

Salt Lake Arts Academy
Strategic Planning Survey of Parents and Faculty
Executive Summary
May 18, 2018

Salt Lake Arts Academy will be undergoing a period of transition as our Founder and Principal Amy Wadsworth retires at the end of the 2018-19 school year. As the Governing Board plans for the hiring of a new Principal / CAO to take the reins of our school in the 2019-20 school year they wanted input from our community about SLArts' school culture and operations to determine what is "working" at SLArts, and what needs improvement. This data will be used to inform operational improvements in the short term, and will help identify the kind of leader who can sustain and nurture the school culture our community values, while leading us into the future. This is a summary of the data collected from both Faculty and our Parent Community.

Survey Process – We conducted two online surveys and three focus groups. For the Faculty Survey, 21 of 25 faculty participated (84%). For the Parent Survey, 130 people responded (~40% of our total households.) We held two focus groups for parents and one for faculty members. Survey participants were asked to disagree / agree with statements on a sliding scale (1 -100). We identified "hot topics" as those areas where responses were the least favorable, or where responses varied widely and there was little agreement. Respondents were also invited to respond to open-ended questions. The data below includes those responses and comments from Focus Groups as well. Detailed comments from parents and faculty have been shared with Amy and Governing Board leadership.

Survey Results – Overall, our community is happy with SLArts. Our Teachers like working here and Parents feel their students are having a positive experience. Parents and Teachers feel SLArts is meeting its mission of delivering enriching arts experiences for students and teaching students how to be members of our community.

Most Positive Responses Faculty and Parents:

- Communication from the Admin team is generally strong; twice-weekly eblasts are effective. Parents and Faculty feel comfortable coming to Admin team with concerns.
- Students are having enriching arts experiences daily and field trips support our mission and support learning in the classrooms.
- Students are well-known by their teachers and know where to go for support.
- Overall, students receive high-quality instruction.
- We're doing a good job making people feel included and welcome; families and faculty would like more diversity amongst students and faculty.
- Teachers feel empowered and supported. Innovation and best practices are encouraged. There is camaraderie among teachers, and SLArts is a safe and inclusive environment in which to work.

Least Positive Responses from Faculty and Parents:

- Physical Space at the school could be improved. Currently several teachers share classrooms which is difficult and impact students. Performance spaces are not ideal. Outside play space needs improvement.
- Student Behavior and Discipline needs more attention. Teachers would like continued training and support around issues of bullying and kindness.
- Faculty and Parents believe Student Counseling needs more support.
- Parents want more opportunities to connect with other parents – both in and outside of school settings.
- Parents want more robust information available on the school website including more advance details for events that affect families' logistics and an archive of important school papers / messages.
- Parents are very concerned about Traffic Safety at drop-off and pick-up and would like to be involved in creating a safety plan.
- Our community would like us to review our Campus Safety procedures and equipment.
- Parents want to better understand the work of the Governing Board and want more opportunities to learn what the Board is working on.

Where do we go from here? In the short term, SLArts Administrative Staff is working on addressing the immediate operational concerns shared in the survey. For example, a new Parent Connections Committee is forming to plan in- and out-of-school ways for parents and students to build community together. The Governing Board will be evaluating the school's physical space needs and developing a multi-year plan for addressing those improvements. Our Faculty and Staff will be analyzing student discipline efforts during their planning sessions over the summer to make sure we are applying consistent and effective supports for students.

How will this inform the search for a new Principal / CAO? The issues raised here will help the Governing Board prioritize candidates based on their alignment with our community values and our community's goals for the school. Once the selection is made this data will help introduce our school community to the new Principal/CAO during the onboarding process.

If you have questions about the Strategic Planning Survey, or want to be involved in helping address some of the issues described above, please reach out to Amy Wadsworth (amy@slarts.org). Thank you for your participation and for being part of our Salt Lake Arts Academy family.

