

U.S. Department of Education
2016 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [] Title I [X] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Bernardo Montero

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Somerset Arts Conservatory School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 20807 Johnson Street

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Pembroke Pines State FL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 33029-1916

County Broward County

Telephone (954) 442-0233 Fax (954) 442-1762

Web site/URL http://www.somersetacademy.com E-mail charter5396@browardschools.com

Twitter Handle _____ Facebook Page _____ Google+ _____

YouTube/URL _____ Blog _____ Other Social Media Link _____

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

_____ Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Robert Runcie

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

E-mail

supt_runcie@browardschools.com

District Name Broward Tel. (754) 321-0000

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

_____ Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. David Concepcion

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

_____ Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Part I – Eligibility Certification

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The public school has met their state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) using the most recent accountability results available for the year prior to nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) for the year in which they are nominated (2015-2016) and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2010 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, or 2015.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2015-2016) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 202 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 54 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 50 High schools
 - 9 K-12 schools
- 315 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
 - Suburban
 - Small city or town in a rural area
 - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2015 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	6	21	27
10	7	20	27
11	6	37	43
12 or higher	4	22	26
Total Students	23	100	123

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 20 % Black or African American
 - 57 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 20 % White
 - 2 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2014 – 2015 school year: 3%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	0
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	4
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	4
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	119
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.034
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0%
0 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 33%
 Total number students who qualify: 41

8. Students receiving special education services: 1%
1 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- 0 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 0 Emotional Disturbance
- 0 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 1 Other Health Impaired
- 0 Specific Learning Disability
- 0 Speech or Language Impairment
- 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 0 Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 10
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers	5
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	2
Paraprofessionals	0
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 25:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	93%	92%	97%	97%	98%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2015.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	34
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	71%
Enrolled in a community college	28%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	1%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

Somerset Arts Conservatory's mission is to promote an artistic and creative culture that maximizes student achievement and develop learners in a safe and enriching environment.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

Student admission procedures for Somerset Arts Conservatory are aligned with section 1002.33(10)(e)(5) of Florida Statute, which states: “Students who meet reasonable academic, artistic, or other eligibility standards established by the charter school and included in the charter school application and charter or, in the case of existing charter schools, standards that are consistent with the school’s mission and purpose. Such standards shall be in accordance with current state law and practice in public schools and may not discriminate against otherwise qualified individuals.” Any eligible student who submits a timely application, participates in the school’s audition process, and whose parents accept the conditions of the Parental Involvement Contract shall be considered. Somerset Arts Conservatory will be open to any student residing in Broward County. Based upon the area selected, students will be asked to either audition or submit a portfolio to be evaluated.

PART III – SUMMARY

The Somerset Arts Conservatory was founded 10 years ago in Pembroke Pines through a charter contract with Broward County Public Schools. Pembroke Pines, Florida, is made up of 154,750 residents and the majority of the racial/ethnic composition of the school's student body is reflective of the community it serves. Somerset Arts Conservatory's student demographic reflects the community in that: 72% of the students are white, 20% are black, 0% are Pacific Islander, 2% are Indian, 0% are Asian, 5% are multiracial, and within these 57% are Hispanic. The school serves one student with exceptionalities. Somerset Arts Conservatory has 123 total students enrolled in grades 9-12.

The Somerset Arts Conservatory has had graduating classes since 2009. We provide students with a comprehensive arts education in a variety of artistic disciplines: dance, music, theatre, and visual arts. The Somerset Arts Conservatory has progressed to the point where its graduates have been accepted into colleges and universities all across the nation, including Ivy League universities and prestigious arts schools. The school's growth has surpassed goals previously envisioned when its doors opened in 2006. Some of the school's recent accomplishments include earning a Top 300 School designation from US News and World Report and Newsweek Magazine; "A" school designation from the State of Florida; and designation as a No Place for Hate School.

Somerset Arts Conservatory has received numerous awards. We are proud to showcase our Fine Arts Department with over 150 prestigious awards in the past five years from art exhibits, dance competitions, choir competitions, and theatre competitions to marching band competitions. Somerset Arts Conservatory takes pride in being recognized with numerous awards including:

The Music program has been awarded numerous awards for the last five years. More specifically, the band has been actively competing in local and state competitions since 2011. They have received a Superior rating for district marching band continuously from 2011-2015, as well as an excellent rating in concert band from 2011-2015. Through those years they have always received top three placements at competitions at the local and state levels, many times winning best in class awards. In 2013, the marching band won the 2A division State Title, being one of the youngest programs to accomplish this. Students not only succeed in the ensembles but as soloists, too. Students also receive excellent and superior ratings at district solo evaluations. The choir department has already been recognized in the community, performing at local caroling competitions and performing at district music performance assessments.

The Visual Arts program has showcased students' Art work at several Arts Exhibitions throughout Broward and Miami-Dade Counties. The students have been awarded Excellence with Distinction at Florida Art Education Association (FAEA) Online Art Exhibition and have been awarded the top three placements at the Miami Youth Fair Art Exhibition. The students' artwork has also been exhibited at the Broward County Superintendent's Advanced Placement Studio Art exhibit.

The Theatre program, Thespian Troupe, has been awarded numerous awards in district and state competitions. They have received over 46 Superiors, 71 Excellence, and multiple Critics' Choice awards. The students not only succeed in the ensembles pieces but as soloists too.

The Dance program in recent years has stood out in local and state competitions by winning championships and receiving top rankings. They have attended American Dance Alliance since 2013 and have been awarded top three in several categories, such as Jazz, Contemporary, and Hip-hop. The students not only have been awarded in the group categories but also took top three in the soloist category. The students have received Superiors, Outstanding Technique, and Outstanding Choreography from 2013-2016. The program has grown immensely to where graduates have been accepted to top Dance Programs like Juilliard, Pace University, and Marymount.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Somerset Arts Conservatory curriculum comprises courses in both core academic areas and electives, providing instruction based primarily on the Florida Standards (FS) and the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS). The core subject areas include English language arts, mathematics, social sciences, and science. Depending on individual students' assessments results, some students may be required to enroll in remediation courses for mathematics and/or reading, which would then replace some electives courses. The state adoption specifications guarantee that the standards are included in all courses and support a research-based approach.

The English language arts core curriculum is Florida Collections by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH), which addresses the Florida Standards in grades 6-12. This curriculum directly correlates to Advanced Placement (AP)/College Readiness. Learning content is important, but learning how to learn is vital for students to gain the skills to read and make meaning of any text or to write in multiple modes. Examples of how students develop these skills can be clearly seen through the strategies embedded within the lessons. Debatable topics within lessons translate into their argumentative writing skills and close reading strategies through multiple texts as well as frequent close reads, and annotations of informational and literary texts that enhance acquisition of and proficiency in the Florida Standards. These strategies are vital for students that will be writing and editing their individual monologues and scripts. Tutoring is provided every Monday from 2:30-3:30 p.m. for all students to receive support.

In mathematics, students acquire foundational skills through daily encounters with higher order, multi-step, and real world questions and through the regular use of technology. The HMH high school math curriculum and accompanying write-in student editions ensure that students can access content at appropriate levels of depth and rigor. The student editions focus on deeper understanding of concepts and strategies. The embedded standards prescribe that students experience mathematics as a coherent, useful and logical subject that makes use of their ability to problem solve. Through the process of solving multi-step problems, fundamental skills and ideas previously taught are constantly being reviewed and reiterated. Students deepen their understanding of those skills by being exposed to and solving increasingly difficult questions. Fundamental skills are also reinforced regularly through the use of web-based programs such as Study Island. The use of online games, activities, and software provide students with even more practice opportunities. At the same time, they are also acquiring valuable technological literacy. This two-tiered approach to teaching fundamentals allows for differentiation for students above grade level and those who are struggling below grade level. For the students below grade level, teachers can break problems down into more manageable chunks while still encouraging students to retain and practice those skills. For the students performing above grade level, multi-step problems of increased difficulty can be provided as a way to challenge the students to further their understanding and, thus, their success.

The social studies department's main area of focus has been the analysis of primary sources as a foundation for higher order critical thinking skills in line with the requirements outlined in the Next Generation State Standards and the Florida Standards. Through the use of Document-Based Question (DBQ) strategies, teachers have been able to scaffold lessons and target the needs of individual students. The goal is for students, regardless of their level, to be able to analyze founding documents, political cartoons, maps/charts/graphs, newspapers, and letters. The DBQ initiative is equally integral for AP, honors/advanced, as well as regular placement classes. All AP and End of Course (EOC) teachers also actively engage in additional tutoring for students, including supplementary programs such as before/after school or Saturdays. These strategies are in place to move students into higher level classes with the intent of college preparation for all students.

The goal of our science program is to help students develop a strong understanding of natural systems with an emphasis on scientific inquiry skills. In addition to a rigorous curriculum, science teachers incorporate authentic assessment strategies by allowing the students to apply their knowledge through inquiry-based lab reports and design problems. These student-centered courses emphasize the student's ability to present their

data in multiple representations such as graphing, writing, data sets, and illustrations. Access to laptop carts and computer labs give science classes the ability to incorporate virtual labs and research current science-related world issues. Somerset Arts Conservatory students put their skills to work by participating in competitions such as the South Florida Regional Science and Engineering Fair, Fairchild Botanical Gardens Challenge, SECME Bridge Building Competition, Astronaut Challenge, USA Biology Olympiad, and Envirothon, among others.

Somerset Arts Conservatory students are provided with a college preparatory curriculum that includes a college readiness and SAT/ACT preparatory course to be taken in their junior year. They participate in mandatory academic electives, such as world languages, to complement the core curriculum; these courses equip students to be stronger candidates when it comes to college admissions. Students have the opportunity to take AP courses in subject areas such as art, English, math, science, and social studies, and may also participate in the dual enrollment program at the local state college and universities. Students must maintain a 2.5 GPA to remain in the conservatory. The guidance department visits classrooms quarterly to make sure the students are meeting graduation requirements and are on the right path to achieve their college goals.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Somerset Arts Conservatory offers a wide range of courses that are beyond the core curriculum; these additional curriculum areas include arts (visual and performing), business, foreign language, and physical education. As an arts conservatory, teachers strive to teach students the fundamentals of their subject in order to help them become successful performers. Our common goal is to assist in our students' success and open up a desire and inspire them in the arts. Classrooms are equipped with enough resources and technology to ensure success. Technology is embedded throughout the curriculum and within courses.

The Music Department offers several courses and multiple performance opportunities for its students. Students are exposed not only to the fundamentals of their instrument or voice, but also the history of music, the theory behind music and how it is written and the different genres of music, to prepare for an ambitious musical future in a challenging but rewarding field. All music students also have the opportunity to take Advanced Placement (AP) Music Theory and participate in Modern Music Masters (Tri-M), the National Honor Society for music students.

Business courses offer a wide range of opportunities. Students are taught entrepreneurship through innovative ways as they research diverse companies in order to create their own. Through their business idea, they must have a target market established in order to guarantee profits. Through the blended model, students are required to participate in simulations that teach them how to manage their money in order to ensure their company does not endure financial destitution.

The Visual Arts Department offers a variety of classes for the students including Two-Dimensional Composition, Drawing, Painting, Graphic Arts, and two AP-level studio art classes, including Two-Dimensional Design and Drawing Portfolio. The AP studio classes have a passing rate of 75% or higher in the last two years, above the national average. These courses focus on art history, composition, technique, and concept art to fully prepare students for college-level art courses and beyond. Students have the opportunity to join the National Art Honor Society through which they participate in school events and community service projects, and go on field trips to art museums and galleries.

The Theatre Department develops the skills and creativity of students who are interested in the dramatic arts. Students learn acting techniques, theatre history, directing, playwriting, costume and make-up, and technical and design skills. Students learn the skills necessary to produce a performance. They also learn how to express themselves through their own voice. Upon graduation, these students are equipped with a resume and the experience to pursue a college career in the dramatic arts field. Students may also join the International Thespian Society in which they participate in school events, community service projects, and competitions.

The Dance Department offers extensive training for dance students, with an emphasis on ballet, contemporary, modern, and jazz, to prepare students for success in college dance programs, conservatories,

and the professional world of dance. Courses focus on aspects such as floor work, center work and improvisational work, history of dance, nutrition, and vocabulary pertaining to various genres of dance. All dance students also have the opportunity to be a part of Nu Delta Alpha Dance Honor Society and the Varsity Pantherettes Dance Team, through which they participate in school events and community service projects.

Somerset Arts Conservatory students are provided with opportunities to view concerts, plays, musicals, art exhibits, and other performances through during-school field trips, after school, and on weekends.

Physical education courses encourage students to use their psychomotor skills and develop knowledge of different sports during school learning in grades 9-12. Courses expand student knowledge of rules and strategies of specific sports and allow students to apply skills learned during game situations. Students understand that cooperation and teamwork can be utilized to accomplish a common goal. Students also gain knowledge of health-related topics such as nutrition, CPR, smoking, exercising regularly, and how to prevent diseases. Physical education helps students recognize how team and individual sports are means to a healthy lifestyle, supporting mental, social, and physical development.

The World Languages team has been diligently working to enrich the lives of students through a unique foreign language experience, currently offering both Spanish and Italian courses. Students have also excelled in their foreign language AP courses, an example of which is the 100% passing rate achieved on last year's AP Spanish Literature exam. In addition to teaching languages, the department also teaches culture, history, and values, incorporating cultural activities, projects, participation in competitions, and fieldtrips. Students are also given the incredible opportunity to travel to foreign countries to experience other cultures first-hand. The foreign language teachers are fully committed to making each student's experience at Somerset Arts Conservatory a great and memorable one.

Each of the above courses is offered in the regular schedule, and meets on an "A/B" rotating schedule. Arts groups also require time after school and on weekends for additional rehearsals, performances and/or exhibitions.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Somerset Arts Conservatory successfully implements curriculum and instructional techniques. Curriculum is based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning that provide opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The school ensures that teachers use proven instructional practices that actively engage students in the learning process; provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real world situations; and give students feedback to improve their performance. To ensure fidelity of instructional programs, the school utilizes appropriate grade/ subject level pacing guides and focus calendars.

Somerset Arts Conservatory provides various intervention programs for all students needing academic assistance. All students who scored a Level 1 or 2 on the state assessment and/or end-of-course exams are enrolled in an intensive reading and/or math course, respectively. Counselors provide academic assistance by meeting with students to develop better study skills and obtain strategies in preparation of assessments. The school utilizes the Response to Intervention (RtI) process as a system of intervention, using evidence-based instruction and interventions, progress monitoring, and evaluation to make informed decisions about the student's educational and behavioral programming needs. Students identified as being in tier II or tier III meet regularly and are assessed by a qualified interventionist, monitored by their guidance counselor and motivated to improve through academic and organizational interventions in accordance with the requirements of Broward County Public Schools.

All students enrolled in Somerset Arts Conservatory are encouraged to maximize their academic potential. The school allocates and protects instructional time to support student learning; administrators and teachers are committed to the protection of instructional time. The school is also committed to treating learners as individuals. At the start of the school year, baseline assessments are administered to gauge students' current levels of achievement. These are followed up by interim assessments to measure progress, identify gaps, and

evaluate systems.

The English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program is serviced through certified teachers who provide identified students with ESOL strategies needed to acquire the English language. Somerset Arts Conservatory provides quality exceptional student services and education to all identified students with an individualized educational plan (IEP). Services rendered to students with exceptional educational needs requiring supplemental aides and/or services are provided on site by certified exceptional student education teachers and licensed Speech Language Pathologists (SLP) to ensure the success of all students as required by Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

4. Assessment for Instruction and Learning and Sharing Assessment Results:

Somerset Arts Conservatory implements research-based curriculum based on the new Florida Standards and the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards and encompasses the core subject areas of math, English language arts, science, and social sciences. All of our curricular programs are aligned to meet the goals of the No Child Left Behind Act and the requirements of the Broward County Public Schools' Student Progression Plan.

Somerset Arts Conservatory sets high academic standards, promotes a culture that maximizes student achievement, and fosters the development of responsible, self-directed life-long learners in a safe and enriching environment by incorporating best practices in addition to implementing a rigorous curriculum aligned with Broward County Public Schools.

The school competently uses qualitative data to inform and guide instructional planning and practice. Somerset Arts Conservatory adheres to a calendar of district-wide assessments and uses numerous data results from state summative assessments, which are collected, disaggregated, and compiled in data binders. Results from these assessments are analyzed by the leadership team using the prior year's state assessment data in order to create School Improvement Plans, Instructional Focus Calendars, and professional development opportunities. Formative assessments are administered quarterly.

Instructional strategies and/or research-based materials are modified based on the results of data. Students receive differentiated instruction based on weakness or strengths from formative assessment results. Students are reassessed with summative assessments to ensure mastery has taken place. Once the data has been disseminated and reviewed at the beginning of the school year, teachers conference with students in whole groups in order to understand how to interpret and read the data, then conference with students individually through data chats. Taking ownership of their individual data, students monitor and chart their progress based on the standards taught and tested. Parents are provided with the data during their semester mini conferences. In addition, students must have their parents sign the data chat conference contract.

Instructional materials for the school are research-based and state-adopted. Research and data drive teachers' best practices including how assessments should be constructed and utilized, and what components professional development should include. The baseline assessments are followed by interim assessments. Interim assessments are aligned to the pacing guides, the Florida Standards, and Next Generation Sunshine State Standards. Data collected from these assessments are used to assess student performance, identify gaps, evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, and determine interventions and differentiate instruction to improve student performance. The assessments yield timely and accurate information that is meaningful and useful to the administration, teachers, and other stakeholders in understanding student performance, school effectiveness, and the results of improvement efforts. Curriculum Pacing Guides and student Progress Monitoring Plans are used by all Somerset Arts Conservatory teachers to provide assistance to all students. Site administrators, instructional personnel, and site-based coaches in reading and mathematics assist teachers in using data to drive instruction. Data chat discussions are held with teachers and students to review results of high stakes state tests, baseline data, interim assessments, college entrance exam results, and end-of-course exams.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

At Somerset Arts Conservatory, the concept of “family” is ingrained in our culture. Components of social studies and language arts classes focus on cultural differences; parent academies, student orientations, community involvement sessions, and peer counseling and mediation establish the venue by which families can become an integral part of the “Somerset Family.”

Parents are encouraged to support their children’s artistic endeavors in every way possible. From helping to build sets and props for drama and music shows to volunteering their time at group events, family support is integral to the success of the Arts Conservatory. The annual Conservatory Show brings together all the genres as one to showcase their respective styles. With sell-out shows each year, families, school personnel and community leaders enjoy the annual production and the growth in talent the students display. Other ways the school supports family-like culture is by having a plethora of exhibition shows and competitions which families are welcomed to participate in. Each department minimally hosts 3 shows per year to acknowledge and present the students’ work.

Following the guidelines of the Jessica Lunsford Act and procedures outlined by Broward County Public Schools, Somerset Arts Conservatory has structures in place to ensure teachers and students alike feel that they are in a safe environment conducive to learning. Emphasis on respect of self and others is ingrained in students through leadership and career research classes. All after-school programs are structured to enrich student learning, both academically and socially. We believe that a safe and orderly school is of primary importance.

The Student Services Department helps to provide emotional, social, behavioral, and academic support to students and promotes emotional and academic success. Youth in schools may experience a variety of personal challenges ranging from bereavement and divorce, to managing symptoms of Autism or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, to the need to improve peer relations and communication. Counselors assist in developing students’ coping and problem-solving skills so that they may better deal with stressors and/or tragic life events. This is achieved through a variety of classroom presentations, resource and referral, crisis intervention, and brief individual, group, and family counseling. Large-scale presentations are also provided to address common concerns for youth today such as bullying, sexting, drug use, and suicide prevention. The Student Services Department also works with local community service providers to ensure proper care for individual and select groups of students. A few of these agencies include, but are not limited to, the Anti-Defamation League, Memorial Healthcare Systems, the GLBTQ department of Broward County Public Schools, and private psychotherapists in Broward County.

The established culture of the school provides teachers with an environment that makes them feel valued and supported. Teachers are involved in the decision making process through various platforms. Many teachers are given the opportunity to become members of the School Advisory Council and school leadership team, as well as to fill other leadership roles within the school. The administration also believes in an open door policy where teachers have the ability to freely express concerns they may have or ideas they may want to implement.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Somerset Arts Conservatory believes in involving parents in all aspects. An Open House meeting is held to inform parents of all the resources available for students and families. The school ensures that parents have the information needed to make well-informed choices for their children and effectively share responsibility with their children's school. Parents are a vital component of a student’s success and are encouraged to participate in the school through parent volunteer commitments. Parents are able to participate in school events, on field trips, in coordinating performances, and assisting teachers in extracurricular practices or events.

Parents are highly encouraged to have their children participate in tutorial programs offered by the school. An effective communication system from home-to-school and vice versa is practiced to ensure that parents have information about school programs and their child's progress. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in order to discuss the individual child's achievement along with communication with parents via Parent Link messages and conferences held with the school's administration. Parents are encouraged to participate in the PTSO (Parent Teacher Student Organization) through which they are provided the opportunity to contribute to the decision-making process of the school. Somerset Arts Conservatory believes that positive parent/family involvement is essential to student achievement and encourages involvement in school educational planning and operations. Our PTSO works towards making our school one that meets the emotional, social, and academic needs of our children. Community involvement in school continues to be a fundamental part of the philosophy and operation of Somerset Arts Conservatory. The school ensures that parents, teachers, other community members, and stakeholders are actively engaged in the design and implementation of the school.

Community leaders, parents, and staff are valuable stakeholders and are encouraged to join the School Advisory Council (SAC) and assist in the development and improvement of our school. SAC is a school-based group intended to represent the school, the community, and those persons closest to the students. Our SAC members assist in developing and monitoring the implementation of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and advise the administration on decisions in matters that will academically and economically enhance the school by acting as a liaison between the community and the school. The members strive for excellence as school leaders and assist with the school's annual budget. SAC promotes a school, family, and community network to share and discuss pertinent issues concerning our students' academic achievement.

3. Professional Development:

Our teachers come together on a regular basis for the purpose of improving teaching and learning. The faculty of Somerset Arts Conservatory is a learning community that is driven by specific goals or targets based on student needs. Our professional development system is used to increase student performance, enhance classroom instructional strategies, promote rigor and relevance throughout the curriculum, and prepare students for continuing education and the workforce. The school utilizes Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to incorporate these elements into the professional development for the teachers, with the end goal being increased student achievement. These PLCs are developed at the beginning of the school year by having departments identify a "SMART" goal—one that is specific, measurable, achievable, results-focused, and timely—which allows them to focus on attaining that goal through peer-led sharing of resources, data analysis, and best practices. The school then creates an in-service calendar based on student needs and performance on assessed standards. PLCs meet after school, on early release days, and on certain teacher planning days.

All the members of these PLCs, including the administrators, are clear about the purpose of their time together and share accountability for student success. Their sessions are focused around the "SMART" goal and providing each other with the resources necessary and candid feedback regarding this shared goal. The learning in our community is always transferred into action, and time is spent examining evidence that what they are learning and implementing is having an impact on student achievement. These are measured and recorded via an online tracking system at mylearningplan.com.

In addition to the in-house professional development that is offered for the faculty of Somerset Arts Conservatory, the school participates in district professional development offered by Broward County. Teachers and administrators also participate in professional development provided by the Somerset District, and may participate in resource sharing with teachers from other schools within the network. Some of the professional development activities that are implemented to meet the needs of our teachers and school includes New Educator Support System (NESS) activities meant to assist new teachers who are joining our school, technology training, school wide training on the Depth and Complexity Strategy, Marzano Observation tool, Essay Writing Workshop on how to proceed and manage the essay elaboration unit with their students, and Co-teaching model PD meant to share how to implement co-teaching model and maximize resources and knowledge of two teachers in a classroom.

We are a self-reflective community open to researching and developing our own workshops as needs arise. In addition, being a part of the Somerset District enables us to invite other Somerset schools to our courses on designated teacher planning days as well as lending our teachers and curriculum support personnel to other schools.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership team's main role at Somerset Arts Conservatory is to maintain a safe learning environment and be highly effective instructional leaders. Instructional leadership is the main priority for the school administration. The administrators must conduct daily classroom walkthroughs in all classes. Each administrator oversees curriculum for an assigned department. They are responsible for curriculum and instruction, data, and making instructional decisions as necessary. In addition, curriculum specialists in math and reading/English language arts provide support to teachers and students via coaching, modeling and interventions.

In addition to the administrative team, the school leadership team consists of department chairs from each curricular area. The team meets bi-monthly to discuss data, instructional strategies, assessment information, and school wide activities. The department chairs then disseminate the information to the teachers in their department. The school leadership team also assists in the instructional decision making process.

There is also a School Advisory Council (SAC) made up of school administrators, teachers, parents, students, and community members. The purpose of this School Advisory Council is to work to ensure school improvement, professional collaboration and authentic representation in decision-making regarding school improvement and budget. The main function of the SAC is to monitor implementation of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and approve changes to the SIP each year. Other functions of the SAC include reaching out to community partners, sponsor drives to increase parental involvement, assist the school to create and analyze school climate survey for parents and students, and increase the attendance of financial aid and college admission workshops.

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The philosophy of the school is one in which there is a home-school-community connection. This is emphasized by the consistent contact that is not only encouraged, but expected of all faculty members and parents. A level of accountability is placed on not only the student, but also on the parent/family to ensure two-way communication regarding academics and performances/exhibitions. Although it is difficult to pinpoint just one practice that contributes to the success of the Somerset Arts Conservatory, it would be the duality of mentorship and accountability that each child experiences while attending our school.

Expectations are high and students are guided to meet those expectations with the support of the faculty and their families. This is true of their artistic careers within the Conservatory as well as of their academic proficiencies. Our administrators and counselors work closely with all students throughout the year ensuring they are on track for graduation. Guidance counselors actively encourage students to select honors, Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment courses in preparation for their post-secondary careers and/or education, as documented in our Curriculum Bulletin and Subject Selection Sheets. SAT and ACT preparation classes are offered to our students in supplementary programs such as during summer break, after school and on Saturdays. The Broward Advisors for Continuing Education (BRACE) advisor shares information including data chats, scholarships, Bright Future opportunities, financial aid, including FAFSA, college applications and deadlines. Our school emphasizes rigor, relevance and relationships as the cornerstones of our academic success, and monitors students' progress towards each of their goals to ensure they are adequately equipped to handle these challenges.

When students are struggling academically, they are provided with access to supervised study time to accelerate their progress. Students having difficulty with their Conservatory major will be mentored by their program director to get the back on track. We feel it is the responsibility of every adult on campus to contribute to the students' success and expect that students are given every opportunity to succeed. Thus, high expectations are possible because we work with each child and family to make these expectations a reality. Program directors, guidance counselors, curriculum specialists and administrators work collaboratively with students and families to ensure students are reaching their academic and artistic goals, following the old adage, "It takes a village to raise a child."