

Miami-Dade County Public Schools

# South Florida Autism Charter School Inc



2017-18 Schoolwide Improvement Plan

## South Florida Autism Charter School Inc

18305 NW 75TH PL, Hialeah, FL 33015

[www.sfacs.org](http://www.sfacs.org)

### School Demographics

School Type and Grades Served (per MSID File)	2016-17 Title I School	2016-17 Economically Disadvantaged (FRL) Rate (as reported on Survey 3)
Combination School KG-12	No	50%
Primary Service Type (per MSID File)	Charter School	2018-19 Minority Rate (Reported as Non-white on Survey 2)
Special Education	Yes	85%

### School Grades History

Year	2016-17	2015-16
Grade	C	C

*\*Informational Baseline School Grade*

**Note:** The school grades calculation was revised substantially for the 2014-15 school year to implement statutory changes made by the 2014 Legislature and incorporate the new Florida Standards Assessments. The 2014-15 school grades serve as informational baseline data that schools can use to improve in future years.

### School Board Approval

N/A

### SIP Authority and Template

Section 1001.42(18), Florida Statutes, requires district school boards to annually approve and require implementation of a school improvement plan (SIP) for each school in the district that has a school grade of D or F.

The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) SIP template meets all statutory and rule requirements for traditional public schools and incorporates all components required for schools receiving Title I funds. This template is required by State Board of Education Rule 6A-1.099811, Florida Administrative Code, for all non-charter schools with a current grade of D or F (see page 4). For schools receiving a grade of A, B, or C, the district may opt to require a SIP using a template of its choosing.

This document was prepared by school and district leadership using the FDOE's school improvement planning web application located at <https://www.floridacims.org>.

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## Purpose and Outline of the SIP

The SIP is intended to be the primary artifact used by every school with stakeholders to review data, set goals, create an action plan and monitor progress. A corollary at the district level is the District Improvement and Assistance Plan (DIAP), designed to help district leadership make the necessary connections between school and district goals in order to align resources. The Florida Department of Education encourages schools to use the SIP as a “living document” by continually updating, refining and using the plan to guide their work throughout the year. This printed version represents the SIP as of the “Date Modified” listed in the footer.

### Part I: Current School Status

Part I organizes the current status of the school around five domains inspired by the 5Essentials framework: Supportive Environment, Family and Community Involvement, Effective Leadership, Public and Collaborative Teaching, and Ambitious Instruction and Learning. Questions regarding the school’s Multi-Tiered System of Supports have been embedded throughout this part to demonstrate how data is used by stakeholders to understand the needs of all students and allocate appropriate resources in proportion to those needs.

### Part II: Needs Assessment

Part II requires the school to review performance and early warning systems data in order to develop strategic goals and associated data targets (i.e., “SMART goals”) for the coming school year in context of the school’s greatest strengths and needs. An online tool was developed, which includes data visualizations and processing questions to support problem identification, problem analysis and strategic goal formulation.

### Part III: 8-Step Planning and Problem Solving for Implementation

Part III enables the school to develop implementation plans for its highest-priority goals. With the overview of the current state of the school in mind and the strategic goals identified through the needs assessment, the planning team engages in a facilitated planning and problem-solving process, through which they

- Define strategic goals and establish targets to be reached by successfully achieving the goals (Step 1)
- Identify barriers that could hinder achieving those goals and resources that could be used to eliminate or reduce barriers (Step 2)
- Select high-priority barriers they want to address initially (Step 3)
- Design implementation and monitoring plans for strategies to resolve selected barriers (Steps 4-7)
- Determine how they will monitor progress toward each goal (Step 8)

### Appendices

The following appendices, automatically-generated from content entered in Part III, are included in this document:

- Appendix 1 is a timeline of all action steps and monitoring activities
- Appendix 2 is an outline of all professional development opportunities and technical assistance items
- Appendix 3 is a report of the budget needed to implement the strategies

## Differentiated Accountability

Florida's Differentiated Accountability (DA) system, established in [section 1008.33, Florida Statutes](#), is a statewide network of strategic support, differentiated by need according to performance data, provided to districts and schools in order to improve leadership capacity, teacher efficacy, and student outcomes. Through a data-driven planning and problem-solving process, DA field teams collaborate with district leadership to design, implement, and refine strategic goals and action plans that are documented in the SIP.

### DA Regions

Florida's DA network is divided into four geographical regions, each served by a field team led by a regional executive director (RED).

### DA Categories

At the start of each academic year, traditional schools are classified for DA support in two categories based on the most recent school grades data available. Descriptions of each DA category along with the state support and interventions provided are set forth by [Rule 6A-1.099811, Florida Administrative Code](#):

- **Not in DA** - A school with a current school grade of A, B, or C; charter schools; and ungraded schools.
- **Targeted Support and Improvement** - A school with a current school grade of an initial D.
- **Comprehensive Support and Improvement** - A school with a current school grade of F or two consecutive grades of D, or a high school with a graduation rate of 67 percent or less in the most recent data release.

### DA Turnaround Status

Additionally, Comprehensive Support and Improvement schools have a turnaround status of "Implementing," based on a school's grades history, including the current school grade:

- Implementing - A school with a status of "Implementing" requires the district to submit a turnaround plan to the State Board of Education for approval and implementation. A school remains in "Implementing" status until its school grade improves to a C or higher.

### 2017-18 DA Category and Statuses for South Florida Autism Charter School Inc

DA Region and RED	DA Category and Turnaround Status
Southeast - <a href="#">LaShawn Russ-Porterfield</a>	Not In DA - N/A

## I. Part I: Current School Status

### A. Supportive Environment

#### 1. School Mission and Vision

##### a. Provide the school's mission statement.

The mission of SFACS is to provide education and services to individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) residing in Miami-Dade and Broward Counties. We target students with ASD who have communication deficits and/or behavioral challenges, and who may require training in self-help skills. The methodologies of B.F. Skinner's Theory of Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) and Verbal Behavior (VB) are applied in conjunction with state approved standards for students on a modified curriculum in order to provide the most effective individualized educational programs possible.

##### b. Provide the school's vision statement.

Our vision is to create an effective model for teaching individuals with ASD. Future plans include expanding our programming in order to serve the entire spectrum of ASD, from newly diagnosed children to adults. This will be accomplished on a state-of-the art campus with a K-12 Charter School, an Early Intervention Clinic, Out-of-School Services, and Adult Services. Our objectives are to provide free, appropriate, and science-based educational opportunities to students on the more involved portion of the autism spectrum; to find each student's strengths and provide them with the tools and hands-on learning opportunities that will enable them to function independently in society and have a purpose in life; and to remove the stigma associated with ASD and prove that even the most profoundly affected individuals can contribute to society in a meaningful way.

#### 2. School Environment

##### a. Describe the process by which the school learns about students' cultures and builds relationships between teachers and students.

The school builds relationships and promotes cultural awareness between teachers and students during our annual Spirit Week, which takes place during the month of October. Spirit Week consists of several "theme" days, including Cultural Day, which allows staff and students to dress up in their native costumes. Staff members participate in a potluck lunch featuring dishes from different nations and cultures. These activities provide teachers and students with the opportunity to experience where their peers and teachers come from. SFACS also hosts an Annual Talent Show at the end of each school year. The Talent Show promotes cultural awareness through different musical numbers highlighting the music and costumes of various countries throughout the world. Students and teachers perform together in every song and dance number, which incorporate song and dance from various genres. This allows everyone present; including teachers, staff, administration, and families, to become aware of and celebrate different cultures.

##### b. Describe how the school creates an environment where students feel safe and respected before, during and after school.

SFACS creates an environment where students feel safe and respected. This is accomplished through our low student-to-teacher ratio of 3:1. This setting provides students with continuous supervision throughout the school day. The 3:1 ratio is maintained at all times, as no student is ever alone with a teacher/staff member.

**c. Describe the schoolwide behavioral system in place that aids in minimizing distractions to keep students engaged during instructional time. This may include, but is not limited to, established protocols for disciplinary incidents, clear behavioral expectations, and training for school personnel to ensure the system is fairly and consistently enforced.**

SFACS implements Behavioral Intervention Plans (BIP) for all students enrolled in the school. Within the BIP there is a detailed list of proactive, functional, and educative strategies. These strategies are used to minimize the target behaviors that distract the students during instructional time. SFACS also implements a referral and an informative behavioral system. The referrals are used to target behaviors that need to be addressed immediately and provide the Principal and Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) a description of the behavior paired with data illustrating the student's behavior. The Principal and BCBA then observe the student. Upon completion of the observation, an Intensive Individualized Behavior Management Plan is completed to supplement the BIP that already exists. Additionally, SFACS utilizes an in-house form referred to as the "FYI Sheet". This document is an informative behavioral sheet listing behaviors that do not require immediate attention that are exhibited at home, but that should be documented. This system ensures that everyone involved in the education and services of the students is informed of the behaviors happening within each classroom.

All school personnel are required to participate in professional development activities to ensure that the school's educational philosophy, instructional practices, and behavioral plans are consistently and properly implemented and enforced. Professional development training opportunities are offered by SFACS Administration and conducted during the two-week period prior to the commencement of the school year, two Wednesdays per month after early dismissal, one Saturday mornings, and in the classroom on an as-needed basis. The professional development training topics consist of Managing Behaviors in the Classroom and Implementing ABA in the Classroom. SFACS staff also attend professional development opportunities offered by Miami-Dade County Public Schools, including Crisis Management Training, Functional Assessment of Behavior, and Behavior Intervention Plans.

**d. Describe how the school ensures the social-emotional needs of all students are being met, which may include providing counseling, mentoring and other pupil services.**

The school meets the social-emotional needs of all the students by providing them the opportunity to engage in the same activities as their neuro-typical peers through the General Education Curriculum. Students are invited to participate in social group outings several times a year. These outings allow the students to practice their social skills, communication skills, and community skills by conversing and interacting with their peers and with members in the community in a natural environment setting. Students and staff members meet at public places while engaging in social activities such as bowling, miniature golf, or eating frozen yogurt. These activities not only assist with socialization skills and community awareness, but also help the students build confidence.

Every year the students participate in field day. This is an all sports day where families and friends can come to participate in activities. Individual events are scheduled throughout the day. Every year a different sport is chosen and the students participate in a game between their peers.

SFACS high school students participate in Student Government. Student Government Officers are elected by the entire school body. Officers meet and discuss ways to increase peer connections throughout the school. They have activities such as pizza on Fridays where students can purchase either a slice of pizza or a whole pie.

Several of the students at SFACS participate in the Miami-Dade Special Olympics. Students take part in different events within track and field. This includes the 50 meter dash, 100 meter dash, and disc throw.

### 3. Early Warning Systems



The school's response to this section may address the requirements of ESSA, P.L. No. 114-95, Â§ 1114(b)(7)(A)(i) and (b)(7)(A)(iii)(III).

**a. Describe the school's early warning system and provide a list of the early warning indicators used in the system.**

SFACS takes a proactive approach on its Early Warning System. Attendance is an important component of the Early Warning System. If a student is absent for 1 day, the Teacher is required to call the parent and find out if the student is sick or why they are not attending school. If the student is absent for more than 48 hours and there has been several attempts to contact the family with no response, a certified letter is sent. If the family is experiencing something that SFACS can assist with, we try our best to work with the family or refer them to services in the community. Due to the special needs of the population we serve, health issues sometimes arise with our students, which may affect their attendance. Furthermore, we have a nurse on staff at SFACS. We also offer several trainings for all of the staff members that address seizures, first-aid and CPR. Additional trainings are offered on a case by case basis, depending on the specific medical needs of the student. Because of the nature of the disability, seizures and other serious medical conditions require EMT/Rescue to be called. SFACS works closely and has built a relationship with the local rescue due to the special needs of our students.

Parents at SFACS are required to attend four (4) Parent Training sessions per year. Trainings provide parents with information and strategies on how to deal with different aspects of Autism. Attendance at Parent Trainings can also help increase student attendance and academics.

SFACS utilizes a referral form in which the teachers submit behavioral concerns. Behaviors can negatively affect academics; therefore, we try to address the behavior before it becomes an early warning indicator. Finally, if any early warning indicator is seen, a one to one conference with the principal is scheduled. The parents and/or family members meet with the Principal, Teacher and if appropriate, the Board Certified Behavior Analyst, to discuss the situation and devise a plan and solution. The staff is also trained for Safe Crisis Management through Miami Dade County Public Schools and in-house training at SFACS. If the parents are having difficulties with behaviors at home, the certified behavioral analyst will conduct a house visit also.

**b. Provide the following data related to the school's early warning system**

**1. The number of students by grade level that exhibit each early warning indicator:**

Indicator	Grade Level													Total
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Attendance below 90 percent	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	6
One or more suspensions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Course failure in ELA or Math	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Level 1 on statewide assessment	0	0	0	1	3	13	9	18	15	5	11	0	0	75
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

**The number of students identified by the system as exhibiting two or more early warning indicators:**

Indicator	Grade Level														Total
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
Students exhibiting two or more indicators	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	



**c. Describe all intervention strategies employed by the school to improve the academic performance of students identified by the early warning system.**

At SFACS, we have implemented several intervention strategies to improve the academic performance of students that have been identified by the Early Warning System. Our low student-to-teacher ratio helps students who may be struggling, and provides them with more one-on-one time with instructional staff. SFACS also consults with a Board Certified Behavior Analyst, Occupational Therapist, and Speech Language Pathologists. Forming a dialogue with these professionals can help students improve their performance in the classroom, which in turn can help them improve their academic skills.

**B. Family and Community Engagement**

The school's response to this section may address the requirements of ESSA, P.L. No. 114-95, Â§ 1114(b)(2) and (b)(7)(A)(iii)(I).

**1. Describe how the school works at building positive relationships with families to increase involvement, including efforts to communicate the school's mission and vision, and keep parents informed of their child's progress.**

**a. Will the school use its Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy (PFEP) to satisfy this question?**

No

**1. PFEP Link**

The school completes a Parental Involvement Plan (PFEP), which is available at the school site.

**2. Description**

SFACS works to build positive relationships with families in order to increase their involvement through trainings, workshops, school activities, parent conferences, and ABA progress reports. The school offers free Autism Community Workshops one Saturday per month. These sessions are open to the community, and also count towards the four mandatory trainings that parents must complete. SFACS parents also have the opportunity to schedule private training sessions with the Principal to discuss issues that their child is facing at home. The entire family is welcome to attend, as well as private therapists or caregivers. These meetings can be attended with any family, friend, or any staff member. The school also hosts a variety of activities throughout the school year, which include the entire family. These are opportunities for parents and families to show support for their child and also see the progress their child has made. Parent-Teacher Conferences are offered two times a year, where parents can meet with their teacher to talk about the student and how they are performing in the classroom. Parents may also request additional conferences throughout the year. Finally, an Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) progress report is completed every 9 weeks and reviewed during the Parent-Teacher Conferences. It covers three areas: Behavior, Communication, and Self-Help Skills.

Parents are also required to complete 30 volunteer hours every school year, which assists the school in off-setting costs for supplies, equipment, or services such as cleaning and/or repairs.

**2. Describe the process by which the school builds and sustains partnerships with the local community for the purpose of securing and utilizing resources to support the school and student achievement.**

SFACS builds and sustains partnerships with local community and universities throughout South Florida. The school works closely with NOVA Southeastern University and collaborates with the School of Dentistry. NSU Dentistry students visit SFACS and teach our students about dental hygiene. The school also works closely with UM-CARD for professional development, workshops, and Augmentative and Alternative Communication Devices. SFACS and CARD collaborate to help the community to raise

awareness about different topics dealing with ASD. Saturday workshops are implemented throughout the year to help parents, caregivers, and teachers obtain knowledge on different topics from health and safety to post-secondary transitioning. The late Dr. Robin Parker, Director of the CARD office at NOVA, was an SFACS Governing Board member, and she assisted the school in the implementation and use of assistive technology devices. Dr. Parker also visited classrooms to assist with the incorporation of visual aids in the classroom. SFACS consults with Dr. Michael Alessandri, Executive Director of UM-NSU CARD. SFACS also collaborates with Dr. Kyle Bennett, Assistant Professor of Special Education at Florida International University, on research projects.

## C. Effective Leadership

### 1. School Leadership Team

#### a. Membership

Identify the name, email address and position title for each member of the school leadership team.:

Name	Title
Moodie, Tamara	Principal
Falepaini, Kristen	Teacher, ESE
McMurray, Colleen	Administrative Support
Zambrano, Maria	Teacher, ESE
Ammon, Amanda	Teacher, ESE
Alvite, Alex	Teacher, ESE
Ghitis, Stephanie	Teacher, ESE

#### b. Duties

##### **1. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the members, including how they serve as instructional leaders and practice shared decision making.**

The school leadership team is comprised of 3 teachers and an administrator, who teach grades K through 12, and who serve as mentors and instructional and behavioral leaders to the rest of the staff. They meet several times a month to discuss the students, their achievement, and their behaviors. At least once a week the team will meet with their respective staff to discuss any changes or updates that arise. They also meet to discuss the needs of the teachers and their students. The aforementioned team are lead mentors of the instructional personnel. The teachers are able to come to the team with any instructional or behavioral issues.

##### **2. Describe the process through which school leadership identifies and aligns all available resources (e.g., personnel, instructional, curricular) in order to meet the needs of all students and maximize desired student outcomes. Include the methodology for coordinating and supplementing federal, state and local funds, services and programs. Provide the person(s) responsible, frequency of meetings, how an inventory of resources is maintained and any problem-solving activities used to determine how to apply resources for the highest impact.**

The Principal and Governing Board are responsible for coordinating and supplementing federal, state and local funds, services, and programs. Board meetings are held on a quarterly basis. Additional meetings are scheduled as needed. The Principal creates an operating budget, which the Governing Board reviews, makes recommendations if necessary, and votes to approve. The Governing Board must approve the budget and any revisions. The Governing Board meets to discuss the ways to align all the available resources and meet the needs of all the students.

## 2. School Advisory Council (SAC)

### a. Membership

Identify the name and stakeholder group for each member of the SAC.:

Name	Stakeholder Group
Stephanie Ghitis	Teacher
Dr. Tamara Moodie	Principal
Vivian Mir	Parent
Elaine Vazquez	Parent
Bindu Magesh	Parent
Laura Muzzillo	Business/Community
Glenn Pierce	Business/Community
Amanda Ammon	Teacher

### b. Duties

#### **1. Provide a description of the SAC's involvement with the following activities, as required by section 1001.452(2), Florida Statutes**

The school's response to this question may address the requirements of ESSA, P.L. No. 114-95, Â§ 1114(b)(2).

##### *a. Evaluation of last year's school improvement plan*

The SAC met at the beginning of this school year and reviewed last year's SIP. The various sections were reviewed and discussed. Members gave their input and provided suggestions for different goals. Their input was recorded and used for the creation of this year's SIP.

##### *b. Development of this school improvement plan*

The SAC meets on a quarterly basis to discuss the current SIP, and to recommend any changes to the SIP as they see fit. There is an open communication between the SAC Chair and the members throughout the year to ensure all have equal input in the development and implementation of the SIP.

##### *c. Preparation of the school's annual budget and plan*

The school's annual budget was introduced and approved during the first quarterly EESAC meeting. The members voted and decided to keep the school improvement funds provided by EESAC to remain the same. The \$5.00 per student will be used to continue to improve our individualized Applied Behavior Analysis/Verbal Behavior Program. The funds will be used to purchase materials that will be needed for the program, such as instructional materials and manipulatives.

#### **2. Describe the use of school improvement funds allocated last year, including the amount budgeted for each project.**

School improvement funds include \$5.00 per student provided by EESAC. Those funds are used to enhance our individualized Applied Behavior Analysis/ Verbal Behavior program, and aid in the purchase of materials needed for the program (such as manipulatives and instructional materials.)

#### **3. Verify that the school is in compliance with section 1001.452, Florida Statutes, regarding the establishment requirements and duties of the SAC.**

Yes

*a. If the school is not in compliance, describe the measures being implemented to meet SAC requirements.*

### 3. Literacy Leadership Team (LLT)

#### a. Membership

Identify the name and position title for each member of the school-based LLT or similar group, if applicable.:

Name	Title
Ghitis, Stephanie	Teacher, ESE
McMurray, Colleen	Administrative Support
Falepaini, Kristen	Teacher, ESE
Moodie, Tamara	Principal
Ammon, Amanda	Teacher, ESE

#### b. Duties

##### 1. Describe how the LLT or similar group promotes literacy within the school, if applicable.

The LLT promotes literacy within the school by meeting and reviewing strategies. SFACS has implemented a reading program called PCI, which is geared toward teaching the different levels and learning styles of the SFACS student population. PCI helps non-readers transition into thriving readers using the PCI reading program at every grade level. We have also implemented the Accessible Literacy Learning (ALL) reading program. This program is geared towards the non-verbal population. The Principal and LLT set aside time every nine weeks to discuss any issues teachers may have or to review professional development. The LLT meets with individual teachers that require extra help and attention.

### D. Public and Collaborative Teaching

The school's responses to this section may address the requirements of ESSA, P.L. No. 114-95, Â§ 1114(b)(7)(A)(iii)(IV).

#### 1. Describe the school's strategies to encourage positive working relationships between teachers, including collaborative planning and instruction.

The school incorporates different strategies to encourage positive working relationships among teachers. The Principal meets with the staff at least once a week. This provides staff with a form to discuss any concerns they may have, as well as how their students are doing. This is also an opportunity for the staff to discuss any issues within their classroom or the school. Lead Teachers meet with their respective staff weekly, or more often, to discuss their classroom, their students, etc. Administration and Lead Staff meet with the other staff members throughout the week. Additional meetings are conducted for both the Teacher Assistants who work on Verbal Behavior programs, and other Teacher Assistants. Finally, there is an open communication between all Administration and Lead staff members who in turn communicate with the rest of the staff.

#### 2. Describe the school's strategies to recruit, develop and retain highly qualified, certified-in-field, effective teachers to the school.

SFACS' strategy is to recruit highly qualified teachers through local media outlets, periodic job fairs, and job postings that are publicized on the school's website, dadeschools.net and www.teachers-teachers.com. SFACS also works with local colleges and universities to post job openings for graduate and post graduate candidates, as well as interns working towards a degree in education and/or therapeutic fields. We are presently in collaboration with Florida International University (FIU) in order to

develop a program to sponsor various internships within our charter school.

To retain our highly qualified teachers, SFACS offers in-house professional development targeted to enhance the teacher's skills in working with our specialized population.

### **3. Describe the school's teacher mentoring program, including the rationale for pairings and planned mentoring activities.**

Mentors will meet monthly with teachers in need of mentoring. In addition, they will perform lesson modeling and classroom observation feedback as needed. The mentor will discuss evidence-based teaching strategies correlated to the Florida Standards, and use of assistive technology. The mentor will also discuss evidence-based teaching strategies correlated to Applied Behavior Analysis, Verbal Behavior and use of assistive technology.

This year we have 6 new teachers at SFACS and each has been assigned a mentor. Several second year teachers also have peer mentors to guide them. Ms. Maria Zambrano (11 years' experience) is the lead elementary school mentor. Ms. Kristen Falepaina (11 years' experience) is the lead mentor for middle school and high school. In addition, Ms. Chelsea Colwell (3 years' experience) has become the curriculum specialist and mentors all teachers.

## **E. Ambitious Instruction and Learning**

### **1. Instructional Programs and Strategies**

#### **a. Instructional Programs**

##### ***1. Describe how the school ensures its core instructional programs and materials are aligned to Florida's standards.***

SFACS ensures that its core instructional programs and materials are aligned to Florida state standards through lesson plans and classroom observations. The lesson plans are reviewed by the Administration. Once reviewed, the Administration either approves the plan or notifies the teacher of the changes. The administration also implements spot checks throughout the year to ensure the teachers are complying with their lesson plans. The classroom observations are also used as spot checks. A written review is completed for each class observations, in which the observer is looking for the correct instructional programs as well as materials that correlate to the Florida standards. After each observation, the teachers are informed of what was observed in their class. They then have an opportunity to make the correct changes so that everything is aligned with the Florida standards, as well as the schools mission.

#### **b. Instructional Strategies**

##### ***1. Describe how the school uses data to provide and differentiate instruction to meet the diverse needs of students. Provide examples of how instruction is modified or supplemented to assist students having difficulty attaining the proficient or advanced level on state assessments.***

SFACS is a center school serving students diagnosed with Autism. Teachers meet with the Administration every nine weeks to review data sources and assessments to maintain student improvement. Students have varying abilities and levels of functionality; therefore, SFACS utilizes a combination of state-approved curriculum and supplemental curriculum in order provide differentiated instruction that will meet each student's individual needs. School curriculum is modified and implemented through the use of Unique Learning System, a special education curriculum geared toward differentiated instruction. Unique Learning is comprised of three levels: independent, supported, and participatory. These three levels assist in grouping students with peers on a similar cognitive and functioning level. Supplemental academic curricula include: Edmark Reading Series,

SRA Reading Laboratory, SRA Connecting Math Concepts, Touch Match, Teacher File Box, AbleNet, Word Problems for Non-Readers, Basic Picture Math (PCI), Money Math, Counting Money and Time is Now. In addition, SFACS utilizes the following supplemental ABA-based curricula: Verbal Behavior MAPP (VB-MAPP), Assessment for Basic Language and Learning Skills - Revised (ABLLS-R) and the Assessment for Functional Living Skills (AFFLS). Supplemental curricula assist in the improvement of student academic and functional life skills, as well as improved performance on FAA. Increased instruction in the deficient areas of Reading and Writing will be addressed by implementing several different strategies. SFACS will be adding IEP goals that pertain to academic achievement in Reading and Writing. ABLLS tracking sheets will be utilized as a resource to track and review progress in the deficient areas. The PCI reading program will be utilized more frequently with the help of the Literacy Leadership Team. This supplemental reading program will increase Reading and Writing skills in all levels of the students. It is a program geared towards differentiated instruction that will help with the modifications needed for instruction. The Accessible Literacy Learning (ALL) reading program has also been implemented for use to benefit those struggling readings who are also considered non-verbal. SFACS will offer more PD and in-house staff training to focus on the areas of deficiency. The Literacy Leadership Team will collaborate and monitor the staff more frequently to support and implement strategies that can increase academic achievement.

**2. Provide the following information for each strategy the school uses to increase the amount and quality of learning time and help enrich and accelerate the curriculum:**

**Strategy:** Weekend Program

**Minutes added to school year:** 360

SFACS offers weekend training to staff members several times throughout the year. Within those trainings, 6 of them are professional development opportunities. The other meetings are for teacher collaboration and learning different strategies specific to teaching students with Autism.

**Strategy Rationale**

The rationale behind the weekend trainings is to be proactive and increase the students overall achievement at the school. These trainings teach different strategies and ways to teach students with Autism. This can increase the students behavioral, communication skills and self-help skills along with their academics.

**Strategy Purpose(s)**

- Teacher collaboration, planning and professional development

**Person(s) responsible for monitoring implementation of the strategy**

Moodie, Tamara, drmoodie@dadeschools.net

**Data that is or will be collected and how it is analyzed to determine effectiveness of the strategy**

Data is collected through different assignments. The staff is given homework for their professional development. They are also given projects throughout the year. Sign in sheets are taken to show staff that was present. Data is also analyzed through teacher observation in the classroom by the certified behavior analyst. She comes to observe to see if the strategies and interventions are being implemented in the classroom.

**2. Student Transition and Readiness**

**a. PreK-12 Transition**



The school's response to this question may address the requirements of ESSA, P.L. No. 114-95, Â§ 1114(b)(7)(A)(iii)(V).

**1. Describe the strategies the school employs to support incoming and outgoing cohorts of students in transition from one school level to another.**

In order to be eligible to enroll at SFACS, a student must have ASD as an eligibility on his/her IEP. Kindergarten students are admitted to SFACS based on a lottery system, with the first 9 children drawn enrolling in the class, and the subsequent names drawn added to a waiting list. Applications received for 1st grade and up are screened for eligibility and enrolled if there is space in the school, or added to the waiting list. SFACS advertises its services through various outlets, such as the Autism Notebook, South Florida Parenting Magazine and Family Magazine. SFACS also sends e-mails to members of the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities data base, Parent-to-Parent, Autism Society, and Denise's List. Weekly Tours are offered weeks for anybody who is interested in seeing SFACS' campus and learning about the programs offered. Community outreach trainings held on Saturdays that are open to the public. In order for the students to transition successfully from one grade level to the next, the current teacher meets with the new teacher to discuss where the student is, academically and functionally. This helps to ease the transition from one grade to another, as the new teacher is more familiar with their students and prepared for the new school year.

In the area of post-secondary transition, SFACS does not currently have any students who are eligible to meet the criteria for Vocational Agencies. However, the school is forming relationships with outside agencies to help our population learn the appropriate skills necessary for post-secondary life. The students are engaged throughout the school day in Vocational Academies that are geared towards learning skills for supported employment. We are also working with agencies to come and speak to the students.

**b. College and Career Readiness**

**1. Describe the strategies the school uses to advance college and career awareness, which may include establishing partnerships with business, industry or community organizations.**

The Teacher and Principal meet to determine the best course schedule for the students, which includes a functional curriculum in which life skills and real life problems are the basis of delivery. Each student will have individualized components based on individual needs and every nine weeks, the students will rotate from throughout the different Vocational Training Academies in order to learn a variety of vocational skills. Students also receive life skills training in order to prepare them for post secondary transitioning.

**2. Identify the career and technical education programs available to students and industry certifications that may be earned through those respective programs.**

SFACS is a center school serving students with Autism. Our high school program offers academic courses alongside vocational training in our Vocational Academies. These Academies are geared to teach the students culinary arts skills, retail management, health and beauty industry training, environmental technology, and clerical skills. These courses are taught to all high school students via a functional curriculum which incorporates life skills and functional academics.

**3. Describe efforts the school has taken to integrate career and technical education with academic courses (e.g., industrial biotechnology) to support student achievement.**

Students receive life skills training and vocational training in order to prepare them for postsecondary transitioning. Teachers, Administration and parents meet to determine which vocational course is best suited for each individual student.



**4. Describe strategies for improving student readiness for the public postsecondary level based on annual analysis of the [High School Feedback Report](#), as required by section 1008.37(4), Florida Statutes.**

South Florida Autism Charter School does not appear on the above link for the High School Feedback Report.

## II. Needs Assessment

The school's completion of this part may address the requirements of ESSA, P.L. No. 114-95, Â§ 1114(b)(6).

### A. Problem Identification

#### 1. Data to Support Problem Identification

##### b. Data Uploads

Data uploads are not required by the Florida Department of Education but are offered as a tool for the needs assessment. In this section, the school may upload files of locally available data charts and graphs being used as evidence of need.

The following documents were submitted as evidence for this section:

*No files were uploaded*

#### 2. Problem Identification Summary

This section is not required by the Florida Department of Education but is provided as an opportunity for the school to summarize the points of strength and areas of need that have been identified in the data.

### B. Problem Analysis Summary

This section is not required by the Florida Department of Education but is provided as an opportunity for the school to summarize the underlying "why" or root causes for the areas of need identified in the data, as determined by situational awareness of, and research conducted by, the stakeholders involved in the needs assessment.

### C. Strategic Goals

## School Improvement Goals

*The following key is intended to help readers understand how the sections of this document correspond to the steps of the 8-step planning and problem-solving framework used in the School Improvement Plan. The Quick Key numbers can help registered users go directly to the point of entry for any given goal, barrier and strategy within the online survey.*

### Problem Solving Key

**G** = Goal

**B** =  
Barrier

**S** = Strategy

 = Problem Solving Step     S123456 = Quick Key

## Strategic Goals Summary

**G1.** To increase student achievement by improving core instruction in all content areas.

## Strategic Goals Detail

*For each strategic goal, this section lists the associated targets (i.e., "SMART goals"), targeted barriers to achieving the goal, resources available to help reduce or eliminate the barriers, and the plan for monitoring progress toward the goal.*

**G1. To increase student achievement by improving core instruction in all content areas.** 1a

G097087

**Targets Supported** 1b

Indicator	Annual Target
-----------	---------------

**Targeted Barriers to Achieving the Goal** 3

- Lack of adequate and appropriate attending skills (ability to sit and stay focused)
- Lack of effective communication skills
- Lack of behavioral needs (escape, attention, change in routine)
- Lack of cognitive ability to complete daily life skills

**Resources Available to Help Reduce or Eliminate the Barriers** 2

- PCI Reading Program
- The Accessible Literacy Learning (ALL) Reading Program
- Unique Learning System
- AbleNet
- iPads and Smartboards
- AAC Devices (low and high tech)

**Plan to Monitor Progress Toward G1.** 8

In order to determine an increase in student communication skills, data will be collected to ensure that the strategies are being implemented effectively.

**Person Responsible**

Tamara Moodie

**Schedule**

Monthly, from 8/21/2017 to 6/8/2018

**Evidence of Completion**

Data collection

## Action Plan for Improvement


For each strategy selected in the plan to reduce a targeted barrier to a strategic goal, this section lists the rationale for that strategy (i.e., why the school believes it will reduce the barrier) and the action steps that have been identified as necessary to implementing the strategy, including details such as the point person, timing and duration, and evidence of completion. At the end of each set of action steps is the plan for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the respective strategy.

### Problem Solving Key

**G** = Goal                      **B** =  
Barrier                      **S** = Strategy

**1** = Problem Solving Step       S123456 = Quick Key

**G1.** To increase student achievement by improving core instruction in all content areas. **1**

 G097087

**G1.B1** Lack of adequate and appropriate attending skills (ability to sit and stay focused) **2**

 B261170

**G1.B1.S1** When students are presented with tasks or activities that require a significant amount of assistance and redirection, these assignments will be broken down into smaller sequential steps. **4**

 S276522

### Strategy Rationale

If larger assignments are broken down into smaller steps, the students will be able to attend to the assignments without redirection or assistance as this will help increase their overall attending skills.

### Action Step 1 **5**

Will host trainings in order to help teachers break down assignments as well as learn strategies to improving attending skills.

#### Person Responsible

Tamara Moodie

#### Schedule

Quarterly, from 8/21/2017 to 6/8/2018

#### Evidence of Completion

Follow up activities

**Plan to Monitor Fidelity of Implementation of G1.B1.S1** 6

Administration will conduct classroom observations to ensure the strategies are being implemented and the students attendance skills have increased.

**Person Responsible**

Tamara Moodie

**Schedule**

Quarterly, from 8/21/2017 to 6/8/2018

***Evidence of Completion***

Observation notes and minutes from meetings

**Plan to Monitor Effectiveness of Implementation of G1.B1.S1** 7

Administration and lead mentors will monitor and support the staff to ensure effective implementation

**Person Responsible**

Tamara Moodie

**Schedule**

Monthly, from 8/21/2017 to 6/8/2018

***Evidence of Completion***

Observation notes

**G1.B2 Lack of effective communication skills 2** B261171

**G1.B2.S1** Staff will promote and model effective communication strategies for each specific learner (PCS, AAC, VERBAL LANGUAGE) based on their ability in order to improve cognitive understanding and function throughout daily activities 4

 S276523**Strategy Rationale**

If students are taught to effectively communicate, it will increase their understanding of the materials presented. It will also decrease maladaptive behaviors due to the inability to communicate and in turn increase academic achievement.

**Action Step 1 5**

Trainings will be offered to show teachers how to identify needs and implement strategies and interventions to increase communication skills.

**Person Responsible**

Tamara Moodie

**Schedule**

Monthly, from 8/21/2017 to 6/8/2018

**Evidence of Completion**

Follow up activities, training homework and monthly assessments

**Plan to Monitor Fidelity of Implementation of G1.B2.S1 6**

Administration will conduct classroom observations in order to evaluate the progress of implementation of communication strategies.

**Person Responsible**

Tamara Moodie

**Schedule**

Monthly, from 8/21/2017 to 6/8/2018

**Evidence of Completion**

Observation notes, minutes from staff meetings and assessment data

## Plan to Monitor Effectiveness of Implementation of G1.B2.S1 7

Administration and lead mentors will monitor, support, and implement additional training in order to ensure effective implementation of communication strategies

### Person Responsible

Tamara Moodie


### Schedule

Monthly, from 8/21/2017 to 6/8/2018

### Evidence of Completion

Observation notes and data collected from classroom teachers.

## G1.B3 Lack of behavioral needs (escape, attention, change in routine) 2

 B261172

**G1.B3.S1** To decrease maladaptive behaviors by implementing methods of Applied Behavior Analysis including behavior intervention plans, A-B-C data, and referral sheets. 4

 S276524

### Strategy Rationale

When students demonstrate maladaptive behaviors, data will be collected in order to determine the function of the behavior to determine the proper course of treatment.

## Action Step 1 5

Will host trainings in order to help staff implement proper use of ABA methodology, data collection and proper restraint techniques.

### Person Responsible

Tamara Moodie

### Schedule

Monthly, from 8/21/2017 to 6/8/2018

### Evidence of Completion

meeting sign-in sheets, data collection forms and administrator observagtions



**Plan to Monitor Fidelity of Implementation of G1.B3.S1** 6

Administration and Lead Staff will observe and evaluate teachers and assistants

**Person Responsible**

Tamara Moodie

**Schedule**

Quarterly, from 8/21/2017 to 6/8/2018

***Evidence of Completion***

observation and staff evaluation forms, data collection

**Plan to Monitor Effectiveness of Implementation of G1.B3.S1** 7

Administration and lead staff will monitor and support the staff to ensure effective implementation

**Person Responsible**

Tamara Moodie

**Schedule**

Quarterly, from 8/21/2017 to 6/8/2018

***Evidence of Completion***

Observation notes

**G1.B4** Lack of cognitive ability to complete daily life skills **2** B261173

**G1.B4.S1** Student who attend South Florida Autism Charter School lack the skills needed to complete daily life skills due to their disability. **4**

 S276525**Strategy Rationale**

Teachers will implement strategies such as task analyses which break down individual tasks into simplified steps. Specific tasks can be modified into more simplified steps based on the individual needs of each student.

**Action Step 1** **5**

Staff will receive training on how to create and teach proper use of task analyses

**Person Responsible**

Tamara Moodie

**Schedule**

Monthly, from 8/21/2017 to 6/8/2018

***Evidence of Completion***

Sign in sheets, observation and evaluation

**Plan to Monitor Fidelity of Implementation of G1.B4.S1** **6**

Administration and lead staff will collect task analyses sheets and observe classrooms in order to ensure the strategies are being implemented.

**Person Responsible**

Tamara Moodie

**Schedule**

Monthly, from 8/21/2017 to 6/8/2018

***Evidence of Completion***

Observation and evaluation

**Plan to Monitor Effectiveness of Implementation of G1.B4.S1** 7

Administration and lead mentors will monitor and support the staff to ensure effective implementation of task analyses

**Person Responsible**

Tamara Moodie














**Schedule**

Monthly, from 8/21/2017 to 6/8/2018

***Evidence of Completion***

observation notes

## IV. Implementation Timeline

Source	Task, Action Step or Monitoring Activity	Who	Start Date (where applicable)	Deliverable or Evidence of Completion	Due Date/ End Date
<b>2018</b>					
G1.MA1  M400764	In order to determine an increase in student communication skills, data will be collected to ensure...	Moodie, Tamara	8/21/2017	Data collection	6/8/2018 monthly
G1.B1.S1.MA1  M400756	Administration and lead mentors will monitor and support the staff to ensure effective...	Moodie, Tamara	8/21/2017	Observation notes	6/8/2018 monthly
G1.B1.S1.MA1  M400757	Administration will conduct classroom observations to ensure the strategies are being implemented...	Moodie, Tamara	8/21/2017	Observation notes and minutes from meetings	6/8/2018 quarterly
G1.B1.S1.A1  A372621	Will host trainings in order to help teachers break down assignments as well as learn strategies to...	Moodie, Tamara	8/21/2017	Follow up activities	6/8/2018 quarterly
G1.B2.S1.MA1  M400758	Administration and lead mentors will monitor, support, and implement additional training in order...	Moodie, Tamara	8/21/2017	Observation notes and data collected from classroom teachers.	6/8/2018 monthly
G1.B2.S1.MA1  M400759	Administration will conduct classroom observations in order to evaluate the progress of...	Moodie, Tamara	8/21/2017	Observation notes, minutes from staff meetings and assessment data	6/8/2018 monthly
G1.B2.S1.A1  A372622	Trainings will be offered to show teachers how to identify needs and implement strategies and...	Moodie, Tamara	8/21/2017	Follow up activities, training homework and monthly assessments	6/8/2018 monthly
G1.B3.S1.MA1  M400760	Administration and lead staff will monitor and support the staff to ensure effective implementation	Moodie, Tamara	8/21/2017	Observation notes	6/8/2018 quarterly
G1.B3.S1.MA1  M400761	Administration and Lead Staff will observe and evaluate teachers and assistants	Moodie, Tamara	8/21/2017	observation and staff evaluation forms, data collection	6/8/2018 quarterly
G1.B3.S1.A1  A372623	Will host trainings in order to help staff implement proper use of ABA methodology, data collection...	Moodie, Tamara	8/21/2017	meeting sign-in sheets, data collection forms and administrator observations	6/8/2018 monthly
G1.B4.S1.MA1  M400762	Administration and lead mentors will monitor and support the staff to ensure effective...	Moodie, Tamara	8/21/2017	observation notes	6/8/2018 monthly
G1.B4.S1.MA1  M400763	Administration and lead staff will collect task analyses sheets and observe classrooms in order to...	Moodie, Tamara	8/21/2017	Observation and evaluation	6/8/2018 monthly
G1.B4.S1.A1  A372624	Staff will receive training on how to create and teach proper use of task analyses	Moodie, Tamara	8/21/2017	Sign in sheets, observation and evaluation	6/8/2018 monthly

## V. Professional Development Opportunities

*Professional development opportunities identified in the SIP as action steps to achieve the school's goals.*

**G1.** To increase student achievement by improving core instruction in all content areas.

**G1.B1** Lack of adequate and appropriate attending skills (ability to sit and stay focused)

**G1.B1.S1** When students are presented with tasks or activities that require a significant amount of assistance and redirection, these assignments will be broken down into smaller sequential steps.

### PD Opportunity 1

Will host trainings in order to help teachers break down assignments as well as learn strategies to improving attending skills.

#### Facilitator

Colleen McMurray

#### Participants

Teachers, Assistants and paraprofessionals

#### Schedule

Quarterly, from 8/21/2017 to 6/8/2018

**G1.B2** Lack of effective communication skills

**G1.B2.S1** Staff will promote and model effective communication strategies for each specific learner (PCS, AAC, VERBAL LANGUAGE) based on their ability in order to improve cognitive understanding and function throughout daily activities

### PD Opportunity 1

Trainings will be offered to show teachers how to identify needs and implement strategies and interventions to increase communication skills.

#### Facilitator

Dr. Tamara Moodie

#### Participants

ESE Teachers and Assistants

#### Schedule

Monthly, from 8/21/2017 to 6/8/2018

**G1.B3** Lack of behavioral needs (escape, attention, change in routine)

**G1.B3.S1** To decrease maladaptive behaviors by implementing methods of Applied Behavior Analysis including behavior intervention plans, A-B-C data, and referral sheets.

**PD Opportunity 1**

Will host trainings in order to help staff implement proper use of ABA methodology, data collection and proper restraint techniques.

**Facilitator**

Tamara Moodie

**Participants**

All SFACS staff

**Schedule**

Monthly, from 8/21/2017 to 6/8/2018

## VI. Technical Assistance Items

Technical Assistance opportunities identified in the SIP as action steps to achieve the school's goals.

## VII. Budget

1	G1.B1.S1.A1	Will host trainings in order to help teachers break down assignments as well as learn strategies to improving attending skills.				\$600.00
	Function	Object	Budget Focus	Funding Source	FTE	2017-18
		239-Other	1070 - South Florida Autism Charter School Inc	General Fund		\$600.00
2	G1.B2.S1.A1	Trainings will be offered to show teachers how to identify needs and implement strategies and interventions to increase communication skills.				\$500.00
	Function	Object	Budget Focus	Funding Source	FTE	2017-18
		239-Other	1070 - South Florida Autism Charter School Inc	General Fund		\$500.00
			Notes: Notes			
3	G1.B3.S1.A1	Will host trainings in order to help staff implement proper use of ABA methodology, data collection and proper restraint techniques.				\$0.00
4	G1.B4.S1.A1	Staff will receive training on how to create and teach proper use of task analyses				\$0.00
Total:						\$1,100.00