



ALABAMA SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS 5 YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN



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Alabama School of Fine Arts



2020.

Does it conjure up thoughts of a ticking clock on Sunday evening, or perfect vision, or the very distant future?

Not so.

Educators, politicians and policy wonks are pondering what education will look like in 2020. A different world requires different skills. Our State Board of Education has even adopted Alabama's "Plan 2020" to insure that our state's students will have the necessary skills for success whether they choose a 2-year or 4-year institution, or directly enter the work force...all by the year 2020.

The impact of ASFA's new five-year strategic plan on our school and its students is high. 2020 is a leap year for all of us. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, "The future depends on what you do today." Digging deep and developing our strategy, our perfect vision, of what ASFA must be in the year 2020 is crucial. HIGH FIVE: ASFA's Strategic Plan 2014-2019 is the result of that need.

To begin this process, we surveyed stakeholders to gauge those historically unique contributing factors that have made ASFA's students successful over the past 43 years. The results of seeking feedback from parents, faculty, students and alumni found commonalities in several areas of strength as well as in areas for improvement. In total, 486 respondents participated in this study. Overall, more than 8 in 10 respondents gave ASFA an A or B (84%), with almost half of the respondents giving ASFA an A (46%). Although there were significant differences in the important categories between the 3 stakeholder groups, they all agreed on the importance of developing a student's talent, the quality of teachers, and preparing students for the future. There were also several key areas cited for improvements, including inter-departmental relationships and coordination, and strengthening ASFA's financial security. These commonalities helped form the backbone of our road map to crafting a successful document.

My profound thanks go to all who participated in this effort—members of the Strategic Planning Team, those dozens of committed participants during our planning retreat, as well as the individuals responding to our surveys. What we have achieved is not an end result but the beginning of a new and vital vision.

To all of you, a hearty HIGH FIVE! Not for what we've accomplished with the creation of this plan, but for what we accomplish because of it.

With sincere gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. ...", is written below the text.

Executive Summary

Overview

On June 4-5, 2014, Dr. Michael W. Meeks, Executive Director, Alabama School of Fine Arts (ASFA), convened a two-day strategic planning conference in Birmingham, Alabama. Twenty-nine stakeholders (strategic planners) attended the conference representing ASFA's leadership, administration, faculty, parents, foundation, and students (See Strategic Planners at Appendix B). The conference resulted in the development of an ASFA strategic plan for the period August 2014 to July 2019 that aligns key stakeholders toward a shared strategic direction.

The Current State

The conference began with a current state assessment by the strategic planners. This assessment acknowledged the external trends and forces impacting ASFA and examined ASFA's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Based on the current state assessment, the planners identified the following strategic challenges facing AFSA.

Strategic Challenges

- Future growth and appealing curriculum in a constrained budget environment.
- Awareness of ASFA's uniqueness while balancing arts and academic excellence.
- Unity of team spirit among core faculty, specialty faculty, and administrative staff.
- Recruiting qualified students and faculty geographically and demographically representative of the State of Alabama.
- Cultivating effective partnerships and engaging key AFSA stakeholders.

Road Map to the Future

With a shared understanding of the current state, the strategic planners revised the planning assumptions, reviewed the mission, and developed a vision statement. The planners then engaged in a discussion of ideas regarding the direction ASFA should take over the next five years. These ideas were organized into the following six strategic focus areas.

Strategic Focus Areas

- **Curriculum** - Optimization of student learning and student engagement.
- **Student Recruitment** - Qualified and demographically diverse student body.
- **Alumni** - Engaged alumni and student families who support ASFA.
- **Community** - A culture of mutual respect, trust, and commitment.
- **Marketing** - Resilient ASFA identity with community and political support.
- **Fiscal Policy** - Stable funding and prudent spending that meets ASFA financial needs.

About Alabama School of Fine Arts

History

ASFA is a partially residential public school authorized and funded by the Alabama Legislature to provide tuition-free instruction to impassioned students, grades 7-12. The school provides focused specialty instruction in six specialties: Creative Writing, Dance, Mathematics/Science, Music, Theatre Arts, and Visual Arts, plus core academic courses necessary to earn an Alabama high school diploma. Admission is by audition only.

The school began with a group of Birmingham arts community leaders, who acquired discretionary funding from Governor Lurleen Wallace in 1967 to support after-school instructional programs based in community arts agencies.

In 1971, the Legislature approved a resolution formally establishing the school. Among the many learning resources serving students are a caring faculty, a campus designed to meet specialty department needs, a teaching and professional performance theater, advanced information technology, and the school's location.

The ASFA Difference

- Partially residential, publicly funded secondary school enrolling 353 students, grades 7-12, with a senior class of 65.
- Competitive admission based on application, letters of recommendation, school records, audition, and interview.
- Extended school day (7:55 AM - 4:40 PM) includes six periods of 47 minutes and two specialty periods of 90 minutes each (minimum of 3 hours of specialty instruction per day).
- Students who do not maintain 80% average in specialty, 65% in academic courses, or 77% combined must withdraw.
- All seniors create an original, substantial research project, written work, performance or exhibit in their specialty.
- Because our specialty majors are so varied, our graduating classes are small, and our students almost without exception attend competitive four-year colleges.

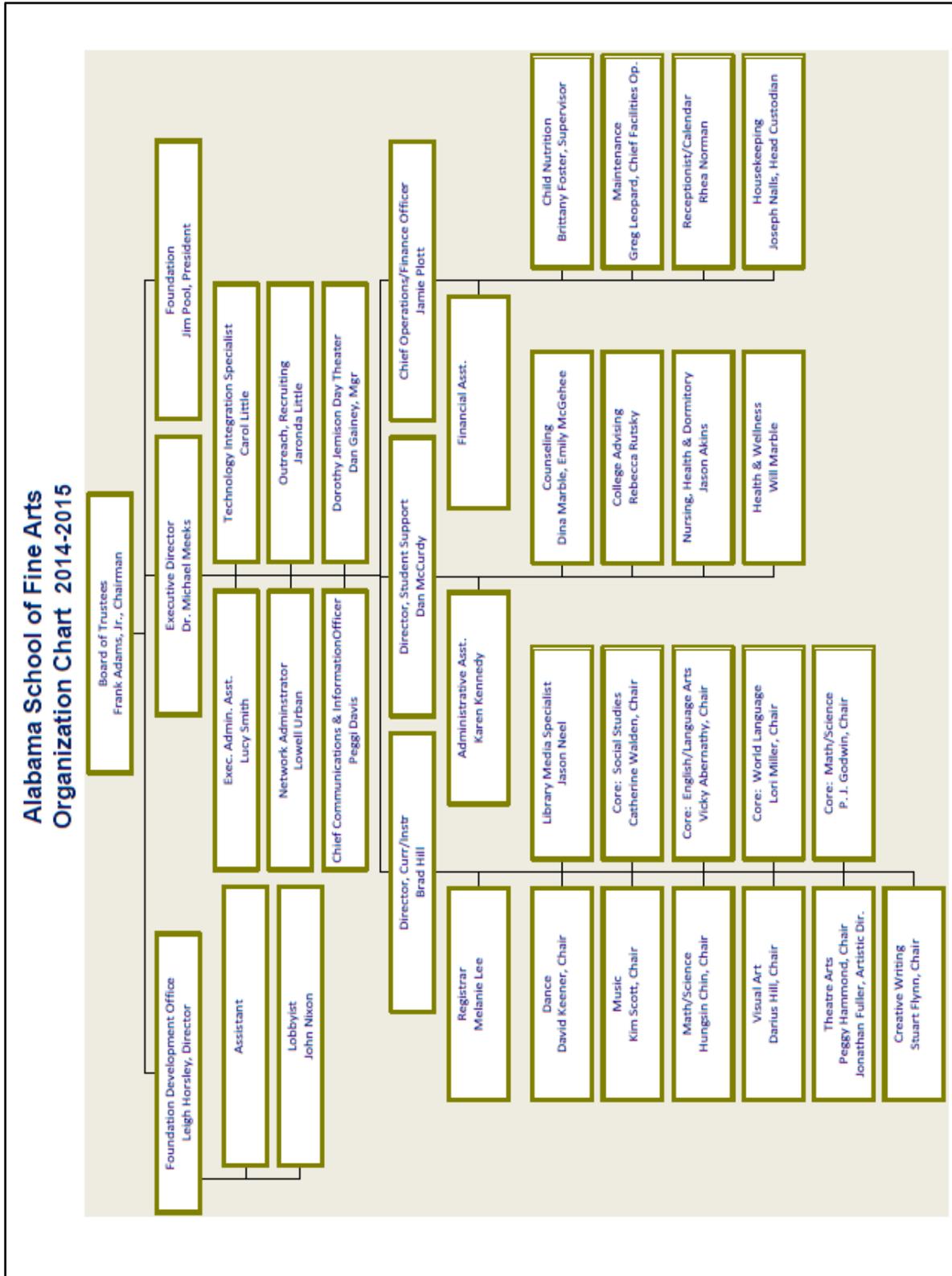
Faculty Profile

ASFA has 45 full-time and 22 part-time and adjunct instructors, over half of whom are professional artists including one Pulitzer Prize winner. Over 50% hold terminal degrees in their specialty fields.

Student Profile

ASFA averages 350 students in grades 7 to 12. The typical senior class of 65 students is composed of 35% male and 65% female. Overall, 57% of the students are Caucasian, 22% African-American, 16% Asian, 2% Hispanic, and 3% multiracial.

Organizational Chart



Mission

The mission of the Alabama School of Fine Arts, a diverse community of explorers, is to nurture impassioned students by guiding and inspiring them to discover and fulfill their individual creative abilities in an atmosphere distinguished by the fusion of fact and feeling, risk and reward, art and science, school and society.



Vision

The preeminent fine arts and math/science specialty school for impassioned students in grades 7-12



Strategic Planning Assumptions

- Demand for using digital technological services will continue to increase.
- Funding from state agencies will continue to be unpredictable.
- Government policy will continue to impact school operations.
- Difficulty identifying and recruiting quality students will continue.
- Physical space will continue to be limited.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Develop dynamic curricular initiatives to optimize student learning and engagement.	
Curriculum	<p>Objectives</p> <p>1.1: Beginning August 2014 and ongoing, develop meaningful partnerships with local organizations and businesses to enhance the quality of ASFA's programs.</p> <p>1.2: By April 2015, research other specialty institutions to influence our curricular decisions.</p> <p>1.3: By September 2015, develop a dynamic elective structure to increase relevance for students/faculty.</p> <p>1.4: By March 2016, explore offering a humanities block to fulfill graduation requirements.</p>
Goal 2: Implement recruiting strategies to ensure a qualified and demographically diverse student body.	
Student Recruitment	<p>Objectives</p> <p>2.1: Beginning August 2014 and ongoing, build a lasting relationship among ASFA, public/private school staff and others to identify and recruit diverse and qualified applicants.</p> <p>2.2: By October 2014, determine recruitment challenges for each department to develop appropriate recruiting strategies.</p> <p>2.3: By May 2015, create a specific and dedicated network of alumni and their families, and other key stakeholders to assist with recruitment.</p> <p>2.4: By August 2015, explore employment of a full-time recruitment coordinator.</p> <p>2.5: By June 2016, explore development and implementation of a new summer program of dynamic, interdisciplinary curricular activities to attract potential middle-school students from across the region.</p>

Goal 3: Engage alumni and their families to contribute their time, talents, and resources to benefit ASFA.

Alumni	Objectives
	3.1: Beginning academic year 2014-2015, annually increase by 5% the total number of alumni and their families with whom ASFA communicates.
	3.2: By May 2015, re-establish an active Alumni Association.
	3.3: By May 2015, identify ways to monitor patronage of ASFA events by alumni and/or families.
	3.4: By May 2016, establish at least three avenues for alumni and/or family volunteer engagement.
	3.5: By August 2017, 20% of alumni and/or family engaged with ASFA make a financial contribution to the school.

Goal 4: Promote a sense of community and a culture of mutual respect, trust, and commitment.

Community	Objectives
	4.1: By May 2015, identify and instill ASFA core values to reinforce and strengthen the ASFA culture.
	4.2: Beginning August 2015 and ongoing, implement strategies to improve CORE/specialty communication and interaction.
	4.3: Beginning August 2015 and ongoing, provide student opportunities for community service and environmental awareness to promote a sense of global responsibility.

Goal 5: Increase visibility to clarify our identity and build community and political support	
Marketing	<p>Objectives</p> <p>5.1: Beginning August 2014 and ongoing, engage traditional media sources to support performances, school identity, and subscriber campaigns.</p> <p>5.2: Beginning in October 2014 and ongoing, build awareness of and support for student talent to increase attendance at onsite and off-campus performances.</p> <p>5.3: Beginning October 2014, establish relationships with media and organizations to promote the expertise of ASFA faculty and staff.</p> <p>5.4: By August 2015, establish and maintain a robust online presence to engage ASFA stakeholders and to build community support.</p>

Goal 6: Create an integrated fund development and fund allocation program to meet school financial needs.	
Fiscal Policy	<p>Objectives</p> <p>6.1: By September 2014, form an advisory committee to assist with prioritization of projects and allocation of funds.</p> <p>6.2: By October 2014, identify and assess current corporate and community fundraising plans.</p> <p>6.3: By June 2015, develop a school-wide lobbying strategy marshalling faculty, student, parent, and alumni resources.</p> <p>6.4: By June 2015, study potential parking solutions, analyze costs, and report recommendations to the leadership committee.</p> <p>6.5: By June 2015, study potential physical space solutions, analyze costs, and report recommendations to the leadership committee.</p>

Appendix A: Board of Trustees (July, 2014)

Mr. Frank E. Adams, Jr., Chair
Exec. Dir., A. G. Gaston Boys & Girls Clubs
Music, ASFA Alum

Mr. Gregory T. Reagan
Reagan Accounting & Consulting, P.C.
Visual Art/Dance, ASFA Alum Parent

Ms. Deborah G. Huff
Community Volunteer
Visual Art/Math & Science, ASFA Alum Parent

Mr. Jim Noles
Balch & Bingham LLP
Creative Writing

Ms. Anne Arrasmith
Space One Eleven Visual Art Gallery
Visual Art

Mrs. Suzy Maccabe Baker
Community Volunteer
Math & Science, At Large

Mrs. Edie D. Barnes
Retired University of Alabama Dance Dept.
Dance

Dr. Jane B. Moore
Retired Auburn University Athletics Director
Dance, Visual Art, At Large

Mr. William Webb Robertson
Community Volunteer, Music

Dr. Rosemary W. Johnson
Exec. Dir., Alabama Dance Council
ASFA Alum, Music, Dance

Unfilled Seat
Alabama State Dept. of Education Designee

Mr. Smith Williams
Community Volunteer, Music
ASFA Alum Parent

Mr. Elias Hendricks Jr.
Community Volunteer
Visual Art, At Large

Judge Nyya Parson-Hudson, J.D.
Birmingham Municipal Judge
ASFA Alum, Theater Arts

Mr. Kelly Allison
UAB Theater Arts Dept. Chairperson
Theater Arts

Dr. Scott Wright
Exec. Dir. Mobile Opera
Music

Mrs. Bernice Fischman
Retired Auburn University
Visual Arts

Dr. Michael Han
Internal Medicine, South View Med. Group
Math & Science

Appendix B: Strategic Planners

Keith Abrams - Grayson & Associates, P.C.--ASFA Parent
T. J. Beitelman - Instructor, Creative Writing
Javacia Bowser - Instructor, English
Hungsin Chin - Supervisory Chair, Math & Science Department, Math Instructor
Peggi Davis - Chief Communications Officer
Stuart Flynn - Department Chair, Creative Writing, Creative Writing Instructor
Brittany Foster - Director of Child Nutrition
Annemarie Gray - Instructor, Social Studies
Peggy Hammond - Department Chair, Theatre Arts Department, Theater Arts Instructor
Ben Harley - Instructor, Visual Arts
Brad Hill - Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Leigh Horsley - Director of Development
David Keener - Department Chair, Dance, Dance Instructor
Bree Latner - Instructor, Science
Melanie Lee - Administrative Assistant and Registrar
Carol Little - Technology Integration Specialist
Jaronda Little - Recruitment Specialist
Paige McCormick - University of Alabama--ASFA Dorm Parent
Dan McCurdy - Director of Student Support Services
Michael Meeks - Executive Director
Jason Neel - Library Media Specialist
Jamie Plott - Chief Finance Officer
Juliana Schock - ASFA Student
Kim Scott - Department Chair, Music Department, Music Instructor
Parker Sellers - ASFA Dorm Student
Lucy Smith - Executive Assistant
Lowell Urban - Network Administrator
Tommy Waggoner - Southern Company Operations--ASFA Parent
Linda Wenndt - Instructor, Science and Math

Point of Contact

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