



**Academy at the Farm, Inc.**  
**Not for Profit**  
**Public Charter School**  
**Dade City, FL**  
***Business Plan, Short Version***

***School Profile***

Academy at the Farm is a public charter school located in Dade City, Florida. The school was founded in 2002 and renewed its charter in 2013 for 15 years. Academy at the Farm's mission involves utilizing teaching methods that focus on meeting the needs of all students by promoting academic excellence, developing productive citizens through character building and incorporating the advancement of technology in the curriculum.

***Organization***

Academy at the Farm is a nonprofit charter school operating in Pasco County, Florida. The school is a nonprofit organization that has a local Board of Directors consisting of area business leaders, parents and educators. The board meets monthly and adheres to the "Florida Sunshine Law".

The school has had only two Directors since it opened in 2002. It operates on a team leadership model where there is an Assistant Principal at each level of the school (primary K-2, intermediate 3-5, middle 6-8) who teaches and oversees progress monitoring plans, discipline and assessments including FSA, FIKrs, FCAT and EOC testing. Utilizing this model allows for immediate support for teachers, students and parents.

Currently, the Academy at the Farm has a total of 52 highly qualified instructional staff members. Each core academic classroom has a Florida State certified teacher and a highly qualified paraprofessional (teacher assistant) working in it. This allows for extra support on a daily basis for our students who may need remediation and/or enrichment. Academy at the Farm also employs five special area teachers in the arts, music and physical education and five Exceptional Student Education teachers who push into the classrooms to serve students in overseeing IEP's (Individual Education Plans for special education students), EP's (education plans for gifted students) 504 plans and English Language Learner services. In addition, we have four Instructional Assistants (certified teachers) who teach classes as well as pull small groups for support and/or enrichment activities.

All teachers continue to receive yearly professional development in their areas of curriculum and general education competencies. It is the school's goal for all Academy at the Farm teachers to receive continuing education credits as applicable to maintain their Highly Qualified status.

***School Demographics***

Our school educates students in grades kindergarten through eighth. Academy at the Farm had 570 students enrolled in the 2017-2018 school year. Our school demographics for that year were 49% male and 51% female. 68% of the students pay for their lunches, while 32% of our students qualified for free or reduced lunch.

The Academy serves students in Pasco, Hernando and Hillsborough Counties. This encompasses the areas of San Antonio, Dade City, Land O Lakes, Ridge Manor, Lacochee, Zephyrhills, Wesley Chapel, and New Tampa. (A plot chart is attached.)

### **School Performance**

The State of Florida rating for the school has been an “A” for the past 13 years. (The state rating scale is from “A” to “F”) The Academy has also been awarded High Performing Charter School status by the Florida Department of Education. Our eighth graders in the 2018 school year graduated with an English Language Arts proficiency on state testing at 83% (district comparison is 58%), Mathematics proficiency of 94% (district comparison is 63%), Algebra proficiency of 100% (district comparison is 65%), Science proficiency of 73% (district comparison is 53%) and 98% of our students completed all necessary coursework to be able to advance to high school.

### **School Culture**

As a school, we believe that having high academic standards is important for our students to be able to move forward to success in high school and prepare them for any career they may desire. We also believe that developing a student’s character is equally as important to their future success. Beginning in kindergarten we employ a system of character building among our students called “The Six Traits”. The traits we focus on are *responsibility, respect, citizenship, fairness, honesty, and caring*. These traits are taught at the beginning of each school year and reinforced throughout the school year for every grade level through the 8th grade. (The Six Traits chart is attached.) Instilling and practicing these traits helps promote a more positive school climate and keeps student management issues to a minimum.

Our school strives to create an environment where children can be educated academically and emotionally so they can become productive citizens in our community. We accomplish this by living our motto each day: We do what’s best for kids!

### **Reason For Need**

Over the past 15 years, the Academy at the Farm has created a school of excellence for our community. Our lottery list has grown each year to just under 2000 students who are currently waiting to get into our school. In addition, our community needs another choice of a high school for students who are college-bound and/or for those wanting to pursue other opportunities. Parents who currently have children in our school have expressed a strong desire for their children to continue receiving a quality education through high school at the Academy at the Farm.

### **Goal/Objectives**

Our goal is to expand our school so that more students can get the quality education and positive character development that we offer at Academy at the Farm.

Our objectives are to increase each grade level by two classes to a total of five classes per grade level and to add a high school to our campus that has six classes at each grade level.

### **Statement of Need**

To fulfill our goal of bringing in additional students to our kindergarten through eighth grade and expand to high school, property and additional structures must be purchased to accommodate this growth. This includes 15 acres adjacent to our present location, additional buildings for classrooms and student support services, multipurpose rooms for student activities, playground areas, additional parking and infrastructure to support these needs.

### **Methods and Strategies**

Our first endeavor is to acquire property at a location that is adjacent to our current facilities. At this time we have a purchase contract for 15 acres on the south border of our present location. This contract is for \$490,000. Due diligence on this property is now being evaluated.

An engineering company has done a general overview of the feasibility of using the new property for our expansion. Once the engineering company has engaged in a contract with us, a detailed development plan will be drawn up and approved by the Academy at the Farm Board of Directors.

Building structure plans have been drawn out and will be submitted for the bid process once the property has been purchased and all environmental and zoning needs have been met.

When infrastructure plans are completed by the engineering company, those plans will be submitted for bid.

The Academy at the Farm has every intention of using as many local contractors and vendors on the project as financially feasible.

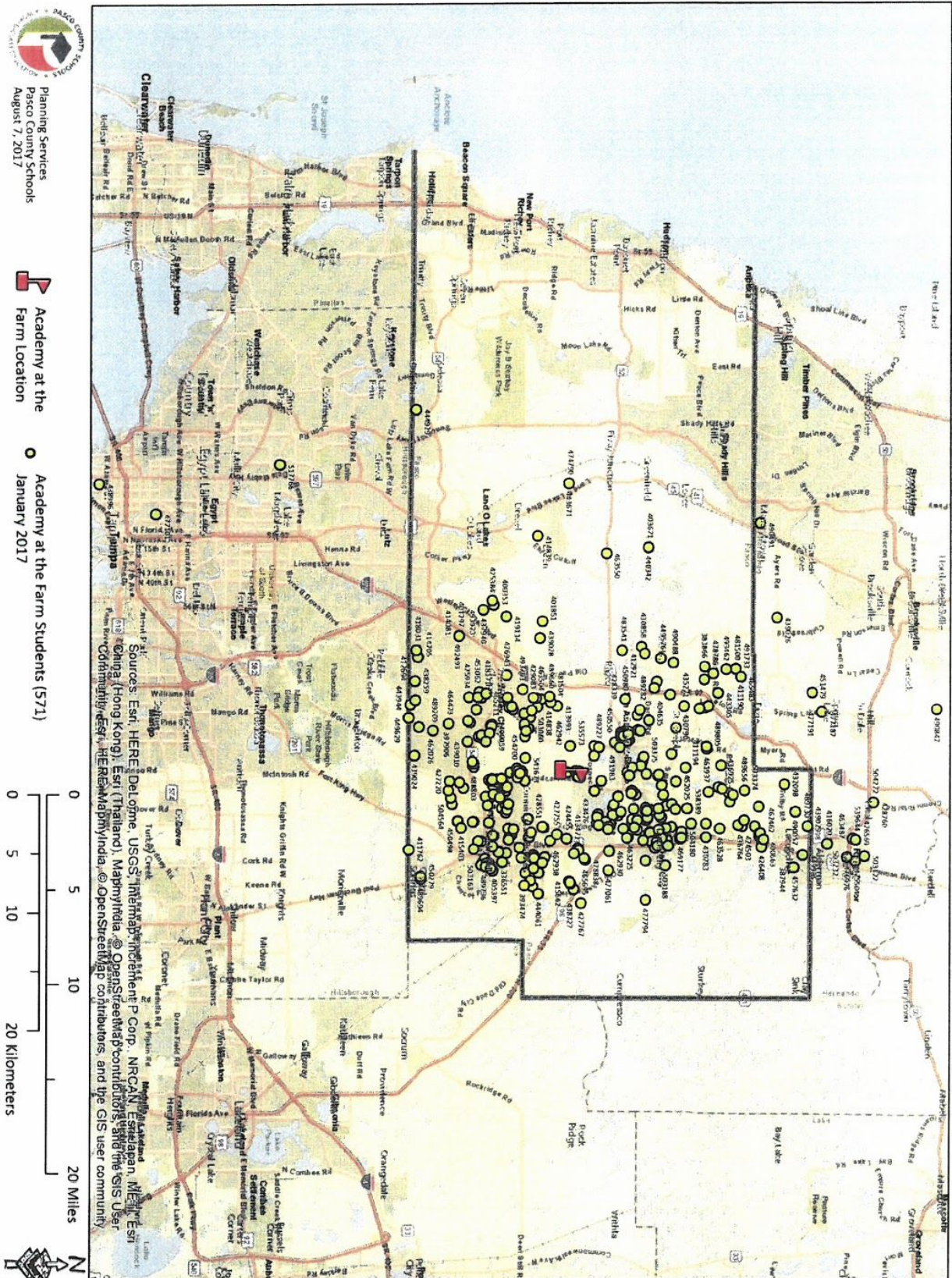
### ***Budget***

The estimated cost for the infrastructure, buildings, and classrooms needed will be \$5.7 million. We are working with an agency that would combine our present loan and the expansion loan with a fixed interest rate that would be determined on the day of closing. The loan will be amortized over 30 years. This kind of loan will substantially benefit the school's budget because the interest rate would not fluctuate over the course of the loan.

An additional budgetary need is for the expansion to a high school. The Academy's high school will start with the ninth grade and add an additional grade level each year. Additional fundraising will be needed for three years until the high school is at full capacity. This need will be approximately \$150,000 during the years it takes us to expand through the 12th grade.

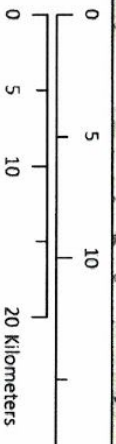
Using today's information on state funding for education, once the Academy at the Farm has completed its expansion project, kindergarten through 12th grade, it will be able to operate using the allocated funds provided for public charter schools.

# Academy at the Farm Student Locations 2016-2017



Planning Services  
 Pasco County Schools  
 August 7, 2017

● Academy at the Farm Students (571)  
🏠 Farm Location  
● January 2017



# Character Traits

## RESPONSIBILITY

Think: Taking Care of the Earth

- Follow directions
- Keep on trying and always do your best
- Be self-disciplined
- Consider the consequences before you act
- Be accountable for your choices
- Clean up after yourself

## FAIRNESS

Think of dividing an orange into equal sections to share fairly with friends

- Play by the rules
- Take turns and share
- Be open-minded; listen to others
- Don't blame others carelessly

## RESPECT

Think: The Golden Rule

- Be tolerant of differences
- Use good manners and kind words
- Be considerate of the feelings of others
- Deal peacefully with anger and disagreements
- Keep your hands, feet and objects to yourself

## HONESTY

Think: "True Blue"

- Know right from wrong
- Be responsible for your actions
- Be positive
- Never cheat or steal
- Always telling the truth

## CITIZENSHIP

Think: Regal purple as representing the state

- Do your share to make your school and community better
- Cooperate with others
- Get involved and stay informed
- Be a good neighbor
- Obey the rules and laws
- Respect authority
- Protect the environment

## CARING

Think of a heart

- Be kind and compassionate
- Express gratitude
- Forgive others
- Help those in need