



Sage Collegiate Public Charter School

Our Mission: Driven by excellence for all in a supportive, rigorous, and ambitious school community, Sage Collegiate Public Charter School educates K-8 students for academic achievement, college success, and a life of opportunity.

TO: Melissa Mackedon, SPCSA Board Chair
Rebecca Feiden, SPCSA Executive Director
Mark Modrcin, SPCSA Director of Authorizing

FROM: Jennifer Braster, Board Chair, Sage Collegiate
Sandra Kinne, Executive Director, Sage Collegiate

RE: March Board Meeting Update

DATE: Tuesday, March 1, 2022

BACKGROUND & CONDITIONS

Sage Collegiate was authorized in November 2020 and expected to open in August 2021 with K-2. In June 2021, we requested deferment to the 2022-23 school year based on enrollment, facilities, and the continued pandemic. The Authority approved our deferral, with conditions related to facility procurement. Those conditions were met in November 2021.

In October 2021, the SPCSA approved a Good Clause Exemption request related to our then-identified facility and a zip code matter. In November 2021, the SPCSA approved an amendment request to adjust our enrollment from 168 to 224 in Year 1; from 460 to 588 in Year 6 (the final year of the current authorization contract); and from 520 to 756 at capacity.

As part of our conditions for authorization in November 2020, we had three conditions related to Facilities, Partnerships, and Special Education. These conditions were met in the required timeline.

GENERAL UPDATES

We share these updates with the SPCSA board and staff.

▪ FACILITIES

RedHook, our facility partner, closes this week on the property at 4100 W. Charleston Blvd. (The zip code is officially 89102 but 89107 by Google measures. It's not at all confusing.) Renovations are expected to begin next week, and given the July 18 TOC deadline with the authorizer, we are on track to meet that goal. We will work on a backup plan for two weeks of space should the TOC not be secured by this day. We anticipate the school sign going up at the property any day now.

▪ STUDENT ENROLLMENT

We had our Founding Year Lottery last Thursday, Feb. 24th. We needed the lottery for 3rd grade and were just one seat shy of needing it for Kindergarten. We currently have a waitlist in three grade levels: Kindergarten, 2nd grade, and 3rd grade.



Our current enrollment is as follows:

Grade	Seats Available	Accepted	Enrolled*	Waitlist
Kinder	56	60	-	12
1 st grade	56	49	1	0
2 nd grade	56	31	-	1
3 rd grade	28	31	-	4
4 th grade	28	14	-	0
5 th grade	28	16	1	0
Total	224	201	2	17

Our focus, clearly, is converting all of our accepted students to enrolled students and continuing to recruit for all grade levels so as to ensure all seats are filled and have a robust waitlist. Moving students to ‘enrolled’ status includes supporting families to complete the submission of all the required documentation. Given we are a brand-new school, and we want to ensure students’ enrollment packets are complete, we have given families until Sunday, March 13th to complete the enrollment process post-lottery. Beyond that, we will offer families five days to process their enrollment. Once instruction has begun, we plan a 72-hour turnaround time to ensure students are in seats and do not miss out on critical instruction time.

In the few days since our lottery, we’ve noted that address verification, birth certificates, and parent identification are the quickest for families to submit, but that transcripts and immunization records are taking longer for families to gather. To support families with the enrollment process, our team has/will host two office hours at the West Charleston Library. This partner is only two miles from our campus and provides us an opportunity to emphasize our focus on literacy. We hosted our lottery at the library last week, too, and had a full room of attendees, including the Executive Director of CSAN. [We also thank Mr. Modrcin for attending to provide oversight and ensure compliance of our inaugural lottery.]

In addition to the required enrollment documents, we’ve asked families to take a post-lottery survey. This survey includes questions related to before/after care programming (so we can best align our planning and partner to meet families’ needs); uniform sizes; family¹ representation on our Governing Board; and free/reduced lunch status (again, for planning purposes).

Based on the families that have taken our survey, **61 percent of students qualify for free/reduced lunch**, a proxy for socioeconomic status. This tracks with our anticipated FRL population given the community demographics and FRL population of district schools within our authorized zip code. We anticipate this number increasing based on the responses by families, thus far, who are unsure if their child qualifies as they child will be in kindergarten and/or their child has not attended yet school.

▫ **Family and Community Engagement**

Family and Community Engagement has been top of mind for us given five factors:

1. **Enrollment.** We want to meet our enrollment goals, and repeated, consistent engagement with families is critical to doing so.

¹ For clarification purposes, the words families and parents are used interchangeably at Sage Collegiate to represent individuals with the extended family of a student or persons with a legitimate interest in the student and who are the student’s legal guardian(s).



2. **Facility factor.** We are a new, independent school with a facility that is not ready for tours, which are of interest to prospective families. Absent tours, we want to have continuous opportunities to showcase our school and help families understand our educational program in other ways.
3. **New to the community.** Families in our immediate community have had a lack of access to public schools of choice, and in several conversations are unclear about the concept of charters. (i.e., Families think we won't enroll students with IEPs; we do. Families think there is a charge for charter schools; there is not.) It's important to us that families in our community understand that we are a public school and open to all students, and the more engagement we have with them, the better their understanding of charters as a whole.
4. **The pandemic.** The pandemic led to limited opportunities with which to engage with families, and we are excited to have a number of opportunities with which to build our school community and culture before the start of the 2022-23 school year.
5. **Our core tenets.** Our core tenet of "It Takes a Village" focuses on parents and families as partners. We want to live up to this tenet in our enrollment and pre-opening process, and engagement is critical to this. We have demonstrated this with our community partners, including organizations who signed letters of support/MOUs on our behalf. We are hosting events that bring new attendees to their space (i.e., Springs Preserve, the library, the Y); rented space to contribute to their work (i.e., the library, Springs Preserve); and have meaningful partner relations where mutual support of each other's missions is evident (i.e., Leaders in Training, Springs Preserve).

To this focus on enrollment/student recruitment, we have participated in a number of community events, including the Springs Preserve's Black History Month event and tabling at Meadows Mall. We also have several upcoming events in the next few weeks in which we are participating:

- **Acelero Community Partner meeting:** This is an opportunity to share information about our school and engage with prospective families.
- **As They Grow Consignment Sale:** This quarterly event has moved to the 89108-zip code, which is in our targeted community for recruitment. We've been a previous co-sponsor at this event and plan to sponsor a table at the upcoming in-person pop-up.
- **Books & Basketball:** We are hosting this event with our local partner, the Heinrich Y, to celebrate both the madness that is March and literacy. Students will have the opportunity to earn a book for every basket they make, while we discuss our program with families.
- **Foster Care Resource Fair:** We will sponsor a table to share information with current and prospective foster families at this event hosted by the Department of Family Services.
- **Touch-a-Truck:** After a two-plus year absence, this event resumes in April. We are a table sponsor and will have activities related to the theme of the event, literacy, and sensory development.

Additionally, to support recruitment and enrollment efforts, we have continued a social media ad campaign with our partner, Mattlerlab; we have consistent presence and updates on our social media; and we launched a new "[For Families](#)" tab on our school website to ensure consistent and transparent sharing of information with families and prospective families.

We look forward to answering questions at the March 4th SPCSA Board meeting and hope this meets with the Authority's approval.

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