

## SIC REPORT PURPOSE

“This report is issued by the Aiken Scholars Academy School Improvement Council in accordance with the South Carolina law to share information on the school’s progress in meeting various goals and objectives, the work of the SIC and other accomplishments during the school year”



## 2019-2020 MEMBERSHIP

### Elected Members

Dr. Thomas Burns, Parent – Chair  
Dr. Tim Lintner, Community Member – Vice-Chair  
Alex Wilson, Student – Secretary  
Gavin McGillivary, Student  
Melinda Derr, Parent  
Lori James, Teacher  
Anne Poplin, Teacher

### Appointed Members

Andrew Hendrix, Community Member – USC Aiken  
Grace Preston, Community Member – Alison South Marketing Company  
Dr. Tim Lintner, Community Member – USC Aiken

### Ex-Officio Members

Martha Messick, Principal  
Ann Alyse Messick, Student Body President  
Amy Christensen, PTO President



*THANK YOU to our partner U of SC Aiken for their continued support!*

# ANNUAL REPORT TO PARENTS 2020



## AIKEN SCHOLARS ACADEMY

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# MISSION



The Mission of Aiken County Public Schools, the emerging premier school district, is to cultivate future-ready students to serve our evolving community and world through an innovative, literacy-focused school system distinguished by

- \* rigorous, personalized learning opportunities
- \* highly effective, service-driven professionals; and
- \* mutually beneficial partnerships.



**AIKEN SCHOLARS ACADEMY**

Our vision is to create an environment that focuses on the whole student where we facilitate the learning process in order to build the knowledge and skills geared towards preparing scholars for their future. We will accomplish this by providing scholars with a unique educational experience immersed in the college atmosphere. In collaboration with the University of South Carolina Aiken, ASA provides a high-quality education through rigorous high school and college coursework in a nurturing and supportive learning environment to prepare scholars for entrance into an ever-changing and advanced society.

## FOLLOW US



Aiken Scholars Academy



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# SIC GOALS

The second year of Aiken Scholars Academy has been one of unrelenting growth and development. We continue to strengthen the foundation of the school through refinement of the academic program and day-to-day school processes, while maintaining focus on the school's vision. The SIC plays a significant role in examining ways to promote school improvement. In 2019-2020 ASA's SIC maintained goals centered on Scholar Recruitment, Scholar Retention and Parent Involvement.

## SCHOLAR RECRUITMENT



Recruitment begins with community outreach designed to create an awareness and basic understanding of the tremendous opportunity awaiting ASA students. Our goal remains to enhance recruiting through targeted efforts based on student performance data in middle school, maintaining an active social media presence and engaging current Scholars and their families in recruiting efforts. Increasing our promotions through professional videography clips will be

key in further promoting the school.

## SCHOLAR RETENTION



Retention begins with the recruitment of the right students, as well as providing a nurturing environment that promotes learning and meets the individual needs of each student. As part of our goal, we look to provide engaging opportunities for Scholars to pursue areas not traditionally part of the academic school day, such as increased extra-curricular experiences, job shadowing, internships and promotion of summer programs.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT



Parental involvement is a fundamental component to the success of any school. The SIC recognizes the need in the new program to promote opportunities for parents and other stakeholders to be engaged. SIC hopes to support the foundation of the PTO, as well as explore additional opportunities for parent engagement.

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Scholars are required to participate in a minimum of 20 hours of documented community service annually. As a school, we also value the experiences and expertise of the community and enjoy having them be a part of our Lunch and Learn Series, as well as the Black History Month Celebration and support field trips.

*“Building relationships with and learning how to give back to the community is something that ASA values immensely.”*

## 2019-2020 OUTREACH EXPERIENCES

- \* ACPSD Annual Day of Caring – Scholars and their families planted new flower beds at the entrance, painted the RPSEC sign and did a campus wide clean up at UofSC Aiken.
- \* RPSEC Annual S.E.E.D. – Scholars sponsored the straw tower building competition and examined the anniversary of the Periodic Table.
- \* Spooky To Be Hungry – Scholars collected canned goods for our local Harvest Hope Food Bank. Raising in total over 3000 food items.
- \* One Table – Scholars and their families joined USC Aiken in an event to raise food for North Aiken Elementary.
- \* National Job Shadowing – 69% of Scholars participated visiting local businesses.
- \* Blessing Box – Beta Club collaborated with the Aiken Junior Woman’s Club to support the box installed on the USCA campus.
- \* Most Amazing Drive of the Year – Student Council sponsored a drive to support the Cumbee Center to Assist Abused persons. In total the school raised over 1300 items in two weeks.
- \* At the end of 2019, Scholars had completed over 1050 hours of service in Aiken.



# ASA BELIEFS & VALUES

- \* It is our obligation to provide a safe and secure learning environment for all scholars.
- \* The success of our scholars is dependent on our ability to develop a thriving culture where we cultivate positive and long-lasting relationships, embrace diversity, communicate effectively, and provide support for the developmental and academic needs of our student body. We firmly believe in developing the whole child and preparing scholars for success in school, work, and life.
- \* Student achievement is reliant on our providing access to meaningful and engaging learning experiences with a focus on academic excellence and preparation for future learning. School is not the sole, or perhaps even primary, place of learning, but rather it is a point of departure for learning in all areas of life. Our belief is that we facilitate the learning process and build within scholars the ability to make connections between their knowledge and its application to the world beyond the secondary classroom.
- \* Effective and consistent communication is key to the success of our family. We value input from students, parents, and our community, and we encourage openness via appropriate channels of communication.
- \* Celebrating the efforts and accomplishments of scholars, while continuing to promote both academic and personal growth, is vital in the development of each scholar.
- \* We believe in working cohesively with our school family and local community. Scholars and faculty have a responsibility to sponsor and provide for our local community through service learning.



# SCHOLAR ATTRIBUTES

The **SCHOLAR** profile represents attributes valued by the Aiken Scholars Academy Family. We believe these attributes foster positive character development and support life-long learning.

**SERVICE** – We selflessly give of our time and resources by helping others. We strive to make a positive impact within our community and the world we live in with gratitude.

**CURIOSITY** – We nurture our curiosity through investigation and discovery. We develop our skills through exploration, inquisitiveness and research, which fosters our passion for learning.

**HONOR** – We act with integrity and dignity at all times. We show empathy, respect and compassion to all those around us, even if they are different. We acknowledge the achievements and accomplishments of all.

**OWNERSHIP** – We take responsibility for our actions and beliefs and willingly commit to complete our best work. We will accept the consequences of our commitments and show pride in our results. We evaluate our actions and grow from our experiences.

**LIFE-LONG LEARNER** – We seek to develop skills to support our learning and personal development through both classroom and personal experiences. We are self-driven and continue to explore knowledge that will support our growth and development throughout our lifetime.

**ADVOCACY** – We thoughtfully and respectfully speak up for our beliefs and ideas. We possess dignity in our actions while we prudently consider the beliefs and ideas of others. We will use our voices to speak for those who may not yet be able to advocate for themselves.

**RESILIENCE** – We are adaptable and resilient in the face of adversity. We persevere through obstacles resourcefully in a way that supports our learning and personal development.

# DEMOGRAPHICS

ASA is made up of a diverse group of students who represent Aiken County from different middle school experiences ranging from homeschool, public, parochial and virtual educational programs. They each bring with them unique experiences and outlooks on their future.

- \* 67% Female, 33% Male
- \* Asian 3%, Black/AA 12, Hispanic 7%, Pacific Islander 1%, Two More 1%, White 76%
- \* 24% Free/Reduced Lunch

# ACHIEVEMENTS

- \* 2019 End of Year Academic Data:
  - o 80% earned a qualifying score on AP Human Geography Exam
  - o 82% earned a qualifying score on AP Seminar exam
  - o The average combined SAT score was 1163, almost 50 points above the total group mean (n=38)
- \* January 2020- 100% Pass Rate Biology EOC with 21 perfect scores
- \* Inducted 26 Scholars into BETA Club and named 2020 National BETA Club School of Merit
- \* Academic Team won seven of twelve matches finishing as one of the top 3 schools in the district before COVID-19 closures.
- \* Student Council was awarded the Silver Honor Award from SCASC for their efforts to instill school pride.
- \* Ann Alyse Messick – SCASC 2020 Terry McCoy Hall of Fame Inductee
- \* Michelle Dent – 2020 Celebration of Character Recipient
- \* Lori James – 2020 ASA Teacher of the Year
- \* Stephanie House – 2020 ASA GEM of the Year

