

U.S. Department of Education
2015 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. Barry Jon Schmelzenbach

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

Official School Name Harding Fine Arts Academy

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3333 North Shartel Avenue PO 18895 (Mailing address)

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

City Oklahoma City State OK Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 73154-0895

County Oklahoma County State School Code Number* 55 E0010 980

Telephone 405-702-4322 Fax 405-601-0904

Web site/URL http://www.hardingfinearts.org E-mail bach@hfaaokc.org

Twitter Handle twitter.com/hfaafirehawks Facebook Page www.facebook.com/hfaaokc Google+ _____

YouTube/URL http://goo.gl/kqx9b5 Blog _____ Other Social Media Link _____

Instagram instagram.com/hfaafirehawks/

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

Date

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Barry Schmelzenbach, N/A E-mail: bach@hfaaokc.org

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

District Name Harding Fine Arts Academy Tel. 405-702-4322

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

Date

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mrs. Sally Bentley

(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 that it is accurate.

Date

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

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

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

Include this page in the school’s application as page 2.

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 school has made its Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) or Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state’s AMOs or AYP requirements in the 2014-2015 school year 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 2009 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: 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, or 2014.
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

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 0 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 1 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. 1 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.
4. Number of students as of October 1 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 | 41 | 55 | 96 |
| 10 | 37 | 60 | 97 |
| 11 | 30 | 54 | 84 |
| 12 | 27 | 56 | 83 |
| Total Students | 135 | 225 | 360 |

5. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 6 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 4 % Asian
 - 26 % Black or African American
 - 17 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 41 % White
 - 6 % 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.)

6. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2013 - 2014 year: 5%

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, 2013 until the end of the school year | 2 |
| (2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2013 until the end of the school year | 14 |
| (3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)] | 16 |
| (4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1 | 350 |
| (5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4) | 0.046 |
| (6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100 | 5 |

7. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1 %
3 Total number ELL
 Number of non-English languages represented: 5
 Specify non-English languages: Karen, Spanish, Burmese, Vietnamese, Malaysian
8. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 56 %
 Total number students who qualify: 202

Information for Public Schools Only - Data Provided by the State

The state has reported that 56 % of the students enrolled in this school are from low income or disadvantaged families based on the following subgroup(s): Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals

9. Students receiving special education services: 7 %
24 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 categories.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <u>0</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>10</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>11</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>1</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Mental Retardation | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>2</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed |

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of personnel in each of the categories below:

| | Number of Staff |
|---|------------------------|
| Administrators | 3 |
| Classroom teachers | 22 |
| Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc. | 1 |
| Paraprofessionals | 1 |
| Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc. | 2 |

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 16:1

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

| Required Information | 2013-2014 | 2012-2013 | 2011-2012 | 2010-2011 | 2009-2010 |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Daily student attendance | 95% | 94% | 94% | 94% | 92% |
| High school graduation rate | 96% | 100% | 98% | 100% | 95% |

13. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools)**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2014

| Post-Secondary Status | |
|---|-----|
| Graduating class size | 76 |
| Enrolled in a 4-year college or university | 63% |
| Enrolled in a community college | 28% |
| Enrolled in career/technical training program | 4% |
| Found employment | 4% |
| 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. Please summarize your school mission in 25 words or less: Preparing students for college in an academically challenging, arts-integrated environment.

PART III – SUMMARY

Harding Fine Arts Academy was founded in 2005 by visionary community leaders who believed a truly transformative education should draw from the full breadth of human experience. Harding provides a free, public education that effectively combines arts and academics to advance student achievement in all areas. The mission, vision and purpose of HFAA is unmistakably a comprehensive liberal arts education that gives the same footing to the arts as it does to academics, with high expectations for both. It is through this lens that founders focused on a mission to “prepare students for college in an academically challenging, arts-integrated environment.”

Over the past nine years Harding has emerged from a fledgling startup with only 65 freshmen and a skeleton staff and to over 350 students 9th-12th and a faculty of almost 25 full-time teachers,. HFAA is a non-selective public charter school with enrollment open to all students in the Oklahoma City School District. The school’s unique approach and success generated such demand that Harding held its first lottery in March of 2012 and has maintained a wait list ever since.

Located near the heart of downtown Oklahoma City, HFAA serves a highly diverse metropolitan area of 1.3 million with a student body that closely mirrors city demographics. As a Title I school, 56% of our population currently qualifies for free or reduced meals, and students of color represent 57% of those in the classroom. Additionally, our Special Education program has identified and supports approximately 7% of our students, and 24% of our population is recognized as Gifted & Talented. Many of HFAA’s students are potentially first generation college students, and it’s not uncommon to be a first generation high school graduate.

There are many reasons for Harding’s success at meeting the needs of its students, but arguably its culture and approach to curriculum are the two most powerful. Our teachers and leadership believe every student has great potential and we strive to foster a culture of high expectations while providing supports for students and families focused on their needs as individuals. We understand that education is not preparation for life; education is life itself. HFAA strives to connect our students’ passions with their pursuits, and as the state’s first Oklahoma A+ demonstration school, HFAA is uniquely committed to exemplify the OKA+ Essentials framework: Arts-Integration, Curriculum, Experiential Learning, Multiple Learning Pathways, Enriched Assessment, Collaboration, Infrastructure, and Climate. HFAA seeks to recognize the genius in each student and it is this approach that encourages and challenges all students to develop their full potential.

Navigating high school and transitioning to adulthood is not an easy task. From the moment a student enrolls they are assigned to a faculty advisor for all four years with whom they meet twice each week. Harding provides after-school tutoring every day through teachers and NHS peer-tutoring. The school runs a missing assignment report each week and provides an academic intervention on Fridays to help support the completion of assignments and subject mastery. Harding’s Parent Liaison connects weekly with struggling students and their parents to help keep students on task, identify non-curricular issues affecting achievement, and help students build personal resilience. Additionally, HFAA hosts a series of grade-specific evenings throughout the year to inform and support parents.

To prepare our students for life beyond our walls, seniors are enrolled in a Capstone course designed to navigate students in their post-secondary search. In this class seniors research and apply to colleges/universities, meet with representatives, and travel to various campuses. Students and parents review and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and learn about and apply for scholarship opportunities. During the spring semester, seniors take a comprehensive financial literacy class to help prepare them for independent living. The culmination of this class is a student-led, community service project each senior plans, executes, and then presents to a faculty panel.

Harding’s mission to develop students for the challenges of college begin in the classroom. Reading, writing, and critical thinking are emphasized across the curriculum. We offer fourteen AP/preAP courses and eight advanced visual/performing arts classes to challenge students. With over 80 electives from which

to choose, students can grow academically, artistically, and physically through classes from Martial Arts to Photography, or Modern Dance to Creative Writing. Not only do students in our programs continually achieve at high levels, they gain personal confidence and grow socially and culturally by putting their skills into practice in their own community. HFAA students and parents provide over 10,000 community service hours per year to local organizations.

Harding has grown tremendously in its arts, academics and achievements. A focus on continual improvement has seen the school's state assessment grow from a "B+" in 2011-12 to an "A" in 2012-13, and an "A+" for 2013-14. Most notable has been HFAA's Bottom Quartile Student Growth, which represents the growth rate of students who came to the school already struggling. Now in its tenth year, HFAA has become not only one of the highest achieving high schools in Oklahoma City, but it has also been named by US News & World Report as one of the top ten high schools in the state. Most importantly, however, are the individual successes of our students. HFAA's innovative curriculum and ongoing commitment merges to develop all students to their full potential through high expectations, research-based innovations, and a high-quality, creative faculty.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Harding Fine Arts Academy's unique curriculum and instructional methods are key to our students' success. By merging the arts and academics, HFAA has created an engaging educational atmosphere which promotes critical thinking and problem-based learning. This approach resonates with the creative learner and provides an academic environment for students who are bored with traditional methodology. By challenging students to demonstrate what they have learned in a variety of ways, students explore the curriculum at a deeper level and have greater retention. Throughout all classes, HFAA places an emphasis on reading, writing, vocabulary expansion, and critical thinking.

Harding exceeds state graduation requirements with 24 credits required for graduation, which includes: 4 years of English, and a minimum of 3 years math, 3 years science, 3 years social studies, and 6 credits in the arts. In addition all students must have at least 2 years of the same foreign language or computer applications and one additional core credit. All classes meet and exceed the standards most closely associated with the course: Oklahoma PASS standards as measured by End of Instruction tests, the College Board AP Curriculum Standards as measured by student success on AP exams, and the ACT National Standards as measured by outcomes of the test.

HFAA's English department offers four on-level courses, one Pre-AP course, two AP courses, and several language arts electives. HFAA's language arts teachers infuse their curriculum with a wide variety of literary genres to teach the necessary comprehension and analysis skills required for success at each grade level and in college. Students learn how to identify scholarly sources and write both expository and argumentative research essays with increasing complexity and rigor. Unique features of the curriculum include arts-integrated activities such as artistic interpretations of characters from literature, cross-curricular collaboration such as a lesson analyzing the behavior of SS officers during WWII while reading Holocaust literature and studying a psychological obedience experiment, and real world applications such as drawing parallels between themes in Frankenstein and stem cell research, genetically modified food, and abortion/reproductive rights issues.

The courses offered in mathematics are Algebra I, Geometry, Pre-AP Geometry, Algebra II, Pre-AP Algebra II, Trigonometry, Pre-Calculus, AP Calculus, and AP Statistics. The goals of the math department are relevance through real-world application, equipping students with essential critical thinking skills, and preparing students for college mathematics. Unique features of the curriculum are arts-integration projects such as the Sinusoidal Art project in trigonometry, instruction through daily use of the theory of Multiple Intelligences, and project-based learning where students complete projects that relate math to the real world. Students also maintain an interactive notebook which enables them to be creative, organized thinkers and serves as a reference book while studying for the ACT/SAT or taking math classes in college.

Our social studies curriculum focuses not only on the study of history, but also on furthering student knowledge of concepts like culture, environments, and the development of society throughout time. In history classes, students are presented with concepts and events that define particular eras, while studying major leaders and groups. Students analyze events through political, social, and economic lenses to fully gain a deeper understanding of their impact on human history and make informed decisions as citizens in the future. In government, economics, geography, and psychology classes, students learn how people work together to solve economic, political, and social problems and learn to apply this knowledge to theoretical situations in the real world. For example, when discussing the Tulsa Race Riots, students were able to relate the topic to events taking place in Ferguson, Missouri. Additionally, classes incorporate arts enhanced and integrated activities such as music from historical periods, creation of original political cartoons, mock trials and senate debates into the curriculum along with a strong focus on writing and vocabulary.

HFAA science curriculum focuses on ensuring that students have a sufficient grasp of the scientific method, and procedural and factual knowledge of the natural world to aid in their creativity and advancement in higher education. Students apply the scientific method to test a hypothesis and regularly incorporate math

skills to calculate scientific properties and extrapolate and explain meaningful conclusions from data. Science classrooms are managed to create a safe and informative environment. In addition to traditional methods, teachers seek to integrate the arts through the use of model-making, animations, and even physically re-enacting the motions of hydrogen bonding between opposite strands of DNA. Students are given multiple options for learning required content and are encouraged and rewarded for asking questions. Online study tutorials and class-specific, teacher-directed group chatrooms provide support for all students. Peer and/or teacher tutoring is also available throughout the week. Independent study projects are developed for students who desire greater challenge.

Harding's curriculum recognizes that students don't come to us as blank slates; they come to us from diverse backgrounds with their own unique set of gifts and challenges. The school's integrated and collaborative approach is able to effectively support students where they struggle while challenging them where they excel. This allows HFAA to meet the academic needs of the individual student while maintaining high expectations and clearly defined, school-wide learning standards to support college and career readiness. Differentiated instruction, enriched formative assessment, advanced coursework, academic intervention, and reading/writing across the curriculum weave together to support academic achievement and to foundationally prepare students for life and their post-secondary pursuits.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

HFAA's mission is a fusion of the arts and academics, and we are committed to daily arts instruction, experiential learning and a cross-curricular instructional approach. The school offers a phenomenal selection of elective courses in the visual/performing arts and academics, which include advanced offerings in all areas to prepare students for post-secondary studies. As an academic and arts-integrated school we believe in a purposeful approach that includes the essential skills of reading, writing, and critical problem solving skills in all subjects. Through a comprehensive liberal arts education at a high school level we provide students with the opportunity to discover their creative capacity and to develop skills they will take far into their future regardless of their passions.

HFAA provides a rigorous visual arts program, which enables each student to build a sound foundation and to begin developing a personal artistic voice. Classes are offered in Visual Art I - IV, AP Studio Art – Drawing, AP 2D Design, Graphic Design, and Photography I - III. We develop problem-solving skills in visual art by continually challenging students to find creative solutions to classroom assignments. Each assignment, for example, will focus on particular art skills, but will include a creative challenge that must be met to make the design effective and engaging.

In music, students may pursue instruction in Piano I-III, Guitar I-IV, Strings, Winds, Percussion, Choral Music and Music Theory. Students gain essential skills enabling them to read, play, and interpret music as well as develop valuable skills in self-discipline and focus.

Additionally, students can select Ballet, Modern Dance I-III, or Martial Arts. Both dance programs are well respected, and if desired prepare students for serious study at the university level. In three short years HFAA Martial Arts has become one of the premiere martial arts programs in the state and has been transformative for many struggling students.

Students in Drama I-III, and Speech and Debate are taught to trust themselves and what they have to say. They must research, solve problems, peer coach, and write constantly: scenes, monologues, character analyses or arguments and original oratory. Communication skills, both written and oral, are critical in college and career.

All students at Harding Fine Arts Academy must take a minimum of two years of the same foreign language or two years of computer technology. HFAA offers French I-III, AP French, and Spanish I-IV. Third and fourth year Spanish classes are a mix of native and non-native speakers and prepare student for the AP Spanish exam. Foreign language classes develop a proficiency in a second language and provide an opportunity to learn the skill of circumlocution, which teaches them to move past gaps in comprehension and trains them to look for the central idea. Foreign language students are more culturally aware and become

better communicators both in the target language and in English. Learning about economic, social, and cultural differences is always incorporated and creates more tolerance and understanding.

Students taking the computer technology route learn basic computer applications, Multimedia Presentations, Web Design and Development, and Graphic Design. Technology courses include the ability to obtain certification in certain platforms such as the Adobe Creative Suite of programs, and they provide a solid post-secondary foundation.

In all our arts/elective classes, students are encouraged to think critically in evaluating their work via formal group critiques, written reviews, or through historical research, writing or discussion. At HFAA, students have the opportunity to incorporate their artistic skills into their core curriculum as they meet the challenge of translating what they know from one subject to another. What does covalent chemical bonding look like in a dance with 40 students? We know. Can art be made in Physics by building a trebuchet and perfecting equations to throw paint-soaked tennis balls across an athletic field? Yes, it can.

HFAA does not select students for enrollment in any program based on grades or aptitude, but placement level is dependent upon ability. All programs are open to all students 9th-12th and elective classes meet daily for the same duration as core classes. Some students seek out the arts solely as enrichment while others become state champions and achieve large scholarships to study at the university level. Both approaches are valid and support the acquisition of essential skill when you treat the arts as seriously as the academics, and academics as creatively as the arts.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Instructional methods begin with the needs of students, and teachers apply differentiated strategies as a way to reach all students. As an Oklahoma A+ School, teachers consider the multiple intelligence styles of students as they plan lessons. Struggling students are identified early through pre-enrollment and formative assessments. Teachers have the freedom to control the pacing of concepts, and to reteach if necessary. After-school and NHS peer tutoring are available daily and used widely. The needs of gifted students are met by offering more than 20 AP and advanced level courses spanning every academic and arts program.

Teachers readily incorporate technology through iPads, Promethean board activities, classroom responders, still/video cameras, document projectors, computer labs and department specific technology, such as digital microscopes. Students practice their knowledge, comprehension, and ability to apply content through cooperative groups, inquiry based hands-on activities, Socratic seminars, and quizzes and exams containing questions from all 6 levels of Bloom's Taxonomy. Project-based learning allows students to internalize concepts and demonstrate mastery, such as the Kite and Bridge Building projects in math, the Animation project in science, and the Stanley Milgram project in social studies/language arts.

Interactive lectures, discussions, primary source document analysis, essay writing, and extensive internet research prepare students for the rigor of college. Students are instructed in the use of Cornell Notes, and must complete curriculum specific vocabulary analysis that goes beyond simple definition by requiring students to identify why each term is important. Higher thinking is stressed in all classes, and students are expected to communicate effectively in writing, work within time constraints, and utilize technology.

HFAA uses a tiered RTI approach that includes Academic Intervention (AI), a program developed at Harding focused on supporting subject mastery and strengthening student/teacher/parent accountability. AI is a mandatory study hall held on the last day of each week for students that have missing assignments in one or more classes. Teachers and National Honor Society tutors are available to assist students in completing assignments. When students are required to complete assignments they grow in their mastery of the material and build powerful habits. AI also provides a weekly connection point for parents and teachers that clearly communicates whether or not students are remaining on task and it is a formative indicator for early signs of students struggling academically as well as emotionally. AI has been instrumental in reducing incomplete assignments and increasing student learning as evidenced by greater student eligibility and increased school-wide GPAs.

PART V – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results Narrative Summary:

HFAA students continue to demonstrate mastery in ELA with a 97% pass rate in English II, especially compared to a district average of 73%. African American students have made steady improvement in language arts with a 3-year average of 94% and Hispanic/Latino students have remained consistently strong with a 5-year average of 97%. Both of these populations out-paced the school's average in Advanced, clearly demonstrating that being a student of color is not a hindrance at HFAA.

After analyzing 2009-2010 testing data, the leadership team decided major changes needed to be made in the math department. Students had historically done well on the English exams, so we knew they could achieve greater success in mathematics. A new department head was hired and we implemented the kind of instruction and interventions that resonated with our students. Through the use of manipulatives, problem-based learning, group work, and arts-integrated activities, students began to understand and enjoy mathematics. The improvement in the 2010-2011 test scores was dramatic, jumping almost 40% points (52% to 91%). As the department has grown, the school has continued to hire teachers who are committed to using the types of teaching methods that have resulted in student success.

When analyzing last year's Algebra I and English II scores, we noted the number of students who scored proficient dropped 10 points or more for economically disadvantaged students, although the number who scored Advanced actually increased. Digging deeper, we discovered 67% of our special education students qualify for Free/Reduced Lunch. In 2013-2014 the State of Oklahoma eliminated modified assessments for Special Education students, resulting in a lower number of these students passing statewide, thus accounting for the lowered proficiency figure among HFAA's disadvantage students. In prior years, 100% of HFAA Special Education students scored proficient or higher. As with all of our students who do not pass their end-of-instruction exams, the teachers and counselors analyze individual test results to identify areas of deficiencies and then developed individualized remediation plans. Likewise, this data analysis is used school wide to build on our instructional success and determine necessary adjustments in curriculum.

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

Harding Fine Arts Academy uses a variety of assessments to gauge students' educational progress. State End-of-Instruction (EOI) tests, PLAN and ACT, PSAT, and Advanced Placement tests provide students, parents, teachers, and the school valuable feedback regarding students' and program strengths and weaknesses. This information allows the school to make data-driven decisions regarding new initiatives to improve student achievement and what professional development teachers need to implement them. This ongoing process results in a culture of continuous school improvement and is one of the reasons HFAA's student pass rates are 15 to 25 points higher than district averages on state exams .

When our students score lower than we feel their abilities warrant, on-going data analysis allows us to determine where we can improve instruction to guide student success. For example, EOI scores dropped last year with the elimination of modified assessments for special education students except for US History which had a remarkable 99% pass rate (all students except one) including special education students. We recognized the exceptional talents of our US History teacher and transitioned a portion of her day to allow for teacher mentoring to help replicate successful techniques.

In another instance, we analyzed the types of questions in Biology, HFAA's lowest EOI, and determined that reading comprehension and graphic data analysis were key components to student success. Additionally, 2014 ACT data indicated the school's average score had dropped due to lower reading results. Since our students regularly score in the upper 90's on the English II & III EOI exams, we were surprised by this indicator; however, Biology EOI scores corroborated this finding. Consequently, this year's professional development has focused on teaching reading, vocabulary, and graphic analysis strategies in all content areas. Moreover, because we draw from several public/private middle schools, our students do not come to us with a known set of skills. Students can have serious gaps in their educational preparation, which we

need to identify early to provide needed interventions. Now all incoming students for the 2015-16 school year will take a math and reading pre-test, so that our teachers can be more focused in remediation lessons for struggling students.

HFAA continually shares and celebrates this journey with stakeholders through newsletters, assemblies, our website, social media, parent e-mail blasts, presentations to stakeholder groups, community tours/events, and through local and state newspapers.

Part VI School Support

1. School Climate/Culture

School culture is an essential element in creating a successful working environment, for both students and faculty. While it is intangible, it is not necessarily undefinable. At Harding Fine Arts Academy we share a sense of purpose and values, norms of continuous learning and improvement, collaborative collegial relationships, as well as our experiences in the classroom. Equally important to our culture are empowerment, innovation, leadership, and teamwork. Teachers eagerly share their successes and feel safe to seek advice when they struggle. Likewise, students are encouraged to share their experiences with one another and work together as colleagues toward an end goal in many different aspects of their educational journey. In student leadership, academics, the arts, and co-curricular activities, students are expected to collaborate to accomplish tasks in and out of the classroom. Both students and teachers are inspired in an atmosphere of support where creativity and hard work are valued.

Adopting the name from our mascot, both current students and graduates often refer to our Firehawk Family. A recent student survey indicated that 96% felt there was at least one faculty member they could trust and confide in, and 94% agreeing or strongly agreeing that the principal and teachers have high expectations of them. From their first visit while student shadowing, to their new student orientation, through their sophomore slump, and to their final senior dinner, students are welcomed as they are, but challenged to grow academically, artistically, emotionally and socially. The principles of relationship, relevance, and rigor in the classroom intertwine and extend to the many co-curricular activities in which students are encouraged to participate. With more than a dozen clubs or teams, students participate in physical, social and extended learning opportunities.

In so much as we strive to create a culture at school, we also recognize that students and their families bring their own culture from home. As HFAA a charter school, students come to us from a variety of different backgrounds and educational experiences. The one unifying strand is that at Harding, students are respected for their differences. While we expect each student to achieve to their abilities, we do not expect everyone to fit a certain mold. We recognize that it is out of our differences and unique experiences that we become more successful, creative, and strong as individuals and a community. It is the respect for diversity, appreciation and interweaving of experiences of each student, teacher, administrator, and staff member that creates the Firehawk family.

2. Engaging Families and Community

The strength of HFAA's programs and student success can often be traced directly to the ways in which we connect with all stakeholders. Our strategies are designed to cultivate and strengthen partnerships with area arts and education organizations, and foster support and involvement from students and their families.

Characterizing our mission and bringing focus from the arts and education community to our school, HFAA established its Leadership in Arts & Education Award, now in its third year. The John & Joy Reed Belt Award for Leadership in Arts & Education recognizes a person or people who have heightened visibility for arts education and demonstrated systemic and sustainable results in support of learning in the arts or through the arts.

Last summer, HFAA organized it's first-ever 'Hawkstock Music Festival. In the months prior to event, volunteers comprised of HFAA students, parents, and staff painstakingly renovated a 3,500-seat facility, and worked to bring in local and area performing artists and food vendors. The renovation of this circa-1947 amphitheater stands to benefit the community as whole, as other groups are now enjoying this beautiful venue, including a local community theater company. Slated to become an annual event, the second 'Hawkstock festival will take place September 2015.

Each March for the past decade, HFAA hosts a community arts festival, drawing visual and performing artists from across the city while also featuring works from Harding students. The "Ignite the Arts" event is

held in conjunction with ArtSpark, HFAA's annual student art competition open to elementary and middle school students throughout the metropolitan area. More than 100 students take part from a growing number of area public and private schools.

HFAA students and parents are also required to complete 10 service hours per semester to aid the school and community. Service efforts include after school mentoring and tutoring, volunteering at local non-profit organizations, and through workdays to repair and renovate the school building and maintain the grounds.

Partnerships are forged with outside organizations to leverage programs and increase student opportunities. When Harding first initiated its ballet program we partnered with Ballet Oklahoma to write a grant and bring in one of their instructors. HFAA's facilities do not allow for ceramics in our visual arts program, so we partner with Oklahoma Contemporary to provide free classes for our students on days we are not in session.

HFAA also takes part in mentoring programs to benefit local at-risk youth. Since 2009, through a partnership with Rocktown Youth Mentoring in Oklahoma City, Harding teachers, students and staff engage targeted youth in rock-climbing and cycling activities, enabling them to gain the confidence to face the world with a healthier outlook. HFAA's local chapter of the National Honor Society and Key Club organize a wide variety of activities that benefit the community, ranging from blood and food drives to peer tutoring and holiday gifts for children in foster care.

These are just a few ways in which Harding embraces a leadership role in our community for the benefit of our students, our school, education and the arts.

3. Professional Development

Harding believes that great teachers develop great students. In fact, nothing has a more powerful school-related impact on student learning than highly effective teachers with a relentless commitment to personal and professional growth. The school's culture revolves around the belief that there is always room for growth, and as teachers and leaders we model this for each other and our students.

Professional development (PD) at Harding falls into three main categories and is directly driven by assessment of student and teacher needs: 1) workshops and seminars designed to increase skill in instructional methodology, such as attendance at AP conferences or ongoing technology integration training, 2) presentations that help teachers support students socially and emotionally such as suicide prevention, bullying awareness, and advisory training, and 3) collaborative efforts to address students' academic needs as particularly identified through analysis of test results, such as the need to teach reading and vocabulary strategies, and graph and chart analysis in every class.

Professional development begins the moment a teacher joins our faculty. New teachers participate in a mini-conference dedicated to Harding's mission and culture, and then they are paired with a mentor teacher for the remainder of the year. We have high expectations for our student and teachers, but we also strive to provide the necessary tools and support for individual growth.

As a demonstration school for Oklahoma A+, HFAA also participates in a variety of workshops and conferences that address our school's mission of arts integration and cross-curricular study. Teachers build their depth of understanding of the A+ Eight Essentials and how to incorporate these into their lesson planning.

Harding's commitment to ongoing professional development is evidenced in our yearly schedule, which includes nine additional PD days in our calendar. HFAA's highly qualified staff is included in both the planning and often the presentation of best practices to empower and develop teacher leaders. Each faculty member is an instrumental component to the school's improvement as a professional learning community.

In all professional development activities, great effort is made to model the learning environment we expect in the classroom by incorporating best practices such as collaborative grouping and inquiry based problem solving. It is out of this environment that innovative programs like Academic Intervention have grown and flourished.

We see every student's learning as every teacher's responsibility and we know this is best accomplished when we work together to create a learning community focused on student achievement and professional growth.

4. School Leadership

Harding owes much of its success to a philosophy of leadership focused on student achievement and stakeholder empowerment. HFAA is governed by a dynamic, innovative board whose 18 members serve as valuable resources in the areas of business, education, philanthropy, the arts, and parent involvement. The board is responsible for establishing school policy, hiring and evaluating the principal/superintendent, and providing for the financial stability of the school, including raising additional funds. The relationship between the board and the principal is one of open communication and respect for roles and boundaries.

As the instructional leader, the principal communicates high expectations for academic and creative achievement to teachers, students, and stakeholders. The principal/superintendent is also responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school, including state/federal monitoring and reporting, development and oversight of school finances, community and stakeholder relationships, facility management, and personnel recruitment, support, and evaluation.

Reporting to the principal/superintendent is a distinctive leadership team comprised of an assistant principal, a director of operations, a guidance counselor, a parent liaison, and department chairs. The assistant principal duties include discipline, academic intervention, assisting the principal with teacher support and evaluation, and serving as athletic director. Our director of operations oversees procurement, daily finances, and the school's SIS. HFAA's counselor and parent liaison work closely with parents/guardians, faculty and staff to support student success and identify student needs. Behavioral challenges are quickly addressed to maintain a supportive atmosphere of serious academic and artistic endeavor.

The school's commitment to relationships, relevance, and rigor is constantly evidenced by the leadership team. Leadership meets frequently, focusing upon and evaluating ways to empower teachers and students to take educational risks, incorporate and utilize resources, and find creative and innovative solutions. Due to a lack of funding for maintenance and improvements in a building opened in the 1920s, it is not uncommon to see leadership step in with a mop or wrench where needed. Our philosophy is to do what it takes to provide a safe and nurturing atmosphere where students can learn and grow.

An advantage to Harding's structure is the ability to address opportunities and challenges quickly. For example, when an extended day schedule was enacted to make up snow days, the students and teachers found they benefited from the longer class periods. After stakeholder input, the Board approved extending HFAA's instructional day permanently, resulting in 8.7 instructional days beyond the state minimum and 9 additional professional development days to better focus on student achievement and the mission of the school.

PART VIII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

| | |
|--|--|
| Subject: <u>Math</u> | Test: <u>Algebra I - End-of-Instruction Exam OSTP Spring 2014</u> |
| All Students Tested/Grade: <u>9</u> | Edition/Publication Year: <u>2012</u> |
| Publisher: <u>CTB/McGraw Hill Education</u> | |

| School Year | 2013-2014 | 2012-2013 | 2011-2012 | 2010-2011 | 2009-2010 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Testing month | Apr | Apr | Apr | Apr | Apr |
| SCHOOL SCORES* | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | 91 | 89 | 93 | 91 | 52 |
| Advanced | 37 | 25 | 30 | 28 | 4 |
| Number of students tested | 54 | 55 | 57 | 46 | 48 |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Number of students tested with alternative assessment | | | | | |
| % of students tested with alternative assessment | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| SUBGROUP SCORES | | | | | |
| 1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | 82 | 97 | 91 | 93 | 44 |
| Advanced | 32 | 32 | 31 | 21 | 0 |
| Number of students tested | 34 | 31 | 32 | 29 | 25 |
| 2. Students receiving Special Education | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | | | | | |
| Advanced | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 3. English Language Learner Students | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | | | | | |
| Advanced | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 4. Hispanic or Latino Students | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | 89 | 91 | 100 | 91 | 50 |
| Advanced | 56 | 25 | 14 | 18 | 0 |
| Number of students tested | 9 | 12 | 7 | 11 | 4 |
| 5. African- American Students | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | 92 | 93 | 79 | 84 | 29 |
| Advanced | 0 | 13 | 14 | 8 | 0 |
| Number of students tested | 13 | 10 | 14 | 13 | 7 |
| 6. Asian Students | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | | | | | |
| Advanced | | | | | |

| School Year | 2013-2014 | 2012-2013 | 2011-2012 | 2010-2011 | 2009-2010 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | | | | | |
| Advanced | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | | | | | |
| Advanced | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 9. White Students | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | 87 | 91 | 100 | 100 | 60 |
| Advanced | 43 | 27 | 36 | 56 | 7 |
| Number of students tested | 30 | 22 | 28 | 18 | 30 |
| 10. Two or More Races identified Students | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | | | | | |
| Advanced | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 11. Other 1: Other 1 | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | | | | | |
| Advanced | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 12. Other 2: Other 2 | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | | | | | |
| Advanced | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 13. Other 3: Other 3 | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | | | | | |
| Advanced | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |

NOTES: We have noted the number of economically disadvantaged students who scored proficient has decreased from 2013 to 2014. State testing changed from 2013 to 2014 to eliminate modified tests for Special Education students, which substantially affected their proficiency rate. Since a full 67% of HFAA's 2014 Special Education students were economically disadvantaged, the overall proficiency rate for Free/Reduced Students was adversely affected.

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

| | |
|--|--|
| Subject: <u>Reading/ELA</u> | Test: <u>English II - End-of-Instruction Exam</u> <u>OSTEP Spring 2014</u> |
| All Students Tested/Grade: <u>10</u> | Edition/Publication Year: <u>2012</u> |
| Publisher: <u>CTB/McGraw Hill Education</u> | |

| School Year | 2013-2014 | 2012-2013 | 2011-2012 | 2010-2011 | 2009-2010 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Testing month | Apr | Apr | Apr | Apr | Apr |
| SCHOOL SCORES* | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | 97 | 97 | 98 | 94 | 96 |
| Advanced | 32 | 31 | 36 | 50 | 60 |
| Number of students tested | 74 | 74 | 55 | 68 | 47 |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Number of students tested with alternative assessment | | | | | |
| % of students tested with alternative assessment | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| SUBGROUP SCORES | | | | | |
| 1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | 87 | 98 | 94 | 90 | 95 |
| Advanced | 31 | 25 | 30 | 33 | 50 |
| Number of students tested | 54 | 40 | 33 | 30 | 20 |
| 2. Students receiving Special Education | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | | | | | |
| Advanced | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 3. English Language Learner Students | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | | | | | |
| Advanced | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 4. Hispanic or Latino Students | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | 100 | 92 | 100 | 91 | 100 |
| Advanced | 33 | 8 | 71 | 36 | 100 |
| Number of students tested | 18 | 13 | 7 | 11 | 3 |
| 5. African- American Students | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | 94 | 95 | 93 | 78 | 83 |
| Advanced | 33 | 24 | 13 | 11 | 25 |
| Number of students tested | 18 | 21 | 15 | 9 | 12 |
| 6. Asian Students | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | | | | | |
| Advanced | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | | | | | |

| School Year | 2013-2014 | 2012-2013 | 2011-2012 | 2010-2011 | 2009-2010 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Advanced | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | | | | | |
| Advanced | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 9. White Students | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | 96 | 97 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Advanced | 33 | 47 | 50 | 63 | 77 |
| Number of students tested | 27 | 32 | 28 | 41 | 22 |
| 10. Two or More Races identified Students | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | | | | | |
| Advanced | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 11. Other 1: Other 1 | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | | | | | |
| Advanced | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 12. Other 2: Other 2 | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | | | | | |
| Advanced | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 13. Other 3: Other 3 | | | | | |
| Proficient and above | | | | | |
| Advanced | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |

NOTES: We have noted the number of economically disadvantaged students who scored proficient has decreased from 2013 to 2014. State testing changed from 2013 to 2014 to eliminate modified tests for Special Education students, which substantially affected their proficiency rate. Since a full 67% of HFAA's 2014 Special Education students were economically disadvantaged, the overall proficiency rate for Free/Reduced Students was adversely affected.