Two public schools, K-5 on DM until 2006 (Tucson Unified School District (TUSD))

- **TUSD down-sizing and financial issues**
- **Consolidated to one K-5 school**
- **Defaulted on vacant school deed**
- **58-year old school returned to Base**
BACKGROUND

- Assigned TUSD middle school (6-8) in local community
  - Labeled “failing” three straight years
  - Over-crowded
  - Underfunded
  - Bus ride to other school over 1 hour

Davis-Monthan Charter School
Parents on Base survey and Town Hall meeting

- "Overwhelming response" – need on-base middle school

DM Charter School Working Group formed

- Work options/advantages to local middle school
- Incorporated experts from:
  - Fighter Wing Plans and Legal Offices
  - Mission Support Group engineers, contractors, Force Support and Security Forces personnel
DAVIS-MONTHAN CHARTER SCHOOL

PROCESS

- Team Strategy
  - Reuse 58-year old school -- facility condition assessed by Engineers
  - Wing Plans Office submitted beddown request for a charter school to HQ Air Force -- Approved 17 November 2008
  - Force Support held open, transparent communication with families/leadership for desired qualities for middle school
    - Town Hall meetings
    - Wing and Group meetings
    - Open e-mail discussion
  - Researched charter school xxxxx in Arizona
    - Contacted 327 charters schools
Team Selection Procedure

- Establish Source Selection Team (SST) -- Contracting
- Developed Request for Proposal (RFP) / Statement of Objectives
- Operating Agreement (OA) developed
  - Safety/Security/Maintenance costs
- Basis for Award – competitive Best Value
  - Technical Properties (educational standards) – Force Support and Contracting
  - Financial (Pass/Fail) – Civil Engineering (CE) and Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence (AFCEE)
  - Lease for facility (Pass/Fail) – CE and Legal
- Advertised plan with a press release through Arizona Charter School Association
Charter School Selection

- **Streamlined tech evaluation cut 50% off coordination time with multiple units working simultaneously**
- **SST sent results to Fighter Wing Commander (selection authority)**
- **Final selection approval was sent to:**
  1) Air Combat Command
  2) Air Force Real Property Agency
  3) Secretary of the Air Force
  4) Congress

- **Selection of Sonoran Science Academy approved, 15 July 2009**
- **DM School Liaison Officer**
  - Facilitated interagency coordination / ensured on-time school start
- **Sonoran Science Academy opened 17 August 2009 -- 120 students**
Selected charter school—Sonoran Science Academy (SSA)

- Embraced “Excellence”
  - “Love for Learning – Independent Thinking”
- Named “Arizona Charter School of the Year, 2009”
- No. 1 of 502 in Charter School Organization
- Eliminated substandard middle school education program
  - Ranked 50th in pupil spending in all Arizona Public Schools
- Quality education – no tuition fees!
DAVIS-MONTHAN CHARTER SCHOOL

IMPACT AND RESULTS

- Facility and Lease
  - Army Corps of Engineers – Lease Agreement
    - Determined “No Fee-Based” lease
    - Quality education – minimal cost to charter school (SSA)
      - More money spent on students
  - Savings to the Air Force – over $940,000
    - Demolition of 58-year-old facility -- $910,000
    - Grounds maintenance -- $31,000
**SSA Program**

- **19 classes and 11 extra-curricular classes to students – 1st year**
- **Free after-school and weekend tutoring**
- **Technology in Teaching – internet in every class**
- **Resource computer lab – Fall of second year**
- **Programs for special needs students**
- **Student/teacher ratio = 10:1**
- **Focus on learning and college preparation**
- **Two sets of textbooks – for school and home**
- **Teacher tracking to every student level**
- **Home visits, community, and social events**
SSA provides an environment of emphasis on high academic achievements

- Airmen’s children have opportunity to attend one of nation’s top technical school – math and science
- Student aptitude – test results show exceptional increases in one year (6-8 grades)
  - Reading up 46%
  - Writing up 53%
  - Math up 60%
- Phenomenal return on investment!
Unprecedented success!

- Military families – parents & students excited about opportunities SSA offers
- DM process sought by 6 Air Force installations
- AF, ACC, State of Arizona officials have visited SSA

SSA plans for 2010/2011 school year

- Adding high school 1 grade per year to 12th
- Requested extension of lease to 15 years with options
  - Stability and long-term growth
- Integrated Air Force School Liaison with faculty board – quick problem solving
- Renovation plans for computer lab
- Expanded full-sized gym in 3 years
SUSTAINMENT AND STANDARDIZATION

- 355TH Fighter Wing enterprise – SSA charger school
  - Opportunity to Airmen’s families
    - Excel now and in the future
  - College prepared – success in high tech community of new millennium
  - Military Ops Tempo – less family stress
    - Quality school
  - Parents and students – E³
    - Excited
      - Enthusiasm
      - Energized
SUSTAINMENT AND STANDARDIZATION

Comments by parents and students:

- “School actually goes the extra mile”
- “No one has bullied me at this school”
- “I love my teachers. They take time to listen.”
Quality Education in Military Community