the new campus.

The 2000 Accountability Plan provides a measurement by which SSCS determines whether it is abiding by its charter. The Accountability Plan was used by the Strategic Plan Group to direct their efforts. The Plan gives the leadership the tools to put in place many of the goals determined by the Strategic Plan. The annual Satisfaction

Survey tells the school how its constituent groups perceive it. At various times, particularly in 2002 the community told the school that it did not approve of some of governance operations of the school. The community and the school then over the next year took steps to refocus the school on the ideals of the charter. The community has always given the work of the teachers and the program in general high marks for their work with the students. The Accountability Plan has served the school well during this charter term and the new 2005 Accountability Plan will take the school to an even higher level of performance.

#### **IV. PLANS FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS**

##### ***4A. Please attach an Accountability Plan that defines the school's measurable objectives for its next charter term.***

The school's Accountability Plan for its third charter term is found as Attachment B. The Board of Trustees unanimously approved the 2005-2010 Accountability Plan on July 21, 2004. This Plan does not take the school in any new direction, as we are pleased with our program and culture, though the Plan will push the school towards becoming more vigilant in documenting and assessing its program. We need to better monitor outcomes of courses and projects and teacher delivery. As a result, this Plan contains greater specificity of expectations, assessment tools, timing of assessments, and responsible parties.

The 2004 Strategic Plan (Attachment C) calls for significant attention to be dedicated to grades 9-12. The high school has offered an increasingly demanding program, but it has lacked the fullness and depth of larger, better-funded schools. Thus, SSCS hired as its new K-12 principal an experienced educator and administrator who in his first year on the job as a 9-12 principal transformed the program. Each discipline offers a full range of curricular choices and projects are more uniform in quality. The 66% increase in enrollment the high school staff to expand its range of classes in this way.

##### ***4B. Based on the school's last four years of operation, please describe what changes to your charter are foreseen for the coming term.***

At this time, we foresee several issues that will require changes to our charter. The first of these issues pertains to the school name. While this change may be accomplished under the 2000 charter, a campaign sponsored by the Mifflin Memorial Fund is designed to raise awareness about charter schools. The general concern being targeted by the campaign is the public's unfamiliarity with charter schools as public schools. Our Board of Trustees voted on June 16, 2004 to add the word "public" to the school's name in order to receive a \$10,000 grant through this campaign to support marketing and promotion, updating of letterhead and the webpage, and related costs. As a result, South Shore Charter School will, with Department of Education approval, become South Shore Charter Public School.

The second issue that may require a change to the charter relates to projected enrollment. For the first time in school history enrollment will be at our charter cap of 468. The congruence of our reaching full enrollment and our beginning our tenth year in Norwell is of great importance to the school. Depending on a number of factors, including retention and matriculation, recruitment, fundraising, construction, and the school's ability to manage programmatic and institutional growth, the school may be able to reach the building's capacity of 550 students in advance of our fourth charter renewal in 2010.

A third issue pertains to the school's mission, which was modified during the Strategic Planning process to better express the culture and direction of the school. SSCS will be submitting this change for DOE approval.

The school's bylaws were rewritten with cleaner organization in order to ensure smoother operation and governance. The amended bylaws were submitted to the DOE's Charter School Office last year which provided comments and recommendations. These edits will be addressed by the Board of Trustees in Fall 2004.

Finally, SSCS would like to amend the towns in its service region. With our new location in Norwell, there are several towns from which the school draws students but are not designated as towns within our region. Families in these towns are given unfavorable status in the Lottery despite the fact that they may live closer to the school than families who reside within our current region. Boston will be removed from our region. The list of towns we would like to have as our region include:

Abington	Hingham	Quincy
Braintree	Holbrook*	Randolph
Brockton	Hull	Rockland
Cohasset	Kingston	Scituate
Duxbury	Marshfield	Weymouth
East Bridgewater*	Norwell	Whitman
Halifax*	Pembroke	
Hanover	Plymouth	(*) Added town
Hanson	Plympton	

***4C. What facility or facilities do you plan to use during the term of the next charter?***

South Shore Charter School recently purchased and is currently renovating a 53,000 square foot building located at 100 Longwater Circle in Norwell, Massachusetts. The total cost of the purchase and renovation is \$7,500,000. This new location will become a K-12 facility when Phase II renovations are completed in Summer 2004, providing the school with the benefits of a united and permanent location after years in multiple leased buildings. The new facility is centrally located within the school's 21 community region. The previous location in Hull was a difficult commute for many families located in distant parts of the school's region. The Norwell location, with its

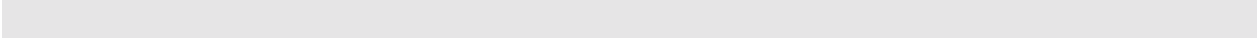
access to major highways, significantly improves the school's ability to serve as a regional institution as defined in its charter.

As noted earlier, the new location allows SSCS to finally reach its enrollment cap of 468 students. Applications increased 338% in 2004-2005 and high school enrollment grew by 66% (48 students). This facility will solidify the future of SSCS and give the school permanency and stability. The new location gives the school a greater proximity to populations of diverse backgrounds. Students from all grades and across the South Shore will be able to work together, learn, and build a vibrant school community.

This single campus will provide physical space for programs that SSCS has struggled to offer over the years. Students will be learning in a safe, sunlit building. Phase II renovations will find the building outfitted with 28 newly built classrooms, a computer lab, an outdoor recreation area, common spaces for each Level, a science center, an art room, a small theatre, and a conference room. Ultimately, the school plans to add a library, music studio, and multi-purpose room.

Furthermore, unlike in the past, when our multi-grade Levels were organized around the facilities, the new campus allows us the luxury of designing the building to fit programmatic needs. Our location makes the commute easier for our parents and enables the school to reach out through its projects to make contact with new project "clients," internship and community service opportunities, and other destinations.

## **ATTACHMENTS/APPENDICES**

- Attachment A – Public Certification Statement
  - Attachment B – 2005-2010 Accountability Plan
  - Attachment C – Strategic Plan Top 21 Goals
  - Attachment D – Leadership Resumes
  - Attachment E – Exit Standards (Approved July 2004)
  - Attachment F – Permits and Certificates (6)
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**Accountability Plan 2005/2010 Approved 7/21/04**

Student Performance Goals

**V. Objective # 1: All students will work towards developing essential skills in initiative, critical thinking, teamwork, and communication.**

<b>Student Experience/practice</b>	<b>Performance Standard</b>	<b>Assessment Method</b>	<b>Assessment Schedule</b>
All SSCS students will participate in experiential projects	100% of students will participate	Enrollment	Annually
SSCS students will meet project requirements	1. 90% of Level IV, V, and VI SSCS students will successfully complete project requirements. 2. 90% of all Level I, II, and III students will meet project requirements.	Teacher evaluations/grading Student progress reports Exhibition of Mastery Rubric	1. Quarterly (Level V and VI) Trimester (Level IV) 2. Trimester (Level I, II, III)
SSCS students will reflect on project work.	90% of students will reflect on project work on a weekly basis.	Student journals	Annually
SSCS Students will demonstrate proficiency in communication skills	1. 90% of SSCS students will successfully complete exhibitions of mastery 2. 100% of Level VI students will successfully participate in a formal debate 3. Students will demonstrate writing ability in a variety of genres of in short and long writing assignments 4. 90% of students in Levels I-IV will successfully complete Science Fair Exhibition. 5. Students will successfully communicate in an artistic mode.	1. Student Exhibition of Mastery Scoring Rubrics 2. Debate Scoring Rubric by three judges 3. Teacher and student evaluation/grading 4. Science Fair Scoring Rubric. 5. Art evaluations	1. Annually 2. By the end of Level VI 3. Ongoing as dictated by class schedule 4. Annually 5. Annually
Level VI students will complete an internship with an organization/business	100% of students will successfully complete internship	Employer and school exit evaluation	Evaluation at the end of the internship

All SSCS students will be provided with opportunities to take initiative and assume leadership within their projects and other school activities	75% of the students will agree SSCS provides opportunities for students in initiative and leadership	Student Evaluation	Annually
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**VI. Objective # 2: All students will master essential academic skills.**

<b>Student Experience/practice</b>	<b>Performance standard</b>	<b>Assessment Method</b>	<b>Assessment Schedule</b>
Students in all Levels will be able to meet passing requirements for the Core Curriculum Courses referred to in the SSCS Exit Standards in order to be promoted to the next Level or to graduate	90% of students will pass each course or subject	Internal: Teacher evaluation/grading	Annually
Students in Levels I - VI will meet the portfolio requirements in the SSCS Exit Standards in order to be promoted	100% of students will complete required portfolio work (Levels III - VI with a minimum score of 80%)	Internal: Scoring Rubrics	At the end of every level.
Students in Level VI will meet the passing requirements of the MCAS as required in the SSCS Exit Standards in order to graduate	100% of Level VI students must meet state requirements for graduation on MCAS	External: MCAS	At the end of Level VI
Students in Level VI will meet the college course requirement in the SSCS Exit Standards in order to graduate	100% of Level VI students will receive a passing grade (C or better) at an accredited college or university	External: College Grade report	End of Level VI
Students in Level VI will meet the technology Exit Standard in order to graduate	100% of Level VI students must attain Microsoft Office User Certification	External: User Test	End of Level VI
Students will be prepared to take the MCAS	90% of SSCS students (in grades 3- 10) will meet or exceed the Needs Improvement Score	External: MCAS	Annually for grades designated by the MA DOE
Students will be prepared to take the SATs	Student scores will be acceptable for college entry	External: College Acceptances Actual Scores	End of Level VI

**VII. Objective #3: All students will demonstrate active engagement in their education.**

<b>Student Experience/practice</b>	<b>Performance standard</b>	<b>Assessment Method</b>	<b>Assessment Schedule</b>
Students will meet attendance requirements	95% of students will meet an average daily attendance rate of no less than 90%	Attendance record in keeping with Commonwealth standards	Daily
SSCS students will participate	90% will meet Community Service hours	Exit Standard requirements	At the end of each level.

Community Service Hours		Student Reflection	
Students will participate in Governance activities	Students will participate in weekly Level Town and Pod meetings	Level Schedule	Annually
Level V and VI students will participate in annual educational goal setting	All students with advisors will create a yearly educational plan	Educational Plan	Annually

School Performance Goals

Is South Shore Charter School faithful to the terms of its Charter?

**VIII. Objective #1: SSCS will remain faithful to our charter in providing a balanced academic and project-based learning environment.**

<b>Expectations</b>	<b>Strategies for Attainment</b>	<b>Assessment or Measurement Tool</b>	<b>Assessment Schedule</b>
All students will have access to a curriculum aligned with the MA curriculum Frameworks	K-12 Correlation to Revised MA Frameworks	Faculty and Administration will review curriculum	Annually
Students will have a personal education plan.	Goal Setting Meetings: The teachers and parents on Levels I, II, III, and IV annually create personal education plans. Students and their advisors create the plans on Levels V and VI with input from parents.	Personal Educational Plan	Completed within the first eight weeks of school each year
All students will have access to quality yearlong projects in which students learn academic and social skills	Projects will meet criterion supplied in Project Toolkit.	Projects will be evaluated by student surveys and students will be evaluated on their participation through project rubrics. Administration will evaluate each project on whether it meets the criteria in the Project Tool Kit.	Annually
Faculty will be provided opportunities for Professional Development	Faculty will engage in Professional Development that directly enhances student learning or interest	Professional Development spending Recommendations by Commonwealth. Each faculty member will have an annual professional development plan Days will annually be set aside for professional development	Annually as part of each teacher's evaluation

SSCS will provide an educational program that meets all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements	SSCS will continually review for compliance with state law and DOE regulations	Internal/external audits	Annually
SSCS will meet school wide performance goals on MCAS as determined by MA DOE	SSCS will respond to weak performance areas as appropriate	DOE Report on MCAS scores	Continuously
SSCS will maintain a NCE score of no less than the 50% on Terra Nova scores in reading, language arts and math for a combined group of non-SPED, SPED, and Title 1 students (Group includes Grades 1 - 12)	Administer annual Terra Nova tests	The Education Committee will analyze all Terra Nova scores and complete longitudinal analysis. Programs will be adjusted if needed	Annually
Student access to technology will support student learning	1. 75% of parents surveyed feel technology supported student achievement (State Recommendation) 2. Faculty will be provided with ongoing technology training	Internal: Survey	Annually
SSCS will maintain a low student/teacher ratio	SSCS will maintain a student/ teacher ratio of no more than 18: 1 (all students/all teaching and academic support staff)	Enrollment/FTE Faculty Receipt of Full Day K Grant	Annually
SSCS students will have access to varied modalities of instruction	Teachers will use various modalities	Administrative teacher evaluation Student Survey	Annually
SSCS students on Levels II through VI will have access to a diverse choice of projects	SSCS will provide a variety of project choices from which students may choose.	Project listing	Annually
SSCS will promote students to participate in external and/or community events	SSCS will publish community events in the SSCS Update both on paper and on the SSCS website, as well as on school bulletin boards	Update	Weekly

School Performance Goals

**IX. Objective #2: SSCS will be faithful to its charter by promoting a mutually respectful culture and a responsive family/school partnership.**

Expectations	Strategies for Attainment	Assessment or Measurement Tool	Assessment Schedule
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SSCS will promote a mutually respectful culture within all facets of the school community	Social Competency Curriculum Code of Conduct Student/Parent Expectation Form	Annual Satisfaction Survey Signed Forms	Annually and ongoing
SSCS will promote a partnership in which the school and the families each have responsibilities for the growth and progress of the students	Goal Setting Meetings Parent-Teacher Conferences School Council Narrative Progress Reports Weekly Update Encouragement of Volunteerism Parent Association meetings	Annual Satisfaction Survey	Annually and ongoing
All students/parents will understand the standards expected for promotion	100% of students/parents will be provided with detailed Exit Standards that set clear rigorous and minimum academic requirements	Goal Setting Form Signed Exit Standard Form	Annually

**X. Objective #3: SSCS will be faithful to its charter and share the strengths of our model with schools and educators throughout the Commonwealth**

<b>Expectations</b>	<b>Strategies for Attainment</b>	<b>Assessment or Measurement Tool</b>	<b>Assessment Schedule</b>
SSCS will disseminate its model	SSCS will provide information about our program to the community Presentations/Publications TV/Radio Visitors Web Site	Web Site Traffic Annual Report	Tallied annually in the Annual Report
SSCS will work with district schools to improve education for all students	SSCS will contact and meet with local districts to cooperate on grants and joint programs	Contacts and cooperative work	Tallied annually in the Annual Report

Is SSCS a Viable Organization?

**XI. Objective #1: SSCS will maintain financial solvency and stability.**

Board of Trustees will continue to oversee a balanced budget and school annual audit will reflect good business practice.

**XII. Objective #2: SCS will maintain enrollment that is stable and near capacity.**

For the first time, SCS has a projected enrollment for FY2005 at its capacity of 468 with a waiting list of approximately 200. The one-year enrollment growth from FY 2004 to FY 2005 is 22%. There has been dramatic increased interest in the school with applications for the FY 2005 Lottery were up over 300% from FY2004.

The school is analyzing the expansion of its enrollment in the coming years. The new facility has a capacity for approximately 550 students. Increasing our cap to 550 students will allow improved faculty salaries and curriculum offerings.

<b>Fiscal year</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>Projected Enrollment</b>	468	488	520	550	550
<b>Wait List</b>	200	***	***	***	***
<b>Number of applications</b>	***	***	***	***	***

**XIII. Objective #3: SCS will demonstrate itself to be a viable organization.**

<b>Expectation</b>	<b>Strategies for attainment</b>	<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Assessment Schedule</b>
SSCS will include students, faculty and parents in its democratic governance model	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Written communication process</li> <li>2. Active School Council - meets monthly, provides opportunities for communication</li> <li>3. Focused committees in which students, faculty and parents work together</li> <li>4. Newly designed Survey</li> <li>5. Reorganized Parent Association</li> <li>6. Student Boards and Town/Pod Meetings</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Published annually</li> <li>2. Accomplishes its goals</li> <li>3. Productive committee work</li> <li>4. Increased response rate</li> <li>5. Increased participation by parents</li> </ol> Parents' opinions are solicited on major initiatives 6. Students' opinions are solicited on major initiatives	All organized annually
SSCS will strive for teacher retention	Provide mentoring for new teachers Provide competitive salaries and benefits Provide a strong commitment to Professional Development Teachers' opinions are solicited on major initiatives	The administration will monitor teacher retention Conduct exit interviews to ascertain the reasons a staff member leaves.	Annually
SSCS will strive for student retention	Provide peer mentoring Provide advisors	School will monitor student retention Conduct Exit interviews	Annually

	Provide Student Learning Support Services		
SSCS will provide clear and stable leadership	<p>Board of Trustees Annual Training</p> <p>Ongoing administration professional development</p> <p>Offer salaries to attract and keep school leaders</p> <p>Board will plan ahead for leadership changes</p>	<p>Board of Trustees and Standing Committees meet on a consistent basis.</p> <p>Executive Director/Head of School beginning his third year.</p> <p>Principal is beginning his second year.</p> <p>New assistant principal has been a teacher at the school for nine years.</p>	Annually
SSCS will maintain adequate facilities to meet our students needs	<p>Ongoing capital campaign begun to provide sufficient funding to complete renovations.</p> <p>Development committee formed.</p> <p>As needed, additional space will be located, i.e.: athletic and recreational facilities.</p> <p>Facilities Task Force changed to Building and Grounds Committee.</p>	<p>Sufficient money will be raised for renovation</p> <p>We will have expanded athletic/recreational facilities.</p>	Annually

## **ATTACHMENT C**

The 2004 Strategic Plan (Attachment C) calls for attention to be given to the need for athletic facilities and the use of the new building by outside groups to generate additional income for the school. It also calls for the development of a capital plan and budget for the further renovations of the building and the purchase of capital equipment. It finally calls for the development of a comprehensive student transportation plan. This is being carried out by groups of parents in various communities due to the nature of the school's inability to be involved in a regional bussing system.

### **Top 21 Strategic Planning Goals**

#### **Marketing and Public Relations**

- Address immediate outreach & marketing needs to maintain and increase enrollment
- Nurture relationships with new and returning parents to increase enrollment, limit withdrawals, and encourage gift giving
- Increase visibility and community goodwill by nurturing relationship with media

#### **Education**

- Strengthen Secondary School curriculum, programs, and supports for students
- Refine the structure and outreach of projects
- Promote K-12 culture and unity
- Increase support for Faculty, Staff, and Administration

#### **Governance/Leadership**

- Strengthen the effectiveness of the Board of Trustees
- Improve communication within SSCS governance structure
- Clarify and revise policies regarding SSCS governance roles of the BOT, the Executive Director, the faculty, the parents, and the students
- File SSCS's application for renewal of a public school charter

#### **Facilities**

- Establish a capital plan for renovations to facilities and purchase of equipment
- Develop a comprehensive student transportation plan to maintain enrollment, limit withdrawal and facilitate students' off campus experiences
- Investigate potential after-school hour uses for earned income opportunities
- Establish athletic program facilities

#### **Development**

- Develop new fundraising initiatives
- Establish and execute multiyear development plan
- Inventory and motivate current development resources

## **Finance**

- Maintain policy and practice of balanced budgets in all fiscal years
- Increase income from non-tuition (grants and donors) sources as well as income earned from tuition sources from present level
- Increase faculty/staff benefits and salaries

ATTACHMENT D

**MICHAEL T. MUNHALL**  
**25 Lawson Farm Road**  
**Londonderry, NH 03053**  
**781-864-7313**  
**school: 781-982-4202**  
[mmunhall@sscs-ma.org](mailto:mmunhall@sscs-ma.org)

**Rank:** Executive Director/Head of School

**Education:** M.A. Michigan State University, 1981, Educational Administration  
B.A. Monmouth College, 1971, Government

**Experience:** 2002-present Executive Director/Head of School  
South Shore Charter School, Norwell, MA  
1998-2002 Head of the Upper School  
The Pike School, Andover, MA  
1996-1998 Director of Admission  
St. Margaret's-McTernan School, Waterbury, CT  
1994-1996 Head of the Upper School  
The Wellington School, Columbus, OH  
1987-1994 Head of the Upper School  
Cape Cod Academy, Osterville, MA  
1982-1987 Headmaster  
The Leelanau School, Glen Arbor, MA  
1972-1982 Teacher and Dean  
The Leelanau School, Glen Arbor, MA

**Member:** 2003 – present Board of Directors  
Massachusetts Charter School Association

**ATTACHMENT D2**

**THOMAS J. GORSUCH**  
**370 Battles Street**  
**Brockton, MA 02301**  
**617-699-1103**  
**School: 781-982-4202**  
**tjgorsuch@sscs-ma.org**

**Rank:** Principal  
Senior Lecturer, Graduate Studies in Education

**Education:** Ph.D., Boston College, 1991, Curriculum, Instruction, and Administration  
M.A., Boston College, 1987, Counseling  
Graduate Courses – Materials Science and Physical Chemistry  
B.S., Northeastern University, 1974, Chemistry and Materials Science

**Certifications:** Massachusetts Certification in Grades 9-12, Assistant Principal/Principal  
Massachusetts Certification in Grades 9-12, Mathematics  
Massachusetts Certification in Grades 9-12, Physical Science  
Massachusetts Certification in Grades 9-12, Chemistry  
Massachusetts Certification in Grades 9-12, Physics

**Experience: Teaching/Administrative**

2003 – present Principal, South Shore Charter School, Norwell, MA  
2002 – 2003 Principal, Marian High School, Framingham, MA  
1997 – 2002 Assistant Principal, Sacred Heart H.S., Kingston, MA  
1994 – present Senior Lecturer, Curry College, Milton, MA –  
Graduate School of Education  
1995 – present Lecturer, Statistics and Mathematics, Quincy College  
1988 – 2002 Director of Audiovisual Services, Sacred Heart High School  
1995 – 1997 Department Head, Sacred Heart H.S.  
1987 – 1997 Teacher: Physics, Religion, Sacred Heart H.S.  
1988 – 1993 Technical Director, Theater Department, Sacred Heart H.S.

**Other Administrative and Professional Experience**

1982-1985 Plant and Product Manager, Supercon, Inc.  
1980-1982 Senior Engineer/Project Manager, Engelhard Corp.  
1978-1980 Process Engineer, Texas Instruments  
1974-1978 Member of the Technical Staff, Project Leader, GTE Research Laboratories

## ATTACHMENT D3

**ELAINE FRENCH**  
**56 Black Rock Road**  
**Cohasset, MA 02025**  
**781-383-6353**  
**School: 781-982-4202**  
**efrench@sscs-ma.org**

**Rank:** Director of Learning Services

**Education:** CAGS, Bridgewater State College, 1991, Educational Leadership and Administration  
M.A., Bridgewater State College, 1978, Guidance and Counseling  
B.A., Bridgewater State College, 1973, Special Education

**Employment:** 2000-Present Educational Consultant, South Shore Charter School, Hull, MA  
1970-2000 Assistant Superintendent, Hull Public Schools, Hull, MA  
1988-1997 Director of Pupil Services, Hull Public Schools, Hull, MA  
1986-1988 Guidance Counselor, Hull High School, Hull, MA  
1983-1986 Special Education Teacher, Hull High School, Hull, MA  
Evaluation Team Chairperson, Hull High School, Hull, MA  
1975-1983 Special Education Teacher, Memorial Middle School, Hull, MA  
Evaluation Team Chairperson, Memorial Middle School, Hull, MA  
1974-1975 Fifth Grade Teacher, Jacobs School, Hull, MA  
1973-1974 Intermediate Resource Room Teacher, Jacobs School, Hull, MA

**ATTACHMENT D4**

**XIV. TED HIRSCH**

**41 Western Avenue  
Hull, MA 02041  
781- 925-9383  
School: 781-982-4202  
thirsch@sscs-ma.org**

Rank: Assistant Principal, K-12

Education: M.F.A., University of California at Davis, 1993, Visual Art  
A.B., Harvard College, 1984, Visual and Environmental Studies

Experience: 2004 – present Assistant Principal  
South Shore Charter School, Hull, MA  
1998 – present Level I (grades K-2) Coordinator  
South Shore Charter School, Hull, MA  
1994 – present Level I Teacher  
South Shore Charter School, Hull, MA  
1993 – 1995 Art Teacher  
Willauer School  
1993 Art Instructor  
University of California at Davis  
1985 – 2002 Exhibiting artist in over fifty solo and group shows in California,  
Massachusetts, Maryland, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina,  
Pennsylvania and Washington, DC

Member: 2002 – present Board of Trustees  
Core Knowledge Foundation

**ATTACHMENT D5**

**RICHARD A. LEVITT**  
**207 Lake Street, #77**

Weymouth, MA 02189  
**781/982-4202**  
**rlevitt@sscs-ma.org**

**Rank: Director of Development**

**Education:** J.D. and Masters in the Study of Environmental Law, Vermont Law School  
B.S., Environmental Management and Policy, Indiana University

**Experience:** 2003-Present Director of Development  
South Shore Charter School, Hull, MA

2002-2003 Principal  
Levitt Environmental Consulting

2000-2002 Senior Issues Manager  
Office of Senator John F. Kerry

1999-2000 Program Associate  
The Wilderness Society

## ATTACHMENT E

### EXIT STANDARDS

#### LEVEL I EXIT STANDARDS – GRADES K, 1 AND 2

By the completion of Level I, each student must meet all but one of the following standards to be promoted to Level II. For students with an IEP or 504, the IEP or 504 may contain details of any modification of Exit Standards. A student's teacher may request a waiver if a student fails to meet more than one exit standard by written explanation to the Level Coordinator and Principal. Level I teachers will document each second grade student's fulfillment of Exit Standards.

#### **Internal and External Performance Evaluations:**

1. Participate and meet the yearlong project goals, including one project related Exhibition of Mastery.
2. Be making progress towards meeting all Core Curriculum expectations (Math, Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science) as specified on the progress reports and in the supporting Curriculum Project rubrics. Also the student must meet the following explicit performance criteria:
  - Read with fluency and comprehension material at 2.5 or better grade level with 95% accuracy as measured by the Developmental Reading Access (DRA).
  - Score 75% on a math computation and concepts test of material covered in the Second Grade Core Knowledge Book.
  - Addition and subtraction problems to add from 18 at a rate of 15 per minute for addition and 10 per minute for subtraction with 100% accuracy.
3. Complete a Science Fair Project for both first and second grade if the student attended SSCS for both of those years.
4. Take the level appropriate standardized exam.
5. In second grade demonstrate passing or improving scores on our internal Core Knowledge Curriculum Social Studies tests.

#### **Writing Portfolio:**

Complete the following writing portfolio using the Collins writing guidelines.

- Friendly Letter (Type 4)
- Paragraph (Type 5)
- Book Report (Type 5)
- Scientific Writing (Type 3)
- Poem (optional)

A Letter of Recommendation written by the student's pod teacher

#### **Arts:**

Perform in at least two school performances per year, such as the Winter Solstice Concert or History Play in the second grade year.

#### **Community Service:**

A student must complete and document five acts of community service in the second grade year.

## **LEVEL II EXIT STANDARDS – GRADES 3 AND 4**

By the completion of Level II, each fourth grader must meet these minimum standards to be promoted to Level III. For students with an IEP or 504, the IEP or 504 may contain details on any modification of Exit Standards. A student's teacher may request a waiver of no more than one exit requirement by written appeal to the Level Coordinator and Principal. Level II teachers will document each fourth grade student's fulfillment of Exit Standards.

### **Internal and External Performance Evaluations:**

1. Complete yearlong project competencies including two Exhibitions of Mastery (one is project-related, the other is the Science Fair project) per year enrolled in Level II. (*Evidence of meeting this standard is documented in Progress Reports and Exhibition of Mastery Scoring Rubrics.*)
2. Receive a passing grade (progressing or better on final progress report) in all Core Curriculum Courses: Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, and Science. (*Evidence of meeting this standard is documented in Progress Report.*)
3. Achieve a grade equivalent score of at least 3.5 on Terra Nova testing in Total Math and Total Reading.

### **Portfolio:**

Complete six required written pieces meeting Collins Type 4 or Type 5 standards (with a minimum of two Type 5 pieces). Standardized scoring rubrics must be attached to all student portfolio pieces. A minimum score of 3.5 on a 5 point scale must be obtained.

- Friendly Letter
- Persuasive Narrative (Non-fiction)
- Investigative Research (5 paragraph minimum)
- Persuasive Essay (5 paragraph minimum)
- Poem
- Short Story (Fiction)

Submit a sample (or evidence) of best artistic work from a course or project to the portfolio; this may include literary work, dance, music, drama/theater or visual arts.

Present one written portfolio piece, twice a year, to a panel of judges that includes pod teacher and peers.

### **Technology:**

Meet Level II Technology requirements. (Evidence of meeting this requirement is documented on Technology rubric included in Progress Reports.)

### **Community Service:**

A student must complete and document 10 acts of community service for each year enrolled in Level II.

## **LEVEL III EXIT STANDARDS – GRADES 5 AND 6**

By the completion of Level III, each student must meet these minimum standards to be promoted to Level IV. For students with an IEP or 504, the IEP Or 504 may contain details on any modification of Exit Standards. Any student may request a waiver of no more than one exit requirement by written appeal to the Level Coordinator and Principal. The student must submit evidence that he/she has met all the Exit Standards to the Level Coordinator and Principal.

### **Internal and External Performance Evaluations:**

1. Receive a passing grade (D- or better) each trimester and meet the yearlong project goals, including one project-related Exhibition of Mastery with an average score of 70% per year enrolled in Level III. (*Evidence of meeting this standard is documented in Progress Reports and Exhibition of Mastery Scoring Rubrics.*)
2. Achieve an annual average passing grade (D- or better) each trimester in all Core Curriculum courses: Literature, Composition, Math, Social Studies, Science and World Language. (*Evidence of meeting this standard is documented in Progress Reports.*)
3. Achieve a grade equivalent of 5.5 on Terra Nova in Total Score for Language, Reading and Math.

### **Portfolio:**

Present a portfolio to a panel of judges, which must include at least one faculty member and the Level Coordinator. (Scoring rubrics must be attached to all student portfolio pieces. A minimum score of 80% must be attained for each piece and for the final presentation.) The Sixth Grade Portfolio must include these Collins Type 4 pieces:

- Autobiography
- Cause and Effect Essay
- Multi-scene Play
- Essay on a Biography
- Poem
- Creative Writing (Historical Fiction)
- Investigative Research Paper to accompany an Exhibition of Mastery.

It must also include:

- Sample of best artistic work from a course or project (which may include literary work, dance, music, theatre or visual arts)
- A Letter of Recommendation written by the student's pod teacher.

### **Science and Technology:**

1. Complete a Science Fair Project and Paper with a grade of 70% or higher for each year in Level III. (*Evidence of meeting this standard is documented in Progress Reports and on Scoring Rubrics.*)
2. Present the Science Fair Project as an Exhibition of Mastery receiving an average score of 70%. (*Evidence of meeting this standard is documented on the Exhibition of Mastery Scoring Rubrics.*)
3. Acquire Level III Technology Competencies (*Evidence of meeting this requirement is documented in the technology competency checklist.*)

### **Community Service:**

A student must complete and document 15 hours of community service for each year enrolled in Level III. Documentation includes standard reflective paragraphs.

## **LEVEL IV EXIT STANDARDS – GRADES 7 AND 8**

By the completion of Level IV, each student must meet these minimum standards to be promoted to Level V. For students with an IEP or 504, the IEP or 504 may contain details on any modification of Exit Standards. Any student may request a waiver of no more than one exit requirement by written appeal to the Level Coordinator and Principal. Student must submit evidence that he/she has met all the Exit Standards to the Level Coordinator and Principal.

### **Internal and External Performance Evaluations:**

1. Receive an average passing grade (D- or better) and meet the yearlong project goals, including one project-related Exhibition of Mastery with an average score of 70% per year enrolled in the Level. (*Evidence of meeting this standard is documented in Progress Reports and Exhibition of Mastery Scoring Rubrics.*)
2. Achieve an annual average passing grade (D- or better) in all Core Curriculum courses: Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, Science and World Language. (*Evidence of meeting this standard is documented in Progress Reports.*)
3. Achieve a grade equivalent of 7.5 on Terra Nova in Total Language, Total Reading and Total Math.

### **Portfolio:**

Present a portfolio to a panel of judges, which must include at least one faculty member and the Level Coordinator. (Scoring rubrics must be attached to all student portfolio pieces. A minimum score of 80% must be attained for each piece and for the final presentation.) The Eighth Grade Portfolio must include these Collins Type 4 or 5 MLA formatted pieces in each of the following areas:

- Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- Essay related to Project Work
- Investigative research paper of no less than 1000 words earning a grade of B or better.

It must also include:

- Resume
- A reflective essay on community service work.
- Sample of best artistic work from a course or project (which may include literary work, dance, music, theatre or visual arts)

A Letter of Recommendation written by the student's pod teacher.

### **Science and Technology:**

1. Complete a Science Fair Project and Paper with a grade of 70% or higher for each year in Level III. (*Evidence of meeting this standard is documented in Progress Reports and on Scoring Rubrics.*)
2. Present the Science Fair Project as an Exhibition of Mastery receiving an average score of 70%. (*Evidence of meeting this standard is documented on the Exhibition of Mastery Scoring Rubrics.*)
3. Acquire Level IV Technology Competencies (*Evidence of meeting this requirement is documented in the technology competency checklist.*)

### **Community Service:**

A student must complete and document 20 hours of community service for grade 7 and 25 hours of community service for grade 8. Documentation includes standard reflective paragraphs.

## **LEVEL V EXIT STANDARDS – GRADES 9 AND 10**

By the completion of Level V, each student must meet these minimum standards to be promoted to Level VI. For students with an IEP or 504, the IEP or 504 may contain details on any modification of Exit Standards. Any student may request a waiver of no more than one exit requirement by written appeal to the Level Coordinator and Principal. Student must submit evidence that they have met all the Exit Standards to the Level Coordinator and Principal.

### **Internal and External Performance Evaluations:**

1. Receive a passing grade (D- or better) and meet the yearlong project goals, including two project-related Exhibitions of Mastery per year enrolled in Level V. (*Evidence of meeting this standard is documented in Grade reports and Exhibition of Mastery Scoring Rubrics.*)
2. Achieve a passing grade (D- or better) in Core Curriculum courses for each year: English/Language Arts, Math, Social Studies & Science. (*Evidence of meeting this standard is documented in Grade Report.*)
3. Must achieve a grade equivalent of 9.5 on Terra Nova test in Total Math, Total Language and Total Reading.

### **Portfolio:**

Present a portfolio to a panel of judges, which must include a faculty member, the Guidance Counselor, and Level Coordinator. (Scoring rubrics must be attached to all student portfolio pieces.)

1. Five writing pieces meeting Collins Type 5 standards, which have both the originally submitted and revised versions.
  - Language Arts
  - Mathematics
  - Science
  - Social Studies
  - Essay related to student's Project work
2. One MLA formatted investigative paper, not less than 1500 words earning a grade of B or better.
3. One reflective essay on community service work.
4. One resume.
5. A sample of best artistic work from a course or project (which may include literary work, dance music, theater, or visual arts).
6. One letter of recommendation from the student's advisor or a faculty member.

### **Community Service:**

A student must complete and document no less than 30 hours of community service for each year enrolled in Level V.

## **LEVEL VI EXIT/GRADUATION STANDARDS – GRADES 11 AND 12**

By the completion of Level VI, each SSCS graduate must meet these minimum standards. For students with an IEP or 504, the IEP or 504 may contain details on any modification of Exit Standards. Any student may request a waiver of no more than one exit requirement by written appeal to the Level Coordinator and Principal. Student must submit evidence that he/she has met all the Exit Standards to the portfolio panel and Principal.

### **Internal and External Performance Evaluations:**

1. Receive a passing grade (D- or better) and meet the yearlong project goals, including two project related exhibitions of mastery per year enrolled in Level VI. (*Evidence of meeting this standard is documented in Grade reports and Exhibition of Mastery Scoring Rubrics.*)
2. Achieve a passing grade (D- or better) in all Core Curriculum courses: English/Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, Science and World Language (*evidence of meeting this standard is documented in Grade Report.*)
3. Meet the Massachusetts MCAS graduation requirements.
4. Complete, with a grade of C or better, at least one pre-approved three-credit course at an accredited college or university for each year enrolled in Level VI.
5. Attain an averaged score of 70% in a formal debate on a significant historical or contemporary moral or legal issue evaluated by a panel of no less than three judges. Judges are defined as faculty members and qualified adult members of the community.
6. Complete an approved internship with a minimum of 40 hours on site.

### **Portfolio:**

1. Present a portfolio to a panel of judges, which must include a faculty member, the Guidance Counselor, and Level Coordinator. (*Scoring rubrics must be attached to all student portfolio pieces. A minimum score of 70% must be obtained.*)
2. Eight required written works which have both the originally submitted and revised version. (*Writing pieces must meet Collins Type 5 Standards*)
  - Language Arts
  - Mathematics
  - Science
  - Social Studies
  - Essay related to students Project work
  - One MLA formatted investigated research paper, not less than 2500 words, earning a grade B or better.
  - One resume
  - One reflective essay on community service work
3. A sample of best artistic work from a course or project (which may include literary work, dance, music, theater or visual arts)
4. One accredited college or university letter of acceptance
5. Two letters of recommendation from student's advisor, faculty member, guidance counselor or Principal

### **Technology:**

Attain Microsoft Office User Certification

### **Community Service:**

A student must complete and document 75 cumulative hours or a highly significant Community Service activity, which was approved in advance by the school.