



## 2021 UMSL Annual Review Report: Part 2 The Soulard School

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### NOTE:

In the Evidence columns, under Required Documents:

- Documents in **bold blue** must be submitted to the Charter School Office.
- Documents in **bold black** must be on hand, but do not need to be submitted to the Charter School Office.

## Summary of Findings

Please note that the comments in this report reflect our analysis as of the end of the 2020-2021 school year.

### Areas of Strength

- Established an adequate fund balance.
- Ensured academic growth, despite the challenges of the pandemic.

### Area for Growth

- Implementing sound internal controls and financial policies and procedures.
- Ensuring all students make at least one year of growth annually.

**IX. Substantive Student Academic Achievement**

Standards	Indicators	Evidence
<p>A. Sets and meets clear, meaningful, and measurable academic goals and student learning objectives as stated in the charter through an accountability plan (performance contract) with its sponsor.</p> <p>B. Demonstrates high expectations for student achievement.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Articulates its curricular content and performance standards, including minimum student performance standards for advancement or graduation.</li> <li>2) Student achievement targets in the accountability plan (performance contract) propel students towards proficient and advanced scores on state assessments and success in future educational and occupational settings.</li> <li>3) Uses multiple forms of assessment, including growth measures assessments, to inform instructional decision making.</li> <li>4) Implements assessments that collect data about students' short-term acquisition and long-term mastery of essential knowledge.</li> <li>5) Analyzes assessments to gauge students' progress towards meeting school performance goals and makes instructional adjustments, as needed, to improve student achievement.</li> <li>6) Tracks and disseminates growth data for students over time using both norm-referenced measures and state assessments.</li> <li>7) Closes the achievement gap among sub-groups of students.</li> <li>8) Complies with the accountability plan (performance contract) established with its sponsor.</li> <li>9) Maintains an attendance rate that aligns with the school's performance contract.</li> <li>10) Maintains a high graduation rate (secondary schools) that aligns with the school's performance contract.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Required Documents:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Performance Contract</b></li> </ul> <hr/> <p><b>Other Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Teacher and instructional coordinator interviews</li> <li>● Internal formative and summative assessment data</li> <li>● MSIP-5 student achievement, attendance and retention data</li> </ul>

Element IX: Student Achievement	
Areas of Strength	Areas for Growth
<p><b>GENERAL NOTE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to the pandemic, the state of Missouri did not administer MAP tests in spring, 2020. Neither the state nor UMSL has current student achievement data to analyze for school performance in this area.</li> </ul>	
<p><u>Introduction</u></p> <p>The last 2 years have presented challenges in assessing student achievement on state assessments in comparison to previous years in the same school and in comparison to similar public schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SY 2020: DESE states, “On March 19, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) announced the spring 2020 Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) assessments would not be administered, including Grade-Level (GLA), End-Course (EOC) and Missouri Assessment Program-Alternate (MAP-A) exams. Assessment data is not available for the 2020 school year.”</li> <li>• SY 2021: Statewide assessments were administered, but DESE advised that results were not to be used for accountability purposes.</li> </ul> <p>Because state assessment data are not to be considered for accountability purposes in SY 2021, the UMSL CSO amended the charter Performance Contract, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>UMSL will not populate the cells in section E of its performance contracts with state assessment data from 2021 to compare against the performance targets listed in the 2021 column and will not hold The Soulard School accountable for reaching these targets.</i></li> <li>• <i>Upon completion of the 2020-2021 school year; UMSL and The Soulard School will determine the feasibility of adjusting the performance targets in section E for subsequent school years; allowing for the possibility that UMSL might not hold The Soulard School accountable for reaching the performance targets listed in section E columns for 2022 and beyond.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Internal Assessments</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Regarding internal assessments of student achievement,</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>The Soulard School will:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <i>Within constraints arising from the pandemic and to the best of its ability:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Administer a nationally normed assessment for student achievement in ELA and math to all students at least twice during the 2020-21 school year.</i></li> <li>• <i>Establish individual student growth targets based on data from the assessment(s).</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

- *Share the data from the assessment(s) with UMSL.*
- *At the end of the 2020-2021 school year, share findings related to individual student annual growth outcomes with UMSL.*
- *UMSL will NOT:*
  - *Hold The Soulard School accountable for students reaching their individual growth targets based on data from the internal assessments administered in 2020-21.*
- *UMSL will:*
  - *Incorporate internal assessment outcomes related to individual student growth in its 2021 annual review report; specifically, in the section on student academic achievement.*

#### *Comparisons with SLPS Schools*

- *UMSL may compare The Soulard School's 2020-2021 state assessment outcomes with those of comparable schools within St. Louis Public Schools; with the understanding that the comparison will account for variance in the attendance models (in-person, fixed-blended and virtual) each school followed, including shifts between the models through the school year.*

After the assessments were administered in SY21, and DESE has revealed that LEA-level data will be made available publicly on December 1, 2021, but it is unlikely school-level data will be released, the UMSL CSO has determined only internal assessment data will be reported. Comparisons to SLPS schools will not be made because comparison data is not available.

#### Internal Data

*\* Analysis is pulled directly from a summative report submitted by Sarah Christman, of TSS.*

#### **STAR Assessment Data by Demographics**

	LITERACY				MATH		
Demographic	# of Students Taking the EOY Assessment	# of Students Meeting Growth Goals	% of Students Meeting Growth Goals		# of Students Taking the EOY Assessment	# of Students Meeting Growth Goals	% of Students Meeting Growth Goals
ALL	115	79	69%		91	59	65%
FRL - Does not Qualify	89	65	73%		71	51	72%
FRL - Qualifies	26	14	54%		20	8	40%
Black	17	6	35%		12	3	25%
Hispanic	3	1	33%		1	0	0%
Multi-Racial	7	5	71%		6	4	67%
White	88	68	77%		72	52	72%

**STAR Assessment Data by Grade**

	LITERACY				MATH		
Grade	# of Students Taking the EOY Assessment	# of Students Meeting Growth Goals	% of Students Meeting Growth Goals		# of Students Taking the EOY Assessment	# of Students Meeting Growth Goals	% of Students Meeting Growth Goals
ALL	115	79	69%		91	59	65%
Kindergarten	23	19	83%		N/A	N/A	N/A
1st Grade	22	12	55%		21	18	82%
2nd Grade	21	18	86%		21	16	76%
3rd Grade	18	7	39%		19	8	42%
4th Grade	20	14	70%		18	12	67%
5th Grade	11	9	82%		11	5	45%

**Findings:**

- ELA:
  - 69% met growth goals, overall.
  - Students in K, 2nd, 4th and 5th grades met growth goals at significantly higher percentages.
- Math:
  - 65% met growth goals, overall.
  - Students in 1st, 2nd and 4th grades met growth goals at significantly higher percentages.
- Overall

- There is a large discrepancy between white and multi-racial students meeting growth goals and black and hispanic students meeting growth goals, with the latter meeting less frequently.
- There is a large discrepancy between students who qualify for free or reduced lunch meeting growth goals and students who do not qualify for free or reduced lunch meeting growth goals, with the latter meeting more frequently.

**Conclusion**

The challenges of understanding student growth during the 2020-2021 school year were many, as schools adjusted to meet students’ needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Conditions for administering assessments were less than ideal; platforms for learning were varied between virtual, on-site, and hybrid models; students and staff were operating with additional stressors and trauma.

Even with the challenges, the majority of students at The Soulard Schools met growth goals. The Soulard School did an excellent job of providing support and ensuring students continued to learn despite the challenges of the pandemic.

**IX. Sound Financial Operations**

Standards	Indicators	Evidence
<p>A. Fulfills its fiduciary responsibility for public funds by ensuring the school operates in a fiscally sound and appropriate manner.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Preserves a minimum of three percent budget surplus.</li> <li>2) Maintains accessible and appropriate fiscal records.</li> <li>3) Core Data and other required school reporting is conducted in a timely and appropriate manner.</li> <li>4) Conducts an annual financial audit.</li> <li>5) Ensures that school business and expenses, including personnel, are made free of conflict of interest and directed toward meeting the mission of the school through:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Board review of monthly check register</li> <li>b) Oversight of credit card expenses</li> <li>c) Oversight of cash management</li> <li>d) Monitoring attendance reporting</li> <li>e) Provision of insurance coverage including:</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<p><b>Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Annual Secretary to the Board Report (ASBR)</b></li> <li>● <b>Independent Annual Audit</b></li> <li>● <b>Cash Flow Projection and Analysis</b></li> <li>● <b>Annual Debt Report</b></li> <li>● <b>Tear Sheet and Invoice for Locally Published Annual Audit</b></li> <li>● <b>Monthly Check Registers</b></li> <li>● <b>Monthly Bank Statements and Cash Reconciliations</b></li> <li>● <b>Quarterly Reports</b></li> <li>● <b>Proof of Insurance Statements</b></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Director and Officers</li> <li>ii) Employee Dishonesty</li> <li>iii) General Liability</li> <li>iv) Professional Liability</li> <li>v) Property</li> <li>vi) Workmen’s Compensation</li> </ul>	<p><b>Other Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Interview with CFO</li> <li>● Payroll and retirement records</li> <li>● Core Data Reports</li> <li>● Evidence in board minutes that the check register has been reviewed and approved by the board.</li> </ul>
B. Establishes clear fiscal policies that use public funds appropriately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Adhere to an adopted and board approved fiscal policy and procedures manual.</li> <li>2) Ensure fiscal policies include procedures for the authorization of purchases and release of funds</li> <li>3) Adopt a budget by June 30 for the upcoming fiscal year .</li> <li>4) Ensure that the budgeting process maintains a direct focus on teaching and learning needs with a fiscal balance to cover expenses with revenue.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Annual Budget</b></li> <li>● <b>Monthly Financial Statements</b></li> <li>● <b>Banking Information</b></li> <li>● <b>Account Coding Data FED/LEA</b></li> <li>● <b>Internal Control Policies and Procedures</b></li> <li>● <b>Procurement Policy</b></li> <li>● <b>Federally Funded Purchase Inventory</b></li> </ul>
		<p><b>Other Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Interview with CFO</li> <li>● Approved board meeting minutes</li> </ul>
C. Ensures financial resources are directly related to the school’s purpose: student achievement and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Ensure that the school’s physical space, materials, and supplies are conducive to accomplishing the charter’s school-wide learning goals as specified in the charter.</li> <li>2) Establish policies to ensure that contracts reflect fair market value.</li> <li>3) Determine compensation levels for employees that are appropriate for the positions and responsibilities and that are consistent with industry norms</li> </ul>	<p><b>Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Staff Salary Records (including average staff salary)</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Other Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Building walk-through</li> <li>● Classroom observations</li> <li>● Vendor contracts</li> </ul>

**Element X: Financial Operations**

In review of information provided by The Soulard School the following is the analysis of The Soulard School’s financial picture, with Janice Denigan’s recommendations:



- FY20 ending fund balance reported on the ASBR was 28.05%; \$329,338.63
- FY21 ending fund balance reported on the ASBR was 20.02%; \$278,486

Concerns - No concerns.

#### Standard A

- ASBR: The ASBR was filed on time.
- Independent Annual Audit: Complete.
  - The FY20 Audit was approved by the Board and submitted to DESE late.
  - There were several findings related to internal controls, segregation of duties, tracking and releasing restricted contributions, and updating policies and procedures. The school has responded with corrective action plans that have been determined to be sufficient.
- Annual Debt Report: The school received an SBA PPP Forgiveness Loan in FY20. The loan was forgiven in FY21; the other loan is submitted via the Missouri Accountability Portal.
- Audit Published: FY20 was published in St. Louis American.
- Evidence - Information provided by Susan Marino, Janice Denigan, and Shannon Spradling.

#### Recommendations

- Ensure audit is submitted on time and corrective action plans are adhered to for the purpose of correcting the audit's findings.
- Recommend that based on the audit letter comments, inter-agency transfers need to be documented to the Sponsor. Suggest that TSS prepare a schedule quarterly on any such inter-agencies transfers including but not limited to shared staff salaries, donations/contribution revenue and donated space. Haven't yet - most after audit to right from findings; donations from SEC; use same HI so SEC pays back HI; SEC pays portion of teacher's salaries and lunches
- Recommend that if not in place, the board prepares a policy on donating space versus renting space.
- Ensure that expenses charged to the IDEA grant are supplementing not supplanting. (feels unnecessary)
- Recommend that if not in place, credit card statements be approved by the board or board finance committee

#### Standard B

- Annual Budget: Board approved and amendments were made as presented for FY21 and current year FY22.
- Monthly Financial Statements: Monthly financial statements are reviewed and approved by the Board and published on website
- Banking Information: Cash is invested at Commercial Bank.
- Account Coding: Coding is in compliance with DESE Financial Accounting requirements

Recommendations - None

#### Standard C

- Board approves all hiring agreements (approve % raise and salary range): research if this is required

- The average teaching salary in FY21 is \$38,245

Recommendations

- Recommend that if not in place, the board approves either via staff contracts or board minutes, the salaries, benefits and other costs both indirect and direct for staff that is shared with other agencies.