



SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT CARD FOR 2006-2007
Sponsored by: SHASTA UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Redding School of the Arts

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DIRECTOR(s): Margaret Johnson, Jean Hatch

GRADE RANGE: K-8

OUR SCHOOL DEFINED

Redding School of the Arts is a K-8 visual and performing arts charter school in northern California. The school believes that when it comes to young minds, the arts enrich, expand and prepare students to become vibrant, fully contributing members of their communities and the larger society. Children engaged in music and arts programs not only do better in other academic subjects than children not engaged in the arts, but also have better attendance, increased self-esteem, and cooperate more fully with teachers and peers.

Basic Facts

- Charter school with a focus on visual and performing arts
- Grades offered: K-8th
- Current enrollment: 315

Key Factor	Our School
Student enrollment	315
Number full-time equivalent teachers	19
Number students per teacher	20 for K-3, 28 for 4-8
Academic Performance Index	829

Major Achievements

- RSA's Academic Performance Index (API) of 829 is among the highest in the county.
- RSA has been recognized nationally for its innovative special education program.
- RSA received the California Creative Schools Award from the state for its visual and performing arts educational program.

- RSA along with the Shasta Union High School District began planning for a Kindergarten Mandarin Immersion Education Program.
- RSA's Art Club painted a mural for Beverly Residential Facility to promote positive mental health.
- Increased enrollment from 264 to 315 and added additional teaching staff to help meet community demand educational program
- Five students received art awards (Crocker Art museum showing, National Duck Stamp, other awards).
- School musical production of Wizard of Oz sold out three of its six performances. Students not only act in musical, but also built sets, performed the music, and worked backstage.

Focus for Improvement

- Continue to expand enrollment to meet community demand for educational program and to increase funding for programs.
- Enhance RSA as a community resource for a variety of art and performance-based programs.
- Implement a sequential writing program across academic subjects.
- Reach out into the community with artistic endeavor to build awareness and enrich the community and its citizens through the arts.

Charter School – Defined

Charter schools are public schools designed to provide opportunities for innovations without the beaurocratic constraints of traditional public schools. Charter schools are usually established by teachers, parents, or community members with a vision of a different way to education students and achieve the same or better results. While charter schools have their own governing or oversight boards, they are also sponsored by a local public school district, county board of education or the State. The specific goals and operating procedures of the school must be spelled out in its Charter and an agreement between the school board and the charter organizers.

The purpose of a charter school is to improve student learning, to encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods, to create new professional opportunities for teachers, and to provide parents and students with expanded educational opportunities within the public school system. These opportunities are provided without some of the constraints of traditional bureaucratic rules and structure, and give schools the chance to use a “performance-based” system of accountability. In essence, charter schools allow for increased flexibility in exchange for increased student performance.

The History of RSA

In the late 1990s visual and performing arts programs were in rapid decline or nonexistent in Shasta County public elementary schools. Some local teachers were distressed by this shift in programming as they believed that education in its entirety is complete only when the arts are included in the academic program. They envisioned an academically rigorous educational program that was theme based and incorporated the arts in the core academic instruction to supplement learning in math, science, language arts and life skills. In addition, with a strong background in special education, they believed that *all* children, not just those with special needs, should be instructed at their academic levels, not strictly grade level. From this educational platform, Redding School of the Arts was created and opened its doors in August of 1999 with a charter sponsored by Shasta Union High School District. The first year saw an enrollment of 164 students in grades K-7. Since then, enrollment has increased to 315 students in grades K-8 with many more students on a waiting list to enroll.

The Philosophy of RSA

Academics

While students attending RSA have a real interest in the arts they also have specific and individual academic needs. Each year, RSA assesses its student-base and makes adjustments to class structure to best meet those needs. For example, students who are not in the same grade level but exhibit similar learning styles or academic aptitude may be placed together in a core class. Or, another level of math may be offered if enough students show a need for it. In other words, students at RSA are not constrained by the traditional “grade level.” Instead, more emphasis is placed on “learning levels” and meeting the needs of students as individuals.

Thematic Learning

As a public school RSA must teach the materials mandated by the State Curriculum Standards for grades K-8. However, as a charter school, RSA has the discretion to teach those materials in innovative ways to increase student learning. RSA’s academic instruction is theme-based, meaning that the curriculum in language arts, social studies, science, art, music and math is integrated to support learning across all disciplines. This means that when students are studying ancient civilizations in social studies, their language arts reading books and vocabulary/spelling words relate to Rome, Greece and other ancient cultures. Likewise, their science will focus on physics, alchemy, astronomy and such. Their studies in art and music will further support those themes.

Arts

In addition to academics, RSA is committed to exposing students to the visual and performing arts. To this end, it is the only elementary school in Shasta County that provides daily music classes to kindergarteners through 6th graders (7th and 8th graders also benefit from daily music but this is not uncommon in traditional public schools). Students learn the basics of music theory, music performance, cultural dance, folklore, and have a “hands-on” musical opportunity using the Orff instrument system.

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Students in 1st –8th grades also have visual art instruction periods two or more days each week.



To expose students to additional dance, visual, musical, or theatrical arts, RSA offers a unique daily elective class program to its 1st through 8th graders. Class choices (which may include beginning, intermediate or advance levels) have included: drama, cooking, oil painting, three dimensional art, tumbling, jazz, tap, ballet, fiddle, stage craft, puppetry, movie-making, and more. For one hour each school day, students break from their homeroom to participate in the class of their choice.

(Choices are made each trimester.)

Special Education

Redding School of the Arts has been nationally recognized for its innovative approach to special education. The educational model focuses on identifying students with exceptional needs as early as possible and meeting their educational needs in a proactive, preventive fashion. The school’s very design promotes seamless and inconspicuous direct services to children. For instance, for math instruction, students go to a classroom of their instructional level, regardless of their grade. This meets the special needs of both the GATE and below-grade level students.

The Consortium is the first of its kind for charter schools in California and in the nation to provide direct services to children.

In addition, paraprofessionals are provided to meet one-on-one with students struggling to meet particular concepts. The school utilizes professionals with specific credentials to provide the following services as needed: speech and language, psychological services, occupational therapy, adaptive PE, nursing, and access to a special physical therapy day class.

In fact, RSA helped create a Special Education Consortium with other charter

schools in the area in order to share these services. The Consortium is the first of its kind for charter schools in California and in the nation to provide direct services to children. For its efforts, the school received a California Dissemination grant to share the knowledge of providing services to children in a positive direct model whereby all students, including the talented and gifted students, benefit.

Parental Involvement

RSA believes a major factor in the success of students is the involvement of a significant adult in their school. To encourage this, all students must have an adult representative serve at least 40 hours of volunteer time per family per school year. Parents have embraced this volunteer time, not as a reluctant requirement, but as an opportunity to provide enriched experiences for our students. In a given year, approximately 30% of our families serve over 100 hours per school year. Volunteer activities have included: Classroom assistance, art docent, theme day organizing and participation, building and maintaining the library, serving on various committees, building sets for performances, sewing costumes, coordinating fund raisers, coordinating extra-curricular clubs such as Odyssey of the Mind, Homework Help, or a running club, and many, many, more, too numerous to name.

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Two significant parent groups within RSA are the Parent Teacher Club (PTC) and the Theatre Booster Club. The PTC works to promote community within the school through events such as a Back-to-School Picnic, a Boohoo/Yahoo First Day of School morning social, Barn Dance, Chalk Art Day, and Teacher Appreciation Week. In addition, they have raised up to

\$35,000 per year through various fundraisers like Annual Fall Dinner Auction, Cookie Dough Sales, Escrip and Boxtops. The Theatre Booster Club supports the school's drama programs including the spring musical and its unique needs. They also perform fundraisers in order to purchase rights to the annual play, costumes, stage equipment, and other items related to the performing arts. Both groups have established officers and bylaws and conduct monthly meetings.

The Mission of RSA

The mission of the Redding School of the Arts is to provide skills for the 21st century to kindergarten through 8th grade students who have an interest in visual or performing arts. Skills for the 21st century are defined as:

- the ability to read, write, speak and calculate with clarity and precision; and
- the ability and desire to participate in the life of the community.

It seeks to accomplish its goal of high academic and behavioral standards through:

- a student-centered, interdisciplinary approach;
- a multicultural environment; and
- an emphasis on the Arts.

RSA enables students to become literate, self-motivated and lifelong learners who appreciate, enjoy and respect the visual and performing arts.

THE COMMUNITY WE SERVE

Redding School of the Arts (RSA) is a charter school in a county with a total of 25 school districts including 40 elementary schools, 12 junior/middle schools, and 9 other charter schools. RSA's student population reflects the diversity of the county in terms of ethnicity, socio-economic status, politics, culture, and beliefs. The charter school draws students from both the very rural outskirts of the county as well as from the town proper. Families have been known to drive up to an hour one-way for their student to have the opportunity to be exposed to RSA's programs.

The school is located in Shasta County; specifically in Redding, CA, which lies at the northern tip of the Sacramento Valley. Traditionally rural, Shasta County is surrounded on three sides by millions of acres of federal and state lands including the California Cascades, Mt. Shasta, and the Trinity Alps. By car, Redding is about a 2 ½ hour drive north from Sacramento on I-5, or about a 3 ½ hour drive northwest from the Bay Area.

Shasta County's population in 2000 was 164,748. By 2010, population is expected to

be 196,494. The area has seen a surge in building and population growth since 2000. The average age of residents is climbing and is expected to continue to do so over the next 20 years as retirees from metropolitan areas settle here to take advantage of the rural feel and the many arts and recreational activities. For specific demographic information about Shasta County, visit <http://www.dof.ca.gov/html/demograp/sf%20I/shasta.pdf>.

Accessible educational opportunities include Shasta Community College, National University, Simpson University (private four-year college), and California State University of Chico (a 1.25 hour drive from Redding, CA).



Major tourist attractions in the area include: Lake Shasta, the Sundial Bridge over the Sacramento River, the TurtleBay Exploration Museum and Arboretum, the newly renovated Cascade Theater, Shasta Dam, Whiskeytown National Recreation Area, and Lassen Volcanic Park.

Redding is the second sunniest city in the nation with 320 days of sunshine per year. The area boasts moderate weather and residents experience four distinct seasons. The average low temperature in winter is 30 – 40 degrees F. The average high temperature in summer is 90 degrees F.

SCHOOL ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Academic Performance Index.

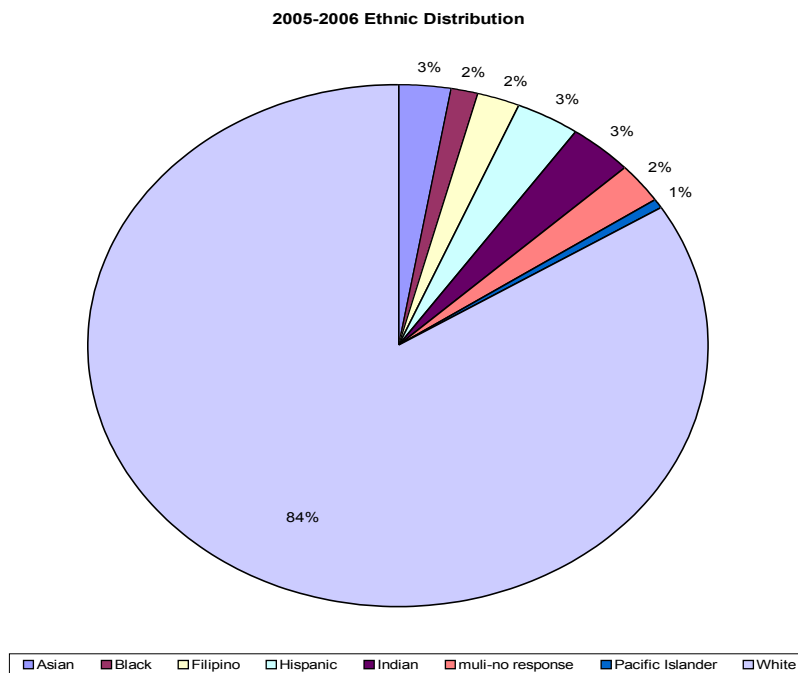
The Academic Performance Index (API) is California’s way of comparing school’s based on student test scores. It can be used to compare schools in a statewide ranking system. The state Department of Education (CDE) calculates our school’s API score using student test results from the California Standards Tests and the CAT/6. API scores range from 200 to 1000. The CDE expects all schools to eventually obtain APIs of at least 800. RSA’s API for the 2005-2006 school year was 829.

API Rankings

California API Academic Performance Index	
Met school wide growth target?	Yes
Met growth target for prior school year?	Yes
API score	829
Met subgroup* growth targets	Yes
Governor’s Performance Award?	Yes
Underperforming school?	No
<small>Source: API based on spring 2005 test cycle. Growth scores alone are displayed, and are current as of May 2006. *Ethnic or socioeconomic groups of students that make up 15 percent or more of a school’s student body. These groups must meet AYP and API goals.</small>	

Based on our API score, our school is ranked on a scale from 1 to 10 (10 being the highest). We receive a ranking that compares us to all elementary schools in the state. Compared to all elementary schools in California, our school currently ranks 9 out of 10.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT – ETHNIC and SOCIOECONOMIC SUBGROUPS



Most students (82%) at RSA identify themselves as White, non-Hispanic. However, RSA has 3% of American Indian or Alaskan native students and 6% of Asian, Pacific Islander, or Filipino descent. The state of California allows citizens to choose more than one ethnic identity, or to select “multi-ethnic” or “decline to state.” As a result, the sum of all responses rarely equals 100 percent.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Class sizes and student requirements

At present, 315 students from kindergarten through eighth grade and 16 homeschooled students are enrolled at RSA. There are 36 students in kindergarten, an average of 35 in each grade 1-3, and average of 30 in 4-8. First through third grades classrooms and those third grade rooms that do not have fourth grade students implement class size reduction. For students in K-5th, the direct instruction during Language Arts is further reduced by



half. During this time, half the students attend a music class, allowing for a rate of 1 to 10 or 1 to 14, depending on the grade level.

In addition, math classes are grouped by math skill rather than grade level or home room divisions. Home room placements are based on student reading abilities.

RSA serves students who reside in or whose parents or legal guardians are employed within the Redding community. It is also open to qualifying students within Shasta County and contiguous counties who agree to the philosophy and meet the admission requirements of RSA. The homeschool/independent study constituent never exceeds 20% of total enrollment.

In addition to the standard admission requirements of public education schools, Redding School of the Arts has the following special requirements:

- A commitment by the student to pursue the student's personal interest in an area of visual or performing arts beyond what the school provides.
- A commitment by parents/guardians and student for flexibility in scheduling.
- The student's parent(s) or guardian(s) must volunteer their time at the school or a school related function at least once a month for a minimum of five hours.
- Parents/guardians are asked to serve on committees, share expertise in specific areas of need, help with outreach, assist in classes and to support the work of the school in the home. They are asked to donate time and/or money toward the establishment of the school.

Instructional Minutes

The Instructional minutes for the students attending RSA exceed the requirements of the state in all grades. This allows for an extensive academic instruction and enrichment

of the visual and performing arts for all students.

Minimum Days in School Year

RSA conducts 10 minimum days per school year in which one week is dedicated to parent teacher conferences and the others to staff development focused on additional training in core curriculum.

Teacher Compliance and Experience

RSA is proud to note that all of its teachers meet the following requirements:

- Minimum of two years classroom teaching experience.
- Considered “highly qualified” as defined by the No Child Left Behind Act.
- 100% meet the (Bilingual) Cross-cultural, Language and Academic Development (BCLAD) standards.
- Elective teachers are community professionals actively working in the areas they teach.

During the 2006-2007 school year, RSA added two new teacher to accommodate changes in RSA’s academic programs and additional resource assistance to accommodate growth in the Shasta County Special Education Consortium. Currently, there are 19 full and part-time teachers, three paraprofessionals, a full-time office manager, two part-time office assistant, school psychologist, speech pathologist, and two school directors.

School Safety Plan

RSA meets quarterly with the district safety committee reviewing site safety concerns. A fire drill and intruder on campus drill planned and executed. A new bell system was added to assist with safety procedures. Staff and students were introduced to the new sounds and then practice the safety procedures to the corresponding bell system.

School Disciplinary Practices

RSA’s school board reviewed the school disciplinary practices during this school year. An attempt was made to have natural consequences for student actions. The plan includes levels of administrative and classroom consequences dependent upon the infraction. These disciplinary practices were included in the Student Parent Handbook which is distributed at the beginning of school or for new enrollees.

Suspensions/Expulsions

RSA suspended fewer than 5 students through out the school year. There were no expulsions at the school.

School Leadership

Directors

Jean Hatch, Co-director. Mrs. Hatch taught for 23 years prior to starting RSA with her colleague, Margaret Johnson. She spent most of the 23 years teaching in Special Day classes, RSP classes, Court Schools, as well as Home and Hospital and middle school. She did her undergraduate work at University of California, Davis and her graduate studies at San Francisco State University.

Mrs. Hatch created and also directs the Shasta County Charter Schools Special Education Consortium. This consortium serves five charter schools with approximately 1,000 students in Shasta County and serves as a state and national model for innovative delivery of special education services.

Margaret Johnson, Co-director. Mrs. Johnson has been working in education for over 20 years. She spent time in the classroom educating children from grades kindergarten through 12th grade. While working for her previous district she designed and implemented a homeschool component developing budgets, setting and selecting curriculum, interviewing and evaluating teachers, as well as developing educationally appropriate materials for special needs students. Margaret earned her undergraduate degree at Oregon State University and a Masters in Elementary Education: Reading and the English as a Second Language Learner from California State University of Chico.

Governing Board

RSA is governed by a Governing Board consisting of seven members, five of whom are voting members:

- School founder – voting member
- Two parent representative – voting member; elected by the Parent Teacher Club; serves a two-year term
- A faculty representative – voting member; elected by faculty peers; serves a two-year term
- Three community members – voting members; chosen by application; serve two-year alternating terms; may serve more than one term

Policies or personnel and/or fiscal issues are determined by a majority vote of the Governing Board.