

# SOAR Academy Public Charter School

## 2016 - 2017 ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

by Washington State Charter School Commission

# INTRODUCTION

The Organizational Performance Framework is a reporting tool designed to communicate to the charter school and public the compliance-related standards that all charter schools authorized by the Washington State Charter School Commission (the Commission) must meet. The Organizational Framework lists the standards which align to state and federal law, rules, regulations and the charter contract that charter schools are required to meet.

## PURPOSE OF REPORT

The Commission's Organizational Framework is intended to lay out the legal requirements for charter schools. It is designed to treat all charter schools as though they are the same only in terms of meeting minimum legal and ethical requirements. This enables charter schools to retain the flexibility and autonomy to be different in the ways that matter most for a school's mission, vision, and educational program. The expectations set out in the Organizational Framework derive from state and federal law as well as the operating terms in the charter application. Of the three frameworks, the Organizational Framework is most closely aligned with the charter contract in terms of documenting operational expectations such as special education, accounting practices, reporting requirements, and the like.

One of the Commission's core responsibilities with respect to charter schools is to protect the public interest, and the Organizational Framework is the primary lever for carrying out this responsibility. It enables the Commission to ensure that charter schools are respecting rights of students, staff, and families within the schools as well as the interests of the general public in ensuring that charter schools meet the legal obligations that state and federal legislatures have determined should apply.

The central premise of charter school autonomy is that the authorizer will articulate the expected outcomes, and the school will have maximum flexibility to determine the best way to achieve those outcomes. In other words, the authorizer articulates the ends and the school decides the means of getting there. The Organizational Framework is the place where the school becomes externally accountable for how it operates.

# SCHOOL OVERVIEW

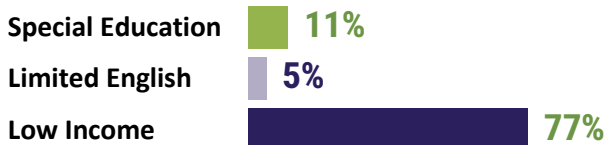


## SOAR Academy Public Charter School

<b>2136 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Tacoma, WA 98405</b>	
<b>School Contact</b>	(253) 444-6759
<b>School Website</b>	www.soaracademies.org
<b>Neighborhood Location</b>	Tacoma Public Schools
<b>Leadership</b>	School Leader: Jessica Stryczek
<b>School Mission</b>	It is the mission of SOAR Academy to provide students with a rigorous engaged and personalized educational experience; allowing them to become positive contributing members of a diverse, global society, prepared and equipped academically and socially for success in college, career and beyond.
<b>Education Program Terms &amp; Design Elements</b>	Arts-Integration: SOAR Academy is an arts integrated school. Dance is the art-form of focus in years 1-4 and is considered "foundational" to the academic program offered. Students take dance at least 3 times a week. Extended School Year: SOAR Academy will Offer an extended school year in excess of the state mandated 180 school days. Extended School Day: SOAR offers an extended school day in excess of traditional elementary school offerings. Inclusive Learning Environment: SOAR offers an inclusive learning environment in which all learners have access to their peers and the general education classroom.
<b>Grades Served</b>	K-2
<b>First Year of Operation</b>	2016 / 2017
<b>Total Student Enrollment</b>	143 Students

## Student Demographics

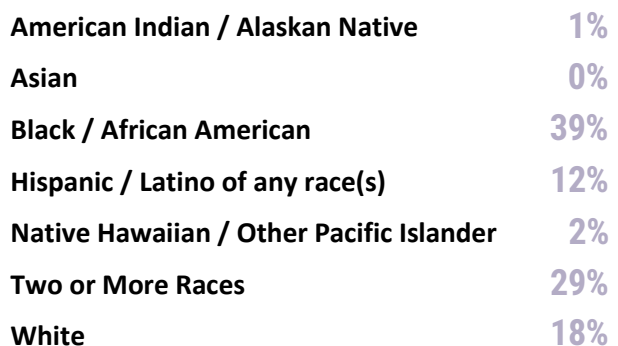
### STUDENT GROUPS



### GENDER



### RACE / ETHNICITY



# AT A GLANCE

## SOAR ACADEMY

### Is SOAR Academy meeting legal obligations?

Ratings will be determined through the Commission’s quality assurance on-site and desk reviews as well as through the Commission’s Pre-Opening and Annual Compliance Calendar. Additionally, the charter school board’s signed assurances and school contract will be reviewed for evidence of compliance. All schools are obligated to comply with all state and federal public school reporting and compliance requirements as monitored by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the State Auditor’s Office (SAO).

#### **MEETS Standard**

The school materially meets the expectations outlined per state and/or federal laws, rules and regulation, or the charter contract.

#### **DOES NOT MEET Standard**

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school, or regardless of the severity of the failure(s), the board had not instituted remedies that have resulted in prompt and sufficient movement toward compliance to the satisfaction of the authorizer.

# SOAR ACADEMY

These ratings provide clarity to schools about how decisions will be made and which components of performance are most important. Additionally, ratings provide a “bright line” regarding charter school performance expectations that ensures consistency in Commission decision-making and supports parents as they navigate their public school options.

INDICATOR	MEASURE	RATING
<b>1. Education Program</b>	1a. Material Terms of the Charter Contract	MEETS
	1b. Education Requirements	MEETS
	1c. Students with Disability Rights	MEETS
	1d. English Language Learner Rights	MEETS
<b>2. Financial Management &amp; Oversight</b>	2a. Financial Reporting & Compliance Requirements	MEETS
	2b. Adherence to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)	MEETS
<b>3. Governance &amp; Reporting</b>	3a. Governance Requirements	MEETS
	3b. Management Accountability	MEETS
	3c. Reporting Requirements	MEETS
<b>4. Students, Parents &amp; Employees</b>	4a. Rights of Students	MEETS
	4b. Recurrent Enrollment	NOT APPLICABLE
	4c. Teacher and Staff Credentials	MEETS
	4d. Employee Rights	MEETS
	4e. Background Checks	MEETS
<b>5. School Environment</b>	5a. Facilities and Transportation	MEETS
	5b. Health and Safety	MEETS
	5c. Information Management	MEETS
<b>6. Other Obligations</b>	6a. Mission Specific Non-Academic Goal - Student Attendance	DOES NOT MEET

# METHODOLOGY

## SOAR ACADEMY

### 1. EDUCATION PROGRAM

MEASURE	THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATES COMPLIANCE WITH...	RATING
1a. Materials Terms of the Charter Contract	The materials terms of the education program in all material respects, and the education program in operation reflects the material terms as defined in the charter contract or subsequent approved amendments.	MEETS
1b. Education Requirements	Applicable laws, rules regulations, and provisions of the charter contract related to education requirements AND mandated programming as a result of state or federal funding.	MEETS
1c. Students with Disabilities Rights	Applicable state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to the treatment of students with identified disabilities and those suspected of having a disability. A school may still meet standard if it was out of compliance in a minor area, or the school may have unknowingly been out of compliance in a major area, but immediately took action to negate any potential resulting problems or loss of funding. Reasons are provided identified services.	MEETS
1d. English Language Learner Rights	Applicable state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to requirements regarding English Language Learners (ELLs). A school may still meet standard if it was out of compliance in a minor area, or the school may have unknowingly been out of compliance in a major area, but immediately took action to negate any potential resulting problems or loss of funding.	MEETS

#### PROMISING PRACTICES

- The school creates discipline plans collaboratively with parents to ensure success at home and at school.
- The school employs daily progress monitoring of emotional and social adaptive goals using an IEP at a glance system.

#### PARENT VOICE

*“The whole staff treats you like family here... I don’t know what we would do without the school.” --Parent Interview, First Year Site Visit*

## SCHOOL SPECIFIC NARRATIVE

As verified by the Commission through its First Year Site Visit and board observations, SOAR Academy remained in compliance at all times throughout the year with the implementation of its Education Program Terms. Following the 2016-17 school year, the State Auditor's Office (SAO) issued no findings in its [Accountability Audit Report](#) regarding implementation of mandated programming as a result of state or federal funding or special education enrollment.

SOAR Academy conducts meetings with parents and appropriate personnel to determine acceptance of transfer Individualized Education Plans (IEP) and provision of comparable services or the need to revise the IEP based on a review of current data. SOAR uses a Student Support Team (SST) process to refer and evaluate students suspected of having a disability, and needing services and accommodations or special education. This process includes appropriate team participation to include the parent. The school ensures that evaluations are sufficient in scope to develop an appropriate Section 504 or IEP. To develop plans, SOAR completes a review of existing data from comprehensive evaluations. As needed, SOAR provides instructional support and services to students with special needs, and provides accommodations and modifications for diverse learners. The school ensures procedural safeguards for students and families as evidenced in timely notifications and conducts necessary progress monitoring activities. SOAR provides the least restrictive placements that address students receiving maximum access to the general education setting with their typical peers. Current placement services include full inclusion, push-in services and pull-out services, 1-1 adult support, and individual and small group instruction from the special education teachers and related service personnel. SOAR ensures students who have been removed from classes for disciplinary reasons receive appropriate services, manifestation determinations, functional behavior assessments and behavior intervention plans as needed.

SOAR Academy uses the parent home language survey to identify students and/or families in need of English Language Learner (ELL) support. Qualified adult interpreters are provided to ensure accurate communication with parents of ELLs and to translate vital documents as needed or requested. SOAR administers the Washington English Language Proficiency Assessment (WELPA) to determine English proficiency, and provides on-going progress monitoring of academic performance. The school delivers in-service training to instructional staff on how to modify and accommodate the needs of students who are not yet English proficient. All ELL students receives direct academic support in general education classrooms with individualized modifications and accommodations implemented as indicated. The school measures the effectiveness of the ELL program through grade level and team data analysis with modifications made as needed. SOAR provides language acquisition professional development to all staff.

**DATA SOURCES:** *Attachment 4 of Charter Contract, Charter contract amendments, board meeting agendas, packets, reports and minutes, Commission Site Visit Report, Academic Calendar, Statement of Assurances within Charter Contract, Pre-Opening Conditions Calendar Submissions, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) Consolidated Program Review (CPR) (if applicable), State Auditor's Office (SAO) Accountability Audit, Washington Integrated System of Monitoring (WISM) (if applicable)*

## 2. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT & OVERSIGHT

MEASURE	THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATES COMPLIANCE WITH...	RATING
2a. Financial Reporting & Compliance Requirements	Applicable state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to financial reporting and compliance requirements. All policies and requirements issued by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and Washington State Auditor's office concerning accounting for public school districts in the state of Washington.	MEETS
2b. Adherence to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles	Applicable state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to financial management and oversight expectations as evidenced by an annual independent financial audit.	MEETS

### SCHOOL SPECIFIC NARRATIVE

SOAR Academy maintained compliance with its financial reporting and compliance requirements to the Commission, OSPI, and the SAO. The school's independent auditors, Clifton Larson Allen, issued an unmodified report that identified no material weaknesses, reported no significant deficiencies, and noted no areas of noncompliance material to the financial statements.

**DATA SOURCES:** *Quarterly Financial Report, Annual Budget, Annual independent financial audit*



# 3. GOVERNANCE & REPORTING

MEASURE	THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATES COMPLIANCE WITH...	RATING
3a. Governance Requirements	Applicable state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to governance by its board. A school board may still meet standard if it was out of compliance in a minor area, or unknowingly out of compliance in a major area, but immediately took action to negate any potential resulting problems.	MEETS
3b. Management Accountability	Applicable state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to oversight of the school management team. A school board may still meet standard if it was out of compliance in a minor area, or unknowingly out of compliance in a major area, but immediately took action to negate any potential resulting problems	MEETS
3c. Reporting Requirements	Applicable state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to relevant reporting requirements to the Commission, state, and/or federal authorities.	MEETS

## BOARD OVERVIEW

**4**  
 MEMBERS  
 The SOAR Academy board meets on a **monthly** basis.

**3**  
 required for Quorum

- No fewer than **3**, no more than **15** directors
- Teleconferencing allowed

## SCHOOL SPECIFIC NARRATIVE

As verified by the Commission through its board meeting observations and the SAO through its [Accountability Audit Report](#), the board at SOAR Academy maintained compliance with its governance requirements. The board of directors at SOAR Academy demonstrated understanding of the school’s bylaws, and policies and procedures through its consistent compliance with those regulations. The board met monthly and regularly met quorum, with the majority of directors consistently in attendance. Directors reviewed board packets in advance and received extensive updates from the school leadership team regarding student academic performance, fundraising and partnerships, finance and school policies. Regularly, Directors participated in committees, including Governance, Finance, Development, Academic Excellence (including School Leadership Evaluation), presenting their progress at open board meetings.

SOAR’s board is active, inquisitive, and provides competent oversight of the school. The board is comprised of individuals with experience in marketing, education, business, law, and strategic thinking. A review of meeting minutes and notes demonstrates the board’s clear understanding of and commitment to the school’s mission. Directors were consistently engaged in full board meetings, asking clarifying questions to each other, school staff, and other presenters and offering expertise where needed.

The SOAR Academy school leader provides an evaluation form of strengths and needs for the upcoming quarter and

yearly evaluation which is due in October. At the First Year Site Visit, the board chair described the board's role establishing objectives, priorities, and goals around student achievement, finance and fundraising, SOAR's relationship with the traditional school district, student enrollment and parent engagement. While the board has a process in place to set and evaluate goals by committee, the board did not have a formalized evaluation for itself at the close of the 2016-17 school year.

The Board did not note any major deficiencies, though members did discuss potential revisions to the school's mission and vision given the unique needs of the students enrolled. To that end the board will continue to explore the school's governance structure, with the potential of having Seneca, the school's Education Management Organization, becoming more involved at the governance level. The board also noted concerns regarding the school's financial sustainability and imminent need to find a new facility to serve students more adequately.

During the 2016-17 school year, the school submitted compliance documents to the Commission on time and had no outstanding documents at the end of the school year. School leadership and board members attended and actively participated in all meetings with the Commission.

**DATA SOURCES:** *Commission Board Meeting Observations, Annual Compliance Calendar, SAO Accountability Audit*

## 4. STUDENTS, PARENTS & EMPLOYEES

MEASURE	THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATES COMPLIANCE WITH...	RATING
4a. Rights of Students	Applicable state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to the rights of students. A school may still meet standard if it was out of compliance in a minor area, or the school may have unknowingly been out of compliance in a major area, but immediately took action to negate any potential resulting problems.	MEETS
4b. Recurrent Enrollment	NOT EVALUATED FOR SCHOOLS IN THEIR FIRST YEAR OF OPERATIONS	NOT APPLICABLE
4c. Teacher and Staff Credentials	Legal obligations for public schools to employ appropriately qualified and credentialed staff including administrative, teaching, and educational support staff as required by law.	MEETS
4d. Employee Rights	Applicable state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to employment considerations.	MEETS
4e. Background Checks	Applicable state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to background checks of all applicable individuals (including stand and members of the charter community, where applicable).	MEETS

### SCHOOL COMPLIANCE WITH ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT PRACTICES

No limits to admission on any basis other than age group, grade level, or enrollment capacity	✓
No tuition charged	✓
Follows lottery enrollment laws	✓
Does not inquire about a student's special education status during the application process	✓
Accepts a variety of documents to establish a student's age and residency	✓
Does not inquire about a student or parent's U.S. citizenship status or immigration status	✓

## SCHOOL SPECIFIC NARRATIVE

Through a desk audit of documentation submitted by SOAR Academy, and in-person verification at the First Year Site Visit, the Commission monitored compliance with the school's obligation to protect the rights of all students. The Commission did not identify any areas of non-compliance.

For the 2016-17 school year, the school had assigned coordinators in place to fulfill its responsibilities under Section 504, Title IX, McKinney-Vento, Foster Care and state nondiscrimination laws. Each of the coordinators received training regarding their responsibilities. The Commission recommends SOAR continues to access formal training and technical assistance opportunities on an ongoing basis. SOAR included a nondiscrimination statement in all major school publications widely disseminated to students, parents, and employees. Furthermore, the school posted its sexual harassment policy and educational rights of homeless children and youth in accessible locations of the school's campus. The Commission verified that the school adopted discrimination complaint and appeal procedures and a sexual harassment policy and procedure that are consistent with the requirements in state law. SOAR has formalized methods of data collection and analysis as well as the ability to implement effective interventions throughout the course of the year regarding discrimination in course and program enrollment and discipline of students across subgroups. Furthermore, the school has a process for auditing instructional materials to evaluate and eliminate bias pertaining to a protected class in all textbooks and instructional materials.

Overall, SOAR Academy has removed barriers to the enrollment and retention of all students. Its application is available on its website and on campus and is translated into Spanish. The school follows admissions and enrollment practices outlined in RCW 28A.710.050 (not limiting admission on any basis other than age group, grade level, or enrollment capacity; not charging tuition; following lottery enrollment laws; revising enrollment capacity annually to facilitate the academic success of its students). Furthermore, SOAR Academy includes a Student Housing Questionnaire in its enrollment packet and includes a comprehensive Homeless Student Policy in its Family Handbook. The school identified a Foster Care/McKinney-Vento Liaison responsible for enrollment, accommodations, and transportation for eligible students and coordination of services with community agencies and entities.

Based on need, the school created a new bus stop to accommodate homeless students. SOAR staff provide intensive individualized help to families in need. Once a month, the school hosts parent advisory council meetings, where they provide food and build community with school administration present.

Following the 2016-17 school year, the State Auditor's Office (SAO) issued no findings in its [Accountability Audit Report](#) regarding teacher and staff credentials as tested through its evaluation of staff mix compliance.

As verified through compliance submissions based on the Annual Compliance Calendar, the Commission identified no areas of non-compliance related to employment considerations or background checks.

**DATA SOURCES:** *Commission Site Visit Report (if applicable), SAO Accountability Audit, Pre-Opening Conditions, Employee Handbook, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) Consolidated Program Review (CPR) (if applicable), Washington Integrated System of Monitoring (WISM) (if applicable)*

## 5. SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

MEASURE	THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATES COMPLIANCE WITH...	RATING
5a. Facilities and Transportation	Applicable state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to the school facilities, grounds, and transportation. A school may still meet standard if it was out of compliance in a minor area, or the school may have unknowingly been out of compliance in a major area, but immediately took action to negate any potential resulting problems.	MEETS
5b. Health and Safety	Applicable state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to safety and the provision of health-related services. A school may still meet standard if it was out of compliance in a minor area, or the school may have unknowingly been out of compliance in a major area, but immediately took action to negate any potential resulting problems.	MEETS
5c. Information Management	Applicable state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to maintaining and handling information appropriately. A school may still meet standard if it was out of compliance in a minor area, or the school may have unknowingly been out of compliance in a major area, but immediately took action to negate any potential resulting problems.	MEETS

### SCHOOL SPECIFIC NARRATIVE

Following the 2016-17 school year, the State Auditor’s Office (SAO) issued no findings in its [Accountability Audit Report](#) regarding transportation.

In 2016-2017, SOAR Academy’s facility met all health and safety code requirements, maintained compliance with legal obligations for providing student transportation and offered a safe environment conducive to learning. The facility’s design, size, maintenance, security, equipment and furniture were all adequate to meet the school’s needs. The school was accessible to all, including people with physical disabilities. The Commission’s pre-opening compliance monitoring of health and safety code requirements did not reveal any significant concerns related to these obligations.

Schools participating in the United State Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) School Meal Programs are required to have an Administrative Review from the Office of Superintendent of Instruction (OSPI) every three years. The Administrative Review is a comprehensive evaluation of school meal programs to ensure that program regulations and requirements are being met. During the 2016-17 school year, SOAR Academy participated in the Review. Auditors identified several findings, but the school addressed them immediately through corrective action and without any consequence to student health and safety. SOAR Academy submitted all of the required safety plans during the re-opening process, and provided evidence that lock down and fire drills were conducted. SOAR submitted all of the required safety plans during the re-opening process, and provided evidence that lock down and fire drills were conducted.

In 2016-17, SOAR Academy maintained compliance with public records requirements, proper and secure maintenance of student, governance, and finance records, rules and regulations regarding transferring of student records. The school follows proper safety and security procedures to ensure safe testing administration. Rainier Prep identified an Assessment Coordinator who has provided training to all staff.

**DATA SOURCES:** *Commission Site Visit Report (if applicable), SAO Accountability Audit, Pre-Opening Conditions, USDA Administrative Review*

## 6. MISSION SPECIFIC NON-ACADEMIC GOALS

MEASURE	THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATES COMPLIANCE WITH...	RATING
6a. Student Attendance	SOAR Academy will average 95% or higher daily student attendance each school year.	DOES NOT MEET

### SCHOOL SPECIFIC NARRATIVE

Each year, Commission authorized charter schools set mission specific non-academic goals that are aligned to or support the school's unique mission. All data for mission specific goals is self-reported by the individual school.

In 2016-17, SOAR set its goal around student attendance. The school reports average daily attendance of **87%**. Due to several factors, including higher than expected enrollments by students experiencing housing insecurity, one particular health need experienced by a child (who as a result was absent more than half the year), and a number of students who had moved but not been formally dis-enrolled for some time SOAR did not meet its goal. SOAR has invested in a Dean of Students to oversee school/home connections in the 17-18 school year.

**DATA SOURCES:** *based on school-specific non-academic goal, in conjunction with the school.*

