

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"



2020-2021 MEMBERSHIP

Elected Members

Dr. Thomas Burns, Parent – Chair
Mara Newman, Student – Secretary
Gavin McGillivray, Student
Alex Wilson, Student
Melinda Derr, Parent
Dr. Anne Poplin, Teacher
Cheri Watkins, Teacher

Appointed Members

Grace Helms, Community Member – SRP – Vice-Chair
Hailey Knight, Community Member – ADDA
Dr. Tim Lintner, Community Member – USC Aiken

Ex-Officio Members

Martha Messick, Principal
Kayla Goldschmidt, Student Body President
Amy Christensen, PTO President



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

ANNUAL REPORT TO PARENTS 2021



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.

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Aiken Scholars Academy



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SIC GOALS

The third year of Aiken Scholars Academy was filled with continued 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 2020-2021 ASA's SIC developed goals aligned directly with the School Renewal Plan, focusing primarily on components of School Climate.

SCHOLAR RECRUITMENT & RETENTION



Goal: Establish a welcoming and supportive environment where we consistently question effectiveness, respond to need and promote improvement. Action Steps Taken:

1. Refining application components and interview process.
2. Creating a survey for new students regarding reasons for attending.
3. Creating a survey for current Juniors regarding their needs, experiences with Phoenix to Pacer and ways they

can mentor and connect with younger Scholars.

PROMOTING INTERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES



Goal: Develop a robust set of internship opportunities for Scholars across a broad spectrum of fields.

Action Steps Taken:

1. Conduct a student survey on desired internships (type, duration, etc.).
2. Identify and communicate UofSC Aiken internships in STEM, Business and Liberal Arts areas.
3. Identify and communicate external internships in STEM, Business and Liberal Arts areas.

BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



Goal: Expand community partnerships with external business and entities to increase the ASA support base.

Action Steps Taken:

1. Create Linked-In account.
2. Take steps for the school to become part of the Aiken and North Augusta Chamber of Commerce.
3. Add questioning component to all communications to

research effectiveness of media outlets.

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 events.

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

2020-2021 OUTREACH EXPERIENCES

- * Service Hours- At the end of 2020, despite the interruption of Covid-19 and the inability of Scholars to complete their required service hours, nearly 1000 hours of community service were documented by students.
- * Spooky To Be Hungry – Scholars collected canned goods for our local Harvest Hope Food Bank.
- * One Table – Scholars joined UofSC Aiken in an event to raise food and school supplies for Warrenville Elementary.
- * Most Amazing Drive of the Year –Student Council sponsored a drive to support the Children’s Place Aiken. In total, the school raised over 300 item, including toys, books and diapers that students delivered to the organization.



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.
- * 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. 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.

DEMOGRAPHICS

ASA is made up of a diverse group of students who represent all attendance areas in Aiken County.

- * 63% Female, 37% Male
- * Asian 5%, Black/African American 13%, Hispanic 5%, Two or More 2%, White 74%
- * 24% Free/Reduced Lunch

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.



ACHIEVEMENTS

- * 2020 End of Year Academic Data:
 - 94.4% of total students earned a Qualifying score on AP Exams
- * Alyssa Perkins and Alex Wilson participated in Summer Scholars Institute at UofSC Aiken, a paid internship where they supported faculty research.
- * EOC Data January 2021-
 - 100% Pass Rate Biology EOC
 - 100% Pass Rate English 2H
- * BETA Club inducted 25 new members into and was named 2021 National BETA Club School of Merit
- * Science Team Placed 4th in the Forensics Competition at the Science Olympiad with Laura Cutler and Isabella Peralta participating.
- * Student Council was awarded the Gold Honor Award from SCASC
- * Isabella Peralta – SCASC 2021 Terry McCoy Hall of Fame Inductee for being named Outstanding Student Council Member of the Year.
- * Luka Djolic – 2021 Celebration of Character Recipient
- * Alyson Moots – 2021 ASA Teacher of the Year

