



## State Charter School Board Action Summary

Charter School: **Tuacahn High School for the Performing Arts (THS)**

Action: **Reassignment of Charter to Utah Arts Academy (UAA) and consideration of new *Charter Agreement* including to an *Exhibit A*.**

**Context of the School:** The Tuacahn Center for the Arts (TCA) is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt non-profit foundation and was granted a charter to open Tuacahn High School for the Performing Arts (THS) beginning with the 1999-2000 school year.

THS is located in Ivins, Utah in the Washington County School District. The mission of THS is “to create an unparalleled environment where students can maximize their potential academically and artistically. Tuacahn High School is committed to partnering with faculty, home and community to make our school a world-class educational experience for all students who attend.”

THS serves grades 9-12, with a maximum enrollment of 450.

School Year	Total	Grades			
		9	10	11	12
2021	351	60	103	112	76
2020	399	114	113	78	94

According to the 2020 Financial Audit, THS met all CSAF Financial metrics. The most recent transfer rate was 8.4% (charter average was 7.5%) and the retention rate was 86.0% (charter average was 81.4%). For SY2020, THS had a 95.7% graduation rate (93.2% for SY2019 and 86.0% for SY2018).

**Background of the Issue:** After receiving a notice of concern (NOC), the current THS governing board began working with the SCSB staff to resolve the concerns listed. After multiple meetings and discussions with SCSB staff and the THS community, the THS governing board concluded that the best way to resolve the issues with their community as well as the concerns listed in the NOC would be to give the school to another entity, specifically to a 501(c)(3) created by the school community.

The only group from the community who expressed interest in taking over the THS charter formed a 501(c)(3) called Utah Arts Academy (UAA). UAA has been working with THS and SCSB staff to take over the THS charter. While this is an existing charter, there are also some elements similar to what we would review in a new school application. See UAA’s application for more details. The main points from the application are summarized below.



## Points about the application and transfer:

1. Exhibit A
  - The Authorizing Committee will review prior to the Board meeting.
  - The main purpose and mission of the school is not changing.
2. Governance Structure
  - The governance structure outlined by UAA appears reasonable and addresses concerns brought up by the SCSB with the previous THS board.
    - Number of board members: 5-9 board members (current UAA board has 9 members)
    - Appointment of board members: Board members will apply through a third party approved application process. The third party will appoint the new board member(s) and the board will vote to approve the appointee(s).
    - Term Limits: Board members can serve no more than 6 consecutive years.
    - Board Makeup:
      - Nine voting members with a wide range of expertise.
      - Board chair and one other board member were previous board members of THS.
      - The Executive Director will be a non-voting member of the board.
3. Students
  - UAA is expecting to enroll 340 students for the 2021-2022 school year.
  - Have already implemented an outreach plan that addresses a variety of ways to market to students.
  - Hope that a more centralized location with easier access will make it more attractive to some families.
4. Budget and Finances
  - UAA is anticipating ending FY21 with a positive net position of approximately \$57,000.
  - Estimated breakeven is 320 students.
  - Next year's budget is based on 340 students.
  - UAA has described internal control processes that are appropriate, as well as describing contracting with the Utah Division of Risk Management for insurance needs.
5. Facilities
  - The current space under negotiation and finance approval is at 1091 N. Bluff St. in St. George.
  - By July, 7,000 square feet will be finished meeting education occupancy standards. This will include a dance studio, music studio, and seven classroom spaces to ensure students have access to in-person learning when school begins in August. The final completion date is anticipated to be September 1<sup>st</sup>.
6. Contracts with ESPs
  - UAA States that they have not entered into a contractual relationship with an education service provider, nor do they intend to enter into such a relationship.



7. Transfer of Assets

- UAA and THS are inventorying all assets and tracking the source of funds that purchased the assets. SCSB staff traveled to St. George to review the inventory and oversee the process.

8. Transfer of Assignment

- AAG Jones and attorneys for THS and UAA have been drafting documents to ensure the proper transfer of assignment of the charter from THS to UAA.