

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMISSIONER

December 2018

Maine Charter School Commission

Seat #1

Dr. Fern Desjardins
(Also State Board of Education)

Seat #2

Jana Lapoint
(Also State Board of Education)

Seat #3

John Bird, Vice Chair
(Also State Board of Education)

Seat #4

Dr. J. Michael Wilhelm, Chair

Seat #5

Shelley Reed

Seat #6

Jim Rier

Seat #7

Laurie Pendleton

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 Executive Director
 (207)624-6728

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 Director of Program Management
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Amy Allen
 Senior Support Coordinator
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ACADIA Academy
 12 Westminster Street, Lewiston
www.acadiaacademy.org

Baxter Academy for Technology and Science
 185 Lancaster Street, Portland
www.baxter-academy.org

Cornville Regional Charter School
 1192 West Ridge Road, Cornville
www.cornvilleregionalcharterschool.org

Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences
 25 Shaker Road, Gray
www.fiddleheadschoo.org

Harpswell Coastal Academy
 9 Ash Point Road, Harpswell
www.harpswellcoastalacademy.org

Maine Academy of Natural Sciences
 16 Prescott Lane, Hinckley
www.gwh.org/means

Maine Arts Academy
 8 Goldenrod Lane, Sidney
www.snowpondartsacademy.org

Maine Connections Academy
 75 John Robert's Road, South Portland
www.maineconnectionsacademy.org

Maine Virtual Academy
 6 East Chestnut Street, Augusta
www.mainevirtual.org

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Maine Charter School Commission

Annual Report to the Commissioner 2017-2018 School Year December 2018

This Annual Report to the Commissioner is written to satisfy the requirement of MRSA Title 20-A, Chapter 112, §2405.4 Reporting and Evaluation, an authorizer shall submit to the Commissioner an annual report within 90 days of the end of each school fiscal year summarizing:

- A. The authorizer's strategic vision for chartering and progress toward achieving that vision;
- B. The performance of all operating public charter schools overseen by the authorizer, according to the performance measures and expectations specified in the charter contracts;
- C. The status of the authorizer's public charter school portfolio of approved charter applications, identifying all public charter schools within that portfolio as – approved, but not yet open; operating; renewed; transferred; terminated; closed; or never opened;
- D. The oversight and services provided by the authorizer to the public charter schools under the authorizer's purview; and
- E. The total amount of funds collected from each public charter school the authorizer authorized pursuant to subsection 5, paragraph B and the costs incurred by the authorizer to oversee each public charter school.

A.

Mission:

The mission of the Maine Charter School Commission (Commission) is to allow charter schools to be established as public schools that improve pupil learning by creating more high quality schools with high standards for pupil performance; that close achievement gaps between high-performing and low-performing groups of public school students; that increase high-quality educational opportunities within the public education system; that provide alternative learning environments for students who are not thriving in traditional school settings; that create new professional opportunities for teachers and other school personnel; that encourage the use of different, high-quality models of teaching and other aspects of schooling; and that provide students, parents, community members and local entities with expanded opportunities for involvement in the public education system.

This mission is being accomplished in a number of different ways. The Commission has formally adopted Rule 90-668 Chapter 1: Commission Organization and Operation that guides how the Commission will organize and operate; Rule 90-668 Chapter 2: Procedures for Commission Authorization of Public Charter Schools; and Rule 90-668 Chapter 3: Procedures for Charter School Renewal. Chapter 3 was created to have a procedure established for the renewal process. In 2017, three schools completed the renewal process – Baxter Academy for Technology and Science; Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences; and Harpswell Coastal Academy.

Charter School Approval Process:

The charter school must submit a charter application for establishing a charter school as described in the Maine Charter School Commission’s Request for Proposals.

After the receipt of a charter school application, the approval includes a four step process:

1. The first step is a completeness review. Applications judged not complete are returned to the sponsor for errors or omissions to be corrected within 5 days.
2. Those applications deemed to be complete then move to the second step, approval for continued review. A Review Team, comprised of three (3) Commission members, assisted by technical experts, as needed, review each application and rate it using the evaluative criteria in the RFP. Using the scoring rubric as a tool, the Team develops a recommendation for consideration by the full Commission to determine merit for continued review.
3. The applicants approved for continued review then move to the third step which includes an interview with the Commission and a public hearing.
4. In the final step, the Commission reviews the findings from the review of the application, the information received from the interview and the public hearing and makes a decision to approve or deny the application.

In the summer of 2017, the National Association for Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) conducted a

thorough Authorizer Evaluation (*see Appendix*) of the Commission's oversight activities and offered several recommendations to improve the RFP process. In addition, the Commission hired Dr. David Silvernail to complete additional research on the Commission's activities (*See Appendix*) To give ample time to review and implement these recommendations, the Commission decided not to issue an RFP for schools opening in the fall of 2019.

In the 2018-19, Maine students have the opportunity to choose to receive their education from nine public charter schools, each offering a different educational focus:

- ACADIA Academy serves grades K-4 with a focus on direct instruction and hands-on learning;
- Baxter Academy for Technology and Science serves grades 9-12 with a focus on science, technology, engineering and math;
- Cornville Regional Charter School serves grades preK-10 with a focus on standards-based instruction;
- Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences serves preK-5 using the Emilia Reggio philosophy;
- Harpswell Coastal Academy serves grades 6-12 with a focus on project-based learning;
- Maine Academy of Natural Sciences serves grades 9-12 with a focus on agriculture and forestry;
- Maine Arts Academy (*formerly Snow Pond Arts Academy*) serves grades 9-12 with a focus on the performing arts.
- Maine Connections Academy serves grades 7-12 through a virtual platform;
- Maine Virtual Academy serves grades 7-12 through a virtual platform;

Legislative Process:

In addition to its work managing the RFP process, authorizing of new charter schools, and overseeing all charter schools, the Commission was engaged in the legislative process. The Commission introduced the work of the Commission in implementing the law and meeting its authorization and monitoring responsibilities to legislators; monitored legislative proposals that might affect charter schools or amend the charter school law; provided testimony to assist the legislative committee as it considered proposed legislation and was available to address requests for information.

Monitoring:

The Commission also maintained close communication with the approved charter schools and attended important functions at the charter schools. The Commission conducted the required monitoring responsibilities. These included Pre-Opening and 90-Day Reviews, as well as an extensive end-of-year review with each charter school. Schools in the last year of their current charter contract underwent additional visits, an interview and a public hearing as part of the renewal process.

Commission Activities:

In addition to monthly meetings (*see Calendar in Appendix*), Commission members were available to media representatives responding to inquiries, as well as contributing to a better public understanding of the charter school law and transparency of Commission activities.

The Commission was fully engaged in the development of rules and the rewriting of RFPs. Commission members maintained a record of excellent attendance at the Commission's regular monthly business meetings, workshops and also at all special meetings of the Commission. Each of these responsibilities required many hours of voluntary labor.

In October 2017, four (4) members of the Commission and two staff attended the NACSA Annual Conference in Phoenix, Arizona to attend workshops and sessions to assist in developing and maintaining policies and practices consistent with nationally recognized principles and professional standards for authorizing public schools.

Staff:

Supporting the Commission were three administrative employees – Senior Support Coordinator, Director of Program Management and Executive Director.

Collaboratively, the staff: provide preparation for meetings, notifications, agendas and minutes; maintain records and correspondence of the Commission; analyze and evaluate charter school data; write monitoring reports; provide research and analysis; communicate with charter schools to strengthen their performance; provide feedback to schools regarding accountability metrics; review schools' performance and legal compliance; assist the Commission in developing policies and procedures; serve as a liaison between the Commission and the Maine Department of Education, Legislature, and Attorney General's Office; provide research and analysis; monitor charter contracts for compliance; manage Commission income and expenses; and work with the Commission throughout the charter application process.

Strategic Plan:

The Charter Commission annually reviews its work from the previous year for the purpose of continuous improvement of its efforts to oversee the public charter schools. This review results in the Commission's strategic plan for the following year. In 2017, the Commission underwent a rigorous Authorizer Evaluation conducted by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA). The Commission has begun to address the following recommendations:

1. Clarify roles - Commission/staff
2. Hire and train application reviewers
3. Establish new performance framework
4. Contract a finance person
5. Revisit charter contract
6. Revise new charter application
7. Develop criteria to be met in order to be eligible to apply for expansion/replication
8. Revise renewal application and process
9. Differentiate monitoring and oversight

Sub-Committees:

In addition to the work done by the full Commission, the Commission established sub-committees. These sub-committees consisted of 2-3 Commission members, and also included staff as appropriate. The Commission also created standing committees for Finance and Policy.

B.

The performance of all operating public charter schools overseen by the Maine Charter School Commission, according to the performance measures and expectations specified in the charter contracts:

The Commission conducts a comprehensive 90 day visit to new schools, schools that are operating in a new location and schools that have new programs. During the 2017-2018 school year, four visits were conducted. Reports were generated and approved by the Commission. *(The reports are included with this document.)*

A final, year-end monitoring review was also conducted for each school. This included a presentation of the required data, as well as visits to the public charter schools with interviews, and observations. A report with findings was generated and accepted by the Commission. *(The final report for each school is included with this document.)*

C.

The status of the authorizer’s public charter school portfolio of approved charter applications, identifying all public charter schools within that portfolio as:

(1) Approved: None

(2) Operating:

- ❖ ACADIA Academy (September 2016)
- ❖ Baxter Academy for Technology and Science (September 2013)
- ❖ Cornville Regional Charter School (October 2012)
- ❖ Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences (September 2013)
- ❖ Harpswell Coastal Academy (September 2013)
- ❖ Maine Academy of Natural Sciences (October 2012)
- ❖ Maine Connections Academy (September 2014)
- ❖ Maine Virtual Academy (September 2015)
- ❖ Snow Pond Arts Academy (September 2016)

(3) Renewed:

- ❖ Baxter Academy for Technology and Science (November 2017)
- ❖ Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences (November 2017)
- ❖ Harpswell Coastal Academy (November 2017)

(4) Transferred: None

(5) Terminated: None

(6) Closed: None

(7) Never Opened: None

D.

The oversight and services provided by the Maine Charter School Commission to the public charter schools under the authorizer's purview:

The Commission provides oversight of the authorized charter schools through end-of-year monitoring visits. Additionally, charter schools are required to provide information periodically during the year, as well as end-of-year-data. *(See Calendar in Appendix)*

In the past year, the Commission made pre-opening visits to Baxter Academy for Technology and Science, Cornville Regional Charter School, Maine Academy of Natural Sciences, and Snow Pond Arts Academy. Representing the Commission was a team of Commission members, assisted by Department of Education Special Services team member(s), and Commission staff. In general, the three-member teams of Commission members assigned to review an application continues to serve that public charter school conducting the monitoring and visits for compliance with the Contract – which includes the Application, Pre-Opening Plan, Monitoring Plan, Performance Indicators and Closure Plan.

The pre-opening visits included Governing Board members and administration at which the schools' contracted pre-opening plan was reviewed for completeness and authorization to open. *(The Pre-Opening Visit reports are attached.)*

During the first year of operation – the opening of the school; a new location; or new program -- the Commission Review Team administers a 90-day visit at the school. For the 2017-2018 school year, Baxter Academy for Technology and Science *(new location)*, Cornville Regional Charter School *(new programs)*, Maine Academy of Natural Sciences *(new program)*, and Snow Pond Arts Academy *(review of School Improvement Plan)* required 90-day visits. The team reviewed data provided by the schools, toured the schools and observed classes and activities; all to assess the schools' progress in implementing their proposed educational and organizational plans. *(The 90-Day Visit Reports are attached.)*

At the end of the school year, an annual on-site visit was conducted and an annual monitoring report was written. The Review Team measured progress on attainment of the charter schools' Performance Indicators in the Charter School Contract.

The Commission conducts periodic visits to the schools during the year, unannounced and scheduled, as well as email and telephone conferencing with school personnel. These are for the purpose of providing support to the schools; maintaining an awareness of the schools' activities, procedures and programs; and responding to questions or need for information. As reports are received from the school during the year, they are reviewed and the records are retained.

Members of the Commission were present at charter school events such as:

- ✓ Site Visits;
- ✓ Enrollment Lotteries;
- ✓ Pre-Opening Reviews;
- ✓ 90 Day Reviews;
- ✓ End-of-Year Visits;
- ✓ Graduation ceremonies.

MCSC staff maintained communication with each school throughout the year and provided assistance to each school as needed. In addition to the oversight activities, the Commission staff supported programs to assist the charter schools as needed.

E.

The total amount of funds collected from each public charter school the Maine Charter School Commission authorized and the costs incurred by the authorizer to oversee each public school.

By law, the Commission is allowed to receive up to 3% of annual per-pupil allocations received by each public charter school that it authorizes. These funds must be used to cover the costs for the Commission to oversee its public charter schools. Currently, the Commission takes only 2.25%.

The revenue received from the Department of Education based on the Essential Programs and Services (EPS) formula in FY18 was \$388,472 of which \$333,515 was used to pay the Commission per diem, fund professional development for the Commission and staff, engage professional and administrative staff and to fund activities to oversee public charter schools. The balance has been carried into FY 2019.

Professional development of the Commission and staff is to assure that the Commission, in its operation, adheres faithfully to the requirement of the Public Charter School Law that authorizers meet nationally recognized principles and professional standards.

Also attached to this report are FY18 year to date expenditures – Other Special Revenue Funds; FY18 expenditures by vendor – Other Special Revenue Funds; FY19 approved budget; and FY19 budget guideline.

Appendix A

Organizational Chart

**Maine Charter School Commission
Organization Chart 2017-2018**

*Laurie Pendleton,
Chair*

*Dr. J. Michael
Wilhelm, Vice Chair*

John Bird

Jana Lapoint

Shelley Reed

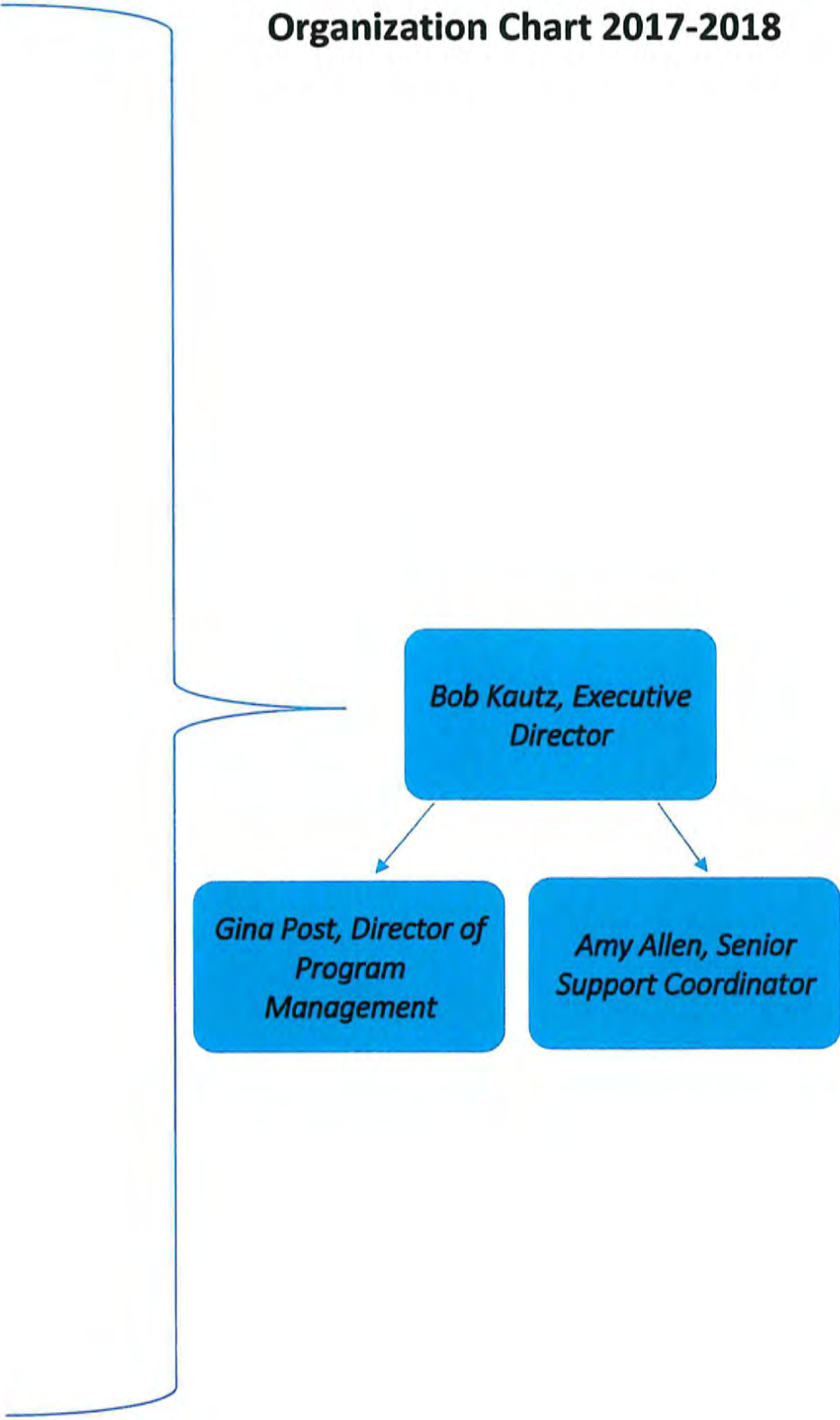
Jim Rier

Nichi Farnham

*Bob Kautz, Executive
Director*

*Gina Post, Director of
Program
Management*

*Amy Allen, Senior
Support Coordinator*



Appendix B

2017-2018 Calendar

2017/2018 CALENDAR

July 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
B						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

August 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

September 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

October 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

November 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

December 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

10	MCA EOY Visit 2
11	Business Meeting
25	NACSA Auth Eval
26	NACSA Auth Eval

1	Business Meeting
9	SPAA Pre-Opening
9	MeANS Pre-Opening
24	CRCS Pre-Opening

5	Business Meeting
14	Baxter Walk-Thru

3	Business Meeting
24	Baxter Public Hearing
26	FSAS Public Hearing

1	HCA Public Hearing
7	Business Meeting

5	Business Meeting
5	SPAA 90-Day
15	MeANS 90-Day
20	CRCS 90-Day

January 2018						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

February 2018						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			

March 2018						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

April 2018						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

May 2018						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

June 2018						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

2	Business Meeting
---	------------------

6	Business Meeting
---	------------------

3	Business Meeting
---	------------------

5	MCA EOY Visit 1
---	-----------------

1	Business Meeting
---	------------------

18	MCA EOY Visit 2
----	-----------------

22	SPAA EOY Visit 1
----	------------------

31	CRCS EOY Visit 1
----	------------------

4	MeVA EOY Visit 1
---	------------------

5	Business Meeting
---	------------------

8	ACADIA EOY Visit 1
---	--------------------

12	FSAS EOY Visit
----	----------------

14	SPAA EOY Visit 2
----	------------------

19	MeVA EOY Visit 2
----	------------------

20	HCA EOY Visit
----	---------------

21	Baxter EOY Visit
----	------------------

22	CRCS EOY Visit 2
----	------------------

26	ACADIA EOY Visit 2
----	--------------------

Appendix C

*FY18 Year to Date Expenditures – Other Special
Revenue*

MAINE CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION
 FY18 YEAR TO DATE EXPENDITURES - OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS
 AS OF JUNE 30, 2018

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL	FY17 Actual
PERSONAL SERVICES ALLOTMENT	3,850	3,850	3,850	3,850	15,400	12,100
<i>EXPENDITURES</i>						
3890 PER DIEM PAYMENT	1,925	1,760	2,200	2,035	7,920	8,470
PERSONAL SERVICES EXPENDITURES	1,925	1,760	2,200	2,035	7,920	8,470
PERSONAL SERVICES ALLOTMENT BALANCE	1,925	2,090	1,650	1,815	7,480	3,630
ALL OTHER ALLOTMENT	392,078	49,149	39,149	39,149	519,525	286,306
UNENCUMBERED BALANCE FORWARD					0	40,648
ENCUMBERED BALANCE FORWARD	23,443				23,443	17,192
TOTAL ALL OTHER ALLOTMENT	415,521	49,149	39,149	39,149	542,968	344,146
<i>EXPENDITURES:</i>						
4021 ENTERTAIN & CATERERS SERV					0	1,095
4099 MISC PROF FEES & SPEC SRV	49,821	63,137	61,523	54,831	229,311	201,537
4105 SERVICE CENTER		4,069	4,069	4,069	12,206	16,351
4142 LEGAL SERVICES					0	8,673
4250 W-2 REPORTABLE IN STATE TRAVEL					0	691
4275 MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSE					0	5,160
4360 AIR FARE OUT OF STATE	2,566	740			3,306	3,715
4378 OUT-OF ST CONFERENCE REG CHGS	3,000	150			3,150	
4380 AUTO MILEAGE-GEN OUT-OF ST		122			122	172
4381 OTHER TRANSPORTATION COST	46	402	24		472	470
4383 HOTEL ROOM AND LODGING		3,759		1,411	5,169	4,036
4384 MEALS INCLUDE GRATUITIES		707	121		828	712
4385 MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSE		50			50	40
4422 REPAIRS LABOR					0	460
4801 INSURANCE ON BUILDINGS	12				12	12
4825 GENERAL LIABILITY INSUR	526				526	338
4841 EMPLOYEES BONDS	8				8	8
4852 AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE	31				31	11
4909 COURIER SERVICE		97			97	45
4911 POSTAGE	21	109	78	17	225	721
4913 INTRAGOVERNMENTAL SERVICE	4,072	33	13	3	4,120	38
4916 CONFERENCE CHARGES		150	210		360	3,100
4929 PRINTING AND BINDING		1,300	809		2,109	1,015
4938 PHOTO COPYING	652	307	230	93	1,282	2,883
4939 PRINTING BINDING ETC STAT			10		10	
4946 ADVERTISING NOTICES	902	163			1,065	518
1961 OTHER ADV AND PUB MATTER	770				770	
4970 OTHER THAN ST MILEAGE	1,863	1,999	1,310	2,343	7,515	9,059
4980 TRAVEL EXP OTHER THAN ST	38	56	22	63	178	255
4982 PERIODICALS NEWSPAPER SUB		463			463	443
4983 DUES	1,250			1,250	2,500	1,250
5002 REGISTRATION FEE-STATE				175	175	270
5020 BOOKS					0	12
5150 FOOD	556	419	123	270	1,367	691
5301 OIT PROFESSIONAL CHARGES		125	1,306	527	1,959	154
5302 TELEPHONE SERVICE		831	572	394	1,797	1,868
5304 CELLULAR PHONE SERVICE	261	524	395	819	1,999	1,633
5310 IT END USER SERVICES					0	2,801
5331 NETWORK ACCESS					0	1,707
5355 SOFTWARE MAINT / LICENSES	17,100			2,000	19,100	8,000
5370 MINOR IT EQUIPMENT		150	122	155	427	
5380 SUBSCRIPTION - PC/LAPTOP/THIN CLIENT		4,250	3,396	2,408	10,054	1,361
5381 SUPPORT - PC/LAPTOP/THIN CLIENT					0	1,799
5382 FILE SERVICES					0	68
5383 EMAIL					0	539
5386 MOBILE DATA DEVICE/CONNECTION					0	397
5602 OFFICE SUPPLIES	575	991	1,279	1,371	4,217	1,938
5627 PURCHASE OF BOOKS		368			368	
5636 MISC SUPPLIES			80		80	15
5650 MISC OFFICE EQUIPMENT					0	633
6719 OTHER TRAINING		650			650	
8511 TRANS TO GEN FUND STACAP	1,987	2,015	1,799	1,715	7,516	8,840
TOTAL ALL OTHER EXPENDITURES	86,058	88,134	77,490	73,913	325,594	295,536
ALL OTHER ALLOTMENT BALANCE - SUBTOTAL	329,463	(38,985)	(38,341)	(34,764)	217,373	48,610
<i>ENCUMBRANCES:</i>	254,536	(71,845)	(47,595)	(54,831)	80,265	37,062
ALL OTHER ALLOTMENT BALANCE	74,927	32,861	9,255	20,066	137,108	11,548

Appendix D

*FY18 Expenditures by Vendor – Other Special Revenue
Funds*

MAINE CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION
 FY18 EXPENDITURES BY VENDOR - OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS
 AS OF JUNE 30, 2018

OBJECT	OBJECT NAME	VENDOR	EXPEND.
3890	PER DIEM PAYMENT	JAMES E RIER JR	770.00
3890	PER DIEM PAYMENT	JANA LAPOINT	1,320.00
3890	PER DIEM PAYMENT	JOHN A BIRD	1,210.00
3890	PER DIEM PAYMENT	JOHN MICHAEL WILHELM	1,265.00
3890	PER DIEM PAYMENT	LAURIE PENDLETON	935.00
3890	PER DIEM PAYMENT	NICHI S FARNHAM	880.00
3890	PER DIEM PAYMENT	SHELLEY S REED	1,540.00
TOTAL PERSONAL SERVICES			7,920.00
4099	MISC PROF FEES & SPEC SRV	DAVID L SILVERNAIL	15,187.50
4099	MISC PROF FEES & SPEC SRV	PANORAMA EDUCATION, INC	6,180.00
4099	MISC PROF FEES & SPEC SRV	TRI-STATE STAFFING, INC	207,943.24
4105	SERVICE CENTER		12,206.25
4360	AIR FARE OUT OF STATE		3,305.99
4378	OUT-OF ST CONFERENCE REG CHGS		3,150.00
4380	AUTO MILEAGE-GEN OUT-OF ST	LAURIE PENDLETON	33.44
4380	AUTO MILEAGE-GEN OUT-OF ST	NICHI S FARNHAM	2.64
4380	AUTO MILEAGE-GEN OUT-OF ST	ROBERT KAUTZ	29.92
4380	AUTO MILEAGE-GEN OUT-OF ST	SHELLEY S REED	56.32
4381	OTHER TRANSPORTATION COST	GINA POST	24.00
4381	OTHER TRANSPORTATION COST	LAURIE PENDLETON	40.00
4381	OTHER TRANSPORTATION COST	ROBERT KAUTZ	84.00
4381	OTHER TRANSPORTATION COST		323.66
4383	HOTEL ROOM AND LODGING		5,169.42
4384	MEALS INCLUDE GRATUITIES	GINA POST	121.00
4384	MEALS INCLUDE GRATUITIES	LAURIE PENDLETON	167.00
4384	MEALS INCLUDE GRATUITIES	NICHI S FARNHAM	180.00
4384	MEALS INCLUDE GRATUITIES	ROBERT KAUTZ	180.00
4384	MEALS INCLUDE GRATUITIES	SHELLEY S REED	180.00
4385	MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSE	ROBERT KAUTZ	50.00
4801	INSURANCE ON BUILDINGS		12.47
4825	GENERAL LIABILITY INSUR		526.40
4841	EMPLOYEES BONDS		8.00
4852	AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE		31.35
4909	COURIER SERVICE		96.55
4911	POSTAGE		224.93
4912	BUS REPLY & POSTAGE DUE		0.21
4913	INTRAGOVERNMENTAL SERVICE		4,120.16
4916	CONFERENCE CHARGES		360.00
4929	PRINTING AND BINDING	Harvard Pinnacle Group Corporation	1,300.00
4929	PRINTING AND BINDING	Print Bangor	800.55
4929	PRINTING AND BINDING	THE COPY CENTER	8.00
4938	PHOTO COPYING		1,282.34
4939	PRINTING BINDING ETC STAT		9.58
4946	ADVERTISING NOTICES		1,065.12
4961	OTHER ADV AND PUB MATTER	Chris Lausier	770.00
4970	OTHER THAN ST MILEAGE	GINA POST	1,425.42
4970	OTHER THAN ST MILEAGE	JOHN A BIRD	986.48
4970	OTHER THAN ST MILEAGE	JOHN MICHAEL WILHELM	1,154.56
4970	OTHER THAN ST MILEAGE	LAURIE PENDLETON	954.80
4970	OTHER THAN ST MILEAGE	NICHI S FARNHAM	1,075.36
4970	OTHER THAN ST MILEAGE	ROBERT KAUTZ	1,418.12
4970	OTHER THAN ST MILEAGE	SHELLEY S REED	500.10
4980	TRAVEL EXP OTHER THAN ST	GINA POST	45.00
4980	TRAVEL EXP OTHER THAN ST	JOHN MICHAEL WILHELM	61.00
4980	TRAVEL EXP OTHER THAN ST	ROBERT KAUTZ	72.15
4982	PERIODICALS NEWSPAPER SUB		463.30
4983	DUES		2,500.00
5002	REGISTRATION FEE-STATE		175.00
5150	FOOD		1,367.27
5301	OIT PROFESSIONAL CHARGES		1,958.90
5302	TELEPHONE SERVICE		1,797.01
5304	CELLULAR PHONE SERVICE	US CELLULAR	1,998.98
5355	SOFTWARE MAINT / LICENSES	THE INSTITUTE FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATIC	17,100.00
5355	SOFTWARE MAINT / LICENSES		2,000.00
5370	MINOR IT EQUIPMENT	Axis Business Solutions	121.95
5370	MINOR IT EQUIPMENT		305.12
5380	SUBSCRIPTION - PC/LAPTOP/THIN CLIENT		10,053.87
5602	OFFICE SUPPLIES		4,216.55
5627	PURCHASE OF BOOKS		368.00
5636	MISC SUPPLIES		79.95
6719	OTHER TRAINING	FIDDLEHEAD SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES	650.00
8511	TRANS TO GEN FUND STACAP		7,515.66
TOTAL ALL OTHER			325,594.59
GRAND TOTAL PERSONAL SERVICE AND ALL OTHER			333,514.59

Appendix E

Budget FY19

OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL	\$1,875,000	\$1,875,000
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Sec. A-8. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

CENTERS FOR INNOVATION

Centers for Innovation 0911

Initiative: BASELINE BUDGET

GENERAL FUND	2017-18	2018-19
All Other	\$118,009	\$118,009
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$118,009</u>	<u>\$118,009</u>

CENTERS FOR INNOVATION 0911

PROGRAM SUMMARY

GENERAL FUND	2017-18	2018-19
All Other	\$118,009	\$118,009
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$118,009</u>	<u>\$118,009</u>

Sec. A-9. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION, STATE

Maine Charter School Commission Z137

Initiative: BASELINE BUDGET

OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	2017-18	2018-19
Personal Services	\$12,100	\$12,100
All Other	\$286,306	\$286,306
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL	<u>\$298,406</u>	<u>\$298,406</u>

Maine Charter School Commission Z137

Initiative: Provides funding for per diem payments and other costs related to overseeing public charter schools.

OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	2017-18	2018-19
Personal Services	\$3,300	\$3,300
All Other	\$233,219	\$296,833
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL	\$236,519	\$300,133

**MAINE CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION Z137
PROGRAM SUMMARY**

OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	2017-18	2018-19
Personal Services	\$15,400	\$15,400
All Other	\$519,525	\$583,139
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL	\$534,925	\$598,539

CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION, STATE DEPARTMENT TOTALS	2017-18	2018-19
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	\$534,925	\$598,539
DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS	\$534,925	\$598,539

Sec. A-10. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

CHILDREN'S TRUST INCORPORATED, BOARD OF THE MAINE

Maine Children's Trust Incorporated 0798

Initiative: BASELINE BUDGET

OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	2017-18	2018-19
All Other	\$48,300	\$48,300
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL	\$48,300	\$48,300

**MAINE CHILDREN'S TRUST INCORPORATED 0798
PROGRAM SUMMARY**

OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	2017-18	2018-19
All Other	\$48,300	\$48,300

Appendix F

Budget Guidelines

Budget & Financial Management System

Budget Guideline Report

Account: 01490SZ13701

MAINE CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION

Fund: All Policy: All Unit: All Agency: All Program: All Account: All

	Object	2016-U01 Total FY 17 (Cumulative)	2018-T01 Total FY 18 (Cumulative)	Legislative Document
Personal Services	1			
		6,600		P267A1
		5,500		P267A1-3
			12,100	P284A1
			3,300	P284A1-4
Personal Services TOTAL		12,100	15,400	
All Other	2			
		11,900		P267A1
		126,000		P267A1-3
		148,406		P267A1-7000
			286,306	P284A1
			233,219	P284A1-4
All Other TOTAL		286,306	519,525	
TOTAL		298,406	534,925	

Budget Guideline Report

Account: 01090SZ13701

MAINE CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION

Fund: All Policy: All Unit: All Agency: All Program: All Account: All

Object	2016-U01	2018-T01	Legislative Document
	Total FY 17 (Cumulative)	Total FY 18 (Cumulative)	
All Other	2		
	148,406		P267A1
	(148,406)		P267A1-7000
All Other TOTAL	0	0	
TOTAL	0	0	

Appendix G

*Number of Students Attending Maine Public Charter
Schools by Resident Town*

2017-18 Resident Town Breakdown	ACADIA	Baxter	Cornville	Fiddlehead	Harpswell	MCA	MeANS	MeVA	Snow Pond	Totals
Acton		1				1		1		3
Albany Twp								4		4
Albion								1	1	2
Alfred		1				2				3
Allagash								1		1
Anson			1			2	3			6
Appleton									1	1
Arundel		1				1		1		3
Ashland						1				1
Athens			6				3			9
Atkinson								1		1
Auburn	39	17		6	3	7		7	1	80
Augusta		1				7	3	10	18	39
Baldwin						1		1		2
Bangor						13		15		28
Bath		3			22	1		5	2	33
Belfast						1	1	3		5
Belgrade			2			1	2		3	8
Benedicta Twp								1		1
Benton						2	4	7	9	22
Berwick						3		2		5
Bethel						1				1
Biddeford		4				7		3		14
Bingham			3			1				4
Blue Hill						1		1		2
Boothbay								1		1
Boothbay Harbor									1	1
Bowdoin		3			9			1		13
Bowdoinham		4			5	1				10
Bradford						3				3
Brewer						1		4		5
Bridgton		5				2		2		9
Brighton Plt							1			1
Bristol								1		1
Brooks								1		1
Brownville						3		1		4
Brunswick		14			42	6	1	3	3	69
Bucksport						1		1		2
Burnham								1		1
Buxton		13						2		15
Calais						1		2		3
Camden								1		1
Canaan			7				11	1		19
Cape Elizabeth		10				1	1			12
Caribou						1				1
Carmel						1				1
Carthage								1		1
Casco		6		1		1		1		9
Castle Hill						2				2
Chapman						1				1
Charleston						1				1
Chebeague Island		1								1
Chelsea								1	2	3
Cherryfield						1				1

	ACADIA	Baxter	Cornville	Fiddlehead	Harpswell	MCA	MeANS	MeVA	Snow Pond	
Chester						3				3
Chesterville								2		2
China						2		1	2	5
Clinton			2				6	2	1	11
Columbia Falls						1				1
Corinth								1		1
Cornish		1				2				3
Cornville			23				1			24
Cumberland		15		1		1				17
Cushing								4		4
Damariscotta						1		2		3
Danforth						1				1
Dedham						1		1		2
Deer Isle							1			1
Denmark						1		1		2
Dexter						1	1	1		3
Dixfield						1				1
Dover-Foxcroft						3				3
Dresden					2	1				3
Durham		7		7	4					18
Eagle Lake								1		1
East Machias								1		1
East Millinocket						3		2		5
Eastport						1				1
Eddington						3				3
Eliot						2		1		3
Ellsworth						3		3		6
Embden			1				2	1		4
Enfield						1				1
Exeter								2		2
Fairfield			5			5	18	9	9	46
Falmouth		8		5	1					14
Farmingdale		1					1	2	1	5
Farmington						1	1	2	2	6
Fayette							1			1
Fort Fairfield								3		3
Fort Kent						2		1		3
Franklin						3		1		4
Freedom							1		1	2
Freeman						1				1
Freeport		8			5	1				14
Fryeburg						1		2		3
Gardiner	1					3		3	2	9
Glenburn						1		3		4
Gorham		13				10		2		25
Gouldsboro								1		1
Gray		9		18		8				35
Greene	6	3		2		1				12
Greenville								1	1	2
Guilford						1				1
Hallowell						1		1	1	3
Hampden						1		4		5
Hancock						1		1		2
Harmony								1		1
Harpswell		3			31	1		1	1	37

	ACADIA	Baxter	Cornville	Fiddlehead	Harpswell	MCA	MeANS	MeVA	Snow Pond	
Harrison						1		1		2
Hartford	2									2
Hartland			35			1	5	2		43
Hebron	2									2
Hiram						1				1
Hodgdon								1		1
Holden						1		1		2
Hollis		6				3				9
Houlton								3		3
Industry							3			3
Jackman								1		1
Jay							1	2	1	4
Jefferson						1		1		2
Jonesboro								1		1
Kennebunk		2				2				4
Kennebunkport		1								1
Kingfield						1		3		4
Kittery						2		1		3
Lagrange						2				2
Lebanon		1				4		5		10
Lee						1				1
Leeds	2					1		1		4
Lewiston	104	15		14	6	8		9	3	159
Liberty									1	1
Limerick		3				3		2		8
Limestone								1		1
Limington		1				2	1	1		5
Lincoln						4		3		7
Lincolnton								1		1
Linneus								1		1
Lisbon	4	1		2	14	5		4		30
Litchfield	2	3		1	1			3	1	11
Littleton								2		2
Livermore						1		1		2
Livermore Falls	2							1	1	4
Lovell						1		2		3
Lowell						1				1
Ludlow						1				1
Lyman		1				1		3		5
Madawaska						2				2
Madison			22			1	12		3	38
Manchester								1		1
Mariaville						1		1		2
Masardis						1				1
Maxfield						2				2
Mechanic Falls								1		1
Mercer							1		2	3
Merrill						1				1
Mexico								1		1
Milbridge								1		1
Milford						2				2
Millinocket						2				2
Milo						2		1		3
Minot				1						1
Monmouth						3	1	1		5

	ACADIA	Baxter	Cornville	Fiddlehead	Harpswell	MCA	MeANS	MeVA	Snow Pond	
Monroe								2		2
Montville							1	1		2
Moose River						1		1		2
Moscoe							1			1
Mount Chase								1		1
Mount Desert						2				2
Mount Vernon						2	1		1	4
Naples		4				2				6
New Gloucester		4		35		4		4		47
New Portland							1			1
New Sharon						1	1		1	3
New Sweden								1		1
Newburgh						1				1
Newcastle								2		2
Newfield						1				1
Newport			1			4				5
Norridgewock			8			2	8	3		21
North Berwick						3		1		4
North Yarmouth		11				1				12
Northport							1			1
Norway				1		2		3		6
Oakland						2	5		7	14
Old Orchard Beach		3				2		1		6
Old Town						4		2		6
Orland						2		1		3
Orono						2		1		3
Orrington						1		2		3
Otisfield						1				1
Owls Head						1				1
Oxbow Plt						1				1
Palermo						2				2
Palmyra			12					1	1	14
Paris	2					2		2		6
Parlin Pond Twp			1							1
Parsonsfield		1								1
Patten								4		4
Perry						1		1		2
Peru						1		4		5
Phillips						1		1		2
Phippsburg					5					5
Pittsfield			2			3	1	4	3	13
Pittston						1		1		2
Pleasant Rdge Plt						1				1
Plymouth						2				2
Poland		1		10				2		13
Porter						1		3		4
Portland		52		5		6	1	4		68
Pownal		2		1						3
Presque Isle						1		8		9
Randolph								3		3
Raymond		8		3		1				12
Readfield							1	1	1	3
Richmond					11	1				12
Ripley						1				1
Rockland						3		4		7

	ACADIA	Baxter	Cornville	Fiddlehead	Harpswell	MCA	MeANS	MeVA	Snow Pond	
Rome									4	4
Roxbury		1								1
Rumford						1		5		6
Sabattus	1	1		1		1		3		7
Saco		1				7		1		9
Saint Albans			10			1	3	1		15
Salem Twp								1		1
Sanford		1				10		9		20
Sangerville								1		1
Scarborough		26				5				31
Searsmont								2		2
Searsport						1				1
Sebago		1					1	5		7
Sedgwick						1				1
Shapleigh								1		1
Sherman								1		1
Sidney						2	2	4	4	12
Silver Ridge						1				1
Skowhegan			73			1	21	1	1	97
Smithfield			3							3
Solon			1				4			5
Somerville						1	1			2
South Berwick						4		3		7
South Portland		35				8		2	1	46
Southwest Hbr						2				2
Stacyville								2		2
Standish		8				8		3		19
Starks			3			2				5
Stetson						1				1
Stockton Springs						1				1
Stonington								1		1
Sullivan									1	1
Sumner						1		2		3
Sweden						1				1
Temple								1		1
Thomaston						1				1
Thorndike								1		1
Topsham		6			22			2	3	33
Troy								2		2
Turner	5					2		1		8
Union						1		1		2
Unity						1		1		2
Van Buren						3		1		4
Vassalboro							6		2	8
Veazie						2		1		3
Verona						1				1
Vienna							1			1
Wade						3				3
Waldo						1				1
Waldoboro								4		4
Wales					2					2
Warren								2		2
Washburn								3		3
Washington								2		2
Waterboro		2				7		2		11

	ACADIA	Baxter	Cornville	Fiddlehead	Harpswell	MCA	MeANS	MeVA	Snow Pond	
Waterville						4	14	9	14	41
Wayne									1	1
Wells						2		1		3
West Bath					4			1	1	6
West Gardiner						5		1		6
West Paris						2		2		4
Westbrook		20		7		1	1	3	1	33
Westfield								1		1
Whitefield						2				2
Wilton						4		1	2	7
Windham		14		12		1		3		30
Windsor		1				1	3		4	9
Winslow							11	3	11	25
Winter Harbor						2				2
Winterport						1				1
Winthrop						4	1	2	6	13
Wiscasset		1				2				3
Woolwich						3		2		5
Yarmouth		10				1	1	1	1	14
York						5		2		7
Totals	172	400	221	133	195	406	178	390	145	2,240

Appendix H

*Number of Students Attending Maine Public Charter
Schools by Resident District*

2017-18 Resident SAU Breakdown	ACADIA	Baxter	Cornville	Fiddlehead	Harpswell	MCA	MeANS	MeVA	Snow Pond	Totals
Acton Public Schools		1				1		1		3
Athens Public Schools			6				3			9
Auburn Public Schools	39	17		6	3	7		7	1	80
Augusta Public Schools		1				7	3	10	18	39
Bangor Public Schools						13		15		28
Biddeford Public Schools		4				7		3		14
Blue Hill Public Schools						1		1		2
Boothbay-Boothbay Hbr CSD								1	1	2
Brewer Public Schools						1		4		5
Brighton Plt School Department							1			1
Bristol Public Schools								1		1
Brunswick Public Schools		14			42	6	1	3	3	69
Calais Public Schools						1		2		3
Cape Elizabeth Public Schools		10				1	1			12
Chebeague Island Public Schools		1								1
Cherryfield Public Schools						1				1
Damariscotta Public Schools						1		2		3
Damariscotta Public Schools						1		1		2
Deer Isle-Stonington CSD							1	1		2
East Machias Public Schools								1		1
East Millinocket Public Schools						3		2		5
Eastport Public Schools						1				1
Education in Unorganized Territories			1			2		6		9
Ellsworth Public Schools						3		3		6
Falmouth Public Schools		8		5	1					14
Fayette Public Schools							1			1
Five Town CSD								2	1	3
Glenburn Public Schools						1		3		4
Gorham Public Schools		13				10		2		25
Great Salt Bay CSD								2		2
Greenville Public Schools								1	1	2
Hancock Public Schools						1		1		2
Harmony Public Schools								1		1
Jefferson Public Schools						1		1		2
Jonesboro Public Schools								1		1
Kittery Public Schools						2		1		3
Lewiston Public Schools	104	15		14	6	8		9	3	159
Lisbon Public Schools	4	1		2	14	5		4		30
Lowell Public Schools						1				1
Madawaska Public Schools						2				2
Milford Public Schools						2				2
Millinocket Public Schools						2				2
MSAD 10								1		1
MSAD 27						2		2		4
MSAD 46						2	1	3		6
Mt. Desert CSD						3				3
New Sweden Public Schools								1		1
Northport Public Schools							1			1
Orrington Public Schools						1		2		3
Perry Public Schools						1		1		2
Pleasant Ridge Plt. School Dept.						1				1
Portland Public Schools		52		5		6	1	4		68
RSU 01 - LKRSU		3				1		7	2	43
RSU 02		1				13	6	2	4	28

	ACADIA	Baxter	Cornville	Fiddlehead	Harpswell	MCA	MeANS	MeVA	Snow Pond	
RSU 03/MSAD 03						2	2	8	2	14
RSU 04	3	4		2	3	1		6	1	20
RSU 05		17		8	9	1				35
RSU 06/MSAD 06		28				13	1	6		48
RSU 09			3			8	6	6	5	28
RSU 10	2	1				4		8		15
RSU 11/MSAD 11	1					9		8	2	20
RSU 12		1				6	4	1	6	18
RSU 13						5		8		13
RSU 14		22		15		2		3		42
RSU 15/MSAD 15		13		53		12		4		82
RSU 16		1		11				3		15
RSU 17/MSAD 17	4			1		8		8		21
RSU 18			2			7	9	5	20	43
RSU 19			58			8	8	4	1	79
RSU 20						2				2
RSU 21		4				3		1		8
RSU 22						3		4		7
RSU 23		3				2		1		6
RSU 24						6		3	1	10
RSU 25						4		2		6
RSU 26						2		1		3
RSU 29/MSAD 29								5		5
RSU 30/MSAD 30						1				1
RSU 31/MSAD 31						3				3
RSU 32/MSAD 32						3				3
RSU 34						4		2		6
RSU 35/MSAD 35						6		4		10
RSU 37/MSAD 37						1		1		2
RSU 38						2	2	2	3	9
RSU 39						1		1		2
RSU 40/MSAD 40						1		9		10
RSU 41/MSAD 41						7		3		10
RSU 44/MSAD 44						1				1
RSU 45/MSAD 45						3		3		6
RSU 49/MSAD 49			7			7	28	19	20	81
RSU 50						1		8		9
RSU 51/MSAD 51		26		1		2				29
RSU 52/MSAD 52	13	3		2		4		2		24
RSU 53/MSAD 53			2			3	1	5	3	14
RSU 54/MSAD 54			114			3	42	5	3	167
RSU 55/MSAD 55		2				5		4		11
RSU 56								5		5
RSU 57/MSAD 57		7				14		8		29
RSU 58/MSAD 58						2		4		6
RSU 59/MSAD 59			22			1	12		3	38
RSU 60/MSAD 60		1				10		8		19
RSU 61/MSAD 61		16		1		5	1	8		31
RSU 63/MSAD 63						4		1		5
RSU 64/MSAD 64						4		1		5
RSU 67						7		3		10
RSU 68/MSAD 68						4				4
RSU 70/MSAD 70						1		2		3
RSU 71						1	1	5		7
RSU 72/MSAD 72						4		5		9

	ACADIA	Baxter	Cornville	Fiddlehead	Harpswell	MCA	MeANS	MeVA	Snow Pond	
RSU 73	2					1	1	4	2	10
RSU 74/MSAD 74			3			2	10	1		16
RSU 75/MSAD 75		16			67	2		4	4	93
RSU 79/MSAD 01						4		9		13
RSU 80/MSAD 04						1		1		2
RSU 82/MSAD 12						1		2		3
RSU 83/MSAD 13			3			1	1			5
RSU 84/MSAD 14						1				1
RSU 86								3		3
RSU 87/MSAD 23						1				1
RSU 88/MSAD 24						3		1		4
Saco Public Schools		1				7		1		9
Sanford Public Schools		1				10		9		20
Scarborough Public Schools		26				5				31
Sedgwick Public Schools						1				1
South Portland Public Schools		35				8		2	1	46
Southwest Harbor Public Schools						1				1
Vassalboro Public Schools							6		2	8
Veazie Public Schools						2		1		3
Waterville Public Schools						4	14	9	14	41
Wells-Ogunquit CSD						2		1		3
West Bath Public Schools					4			1	1	6
Westbrook Public Schools		20		7		1	1	3	1	33
Winslow Schools							11	3	11	25
Winthrop Public Schools						4	1	2	6	13
Wiscasset Public Schools		1			2					3
Yarmouth Schools		10				1		1	1	13
York Public Schools						1		2		8
Totals	172	400	221	133	195	406	178	390	145	2,240

Appendix I

ACADIA Academy Annual Monitoring Report

Maine Charter School Commission



ACADIA ACADEMY

A Charter Academy for Developing Independence & Achievement

ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2017-2018

September 2018

On June 8th and June 26th announced on-site visits were made to ACADIA Academy. One Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) Review Team member was accompanied by the MCSC Executive Director and the MCSC Director of Program Management. The visiting team held interviews with families, staff, students, school leadership, and the school's Governing Board. They also reviewed data provided by the school. Information gathered from documents, interviews and on-site observation was used to determine the extent to which the school has met its contracted performance targets.

Commission Member, Review Team Chair	Laurie Pendleton
MCSC Executive Director	Bob Kautz
MCSC Director of Program Management	Gina Post

School's Mission	<i>ACADIA, A Charter Academy for Developing Independence and Achievement, will provide a rigorous, comprehensive educational program for children of the Lewiston/Auburn area in grades PreK through 6th. ACADIA will promote high educational achievement through directed teaching opportunities that are entwined extensive experiential learning opportunities. ACADIA faculty and staff will support the development of the whole child as each student develops academically, socially and emotionally in a safe community that requires personal accountability and meaningful participation. It is our intent to support our individual students in developing their full potential, while teaching them the value of belonging, connectedness and contribution to our larger community.</i>
School's Vision	<i>ACADIA, A Charter Academy for Developing Independence and Achievement, will provide for a unique and innovative educational experience. ACADIA students will fully participate within our learning community, experiencing rigorous daily instruction comprised of carefully selected curricula to allow for academic acceleration, small group interaction and meaningful application. Authentic, relevant experiential activities will provide critical opportunities for our students to grasp real world application of concepts and skills, through the delivery of multi-modal learning opportunities that are necessary to meet the learning preferences of our students. Our students will be challenged to meet high expectations for academic performance, social and emotional competence, and demonstrate evidence of commitment to their community. We expect students to embrace high standards of personal accountability and commitment to their personal learning journey through innovative, projects of self-study and interest.</i>

The Maine State Charter School Commission will provide thoughtful stewardship in authorizing and monitoring public charter schools consistent with State statutes to create unique, high-quality learning options for Maine students.

2018–2019 School Information

School Name	ACADIA Academy
Address	12 Westminster Street, Lewiston, ME 04240

Governing Board

Board President	Chris Brann
Board Vice President	Meaghan Swan
Board Secretary	Sean Siebert
Board Facilities Manager	Tracy Gendron-Turner
Board Treasurer	Samantha Pedersen
Board Member	Mary Verrill
Board Member	Amy Dieterich
Board Member	Travys Fecteau
Board Member	Stephanie Howe, Danielle Moreau

Principal	Brittiny-Rae Perron
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Year Opened	2016
Years in Operation	2
Number of Sending Districts	9
Grades Served	PreK - 3
Current Enrollment	172*
Students on Waiting List	28*

*As of October 1, 2017 certified enrollment date.

Section 1: Overview

ACADIA Academy is a PreK through third (3rd) grade school focused on the Social Emotional Learning and competence of students as well as the integration of Direct Instruction and Experiential Learning models. Through these focuses, ACADIA is able to focus on its students as whole child learners. The development of a studious individual and emotionally stable person is achieved through the classroom models used. ACADIA teaches children to be mindful of their place in the world around them in and out of the building. And encourages them to acknowledge and receive the messages that their body gives them with regards to their needs and feelings so that they can make choices for learning that allow them to feel successes. ACADIA teaches goal-setting, short term and long term, and helps students to reach those goals so that children know the feeling and value of success and strive to meet that daily. This feeling encourages them to meet and make new goals regularly so that they never become complacent. They are always eager to learn more and demonstrate this through a WINK project they self-select and work on over the course of the year. These projects teach them the basis of Inquiry Learning as they identify their interests, select their own course of learning path, and determine the best way to share their newly acquired knowledge. They are taught to use PRIDE Portfolios to collect evidence of their learning throughout the year and to use that portfolio to watch their growth over spans of time, as that portfolio moves with them year to year. The program encourages and teaches character education and work habits of a successful person so that they can encourage each other and support the community of learners in our building.

ACADIA is a school that recognizes that learning in its community is just as rich as the learning that takes place outside of its walls and uses that community to support its needs. Learning is best when relevant and connected to life. With this in mind, ACADIA's experiential learning opportunities are how they build engagement and rigorous relevance for students. STEM learning opportunities support the mindset of cooperative, rigorous expectations where an "I can!" mentality is heard. Throughout all experiences at ACADIA, social emotional competence is gauged.

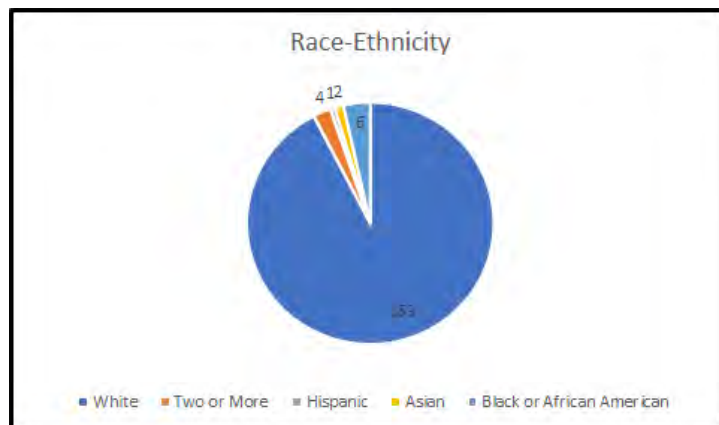
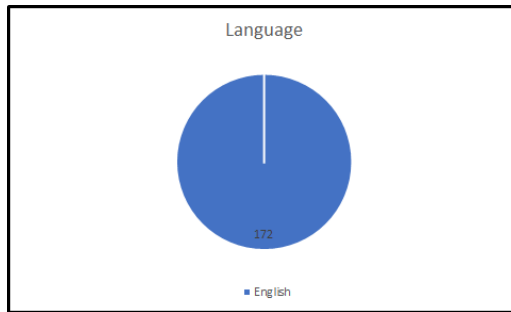
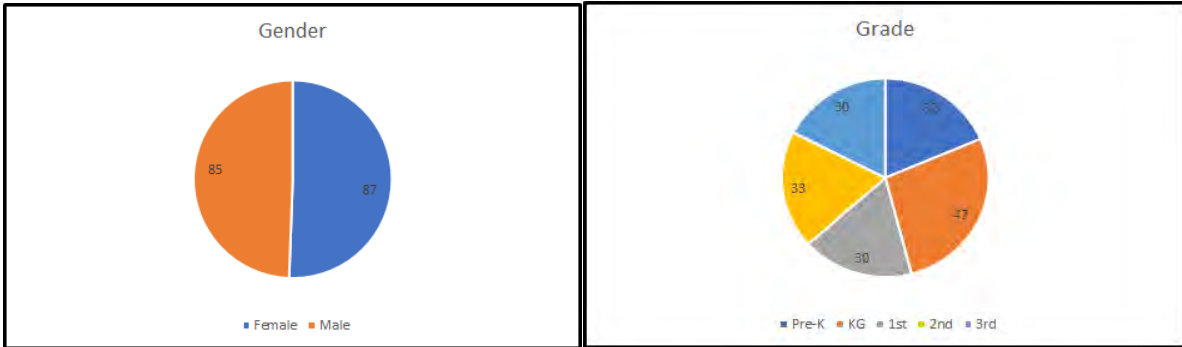
ACADIA believes in the active body- the state for which all energy resides within ourselves and acknowledges that students need to move. Movement breaks are built in throughout the day offering the students the input time their body requires to feel centered and focused on learning. Students learn best through multi-model opportunities daily. Math and movement, reading in song, "Making a Pizza" before writing on Go Noodle, Yoga in the Classroom can all be seen throughout ACADIA. With the completion of its gym, grade levels offer students opportunities to play outside or inside during recess depending the type of movement they feel their body requesting. ACADIA utilizes the space for games that support our social emotional learning and also uses this space for whole school assemblies where they honor and acknowledge the hard work of others. ACADIA participates in healthy competition with grade span challenges (groups created by PreK through third (3rd) students to encourage whole school support of all grades) as well as student vs teachers challenges. In these assemblies, ACADIA teaches how to be good winners and good losers and practices this at school, what to say when things don't go our way. This ensures that positivity is met and supported even when only a small group of students may be acknowledged school-wide.

The most powerful message you receive at ACADIA - "I can, I will, I am successful." You can feel this message entering the building. You can sense the calm, supportive nature. You are met with support and kindness. You walk away with a feeling of contentment. These are the messages received from visitors, students and parents. The ACADIA community is a strong one, and those are the benefits students receive. All in the name of success.

Section 2: Indicator Summary Table

Indicator	Meets Contract Agreement	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet
Student Academic Proficiency		X	
Student Academic Growth		X	
Achievement Gaps in Proficiency and Growth Between Major Student Subgroups	X		
Student Attendance	X		
Enrollment	X		
Financial Performance and Sustainability	X		
Governance Board Performance and Stewardship	X		
Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of Program	X		
School Social and Academic Climate	X		
Parent and Community Engagement		X	

Section 3: Demographics



Section 4: Academics

Student Academic Proficiency

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
State Assessment-reading: Year 1 of Testing (2017-2018), eligible students will complete testing to determine the baseline data for ACADIA Academy students.	Goals will be set using the results of the baseline information gained from the larger testing data generated by Maine students.	Grade 3 - 21.43% proficient	Met
State Assessment-math: Year 1 of Testing (2017-2018), eligible students will complete testing to determine the baseline data for ACADIA Academy students.	Goals will be set using the results of the baseline information gained from the larger testing data generated by Maine students.	Grade 3 - results not publicly reportable due to small n size and maintaining student confidentiality	Met
School Selected Assessment-reading: students will be assessed in Reading utilizing the FAST Bridge Computer Adaptive Assessment.	In year 2, ACADIA will maintain 59% OGL (on grade level).	K -73% 1 – 50% 2 – 66% 3 – 70% (School-wide – 65%)	Partially met
School Selected Assessment-reading: students will be assessed in math utilizing the FAST Bridge Computer Adaptive Assessment.	In year 2, ACADIA will maintain 79% OGL (on grade level).	K -75% 1 – 79% 2 – 83% 3 – 30% (School-wide – 77%)	Partially met
School Selected Assessment-Goal Setting: In Year 2, student success creating and using their MAPS (My Achievement Plans for Success)	During Year 2, baseline data will be developed about student use of MAPS and proficiency levels. This baseline data will be utilized to develop goals for Years 3-5	Baseline data were collected	Met
School Selected Assessment – PreK Brigance: PreK students will be assessed during the spring testing window using.	Students will score at or above the cut off score for their age bracket at the time of testing	79% of students scored at or above the cut off score for his/her age bracket.	Did not meet

Discussion

100% of eligible ACADIA students participated in the state testing. Grade 3 students were tested. 21.34% of students scored proficient on the ELA assessment. Because of the small n size, scores in math are available to the school and the Commission, but are not publicly reportable for maintaining student confidentiality. The school will analyze the results and set targets for the coming year.

On the FAST Bridge Reading assessment, the target of maintaining 59% OGL was reached in 2 out of 4 grade levels. Grades 1 did not meet the 79% target (gr. 1 OGL=50%). On the FAST Bridge Math assessment, the target of maintaining 79% OGL was reached in 2 out of 4 grade levels. Grades K and 3 did not meet the 79% target (K OGL=75%, gr. 3 OGL=30%).

Goal Setting- Every teacher used the PRIDE rubric to determine what level a student was on a 4-point proficiency rating with regards to goal setting, planning, execution, and reflection of goals. ACADIA Academy plans to adjust the rubrics as needed during summer staff meetings and will use baseline data to set benchmarks for the upcoming year.

On the preK Brigance 23 of 29 students (79%) met the cut off score for their age group. ACADIA Academy reports having learned from the results of the Brigance administration. For example, on the Brigance, students do not receive credit for singing the alphabet; they must speak it. The school learned that roughly 50% of its preK students could not speak the alphabet. The school reports it will be teaching the spoken alphabet in addition to teaching it in song.

Student Academic Growth

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
School Selected Assessment-reading: In Years 1-5, using FAST Bridge Computer Adaptive Assessment for Reading, students will exhibit a specific Rate of Improvement (ROI) from Fall to Spring.	75% of same students tested in Fall and Spring will exhibit a Rate of Improvement (ROI) from Fall to Spring, that falls within the 50th percentile or higher nationally.	K - 72% 1 – 43% 2 – 34% 3 – 56% School-wide – 54%	Did not meet
School Selected Assessment-math: In Years 1-5, using FAST Bridge Computer Adaptive Assessment for Mathematics, students will exhibit a specific Rate of Improvement (ROI) from Fall to Spring.	75% of same students tested in Fall and Spring will exhibit a Rate of Improvement (ROI) from Fall to Spring, that falls within the 50th percentile or higher nationally.	K -74% 1 – 79% 2 – 47% 3 – 33% School-wide – 61%	Partially met
State assessment- Same Cohort Growth in reading: During the 2017-2018 school year, ACADIA third grade students will participate in the Maine State Assessment.	Baseline data will be utilized to establish goals for growth	Baseline data collected – see student academic proficiency	Met
State assessment- Same Cohort Growth in math: During the 2017-2018 school year, ACADIA third grade students will participate in the Maine State Assessment.	Baseline data will be utilized to establish goals for growth	Baseline data collected- see student academic proficiency	Met

Discussion

FAST Bridge Reading- The target of having 75% of students having a 50% or higher rate of improvement was not met. The k-3 average was 54%.

FAST Bridge Math- The target of having 75% of students having a 50% or higher rate of improvement was met at the first grade level. The 3 other grades did not reach the target.

ACADIA staff continues to examine data at monthly grade level meetings and in monthly staff meetings to determine if students need to have their instructional groups changed in order to address students' needs.

The school has state assessment data for 1 year. In the future the school will analyze the results to set growth targets.

Achievement Gaps in Proficiency and Growth Between Major Student Subgroups

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
Gaps in proficiency and growth between major student subgroups on Maine State Assessment in reading.	After completion of the initial testing with the Maine State Assessment, ACADIA staff will determine the performance gaps between major student subgroups and will develop goals that will show decrease in performance gaps across those subgroups.	baseline collected - results not publicly reportable due to small n size and maintaining student confidentiality	Met
Gaps in proficiency and growth between major student subgroups on Maine State Assessment in math.	After completion of the initial testing with the Maine State Assessment, ACADIA staff will determine the performance gaps between major student subgroups and will develop goals that will show decrease in performance gaps across those subgroups.	baseline collected - results not publicly reportable due to small n size and maintaining student confidentiality	Met
Gaps in proficiency and growth between major student subgroups on school selected assessments for literacy	ACADIA Adademy will decrease identified subgroup gaps in proficiency from the fall administration of the FAST Bridge assessment to the spring administration of the FAST Bridge assessment.	Gap decreased by 5% between students with an Individualized Education Plan and students who do not have an IEP.	Met

Gaps in proficiency and growth between major student subgroups on school selected assessments for math	ACADIA Adademy will decrease identified subgroup gaps in proficiency from the fall administration of the FAST Bridge assessment to the spring administration of the FAST Bridge assessment.	Gap decreased by 18% between students with an Individualized Education Plan and students who do not have an IEP.	Met
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Discussion

Based on the school Selected assessment:

Reading- In the fall, 67% of ACADIA students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) were below Grade Level Expectations (GLE), while 36% of students without an IEP were below GLE. At the spring assessment, 50% of students with an IEP were below grade level, while 24% of students without an IEP were below grade level. The gap was decreased by 5% in this area.

Math- In the fall, 59% of ACADIA students with an IEP were below GLE, while 18% of students without an IEP were below GLE. At the spring administration, 30% of students with an IEP were below GLE and 7% of students without an IEP were below GLE. The gap was decreased by 18% in this area.

The Maine State assessment data were collected to establish baseline data among various student subgroups. The results are available to the school and the Commission, but are not publicly reportable due to small n size and maintaining student confidentiality.

ACADIA Academy reports it used student data to identify students who were not on grade level and/or not making growth at the 50%ile. This was compared with classroom data to make instructional grouping changes. The teachers also identified which grade levels were presenting the most challenge in moving students to grade level expectancy.

To support students, the 2018-19 schedule will include 1.5 hours of reading instruction, and will additionally include a dedicated intervention time. Students who do not need additional reading support will be in independent learning stations while the 3 grade level teachers provide intense reading interventions.

Section 5: Attendance and Enrollment

Student Attendance

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
Average Daily Attendance Rate	ACADIA will hold daily attendance that is at or higher than 95%.	ADA = 96%	Met

Discussion

ACADIA’s daily attendance rate was 96.1%. The lowest monthly attendance rate was January, with 95%.

A few concerns the school addresses with families:

- taking trips outside of the vacation weeks
- more absences during the winter months- particularly students who travel from farther away
- families forgetting to call when children are absent resulting in an unexcused absence

Enrollment

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
Maintaining student enrollment throughout the year	In years 1-5, ACADIA will maintain 90% of same students enrolled at the state count day through the school year	Same student enrollment at end of year = 98%	Met
Student re-enrollment from one year to the next	In years 2-5, ACADIA will maintain 90% of eligible students showing intent to re-enroll.	Re-enrollment= 98%	Met

Discussion

On October 1 “state count day,” ACADIA had 172 students enrolled. The school had 4 students unenroll during the year (2 moved out of state and 2 moved back to their district school). All remaining 168 students re-enrolled, for a reenrollment percentage of 97.7%.

Summer enrollment was 96% for extended year learning.

Section 6: Finances

Financial Performance and Sustainability

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
Budget versus actual revenue and expenditures	Operating Costs within 10% of each year's revised budget plan which will be approved by the board annually.	Operating cost was 92% of budgeted amount	Met

Discussion

The school's finance manager reports that based on the full year forecast that was prepared alongside the budget the school estimated that it would finish the year with \$1,645,040 in operating expenses. This is 92% of the governing board approved operating budget which was \$1,790,035.

Section 7: Governance Board Performance and Stewardship

Governance Board Performance and Stewardship

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
Public accountability – Transparent, responsive, and legally compliant Board operations	In years 1-5, 100% of ACADIA Board meetings will be open to the public; minutes will be kept and made available to the public online and upon request, for public review.	Regular meetings held, minutes posted	Met

Discussion

All board meetings were open to the public, and minutes were kept and posted to the school's website.

The board continues to meet monthly and provides support and direction to the administration in setting policies and shaping the direction of the school. The board is composed of a diverse set of skills and expertise including, but not limited to, a PhD and School Psychologist, attorney, CPA, police officer, adult education specialist, former elementary school teacher, finance professional, case manager, and 2 early education professionals. The board has 4 sub committees: membership, education, grievance, and finance.

Section 8: Facilities & Maintenance, Food Service, and Transportation

Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of Program

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
Facility meets State standards	The school facility will pass all required local and state inspections	School passed required inspections	Met

Discussion

All facility inspections were passed. Over the course of the year, ACADIA Academy noted a discoloration in its water. A water test indicated a higher than expected level of iron in the water. The school has asked the city to study the situation and has received a quote to have an additional “iron specific” water filtration system installed in the water source.

To provide additional security to the school, a camera system was installed on the exterior of the building. This provides the director the ability to keep watch of the building on weekends and nights remotely and provides the school with additional safety should an issue occur. The school has also installed two interior cameras in the main hallways. ACADIA Academy had 2 instances of vandalism previously. Since these measures were taken and local police offered support there have been no further issues.

In response to student, staff and parent requests for additional exterior space, the school has pursued property adjacent to the building. If secured, the space will provide students with an outdoor area for gross motor activities.

In response to families’ wishes for a food program, the school is exploring options for having warm and cold lunches, and following the appropriate identification of students qualifying for free/reduced/full pay lunches. During the 2017-18 school year ACADIA replaced 24 meals for students who forgot or dropped lunches. Additionally, the school provided snacks for students who needed them.

The school reports transportation use has increased. 44% of the school’s student population uses the school’s bus system. The school added bus monitors to the routes to ensure student safety and to keep behavior positive on the rides. ACADIA reports a good working relationship with Northeast Charter and has signed a contract for the upcoming year.

Section 9: School Climate

School Social and Academic Climate

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
Instances of bullying, harassment, or other abusive practices	In years 2-5, ACADIA will maintain or decrease incidents of substantiated bullying.	One incident of bullying reported	Did not meet
Confidential survey of parents, staff, and students.	In year 2 ACADIA will have a 70% parent participation rate on the family survey. Staff and student participation rates will be 90% or higher.	Participation: Families- 68% Teacher/Staff- 100% Students- 80%	Partially met

Discussion

During the 2017-18 school year ACADIA had 1 substantiated incident of bullying. In 2016-17 there were no incidents of bullying. ACADIA did not meet the target to maintain or decrease incidents. While it was an increase in incidents from the previous year, the baseline was zero incidents, which could not be decreased. ACADIA's administration met with the student who bullied throughout the year to ensure the incident did not happen again and to see that the student received teaching for appropriate behavior. The school reported that the teachers were very attentive and made immediate reports to the administration when they suspected students were being treated unkindly.

ACADIA Academy had strong participation on the Panorama Education surveys. Family participation was 68%, teacher/staff participation was 100%, and student participation was 80%. The 90% minimum participation was met for teachers/staff and was not met for students. The family participation, while strong, missed the 70% target by 2% (68% participation).

Section 10: Parent and Community Engagement

Parent and Community Engagement

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
Communication to families	In years 2-5, ACADIA will provide a minimum of 7 newsletters to all families and these newsletters will be posted on the ACADIA webpage.	7 newsletters were sent	Met
Events will be offered to the parents of the community	In years 2-5, ACADIA will offer a minimum of 7 monthly events open to parents of community members. These events will be advertised in languages representing out student demographics.	Over 15 events were offered to parents	Met
Parental involvement	In years 2-5, parental involvement will maintain or increase the Year 1 hours (313).	320 hours of parent volunteers	Met
Conferencing on Progress	In years 1-5, family/guardian participation in at least one student-led conference will be reached at a minimum level of 90% annually. Participation may include in person attendance, video conferencing, and telephone conferencing.	Participation: Fall=100% Spring=98%	Met

Discussion

7 newsletters were sent to families and were posted on the school's website.

ACADIA offered well over 15 monthly events including:

- 7 monthly parent learning events hosted by USM's SEL Professor Mary-Anne Peabody on a variety of topics that relate to student SEL growth and successful parenting ideas.
- 3 book fairs with "someone special events"
- math and literacy night
- school dance
- Harvest supper
- winter skate to collect donations for local community organizations
- movie night for families
- school-wide cookout
- ice cream social
- open house
- parents were invited to attend assemblies and were offered opportunities to volunteer on the community holiday cheer trip.

This year ACADIA had 320 hours of parent volunteer time. The school reports many hours were not recorded, as parents and family members volunteered to complete projects at home.

All students participated in a student led conference in the fall, with 100% participation by parents. In the spring, all students and all but 2 families participated in a second conference.

ACADIA Academy continued to work with the University of Southern Maine for both occupational therapy and social emotional learning. The school also continued its relationship with the University of Maine in Orono and the Cooperative Extension with 4H to provide both summer science learning for students through STEM learning programs and for continuous science lessons once a week with 3rd grade. The school plans to offer this annually to 2nd and 3rd grade. ACADIA's work with Thorn Craig and Bates Science students continued and will continue into the summer with the building of pollinator gardens on the side of the school.

Section 11: Administration

ACADIA Academy had the same Director for its first 2 years in operation. At the end of the 2017-18 school year both the Director and the assistant director/special education coordinator resigned. The school is seeking candidates to fill the positions.

The school's director is dedicated to the school's mission and includes staff and students in decision-making. For example, staff and students were given time in June to create "dream weekly schedules" to best reflect the developmental needs at each grade level when crafting the final schedule for the coming school year.

At the MCSC team's visit, teachers reported feeling supported by the administration. They feel that the director responds to their requests and suggestions. During a recent training on Direct Instruction, the staff shared some concerns and corrective plans were quickly made to address the concerns. Additionally, the number of student monitors in the cafeteria and playground were increased so staff could have adequate planning time with their grade level partners.

The new teaching positions for the 2018-19 school year have been filled and the school is now interviewing for the administrative positions. The school reports it will also be hiring a part-time custodian to work with the current full-time custodian.

The school has a teacher evaluation system in place, which includes peer observations.

Section 12: Evidence of Mission and Vision Implementation

(See Page 2 for School's Mission and Vision)

ACADIA Academy is a PreK through Third grade school focused on the Social Emotional Learning and competence of students as well as the integration of Direct Instruction and Experiential Learning models. Through DI and EL, ACADIA Academy focuses on its students as whole child learners. The development of a studious individual and emotionally stable person is achieved through the classroom models. ACADIA Academy teaches children to be mindful of their place in the world around them. ACADIA encourages students to acknowledge and receive the messages that their body gives them so they can make choices for learning that allow them to be successful.

ACADIA Academy teaches goal-setting, short term and long term, and helps students to reach those goals so they know the feeling and value of success and strive to meet that daily. This feeling encourages them to meet and make new goals regularly so that they never become complacent. Students are always eager to learn more and demonstrate this through a WINK project they select and work on over the course of the year. These projects teach them the basis of Inquiry learning as they identify their interests, select their own learning path, and determine the best way to share their newly acquired knowledge. They are taught to use PRIDE Portfolios to collect evidence of their learning throughout the year and to use that portfolio to watch their growth over year spans of time, as that portfolio moves with them year to year. The program encourages and teaches character education and work habits of a successful person so they can encourage each other and support the community of learners in their school.

Section 13: Commendations and Concerns

Commendations

- Pursuing food service options
- Pursuing additional outdoor space
- Beginning final phase of construction on facility
- Strong use of data to inform and support instruction
- Strong focus on mission and vision

Concerns

- Resignation of both administrators at the end of the 2017-18 school year
- Student academic growth

Appendix J

Baxter Academy for Technology and Science Pre-Opening Report for New Location

Baxter Academy for Technology and Science
Pre-Opening Visit – 185 Lancaster Street, Portland
September, 2017

Baxter Academy for Technology and Science (BA): Kelli Pryor, Michele Laforge, Dan Amory
Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC): Jana Lapoint, Bob Kautz, Gina Post

On September 14, 2017, the MCSC Review Team chair for BA and MCSC staff met at the school's new facility at 185 Lancaster Street to review the school's preparation to open the new location. Below is a summary of updates regarding the first phase of the move to Lancaster Street.

Organization:

- A certificate of occupancy has been issued for phase 1 of BA's 185 Lancaster Street Location. Work on the remainder of the facility is expected to be completed in late 2017.
- Beginning on September 18, 2017, the new Lancaster facility will open for Engineer Track students and Summit students, with some other students attending classes there in the afternoon. The other students will remain at the York Street facility until January. (Leases at other locations end in June and July of 2018).
- Teachers and staff will be at both the Lancaster and York campuses and there are designated leaders at both locations (Head of School and Dean of Students).
- There are a total of 10 local restaurants/shops with lunch plans for BA students. This includes 5 of the former providers and 5 new providers.
- Students will have specific streets and routes allowed for open campus. The Head of School and a Portland Police outreach specialist presented at a school wide assembly regarding student safety and expectations. Education around this will continue and BA teachers and staff will be out in the community during open campus while students adjust to the new neighborhood.
- Bussing will continue with 3 busses and public transportation (Zoom, So. Po. Transit, Lakes Region Bus, etc.).
- Students and staff are encouraged to bike and carpool to school. New bike racks have been installed by the school parking lot.
- There are designated drop off and pick up locations at the school and a new flashing light was installed in the school area.
- As a condition of the Certification of Occupancy BA must lease an additional student parking lot of 45 spaces.
- Some new furniture had been purchased for the school. Most furniture will be moved in from the Salt and York campuses.
- Technology equipment has been purchased and is being installed as it arrives. Some items were delayed due to recent hurricanes.

Business and Financial:

- BA provided the MCSC with a revised budget based on increased renovation costs and increased revenue.

The Maine Charter School Commission visiting team was satisfied with the documentation and information presented at the site visit. Baxter Academy for Technology and Science has planned thoughtfully and thoroughly for its transition and relocation.

Appendix K

*Baxter Academy for Technology and Science 90 Day
Report for New Location*

Maine Charter School Commission

April 5, 2017

Dr. Allison Crean Davis, Board Chair
Kelli Pryor, Executive Director
Michele LaForge, Head of School
Baxter Academy for Technology & Science
54 York Street, Suite 1
Portland, ME 04101

Dear Dr. Davis, Ms. Pryor & Ms. LaForge:

On March 28, 2017, the Maine Charter School Commission received Baxter Academy for Technology & Science's Supplemental Application to Approve Additional Financing for New School Facility.

Specifically, Baxter requests that the Commission approve its use of NMTC funding for the project and the revised amortization of the NFF Loan, and authorize it to take such actions as may be necessary or appropriate in that regard, including restructuring the NFF Loan and Lease to comply with NMTC requirements; provided that (a) the net effect of such restructuring on Baxter shall not materially and adversely alter the business terms approved by the Commission for the NFF Loan and the Lease, and (b) the use of NMTC funding shall reduce the NFF Loan and subordinated loan, and reduce the annual debt service resulting from the Project from the levels shown in the projections attached to the request. The Commission's approval would be subject to Baxter's obtaining all necessary approvals from FAME. This will result in a 20 year amortization instead of the 25 year amortization previously approved by the Commission.

Baxter's request was presented at the Charter Commission's Business Meeting on April 4, 2017, and all seven Commission members presented voted to approve the request.

Minutes from the April 4, 2017 Business Meeting will not be available until May 2, 2017. Once approved, the minutes will be posted on the Charter Commission website.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need any additional information. I can be reached by phone at (207)624-6751 or by email at gina.post@maine.gov.

Sincerely,



Gina Post
Director of Program Management

cc: Dan Amory

Appendix L

*Baxter Academy for Technology and Science Annual
Monitoring Report*

Maine Charter School Commission



ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2017-2018

September 2018

On June 21st an announced on-site visit was made to the Baxter Academy for Technology and Science. The Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) Review Team of 3 members was accompanied by the MCSC Executive Director, and MCSC Director of Program Management. The visiting team held interviews with school leadership, and the school's Governing Board. They also reviewed data provided by the school. Information gathered from documents, interviews and on-site observation was used to determine the extent to which the school has met its contracted performance targets.

Commission Member, Review Team Chair	Jana Lapoint
Commission	John Bird
Commission	Jim Rier
MCSC Executive Director	Bob Kautz
MCSC Director of Program Management	Gina Post

School's Mission	<i>To be a rigorous, college preparatory high school promoting student ownership of learning through curriculum focused specifically on science, technology, engineering, and math.</i>
School's Vision	<i>To use a technology-rich, project-based learning approach to education at the secondary level.</i>

The Maine State Charter School Commission will provide thoughtful stewardship in authorizing and monitoring public charter schools consistent with State statutes to create unique, high-quality learning options for Maine students.

2018-2019 School Information

School Name	Baxter Academy for Technology and Science
Address	185 Lancaster Street, Portland, ME 04101

Governing Board

Board Chair	Dr. Allison Crean Davis
Vice Chair	Patti Oldmixon
Board Secretary	Christian Sparling
Board Treasurer	Peter Montano
Board Member	Ruth Dean
Board Member	Peter Morrison
Board Member	Thorn C. Dickinson

Executive Director	Kelli Pryor
Principal of Faculty and Instruction	Vacant
Principal of Students and Curriculum	Angela Taylor
Special Education Director	Tammy Holmes

Year Opened	2013
Years in Operation	5
Number of Sending Districts	38
Grades Served	9 - 12
Current Enrollment	400*
Students on Waiting List	26*

*As of October 1, 2017 certified enrollment count.

Section 1: Overview

Baxter Academy is a rigorous, college-preparatory high school promoting student ownership of learning through curriculum focused specifically on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Baxter Academy students study complex, real-world problems, using and building technological tools in a collaborative environment with scientists, engineers and other professionals.

Baxter Academy sets high expectations for all students, develops social responsibility, promotes innovation and creativity, and produces graduates with a 21st century global perspective. Students at Baxter Academy follow a standards-based curriculum for English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and the arts. Upon graduation, students will have 21st century skills and will be able to continue their education, and be successful, at America's best universities.

Baxter Academy serves students with a strong interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. We offer a challenging college-preparatory curriculum featuring outstanding and innovative teachers. Baxter's teachers help guide students to be passionate, self-directed learners by engaging their intellect and encouraging their imaginations by embracing technology-rich project-based learning.

Baxter Academy also offers a strong humanities and foreign language curriculum to prepare students to be ethical leaders in the 21st century global economy.

Baxter was founded in response to a growing urgency among students and parents for greater access to high-quality STEM education. In the summer of 2012, a group of students, parents, educators, and community leaders united around the idea of a STEM-focused charter high school in Portland that would be open by lottery to any high school student in the state of Maine and would feature an innovative, project-based curriculum. A key feature of the school would be Flex Friday, a unique program designed to invest 20 percent of the week in yearlong student-driven projects solving real-world problems. Baxter students would commute daily from a 25-mile catchment area to go to school in downtown Portland where they would be prepared for the best colleges and be plugged directly into the economic engine of the state through internships, mentorships, and industry partnerships.

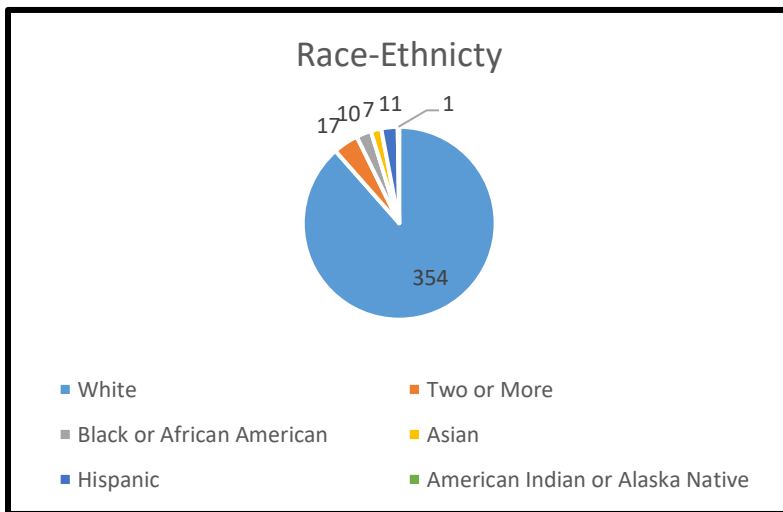
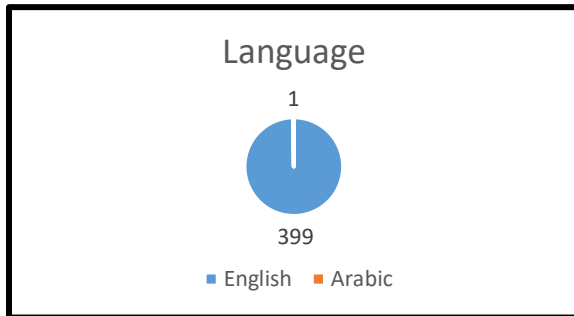
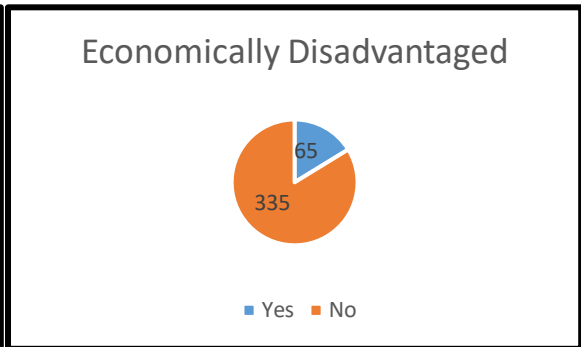
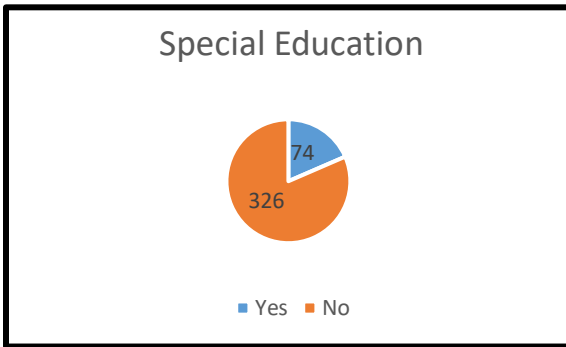
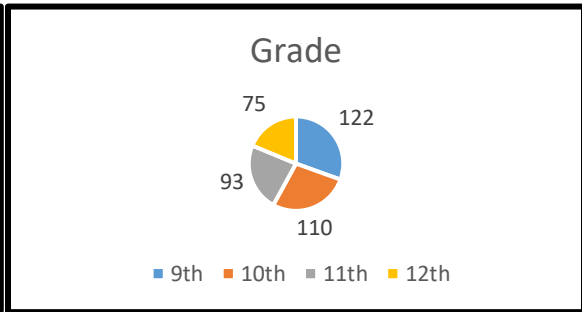
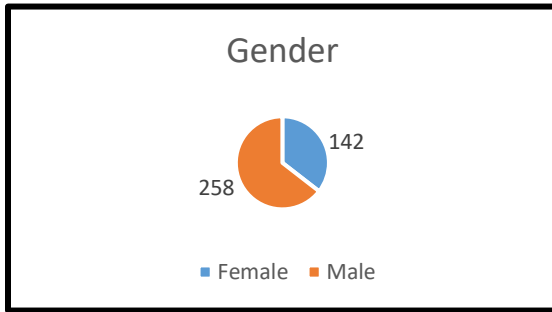
During the rigorous approval process, the community worked together to meet the requirements of Maine's new charter law and the Maine Charter School Commission. Students raised \$8,000 in a 1,000 Pledges in 10 Days campaign. Parents organized information sessions at local libraries.

Baxter Academy has proven already to be a necessary option not only for its students, but for Maine as well. The school continues to seek STEM-industry partnerships and support that will extend its reach and its ability to prepare the next generation of highly skilled innovators who will help Maine meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Section 2: Indicator Summary Table

Indicator	Meets Contract Agreement	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet
Student Academic Proficiency	X		
Student Academic Growth	X		
Achievement Gaps in Proficiency and Growth Between Major Student Subgroups	X		
Student Attendance	X		
Enrollment from Year to Year	X		
Post-Secondary Readiness	X		
Financial Performance and Sustainability	X		
Governance Board Performance and Stewardship	X		
Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of Program	X		
Transportation	X		
School Social and Academic Climate	X		
Parent and Community Engagement	X		

Section 3: Demographics



Section 4: Academics

Student Academic Proficiency

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
State Assessment: Evidence Based Reading & Writing (EBRW)	Percent of students at each grade level scoring proficient on State Assessment	80%	Met
State Assessment: Mathematics	Percent of students at each grade level scoring proficient on State Assessment	45%	Met
State Assessment: Science	Percent of students at each grade level scoring proficient on State Assessment	70.67%	Met
School Selected Assessment: NWEA Reading	Proficiency on school selected standardized test	57%	Met
School Selected Assessment: NWEA Math	Proficiency on school selected standardized test	48%	Met

Discussion

80% of Baxter students scored proficient on the MEA/SAT ELA assessment and 50% scored proficient on the SAT/MEA math assessment.

The NWEA showed 57% of students were proficient in reading and 48% were proficient in math.

Student Academic Growth

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
NWEA: Reading	Growth	80%	Met
NWEA: Math	Growth	50%	Met

Discussion

The NWEA MAP test showed 80% of students showed growth in reading and 50% showed growth in math.

Achievement Gaps in Proficiency and Growth Between Major Student Subgroups

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Decrease in reported gaps in proficiency between major student subgroups on State Assessment: ELA	Decrease in reported gaps	Baxter’s female subgroup closed the gap between female-male	Met
Decrease in reported gaps in proficiency between major student subgroups on State Assessment: math	Decrease in reported gaps	Baxter’s female subgroup closed the gap between female-male	Met

Discussion

On the state assessment in ELA and math the subgroups with sufficient n size for publicly reportable data are listed in the table below. Cells with an asterisk * do not have publicly reportable data due to a small ‘n’ size and maintaining student privacy.

There is an achievement gap in math between economically disadvantaged students and their non-disadvantaged peers, as well as a gap in ELA between students receiving special education services and those who do not receive special education services.

	ELA	MATH
Baxter	80.23	53.33
State of Maine	45.35	34.53
Female	83.3	53.33
Male	78.5	41.07
Economically Disadvantaged	*	38.46
Non-economically Disadvantaged	*	46.58
Special Education Services	53.33	*
No Special Education Services	85.92	*

Mission Specific Indicator

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
School Developed Measure	90% of graduates will take courses in at least two of three areas and 80% will have taken courses in all three areas (Engineering, Design, and Fabrication).	92%	Met

Discussion

92% of the class of 2018 took classes in all three areas: fabrication, design and engineering. Baxter Academy students have taken these classes for the past few school years, during the ramp up phase.

Section 5: Attendance and Enrollment

Student Attendance

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Average Daily Attendance Rate	An attendance rate at least 1% above the state average, with a simultaneous goal of having rates at or above 94%	94.5%	met

Discussion

Baxter’s Average Daily Attendance of 94.5% was 2% higher than the state average for high school ADA (based on 2016-17 school year data, as 2017-18 is not available), which was 92.6%.

Enrollment from Year to Year

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Student re-enrollment from one year to next	90% of students enrolled on last day of school indicate intent to return the following school year.	91.2%	Met
Continuous enrollment of students for multiple years	90% of students will maintain continuous enrollment for multiple years.	96%	Met

Discussion

As of June 14, 2018, 91.2% of students have expressed their commitment to re-enroll at Baxter for the 2018-19 school year.

Class of 2020: 93% of students have been at Baxter for 2 years
 Class of 2019: 95% of student have been at Baxter for 2+ years
 Class of 2018: 100% of students were at Baxter for 2+ years

Post-Secondary Readiness

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Graduation Rate	Rate	96%	Met
Success in Dual Enrollment Courses	Percent of juniors and seniors attempting dual enrollment courses.	26%	Met

Discussion

Baxter’s 4-year graduation rate was 96%.

26% of juniors and seniors attempted dual enrollment classes.

Baxter doubled the number of students taking advantage of college courses from 2016-17 to 2017-18. The school anticipates this number will increase with its transition to semester-long courses, its proximity to USM, and its continued relationship with Thomas College.

In addition to encouraging as much flexibility in scheduling as possible to allow for students to access college courses, Baxter introduced three new channels that aim to improve student access to secondary education. First, Baxter partnered with Thomas College to offer a Dual Enrollment for an Intro to Programming course taught at the Lancaster campus by one of Baxter’s computer science instructors. Second, Baxter piloted the Summit program, which allows students who have completed 75% of their graduation standards to develop their own path to completing the rest of the coursework; many students chose to enroll in local or online courses. Third, the Curriculum committee has spent the year creating a transition plan to move Baxter from trimester to semester programming. This will ease student ability to coordinate their Baxter course load with area college course offerings.

73% of Baxter’s graduating students expressed intentions of attending a post-secondary institution. 17% of graduating students expressed intentions of pursuing full-time employment. The remaining students indicated intentions to start businesses (or continue businesses they had started as students at Baxter), as well as to travel, study abroad, or train for employment.

Baxter class of 2018 students will attend the following post-secondary institutions:

Acadia University	Hampshire College	Mt. Holyoke College	Unity College- Maine
Bard College	Hobart & Wm Smith Colleges	Salem State University	Univ of ME - Farmington
Bates College	Landmark College	So. ME Comm College	Univ of ME - Orono
Bennington College	Lesley University	Smith College	Univ of Southern Maine
Central ME Comm College	Maine College of Art	St. Anselm's College	Wentworth Institute of Technology
Clark University	Maine Maritime Academy	Syracuse University	Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Earlham College	Marlboro College	The New School	Yale University

Section 6: Finances

Financial Performance and Sustainability

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Financial Performance and Sustainability	Quarterly financial reports and end-of-year audit are available to authorizer.	Quarterly financial statements (July 1, 2017 - March 31, 2018) were reported in Epicenter	Met

Discussion

Baxter Academy submitted its quarterly financials to the Commission and its audit to the Maine Department of Education.

Baxter has continued to benefit from financial support from the community. Baxter reports it has maintained a positive cash balance and has not needed to access its line of credit. Baxter's current ratio is 1.75 to 1, which means it has resources available to meet its obligations. The school's internal financial statements are prepared on a GAAP basis, except for depreciation and principal payments. Due to expansion efforts and focus on right-sizing academic salaries, the school budgeted for a small deficit for 2018. Performance is consistent with budget, and cash remains healthy. Parents continue to show their support, through donations of in-kind time, expertise, materials and supplies for student activities, as well as contributing to Baxter's annual appeal.

Section 7: Governance Board Performance and Stewardship

Governance Board Performance and Stewardship

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Board conducts an annual evaluation of school leadership	Evaluation completed	Evaluation Completed	Met

Discussion

Baxter's Board of Directors holds open meetings monthly. All meetings are open to the public and are conducted with regard to statute. Transparency is maintained by posting minutes and agendas online.

Founding board members, including the Chair, provide critical institutional knowledge that allows for continuity and strong working relationships with the school's administration. The Chair is an educational consultant with a national profile. She has consistently consulted with the executive director, serving as a thought partner and providing critical insight. She reviews annually the Executive Director's performance. During the past fiscal year, the founding board treasurer stepped off the board to serve as contract Chief Financial Officer during the high-pressure period when the school was financing and renovating the new building. As one director from the education sector stepped off because of professional commitments, a new director brought an engineering background and experience working in important STEM initiatives in the state. Overall, the Board consists of seven professionals who serve as a vital resource for expertise in school finance, educational best practice, development, assessment, business management, school operations, and the STEM industry in Maine. The board continues to consider highly qualified prospects, especially those who bring development potential.

Section 8: Facilities & Maintenance, Food Service, and Transportation

Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of Program

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Facility	The facilities shall meet all applicable health, safety and fire code requirements and shall be sufficient in size to safely house anticipated enrollment and meet ADA/ state requirements. Governing board will certify that the facilities meet the above requirements.	Board certified	Met

Discussion

The Board of Directors certifies the facilities meet educational and health and safety standards. This year, Baxter Academy moved to a recently renovated space located at 185 Lancaster Street in Portland. The facility was renovated specifically to meet public school compliance standards and support the school’s STEM mission. As of January 2018, all faculty, staff and students are housed in a single location.

Transportation

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Transportation	Student Ridership on School-chartered Buses	33.5%	Met

Discussion

Students travel to Baxter from 59 different towns throughout Maine. Getting to school each day is a varied experience for students, and their families, as students accesses a variety of transportation options. The school provides three chartered buses along routes that provide access for the greatest number of students. The school works with numerous public transportation organizations to facilitate student access, including paying for students’ fares. Students also carpool, drive their own vehicles, walk, ride bicycles and travel by boat. Baxter has a contract with Luce Transportation to run three bus routes.

Food Service

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Food Services	Lunch Program	Approx. 58% participation	Met

Discussion

Baxter Academy has a food service arrangement where local vendors agree to provide select meals for Baxter students for a set price. Lunch services are available to any student at a cost of \$5 per day. This year, six local providers participated in the program where fresh lunches are prepared based upon orders placed a week ahead and delivered daily. Approximately 10,700 lunches were served by June 8th, to approximately 58% percent of the student population. Out of the 10,700 lunches served, Baxter has provided approximately 1,840 lunches to students eligible for free meals at no cost to students and the cost of \$5.00 to the school. Baxter has provided approximately 1,532 lunches to students eligible for reduced price meals at the cost of \$2.50 to students and the cost of \$2.50 to the school. The school has paid approximately \$3,830 in reduced lunch costs and \$9,200 in free lunch costs. Lunch program participation has increased in part due to increased student enrollment and the increased distance students must walk to purchase lunch (lunch delivery is a more convenient option).

Students also bring their own meals and have designated locations to eat during lunch period or may travel within a designated boundary (and with prior written permission from a parent/guardian) to purchase lunch.

Section 9: School Climate

School Social and Academic Climate

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Instances of bullying, harassment or other abusive behavior	Number of behavioral incidents using state and federal reporting requirements.	2 reported incidents	Met
Confidential surveys of parents, staff and students regarding social and academic climate	Results from annual administration of a climate survey representing stable or rising positive perceptions from each stakeholder group concerning school climate and support for learning.	Results stable	met

Discussion

For the 2018 Panorama survey Baxter Academy set the goal of increasing the number of responses. Time was given in advisory for students to participate in the surveys, faculty members were given time in faculty meetings, parents were contacted with consistent messaging about the importance of the survey. Baxter’s survey participation increased in all 3 areas from 2016-2017.

Results show that confidence remained high regarding overall social and learning climate. In the coming year, the school report it has prioritized professional development and student work toward strengthening the school’s community and culture.

Panorama Survey results in the school climate scale were stable, with only slight variations from 2017 (see table below). Student survey results place Baxter Academy at approximately the 70th percentile nationally when compared to the national data set of similar high schools (schools with a low (0–30%) free and reduced lunch percentage (FRL)). When compared to similar schools teachers and staff were around the 80th and 99th percentiles, respectively. Baxter Academy families also fell around the 99th percentile nationally.

Baxter Academy saw a large increase in survey participation in 2018. Student participation increased 45%, teacher and staff participation increased 48%, and family participation increased 41%.

2018 Panorama Survey School Climate Scale Results	
Students	6% increase from 2017
Teachers	6% increase from 2017
Staff	4% increase from 2017
Families	4% decrease from 2017

Section 10: Parent and Community Engagement

Parent and Community Engagement

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Educational Partnerships in the Community	Portfolio of corporate, community, and/or academic partners showing growth in the depth of partner engagement and/or breadth of partners	60 partnerships	Met
Parent Communication Systems	Frequency of communications (mail, e-mail, web-postings)	Communication with parents occurs collectively multiple times per month, and on average, weekly	Met
Parent participation in their children's education and operation of school	Number of Parent advisory meetings	Zero	NA
Parent participation in their children's education and operation of school	Percent of families contributing to the annual appeal	15%	Met
Parent participation in their children's education and operation of school	Participation in Student Led Conference	85% participation	Met

Discussion

Baxter reports extensive efforts in cultivating relationships that benefit the Baxter community. All Baxter administration, faculty, staff, board members, and parents play a role in representing Baxter to the broader community and in fostering relationships.

Baxter Academy indicated in end of year reporting to the Commission that email and text message systems are the primary ways its administration communicates information on a school-wide basis. This year, Baxter introduced scheduled weekly emails of upcoming events, school-wide news, as well as helpful links for the lunch system or extracurricular opportunities. In addition, a text message alert system has been a helpful tool to announce snow days, school-wide schedule changes, etc. The school reported that anecdotal feedback from parents indicated that email communication is sufficient to provide information and is perceived as having more direct communication with the Head of School than they would have otherwise.

The school does not currently have an active parent advisory group. The school has reported that the geographical spread of the school community made managing the group challenging. Parents continue

to find other ways to make meaningful contributions to the school community. The school has prioritized parent engagement around student learning.

15 percent of parents contributed to the school's annual appeal. The school reports that parents also make significant contributions to the school in many other ways such as donations of in-kind time, expertise, materials and supplies for student activities.

During the 2017–18 school year Baxter Academy had 85% participation in Student Led Conferences. Baxter reported that SLCs are a key measure of parent involvement. Students spend time creating a portfolio presentation for their family members and participate in a discussion of learning with their student and the student's advisor.

Section 11: Administration

For its first five years Baxter Academy was led by a principal who was joined in the 5th year by a dean of students. At the end of the school's 5th year, the principal left for a new opportunity. The school took this opportunity to examine its administrative structure and determined the school would best benefit from a co-principal model in the next school year. The school's dean of students moved into the principal of students and curriculum position and a new hire became the principal of faculty and instruction.

Section 12: Evidence of Mission and Vision Implementation

(See Page 2 for School's Mission and Vision)

Baxter Academy currently transports 400 ninth through twelfth graders from 59 Maine towns to a new 32,000-square-foot, STEM-outfitted facility in downtown Portland. There, Baxter students lead their own learning as they study complex, real-world problems both in classroom work and through the school's unique Flex Friday program.

Monday through Thursday, students participate in a core curriculum that offers choice among courses emphasizing science, technology, engineering, and math. In the 2017-2018 year, the school is piloted co-taught classes that integrate content across disciplines: A course in Global Information Systems connects geometry, environmental science, technology, and the humanities. Another teaches geometry through computer-aided design. Humanities teachers push into science classes such as genetics to amplify ways for students to learn to communicate well in a STEM setting. Students who are geared toward pursuing engineering as a college major can opt into an engineering pathway designed to develop skills and competencies intended to help first-year engineering majors persevere through obstacles that typically lead half of students to switch majors. Across the school and across a spectrum of interests, students who have met 75 percent of graduation requirements can opt into the Summit capstone experience, where faculty mentors support their work on projects, early college courses, or internships.

- On Fridays, all students participate in Baxter's unique Flex Friday program, which devotes 20 percent of the school week to student-designed and implemented projects that are diverse, meaningful and impactful. Computer science students are exploring virtual reality: One group developed a Virtual Tour of Baxter's facility. In the life sciences, a student aiming for a career as a marine scientist worked in partnership with the Island Institute to develop a kelp-growing curriculum for children—and she implemented it on Peaks Island. Working at the intersection of chemistry, physics, and photography, a group of students has experimented with the Lippmann color photographic process, which is both based on ancient principles and poised on the cutting edge of what's possible. Two students have built wooden boats. A group of ninth graders used CAD to design a series of surfboards. A tenth grader got certified in welding through his Flex Friday project.

To support its real-world learning, Baxter pursues community partnerships. During the 2017-18 school year, Baxter provided STEM support in Portland's district schools: Ten Baxter students designed and led a Tinker Day at East End Community Elementary School for over one hundred students. A group of Baxter girls teamed up with partners from USM to provide a "morning of coding" for female students at King Middle School. Baxter has continued its partnership with LearningWorks, a nonprofit that provides after-school engineering programs for at-risk second through fifth graders in schools in and around Portland; Baxter students have provided digital media support for the after-school program. Baxter continues to deepen its engagement with organizations including the University of Southern Maine, Maine Public, Ocean Passages, and Maine Game. Its partnership with Thomas College utilizes Baxter teachers in support of students in dual enrollment that accelerates progress toward a college degree while significantly cutting costs. Seniors in Baxter's advanced engineering course work with Southworth Engineering to solve design problems. Students are interning at Pika Energy, University of New England chemistry labs, Engine Room makers' space and art gallery in Biddeford, a veterinary clinic in Cumberland, and with UNE's athletic training program. Students are nurturing connections, identifying what they need to get their work done, and drawing upon and appreciating the skills of their peers.

Section 13: Commendations and Concerns

Commendations

- Increased survey participation
- Successful transition into new school facility

Concerns

- Restructuring of administration
- Transition to new leadership

Appendix M

*Cornville Regional Charter School Pre-Opening Report
for New Programs*

Cornville Regional Charter School
Pre-Opening Visit – Early Childhood and Downtown
August 24, 2017

Cornville Regional Charter School: Travis Works, Steve Govoni (Engineer)
Maine Charter School Commission: Shelley Reed, Dr. Mike Wilhelm, Bob Kautz, Roberta Lucas (DOE), Gina Post

On August 24, 2017 the Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) Review Team for Cornville Regional Charter School (CRCS) and MCSC staff met at the school's new Downtown and Early Childhood campuses to review the school's plan to open the new locations.

CRCS met with MCSC staff regularly during the month of August to provide progress updates. The pre-opening visit was the most recent in the series of update visits. Below is a summary of updates.

Education:

- CRCS has all instructional materials purchased.

Organization:

- Staff have been hired for both campuses. There are designated leaders at both new campuses (teaching principals) as well as teaching staff.
- Due to recent resignations CRCS needs to hire an additional special education teacher, a speech and language therapist, and additional ed techs.
- CRCS has hired a full time special education director (a new position for the schools)
- CRCS will continue to use the social worker, occupational therapist, physical therapist, and nurse it has had on contract in the past.
- CRCS plans to hire a full time administrative assistant for the Early Childhood location.
- The teachers for the Early Childhood program met with each student's family and hosted a s'mores night at the school.
- CRCS is working in a new Organizational Chart and will submit it to the MCSC at the end of September.
- The staff handbook has had minor revisions. A copy will be sent to the MCSC as required.
- Lunch for all 3 sites will be provided by Good Will Hinckley
- Bussing will continue through the same company as in past years with adjustments made to accommodate needed route changes
- Building renovations were nearly complete at the time of the visits. The Downtown HS Site has flooring and ceiling tiles to be done during the first 2 weeks of school while students are out of the building for activities and field trips. The Occupancy Permit has been issued with conditions to be met in the future (upstairs and basement still under renovation)
- Technology equipment has been purchased and will be ready for use after the first 2 weeks of school (field trips).
- While a student Code of Conduct exists at the k-8 site, the Downtown HS students will be creating a new one in the early weeks of school.
- Students at the Downtown HS location will each have a Macbook Air and an ipad.

Location	Grades	Number of Students
Early Childhood	preK	32
Cornville	k-6	144
Downtown HS	7-9	45 (+/- 3)

Governance:

- CRCS recently had some governing board member changes. 2 members have stepped down and 2 new members have joined. Members have varied skills. The board is considering increasing its membership to 7 members instead of 5.

Business and Financial:

- CRCS's annual financial audit has been started.
- CRCS reports being in "overall in good shape" with its operating budget and anticipated carryover.
- CRCS is finalizing a USDA loan for \$700,000 over 20 years through Bangor Savings Bank. Included in the loan is a line of credit. Payments on the loan are in the schools budget.

To be done:

- Air quality testing at Early Childhood site
- Early childhood center's playground still has some work to be done
- Completion of lighted exit signs, new railing, and GFCI outlet installation

Recommended:

- Additional doors with ramps at exits

It is the opinion of the Review Team that CRCS is prepared to open the Early Childhood and Downtown Campuses for the 2017-18 school year.

Appendix N

*Cornville Regional Charter School 90 Day Report for
New Programs*

**Cornville Regional Charter School
Early Childhood Center and Downtown
90-Day Visit
December 20, 2017**

Cornville Regional Charter School (CRCS): Travis Works and Crystal Priest
Maine Charter School Commission: Shelley Reed, Jana Lapoint, Bob Kautz, Gina Post, Roberta Lucas (MDOE Special Services), Dan Hemdal (MDOE Special Services)

On December 20, 2017, the Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) Review Team for Cornville Regional Charter School, MCSC staff, and MDOE Special Services team members met at Cornville Regional Charter School to review the school's new early childhood and high school programs.

Early Childhood Center

CRCS opened its early childhood center for 32 pre-K students (2 classrooms of 16 students each) on August 28, 2017. Topics discussed at the 90-day visit included student enrollment, facility, staffing and programming, and parent engagement.

Student enrollment

The Early Childhood Center opened with 32 students. The current enrollment is 30 students. Families who unenrolled the 2 students did not cite a reason for leaving.

Approximately one third of the Early Childhood Center's students are from Skowhegan. The other two thirds are from Athens, Madison, Cornville, Hartland and more.

Facilities

The last remaining items for completing the required facilities work will be completed during the December 2017 vacation. The ceiling in the foyer will be coated with a fire-retardant sealant, which was a requirement of the fire marshal.

Staffing and Programming

Each of the 2 classrooms has a lead teacher and an assistant teacher (ed. tech. III and certified teacher). Both lead teachers attended training for Tools of the Mind¹, which is the curriculum being used at the center.

Teachers are using Teaching Strategies Gold² for assessing students. Information on each student is available to parents online and instructions on its use were given at student conferences.

It was reported that acquiring the materials for the curriculum has been tricky due to waiting for grant funding to come through. Due to MDOE technical issues, the upload and certification of student enrollment was delayed.

¹ Tools of the Mind is a research-based early childhood model combining teacher professional development with a comprehensive innovative curriculum that helps young children to develop the cognitive, social-emotional, self-regulatory, and foundational academic skills they need to succeed in school and beyond.

² Grounded in 38 research-based objectives for development and learning, *GOLD*® supports effective teaching and assessment, while providing teachers with more time to spend with students. Accessed through *MyTeachingStrategies*™, *GOLD*® automatically links teaching and assessment.

Students requiring special services are referred through Child Development Services. Students who are currently receiving speech and language services are receiving the services outside of the school. The school's executive director is looking at implementing more coaching and additional professional development time in the second half of the school year.

Parent Engagement

Parents are involved in the school at special events, volunteering in the school or completing tasks at home, attending field trips, and attending conferences. Parents are welcome to visit the school. Conferences are planned for 3 times this year. The school is looking at offering "celebrations of learning" bi-annually next year instead of conferences.

Downtown Campus (grades 6-12)

CRCS opened its downtown campus to 45 students in grades 6-12 on August 28, 2017. Topics discussed at the 90-day visit included student enrollment, facility, staffing and programming, and parent engagement.

Student enrollment

The Downtown Campus opened with 45 students enrolled. A few students never showed up and a few have unenrolled, citing sports participation and wanting a larger school. Other students have joined the school and there are currently 45 students enrolled.

Facilities

The school's main level, where all classes take place this year, is nearly completed. The crown molding is being installed when school isn't in session. Sensors, key fobs and a new boiler are being installed during the December 2017 vacation. Central Maine Power is backed up and as a result the phase 3 power has not yet been installed.

The school is working to secure the remaining funds for the renovation through Bangor Savings Bank. The USDA loan was delayed at the federal level.

Staffing and Programming

The Downtown Campus has 2 teachers, one teaching principal, and an Ed. Tech. III. One of the teachers is the special education case manager at the school.

All 3 teachers teach the same subject at the same time and students can attend a class addressing the standards they are working on. The school uses Empower to track student progress on meeting standards.

Students have created a career action plan. There are students exploring internships, employment, and participating on local boards. Students have been to college campuses and will continue to explore other post-secondary opportunities.

Parent Engagement

The school reports that events such as parent nights, student-led conferences, meet and greets, curriculum overviews and others have been well attended. Generally, about 3/4ths of the parents participate and the staff makes the effort to contact parents who are unable to attend. The school maintains communication with parents via weekly newsletter, Facebook, texts, and streaming. Parents are welcome to visit the school at any time.

Conclusion

Cornville Regional Charter School has grown to include both pre-K and high school grades in addition to K-8 in the 2017-18 school year. This growth has been an incredibly demanding process for the school's administration. The Maine Charter School Commission has noted that while the school (all 3 campuses) appears to be meeting the needs of its students, every required report has been late, or has not submitted, during this 2017-18 school year, which is not customary for the school. This was addressed at the visit and will be monitored.

Appendix O

*Cornville Regional Charter School Annual Monitoring
Report*

Maine Charter School Commission



Cornville Regional Charter School

ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2017-2018

September 2018

On May 31st and June 22nd announced on-site visits were made to the Cornville Regional Charter School. The Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) Review Team of 3 members was accompanied by the MCSC Executive Director, and MCSC Director of Program Management. The visiting team held interviews with school leadership, and the school's Governing Board. They also reviewed data provided by the school. Documents provided by the school are available from the MCSC office. Information gathered from documents, interviews and on-site observation was used to determine the extent to which the school has met its contracted performance targets.

Commission Member, Review Team Chair	Shelley Reed
Commission	Jana Lapoint
Commission	Dr. Mike Wilhelm
MCSC Executive Director	Bob Kautz
MCSC Director of Program Management	Gina Post

School's Mission	<i>To create a safe, respectful, nurturing and active learning community where every child is given the opportunity to thrive academically, to be accepted, to celebrate accomplishments and to develop a lifetime love of learning.</i>
School's Vision	<i>To create a school where learning is built around each student so that they become engaged learners with relevant and challenging work.</i>

The Maine State Charter School Commission will provide thoughtful stewardship in authorizing and monitoring public charter schools consistent with State statutes to create unique, high-quality learning options for Maine students.

2018-2019 School Information

School Name	Cornville Regional Charter School
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Governing Board

Board Chair	Jason Gayne
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Board member	Stephanie Miller
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Board member	Jean Walker
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Executive Director/Principal	Travis Works
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Principal	Susan Martin
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Principal	Crystal Priest
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Special Education Director	Nicki Reinholt
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Operations Manager	Jess Brown
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Data Warehouse Manager	Ashlee Savage
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CFO	
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Number of Sending Districts	11
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Current Enrollment	221*
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Students on Waiting List	42*
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*As of October 1, 2017 certified enrollment date.

Early Childhood Center

Year Opened	2017
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Years in Operation	1
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Grades Served	PreK
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Cornville Campus

Year Opened	2012
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Years in Operation	6
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Grades Served	K – 8
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Skowhegan Campus

Year Opened	2017
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Years in Operation	1
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Grades Served	9 - 12
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Section 1: Overview

Founded in 2012, Cornville Regional Charter School (CRCS) offers a public school education for elementary school age children. The school environment emphasizes creativity, collaboration, community, service, and leadership. CRCS currently serves 221 students in multi-age learning groups.

Cornville Regional Charter School's mission is to create a safe, respectful, nurturing and active learning community where every child is given the opportunity to thrive academically, to be accepted, to celebrate accomplishments and to develop a lifetime love of learning.

Cornville Regional Charter School's vision is to create a school where learning is built around each student so that they become engaged learners with relevant and challenging work.

Evidence of CRCS's mission is evident in the use and promotion of Responsive Classroom, Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports, and Mass Customized Learning. Evidence of CRCS's vision is evidence in its hands-on Agricultural Education Program and Mass Customized Learning. The technology provided to each student actively engages them in their education.

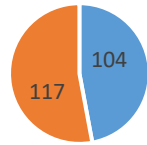
Students are encouraged to actively participate in setting goals and assessing progress for their personal academic achievement in meeting the Common Core Standards and Maine Learning Results. CRCS strives to make the learning environment caring, interactive and personally challenging to promote academic success. CRCS encourages participation and collaboration among students, parents, and teachers in areas of decision making, program development and student growth. CRCS strives to instill strong social and environmental values, a sense of personal responsibility, and to create a love of learning.

Section 2: Indicator Summary Table

Indicator	Meets Contract Agreement	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet
Student Academic Proficiency		X	
Student Academic Growth	X		
Achievement Gaps in Proficiency and Growth Between Major Student Subgroups		X	
Student Attendance		X	
Enrollment from Year to Year		X	
Post-Secondary Readiness	NA Served only students up to 9 th grade in 2018-19		
Financial Performance and Sustainability	X		
Governance Board Performance and Stewardship	X		
Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of Program	X		
Transportation	X		
Food Service	X		
School Social and Academic Climate		X	
Parent and Community Engagement	X		

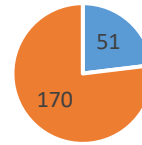
Section 3: Demographics

Gender



Female Male

Special Education



Yes No

Language



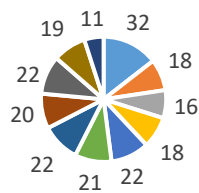
English

Economically Disadvantaged



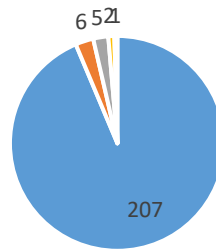
Yes No

Grade



Pre-K K 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th 8th 9th

Race-Ethnicity



White Two or More Hispanic Black or African American American Indian or Alaska Native

Section 4: Academics

Student Academic Proficiency

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
Proficiency on State Assessments in reading	Percent of tested learners scoring proficient on the reading portion of the Maine State Assessment will meet or exceed comparable school's average	Results provided below	Partially met
Proficiency on State Assessments in math	Percent of tested learners scoring proficient on the math portion of the Maine State Assessment will meet or exceed comparable school's average	Results provided below	Met
Proficiency on PSAT/SAT	Percent of tested learners proficiency level will increase every year at level negotiated in contract for negotiated subject or content areas	NA The school did not have 10 th or 11 th grade students during the 17–18 school year.	NA
Proficiency on school selected standardized test in reading (CPAA)	Percent of learners who meet or exceed proficiency with the Fall administration of the CPAA in math establishing the baseline and the Spring administration establishing the endpoint on a yearly basis	NA 17-18 was the school's first year with preK	NA
Proficiency on school selected standardized test in math (CPAA)	Percent of learners who meet or exceed proficiency with the Fall administration of the CPAA in math establishing the baseline and the Spring administration establishing the endpoint on a yearly basis	NA 17-18 was the school's first year with preK	NA
Proficiency on school selected standardized test in reading. (NWEA)	Percent of learners who meet or exceed proficiency with the Spring administration of the Reading NWEA establishing the baseline and the following Spring administration establishing the endpoint on a yearly basis.	Baseline reported Spring 2017 - 50% End point reported Spring 2018 - 46%	Met
Proficiency on school selected standardized test in math. (NWEA)	Percent of learners who meet or exceed proficiency with the Spring administration of the Reading NWEA establishing the	Baseline reported Spring 2017 - 42% End point reported Spring 2018 - 38%	Met

	baseline and the following Spring administration establishing the endpoint on a yearly basis.		
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Discussion

Grade	ELA Percent proficient		MATH Percent proficient	
	CRCS	SAD54	CRCS	SAD54
3	31.58	29.41	42.11	32.62
4	*	49.14	*	33.52
5	*	43.56	*	26.54
6	*	41.97	*	23.32
7	33.33	37.63	*	28.35
8	42.11	49.08	*	39.26

In grade 3, on both ELA and math, Cornville Regional scored higher than the local district most of its students would attend given their residence. On grades 7 and 8 ELA Cornville Regional scored 4.3% and 6.97% below the local district. Cells with an asterisk * are not completed due to small n size and maintaining student confidentiality.

The percentage of learners met or exceed proficiency with the spring 2017 administration of the Reading NWEA was 50%. The spring 2018 reading NWEA showed 46% of learners met or exceeded proficiency. Due to the school’s increase in students from the 2016-17 school year to the 2017-18 school year the 4% variance is insignificant.

The percentage of learners met or exceed proficiency with the spring 2017 administration of the math NWEA was 42%. The spring 2018 math NWEA showed 38% of learners met or exceeded proficiency. Due to the school’s increase in students from the 2016-17 school year to the 2017-18 school year the 4% variance is insignificant.

Student Academic Growth

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
Growth on school selected standardized test in reading. (CPAA)	Percent of learners who make their growth target in each of the reading concept areas with the Fall administration of CPAA creating the baseline with which the goal will be established from and the Spring administration establishing the endpoint on a yearly basis.	NA 17-18 was the school’s first year with preK	NA

Growth on school selected standardized test in math. (CPAA)	Percent of learners who make their growth target in each of the reading concept areas with the Fall administration of CPAA creating the baseline with which the goal will be established from and the Spring administration establishing the endpoint on a yearly basis.	NA 17-18 was the school's first year with preK	NA
Growth on school selected standardized test in reading. (NWEA)	10% percent increase in the percentage of learners who meet their individual growth targets with the Spring administration of the Reading NWEA establishing the baseline and the following Spring administration establishing the endpoint on a yearly basis.	NA Spring 2018 established a baseline for spring to spring comparison.	Met
Growth on school selected standardized test in math. (NWEA)	10% percent increase in the percentage of learners who meet their individual growth targets with the Spring administration of the Math NWEA establishing the baseline and the following Spring administration establishing the endpoint on a yearly basis.	NA Spring 2018 established a baseline for spring to spring comparison.	Met
Growth on school selected standardized test in developmental school readiness (DIAL)	Percent of learners who make growth in their score towards school readiness with the Fall administration of the DIAL being the baseline and the Spring administration establishing the endpoint.	Due to small class size and maintaining student confidentiality results are not publicly available.	Not publicly available
Same cohort growth on State Assessment in ELA	Percent of proficient learners at each grade level will increase compared to the proficiency from the year before. (I.e.comparing 2015 7th graders to 2016 8th graders.) Percentage of learners who are continuously enrolled.	Insufficient data, see below	NA
Same cohort growth on State Assessment in math	Percent of proficient learners at each grade level will increase compared to the proficiency from the year before. (I.e.comparing 2015 7th graders to 2016 8th graders.)	Insufficient data, see below	NA

	Percentage of learners who are continuously enrolled.		
Successive cohort growth on State Assessment in ELA	Percent of proficient learners at each grade level will increase compared to the proficiency from the year before. (I.e.comparing 2015 7th graders to 2016 8th graders.) Percentage of learners who are continuously enrolled.	Insufficient data, see below	NA
Successive cohort growth on State Assessment in math	Percent of proficient learners at each grade level will increase compared to the proficiency from the year before. (I.e.comparing 2015 7th graders to 2016 8th graders.) Percentage of learners who are continuously enrolled.	Insufficient data, see below	NA

Discussion

Cornville Regional Charter School established baseline data with 2017-18 NWEA testing. The Early Childhood Campus screened 22 PreK learners. Due to small class size and maintaining student confidentiality results are not publicly available.

Testing using the same MEA was completed in 2016, 2017, and 2018. However, due to small class sizes and maintaining student confidentiality there are insufficient data to report on cohort growth in math and reading.

Achievement Gaps in Proficiency and Growth Between Major Student Subgroups

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
Decrease gaps in proficiency between major learner subgroups on Maine State Assessment	Percent of learners in identified subgroups reaching proficiency as measured by the state assessment in tested grades in reading and math.	Gaps were either unchanged or had an increase from 2017 to 2018.	Did not meet
Decrease gaps in proficiency between major learner subgroups on NWEA.	Percent of learners in identified subgroups reaching proficiency as measured on the NWEA in grades K - 12 in reading and math.	Results reported below	Met
Decrease gaps in growth between major learner subgroups on NWEA.	Percent of learners in identified subgroups meeting their individual growth target goals as measured on the NWEA in grades K - 12 in reading and math.	Results reported below	Met

Discussion

	ELA % proficient	
	2017	2018
Econ. Disadvantaged	29.63	19.44
Non Econ. disadvantaged	44.44	42.86
Female	40.91	41.07
Male	30.43	15.52

	Math % proficient	
	2017	2018
Econ. Disadvantaged	16.67	12.5
Non Econ. disadvantaged	19.44	33.33
Female	20.45	21.43
Male	15.22	18.97

In ELA the non-economically disadvantaged group had a substantial change from 2017 to 2018 in percent proficient, while the economically disadvantaged group saw a decline in performance. This resulted in an increase of the achievement gap. The proficiency of the female group was unchanged, but the male group decreased in percent proficient resulting in an increase of the achievement gap.

In math the economically disadvantaged group declined in percent proficient while the non disadvantaged group increased in percent proficient, increasing the achievement gap. There was an insignificant decrease in the achievement by sex from 2017 to 2018.

The table below shows the percent proficient by subgroup. Special education subgroup data are not provided for proficiency due to small 'n' size and maintaining student privacy.

PROFICIENCY	Reading percent proficient	Math percent proficient
Economically disadvantaged	41%	33%
Non-economically disadvantaged	55%	45%
Male	36%	38%
Female	58%	38%

There are gaps among subgroups proficiency, most noticeably in reading.

The table below shows the percent of students meeting their individual growth target by subgroup. Certain Economically disadvantaged subgroup and special education subgroup data are not provided for growth due to small 'n' size and maintaining student privacy*.

GROWTH	Reading % meeting growth target	Math % meeting growth target
Special Education	52%	*
Non- special education	53%	*
Economically disadvantaged	56%	45%
Male	51%	45%
Female	52%	45%

Subgroup data for students meeting their individual growth target are relatively stable across subgroups.

Section 5: Attendance and Enrollment

Student Attendance

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
Average Daily Attendance Rate	The average attendance rate as reported in the MEDMS data system for the Early Childhood Center and Cornville Campus will be at or above 94%. For the Downtown Campus it will be at or above 85%.	Early Childhood Campus = 88% Cornville Campus = 90% Downtown Campus = 92%	Partially met

Discussion

The Early Childhood Campus missed the goal by 6%. The Cornville Campus missed the goal by 4%. The campus had a very hard winter with illness. The school is planning parent education for the 18-19 school year on the importance of attendance. It also plans to more strictly implement its attendance and truancy policies.

The average attendance rate for the Downtown Campus was 92%. Therefore, this campus reached its goal of 85%.

Enrollment from Year to Year

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
Learner re-enrollment from one year to the next	90% of learners across all age ranges will re-enroll from one year to the next.	K-5 = 88% 6-8 = 88% 9-12 = 100%	Partially met
Learner enrolled continuously for multiple years	90% of learners across all age ranges will re-enroll from one year to the next.	K-5 = 83% 6-8 = 88% 9-12 = 100%	Partially met

Discussion

CRCS fell 2% short of the reenrollment target for both the K-5 range and the 6-8 range. Ninth graders had 100% reenrollment for the 18-19 school year.

At the end of 2018, CRCS had 83% of learners in grades 1 - 5 maintain enrollment and 88% of learners in grades 6-8 maintain enrollment, as well as all 9th graders remaining enrolled. Kindergarten learners were excluded from this data because they were not yet eligible to be enrolled for multiple years.

Section 6: Finances

Financial Performance and Sustainability

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
Budget versus actual revenue and expenditures	Annual budget to actuals will not have a shortfall or difference of 10% from projections. Quarterly financial reports must be made available to the authorizer. Annual financial audit by a qualified, certified public accountant or public accountant certified by the board of accountancy must be submitted to the Maine State charter School Commission.	CRCS is currently projected to end with an 18% surplus of its budget. Quarterly financials and the annual audited financial statements were submitted to the Commission.	met

Discussion

CRCS projected to end 58.9% of budgeted net income, with an 18% surplus. The school experienced some unforeseen financing costs and construction expenses on the downtown campus during FY2018.

Section 7: Governance Board Performance and Stewardship

Governance Board Performance and Stewardship

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
Public accountability – Transparent, responsive, and legally compliant Board operations	Board will meet one time per month at a minimum. Evidence of required bylaws and policies are in place and are regularly reviewed as indicated in minutes. 100% of Governing Board agendas and minutes are made available to the public.	The CRCS board met monthly. Governing board bylaws are in place. Agendas and minutes are posted on the school's website.	Met

Discussion

The CRCS board met monthly. Meetings were held at all three school locations on a rotating basis. The school's governing board's bylaws are in place. Governing board meeting agendas and minutes are posted on the school's website.

The school's governing board members have experience in education, businesses, and non-profit organization.

Section 8: Facilities & Maintenance, Food Service, and Transportation

Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of Program

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
Facility meets State standards	Facility will meet all applicable state expectations for public schools. Annual review of maintenance for facility Observation during authorizer visits. Facility records, policies, and procedures available on request. Capital Improvement Plan	The facilities meet all applicable state expectations for public schools according to documentation submitted to the Maine Department of Education.	Met

Discussion

The school is working on a comprehensive Capital Improvement Plan. The school reports the Cornville Campus is in need of facilities upgrades including septic and roof.

Transportation

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
Record of costs and learner utilization	Pick-up and drop off by a certified bussing company which will not exceed budgeted amount.	8.14% under budget	Met

Discussion

The school has a contract with a local bus service. The cost of transportation for the 17-18 did not exceed the unbelted amount.

Food Service

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
Record of costs and learner utilization	Breakfast, lunch, and milk program will be available for those that qualify for free/reduced criteria. These programs will meet federal and state guidelines for food service and will not exceed budgeted amount. Contract for food service,	Meals meeting state guidelines were provided during the 17-18 school year. Food survey was completed.	Met

	Record of costs and learner utilization, Survey learners and parents annually regarding satisfaction food (quality and cost).	Revenue – 10% under budget Expenses – 3.33% under budget	
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Discussion

Breakfast, lunch, and milk program were available for those that qualify for free/reduced criteria. These programs met federal and state guidelines for food service.

Food service did not exceed budgeted amount.

The school reported that feedback from a survey given to parents and learners indicated that they wanted a change in the meal program including more options. In the 2018-19 school year the school will be contracting with the Maine Meals and will be locally sourced and locally managed.

Section 9: School Climate

School Social and Academic Climate

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
Climate Measure 1: Instances of bullying, harassment, or other abusive practices	School will report the number of behavioral incidents using the state and federal reporting requirements.	Incidents were not reported to MDOE in accordance with reporting guidelines.	Did not meet
Confidential survey of parents, staff, and learners.	School will gather and respond to family, learner, and staff perceptions of the quality of the school's social and academic climate. Participation goals for the 2017-2018 year are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 family responses • 90% of learners in grades 3-12 will participate • 90% participation by staff 	Participation for the spring 2018 survey administration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 62 family responses • 85% of learners in grades 3-12 participated • 35% participation by staff 	Partially met

Discussion

CRCS did not report its behavioral incidences to MDOE using state and federal reporting requirements. One incident requiring reporting was not included in the school's certified report, and was not amended after receiving notification of this from MDOE.

After a rise in negative behavior the school increased its supports for learners and increased its contract with Maine Behavioral Health. The school reports its leadership team will be participating in training and discussions and reviewing policies/practices around student behavior for consistency.

In the Spring of 2018, 62 families responded to the Family Survey, exceeding the 50 response target. Of 125 eligible learners (grades 3-9) 106 learners participated in the Student Surveys for 85% participation-5% short of the 90% goal. 8 of 23 staff responded to the Staff and Teacher survey for 35% participation. The school reports plans to educate staff regarding the importance of the survey and hopefully increase participation in 2019.

Section 10: Parent and Community Engagement

Parent and Community Engagement

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/partially met
Parent Communication	<p>Parents and guardians will be sent a newsletter periodically from the office. A hard copy will be provided upon request if access to email is unavailable.</p> <p>Percentage of parents who subscribe to the newsletter/Facebook pages electronically and hard copy.</p>	Email sent home weekly	Met
Parent participation in the operation of the school	<p>Goal is to have all families involved in the school community in ways that are meaningful to parents. Parents and guardians will be invited and a minimum of 70% of parents will participate in 1 or more activities throughout the year.</p> <p>(Includes field trip chaperones, learner interest group facilitator, volunteering, PTF sponsored events, PTF meetings, classroom and school wide events, board meetings, etc)</p>	80% of families participated in 1 or more activities throughout the year.	Met
Parent participation in their children's education	90% of parents and learners will participate in at least 1 of the celebrations of learning that happens during the year.	90% of families and learners attend at least 1 celebration of learning throughout the school year.	Met
Parent Communication	<p>The percentage of parents of learners who would respond favorably that their learner are able to persevere through setbacks to achieve important long-term goals will increase from 45% to 55%. School will identify a yearly goal as set by the panorama survey results and verified by the Charter Commission.</p>	This question was not a part of the bi-annual short survey, but will be administered again in 2019.	NA
Parent Communication/Climate	The percentage of parents of learners who would respond favorably that the school's overall	This question was not a part of the bi-annual short survey, but will be	NA

	<p>approach to discipline works for their child will increase from 66% to 71%. School will identify a yearly goal as set by the panorama survey results and verified by the Charter Commission.</p>	<p>administered again in 2019.</p>	
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Discussion

During the 2017-18 school year CRCS emailed families on a weekly basis to communicate with families.

80% of families participated in 1 or more activities such as field trip chaperone, learner interest group facilitator, volunteer, PTF sponsored events, PTF meetings, classroom and school wide events, and board meetings, exceeding the 70% target.

90% of families and learners attend at least 1 of our celebrations of learning, meeting the 90% target.

The Panorama Survey in 2018 was a short survey. The full survey will be administered again in 2019 and the school will be able to measure progress on its targets at that time.

Section 11: Administration

During the 2017–18 school year CRCS contracted with a consultant to assist the school in developing short and long term plans and goals. The consultant assisted the school’s Executive Director in building a strong administrative team. The team now meets regularly to plan and make decisions. The team reported at the schools MCSC visit that the administrative team has become stronger and more cohesive. The team consists of the Executive Director, the special education director, two principals, the operations director, the executive assistant, and the CFO.

Section 12: Evidence of Mission and Vision Implementation

(See Page 2 for School's Mission and Vision)

During the 2017-18 school year the school's Mass Customized Learning vision was at the top of its priorities. The Early Childhood Campus implemented multiple programs which are tailored towards the individual learners needs and success. At the Cornville Campus, learners continued to be grouped and re-group based on individual needs both academically and socially.

The school hired Maine Behavioral Health Organization as a consultant for the Cornville Campus (k-8) and Skowhegan Campus (9–10) which, according to the school, played a large role in the its ability to individualize socially for each learner. The school reports the Skowhegan Campus began to implement Mass Customized Learning vision.

Section 13: Commendations and Concerns

Commendations

- Opening of two additional facilities and addition of grade levels
- Active governing board
- Safety- safety plans, cameras, teacher awareness, drills and meeting with sheriff

Concerns

- Rate of teacher and staff turnover
- Chronic absenteeism
- Lack of appropriate reporting of behavior incidents in state reporting system
- Timely completion of new facility renovations
- Small governing board
- Clarity of leadership team- roles, responsibilities, skill development, at building level, curriculum level and district level
- Follow through of Strategic Design
- Follow through of IEP development and staff to carry out appropriate plans
- Consistency of RTI process across all levels

Appendix P

*Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences Annual
Monitoring Report*

Maine Charter School Commission



ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2017-2018

FSAS Annual Monitoring Report Approved 12-4-18

September 2018

On June 12th, an announced on-site visit was made to the Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences. The Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) Review Team of 2 members was accompanied by the MCSC Executive Director, MCSC Director of Program Management, and 2 representatives from MDOE Special Services. The visiting team held interviews with school leadership, and the school's Governing Board. The team also reviewed data provided by the school. Information gathered from documents, interviews and on-site observation was used to determine the extent to which the school has met its contracted performance targets.

Commission Member, Review Team Chair	Shelley Reed
Commission	Jana Lapoint
MCSC Executive Director	Bob Kautz
MCSC Director of Program Management	Gina Post
DOE Special Services	Roberta Lucas
DOE Special Services	Dan Hemdal

School's Mission	<i>To unfold the potential of children, in a respectful, loving culture through authentic and meaningful experiences that sustain a sense of wonder, a love of learning and embrace the interconnectedness of all things.</i>
School's Vision	<i>To provide for the foundational needs of growing children in a community where children, teachers, and families learn together in a nurturing environment.</i>

The Maine State Charter School Commission will provide thoughtful stewardship in authorizing and monitoring public charter schools consistent with State statutes to create unique, high-quality learning options for Maine students.

2018–2019 School Information

School Name	Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences
Address	25 Shaker Road, Gray, ME 04039

Governing Board

Board Chair	Adam Gilman
Board Vice Chair	Alyson Spencer Reed
Board Secretary	Penny Collins
Board Treasurer	Melanie Prinz
Board Member	Bill Doughty
Board Member	Vincent Micale
Board Member	Zoe Belle Lewin
Board Member	Carolyn Beem

Executive Director/CEO	Jacinda Cotton-Castro
Coordinator of Teaching & Learning	Joanna Frankel
Special Education Director	Lee Ann Arnold
Business Manager	Barb Landry

Year Opened	2013
Years in Operation	5
Number of Sending Districts	15
Grades Served	PreK – 5
Current Enrollment	133*
Students on Waiting List	27*

*As of October 1, 2017 certified enrollment date.

Section 1: Overview

Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences uses a Reggio Emilia-inspired approach to learning. The fundamentals of the Reggio Approach outlined by Gandini (2008) guide and inform its approach.

The principles of the Reggio Emilia Approach guide teaching and learning at Fiddlehead:

- The image of the child
- Children’s relationships and interactions within a system
- The role of families
- The role of space
- Teachers and children as partners in learning.

The practices of the Reggio Emilia Approach are as follows:

- The physical space encompasses both the indoors and outdoors.
- Extensive periods of time – for in depth investigations, thoughtful observations and reflections.
- A community of learners – children, teachers, and parents co-construct knowledge.
- Interactive materials – tools that support development, expression, problem solving and communicate thinking.
- Technology enhances children’s real world experiences.

The curriculum:

- Teachers observe and document children’s learning
- Curriculum grows out of children’s interests and questions.
- At the same time, teachers guide learning to ensure that children are developing necessary knowledge and skills.
- Interdisciplinary, project-based learning is central – in the classroom, outdoors and in the community.
- Not a pre-set curriculum – but a process of inviting and sustaining learning.

Teachers document children’s learning through notes, photographs and examples of children’s work. This makes learning visible to children, parents and teachers, and informs next steps in curriculum. Older children participate in documentation of learning.

At the same time that teachers are documenting children’s learning as a group, they are tuned into the growth of individual children. Each child has a portfolio organized around an assessment framework that describes key knowledge, skills and habits of mind. Each child’s development is documented and reported to families twice a year through summaries and portfolios.

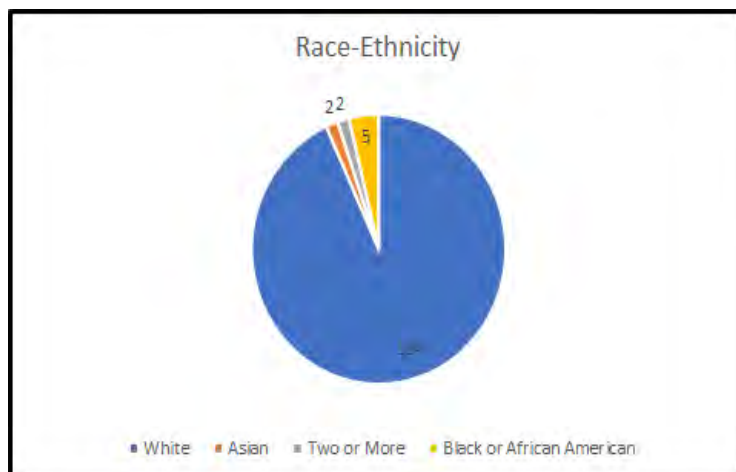
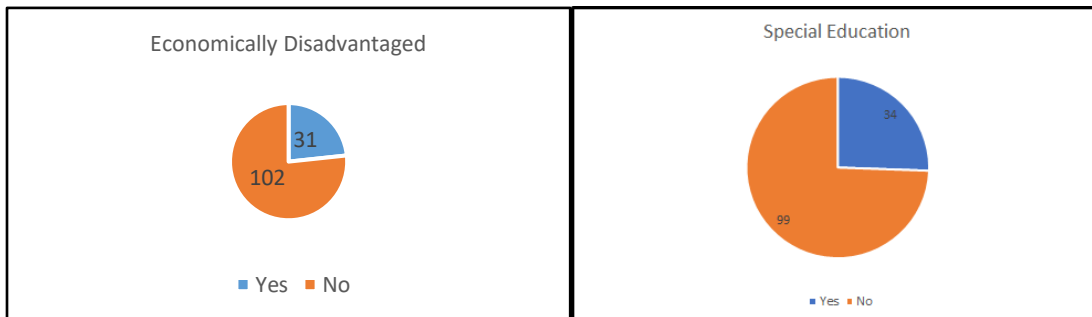
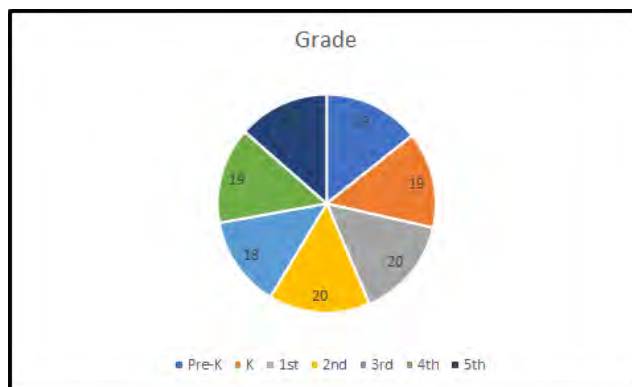
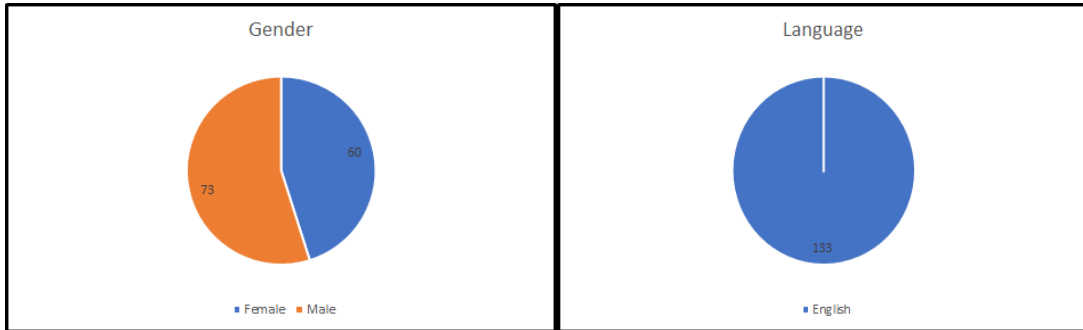
Fiddlehead uses assessment data to identify children who need additional support, and to inform improvement of the overall program.

While there are developmental “norms”, each child develops knowledge and skills on their own timetable. Children in multi-age classes shine in their own ways, learn from each other and progress on a continuum that is not tied to their chronological age.

Section 2: Indicator Summary Table

Indicator	Meets Contract Agreement	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet
Student Academic Proficiency		X	
Student Academic Growth		X	
Achievement Gaps in Proficiency and Growth Between Major Student Subgroups	NA		
Student Attendance			X
Enrollment from Year to Year	X		
Financial Performance and Sustainability	X		
Governance Board Performance and Stewardship	X		
Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of Program	X		
School Social and Academic Climate	X		
Parent and Community Engagement	X		

Section 3: Demographics



Section 4: Academics

Student Academic Proficiency

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
State Assessments: The percent of Grade 3, 4 and 5 students scoring proficient or above on the ELA portion of the Maine State Assessment	To meet or exceed the state's percentage of students scoring proficient or above	Grade 3 – above state Grade 4 – below state Grade 5 – not reportable	Partially met
State Assessments: Grade 3, 4 and 5 students scoring at or above proficient on the math portion of the Maine State Assessment	To be within 20% of the state average of students scoring proficient or above	Grade 3 – within 20% Grade 4 – not reportable Grade 5 – not reportable	Met
School Developed Assessments: Percent of students in each grade level meeting or exceeding proficiency in language and literacy as measured by the June administration of the Work Sampling System.	65% of students in each grade level will meet or exceed proficiency	The 65% proficiency target was met in all but one grade level.	Partially met
School Developed Assessments: Percent of students in each grade level meeting or exceeding proficiency in math as measured by the June administration of the Work Sampling System	65% of students in each grade level will meet or exceed proficiency	The 65% proficiency target was met in all but two grade levels.	Partially met

Discussion

Fiddlehead School has reportable ELA scores in 2 out of 3 grade levels and one out of 3 grade levels in math. Results for grade 5 ELA and grades 4 and 5 for math are not publicly reportable due to small n size and maintaining student confidentiality. The school and the Commission have access to the results for school level use and analysis. In the 3 reportable areas FSAS met its target in grade 3 ELA for being at or above the state average, and 3rd grade math for being within 20% of the state average. It did not meet the target for being at or above the state average in 4th grade ELA.

ELA

Grade	FSAS % proficient	Statewide % proficient	At or Above state?
3	68.75	44.98	Yes
4	33.33	51.3	No
5	*	52.1	*

Math

Grade	FSAS % proficient	Statewide % proficient	Within 20% of state?
3	37.5	45.68	Yes
4	*	40.22	*
5	*	33.52	*

Work Sampling System - Proficiency in language and literacy ranged by grade level from 55.56% to 89.47% and proficiency in math ranged by grade level from 58.83% to 89.47%. The 65% proficiency target was met in all but one grade level for literacy, and all but two grade levels for math.

Grade level	Proficiency Target	FSAS Literacy Proficiency	Target met?	FSAS Math Proficiency	Target met?
Prek	65%	89.5%	Yes	89.5%	Yes
K	65%	84.2%	Yes	84.2%	Yes
1	65%	65%	Yes	65%	Yes
2	65%	70%	Yes	70%	Yes
3	65%	70.6%	Yes	70.6%	Yes
4	65%	55.6%	No	61.1%	No
5	65%	82.4%	Yes	58.8%	No

Student Academic Growth

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Percent of students meeting or exceeding expected growth on Value added nationally normed individual and group assessment or equivalent for English (ITBS)	65% of students meeting or exceeding expected growth	4 th grade= 56% 5 th grade= 53%	Did not meet
Percent of students meeting or exceeding expected growth on Value added nationally normed individual and group assessment or equivalent for Math (ITBS)	65% of students meeting or exceeding expected growth	4 th grade= 71% 5 th grade= 71%	Met

Discussion

The school reports it is very pleased with the growth students made in math as measured by the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). The school held multiple professional development sessions for math during the 2017-18 school year. It will be implementing a new K-5 math curriculum in the fall of 2018 and believes this will contribute to increased student growth.

FSAS students' reading growth has remained steady. The school implemented its new RTI process during the 2017-18 school year and saw growth which the school attributed to that process. Fiddlehead School will be using NWEA next year, to replace ITBS, and student data will be available immediately, which the school believes will help teachers support individual students with literacy goals.

Grade level	Target Percentage meeting expected growth	FSAS percentage meeting expected reading growth	Reading Target met?	FSAS percentage meeting expected math growth	Target met?
4	65%	56%	No	71%	Yes
5	65%	53%	No	71%	Yes

Achievement Gaps in Proficiency and Growth Between Major Student Subgroups

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Achievement gaps in proficiency and growth between major student subgroups	Not reportable	Not reportable	N/A

Discussion

The school's "N size" is too small to report sub groups or to draw meaningful conclusions. However, the school is looking at this data for potential trends. At this time, it has not identified major gaps in growth as measured by ITBS between subgroups (by gender, identified special ed, or qualification for FRL). MEA results will be similarly analyzed when the results are available.

Section 5: Attendance and Enrollment

Student Attendance

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Average Daily Attendance Rate	94%	92%	Did not meet

Discussion

Fiddlehead school did not meet its 94% attendance target (ADA=92%). The school reported a few families had students who were chronically absent. This summer the school plans to review its internal procedures to make sure there is communication with families to develop a plan to come to school, should the need arise.

Enrollment from Year to Year Enrollment

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Percent of students enrolled on state “count day” will still be enrolled on the last day of school.	90%	95.4%	Met
Continuous enrollment of students for multiple years: percent of the student body eligible for re-enrollment at the end of one year indicating intent to return the following school year.	90%	94%	Met

Discussion

The percentage of same students enrolled on state “count day” who were still enrolled on the last day of school was 95.4%. Fiddlehead met the 90% enrollment target.

At the end of the 2017-18 school year 94% of students indicated their intent to return, a 94% re-enrollment rate which met the target of 90%.

Section 6: Finances

Financial Performance and Sustainability

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Financial reports and evidence reviewed by governing board through agenda item.	Monthly	Reports received	Met
When monthly financials vary by more than 5%, the variance will be flagged for special governing board consideration to ensure a positive cash flow at the end of each school year	As necessary	Monthly financials did not vary by more than 5% during the 2017-18 school year	Met

Discussion

The governing board met regularly and reviewed financial reports. During the 17-18 school year financials did not vary by more than 5%, so there was no need for special considerations. The school reported having finished the year with a positive balance.

Section 7: Governance Board Performance and Stewardship

Governance Board Performance and Stewardship

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Governance board meetings	To be held monthly	Monthly meetings	Met
Bylaws and policies	To be in place and regularly reviewed	Bylaws revised	Met
Governing Board membership	To maintain a minimum of seven members	Currently 6 board members	Met

Discussion

The 6 member FSAS governing board met regularly. The board went through a revision of its bylaws in 2018. FSAS has active, well-established subcommittees: personnel, education, diversity, finance, and governance.

Section 8: Facilities & Maintenance, Food Service, and Transportation

Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of Program

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Facility will meet all applicable state expectations for public schools	To meet all state requirements	Reports submitted to MDOE	Met

Discussion

Fiddlehead School submitted its School Facilities Inventory Report to MDOE.

The school reports it is at full capacity and feels it may be outgrowing its current space. The school is considering options to accommodate its students and programming.

Section 9: School Climate

School Social and Academic Climate

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
The school will maintain the same state and federal reporting requirements as public schools	100%	Reported to MDOE	Met
Percentage of surveyed parents, staff and students who express satisfaction with school's social and academic climate	Reporting of parents, staff, and students	Percent favorable Students -73% Families – 81% Teachers – 74% Staff – 81%	Met

Discussion

The school reported incidents of bullying, harassment, and other abusive practices as required by law.

According to the spring 2018 Panorama Education Surveys the percent favorable in each stakeholder group was as follows: Students -73%, Families – 81%, Teachers – 74%, Staff – 81%. When compared to similar schools (elementary schools with 0-30% free/reduced lunch) students were around the 80th percentile, families were around the 60th percentile, teachers were around the 60th percentile, and staff were around the 80th percentile.

Section 10: Parent and Community Engagement

Parent and Community Engagement

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
To have families involved in the school community and engagement in their child's education	1000 hours in parent participation	2012 volunteer hours	Met
Percent of parents in attendance at parent conferences, annually.	85%	96%	Met

Discussion

Fiddlehead School continues to have strong parent attendance at conferences and other school events. 96% of parents attended conferences and 2012 volunteer hours were recorded.

Section 11: Administration

Fiddlehead School continues to operate with an Executive Director, Coordinator of Teaching and Learning, Business Manager, and Special Education Director as its administrative team.

Next year FSAS plans to add a School Counselor & an Integrated Art & Science teacher. The School Counselor will work with staff and students to help the growth of the whole child and will have the flexibility to engage with school staff, as well as with individual students and small groups. The Integrated Art & Science Teacher will have special skills in the atelier (art studio) and the areas of environmental science and ecology and will work with all classes/classroom teachers to integrate and facilitate learning in the visual arts and sciences. The school will also expand the number of hours for a Math specialist to support both staff and students.

FSAS continues to use its Performance Evaluation and Professional Growth (PEPG) process for assessment and evaluation. Educators may, but will not be required to, pursue traditional certification. FSAS reports that its staff meets the needs of its program and as the school continues to grow and develop FSAS continues to assess its needs to best support students.

Section 12: Evidence of Mission and Vision Implementation

(See Page 2 for School's Mission and Vision)

During the 17-18 school year Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences worked on clarifying what FSAS strives for, what FSAS believes, what the FSAS approach looks like, and what FSAS graduates can do. The school developed the following which will serve to guide the school.

What We Strive For

Fiddlehead School of Arts and Sciences is committed to the growth and development of the whole child- socially, emotionally, physically, academically, intellectually, and artistically. The goal of a Fiddlehead education is for students to build a toolbox of habits, skills, and wonderings to drive a lifelong love of learning. We aim to empower learners to seek answers to their own questions and to develop the means necessary for this endeavor.

What We Believe

At Fiddlehead, seven core educational beliefs drive our practices throughout the grades:

- We believe children are capable, competent, and innately curious. They are the co-constructors of their own learning. Our school maintains a deep respect for children and childhood.*
- We believe the foundation of learning lies in habits of mind such as asking questions, looking closely, making reasonable predictions, and engaging in dialogue. Students are encouraged to express their thought processes orally and in writing. In addition, students are taught executive functioning skills such as planning, organization, and self-control.*
- We believe in teachers as facilitators of learning, closely observing children, assessing understanding through a variety of approaches, and using this knowledge to help students extend their thinking. We offer students a variety of materials and methods to express themselves and their understandings, guiding learning through diverse pathways.*
- We believe in learning as a social endeavor, taking place in the cultural context of the child, family, school, and broader community. To this end, we see school and family as partners in a child's education.*
- We believe that social and emotional development are important cornerstones of education. Our students learn to respect diversity in all its forms, problem solve social conflicts, and be advocates for themselves and others.*
- We believe in connecting students to the larger world outside the school walls through relationships with community resources and the natural environment. We help students cultivate a sense of place and an understanding of, and appreciation for, the interconnectedness of the world in which they live.*
- We believe in the importance of documenting student work and experiences in order to make learning visible to students, families, and our school community.*

Section 13: Commendations and Concerns

Commendations

- Active board subcommittees
- Smooth transition to new board chair
- Dedication to mission is evident in the hiring of an integrative arts and science teacher
- Plan to increase hours of math specialist support
- Increased arts experiences
- Clear Education Board Committee Goals
- Diversity Committee is addressing tough issues
- School has invoked many strategies to improve math achievement and growth such as professional development, RTI, instructional time moved up and implementation of a new curriculum
- School has identified attendance issues such as distance, family issues, previous school attendance and are formulating policies
- Special Ed moving from reactive to proactive with PBIS
- Working on increasing teacher benefits to be competitive with district schools
- Getting clear on branding message directed to enrolling families
- Addition of school counselor

Concerns

- Low attendance rate/chronic absenteeism
- Ongoing need to plan for space utilization
- Student Academic Growth

Appendix Q

Harpswell Coastal Academy Annual Monitoring Report

Maine Charter School Commission



ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2017-2018

Annual Monitoring Report 2017-2018 DRAFT

September 2018

On June 20th an announced on-site visit was made to Harpswell Coastal Academy. The Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) Review Team of 3 members was accompanied by the MCSC Executive Director, and MCSC Director of Program Management. The visiting team held interviews with school leadership, and the school’s Governing Board. They also reviewed data provided by the school. Information gathered from documents, interviews and on-site observation was used to determine the extent to which the school has met its contracted performance targets.

Commission Member, Review Team Chair	Laurie Pendleton
Commission	John Bird
Commission	Shelley Reed
MCSC Executive Director	Bob Kautz
MCSC Director of Program Management	Gina Post

School’s Mission	<i>To offer a rigorous, personalized, project-based education to mid-coast Maine students in grades 6-12.</i>
School’s Vision	<i>To use Maine’s shorelines, working waterfronts, forests, and farms as classrooms. To partner with local organizations and businesses, entrepreneurs, and community members who are committed to our goal of preparing caring, creative, resilient citizen-scholars who will flourish in a rapidly changing economy.</i>

The Maine State Charter School Commission will provide thoughtful stewardship in authorizing and monitoring public charter schools consistent with State statutes to create unique, high-quality learning options for Maine students.

School Information

School Name	Harpwell Coastal Academy
Address	

Governing Board

Board Chair	Sally Mackenzie
Board Vice Chair	Ed Harris
Board Treasurer	Dave Jean
Board Secretary	Sharon Whitney
Board Member	Eileen Hornor
Board Member	Cynthia W. Shelmerdine
Board Member	Nancy Andersen
Board Member	Sue Priest

Executive Director	Carrie Branson
Division 1 Principal	Scott Barksdale
Division 2 Principal	Maria Russell
Special Education Director	Deryl Holt
Business & Finance Director	Andrew Smaha

Year Opened	2013
Years in Operation	5
Number of Sending Districts	13
Grades Served	6 - 12
Current Enrollment	195*
Students on Waiting List	0*

*As of October 1, 2017 certified enrollment date.

Section 1: Overview

Harpswell Coastal Academy (HCA) is a public charter school established in 2013 offering rigorous, personalized, project-based education to Maine students in grades 6-12. Originally initiated by a group of Harpswell citizens concerned that many of the town's young people were increasingly disengaged from school, HCA has grown to include a diverse group of mid-coast educators, business leaders, and community partners committed to preparing students to live and work in the rapidly changing coastal economy. Harpswell and the surrounding towns consist of a varied population of business and professional, military, blue collar, and fishing families.

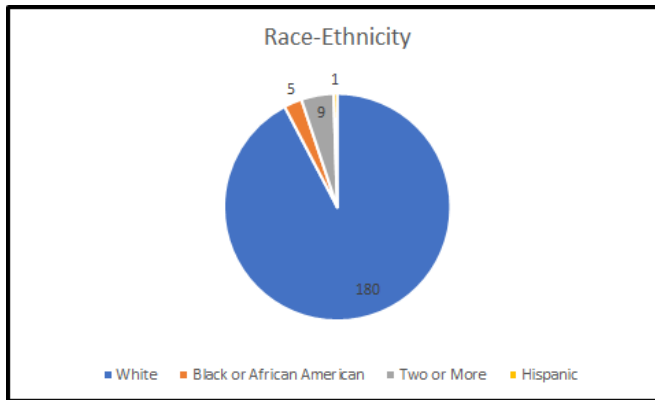
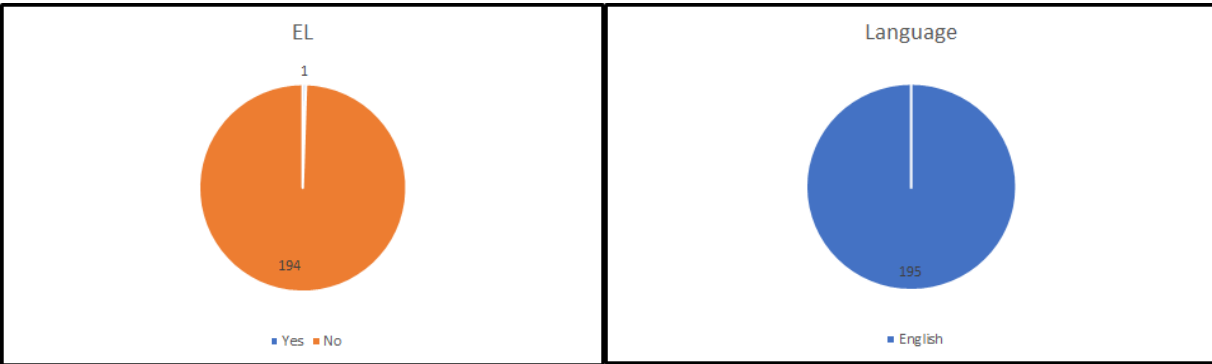
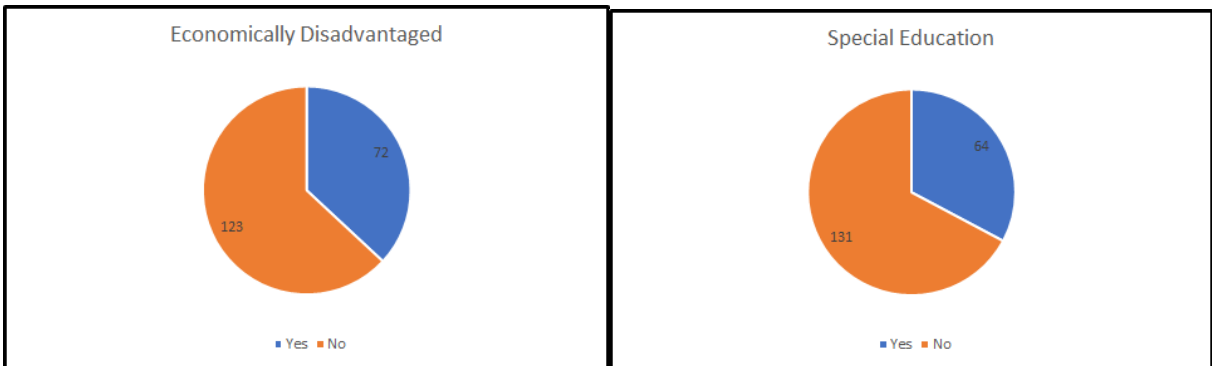
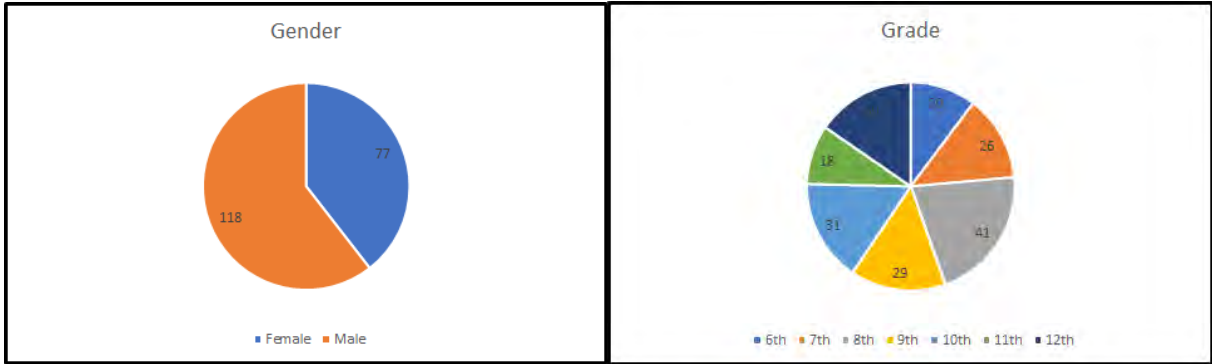
HCA students currently come from mid-coast Maine towns including Harpswell, Brunswick, Bowdoinham, Topsham, Freeport, and Bath. Currently, HCA enrolls 195 students and enrollment is based on a lottery. HCA serves 36.9% Free or Reduced Lunch students and 32.8% Special Education students.

HCA's curriculum and pedagogy is intended to showcase best practices developed over the past 20 years by organizations such as the Coalition of Essential Schools and Expeditionary Learning: standards-based teaching and learning; relevant, place-based curriculum that incorporates fieldwork and internships; and deliberate structures for building students' character and holding them accountable. HCA's organizational structure supports students in achieving high standards in a variety of ways including a longer school day, summer programs, and community mentors for each student. The curriculum at HCA is a college-preparatory and meets the same Common Core standards in Math, Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, Health and Physical Education and Fine Arts, as do all Maine public middle and high schools. However, HCA offers two tenets to its approach of the curriculum that differentiates its school from others. One central tenet of the HCA approach is that students move on when they are ready, not when they reach a certain birthday. A second tenet is that students benefit from teachers who know them well over a longer period of time and are much more accountable for ensuring that each student is able to progress over that time.

Section 2: Indicator Summary Table

Indicator	Meets Contract Agreement	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet
Student Academic Proficiency			
Student Academic Growth			
Achievement Gaps in Proficiency and Growth Between Major Student Subgroups			
Student Attendance			
Enrollment			
Post-Secondary Readiness			
Financial Performance and Sustainability			
Governance Board Performance and Stewardship			
Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of Program			
Transportation			
School Social and Academic Climate			
Parent and Community Engagement			

Section 3: Demographics



Section 4: Academics

Student Academic Proficiency

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially met
State Assessments in Reading & Math	Difference between the percentage of HCA students scoring proficient (or exceeds) on the MEA and the percentage of all Maine students scoring proficient (or exceeds) in the state: Grade 6=3, Grade 7=3, Grade 8=3, HS= 3	Not yet available	NA
School Selected Assessment	Percent of students in grades 6-12 scoring in the average to above average RIT band in reading on the NWEA: Grade 6 = 55%, Grade 7 = 70%, Grade 8 = 55%, Grade 9 = 55%, Grade 10 = 75%, Grade 11 = 55%	Grade 6 = 53% Grade 7 = 59% Grade 8 = 44% Grade 9 = 61% Grade 10 = 64% Grade 11 = 67%	Partially met
School Selected Assessment	Percent of students in grades 6-12 scoring in the average to above average RIT band in math on the NWEA: Grade 6 = 55%, Grade 7 = 55%, Grade 8 = 55%, Grade 9 = 50%, Grade 10 = 45%, Grade 11 = 50%, Grade 12 = 55%.	Grade 6 = 37% Grade 7 = 32% Grade 8 = 28% Grade 9 = 57% Grade 10 = 57% Grade 11 = 72%	Partially met
School Designed Assessment	Division 1: 6th grade: 99% students will approach proficiency (score 2 or higher) in 50% of Division 1 measurement categories. 7th grade: 80% students will approach		NEED DATA

	proficiency in 90% of Division 1 measurement categories. 8th grade: 85% students will approach proficiency in 100% of Division 1 measurement categories.		
School Designed Assessment	Division 2: 9th grade: 85% students will approach proficiency in 75% of Division 2 measurement categories. 10th grade: 95% students will approach proficiency in 75% of Division 2 measurement categories. 11th grade: 85% students will approach proficiency in 80% of Division 2 measurement categories. 12th grade: 85% students will approach proficiency in 80% of Division 2 measurement categories.		NEED DATA
School Designed Assessment	98% of students will submit three satisfactory portfolio pieces.		NEED DATA

Discussion

Student Academic Growth

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially met
Establish baseline for growth on State Assessment	Report Data	Results not yet available	NA

Discussion

Achievement Gaps in Proficiency and Growth Between Major Student Subgroups

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially met
Establish baseline for gaps in proficiency and growth between major student subgroups on Maine State Assessment	Report Data	Results not yet available	NA

Discussion

Section 5: Attendance and Enrollment

Student Attendance

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially met
	95% Average Daily Attendance for Division 1, 92% Average Daily Attendance for Division 2		Need data
	In each school year the number of unexcused absences will decrease from the fall to the spring trimester		Need data

Discussion

Enrollment from Year to Year

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially met
	90% of students enrolled on state "student count day" will still be enrolled on the last day of school	88% still enrolled	Did not meet
	80% of students enrolled on the last day of school indicate intent to return the following year.	94% re-enrolled	Met

Discussion

Post-Secondary Readiness

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially met
Federal Graduation 4 year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate13 (ACGR)	Report data		Need data
Federal Graduation 4 year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate13 (ACGR) Federal Graduation 4 year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate13 (ACGR)	90%		Need data
Percentage of students completing dual enrollment courses	Establish Baseline	12 students successfully completed SMCC courses. > 50% of 12 th grade class	Met
Percentage of students scoring at or above state average on SAT	Report data	Results not yet available	NA
Enrollment in postsecondary institutions	Report data	11 of 23 graduating students plan to enroll in post secondary institutions	Met
Outcomes for students not attending postsecondary institutions	Report data	Several students have secured employment for after graduation. Others will be seeking employment. A few students have a gap year planned.	Met

Discussion

Section 6: Finances

Financial Performance and Sustainability

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially met
Governance Board reviews budget and makes appropriate adjustments to ensure school remains financially healthy.	Governance Board and/or Finance Committee review budget on a quarterly basis at a minimum. Quarterly financial reports and end of year audit are available to authorizer.	The Board Finance Committee met monthly, with additional meetings as necessary, to review reports and provide oversight to the Finance Director and Executive Director.	Met
School conducts an external audit	The end of year audit is made available to authorizer.	The school completed an audit in the fall for FY17. A copy was submitted to the Charter Commission.	Met

Discussion

Section 7: Governance Board Performance and Stewardship

Governance Board Performance and Stewardship

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially met
Governance Board operates in a transparent, responsible, and legally compliant manner	Governance Board holds public meetings with posted agendas and minutes.	The HCA Board holds bi-monthly meetings. Agendas and minutes are posted on the school website. Reminders of the meetings are included in family newsletters.	Met
Governance Board provides oversight of school leadership team	Board conducts an annual evaluation of school leadership	Evaluation completed	Met

Discussion

Section 8: Facilities & Maintenance, Food Service, and Transportation

Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of Program

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially met
School facilities meet educational and health and safety standards.	Board certifies that the facilities meet educational, health & safety standards	Certified in report	Met
Site Development	Report progress	Continuation of planned maintenance	Met
Food Service: School reports on costs and student participation	Report data		Need data
Transportation: School reports on costs and student participation	Report data		Need data

Discussion

Section 9: School Climate

School Social and Academic Climate

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially met
Instances of bullying, harassment, or other abusive practices	Decrease from previous year	Decreased from 22 incidents to 17 incidents	Met
Student (HOWLs) Habits of Work and Learning	1. HOWLs are reported to students & families 3 times yearly 2. HOWLs improve or reach proficiency from fall to spring each year for each Division	1. HOWLs were reported at student led conferences twice during the year and were reported again at the end of the school year. 2. HOWLs progress and proficiency data not reported.	Partially met
School Climate Survey	80% of students report via school climate survey: active participation in Restorative Justice and Community Meeting	85% of students participated in Restorative Justice model 100% participated in Community Meeting.	Met

Annual improvement in targeted areas on student and family climate survey			Need data
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Discussion

Section 10: Parent and Community Engagement

Parent and Community Engagement

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially met
Student participation in activities provided by Community Partnerships	Each student participates in at least one Workshop, club or internship during the year	100% of students participated in at least one activity with a community partner	Met
Parent Communication	1. Parent checks student portal at least once every other week. 2. Parent opens weekly newsletter	1. Data not reported 2. 40%-65% newsletter opening rate	Partially met
Parent participation in their children's education and operation of school: Participation in Student Led Conferences	Division 1: 90% of parents attend at least one (SLC) per year Division 2: 60% of parents attend at least one SLC per year	91% of Division 1 parents attended at least one SLC 75% of Division 2 parents attended at least one SLC	Met
Celebration of Learning & Passages	Each student presents to the larger school community twice each year at minimum.	95% of students participated in 2 presentations	Met

Discussion

Section 11: Administration

Section 12: Evidence of Mission and Vision Implementation

(See Page 2 for School's Mission and Vision)

Section 13: Commendations and Concerns

Commendations

Concerns

Appendix R

*Maine Academy of Natural Sciences Pre-Opening
Report for New Program*

Maine Academy of Natural Sciences
Pre-Opening Visit – Threshold
August 9, 2017

Maine Academy for Natural Sciences: Tonya Arnold, Emanuel Pariser, Dani Best, Christine Sullivan, Ana Rothschild, Kenlyn Clark, Lisa Sandy

Maine Charter School Commission: John Bird, Nichi Farnham, Jana Lapoint, Bob Kautz, Gina Post, Roberta Lucas
(Department of Education – Special Services)

On August 9, 2017 the Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) Review Team for the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences (MeANS) and MCSC staff met at MeANS to review the school's plan to open the new Threshold Program.

MeANS provided documentation of its preparedness to open. Below is a summary of information received and/or discussed at the visit:

Education:

- Student files have been analyzed and teachers are preparing for instruction.
- IEPs are being read and IEP meetings are being planned.
- Professional development for Curriculum Implementation and Development is scheduled for this month.
- Initial student interviews have been developed to be used at the first meeting.
- Books and laptops have been ordered. Laptops are being set up.
- PD Plan for Threshold teachers is being developed.

Organization:

- There are currently 21 students enrolled in the program (22 is the maximum)
- 2 teachers have been hired to provide instruction to the students in the Threshold Program. One has a humanities background and has been at MeANS for several years; the other teacher is new to MeANS and has a science and math background.
- 2 special education teachers at MeANS will also case manage any Threshold students with an IEP.

The Threshold Program is a home-based program designed for students who have not been able to successfully engage in a traditional school program; it has attracted students who are parenting or pregnant (currently 3) as well as those who have emotional and academic needs.

Student locations:

SAD#49 - 3
AOS #92 - 7
RSU 54 - 5
RSU 9 - 1
RSU 74 - 2
RSU 19 - 1
RSU 59 - 1
Augusta – 1

Based on information given to the MCSC by MeANS, the Review Team asked about the feasibility of getting to all the students based on their geographic spread. MCSC also asked about MeANS' ability to fund and staff the program appropriately. MeANS staff was optimistic that the staff would be able to visit each student as planned.

It is the opinion of the Review Team that MeANS is prepared to open for the Threshold Program. MCSC staff will continue to monitor the Threshold program and will conduct a 90-day visit in December.

Appendix S

*Maine Academy of Natural Sciences 90 Day Report for
New Program*

Maine Academy of Natural Sciences
Threshold
90-Day Visit
December 15, 2017

Maine Academy of Natural Sciences: Tonya Arnold, Christine Sullivan, Kenlyn Clark, Anna Rothschild, Tom Edwards, Mike Muir, Karen Kusiak, Ken Coville
Maine Charter School Commission: John Bird, Nichi Farnham, Jana Lapoint, Bob Kautz, Gina Post, Roberta Lucas (MDOE Special Services), Dan Hemdal (MDOE Special Services)

On December 15, 2017, the Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) Review Team for Maine Academy of Natural Sciences (MeANS) and MCSC and DOE staff met at MeANS to review the school's implementation of the new Threshold Program. Topics discussed at the visit included enrollment, staffing and programming, finances, success and struggles.

Enrollment

The Threshold Program started in September 2017 with 21 students enrolled. Since then, one student withdrew due to changes in her life outside of school. Three current Threshold students are expected to graduate this month. The school still plans to add another 20 students to the program for the next school year.

Staffing and Programming

The Threshold Program is staffed by two teachers who meet the students in their home once weekly. It is reported that special education staffing levels have been a challenge. The school has hired an additional special education teacher who will begin after the December vacation. This new position will be the case manager for Threshold students with an IEP.

Individualization allows Threshold teachers to accommodate for varied student learning styles. Students work independently and in consultation with their teacher during the week. Communication is via phone, email, and google docs. Regular consultation with the special education teacher will take place regularly on Friday afternoons during staff meeting times. The special education teacher will be available on the Mondays when Threshold students go to MeANS for social skill activities. This will facilitate the completion of individual transition planning work.

Student progress and success is measured through monitoring progress on targets, meeting individual academic goals and graduation timeline, as well as achieving growth on the NWEA.

The administration reports that approximately 41% of Threshold students have been making steady progress on their targets and standards. Another 41% have been making sporadic progress, and 18% have been mostly unengaged – cancelling most appointments, not turning in any work. It is reported that students who are not engaging, have either had a previous break in schooling related to dropping out, major mental health or life challenges, or major truancy issues.

Finances

The school reports that the Threshold program is currently under budget.

Successes

The school reported the following as some of Threshold's greatest successes so far:

- Making a connection with students who have not been in school for months, and/or who have no high school credits despite being a sophomore or higher.

- Helping a student who is a teen mother complete her standards so that she can begin applying to colleges and follow the career path she is interested in.
- Working with students to enroll in tuition waiver classes at KVCC for the spring semester--three are registered for online Tech Writing, one in College Comp, and two (including one with an infant daughter and one who aspires to work with young children who have disabilities) in Intro to Childhood Ed. They will receive support in these classes and earn MeANS standards through Threshold.
- Getting students re-engaged in their high school careers through high interest, personally relevant content areas such as North Korea, writing self-reflective/autobiographical pieces, etc.
- Finding a homeless student a safe and secure place to live and continue with the school.
- Building partnerships with programs such as the PTO (pathways to opportunity) and resources in surrounding communities that can support students in difficult situations.
- Building a team with parents/guardians, state caseworkers, and section 28 workers to help students become successful.
- Seeing students re-engage in learning and set ambitious goals for themselves such as early graduation, or make-up time to graduate on time.

Struggles

The school reported the following as some of Threshold's greatest struggles so far:

- Working with students who continue to avoid engaging – cancelling appointments frequently, not working between learning sessions.
- Chaotic living situations and challenges creating an avalanche of factors that take students off track.
- High level of academic, emotional, and behavioral needs combined with a lack of ability to complete work independently leading to limited progress.

Maine Academy of Natural Sciences has grown in its sixth year to include a program for underserved students. Many of the students who have enrolled in the work-at-home program have significant barriers to completing their education such as anxiety, mental illness, teen parenting, unstable home life, and others. The Maine Charter School Commission believes the Threshold program is making progress in its implementation as it continues to explore ways to educate its at-risk population.

Appendix T

*Maine Academy of Natural Sciences Annual Monitoring
Report*

Maine Charter School Commission



Maine Academy of Natural Sciences

ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2017-2018

September 2018

On July 20th and August 10th announced on-site visits were made to the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences. The Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) Review Team chair was accompanied by the MCSC Executive Director, and MCSC Director of Program Management. The visiting team held interviews with school leadership, and the school's Governing Board. They also reviewed data provided by the school. Information gathered from documents, interviews and on-site observation was used to determine the extent to which the school has met its contracted performance targets.

Commission Member, Review Team Chair	John Bird
MCSC Executive Director	Bob Kautz
MCSC Director of Program Management	Gina Post

School's Mission	<i>MeANS offers the public a student centered, staff guided high school whose purpose is to inspire and engage students. We welcome a diverse range of students including those whose previous learning environment has not inspired them to fulfill their potential as learners, those who have become profoundly disconnected from their education as well as those who have a passion for the school's themes of agriculture, forestry and sustainability.</i>
School's Vision	<i>To encourage students to re-engage with their education. They will grow as critical thinkers and problem solvers by developing habits of heart and mind that lead them to take responsibility for their own actions, as well as for the welfare of their community.</i>

The Maine State Charter School Commission will provide thoughtful stewardship in authorizing and monitoring public charter schools consistent with State statutes to create unique, high-quality learning options for Maine students.

2018-2019 School Information

School Name	Maine Academy of Natural Sciences
Address	16 Prescott Drive, P.O. Box 159, Hinckley, ME 04944

Governing Board

Board Chair	Mike Muir
Board Vice Chair	Tom Edwards
Board Secretary	Mara Tieken
Board Member	Cheryl Bulmer
Board Member	Karen Kusiak, Ed. D
Board Member	Stephanie Johnson
Board Member	Senator Scott Cyrway
Board Member	Troy Frost
Board Member	Dana Doran
Board Member	Cheryl Mercier
Board Member	David Cyr

Head of School	Tonya Arnold
Special Education Director	Christine Sullivan

Year Opened	2012
Years in Operation	7
Number of Sending Districts	32
Grades Served	9 - 12
Current Enrollment	178*
Students on Waiting List	28*

*As of October 1, 2017 certified enrollment date.

Section1: Overview

The Maine Academy of Natural Sciences (MeANS), the first public charter high school in Maine, introduces students to careers in farming, forestry, sustainability, alternative energy and other related fields. Students gain knowledge and skills through hands-on projects, internships, targeted courses, and real-world experiences such as growing food on campus for the cafeteria and residences.

On campus housing opportunities are available in cottages that house anywhere from 8-12 students and are staffed by experienced Campus Living Advisors (CLAs). CLAs supervise students' academic studies and social activities. Each resident student has responsibilities at his/her cottage – cleaning, cooking, etc. CLAs provide coaching within a specific curriculum of independent living skills.

Students will become engaged, self-directed learners. They will develop habits of heart and mind that lead them to taking responsibility for their own actions, as well as for the welfare of other students, their community and their environment. They will have a plan for their next steps as young adults that includes further education, training, adventure, civic engagement and work.

Located in central Maine on several hundred acres of wilderness, organic farmland and river frontage, MeANS uses hands-on learning experiences tailored to a student's interests, introducing them to careers in farming, forestry, sustainability, alternative energy and other related fields.

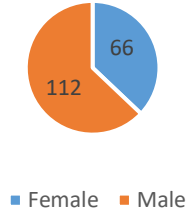
The Maine Academy of Natural Sciences (MeANS) is Maine's first high school to focus on the natural sciences. MeANS includes day students from the local region and boarding students from across the state.

Section 2: Indicator Summary Table

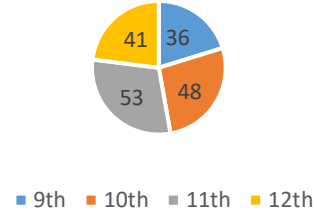
Indicator	Meets Contract Agreement	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet
Student Academic Proficiency		X	
Student Academic Growth	X		
Achievement Gaps in Proficiency and Growth Between Major Student Subgroups		X	
Student Attendance	X		
Enrollment	X		
Post-Secondary Readiness	X		
Financial Performance and Sustainability	X		
Governance Board Performance and Stewardship	X		
Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of Program	X		
Transportation	X		
School Social and Academic Climate		X	
Parent and Community Engagement		X	

Section 3: Demographics

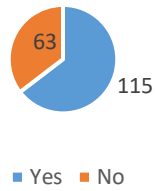
Gender



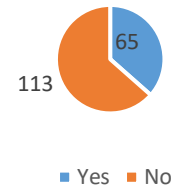
Grade



Economically Disadvantaged



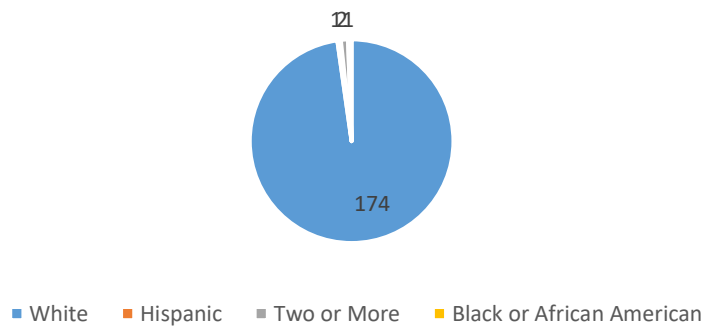
Special Education



Language



Race-Ethnicity



Section 4: Academics

Student Academic Proficiency

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Percent at or above expectations on SAT - reading	Increasing percent of students reading at or above state proficiency level by 3% annually starting in 2016	2016 % proficient= 33.3 2017 % proficient= 23.5 2018 % proficient= 29.6	Partially met
Percent at or above expectations on SAT - math	Increasing percent of students reading at or above state proficiency level by 3% annually starting in 2016	2016, 2017, 2018 % proficient not reportable due to small n size and maintaining student confidentiality	Not publicly reportable
Reading NWEA	Fewer than 35% of seniors will scoring in the Low grade level norm in literacy	Not reportable due to small n size and maintaining student confidentiality	Not publicly reportable
Math NWEA	Fewer than 36% of seniors willIn scoring in the Low grade level norm in literacy	Not reportable due to small n size and maintaining student confidentiality	Not publicly reportable

Discussion

MEANS partially met its targets for 11th grade reading proficiency as measured by the MEA (SAT). The school's results on the MEA (SAT) math and NWEA assessments are not publicly reportable due to small n size and maintaining student confidentiality. In addition to the students who took the SAT during the test window, additional students completed the assessment at a later date. Approximately 1/3 of MEANS students who take the MEA in the 11th grade are in their first year at MEANS.

Percent proficient on grade 11 MEA (SAT) reading by year and district:

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Target
MEANS	33.3%	23.5%	29.6%			48%
State	59.6%	59.1%	57.1%			-----
RSU 54	52.3%	46.9%	43.6%			-----
Waterville	61.7%	59.0%	55.8%			-----
RSU 49	51.5	53.7%	52.2%			-----

Percent proficient on grade 11 MEA (SAT) math by year and district:

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Target
MEANS	*	*	*			25%
State	35.3%	34.9%	34.5%			-----
RSU 54	39.1%	32.0%	24.0%			-----
Waterville	36.5%	32.5%	27.4%			-----
RSU 49	26.7%	43.5%	35.0%			-----

Student Academic Growth

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Reading NWEA - Percent not meeting reading growth target	The 12 th grade will have fewer than 46% who did not meet their projected RIT growth score in reading than in their original NWEA assessment from 9th grade.	26%	Met
Math NWEA - Percent not meeting reading growth target	The 12 th grade will have fewer than 28% who did not meet their projected RIT growth score in math than in their original NWEA assessment from 9th grade.	26%	Met

Discussion

MEANS met its targets in both math and reading on the NWEA. 12th grade students improved their scores over 4 years, resulting in fewer students not meeting their projected growth than in their first (9th grade) year.

Achievement Gaps in Proficiency and Growth Between Major Student Subgroups

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Percent Well Below on SAT Reading	Reducing the number of students with an IEP who score well below by 2% annually beginning with 2015-16 year as baseline.	Not reportable due to small n size and maintaining student confidentiality	Did not meet
Percent Well Below on SAT math	Reducing the number of students with an IEP who score well below by 2% annually beginning with 2015-16 year as baseline	Not reportable due to small n size and maintaining student confidentiality	Met
Percent Not Meeting Growth Target on Reading NWEA in unidentified and identified groups	Reducing the number of students with an IEP not meeting growth target by 2% annually in relation to unidentified group beginning with 2015-16 year as baseline.	Not reportable due to small n size and maintaining student confidentiality	Met
Percent Well Below Growth Target on Math NWEA	Reducing the number of students with an IEP scoring well below by 2% annually beginning with 2015-16 year as baseline.	Not reportable due to small n size and maintaining student confidentiality	Did not meet

Discussion

Of the 4 identified subgroup areas, targets were met in 2. Specific data cannot be shared due to small n size and maintaining student confidentiality.

Reading percent at or above state expectations for reportable subgroups (math and other subgroup data are not reportable due to small n size and maintaining student confidentiality):

	ELA
MEANS	29.6
State of Maine	57.05
Female	53.9
Male	19.4
Economically Disadvantaged	21.7
Non-economically Disadvantaged	38.1

Section 5: Attendance and Enrollment

Student Attendance

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Average daily attendance	ADA will be 85% or higher	87%	Met

Discussion

Overall average daily attendance was 87% and met the 85% target. The Threshold Program's average daily attendance was 74%. The school reports that students in the Threshold program had previously been truant or had dropped out and believes that 74% is an accomplishment to be proud of.

Reenrollment

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Student re-enrollment from one year to next.	student re-enrollment from one year to next will be 90%.	100%	Met
Student enrolled continuously for multiple years	continuous re-enrollment percentage of students for more than two years will be 85%.	100%	Met

Discussion

With 100% student re-enrollment from 2017-18 to 2018-19, the school met its 90% target. The school also met its 85% continuous enrollment for more than 2 years with 100%.

Post-Secondary Readiness

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Percentage of students who have graduation in the current year as their Personal Learning Plan Goal.	90% of students who have graduation as their Personal Learning Plan Goal in the current year will graduate in that calendar year.	88% of junior and seniors who had graduation as their Personal Learning Plan Goal in the current year graduated	Met
Percentage of students who take and complete concurrent and dual enrollment classes at KVCC or other Community Colleges who achieve passing grades.	90% of students who take and complete concurrent and dual enrollment classes at KVCC or other Community Colleges will achieve passing grades.	100% of the 25 learners taking concurrent and dual enrollment courses in Fall 2017 achieved passing grades.	Met

Percentage of most recent graduates contacted who are not in college or parenting and are working full time or enlisted during the year following graduation.	70% of most recent graduates contacted who are not in college or parenting and are working full time or enlisted during the year following graduation.	82% (18 of 22) of students who graduated in 2017 who are not enrolled in college or parenting are working full-time.	Met
Percentage of graduating seniors who will have been accepted into a post secondary institution within a year of graduation.	45% of graduating seniors will be accepted into a post secondary institution.	69% (24 of 35) were accepted to a post secondary institution	Met

Discussion

Two of the student who are not meeting the goal had hospitalizations that impacted their ability to engage in learning at a consistent level.

82% (18 of 22) of students who graduated in 2017 who are not enrolled in college or parenting are working full-time. The remainder are in Vocational Rehabilitation training. 35% are enrolled in post secondary training (12 of 34).

69% (24 of 35) were accepted to a post secondary institution, but only 46% are planning to attend Fall 2018.

Post-secondary plans:

- 46% college bound
- 23% workforce
- 11% apprenticeship or specialized training program 6% GAP year for travel and internship
- 6% Parenting
- 8% Currently undecided

Section 6: Finances

Financial Performance and Sustainability

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Budget versus actual revenue and expenditures	Annual budget balance	Financials reviewed by governing board quarterly, reports submitted to DOE and MCSC as required, 2017 audit completed	Met

Discussion

The MEANS governing board reviews the school's financials quarterly. The school submits reports to the Maine Department of Education and the Maine Charter School Commission as required. The school had an external financial audit completed for FY2017 and submitted the resulting report as required.

Through responsible fiscal management, changes to the funding formula and increased grant funds, MEANS was able to reduce the amount of funds gifted from Good Will Hinkley. The school maintained a favorable budget throughout the year. GWH worked with MEANS to set funds aside to add an outdoor work space (barn next to the greenhouses and a new sugar shack).

Section 7: Governance Board Performance and Stewardship

Governance Board Performance and Stewardship

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Public accountability, transparent, responsive and legally compliant board operations	Meets legal requirements	Requirements met	Met

Discussion

The MEANS 11 member governing board meets several times annually. Its agendas and minutes are posted on the schools website for public accessibility.

The board has 5 standing committees: Executive Committee, Academic Affairs, HR Committee, Finance Committee, and Development Committee.

Section 8: Facilities & Maintenance, Food Service, and Transportation

Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of Program

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Facility meets state Standards	Facility will meet all applicable state standards for public schools.	Standards met	Met

Discussion

Facility standards are met and plans to expand learning spaces to include a new sugarhouse and barn-style garage are underway for 18-19 by redirect of reduction of Good Will Hinkley gift to MeANS into the capital fund with GWH.

Transportation

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Record of costs and student utilization	Transportation is safe and efficient	Transportation report provided	Met

Discussion

In 2017-18 MEANS had a reduction in transportation cost from the 2016-17 school year despite a 13% increase in students and increased square miles covered per day. The cost savings was due to a shift in delivery model from 16-17 to 17-18, and also included the elimination of 10+ passenger vans and 5 van drivers for AM/PM transport. A fleet of smaller vans is used for mid-day transport to KVCC, community trips, etc. which are driven by MeANS staff members who serve other roles.

Food Service

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Record of costs and student utilization	Food service meets applicable requirements.	Report provided	Met

Discussion

68% of Means students qualify for free or reduced lunch and free breakfast. Participation varies between 30 and 60 percent depending on the meal, trips and weather.

Section 9: School Climate

School Social and Academic Climate

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Instances of bullying, harassment, or other abusive behavior.	School will submit 5 or fewer incidents of bullying or harassment reported to the Department of Education.	0 incidents	Met
Confidential survey of parents staff and students	Percent expressing a positive view of school climate 90% of students 85% of parents 90% of staff	Percent expressing a positive view of school climate Students= 56%, 70 th ile nationally parents= 77%, 99 th ile nationally staff= 76%, 99 th ile nationally	Partially met
Participation on Confidential survey of parents staff and student	Students 25% Parents 20% Staff 60%	Students 57% Parents 40% Staff 93%	Met
Gallup Poll Survey of Students Growth Between First and Final Years	Each grade cohort at MeANS will show growth in one of three areas (Hope, Engagement, Well Being) measured by Gallup Poll annually using 2017 fall results as baseline.	Baseline data collected	Met

Discussion

With no incidents of bullying or harassment, MEANS met its target of 5 or fewer.

When MEANS set its climate survey targets it had been using a school developed surveys. The survey data reported here is based on confidential survey was conducted with Panorama Education. While the percent expressing a positive view of the school was below the targets set by the school based on its school developed survey, its percentile ranks in each area were above average and well above average as compared to similar schools nationally (rural, high schools with 30-70% free/reduced lunch). The school partially met this target.

The school met its participation targets for the survey in each of the three groups.

The results of the 2017-18 Gallup Poll establish a baseline.

Section 10: Parent and Community Engagement

Parent and Community Engagement

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Weekly communications between advisor and family	95% of parents receive written or oral communication from the advisor each week.	88% of parents report receiving regular communication with the advisor on a weekly basis.	Did not meet
Percent of Parent/guardian participation in student-led conferences.	90% of parents attend at least one student led conference during the year.	98% of parents attended at least one student led conference during the year	Met

Discussion

88% of parents reported having received weekly communication from their student's advisor. The school did not meet the 95% target. Starting with the 2018-19 school year the school will require all staff to share a uniform parent contact log electronically with the administration so that regular review and support can be provided for staff who are unable to meet the requirement.

Although the school did not meet this target, overall parent engagement level is on the rise according to the Panorama Survey and is around the 90th percentile nationally.

98% of parents attended at least one student led conference during the school year, meeting the 90% target.

Section 11: Administration

MEANS continues to be led by a single administrator. During the 2017-18 school year the administrator's title changed from principal to Head of School, which captures more of the job performed by the administrator.

The Head of School oversees both the on campus and off campus (Threshold) programs and works closely with a consultant, and former MEANS administrator, to manage the Threshold program.

The new School Counselor and Leader positions are designed as leadership roles to support and facilitate the vision and mission of the school in addition to supporting our students' social, emotional, academic, and career needs.

MEANS teachers are involved in decision making processes with the administration and have a distributed leadership model. The leadership roles include, College Access Team Leader, Transportation Coordinator, 21st Century Teacher Leader, team leaders (3), RtI Coordinator, Title 1 Coordinator, Student Leadership Facilitator, Student Information System Liaison, Yearbook Advisor, Professional Development Leader, Technology Integrator, and several Teacher Assistant Stipends for Ed Tech IIIs who want to develop more skills toward becoming a teachers. In addition there are informal leadership roles that certain staff have evolved such as Wellness Coordinator, Student Council Advisor, Community Service Initiatives, and new staff mentorships.

Section 12: Evidence of Mission and Vision Implementation

(See Page 2 for School's Mission and Vision)

MeANS meets its mission and vision by:

- building strong, positive relationships between students and staff, and fostering a tight-knit school community rooted in mutual respect among all members;
- utilizing hands-on learning, the natural sciences, and a highly individualized curriculum to challenge each student to stretch to his or her full potential, and to develop personal interests;
- utilizing the natural world, our local community, and access to the Community College System as motivating and enriching learning environments.

MeANS continues to use a model emphasizing relational learning. While MEANS serves a diverse range of learners, non-traditional students, in particular, thrive in this environment. A relational approach is particularly effective for the much higher than average percentage of students at MeANS with IEPs, 504s, or other demonstrated deficiencies in their previous school experience. Using individually modified learning methods and personal support, MEANS is able to engage the student in learning. MEANS' reports its advisory system is a key element in creating a strong sense of school connectedness. A central function of advisories is to get to know students well and to create strong relationships with their families. Through daily connection with advisees and weekly contact with parents, advisors develop strong productive relationships with their advisees over four years. The continuity and depth of these relationships enhances the goal setting and reflection processes documented by the Personal Learning Plan, and helps students to build a sense of individual responsibility.

MeANS has adapted an experiential learning model, and currently offers ninth and tenth graders 6 separate "intensives" and eleventh and twelfth graders two intensives which cover an engaging range of content areas. The community outreach program places students in apprentice or internships and helps them to find work and career aligned experiences. Threshold students and staff create individualized experiential learning projects tailored to the student needs and interests. These students connect with the environment on campus at least monthly and/or in their local community. Connections to social services, the community college system, and certification or licensure programs also help these students meet higher aspirations than when first enrolled.

Section 13: Commendations and Concerns

Commendations

- Implementation of the new Threshold program
- Increased emphasis on agriculture and forestry

Concerns

- Achievement gaps among subgroups
- Student academic proficiency

Appendix U

*Maine Connections Academy Year 4 Performance
Report*



Maine Connections Academy
75 John Robert's Road, Suite 11B
South Portland, ME 04106

Maine Charter School Commission

YEAR 4 PERFORMANCE REPORT
June 2018

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Appendix C – Maine Connections Academy’s End of Year Reports	

Charter Renewal Process

According to §2411 Charter Term and Renewal a charter may be renewed for successive terms of 5 years, although an authorizer may grant a renewal for a term not to exceed 15 years based on the performance, demonstrated capacities and particular circumstances of each public charter school. An authorizer may grant renewal with specific conditions for necessary improvements to a public charter school.

No later than June 30th of a public charter school's 4th year of operation under each 5-year term of a charter contract, the authorizer shall issue a public charter school performance report. If the charter of the public charter school is expiring, the authorizer shall offer charter renewal application guidance to the school. The performance report required in this subsection must summarize the public charter school's performance record to date, based on the data required by this chapter and the charter contract, and must provide notice of any weaknesses or concerns perceived by the authorizer concerning the school that may jeopardize its position in seeking renewal if not timely rectified. The school must be given the opportunity to respond to the performance report and submit any corrections or clarifications for the report. The renewal application guidance required must include or refer explicitly to the criteria and standards that will guide the authorizer's renewal decisions, which must be based on the performance framework under §2409. The renewal application guidance must, at a minimum, require and provide an opportunity for the public charter school to:

- (1) Present additional evidence, beyond the data contained in the performance report, supporting its case for charter renewal;
- (2) Describe improvements undertaken or planned for the school; and
- (3) Detail the school's plans for the next charter term.

No later than September 30th of a public charter school's 5th year of operation under a term of a charter contract, or September 30th of a public charter school's final authorized year of operation under a term of a charter contract, the governing board of a public charter school seeking renewal shall submit a renewal application to the Maine Charter School Commission pursuant to any renewal application guidance offered by the Maine Charter School Commission.

The Maine Charter School Commission shall rule by resolution on a renewal application under this section no later than 45 days after the filing of the renewal application. In making charter renewal decisions, every authorizer shall:

- A. Ground its decisions in evidence of the public charter school's performance over the term of the charter in accordance with the performance framework under §2409;
- B. Ensure that data used in making renewal decisions are available to the public charter school and the public; and
- C. Provide a public report summarizing the evidence basis for each decision.

A charter may be revoked at any time or not renewed if the authorizer determines that the public charter school failed to comply with the provisions of this chapter or: committed a material violation of any of the terms, conditions, standards or procedures required under this chapter or the charter contract; failed to meet or make sufficient progress toward the performance expectations set forth in the charter contract; failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management; or violated any provision of law from which the school was not exempted.

If an authorizer revokes or does not renew a charter, the authorizer shall clearly state, in a resolution of its governing entity, the reasons for the revocation or nonrenewal. The authorizer shall include in the charter contract a description of the standards and processes under which the authorizer may pursue revocation of the charter contract. The processes must comply with §2410, subsection 2 and provide an opportunity for the public charter school to be heard prior to a decision on revocation.

The following public charter school performance report shall be issued no later than June 30th, 2018, Maine Connection Academy's 4th year of operation under its initial 5-year charter contract. The performance report summarizes Maine Connection Academy's performance record to date, and provides notice of any weaknesses or concerns perceived by the Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) concerning the school that may jeopardize its position in seeking renewal if not timely rectified. Maine Connections Academy will be given the opportunity to respond to this report and submit any corrections or clarifications.

School Information

School Name	Maine Connections Academy
Address	75 John Robert's Road, Suite 11B, South Portland, ME 04106

Governing Board

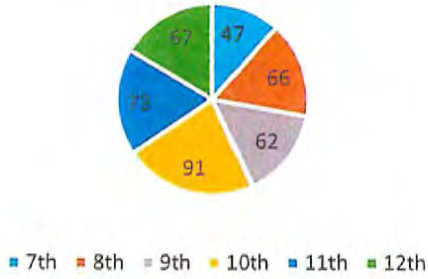
Board President	Amy Linscott
Board Secretary	Carol Weston
Board Treasurer	John Larouche
Board Member	Bernice Stockley
Board Member	Senator Amy Volk

Principal	Chad Strout
Dean of Students	Alicia Chambers
Special Education Director	Joy Kiely

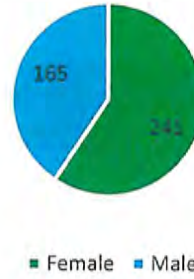
Year Opened	2014-15 School Year
Years in Operation	4
Number of Sending Districts	112
Grades Served	7 through 12
Current Enrollment	406 (As of October 1, 2017 Certified Enrollment Date)
Students on Waiting List	36 (As of October 2017)

Demographic Information

Students by Grade



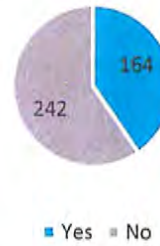
Students by Sex



Special Education Status



Socioeconomically Disadvantaged



Home Language



English Learner



Overview

Maine Connections Academy (MCA), located in South Portland, opened in September 2014 as Maine's first virtual public charter school. It currently educates students from 112 school districts statewide.

The school's curriculum combines online and offline resources working with specialists to deliver comprehensive, high quality education. The school's mission is to help each student maximize his or her potential and meet the highest performance standards through a uniquely individualized learning program in grades 7-12 for students who need an alternative to the traditional classroom.

MCA's vision is to reach students for whom a virtual approach provides the best pathway to school success through an individualized learning program that combines the best in virtual education with close connections among students, family, teachers, and the community to promote academic and emotional success for every learner.

Performance Framework

Indicator	2018			2017			2016			2015		
	Meets	Partially meets	Does not Meet	Meets	Partially meets	Does not Meet	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet	Meets	Partially meets	Does not meet
Student Academic Proficiency	Scores	not	available		X ¹			X ²			X ³	
Student Academic Growth	Scores	not	reported		X ⁴			X ⁵		X		
Achievement Gaps in proficiency and growth between major student subgroups ⁶	See	Above		X						X		
Student Attendance		X ⁷			X ⁸			X ⁹				X ¹⁰
Recurrent Enrollment from Year to Year	X			X			X			X		
Post-Secondary Readiness		X ¹¹			X ¹²		X			X		
Governance Board Performance and Stewardship	X			X			X			X		
Financial Performance and Sustainability	X			X			X			X		
Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of Program	X			X			X			X		
Parent and Community Engagement	X			X			X			X		
School Social and Academic Climate				X			X			X		

¹ Year 2 students did not meet the goal of performing at 90% of the state average in math.

² Year 2 students did not meet the goal of performing at 90% of the state average in Math.

³ MCA partially met its targets in the area of academics; it did not meet its target in math on state testing.

⁴ MCA did not meet the target of increasing the percentage of students with 5% growth in math or reading.

⁵ The percentage of students showing growth in reading in grades 7-8 on the LEAP declined from 67.1% in 2014-15 to 58.8% in 2015-16. The percent of students showing growth in math in grades 9-12 on the Scantron decreased from 68.8% in 2014-15 to 63.8% in 2015-16, and the percent of students showing growth in reading in grades 9-12 on the Scantron decreased from 92.3% in 2014-15 to 59.3% in 2015-16.

⁶ MCA will use 2015-16 data to establish a baseline for achievement gaps in proficiency and growth between major subgroups.

⁷ The average daily attendance rate for students in grades 9 -12 was 91.2%, falling shy of the target of 92%.

⁸ The average daily attendance rate for students in grades 9 -12 was 91.1%, falling shy of the target of 92%.

⁹ The Average Daily Attendance target of 93% for grades 7-8 was not met (gr. 7-8 ADA = 90%). The Average Attendance Rate target of 93% for students in grades 7-8 was not met (AAR = 91.5%).

¹⁰ The average daily attendance rate for students in grades 7 & 8 was 92%, falling shy of the Year 1 target of 93%. The average daily attendance rate for students in grades 9-12 was 84%, falling shy of the Year 1 target of 90%.

¹¹ MCA did not provide data on the percent of graduates enrolled in a post-secondary institution, college, trade, and apprenticeship or on the percent of graduates who were employed full time or enlisted in the military by February of year 1 after graduation.

¹² MCA did not provide data on the percent of graduates enrolled in a post-secondary institution, college, trade, and apprenticeship or on the percent of graduates who were employed full time or enlisted in the military by February of year 1 after graduation.

Academic Performance

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Academic Proficiency	Partially met	Partially met	Partially met	Unavailable
Academic Growth	met	Partially met	Partially met	Unreported
Achievement Gaps	met	n/a	met	See above

Targets:

Student Academic Proficiency:

- Year 1 students will achieve 85% of the state average showing met or above on the MEA
- Year 2 students will be at 90% of state average for those students at met or above on the MEA

Student Academic Growth:

- Percentage of students at proficiency level will increase every year by at least 2% points over the prior year. (NA year 1)
- LEAP 75% score on the LEAP post-test or a 10% gain from their pretest score will be 85% or higher, or will increase 5% points each year until it reaches 85%.

Achievement Gaps in proficiency and growth between major student subgroups:

- Achievement gaps in proficiency and growth between major subgroups using ESEA-based system - Baseline to be determined in first year

Additional:

- Establish benchmarks for each student (baselines to be determined in first year)

Year 1, 2014-15

MCA partially met its targets in Academics.

MCA's grade 7, 8, and 11 students participated in MEA testing in spring 2015. The scores in grade 7 for both subject areas, and for ELA in grades 8 and 11 met the goal of Year 1 students achieving 85% of the state average showing met or above. In grade 8 the math score was 1% below the goal. Grade 11 math cannot be reported due to maintaining privacy for the small number of students in that category. Goals in Science were met at both 8th grade and High school level.

The "Longitudinal Evaluation of Academic Progress," or LEAP, is Connections Education's Pre-, Mid-, and Post-Assessment. Students in grades 7-8 take the LEAP Math and the LEAP English/Language Arts assessments. These assessments are given in the fall, winter, and again at the end of the school year.

LEAP Growth- Growth was defined as having a score of at least 75% on the posttest or improving by at least 10 percentage points from pretest to posttest. Growth was also examined as a function of having a score of at least 75% on the posttest or improving by any amount from pretest to posttest.

MCA LEAP Reading scores were closer than LEAP Math scores to reaching the target of 75% score on the LEAP post-test or a 10% gain from the pretest score will be 85% or higher, or will increase 5% points each year until it reaches 85%, with math at 57.7% and reading at 67.1%.

Scantron Performance Series- Growth is defined as having a score of at least 75% on the posttest or improving by at least 10 percentage points from pretest to posttest. Growth was also examined as a function of having a score of at least 75% on the posttest or improving by any amount from pretest to posttest. Math was at 68.8% and reading was 92.3%.

9 MCA students took SAT in April and early May. The State average in Critical Reading was 467. The average score for MCA students was 502. The State average in Math was 471. The average score for MCA students was 527. The State average in Writing was 449. The average score for MCA students was 427. The scores on the Critical Reading and Math subject areas meet the target of the % of students scoring at or above state average on above tests greater than or equal to 50%. The Writing fell short by 16.7 %.

Year 2, 2015-16

MCA partially met its targets in Academics

Performance:

MCA's grade 7, 8 and 11 students completed MEA testing in spring 2016.

On the SAT MCA's average score for Evidence-Based Reading and Writing was 517 which exceeded the state average of 504. MCA's average score for Math was 471, which was 96.5% of the state average of 488. MCA met the goal of being at 90% of the state average or higher.

In ELA MCA's grade 7 students scored at 65.9% of the state average for 7th grade and 8th grade students scored at 98.2% of the state average for 8th grade. In math both grade 7 and 8 students exceeded the state average. MCA met the target for being at 90% of the state average or higher in grade 8 ELA and math and in grade 7 math. It did not meet the target in 7th grade ELA.

Students in grades 7 and 8 completed the LEAP in both math and reading. Students in grades 9-12 completed the Scantron Performance Series (SPS) in both math and reading. Growth for the LEAP test is defined as having a score of at least 75% on the posttest or improving by at least 10 percentage points from pretest to posttest. Growth for the Scantron Performance Series is defined as having a score at High Average or Above Average on the posttest, maintaining Above Average or improving by at least one level of normative scores from pretest to posttest.

The percentage of students showing growth in math in grades 7-8 on the LEAP increased from 57.7% in 2014-15 to 63.6% in 2015-16, meeting the target. The percentage of students showing growth in reading in grades 7-8 on the LEAP declined from 67.1% in 2014-15 to 58.8% in 2015-16. Although MCA did not meet the target in this area, the average posttest score did improve slightly from 69 in 2014-15 to 71.1 in 2015-16. The percentage of students completing the LEAP math decreased by 29%, and by 33% in reading (78 to 55, and 76 to 51, respectively). The percentage of students completing the Scantron math increased by 21%, and increased by 13% in reading (48 to 58, and 52 to 59, respectively).

The percent of students showing growth in math in grades 9-12 on the Scantron decreased from 68.8% in 2014-15 to 63.8% in 2015-16, and the percent of students showing growth in reading in grades 9-12 on the Scantron decreased from 92.3% in 2014-15 to 59.3% in 2015-16. The target was not met in this area.

MCA used 2015-16 data to establish a baseline for achievement gaps in proficiency and growth between major subgroups.

Each student received a welcome call at the beginning of the school year. During that call, the teacher discovered and documented learning styles, interests, preferences and barriers. School Counselors reviewed previous years' academic records. In the first few weeks of school students took a diagnostic assessment (LEAP, Scantron, Think Through Math or Reading Plus) to establish a baseline and identify targeted areas of need. From that data, students were placed into appropriate courses and provided Supplemental Instructional Support Programming (SISP) threaded into a content course if necessary. MCA met the target for establishing individual benchmarks.

Year 3, 2016-17

MCA partially met its targets in Academics.

Performance:

Student Academic Proficiency

Students in grades 7, 8, and 11 participated in the Maine State Assessments in 2017. Year 2 students met the goal of performing at 90% of the state average in Reading and Science. Year 2 students did not meet the same goal in Math.

MCA used a variety of tools at the beginning of the year to determine a student's individual learning needs, including the initial Leap and Scantron assessments. MCA met the target for establishing individual benchmarks.

Students in grades 7 and 8 completed the LEAP test in both Math & Reading. Students in Grades 9-12 completed the Scantron Performance Series (SPS) in both Math & Reading. Students were included in the data if they had both a pretest and posttest score in Connexus.

LEAP: Growth for the LEAP is defined as having a score of at least 75% on the posttest or improving by at least 10 percentage points from pretest to posttest. The number of students who completed both a pre- and posttest increased slightly in the 16-17 school year. The percent of students showing growth in Math increased from 43.2% to 56.8% meeting the target. The percent of students showing growth in Reading increased from 62.7% to 65.5%.

Scantron Performance Series: Growth for the Scantron Performance Series is defined as having a score at High Average or Above Average on the posttest, maintaining Above Average, or improving by at least one level of normative scores from pretest to posttest. The number of students who completed both a pre and posttest improved this school year. However, the percentage of students showing growth in Math decreased from 68.8% to 63.8%, and the percent of students showing growth in Reading dropped from 92.3% to 59.3%. The target was not met in this area.

MEA Growth:

MCA met the target of 2% annual growth expected for continuously enrolled students in both math and reading.

LEAP Math Growth

In 2016-17, 60.0% of 7th grade students showed growth (compared to 68.4% in 2015-16). In 2016-17, 48.6% of 8th grade students showed growth (compared to 69.4% in 2015-16). MCA did not meet the target of increasing by 5% points.

LEAP Reading Growth

In 2016-17, 61.9% of 7th grade students showed growth (compared to 68.8% in 2015-16). In 2016-17, 52.8% of 8th grade students showed growth (compared to 60.0% in 2015-16). MCA did not meet the target of increasing by 5%.

Achievement gaps in proficiency and growth on MEA

MCA performance in Math overall decreased from 2015-16 to 2016-17. The performance gap for Low Income & White/Caucasian students increased from 2015-16 to 2016-17. Performance for students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) remained relatively constant.

In ELA, MCA performance improved by 23.1 percent. While the Low-Income subgroup demonstrated a small increase, the students with an Individual Education Plan and White/Caucasian subgroups demonstrated larger increases in performance from 2015-16 to 2016-17.

Overall, MCA's performance in science remained relatively constant from the 15-16 to 16-17 school years. Performance improved for the students with an IEP. Performance was relatively unchanged for the White/Caucasian subgroup. A small decline was present for the Low-Income subgroup.

Year 4, 2017-18

It is unknown whether or not MCA met its targets in Academics.

- State test data not available yet
- School assessment data not reported to the Commission

Performance:

Student Academic Proficiency

Students in grades 7, 8, and 11 participated in the Maine State Assessments in 2018. Results are not yet available.

Students Academic Growth

MCA did not report LEAP and Scantron results with its end of year report.

Achievement Gaps

Subgroup data are not available without test results.

Student Targets

In the 2017-2018 school year 95.7% of students participated in a welcome call within the first 7 days of enrollment. MCA used the initial LEAP and Scantron assessments at the beginning of the year to determine a student's individual learning needs.

Attendance and Reenrollment

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Attendance	Did not meet	Partially met	Partially met	Partially met
Enrollment/Reenrollment	Met	Met	met	Met

Targets:

- Average Daily Attendance Rate
 - Year 1- 93% for grades 7 and 8, and 90% for grades 9-12
 - Years 2-5 93% for grades 7 and 8, and 92% for grades 9-12
- Individual Student Attendance Rate
- Unexcused Absences
- Retention rate of 70% of students during the school year
- 50% of students to be re-enrolled from one year to the next
- Continuous enrollment of students for multiple years

Year 1, 2014-15

MCA met its enrollment targets and did not meet its attendance targets.

Truancy was one contributor to not meeting the attendance target. It appears, however; that MCA made every effort to improve attendance.

Performance:

The average daily attendance rate for students in grades 7 & 8 was 92%, falling shy of the year 1 target of 93%. The average daily attendance rate for students in grades 9-12 was 84%, falling shy of the Year 1 target of 90%.

At the End-of-year visit with the Maine Charter School Commission, MCA's Principal expressed concern regarding truant students. He has made many efforts to contact students and their families, including having local law enforcement making visits to homes of truant students in regions of Maine that are not close.

During the school year the retention rate was 77%, exceeding the 70% target.

The Intent to Return Rate was 77%, exceeding the target of 50%

MCA administration reported that many non-returning students cited that MCA was not a good match for them. MCA planned to work on giving prospective students a clear picture of what the MCA program involves.

Year 2, 2015-16

MCA met its enrollment targets and partially met its attendance targets.

Performance:

The average daily attendance rate for students in grades 7 - 8 was 90%, and did not meet the target of 93%. The average daily attendance rate for students in grades 9 -12 was 92%, meeting the target of 92%.

The majority of students had an attendance rate above 90%. However, seven students had an attendance rate less than 25%. There were 17 students who had an attendance rate below 50% and 26 students who had an attendance rate below 75%.

The during-school year retention rate was 82%. MCA met the target of a during-school year retention rate of 70%.

Of 350 students eligible to return to MCA, 263 completed an Intent to Re-enroll form. This was a 83.8% Intent to Return Rate, exceeding the target of 50%

Year 3, 2016-17

MCA met its enrollment targets and partially met its attendance targets.

Performance:

The average daily attendance rate for students in grades 7 - 8 was 96.3%, meeting the target of 93%. The average daily attendance rate for students in grades 9 -12 was 91.1%, falling shy of the target of 92%.

The majority of students (323) had an attendance rate above 90%. However, ten students had an attendance rate less than 25%. There were 23 students who had an attendance rate below 50% and 37 students who had an attendance rate below 75%.

Year 4, 2017-18

MCA met its enrollment targets and partially met its attendance targets.

Performance:

The average daily attendance rate for students in grades 7 - 8 was 95.6%, meeting the target of 93%. The average daily attendance rate for students in grades 9 -12 was 91.2%, falling shy of the target of 92%.

MCA reported 62 counts of truancy during the 2017-2018 school year.

The during-school year retention rate was 80%. MCA met the target of a during-school year retention rate of 70%.

84.8% of students eligible to return to MCA indicated an intent to return for the coming 2018–2019 school year, meeting the 50% target.

Post-Secondary Readiness

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Post-Secondary Readiness	Met	Met	Partially met	Partially met

Targets:

- Senior graduation rate of 70% increasing 5 points in every year getting to 90% in year 5
- Explore possibility of dual enrollment courses
- ACT, SAT, Accuplacer, and other tests to be determined
- 30% of graduates enrolled in a post-secondary institution, college, trade, and apprenticeship by February of year 1 after graduation.
- 10% of graduates not enrolled in post-secondary institutions but employed full time or enlisted in the military by February of year 1 after graduation.

Year 1, 2014-15

MCA met its Post-Secondary Readiness targets.

Six out of seven MCA seniors graduated in June 2015. This 85.7% graduation rate met the target of 70%. The seventh senior was credit-deficient and had been chronically truant since the time of his enrollment in January 2015. MCA worked to support and address this student's truancy issues via certified letters, phone calls, truancy meetings, support plans, face-to-face welfare checks, etc.

66.7% of MCA's 2015 graduates accepted offers of enrollment to 4-year universities, meeting the target of 30%. 33.3% of 2015 graduates planned to enlist in the military or pursue full-time employment after graduation.

During the 2014-15 school year MCA established a partnership with Rural U – University of Maine Fort Kent for 9 dual enrollment courses taught by MCA teachers to begin for the 2015-2016 school year.

Year 2, 2015-16

MCA met its Post-Secondary Readiness targets.

MCA met its target to increase the graduation rate 5% from the previous year. MCA had a 2016 Graduation Rate 90.2% (graduated 37 out of 41). Three of the graduating students graduated early (7.3%, 3 out of 41).

MCA did not graduate four out of 41 seniors. At the time of enrollment at MCA, three of the four students were not expected to graduate in June 2016 because they had significant credit deficiencies. Those students are on a June 2017 graduation track. One student was expected to

graduate in June of 2016, but was truant off and on all year. This student signed up for MCA's summer session credit recovery.

During the 2015-16 school year 20% of MCA's juniors and seniors earned Dual-Enrollment College Credit (18 out of 88). MCA believes its Partnership with University of Maine at Fort Kent and the increased "advertising" of the Dual-Enrollment opportunities via Homeroom Connection Calls and February School Counseling Live Lessons increased participation.

The class of 2016 had 48% enrolled in 2-4 year post-secondary institutions, 24% in 2-year institutions and 24% in 4-year institutions. 16% of 2016 graduates were planning to pursue vocational training. MCA met its targets for Post-Secondary Readiness.

Year 3, 2016-17

MCA partially met its post-secondary readiness targets.

The class of 2017 Graduation Rate was 91.7%, 44 out of 48 seniors. 4.2% (2 out of 48) graduated early. MCA met the graduation rate target of 90%.

During the 2016-17 school year 55% (48 out of 88) of MCA's juniors and seniors earned Dual-Enrollment College Credit. MCA met the target of dual enrollment course participation.

Post -Secondary Plans:

- 45.8% of 2017 Graduates Enrolled in 2-4 year Post-Secondary Institutions
 - o 18.8% Applied and Accepted to 2 year College (9 graduates)
 - o 33.3% Applied and Accepted to 4 Year College (16 graduates)
- 14.6% Pursued Vocational Training (7 graduates)
- 35.4% planned to join the work force (17 students)
- 2% planned to join the Military (1 student)

Of 70 juniors 63 (90%) participated in the SAT.

MCA did not provide data on the percent of graduates enrolled in a post-secondary institution, college, trade, and apprenticeship by February of year 1 after graduation for the class of 2016. It is unknown whether or not 30% of graduates were enrolled in a post-secondary institution, college, trade, and apprenticeship by February of year 1 after graduation.

MCA did not provide data on the percent of graduates who were employed full time or enlisted in the military by February of year 1 after graduation. It was unknown whether or not 10% of graduates not enrolled in postsecondary institutions were employed full time or enlisted in the military by February of year 1 after graduation.

Year 4, 2017-18

MCA partially met its post-secondary readiness targets.

The class of 2018 Graduation Rate was 87% (47 out of 54 seniors). MCA did not meet the graduation rate target of 90%.

During the 2017-18 school year 23 of MCA's juniors and seniors enrolled in UMFK for dual-enrollment college credit. 3 of MCA's students enrolled in other early college programs in Maine. MCA met the target of dual enrollment course participation.

Post-secondary Plans

- 47% of 2017 Graduates Enrolled in 2-4 year Post-Secondary Institutions
 - o 20% Applied and Accepted to 2 year College
 - o 27% Applied and Accepted to 4 Year College
- 4% Pursuing Vocational Training
- 47% plan to take a gap year/join the work force/other

MCA did not report SAT participation.

MCA did not provide data on the percent of graduates enrolled in a post-secondary institution, college, trade, and apprenticeship by February of year 1 after graduation for the class of 2017. It is unknown whether or not 30% of graduates were enrolled in a post-secondary institution, college, trade, and apprenticeship by February of year 1 after graduation.

MCA did not provide data on the percent of graduates who were employed full time or enlisted in the military by February of year 1 after graduation. It was unknown whether or not 10% of graduates not enrolled in postsecondary institutions were employed full time or enlisted in the military by February of year 1 after graduation

Governance and Operations

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Governance	Met	Met	Met	Met

Targets

- Monthly Governance Board Meetings
- Bylaws and policies in application regularly reviewed

Year 1, 2014-15

MCA met its governance targets.

The Governing Board met the first Friday of the month through its Annual Meeting 2015, meeting the target of monthly meetings. The agenda for regular meetings was posted on the website and at the location of the meeting. Approved meeting minutes were posted to the school Board's website shortly after the Board approved them. Governance and policies were reviewed on an ongoing basis and revisions to policies and procedures or implementation of new policies and procedures was considered as needed.

Year 2, 2015-16

MCA met its governance targets.

During the 2015-16 school year MCA's Governing Board was made of 5 founding members. The Board reported it would like to add two additional members.

In accordance with the school's charter application and applicable Maine laws, the Board met at least eight times per year, but met more often if needed. The regular MCA Board meetings were typically held at the local MCA office in South Portland according to the schedule that was set by the Board at its Annual Meeting each year. The Board met the first Friday of the month. The agenda for regular meetings were posted on the school's website and at the location of the meeting. The public had an opportunity to address the Board at meetings, and members of the public, including parents, were also able to attend Board meetings via teleconference upon request. Approved meeting minutes were posted to the school Board's website shortly after the Board approved them.

Governance and policies were reviewed on an ongoing basis and revisions to current policies and procedures, or implementation of new policies and procedures, were considered as needed. The school's Bylaws and Conflict of Interest policy were two of the items that the Board reviews annually.

Year 3, 2016-17

MCA met its governance targets.

In accordance with the school's charter application and applicable Maine laws, the Board met at least eight times; more often if needed. The agenda for regular meetings were posted on the website and at the location of the meeting in accordance with Public Records and Proceedings Act, Maine Revised Statutes, Title 1, Ch 13. The public had the opportunity to address the Board at meetings. Approved meeting minutes were posted to the school Board's website shortly after the Board approved them.

Year 4, 2017-18

MCA met its governance targets.

In accordance with the school's charter application and applicable Maine laws, the Board met at least eight times. The agendas for regular meetings were posted on the website and at the location of the meeting. The public had the opportunity to address the Board at meetings. Approved meeting minutes were posted to the school Board's website shortly after the Board approved them.

Fiscal Performance

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Fiscal Performance	Met	Met	Met	Met

Targets:

- Monthly Financial Reports
- Target of plus or minus 10% variation between budget and actual revenue and expenditures

Year 1, 2014-15

MCA met its Finances targets.

Performance:

The Governing board was updated monthly with a complete set of financial reports including balance sheet, actual to budget updates, bank reconciliations, and A/R aging reports. The Board Treasurer worked with the Principal and CFO on a regular basis during the first year to make sure the school was operating under sound financial decisions. The governing board voted monthly to authorize payment of expenses.

MCA worked to identify areas for cost savings and to develop its FY2016 budget. The FY2015 deficit was within the 10% variation target.

Year 2, 2015-16

MCA met its Finances targets.

Performance:

MCA's Governing Board was updated monthly with a complete set of financial reports including balance sheet, actual to budget updates, bank reconciliations, and year end projections. The Board Treasurer continued to work with the Principal and CFO ensure the school was operating under sound financial practices. The Principal and CFO took on more fiscal responsibility regarding the daily management of the budget and operation of the school, and the governing board continued to vote monthly to authorize payment of expenses.

MCA ended FY16 with a fund balance of approximately \$60,000, more than \$45,000 under budget. MCA planned to use the fund balance to pay off the outstanding debt with Connections Education a year early and build reserves.

Year 3, 2016-17

MCA met its Finances targets.

Performance:

MCA's school board was updated monthly with a complete set of financial reports including balance sheet, actual to budget updates, bank reconciliations, and year end projections as needed. During the 2016-17 school year the Board Treasurer continued to work with the Principal and CFO on an as needed basis to make sure the school was operating under sound financial decisions. The governing board continued to vote monthly to authorize payment of expenses.

An annual financial audit was completed for FY 2016, and was submitted to the MCSC and the Department of Education. It was determined there were no findings or other matters about which the auditor had concerns.

Year 4, 2017-18

MCA met its Finances targets.

Performance:

MCA's school board was updated monthly with a complete set of financial reports including balance sheet, actual to budget updates, bank reconciliations, and year end projections as needed. The Board Treasurer continued to work with the Principal and CFO on an as needed basis to make sure the school was operating under sound financial decisions. The governing board continued to vote monthly to authorize payment of expenses.

An annual financial audit was completed for FY 2017, and was submitted to the MCSC and the Department of Education. It was determined there were no findings or other matters about which the auditor had concerns.

Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of Program

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Facilities	Met	Met	Met	Met

Targets:

- Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of the Program
- Adequacy of Transportation in Support of the Program

Year 1, 2014-15

MCA met its targets for Facilities & Maintenance and Transportation.

Performance:

The MCA office was cleaned on a weekly basis, and periodic maintenance was performed as needed.

During the 2014-15 school year MCA did not have to provide any transportation for students.

Year 2, 2015-16

MCA met its targets for Facilities & Maintenance and Transportation.

Performance:

During the 2015-16 school year MCA office space operated at full capacity. The school was cleaned on a weekly basis.

One facility issue occurred during the school. When there was heavy rain and strong winds some water was pushed under the door and left a small area of wet carpet. Work was done to correct the problem.

Year 3, 2016-17

MCA met its targets for Facilities & Maintenance and Transportation.

Performance:

During the 2016-17 school year MCA office space operated at full capacity. MCA was cleaned regularly. The school reported there are no room utilization issues and that the space was functional for staff. The Principal believed additional office and meeting space could improve operations.

Year 4, 2017-18

MCA met its targets for Facilities & Maintenance and Transportation.

Performance:

MCA's office space reached its capacity. The office is cleaned two times per week. The school did not report any issues.

Parent and Community Support, Student Involvement

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Parent & Community Engagement	Met	Met	Met	Met

Targets:

- A plan for Parent Conferences established
- Capture data to show percent of logged contact between learning coaches and teachers
- Year 1 Establish 3 Partnerships
- Years 2-5 Maintain previous partnerships and establish at least one new partnership

Year 1, 2014-15

MCA met its Parent and Community engagement targets.

Performance:

After the initial PLP conference at the beginning of the year, teachers had, at minimum, bi-weekly phone calls scheduled with families. Additional conferences were scheduled as needed. There were also conferences at the end of the year for course placement purposes. Records were maintained through the Student Log system.

94% of students had at least 1 logged contact between the Learning Coach and teacher.
 84% of students had at least 2 logged contacts between the Learning Coach and teacher.
 48% of students had 5 or more logged contacts between the Learning Coach and teacher.

Educational partnerships include:

- University of Maine Fort Kent (for dual enrollment)
- University of Maine system (for state assessment administration)
- Maine Principal’s Association
- Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce

The educational partnerships met the target of establishing 3 partnerships in year 1.

Year 2, 2015-16

MCA met its Parent and Community engagement targets.

Performance:

After the initial PLP conference at the beginning of the year, teachers had, at minimum, bi-weekly phone calls scheduled with families. Additional conferences were scheduled as needed. There were also conferences at the end of the year for course placement purposes. Other conferences included the School-wide Title I meeting and the School-wide State testing meeting. MCA met its target of establishing a plan for Parent Conferences.

Banner messaging, school newsletters and informational WebMails on notifications and events were other forms of parent communication utilized by the school.

Communication records were maintained through the Student Log system. 94% of students had at least 1 logged contact between the Learning Coach and teacher. MCA met its goal of capturing logged contact data.

- 76% of students had their Learning Coach contacts met
- 97% of students had at least 1 logged contact between Learning Coach and teacher
- 88% of students had at least 2 logged contacts between Learning Coach and teacher
- 56% of students had 5 or more logged contacts between Learning Coach and teacher

During the 2015-16 school year MCA continued with previously established partners and developed new partnerships.

These educational partnerships met the target of maintaining three partnerships and establishing at least one new partnership.

Year 3, 2016-17

MCA met its Parent and Community engagement targets.

Performance:

After the initial PLP conference at the beginning of the year, teachers have, at minimum, bi-weekly phone calls scheduled with families. Additional conferences are scheduled as needed.

There are also conferences at the end of the year for course placement purposes. MCA met its conference target.

Banner messaging, school newsletters and informational WebMails on notifications and events were other forms of parent communication utilized by the school. Communication records were maintained through the Student Log system.

97% of students had at least 1 logged contact between the Learning Coach and teacher. MCA met the target of reporting teacher and learning coach contact.

MCA met its goal of capturing logged contact data.

- 76% of students had their Learning Coach contacts met
- 97% of students had at least 1 logged contact between Learning Coach and teacher
- 88% of students had at least 2 logged contacts between Learning Coach and teacher
- 58% of students had 5 or more logged contacts between Learning Coach and teacher

During the 2016-17 school year MCA continued with previously established partners and developed new partnerships. These educational partnerships met the target of maintaining three partnerships and establishing at least one new partnership.

Year 4, 2017-18

MCA met its Parent and Community engagement targets.

Performance:

Parent

After the initial PLP conference at the beginning of the year, teachers had, at minimum, phone calls scheduled every third week with families of students in their home room. Additional conferences were scheduled as needed. There was a conference at the end of the year for course placement purposes. MCA met its conference target.

Banner messaging, school newsletters and informational WebMails on notifications and events were other forms of parent communication utilized by the school. Communication records were maintained through the Student Log system.

MCA met its goal of capturing logged contact data.

- 80% of students had their Learning Coach contacts met
- 97% of students had at least 1 logged contact between Learning Coach and teacher
- 90% of students had at least 2 logged contacts between Learning Coach and teacher
- 62% of students had 5 or more logged contacts between Learning Coach and teacher

Community

During the 2017-2018 school year MCA continued with previously established partners and developed new partnerships. These educational partnerships met the target of maintaining three partnerships and establishing at least one new partnership.

School Climate

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
School Climate	Met	Met	Met	Partially Met

Targets:

- Instances of bullying, harassment or other abusive behavior
- 80% of parents, staff, and students will express satisfaction on a confidential survey regarding social and academic climate
- Emotional and social growth of students

Year 1, 2014-15

MCA met its School Climate targets.

Performance:

During the 2014-15 school year MCA did not receive any formal complaints of bullying, harassment, or other abusive behavior.

During the Maine Charter School Commission’s End-of-year Visit, students who were interviewed reported being pleased with the flexibility MCA provided. One student was free to pursue sporting opportunities during the day and complete school work around her availability. Another student was attending MCA after having been bullied at her pervious school, and was appreciated feeling safe and comfortable while completing her education.

- 92% of MCA students reported being satisfied with MCA.
- 86% of students gave MCA an overall grade of either an A or a B on the Student Satisfaction Survey.
- Over 95% of parents reported their child being satisfied with the Connections Academy Program.
- 91.8% of parents gave MCA an overall grade of either an A or a B on the Parent Satisfaction Survey.

MCA School Counseling and Special Education departments focused energy in the area of emotional and social growth. The School Counseling department offered Weekly Live Lessons for 7-12 grade students focusing on topics such as social skill development, coping with anxiety, peer relationships, and career and college readiness. Individual support was also provided and referrals to outside providers were made when appropriate. The Special Education department offered behavioral and social support primarily on an individual basis. School wide activities were also in place.

100% of teachers gave MCA an overall grade of either A or B.

While MCA teachers reported being overall satisfied with MCA and their supervisor, they feel that the compensation and benefits need to be improved, as well as the explanation of how the annual merit increase process worked.

Overall, when ratings given by parents, students, and teachers are combined 93% rate MCA either an A or B.

Year 2, 2015-16

MCA met its School Climate targets.

Performance:

During the 2015-16 school year there was one instance of abusive behavior reported. While providing services at an MCA student's home, a Connections Education contracted social worker was hit in the face by an MCA student. The incident was discussed with the social worker, parent, student and Connections Education legal consultant. The student was suspended and the social worker has since reintegrated back into the student's home.

MCA conducted a 2015-2016 survey of parents and students. 88% of parents gave the school an A or a B on the 2015-16 Parent Satisfaction Survey. 86% of students in grades 7-8 and 95% of students in grades 9-12 gave the school an A or B on the 2015-16 Student Satisfaction Survey. MCA met the target of 80% satisfaction.

Also, on the same survey, 94% of students in grades 7-8 and 98% of students in grades 9-12 reported being satisfied with the Maine Connections Academy program. MCA met the target for 80% satisfaction.

The survey conducted by the Maine Charter School Commission showed similar positive emotional and social growth of MCA students. In the areas of Grit, School Climate, School Engagement, School Rigorous Expectations, School Safety and School Teacher-Student Relationships, MCA students responded more favorably than the MCSC average.

MCA offered many opportunities for student engagement. During the 2015-16 school year MCA provided many in person events for students, teachers and families to interact with each other. MCA had a field trip coordinator and is supported by parent Community Coordinators from around the state of Maine. The Community Coordinators planned local activities in their region to allow MCA students from the entire state of Maine to participate.

MCA conducted a staff survey during the 2015-16 school year. Teachers rated overall satisfaction working for MCA 3.06 out of 4.0. MCA met its target for staff satisfaction of 3.0 or higher.

Year 3, 2016-17

MCA met its School Climate targets.

Performance:

During the 2016-17 school year MCA reported one instance of abusive behavior. An MCA teacher contacted a student to offer a summer school opportunity and the student replied to the staff member with a sexually harassing message. The student was suspended and the staff member chose not to press charges. MCA met the target of reporting on bullying, harassment, or other abusive behaviors.

MCA conducted a 2016-2017 survey of parents and students. Almost 92% of parents gave the school an A or a B on the Parent Satisfaction Survey. 86% of students in grades 7-8 and 93% of students in grades 9-12 gave the school an A or B on the Student Satisfaction Survey. MCA met the target of 80% satisfaction.

Also, on the same survey, 85% of students in grades 7-8 and 92% of students in grades 9-12 reported being satisfied with the Maine Connections Academy program. MCA met the target for 80% satisfaction.

MCA participated in Panorama Education Surveys for a second year in 2017. Families, students, and staff/teachers provided feedback for MCA.

Of 205 student responses 69% responded favorably on school climate. Compared with other middle and high schools nationally MCA was around the 90th percentile. Of 15 teachers and staff responses 75% responded favorably on school climate. Compared with other middle and high schools nationally MCA was around the 95th percentile. Of 170 family responses 73% responded favorably on school climate. Compared with other middle and high schools nationally MCA was around the 95th percentile.

Year 4, 2017-18

MCA partially met its School Climate targets.

Performance:

During the 2017–2018 school year MCA did not have any reportable instances of abusive behavior. MCA met the target of reporting on bullying, harassment, or other abusive behaviors.

MCA conducted a 2016-2017 survey of parents. 85% of parents gave the school an A or a B on the MCA Parent Satisfaction Survey. MCA met the target of 80% parent satisfaction.

MCA did not report on the percent satisfaction for students and teachers. It is unknown whether or not the survey was conducted.

MCA partially participated in Panorama Education Surveys for a third year in 2018. Students, and staff/teachers provided feedback for MCA. MCA had zero family responses to the Maine Charter School Commission sponsored Panorama Education survey.

Of 105 student responses (about one fourth of the school's student population) 75% responded favorably on school climate. Compared with other middle and high schools nationally MCA was around the 80th percentile. Of 9 teacher responses 83% responded favorably on school climate. Compared with other middle and high schools nationally MCA was around the 90th percentile.

Year 1, 2014-15

The principal communicated with the Governing Board regularly via phone and email, as well as at the monthly Governing Board Meeting.

MCA's Principal met with each teacher individually once every 2 weeks. They met to look at data, look at assignments to be corrected, look at goals, identified academic needs, and more. Teachers received feedback and discussed what both the principal and the teacher could do differently.

The Formal evaluation process was digital. The teachers digitally rated themselves, and then wrote a descriptive portion. The principal also rated the teacher and wrote a narrative. They met again to discuss the evaluations.

100% of Maine Connection's Academy Teachers rated their supervisor either an A or B.

Year 2, 2015-16

During the 2015-16 school year the principal took on a larger role in budget development. The Governing Board described the school's CFO as an advocate and an asset to the school.

After the end of the 2015-16 school year, MCA proposed the addition of a Connections Education Special Education Director. This proposal was received by the MCSC and approved for the coming 2016-17 school year.

At the end of the 2015-16 school year MCA's principal resigned to take a position in a local school district, leaving a vacancy to be filled. MCA's Board moved quickly in posting the position and hired a two-year MCA teacher as principal.

Year 3, 2016-17

The new principal, who had previously taught for two years at MCA, transitioned smoothly into the role from his prior teaching position at the school. At the end of the 2016-17 school year the principal resigned. The school's Dean of Students, an MCA teacher of 3 years, took the role of interim principal until a principal was hired.

Year 4, 2017-18

MCA started its fourth year, the 2017-2018 school year, with a new principal and added the new position of dean of students. MCA added grade level professional learning communities

(PLCs), switched to content based assessments, and focused on instructional practices. The school plans to have a new position of instructional coach for the coming 2018-19 school year.

Instructional Quality

Maine Connections Academy had its Performance Evaluation and Professional Growth system approved by the Maine Department of Education. The staff was involved in the development of the system.

MCA's Professional Learning Communities have focused on various goal related to the school's improvement plan.

The school reports that teachers at MCA have many resources available to them including a guide to multi—tiered instruction, a differentiation guide, an assessment objective performance report, intervention indicators, and more. Students are offered a range of courses including gifted and talented, honors, Advanced Placement, CTE (career and technical education) courses, and more. Juniors and seniors are also eligible for dual enrollment opportunities.

Compliance with Terms of Charter Contract and Laws

In its 4 years of operation Maine Connections Academy had no record of instances of noncompliance.

Commendations, Concerns, and Considerations for Charter Renewal

Commendations

- Smooth transition from its previous leader to its new leader
- The addition of the dean of students position
- Strong focus on student attendance and decreased truancy

Concerns

- Data not reported to the Commission
- Low panorama survey participation
- High leadership turnover first four years
- Low student attendance rate/high chronic absenteeism

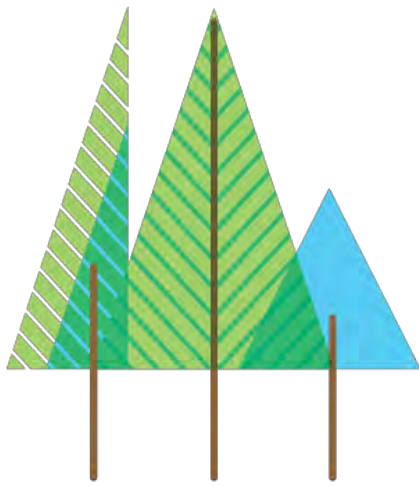
Considerations for Renewal

- Increased student withdrawal rates

Appendix V

Maine Virtual Academy Annual Monitoring Report

Maine Charter School Commission



MAINE
VIRTUAL ACADEMY

ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2017-2018

MeVA Annual Monitoring Report Approved 12-4-18

September 2018

On June 4th and June 19th announced on-site visits were made to Maine Virtual Academy. The Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) Review Team of 2 members was accompanied by the MCSC Executive Director, and MCSC Director of Program Management. The visiting team held interviews with school leadership, and the school’s Governing Board. They also reviewed data provided by the school. Information gathered from documents, interviews and on-site observation was used to determine the extent to which the school has met its contracted performance targets.

Commission Member, Review Team Chair	Dr. J. Michael Wilhelm
Commission	Laurie Pendleton
MCSC Executive Director	Bob Kautz
MCSC Director of Program Management	Gina Post

School’s Mission	<i>Maine Virtual Academy’s (MeVA) mission is to develop each student’s full potential with learner-centered instruction, research-based curriculum and educational tools and resources to provide a high quality learning experience for grade 7-12 students who are in need of alternative educational options. MeVA will develop an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) with specific learning goals to meet each student’s needs.</i>
School’s Vision	<i>MeVA will be a leading 21st century public charter school in Maine and will improve student learning outcomes through individualized instruction, as evidenced by student academic proficiency, student academic growth, post-secondary readiness, and the demonstration of 21st century skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and self-direction. MeVA will empower students to acquire the academic and life skills needed to succeed in post-secondary education and career opportunities. Our graduates will be prepared for college or other postsecondary career training opportunities.</i>

The Maine State Charter School Commission will provide thoughtful stewardship in authorizing and monitoring public charter schools consistent with State statutes to create unique, high-quality learning options for Maine students.

2018-2019 School Information

School Name	Maine Virtual Academy
Address	Ballard Center, 6 East Chestnut Street, Augusta, ME 04330

Governing Board

Board President	Amy E. Carlisle
Board Secretary	S. Peter Mills
Board Treasurer	Edward S. LeBlanc
Board Member	Donna Madore

Chief Executive Officer	Dr. Melinda Browne
Manager of School Programs and Operations	Fadia Afaneh
Special Education Director	Dr. Melinda Browne

Year Opened	2015
Years in Operation	3
Number of Sending Districts	105
Grades Served	7 - 12
Current Enrollment	390*
Students on Waiting List	202*

*As of October 1, 2017 certified enrollment count.

Section 1: Overview

Maine Virtual Academy (MeVA) brings learning alive for students with a personalized program of engaging courses, caring teachers, and a vibrant school community.

- Individualized Learning Plans target each student’s strengths and weaknesses.
- Maine-certified teachers guide progress and tailor teaching to student needs.
- Rigorous, highly interactive curriculum enriches and inspires.
- An Instructional Service Team teaches classes in IT.
- Dedicated school support system helps students grow academically and personally.
- Field trips, open house gatherings, social events, and clubs help students connect.

MeVA is a tuition-free public school that uses the K12 curriculum. Lessons are delivered through a platform called the Online School, as well as through more traditional methods. Materials like books, CDs, and even science lab supplies are delivered right to your doorstep. As a public charter school authorized by the Maine Charter School Commission, MeVA is part of the public school system and is available tuition free. The K12 curriculum is provided free of charge, as well as a loaner computer system, printer, and Internet stipend for families who qualify.

The MeVA 7-8 program serves students in grades 7-8 who reside within the state of Maine.

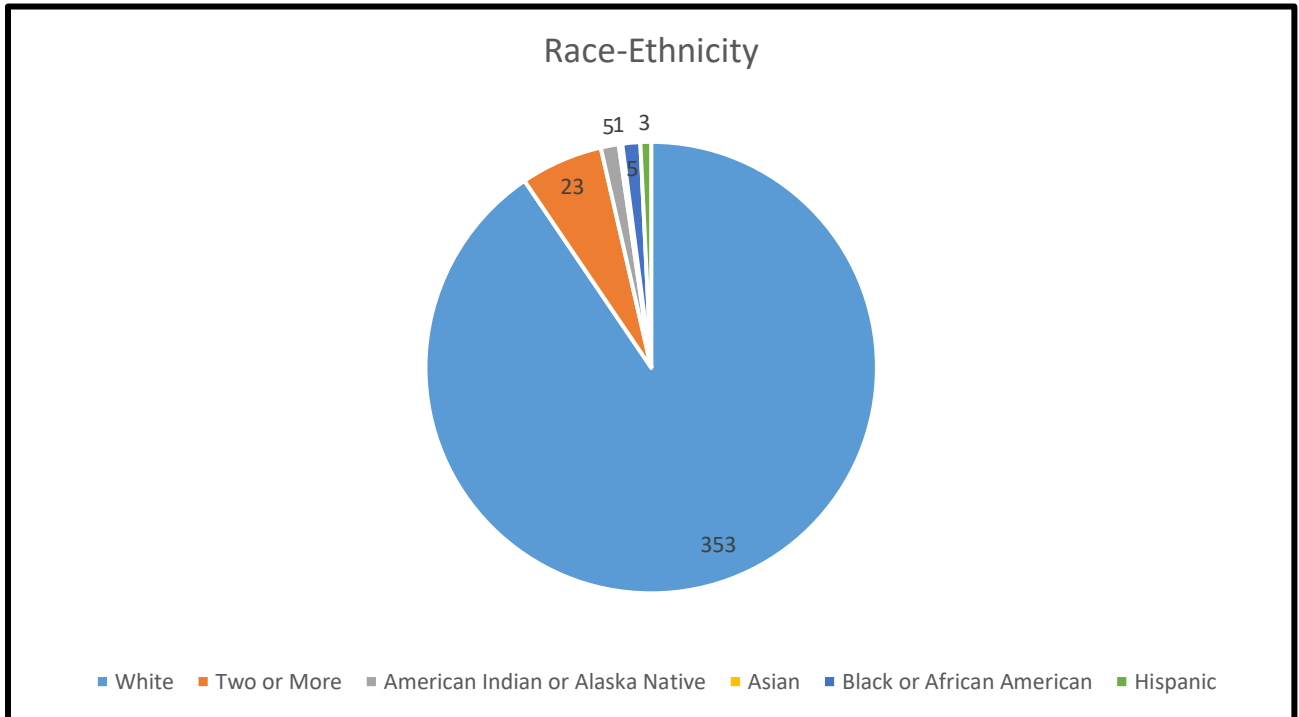
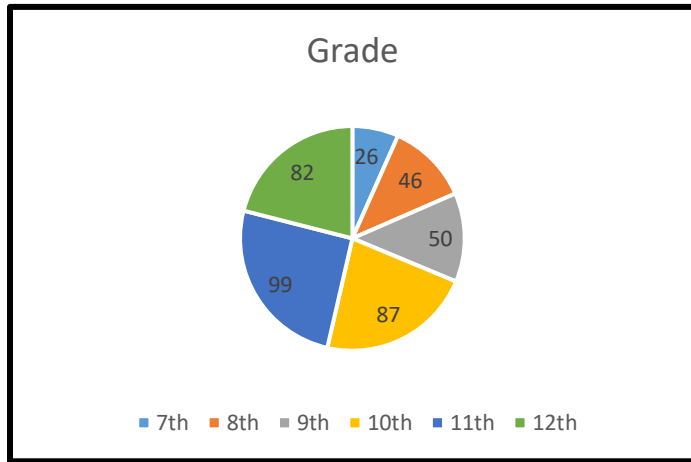
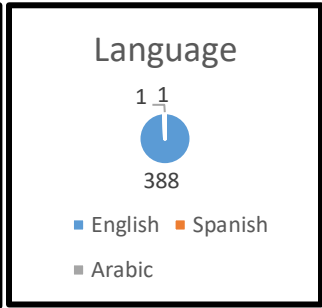
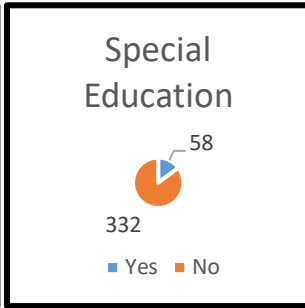
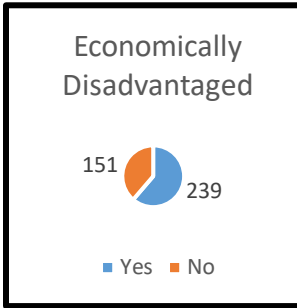
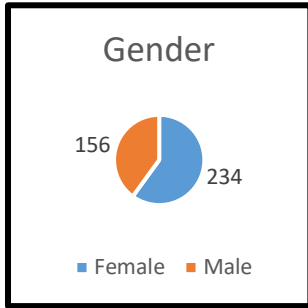
The K12 online high school environment blends the best features of the company’s K-8 learning environment – the elegant and research-driven design, the compelling interactivity, the ease of use of both online and offline content – with key features designed to make the high school experience successful, given the far more complex high school world of content, skills, and time management.

The course catalog offers more than 150 core, elective, and Advanced Placement (AP) courses. Math, English, science, and history courses are offered in multiple versions to meet the needs of diverse learners with diverse goals. Up to four levels of World Languages are offered as well. Students can chart their own course, choosing from among the four levels of courses to match their aptitude and goals.

Section 2: Indicator Summary Table

Indicator	Meets Contract Agreement	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet
Student Academic Proficiency		X	
Student Academic Growth		X	
Achievement Gaps in Proficiency and Growth Between Major Student Subgroups		X	
Student Attendance			X
Enrollment	X		
Post-Secondary Readiness		X	
Financial Performance and Sustainability	X		
Governance Board Performance and Stewardship	X		
School Social and Academic Climate	X		
Parent and Community Engagement	X		

Section 3: Demographics



Section 4: Academics

Student Academic Proficiency

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially met
ELA portion of the Maine State Assessment	46% of grade 7 students will score proficient on the ELA portion of the MEA	33%	Did not meet
ELA portion of the Maine State Assessment	49% of grade 8 students will score proficient on the ELA portion of the MEA	42%	Did not meet
ELA portion of the Maine State Assessment	59% of grade 11 students will score proficient on the ELA portion of the MEA	46%	Did not meet
Math portion of the Maine State Assessment	23% of grade 7 students will score proficient on the math portion of the MEA	19%	Did not meet
Math portion of the Maine State Assessment	14% of grade 8 students will score proficient on the math portion of the MEA	16%	Met
Math portion of the Maine State Assessment.	28% of grade 11 students will score proficient on the math portion of the MEA	8%	Did not meet
Science portion of the Maine State Assessment	69% of grade 8 students will score proficient on the science portion of the MEA	50%	Did not meet
Science portion of the Maine State Assessment	45% of grade 11 students will score proficient on the science portion of the MEA	31%	Did not meet

Discussion

Maine Virtual Academy met its target in one of the 8 areas. The target for 7th grade math was met. MEVA missed its targets by an average of 13%.

Student Academic Growth

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially met
NWEA Reading	Percent of students who meet their individual growth targets +/- 0.5 Conditional Growth Index, with the fall administration of the Reading NWEA establishing the baseline, and the spring		Did not meet

	administration establishing the end point on a yearly basis Grade 7 – 80% Grade 8 – 69% Grade 9 – 80% Grade 10 – 80%	Grade 7 – 32% Grade 8 – 60% Grade 9 – 75% Grade 10 – 77%	
NWEA Math	Percent of students who meet their individual growth targets +/- 0.5 Conditional Growth Index, with the fall administration of the Math NWEA establishing the baseline, and the spring administration establishing the end point on a yearly basis. Grade 7 – 60% Grade 8 – 60% Grade 9 – 75% Grade 10 – 80%	Grade 7 – 25% Grade 8 – 57% Grade 9 – 84% Grade 10 – 71%	Partially met

Discussion

On the NWEA reading assessment the percent of students who met their individual growth targets +/- 0.5 Conditional Growth Index, with the fall administration of the Reading NWEA establishing the baseline, and the spring administration did not meet the targets. Targets for grades eight through ten were based on the previous year’s same cohort scores. Grade 7 targets were based on historical data from previous cohorts.

	Targets	Results	Difference
Grade 7	80%	32%	-48%
Grade 8	69%	60%	-9%
Grade 9	80%	75%	-5%
Grade 10	80%	77%	-3%

On the NWEA math assessment the percent of students who met their individual growth targets +/- 0.5 Conditional Growth Index, with the fall administration of the Reading NWEA establishing the baseline, and the spring administration partially met the targets. Targets for grades eight through ten were based on the previous year’s same cohort scores. Grade 7 targets were based on historical data from previous cohorts.

	Targets	Results	Difference
Grade 7	60%	25%	-35%
Grade 8	60%	57%	-3%
Grade 9	75%	84%	+9%
Grade 10	80%	71%	-9%

Achievement Gaps in Proficiency and Growth Between Major Student Subgroups

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially met
<p>Gaps in proficiency between major student subgroups on Maine State Assessment in reading</p>	<p>Percent of students in identified subgroups reaching proficiency as measured by the state assessment in grades 7, 8, and 11 in reading</p> <p>Sex Grade 7 & 8 (Female) – 58% Grade 7 & 8 (Male) – 37% Grade 11 (Female) – 65% Grade 11 (Male) – 54%</p> <p>Special Education Status Grade 7 & 8 (SE) – 10% Grade 7 & 8 (Non-SE) – 62% Grade 11 (SE) – 46% Grade 11 (Non-SE) – 61%</p> <p>Minority Status Grade 7 & 8 (Minorities) – 50% Grade 7 & 8 (White) – 57% Grade 11 (Minorities) – 67% Grade 11 (White) – 58%</p>	<p>Sex Grade 7 & 8 (Female) – 46% Grade 7 & 8 (Male) – 30% Grade 11 (Female) – 56% Grade 11 (Male) – 23%</p> <p>Special education status Grade 7 & 8 (SE) – 0% Grade 7 & 8 (Non-SE) – 45% Grade 11 (SE) – 14% Grade 11 (Non-SE) – 50%</p> <p>Minority Status Grade 7 & 8 (Minorities) – 38% Grade 7 & 8 (White) – 38% Grade 11 (Minorities) – 40% Grade 11 (White) – 46%</p>	<p>Did Not Meet</p>
<p>Gaps in proficiency between major student subgroups on Maine State Assessment in math</p>	<p>Percent of students in identified subgroups reaching proficiency as measured by the state assessment in grades 7, 8, and 11 in math</p> <p>Sex Grade 7 & 8 (Female) – 39% Grade 7 & 8 (Male) – 38% Grade 11 (Female) – 33% Grade 11 (Male) – 44%</p> <p>Special Education Status: Grade 7 & 8 (SE) – 10% Grade 7 & 8 (Non-SE) – 17% Grade 11 (SE) – 25% Grade 11 (Non-SE) – 28%</p>	<p>Sex Grade 7 & 8 (Female) – 18% Grade 7 & 8 (Male) – 16% Grade 11 (Female) – 7% Grade 11 (Male) – 11%</p> <p>Special Education Status Grade 7 & 8 (SE) – 0% Grade 7 & 8 (Non-SE) – 20% Grade 11 (SE) – 0% Grade 11 (Non-SE) – 10%</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>

	Minority Status Grade 7 & 8 (Minorities) – 17% Grade 7 & 8 (White) – 15% Grade 11 (Minorities) – 10% Grade 11 (White) – 30%	Minority Status Grade 7 & 8 (Minorities) – 13% Grade 7 & 8 (White) – 18% Grade 11 (Minorities) – 20% Grade 11 (White) – 7%	
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Discussion

Maine Virtual’s subgroup gap targets were not met in reading and were partially met in math. The achievement of subgroups mirrored overall achievement, in that the school set ambitious academic targets that were difficult to achieve in only one academic year.

Section 5: Attendance and Enrollment

Student Attendance

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially met
Average Daily Attendance Rate	The Average attendance rate will be at or above 89%.	87.9%	Did not meet

Discussion

Maine Virtual Academy's average daily attendance rate was 87.9%, about 1.1% shy of meeting its target. The school has plans to increase student engagement and improve student attendance in 2018-19.

Enrollment

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially met
Maintaining student enrollment throughout the year	75 Percent of students enrolled on state "count day" will still be enrolled on last day of school	80% retention during the school year	Met
Student re-enrollment from one year to the next	90 percent of students enrolled on last day of school will indicate an intent to return the following school year	91% reenrollment	Met

Discussion

Maine Virtual Academy met its targets in enrollment. 80% of students who were enrolled on state count day were still enrolled on the last day of school. 91% of students who were enrolled on the last day of school indicated an intent to return the following year.

Section 6: Post-Secondary Readiness

Post-Secondary Readiness

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially met
Federal Graduation 4-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR)	62% ACGR	48.98	Did not meet
Post-Secondary plans	Accepted to Postsecondary schools – 37% Continuing Education -76% Entering Work – 22% Enlisting in Military – 2%	Accepted to Postsecondary schools – 40% Continuing Education -80% Entering Work – 15% Enlisting in Military – 5%	Met

Discussion

Students in MEVA's graduating class planned to attend post-secondary school, enter the work force, and enlist in the military. The June 2018 graduating class planned to attend colleges and universities across the country, including: Eckerd College, Hartwick College, Ithaca College, Pace University, Quinnipiac University, University of Plymouth and campuses across the University of Maine system. Two graduates joined the U.S. Air Force, another joined the U.S. Army. Several students planned to pursue career technical programs that include butcher training, cosmetology and veterinary technician preparation.

Section 7: Finances

Financial Performance and Sustainability

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially met
Quarterly Financials	School reports quarterly financials	Reported quarterly	Met
Annual Audit	School provides copy of annual external financial audit to MDOE	Audit completed and provided to MDOE	Met

Discussion

Maine Virtual Academy reported its financials to the Maine Charter School Commission quarterly. An external financial audit was completed for FY18 and was submitted to the Maine Department of Education and the Maine Charter School Commission.

Section 8: Governance Board Performance and Stewardship

Governance Board Performance and Stewardship

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially met
Public accountability – Transparent, responsive, and legally compliant Board operation	Board will meet one time per month at a minimum. Evidence of required bylaws and policies are in place and are regularly reviewed as indicated in minutes.	Board met monthly, bylaws in place.	Met
	100% of Governing Board agendas and minutes are made available to the public.	Meeting agendas and minutes were posted to website.	Met

Discussion

The school's governing board met on a monthly basis. Meeting agendas and minutes were posted to the school's website.

MEVA's governing board members have experience in education, business, and law.

Section 9: School Climate

School Social and Academic Climate

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially met
Instances of bullying, harassment, or other abusive practices	School will report the number of behavioral incidents using the state and federal reporting requirements.	Reporting guidelines followed. MDOE Reporting complete.	Met
Instances of bullying, harassment, or other abusive practices	2 or fewer reportable incidents	0 incidents	Met
Confidential survey of parents, staff, and students	Participation on Commission sponsored surveys Students – 74% Parents – 74% Teachers – 92%	Participation rates: Students – 76% Parents – 87% Teachers – 94% Staff – 100%	Met

Discussion

MEVA met all of its social and academic climate targets. The school completed its incident report as required by MDOE. No incidents were reportable during the 2017-18 school year.

The school participated in the Commission-sponsored Panorama Education school climate surveys and met all participation targets.

Section 10: Parent and Community Engagement

Parent and Community Engagement

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially met
Percentage of learning-coaches logging students' weekly learning time	2018 – set baseline	Data gathered	Met

Discussion

The percentage of learning-coaches logging students' weekly learning time for the 2017-18 school year was 90% This established the baseline for target setting for future years.

Section 11: Administration

MEVA is led by a Director/Principal who also serves as the school's special education director. The director has been with the school since mid-way through the school's first year.

The director is working with the faculty to improve its parent involvement by increasing awareness of the importance of learning coach responsibilities. The school reports it is working to further engage parents and learning coaches.

Additionally, MEVA is focusing on addressing teachers' experience with the virtual learning platform and courses. MEVA is working to increase teacher satisfaction and opportunities for professional growth. The director conducts evaluations of the faculty and provides feedback according to the school's Performance Evaluation and Professional Growth (PEPG) Plan.

Section 12: Evidence of Mission and Vision Implementation

(See Page 2 for School's Mission and Vision)

MEVA is striving to improve its academic outcomes, to provide differentiated courses and lessons for diverse learners, and to create opportunities for students to collaborate by offering each other academic feedback within our virtual classrooms. MEVA is working to prepare its students for higher education and careers by facilitating/developing 21st century skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and self-direction.

Section 13: Commendations and Concerns

Commendations

- 50% decrease in student unenrollment during the school year from previous school year
- Dedication to increasing student attendance and engagement

Concerns

- Chronic absenteeism
- Student retention

Appendix W

Snow Pond Arts Academy 2nd Year Pre-Opening Report

Snow Pond Arts Academy
Pre-Opening Visit – Year 2
August 9, 2017

Snow Pond Arts Academy: Janna Townsend, Sherry Gilbert, Deborah Emery, Heather King
Maine Charter School Commission: John Bird, Shelley Reed, Jana Lapoint, Bob Kautz, Gina Post, Roberta Lucas (Department of Education – Special Services)

On August 9, 2017 the Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) Review Team for Snow Pond Arts Academy (SPAA) and MCSC staff met at SPAA to review the school's plan to open for year 2.

SPAA created a School Improvement Plan and met with the MCSC regularly to provide progress updates. The pre-opening visit was the most recent in the series of update visits.

SPAA provided documentation including the School Improvement Plan and progress toward its goals. Below is a summary of updates.

Education:

- SPAA has provided compensatory services to all students who were offered and accepted services due to the lack of a special education teacher on staff early in year 1.
- SPAA has opted to discontinue its use of K12 for its curriculum. Work has been done to map out standards based on the Maine Learning Results.
- Teachers have had one day of professional development this summer and will have 2 more before school starts.
- Friday afternoons will be weekly PD for teachers.

Organization:

- SPAA has hired qualified leadership in a full time Head of School and a full time Principal.
- SPAA has hired a part time special education director, a full time special education teacher, a full time ed tech, and has provisions for a PT special education teacher if needed.
- The school is interviewing for an English teacher and may need an additional teacher depending on student enrollment.

Governance:

- The governing board adopted a comprehensive Policy book on 8/2/17. Policies will be edited and updated as needed.
- The governing board developed a self-evaluation tool that will be administered in order to give direction to further work.
- There have been some governing board changes. Janna Townsend is now the board president. Additionally, the Board is recruiting candidates to fill vacancies.

Business and Financial:

- SPAA's current budget is based on 155 students (the number of students currently enrolled) and is in the black.
- The budget includes a plan for repayment of debt
- The head of school has explored several cost-saving measures – transportation shared with other schools will save money.

It is the opinion of the Review Team that SPAA has executed its School Improvement Plan and is prepared to open for year 2. MCSC staff will continue to monitor SPAA's progress on the SIP.

Appendix X

Snow Pond Arts Academy 2nd Year 90 Day Report

Snow Pond Arts Academy
90-Day Visit – Year 2
December 5, 2017

Snow Pond Arts Academy: Janna Townsend, Sherry Gilbert, Deborah Emery, Heather King
Maine Charter School Commission: John Bird, Shelley Reed, Jana Lapoint, Bob Kautz, Gina Post

On December 5, 2017, the Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) Review Team for Snow Pond Arts Academy (SPAA) and MCSC staff met at SPAA to review the school's progress on completing its school improvement plan.

SPAA created a School Improvement Plan and met with the MCSC regularly to provide progress updates. The 90-day visit was the most recent in the series of update visits.

SPAA provided documentation including the updated School Improvement Plan and progress toward its goals (attached) in the areas of education, organization, governance, and business and finances. SPAA has substantially completed all tasks outlined in the original school improvement plan. The school improvement plan has become a working document for the school. The administration has begun to use the plan to identify goals and track progress in additional areas such as the school's communication system and academic rigor.

It is the opinion of the Review Team that SPAA is executing its School Improvement Plan.

Appendix Y

Snow Pond Arts Academy Annual Monitoring Report

Maine Charter School Commission



ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2017-2018

September 2018

On **May 22nd** and **June 14th** announced on-site visits were made to **Snow Pond Arts Academy**. The Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) Review Team of 3 members was accompanied by the MCSC Executive Director, and MCSC Director of Program Management. The visiting team held interviews with school leadership, and the school’s Governing Board. They also reviewed data provided by the school. Documents provided by the school are available from the MCSC office. Information gathered from documents, interviews and on-site observation was used to determine the extent to which the school has met its contracted performance targets.

Commission Member, Review Team Chair	John Bird
Commission	Jana Lapoint
Commission	Shelley Reed
MCSC Executive Director	Bob Kautz
MCSC Director of Program Management	Gina Post

School’s Mission	<i>Snow Pond Arts Academy (SPAA) aims to transform students’ lives and contribute to the cultural capital of Central Maine by providing high quality, comprehensive, college preparatory Academic and Arts education in an inclusive, nurturing, and culturally rich environment for high school age students.</i>
School’s Vision	<i>Snow Pond Arts Academy (SPAA) will serve as a center of excellence for both academic and arts learning in Central Maine. Snow Pond looks at education as both the accumulation of knowledge along with the cultivation of engagement, imagination, leadership and collaboration. Through the initial introduction of Music, Theatre, and Dance, and ultimately the inclusion of all the Creative and Visual Arts, Snow Pond will be a witness to the magical power of the Arts to bring people together, to create an engaged vibrant community, and to cultivate the traits that are so vitally important in the next generation of citizens. As a community of engaged learners, Snow Pond Arts Academy will develop more than musicians and artists, but also responsible, joyful, contributing citizens. In this way, and by ensuring as many people as possible can benefit from the exposure to Performing & Creative Arts, hiring talented arts educators who bring their expertise to Central Maine, and further collaborating with other educational arts, and cultural organizations, Snow Pond will become an integral part of the community and a much needed beacon for the arts.</i>

The Maine State Charter School Commission will provide thoughtful stewardship in authorizing and monitoring public charter schools consistent with State statutes to create unique, high-quality learning options for Maine students.

2018 -19 School Information

School Name	Snow Pond Arts Academy
Address	8 Goldenrod Lane, Sidney, ME 04330

Governing Board

Board President/Chairman	Janna Townsend
Board Vice President/Chairman	Carl Steidel
Board Treasurer	Julie Richard
Board Member	Sherry Gilbert
Board Member	Debra Levenseller
Board Member	Mike Thorn
	Jeff Desrosiers
	Jessica Crowell

Head of School	Deborah Emery
Principal	Heather King
Special Education Director	Christine Sullivan

Year Opened	2016
Years in Operation	2
Number of Sending Districts	32
Grades Served	9 – 12
Current Enrollment	145*
Students on Waiting List	5*

*As of October 1, 2017 certified enrollment date.

Section 1: Overview

Snow Pond Arts Academy is a performing and visual arts-focused, free, public charter high school currently serving 50 towns in Maine. The school is located in a rural setting on Messalonskee Lake and shares a campus with Snow Pond Center for the Arts, home of the prestigious New England Music Camp.

Snow Pond Arts Academy's proficiency-based, creative learning experience, is aligned with the Maine Learning Results and the National Core Arts Standards. Since 2016, Snow Pond Arts Academy has been working at transforming its innovative educational system to better meet the individual needs of all Maine Learners. All students have personal learning goals which help support their academic interests, creative passions, and learning styles. This is designed to intrinsically motivate and challenge all students through the arts.

Snow Pond's proficiency based, arts-centered, customized learning and graduation policies ensure that all students leave as highly literate and problem-solving skilled graduates. During their high school career at Snow Pond, students have access to dual enrollment courses, advanced placement courses, online courses, job shadow and community service opportunities, as well as a rich performing and visual arts curriculum.

Each learner must meet a common and essential set of demanding proficiencies. Snow Pond Arts Academy's qualified staff works hard to help students meet these rigorous expectations by offering multiple pathways and methods of demonstrating learning.

Snow Pond recognizes that all students learn in different ways and times and the school provides multiple opportunities for learners to gain proficiency. Its system is focused on what its graduates learn, rather than on the amount of time it takes them to reach rigorous graduation proficiencies.

Snow Pond's goal is to prepare students for success in college, career and citizenship while fostering a lifelong passion for the arts.

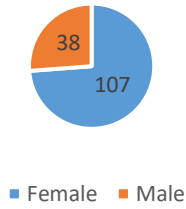
Great education is both the accumulation of knowledge and the cultivation of engagement, imagination, and the understanding of civic and social responsibility. SPAA students will be more than musicians and artists; they will be prepared for a lifetime of learning, and active citizenship.

Section 2: Indicator Summary Table

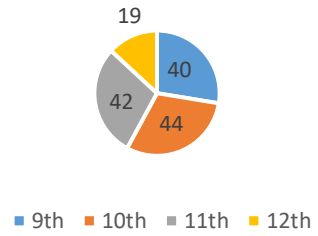
Indicator	Meets Contract Agreement	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet
Student Academic Proficiency	X		
Student Academic Growth			X
Achievement Gaps in Proficiency and Growth Between Major Student Subgroups	X		
Student Attendance			X
Enrollment	X		
Post-Secondary Readiness	X		
Financial Performance and Sustainability	X		
Governance Board Performance and Stewardship	X		
Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of Program	X		
Transportation	X		
School Social and Academic Climate	X		
Parent and Community Engagement		X	

Section 3: Demographics

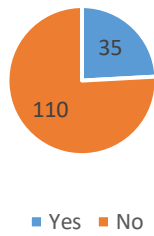
Gender



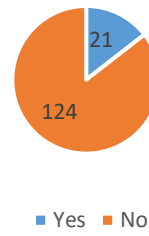
Grade



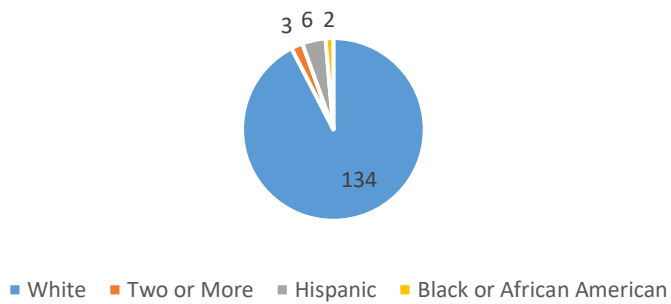
Economically Disadvantaged



Special Education



Race-Ethnicity



Language



Section 4: Academics

Student Academic Proficiency

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Proficiency on State Assessments in reading	Establish baseline	62.17% proficient	Met
Proficiency on State Assessment in Math	Establish Baseline	Not publicly reportable	Met
Proficiency on NWEA - reading	Establish Baseline	Percent of students at or above norm grade level mean: Grade 9 67% Grade 10 56% Grade 11 31%	Met
Proficiency on NWEA - math	Establish Baseline	Percent of students at or above norm grade level mean: Grade 9 36% Grade 10 58% Grade 11 31%	Met
Proficiency on school designed assessment program measuring Common Core ELA and Math as well as Maine Learning Results for Science and History	80% of students will meet all of their personal learning plan goals	95% of students reached proficiency on core standards in academic and arts classes as determined by school developed assessments.	Met

Discussion

In the 4 areas requiring the establishment of baseline data, the school met the target.

On the state assessment in reading 62.17% of 11th grade students scored proficient. State assessment results in math are not publicly reportable to due a small 'n' size and maintaining student confidentiality; however, the Commission does have access to this data and considers it as part of the school's overall academic assessment review.

SPAA administered the NWEA in the 2017-18 school year and reported the percentage of students at or above grade level mean by grade level in both ELA and math. The school met the target of collecting baseline data.

On the school designed assessment program the school exceeded its 80% target with 95% of students reaching proficiency on core standards in academic and arts classes as determined by school developed assessments. The school completed an analysis of the course offerings to assure a rigorous course schedule ad plans to offer higher level courses for the 2018-19 school year.

Student Academic Growth

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Growth in school selected standardized test in Reading	85% of students will meet or exceed individual expected annual growth by RIT score as identified by NWEA	% of students met expected growth by RIT score: Grade 9 66% Grade 10 74% Grade 11 62%	Did not meet
Growth in school selected standardized test in Math	85% of students will meet or exceed individual expected annual growth by RIT score as identified by NWEA	% of students met expected growth by RIT score” Grade 9 38% Grade 10 58% Grade 11 34%	Did not meet

Discussion

Snow Pond Arts Academy did not meet its growth targets based on NWEA. After analyzing the results the school Identified areas of focus including higher level mathematics skills, geometry, editing for grammar usage, key ideas and details in literary and informational text, and language craft and structure.

Achievement Gaps in Proficiency and Growth Between Major Student Subgroups

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Gaps in proficiency and growth between major students subgroups on Maine State Assessments (MEA) - reading	Establish baseline	Not publicly reportable	Met
Gaps in proficiency and growth between major students subgroups on Maine State Assessments (MEA) - math	Establish baseline	Not publicly reportable	Met

Discussion

Snow Pond Arts Academy met the target with the administration of the MEA and establishment of baseline data for setting future targets. State assessment results for individual student subgroups are not publicly reportable to due a small ‘n’ size and maintaining student confidentiality; however, the Commission does have access to this data and considers it as part of the school’s overall academic assessment review.

Section 5: Attendance and Enrollment

Student Attendance

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Average Daily Attendance Rate	Average daily attendance will be 95%	90% ADA	Did not meet
Individual Student Attendance Rate	Individual student attendance rate will be 95%	Individual student attendance rates: 34% between 95-100% 37% between 90-94% 22% between 80-89% 7% between 70-79%	Did not meet

Discussion

Snow Pond Arts Academy did not meet its attendance targets; its ADA was 5% below the target and only 35% of students met the individual attendance target.

The school reported that its rural location makes it difficult for students who miss the bus at regional hubs to get to school. It also reported that late start days and early release Fridays had increased absences. For the 2018-2019 academic year the school has plans to increase attendance including five full academic days per week with fewer early releases and the elimination of late starts. The school also plans to use distance learning equipment to connect with ill students working at home, build in work at home days during storm closing days, have regular contact from staff when students miss school. Additionally, the school updated its student information system to update incorrectly entered contact information.

Enrollment

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Student Retention	A minimum of 90% of the students enrolled on October 1 of any school year will still be enrolled as the last day of that school year.	95%	Met
Student re-enrollment from one year to next	At the end of the school year a minimum of 90% of students enrolled on the last day of school will indicate their intent to return for the following year.	98% reenrollment for 2018–2019	Met

Discussion

Snow Pond Arts Academy met its 90% student retention target with 95% during the year student retention. The school met its re-enrollment target of 90% with 98% of students planning to return for the following year as of the last day of school.

Post-Secondary Readiness

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Graduation Rate	Establish baseline	100%	Met
Success in Dual Enrollment courses	Establish baseline	69% passing rate	Met
Enrollment in post secondary institutions	Establish baseline	95% of graduates	Met

Discussion

Snow Pond Arts Academy met the targets of gathering post-secondary readiness data and establishing baseline data for setting future targets. The graduation rate was 100% and the percent of passing grades in dual enrollment was 69%. 20 students took 30 dual enrollment courses during the 2017-18 school year.

Students from the school's first graduating class were accepted to over twenty schools across the United States including Ithaca, University Of Southern Maine, University of Maine in Orono, University of Maine in Farmington, University of Connecticut, University of Denver, University of Illinois, Rutgers, Wheaton College, Wagner, and more. Some students received substantial scholarships in the arts and academic programs.

Section 6: Finances

Financial Performance and Sustainability

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Financial performance and sustainability	Percentage Variance between budget and actual revenue and expenses (+/- 10%)	Expenditure variance -6.95% Revenue variance -5.32%	Met
Financial performance and sustainability	Balance Sheet (Quarterly Review)	Reviewed quarterly	Met
Financial performance and sustainability	Presence of management findings of deficiencies on an audit report, and success in correcting findings (Annual external audit report for each fiscal year)	Report submitted	Met

Discussion

For the 2017-18 school budget the year end expenditure variance is 5.32% less than budgeted and the year end revenue variance is 6.95% less than budgeted. The school met the target for being within 10%.

The most recent completed audit is for FY 2016-2017. A copy of the audit, management letter, and corrective action plan was submitted in February 2018. The school reports all findings of deficiency have been addressed.

The school's finance committee meets monthly to review financials and approves them to be sent to the board.

Section 7: Governance Board Performance and Stewardship

Governance Board Performance and Stewardship

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Governance Board Performance and Stewardship	Governance Board meetings will be held at least monthly	Monthly meetings were held	Met
Governance Board Performance and Stewardship	Evidence of bylaws and policies in place are regularly reviewed.	Bylaws were reviewed	Met
Governance Board Performance and Stewardship	Meeting agendas are made publicly available (posted within 10 days of approval).	Agendas and minutes were posted	Met

Discussion

Snow Pond Arts Academy held monthly board meetings in its conference room at the school. Committee meetings were held prior to each board meeting. Spring meeting minutes were delayed in posting due to the transition of a new webmaster.

Section 8: Facilities & Maintenance, Food Service, and Transportation

Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of Program

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Adequacy of Facilities	Head of School will provide an annual report to the Board of Directors related to: % over or under cost projection on facilities (+/- 5%).	Report provided to governing board	Met

Discussion

The school met the target of reporting on facilities. The Board facilities committee and Head of School worked with Snow Pond Center for the Arts to revise and develop a new lease that includes cleaning and maintenance.

Transportation

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Adequacy of Transportation	Head of School will provide an annual report to the Board of Directors related to SPAA transportation costs and number of students transported.	Report provided to governing board	Met

Discussion

The Head of School provided an annual report on transportation to the Board of Directors. The school plans to continue sharing bus services with other local charter schools for the 2018-19 school year.

Food Service

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Adequacy of Food Service	Head of School will provide an annual report to the Board of Directors related to food service costs, number of students served/frequency and free and reduced lunch data.	Report provided to governing board	Met

Discussion

The Head of School provided an annual report on food service to the Board of Directors. During the 2017-18 academic year Snow Pond Center for the Arts managed Snow Pond Arts Academy's food service. For the 2018-19 school year, SPAA will be managing its own food service accounts and production through a vendor.

Section 9: School Climate

School Social and Academic Climate

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Instances of bullying, harassment or other abusive behavior	Fewer than 5% of students will be involved in harassment, bullying or other abusive behavior.	2%	Met
Confidential surveys of parents, staff and students regarding social and academic climate	100% parents, staff and students will have the opportunity to complete the Panorama survey.	Panorama Survey was administered to staff and students	Met

Discussion

SPAA met its target of fewer than 5% of students involved in bullying with 2%.

Panorama Education surveys were administered to students, parents and teachers/staff. On the school climate scale students responded around the 90th percentile nationally as compared to other non-urban high schools with a free/reduced lunch population between 30%-70%. When compared to similar school nationally both teachers/staff and parents scored around the 99th percentile.

Section 10: Parent and Community Engagement

Parent and Community Engagement

Measure	Target	Results	Met/Did Not Meet/Partially Met
Educational Partnerships in the Community	SPAA will pursue involvement with community and corporate partners	Work with grant writer for fostering partnerships	Met
Parent Communication System	SPAA will send at a minimum, monthly communications to parents via email and/or web postings to advise them of school happenings and important upcoming dates and decisions.	Emails and web postings were done, but due to system error some families did not receive the communications	Partially met
Parent Participation in their child’s education and operation of school	90% parent participation in at least one conference each year.	80% conference attendance	Did not meet
Parent Participation in their child’s education and operation of school	SPAA will document parent/guardian participation in volunteer groups and activities and gather baseline information	Specific number not reported	Did not meet

Discussion

The school is working with a grant writer to determine foundations and grant writing opportunities and met with educational partnership target.

The school attempted to communicate with all families, but due to system errors some families were unable to receive messages. The school partially met its parent communication target.

With 80% conference participation, the school did not meet its 90% target for parent participation in education and operation of the school.

The SPAA parent group met monthly. The school reported a high percentage of parents attended all recitals and performances. Parents also volunteered at school dances and proms. The school reports that between 6-10 parents attended parent group meetings and approximately 50-60 parents attended bi-monthly performances. The school also sponsored a parent involvement night for its at risk population and had 8-10 parents attend.

Section 11: Administration

Snow Pond Arts Academy began its second year under the continued leadership from year one. After a turnover in leadership in year one, the school hired leaders who effectively manage the academic programs and fiscal operations at SPAA. The school is led by a full time Head of School and a full time principal.

A Director of Special Education provides leadership in effectively managing SPAA's special education program. The Director works with the Head of School and Leadership Team to ensure the school meets all required state and federal laws and statutes.

Section 12: Evidence of Mission and Vision Implementation

(See Page 2 for School's Mission and Vision)

Snow Pond Arts Academy continued into the 2017-18 school year with a strong commitment to the integration of the arts and academics for all students. The performing and visual arts programs continue to build the reputation of the school through art shows in nearby communities, and performances at recitals, sporting events, festivals, parades and local schools.

The families of Snow Pond Arts Academy students are active in their support of the school, community and students. With its new parent/teacher organization, the school has hosted holiday events and spring fairs. Parents have overseen graduation events and prom. The school's students come from a region the size of Rhode Island, demonstrating the value of the program.

Section 13: Commendations and Concerns

Commendations

- After a challenging first year, Snow Pond Arts Academy successfully completed its second year.
- Strong leadership
- Engaged governing board

Concerns

- Attendance/Chronic absenteeism
- Student academic growth

Appendix Z

*National Association of Charter School Authorizers
(NACSA) Authorizer Evaluation Report*

NOVEMBER 3, 2017

NACSA AUTHORIZER EVALUATION REPORT

MAINE CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION

Authorizer

LAURIE PENDLETON

Board Chair

ROBERT KAUTZ

Executive Director

Funding for this report was provided by the U.S. Department of Education through the National Charter School Resource Center. The National Charter School Resource Center is led by Safal Partners under contract number ED-OII-13-C-0065.



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EVALUATION SCOPE

This evaluation is designed to provide the authorizer with a reflective, formative analysis of its primary strengths, priorities for improvement, and recommended action steps. Consistent with NACSA's *Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing*, this evaluation considers the authorizer's core practices, organizational structure, and capacity, all through the lens of the overall quality of its schools. This evaluation is guided by the following overarching principles:

1. **Accountability.** *The authorizer only approves applications that meet rigorous evaluation criteria and holds schools accountable for their academic, financial, and organizational performance.*
2. **Access.** *The authorizer increases access to quality public education by ensuring that all charter schools are meeting their equitable obligations and commitments including for open enrollment; for transparent, consistent enforcement of student discipline; for meeting the needs of students identified with disabilities and English learners; for providing safe and adequate facilities and transportation; and by providing high-performing charter schools with opportunities to grow.*
3. **Autonomy.** *The authorizer honors and preserves charter school autonomies, ensuring schools have ample opportunities to adapt as needed to meet the needs of their students.*
4. **Authorizing Procedures and Capacity.** *The authorizer's procedures support the implementation of high-quality authorizing practices and the authorizer has the capacity, in terms of staffing and resources, to advance its strategic goals and carry out its authorizing duties effectively.*

This evaluation report is the culmination of a process, which included an extensive document review, surveys, stakeholder interviews, and a two-day site visit. This report explores each guiding principle in detail and presents the authorizer with analysis of the applicable standards and recommended actions for strengthening its authorizing program and the quality of schools in its portfolio.

RATING CATEGORIES

For each category, the authorizer receives a rating as follows:

- Well-developed**
Commendable in that it meets or exceeds NACSA's *Principles & Standards*.

- Approaching Well-Developed**
Fundamentally sound in that it contains most aspects of a well-developed practice but requires one or more material modifications to meet NACSA's *Principles & Standards*.

- Partially Developed**
Incomplete in that it contains some aspects of a well-developed practice but is missing key components, is limited in its execution, or otherwise falls short of satisfying NACSA's *Principles & Standards*.

- Minimally Developed**
Inadequate in that the authorizer has minimally undertaken the practice or is carrying it out in a way that falls far short of satisfying NACSA's *Principles & Standards*.

- Undeveloped**
Wholly inadequate in that the authorizer has not undertaken the practice at all or is carrying it out in a way that is not recognizably connected to NACSA's *Principles & Standards*.

ABOUT THE AUTHORIZER | MAINE CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION

AUTHORIZER INFORMATION

Type: ICB	First Charter: 2012	Authorizer Fee: Up to 3% of state subsidy
Decision-Making Body: Seven-member commission	No. Authorizing Staff: 3.5	Annual Office Budget: \$413,120

SCHOOL PORTFOLIO

SCHOOLS

No. Schools: 9

No. Students: 1,953

No. CMO: 0

No. EMO: 0

No. Virtual ESPs: 2

STUDENTS

% FRL: 43%

% EL: less than 1%

% SPED: 22%

AUTHORIZER DECISION-MAKING – 2014-2016

App. Received: 13	Renewed: 2	1st Year Closures: 0
Approved: 3	Non-Renewed/Revoked: 0	Expansion or Replication: 0

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT

The Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC or Commission) currently oversees nine charter schools serving approximately 1,953 students, or a little more than one percent of all K-12 students in Maine. In September 2011, Maine became the 41st state to pass public charter school legislation and the Commission's first charter school opened in 2012. Two types of entities are permitted to authorize public charter schools in Maine. The Commission may authorize up to 10 charter schools throughout the state during the first 10 years of Maine's charter school legislation. Additionally, local school boards and collaboratives of local school boards may authorize charter schools within their school administrative units at any time with no limit to the number of charter schools they may authorize. No local school boards currently authorize charter schools and MCSC is nearing its cap at nine charters.

The Commission has seven members who are appointed by the State Board of Education for three-year terms. Three Commissioners must be members of the State Board of Education; the other four members must be nominated by the three State Board members and approved by a majority vote of the State Board of Education. Two current Commissioners have been members since the Commission's creation in 2011. The Commission does not have salaried employees—all staff, including the executive director, are hired through a temporary placement agency and work hourly as contracted consultants. Until recently, due to capacity constraints, Commissioners did almost all of the work and strategic decision-making. MCSC receives some staff support from the Maine Department of Education (DOE), including legal, special education, and English learner support.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC or Commission) has taken a thoughtful approach to establishing a quality charter school authorizing program that will help promote a thriving charter school sector focused on school performance and meeting the educational needs of the state. Constantly reflective, MCSC works with a singular vision of quality charter school options for Maine’s students. MCSC actively sought a formative evaluation, and Commissioners and staff alike have continually reflected on the Commission’s progress since the first charter school opened in 2012. This focus on continuous improvement will ensure the Commission remains at the forefront of the sector as its portfolio continues to mature.

One area of focus for the Commission should be ensuring that charter school autonomy is upheld, and that Commissioners can make objective high-stakes decisions. While well-intentioned, some of MCSC’s current practices tend to infringe on charter school autonomy and may affect the Commission’s ability to make objective decisions. This tendency for overreach is connected to how the Commission was originally created, without a budget or clearance to hire staff, which resulted in volunteer Commissioners filling the roles of authorizing staff. In addition, with charter schools still in their infancy in Maine, both charter schools and the Commission are still subject to constant opposition.

As a result, MCSC must play multiple roles—policy maker, oversight agent, and decision maker. Until recently—due to the small size of the Commission’s portfolio and the clear dedication of its members—MCSC has been able to manage these multiple responsibilities. However, as the sector matures, grows, and experiences inevitable challenges, the Commission will need to be cognizant of how the multiple roles it plays could impact its ability to play the central role the legislature requires of it: making critical decisions on openings, renewals, and closures in protection of student and public interests. This core responsibility lies with the Commission alone. All of the Commissioners and staff understand the dilemma and are eager to help MCSC operate more efficiently, productively, and objectively. One interviewee described the relationship between the authorizer and schools as a “parent and adolescent child” relationship, which speaks to the close affiliation and the joint responsibility but also the imbalance of authority.

Another area of focus is the Commission’s oversight of school financial performance. Currently, the Commission does not have financial performance measures that effectively assess short- and long-term financial health and viability. Partly due to lack of staff expertise, MCSC does not thoroughly monitor financial performance beyond quarterly budget reviews and analysis of the annual audit, leading to a lack of focus on schools’ financial health.

FOCUS AREAS

RECOMMENDATIONS

Roles and Responsibilities

Clarify and confirm the roles of the Commissioners and staff; revisit all tasks currently completed by staff and Commissioners, and assign tasks based on defined roles.

Financial Expectations, Oversight, and Capacity

Establish financial performance framework guidance to hold schools accountable for near- and long-term financial health, and build capacity in the area of financial expertise to support application reviews, monitoring, and accountability decisions.

Decision-Making

Ensure that Commissioners are able to make objective charter school decisions, free of any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Overall, the authorizer only approves applications that meet rigorous evaluation criteria and holds schools accountable for their academic, financial, and organizational performance.

The authorizer decides which charter school applications are good enough to be approved and which schools are good enough to stay open and be renewed. These are tremendous responsibilities that will ultimately determine the overall quality of the charter schools in the authorizer's portfolio. This section examines the authorizer's decisions related to the school's educational plan and performance, financial plan and performance, and organizational plan and performance.

KEY STRENGTHS

- Given challenges with state accountability data, Commissioners and staff work to find creative ways to assess student academic performance.
- MCSC's application includes appropriate requirements and its revised findings of fact template establishes a high bar for approval.
- MCSC holds charter schools accountable to organizational performance and compliance requirements.

FOCUS AREAS

RECOMMENDATIONS

Application Reviews and Recommendations

Strengthen application reviews to include more detail and context to support the stated ratings and recommendations.

School Performance

Develop a public annual report of school performance to present to the public the status of charter school academic progress in Maine and to support accountability decision-making, transparency, and access to quality school options for parents.


Financial Expectations, Oversight, and Capacity

Establish financial performance framework guidance to hold schools accountable for near- and long-term financial health and build capacity in the area of financial expertise to support application reviews, monitoring, and accountability decisions.

ACCOUNTABILITY | IN DEPTH

EDUCATION PLAN AND PERFORMANCE


In general, schools are performing well academically.

 Partially Developed

Overall, MCSC charter schools are performing below the norm in both math and language arts. However, they are not in the bottom quartile, which suggests that while they are not performing well academically, they are not persistently failing. Unfortunately, data availability limits our review of school performance regarding growth and subgroup analysis, both of which are critical indicators of school academic health.

Recommendation: Develop a public annual report of school performance to present to the public the status of charter school academic progress in Maine and to support accountability decision-making, transparency, and access to quality school options for parents.

Application decisions reflect appropriate requirements for and rigorous evaluation of the educational program's likelihood of success and the applicant's capacity for educating children well.

 Partially Developed

MCSC's application outlines requirements that support a rigorous review of an applicant's educational program. MCSC recently revised its charter school evaluation criteria for the 2017 cycle. The new criteria lay out the requirements and establish a clear bar for approval by making a distinction between minimally compliant—"It does not create confidence in the success of the applicant to implement that aspect of a successful, sustainable, high-quality charter school"—and fully compliant—"It provides strong indication that the applicant can successfully implement that aspect of a successful, sustainable, high-quality charter school." (MCSC Reviewer Rubric) The education plan section of the application appropriately requires the applicant to address its mission and vision, targeted student population and community, proposed curriculum, special populations, approach to assessment, school climate, and behavior management. In addition, the Commission issues a separate Request for Proposals (RFP) designed specifically for applicants proposing online education programs. The virtual-specific RFP requests founding groups to respond to requirements in the education plan that are aligned to national standards for evaluating virtual school proposals. Further, the evaluation criteria, for both the virtual and standard application, establish clear requirements for applicants to submit a quality proposal.

However, while the current applications for both general and virtual schools are comprehensive, the evaluation rubric and subsequent individual reviewer analyses do not always contain the level of detail necessary to ensure that applicants submit a fully developed education plan and that the plan is sufficiently vetted prior to approval. The evaluations themselves reflect a mixed level of rigor and, in many cases, more detail is needed to support the given ratings. While most education plan evaluation rubrics include some feedback on an applicant's strengths or weaknesses, in many instances, the space provided for evidence and justification is left blank and notes are often missing for individual evaluation criteria. In some cases, reviewers only include brief descriptors, such as "yes," "included," "weak," or "n/a" for individual evaluation criteria. The rubric instructions also reference assigning a score for each subsection but few completed rubrics list a score and it is unclear how the scoring is ultimately used, as no guidance or explanation was provided as to how reviewers are to use the points. When asked, MCSC staff shared that they do not know how the ratings are used.

Furthermore, the stated ratings and analysis are not carried over to the Findings of Fact documents, which are the core documents presented to the Commission for application decisions. MCSC does not have a procedure to incorporate individual evaluator ratings from the evaluation rubrics to the Findings of Fact content and recommendation. The Findings of Fact for one application and subsequent MCSC meeting discussion provide evidence that the review team conducted a rigorous review. However, the Findings of Fact analysis for another school does not demonstrate a similar level of analysis, leading to concerns over consistent application of the evaluation criteria. For instance, evaluators assessment of the education plan for the latter school include statements of the school's governing board, reputation in the community, and financial stability but contain little analysis of the actual academic plan. In contrast, the former Findings of Fact outlines strengths and concerns of different elements of the education plan in addition to a summary analysis that assesses the applicant's likelihood of success. It is likely that MCSC made necessary improvements to its


review process from one year to the next, but this cannot be confirmed as different teams conducted the reviews. It is critical that the Commission institute a consistent and high standard of review for applications, particularly given the challenges MCSC experienced with one school in its first year of operation.

MCSC recently approved two virtual school applications with conditions, given concerns about the education model based on published research studies about the overall performance of full-time virtual charter schools. MCSC had concerns given the amount of research pointing to ineffective virtual education models—including the service providers with whom the governing board decided to contract—but approved both virtual charters. The Commission placed conditions on the schools based on research pointing to lack of communication, sense of community, and teacher collaboration/mentoring. As we discuss in more detail in the Autonomy section of this report, MCSC placed restrictions on the education program to attempt to control for concerns that the Commission had about general virtual charter schools' likelihood of success. However, the restrictions neither uphold school autonomy nor demonstrate a rigorous bar for applicant approval.

As we discuss further in the Authorizer Procedures section, the structure of review teams and their level of training impacts the quality of the reviews. MCSC does not train application reviewers and does not attempt to normalize application analyses across reviewers, introducing the potential for inconsistencies in reviews.

Recommendation: Strengthen application reviews to include more detail and context to support the stated ratings and recommendations.

The authorizer holds schools accountable for academic performance using objective and verifiable measures, established in the charter contract or performance framework, that address, at a minimum, student achievement, student growth, and post-secondary readiness or success as primary measures of school quality.

 Partially Developed

MCSC has a guiding document schools use to develop performance frameworks called “measures guidance.” The guidance lacks some critical measures, which leads to school performance frameworks without these critical measures. MCSC incorporate the school’s performance framework into the contract and MCSC evaluates schools against the measures included in this framework annually and at renewal. However, the framework guidance emphasizes progress alone, rather than a mix of achievement and progress, by establishing benchmarks for improvement based on first-year performance and does not roll up to an overall academic rating. While improvement benchmarking helps schools focus on improving performance, it does not establish a minimum threshold of performance that all schools must meet to remain in good standing. For instance, a school in its first year could have proficiency scores significantly below similar schools serving similar populations but be required to only make incremental improvements, thus continuing to underserve its students. Theoretically, a school could continue to underperform compared to similar schools but poor performance would go unnoticed given how the current framework is structured.

Further, while the framework guidance is comprehensive—including proficiency, growth, high school graduation, and measures to close the achievement gap—it does not include a methodology for rolling up performance to a more easily understood rating. As a result, school leaders express some confusion as to the bar they are expected to reach. One school leader noted in the survey: “We have a clear understanding of how we are being judged on performance indicators but we don’t have a clear understanding of whether the expectation is that we meet all indicators all the time or which indicators are most important.” Ultimately, this leads to subjective interpretation of the measures and uncertainty over what the authorizer is valuing for performance to earn renewal. The authorizer may renew one school but non-renew another even if they meet the same number of measures, however different.

Multiple people interviewed noted challenges with Maine’s testing and performance accountability requirements, stating that the test and structure have changed so much over the last few years that they have lost their utility. To address test accuracy issues and provide another data point to consider, MCSC required schools to choose a supplemental test for accountability purposes. This is a positive move and a great way to bring consistency to charter school accountability and performance analysis. However, MCSC does not pay for administration, leaving this an “unfunded mandate” on schools. It also does not require the same assessment for each school, which is important for

autonomy but makes it difficult to compare across schools. In practice, most schools use the same nationally normed NWEA assessment. However, because of the lack of a framework roll up methodology mentioned earlier, it is unclear to schools whether the state accountability assessment or the school-determined supplemental assessment is most important for critical decisions, such as renewal.

Last year, after MCSC's first-ever renewal decisions, the state released state accountability scores and one of the two schools renewed was rated in the lowest 5th percentile, leading critics to question the rigor of MCSC's renewal process. While all public schools saw inconsistencies in state accountability results last year, MCSC could have more proactively anticipated the inconsistencies in performance that ultimately came to light by incorporating an alternative program framework, where applicable, or clarifying the bar for renewal through well-established roll-up methodology.

Recommendation: Establish minimum expectations of proficiency for schoolwide and subgroup ratings, regardless of first-year performance. Consider using a similar schools comparison measure or the state-established priority school threshold to establish the standard.

Recommendation: Adjust the performance framework guidance to include weighting and roll-up methodology.

Recommendation: Consider requiring one single supplemental assessment or offering options but paying for only one, so as to incentivize charter schools to use the same assessment and provide ease of performance analysis, accountability decision-making, and reporting to the public.

ACCOUNTABILITY | IN DEPTH

BUSINESS PLAN AND PERFORMANCE


Schools generally appear to be financially viable.

 Undeveloped

MCSC does not collect and analyze charter school financial data. As a result, it is not possible to evaluate the financial viability and health of the MCSC charter schools. MCSC does not report, annually, a summary of its schools' financial performance.

Recommendation: Collect, analyze, and publicly report financial performance data of MCSC charter schools, aligned with established financial performance standards.

Application decisions reflect appropriate requirements for and rigorous evaluation of the business plan and the applicants' capacity for operating a financially viable school.

 Approaching Well-Developed


MCSC's application requirements include most, but not all, of the elements needed to sufficiently assess a school's financial viability and the applicant's capacity to implement a business plan. While the initial charter contract is five years, the application only requires a start-up and three-year budget. However, the application does require applicants to outline necessary assumptions and demonstrate alignment with the mission/vision and education program.

Reviewers' analysis of business plans has improved over time but financial risk is still not fully considered. Reviewer rubrics include detailed analysis to support stated strengths and weaknesses, and MCSC carries over stated analyses to the Findings of Fact documents, which are the core documents presented to the Commission for application decisions. However, a review a Findings of Fact document highlights concerns regarding the planned dependency of the proposed school on a private foundation that is closely connected with a network of private schools. During the Commission meeting at which this application was considered, this issue, though acknowledged, was not discussed in sufficient detail to assess the risk of the charter school's financial structure so closely tied to a private organization. It is also worth noting that the review teams may vary in their capacity to conduct these reviews and MCSC does not normalize and train application review teams.

Recommendation: Require applicants to submit five-year budgets.

Recommendation: Strengthen application reviews to assess critical financial stability risks.

The authorizer holds schools accountable for financial performance based on externally validated data measured against appropriate near-term and sustainability measures, established in the charter contract or performance framework, as the primary indicators of a school's financial viability.

 Minimally Developed

MCSC has not established a financial performance framework guidance document with near term and long term measures and does not have the systems in place to assess schools' financial performance and hold them accountable for such performance. Performance expectations are inconsistent across schools and not rigorous. The only financial measure included in MCSC's non-academic framework guidance document is a budget-to-actual expectation of within five percent of budget. However, in practice, the bar has been set much lower. One school's performance framework requires that the school remain within 15 percent of budget for the first year and 10 percent thereafter. Review of the school's budget shows an actual planned deficit of more than \$90K. Essentially, this school would be meeting financial expectations if it operates at a more than \$200K deficit. The 90-day visit noted budget challenges despite full enrollment and a waiting list, due to underestimation of reimbursable costs of special education student services. As another example, a school's contract has no standard for the budget, only that the governing board review financials at least quarterly. In addition, the framework guidance includes no sustainability measures to assess a school's long-term viability and no near-term performance measures to assess schools' same-year financial status.

Further, MCSC has approved a number of grade-level and enrollment expansion applications in recent years, and while staff note that they require schools to provide a clear financial plan, documents do not demonstrate thorough review and evaluation of schools' financial health and sustainability to manage such expansions. For example, in 2016, MCSC approved a school for a full 5-year renewal and enrollment expansion but the report notes some financial concerns. Namely, a reviewer comments that "the insistence on the need for continual growth in student numbers for financial stability is a bit concerning. There must be other ways to gain financial stability." Rather than seeking more complete financial review prior to making an expansion determination, the Commission approved the school. However, given the lack of financial data and MCSC analysis, the evaluation team was unable to determine whether schools are financially stable but lack the evidence to demonstrate that stability or whether the schools are struggling.


Recommendation: Establish financial performance framework guidance to hold schools accountable for near- and long-term financial health.

Recommendation: Build capacity in the area of financial knowledge and expertise to support application reviews, monitoring, and accountability decisions.

ACCOUNTABILITY | IN DEPTH


ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN AND PERFORMANCE

Schools generally appear to be meeting their legal and fiduciary obligations, and operating free from conflicts of interest.

 Partially Developed

Given the minimal organizational data collected and analyzed by MCSC, it is difficult to evaluate the organizational performance of MCSC charter schools. According to the annual report that MCSC submitted to the Maine Commissioner of Education for the 2015-16 school year, all but two schools met the organizational performance measures included in its performance framework guidance. Those that did not meet expectations received ratings of "Partially Meets" for the School and Social Academic Climate, and Parent and Community Engagement metrics. It is important to note that the organizational framework guidance is missing a number of critical indicators, which we outline below.

Application decisions reflect appropriate requirements for and rigorous evaluation of the organizational plan and the applicants' capacity for managing school operations and meeting organizational requirements effectively.

 Partially Developed


The MCSC application requirements in this area are generally sound, but the application evaluations demonstrate a mixed quality of review. MCSC requires applicants to describe a clear plan for how the organization will be governed and managed. Specifically, the application includes sections on governance, staffing and human resources, pre-opening, parent and community involvement, and operational requirements, such as emergency planning, facilities, transportation, and food service. In addition, while the application requires an organizational chart depicting the roles of governing board officers and committee chairs, applicants do not have to outline the school's lines of authority and reporting or clearly define the roles and responsibilities for school leadership and management. A strength is the Commission's separate RFP for applicants proposing online education programs which includes additional governance requirements aligned to national standards for evaluating virtual school proposals. The application also includes a separate section for applicants planning to contract with an education service provider.

As stated previously, the application evaluation rubric does not require reviewers to provide a rationale or justification for ratings and the evaluations themselves reflect a mixed level of rigor. In many cases, more detail is needed to support the given ratings in a section. The assessment of the organizational plan has improved over time and the most recent application evaluation demonstrates MCSC's careful assessment of the applicant's organizational capacity. In this case, the review team recommended denial of an application based in part on concerns with the applicant's capacity to be compliant with applicable laws.

MCSC members note that they struggle with assessing the applicant's capacity to open and govern a charter school, and that this weakness was evident in one school's first-year challenges. Upon approval of the application, most of the founding board members and school leadership resigned, highlighting a concern that the review team had not appropriately assessed the commitment of the founding board and team. In the Findings of Fact, the MCSC review team identified as strengths the governing body's capacity to fulfill its fiduciary responsibilities and the board's diversity of experience. However, it did not focus on the founding board's ability to implement the proposed organizational plan. In the next application phase, MCSC made revisions to the Findings of Fact template, including the addition of a requirement for the review team to assess whether it is "convinced that the Board members and Executive Leadership have the skills, background, and understanding of their roles necessary to make this a viable and sustainable public charter."

Recommendation: Strengthen application reviews to include more detail and context to support the stated ratings and recommendations.

The authorizer holds schools accountable for meeting organizational performance requirements established in the charter contract or the performance framework, including educational program requirements; governance and reporting requirements; fiduciary and financial management obligations; and operational requirements related to students, employees, and the school environment.

 Approaching Well-Developed

The charter contract and performance framework guidance establish some of the critical elements to hold schools accountable for organizational performance and, in practice, MCSC does hold schools accountable for meeting organizational performance expectations. The charter contract and performance framework guidance outline some of the organizational performance requirements but are missing key measures, such as identification of key educational program elements, reporting requirements, and expectations of each party in monitoring school performance. In addition, the contract also states simply that schools must follow applicable law, without providing detail, and does not outline legal requirements in critical areas such as special education program and compliance, English learner program and compliance, and school health and safety standards.

Despite not including some critical elements in the performance framework guidance, MCSC, in practice, does hold schools accountable to them. In particular, MCSC collaborates closely with the DOE to monitor and oversee charter schools' special education programs. Two schools were renewed last year, neither of which had any organizational or compliance concerns. Of note, MCSC closely monitors school access data on student discipline and tracks bullying data. It also monitors school enrollment closely.

Recommendation: Revise the organizational performance framework guidance to encompass all critical legal compliance requirements and key educational program terms.

ACCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS

Access means the equal opportunity for all students to attend quality public charter schools. The authorizer increases access to quality public education by ensuring that all charter schools are meeting their equitable obligations and commitments, including for open enrollment; for transparent, consistent enforcement of student discipline; for meeting the needs of students identified with disabilities and English learners; for providing safe and adequate facilities and transportation; and by providing high-performing charter schools with opportunities to grow.

This section assesses the extent to which the authorizer ensures that schools are meeting their equitable obligations and that the authorizer provides opportunities for quality programs to increase access through growth.

KEY STRENGTHS

- The authorizer ensures that public charter schools in Maine are open to all students by including specific questions about how schools will serve English learners and students with disabilities.
- The authorizer proactively partners with the DOE special education division to provide schools with compliance support in Years 1 and 2 and monitoring in future years.
- The authorizer ensures that public charter schools in Maine maintain open enrollment through annual monitoring.
- The contract requires schools to agree to an open and non-discriminatory enrollment process.

FOCUS AREAS

RECOMMENDATIONS

Enrollment

Analyze re-enrollment rates by subgroup, especially special education and gender, to ensure that all students feel welcome once fully enrolled; monitor withdrawals for all students by subgroup and publish the findings annually.

Students with Disabilities

Continue the partnership with DOE in monitoring special education compliance but communicate concerns proactively and consider MCSC action if schools are not in compliance and do not address deficiencies in a timely manner.


Growth

Develop clear, measurable criteria for schools to demonstrate success *before* applying for expansion. Such criteria could include student proficiency and growth levels by subgroup on state assessments, re-enrollment rates, waiting lists, and other clear marks of high quality.


ACCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS | IN DEPTH

ENROLLMENT

The application process includes appropriate requirements for and rigorous evaluation of a school's enrollment plan.

 Well-Developed

The authorizer effectively monitors schools' enrollment practices to ensure that they are fair, transparent, and in accordance with applicable law.

 Well-Developed

MCSC has a robust application process that includes questions specifically designed to address open enrollment and inclusion. The accompanying evaluation rubric provides a standard for approval that includes providing access to all students. In both the application and the rubric, MCSC states the school must reach out to students during recruitment and enrollment, including low-income and English learners. For example, when describing pre-opening conditions, Commissioners and staff explained how they required a school located in Lewiston to translate materials and target outreach to the growing Somali community.

The charter contract has appropriate controls to support fair and equal enrollment practices. The charter contract includes a non-discrimination clause in enrollment and admissions. It also requires schools to use random selection processes for enrollment. To date, there have been no concerns about any school's enrollment policies or practices. The law requires schools to follow strict guidelines in conducting fair lotteries and maintaining waiting lists, and MCSC monitors lottery processes well; staff or commission members have attended almost all lotteries held, to date.


While the Commission monitors enrollment, re-enrollment rates, and student mobility generally, it does not monitor such rates by student subgroups. MCSC's monitoring is done in broad strokes without analyzing special populations separately and ensuring equal and continued access of all students to the school's program and its curriculum. For example, materials show that staff monitor enrollment through the "percent of students enrolled for multiple years," and the Commission is collecting data to examine student mobility. However, MCSC does not review reports of mobility by gender, disability, or race/ethnicity (if appropriate). The authorizer relies heavily on climate surveys and meetings with families to measure culture and climate. However, MCSC does not yet require a specific response rate to ensure that each population is proportionately represented. Additionally, it does not ensure that the data is collected and analyzed by population to ensure all students have a similar feeling of inclusiveness. This is only the second time MCSC has administered the climate survey and should consider such controls in the future as it refines its process.

Recommendation: Analyze re-enrollment rates by subgroup, especially special education and gender, to ensure that all students feel welcome once fully enrolled.


Recommendation: Monitor withdrawals for all students by subgroup and publish the findings annually.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

The application process includes appropriate requirements for and rigorous evaluation of a school's student discipline plan.

 Well-Developed

The authorizer effectively monitors a school's student discipline procedures and practices to ensure that they are fair, transparent, and in accordance with applicable law.

 Well-Developed

MCSC has a well-developed application and process for monitoring school discipline. The application requires schools to submit their discipline policies and the evaluation rubric requires that policies include tiered interventions. Each policy is included in the individual charter contract, ensuring that it is implemented and followed.

There is no evidence of schools using exclusionary discipline excessively (i.e., suspension and expulsion). However, MCSC does not analyze the data by subgroup, which could provide more information about schools' practices in this

area. The schools report few instances of exclusionary discipline, and referred to common definitions and understandings of infractions that would lead to suspensions or expulsions, such as weapons and violence. Likewise, MCSC reports on schools' overall discipline rates. MCSC has access to school-reported student-level suspension and expulsion data and uses this information to ensure that no school is suspending students at high rates. School leaders, staff, and Commissioners all stated that there were few instances of exclusionary discipline occurring at Maine's public charter schools.

While there are few instances of suspension, withdrawals came up in a number of interviews as a potential area to monitor. While not part of the charter law or in any of MCSC's official authorizing tools or documents, MCSC is beginning to probe schools through anecdotal questions at on-site reviews to determine whether schools are counseling out students. For example, one Commissioner mentioned that they may question if they notice, for example, "a group of twelfth graders withdrawing eight weeks before graduating." MCSC is careful not to conflate withdrawals at brick-and-mortar schools with the high rates of withdrawal at the two virtual schools during the first few months, which, according to studies, is consistent with online schools. MCSC heavily monitors the online schools in this area. When issues arise, MCSC brings them to the attention of the school's staff, where the issue is best resolved.


Recommendation: Disaggregate discipline data by subgroup to ensure that there is no evidence of one group being excluded at higher rates than another.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The application process includes appropriate requirements for and rigorous evaluation of a school's plan for identifying, serving, and educating students with disabilities.

 Well-Developed

The authorizer effectively monitors a school's compliance with laws protecting students with disabilities.

 Approaching Well-Developed

MCSC is well-developed in its focus on students with disabilities in its application process and approaching well-developed in its monitoring processes. MCSC has formed an effective partnership with the DOE. Staff from the DOE participate in reviews, renewals, and compliance monitoring. However, some schools still struggle with compliance. Students with disabilities account for approximately 25 to 30 percent of the charter school student population in Maine. This percentage is higher than the percentage of students with disabilities served by traditional public schools in Maine, which is just below 17 percent).

The application sets up schools to be inclusive and to focus on all students. It contains a section on "special populations," which evaluates the academic program based on the founding group's commitment and vision for serving all students, particularly those with disabilities. DOE special education experts review each application, providing the necessary expertise to assess an applicant's likelihood to open and operate a quality program for all types of learners. Schools are open to all students, with high percentages of students with disabilities enrolling and attending.

MCSC monitors schools' compliance with local and state laws but schools still struggle with compliance disproportionate to traditional schools. Special education compliance is particularly complex, especially for new charter schools. The charter law requires that each charter school is its own Local Education Agency (LEA) for special education, which requires each school to provide a full continuum of services. From the beginning, MCSC has partnered with the DOE to ensure that schools were compliant. Schools likewise understand their oversight and generally have a positive relationship with the DOE and MCSC with regard to serving students with disabilities. However, despite these efforts, two of the nine public charter schools are currently late on addressing errors identified in their corrective action plans for IDEA compliance. Both schools are new and learning the legal requirements of IDEA. The state is providing technical assistance to bring the schools into compliance and the state noted that it is appropriately supported by the Commission.


MCSC monitors special education academic performance as part of its subgroup analysis. Additionally, schools mentioned conducting a 35-70 page self-assessment as part of their renewal that includes a section on how they have been serving all students. While both types of reporting provide MCSC with information about each school's program, the self-assessment is qualitative and explanatory, and not extremely useful when determining how well students with

disabilities are doing academically and therefore whether a school's charter should be renewed.

Recommendation: Continue the partnership with DOE in monitoring special education compliance but communicate concerns proactively and consider MCSC action if schools are not in compliance and do not address deficiencies in a timely manner.

ENGLISH LEARNERS

The application process includes appropriate requirements for and rigorous evaluation of a school's plan for identifying, serving, and educating English learners.

 Well-Developed

The authorizer effectively monitors a school's compliance with laws protecting English learners.

 Partially Developed

Though Maine has a relatively small population of English learners, the MCSC charter application appropriately requires schools to contemplate serving English learners by asking questions about their programs and models. However, MSCS's monitoring and oversight practices in this area are minimally developed.

When describing Maine's population, members referenced "pockets" of "new Americans" for English learners. One charter school is in the catchment area of a significant immigrant community and, as a result, the Commission asked for specific strategies this school would employ to ensure the immigrant community was aware of the charter school as an education option, holding the school accountable to Title VI (language access) and applicable law by requiring flyers and enrollment paperwork to be translated into the target language.

Through the charter contract, MCSC requires that schools meet applicable laws and not discriminate based on language. Consistent with their charter contracts, schools confirmed in interviews that they give the Home Language Survey and test students who noted speaking a language other than English at home.

Currently, not many English learners attend charter schools in Maine. The authorizer does not have explicit protocols and tools for overseeing English learner compliance, but rather relies on expertise from DOE to develop and administer English learner monitoring. As with special education, MCSC limits oversight of English learners to compliance and, while MCSC receives and reviews English learner data, it does not report subgroup outcomes of English learners separately, particularly because there are so few English learners in its charter schools.


Recommendation: Ensure that schools are proactive in making charters accessible to English learners and ensure they are ready to serve this population well.

FACILITIES

The application process includes appropriate requirements for and rigorous evaluation of the adequacy of the facilities plan for the number of students to be served.

 Well-Developed

The authorizer effectively monitors the adequacy of the facilities for meeting health and safety and other legal requirements.

 Approaching Well-Developed

MCSC's charter application includes appropriate requirements for assessing school facilities, but the Commission's monitoring practices in this area are often at odds with school autonomy. The charter application requires a proposed facility or plans to find a facility and focuses appropriately on how the facility will be maintained and paid for, and how the school will ensure it complies with appropriate laws, including health and safety. If the school does not find a facility, it must develop a back-up facility plan for how it will accommodate students in its first year of operation.

The contract's section on facilities outlines appropriate facility requirements, such as meeting the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and allowing the Commission to visit the school at any time to monitor for health and safety. The contract also requires that schools provide the Commission with a copy of the signed lease and limits the school's ability to operate if the facility and lease do not meet the Commission's standard of approval. Appropriately, a change

in facility is a material change in the charter.

While MCSC monitors the basic health and safety of facilities prior to school opening, it also requires schools to seek permission for basic school operations, such as selecting custodians and food vendors. This is an overstep of authority and creates unnecessary burdens for schools. MCSC conducts annual on-site reviews and requires submission of compliance documents. Whether explicitly required by MCSC or not, schools indicate the need for approval from the Commission to make operational changes. In addition, in its annual monitoring reports, the Commission reports on the upkeep of the facilities, going into as much detail as to mention if the school changed custodial vendors or agreements, which is well beyond the role of the authorizer. The amount of back and forth required for schools to make relatively simple operational changes is, at times, burdensome, resembling traditional school system bureaucracies versus the flexibilities intended for public charter schools.


Recommendation: Avoid encroaching on school autonomy in areas that are not material to the terms of the charter or that are more appropriately managed by school leadership and/or the charter board, such as vendor agreements.

TRANSPORTATION

The application process includes appropriate requirements for and rigorous evaluation of a school's plan to provide student transportation services or meet the transportation needs of its students.

 Well-Developed

The authorizer effectively monitors a school's implementation of the approved transportation plan and compliance with applicable student safety laws.

 Approaching Well-Developed

The Commission's application process is well-developed in its evaluation of school transportation plans, ensuring that schools comply with laws requiring that they provide transportation options for all families. However, in practice, transportation may be serving as a barrier to student enrollment and a contributing factor in charter school withdrawals.

The application sets the expectation that schools will provide transportation services but allows schools to develop plans unique to their student population, location, and catchment area funding. The Commission reviews transportation plans for transporting both students in the catchment area and beyond, and evaluates whether such plans are viable financially. Schools also must address transportation for students with disabilities according to IDEA requirements. Schools are able to contract with third-party providers and submit a plan on how to hold them accountable. These plans are included in the charter agreement and become the standard by which schools are measured.


MCSC requires schools to follow the transportation plan provided in their applications and incorporated into their charter contracts. However, the contract does not identify what types of changes to a school's transportation plan, if any, would be considered a material change and therefore subject to the Commission's approval. As a result, schools have been compelled to ask MCSC for permission when implementing changes to transportation plans or arrangements.

Additionally, MCSC is not carefully monitoring the effectiveness of these transportation plans. In interviews, schools identified transportation as a barrier to access and gave anecdotal evidence of students withdrawing due to transportation hardships, even when the school provided a level of service. MCSC did not comment on transportation being a barrier to enrollment.

Recommendation: Interview withdrawn students to understand if transportation is a contributing factor to withdrawing and incorporate analysis of access to transportation in MCSC's climate survey to better understand whether transportation is a true barrier to enrollment.

GROWTH

The authorizer encourages opportunities for increased access to quality public schools by allowing for expansion and growth of schools and programs that are demonstrably serving children well.

 Partially Developed

MCSC is beginning to tackle expansion requests but has not yet developed a thoughtful growth strategy. MCSC has an expansion application, but has not established a standard or threshold that schools must meet to apply to expand. As a result, any school, regardless of its track record of performance, can apply to expand grades, enrollment, or even school sites. MCSC did recently develop an expansion application. However, this application's main focus is financial viability and access to facilities rather than academic outcomes or equity. Furthermore, the application does not differentiate between types and size of expansion, and does not center its standard on past academic performance, but rather asks schools to reflect and project, which is impossible to evaluate objectively. No rubric currently exists to effectively assess the proposers' track record of success in educating all students. Lastly, when a school is approved for expansion, the changes to its program are not included in its charter agreement, which references the original charter application.

Recommendation: Develop clear, measurable criteria for schools to demonstrate success *before* applying for expansion. Such criteria could include student proficiency and growth levels by subgroup on state assessments, re-enrollment rates, waiting lists, and other clear marks of high quality.

Recommendation: Develop a differentiated policy to handle the many types of expansion requests, including adding additional students to a current campus, expanding grade levels at a current campus, or adding an additional campus.

DEFINING AND RESPECTING SCHOOL AUTONOMY

The authorizer honors and preserves charter school autonomies, ensuring schools have ample opportunities to adapt as needed to meet the needs of their students.

For charter schools, autonomy means the ability to determine how best to meet the educational needs of their students and how best to fulfill the public educational, financial, and organizational commitments it has made. Autonomy means the ability to make programmatic decisions and to decide how to allocate key resources such as time, people, and money. When an authorizer upholds autonomy, it is as much a reflection of what the authorizer does not do as what it does. It means avoiding restrictions or requirements on schools beyond what is mandated by law. It means resisting the impulse to translate the shortcomings or failures of one school into new restrictions or requirements for all schools. Autonomy works in concert with accountability and access. It means remembering that the authorizer’s job is not to make schools succeed but to give them the opportunity to succeed. This section examines the extent to which the authorizer upholds school autonomy.

KEY STRENGTHS

- The MCSC application clearly communicates the legally entitled autonomies of the charter school governing board over key school management decisions.
- The Commission recognizes a need to clarify its responsibilities, especially regarding those related to charter school amendments.

FOCUS AREAS

Charter Agreement

Monitoring

RECOMMENDATIONS

Remove the charter application as an attachment in the charter contract.


Clearly define material terms of the charter contract with an eye to autonomy and limit charter amendments to material terms. Leave non-material decisions to the charter school governing boards.

Streamline the site visit protocol and monitoring visits to align directly to the performance framework guidance and charter contract, and ensure reviewers are trained on the authorizer and charter school board roles and responsibilities to avoid infringing on autonomy.

DEFINING AND RESPECTING SCHOOL AUTONOMY | IN DEPTH

APPLICATIONS

Application requirements and decisions reflect appropriate recognition of and respect for school autonomy.

 Approaching Well-Developed


The MCSC application communicates clearly that the charter school governing board will have legally entitled autonomy over key school management decisions and specifically outlines autonomy over “key decisions, including, but not limited to, decisions concerning finance, personnel, scheduling, curriculum, and instructions.” MCSC application requirements do not indicate any preconceptions toward one educational model over another, and the Commission’s development of a virtual school application indicates careful assessment of educational plans with an openness to different models used to meet the needs of Maine’s students—especially those in its rural communities.

However, in practice, out of both a recognition of the need for virtual options in the state’s rural areas and a genuine concern about the quality of virtual school programs, MCSC developed certain safeguards for virtual schools which infringe on school autonomy. These safeguards include mandating that all teachers work out of a single brick-and-mortar facility located in Maine to ensure the teachers are Maine residents and to promote collaboration. Yet requiring teachers work out of a single site is based on assumptions about the effectiveness of particular educational philosophies. MCSC believes that students are best served when teachers collaborate and that teachers collaborate best when located in close physical proximity. However, MCSC has not established the basis for this assertion. In fact, this safeguard created another potentially greater concern that teachers may be further from the students. MCSC decided to limit school autonomy as an attempt to ensure that virtual programs are more effective. However, it did so based on an unproven assumption and without consideration of the governing board’s autonomy to make its own decisions about how to make the program more effective. This requirement has lasting ramifications. The Commission is now in a position to approve a telecommuting policy for the school, which is far outside the authority of a charter authorizer.

Recommendation: Avoid applying programmatic restrictions on charter schools as a condition of approval.

CONTRACT AND PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

Requirements in the charter contract, accountability plans, and/or performance frameworks reflect appropriate recognition of and respect for school autonomy.

 Partially Developed

MCSC-established practices sometimes restrict charter school autonomy and place undue burden on schools to comply with ambiguous requirements. School leaders and Commissioners are unclear as to which programmatic decisions the school controls, which has resulted in all items being voted on or, at a minimum, brought to the Commission’s attention. In a recent Commission meeting, members discussed school operational decisions they would “accept” and those they would “approve.” This led to a discussion about why some changes were presented as notices while others necessitated approval. It is not clear to anyone why the Commission considers some items to be material terms of the charter and therefore require Commission approval. Further, the role of the charter school board in governing these decisions is also unclear. MCSC’s definition of material terms which require amendment are in conflict with Maine’s charter school law, which states that charter school boards have autonomy over decisions related to management and operations of the school. (MRS 20-A §2401, sections 6, 9A)

The actual Commission process for evaluating contract amendments is also inconsistent and unclear. MCSC sometimes “approves” and sometimes “accepts” amendments to charter contracts. In the most recent board meeting, MCSC voted to approve decisions that should not be considered material terms. For example, it approved the hiring of lower-level administrative staff at one charter school. The charter contract states that only changes in governance and “senior management” are considered a material term of the charter. Further, it approved the change in instructional days from 200 to 195, even though this is clearly within the legal instructional day requirements of 175 established in the charter contract. It also voted to approve a schedule change for another charter school to shorten and lengthen school-day schedules to improve transportation efficiency, though the total time adjustment was noted as insignificant

by Commissioners. It is not clear why the Commission had to approve this change, as schedule changes are not considered a material change to the charter. This confusion was echoed in conversations in which schools, staff, and Commissioners all shared uncertainty as to what required a vote and what the school had autonomy to manage on its own. School leaders, out of fear of being out of compliance or out of habit, tend to run changes by the Commission. The Commission states that they have made changes to the charter contract to clarify amendment requirements and newer versions of charter contracts are clearer. However, confusion appears to persist and impact school decisions and Commission operations. The Commission may benefit from developing guidance to schools and staff to clarify amendment approvals and operational notifications.

Another concerning practice is the incorporation of the entire charter application in the charter contract. By incorporating the entire charter application, schools must technically seek authorizer approval to make any changes to the program and operations described in the charter application (see examples noted above). By requiring schools to submit all amendment requests to the Commission, MCSC has added an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy and the schools have lost their autonomy to act quickly when new conditions arise.

Recommendation: Clearly define material terms of the charter contract with an eye to autonomy and limit charter amendments to material terms. Leave non-material decisions to the charter school governing boards.

Recommendation: Remove the charter application as an attachment to the charter contract.

MONITORING AND INTERVENTION

The authorizer’s monitoring activities, including site visits, reporting requirements, and interventions—in cases of poor performance or non-compliance—reflect appropriate recognition of and respect for charter school autonomy.

Minimally Developed

On paper, MCSC appropriately identifies concerns with schools and requires the school to remedy without dictating changes. However, in practice, MCSC often steps out of this role and into the role of the charter school board.

In discussions with Commissioners and school leaders, everyone recognized that MCSC review teams sometimes become quite engaged in addressing or solving a school’s challenges. The level of engagement, while well-intended, does not respect school autonomy. School leaders also noted concerns with the level of reporting and communication required by the Commission, including some monitoring requirements that are duplicative and overly burdensome.

Site visit reports and corresponding recommendations to schools demonstrate that MCSC review teams often infringe on areas that should be within the control of the charter school governing board. Some schools reported feeling that they do not have the autonomy to make certain decisions and that during site visits, MCSC often suggests solutions which schools feel they must follow. Commissioners confirmed this, noting that they often provide advice and “strongly worded suggestions” during site visits. For example, in one site visit report, MCSC recommended, “The Board would benefit from board training and from developing a self-evaluation instrument to review information and data to examine the success of the school.” Another site visit report noted, “Although the Marshall model for teacher evaluation has been approved there needs to be a clearer plan of supervision and this needs to be a priority.”

Recommendation: Streamline the site visit protocol and monitoring visits to align directly to the performance framework guidance and charter contract, and ensure reviewers are trained on the authorizer and charter school board roles and responsibilities to avoid infringing on autonomy.

AUTHORIZING PROCEDURES AND CAPACITY

The authorizer's procedures support the implementation of high-quality authorizing practices and the authorizer has the capacity, in terms of staffing and resources, to carry out its authorizing duties effectively.

Holding schools accountable for their performance, ensuring families' access to quality schools, and providing schools the autonomy they need to be successful requires strong authorizing procedures and the capacity to implement these procedures effectively. This section examines the key authorizing procedures, such as application and renewal processes, and the authorizer's capacity to implement such procedures, including its ability to plan well for the future and allocate appropriate staff and resources to carry out its authorizing duties.

KEY STRENGTHS

- Both staff and Commissioners showed an intense dedication to their mission and vision for a vibrant, high-quality charter sector in Maine.
- MCSC has an established process for holding public meetings for all votes on charter applications, amendments, requests, and policies. The Commission meets regularly in a public setting, holds a public comment period, and allows schools to present their materials.
- The Commission acts in response to and anticipation of local and national politics. This heightened awareness prompted it to commission a study of charter school quality in Maine and to build strong alliances with the DOE, school leaders, and the charter association, as well as with national organizations, such as NACSA.

FOCUS AREAS

Roles and Responsibilities

Monitoring Systems

Decision-Making

RECOMMENDATIONS

Clarify and confirm the roles of the Commissioners and staff; revisit all tasks currently completed by staff and Commissioners, and assign tasks based on defined roles.

In the budgeting process, request full-time positions or identify other solutions to create a highly capable, stable staff environment.


Build systems to streamline data collection requests and mitigate ad hoc requests throughout the year.

Ensure that Commissioners are able to make objective charter school decisions, free of any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

AUTHORIZING PROCEDURES AND CAPACITY | IN DEPTH

AUTHORIZER PROCEDURES

The authorizer runs a clear and well-structured application process, which includes clear information and guidance to potential applicants and the community.

 Approaching Well-Developed

MCSC has established a strong application process but, in practice, this process can be inefficient for both applicants and reviewers.

The application has a clear timeline for submitting applications, including separate dates to check for completeness and content, and a formal interview with the applicant. This timeline is established by law and is incorporated into the Commission's process. Likewise, the application itself mirrors the requirements set forth in the charter law and does not request extraneous information. The application includes a standard for approval for each section, providing transparency and clarity into the evaluation process. While the review teams are Commissioners volunteering their time, the teams use the rubrics to determine recommendations for approval. Also, as mentioned earlier in this report, MCSC has created a separate RFP for virtual school applicants. The only area of concern in the applications themselves is the length. MCSC does not require page limits for its applications, allowing new school applications to run upward of 700 pages or more. Page limits may reduce extraneous information and force a more coherent and streamlined application.


The current structure of review teams—made up solely of Commissioners, with DOE staff reviewing specific sections—is not ideal or sustainable and is significantly draining of Commissioners' time. In its first few years, using Commissioners to review applications was a necessary practice because MCSC did not have any staff. Now, however, the Commission does have staff and Commissioners have many other responsibilities, which makes finding time to thoroughly review an application challenging.

Furthermore, MCSC does not provide training and does not normalize application analyses across reviewers, which impacts the quality of the reviews. While staff review applications in their entirety, they do not typically participate in the substantive discussion or provide analysis or recommendations that, to date, have actually informed MCSC's decisions.

Recommendation: Select and train reviewers to conduct comprehensive analyses of applications; broaden review teams beyond Commissioners to address growing capacity challenges; incorporate external reviewers.

Recommendation: Include page limits for the charter application to avoid excessively long applications.

The authorizer ensures that approved schools are prepared adequately for opening.

 Approaching Well-Developed

MCSC is approaching well-developed in this area because schools generally open on time, fully enrolled, and ready to operate. MCSC has a thorough pre-opening checklist that includes appropriate focus on compliance, enrollment, and programming. The checklist requires that schools have all necessary components, such as their certificate of occupancy, staff background checks, food service vendors, transportation, furniture, and filing systems. The authorizer reviews all of the documentation and completes the checklist, noting areas of deficiency and providing extensions appropriately, if required.

In addition, 90 days after opening, the review team (Commissioners who reviewed the charter application) returns to conduct a more thorough site visit review of the school, with a focus on its education program. During this visit, the review team meets with the school leader and governing board. The special education director from the DOE joins these reviews to provide technical assistance for special education compliance and programming.

However, similar to other monitoring challenges related to financial performance, MCSC has struggled to effectively monitor schools' pre-operational financial performance. Two schools that opened this past fall struggled with

operations, partly due to financial management and/or governance.

Recommendation: Incorporate into the pre-opening and first-year monitoring protocols expectations to more closely monitor pre-operational and first year schools' financial performance.

The authorizer has sound procedures and practices for monitoring school performance and intervening appropriately when it identifies problems.

 Partially Developed

The Commission's approach to building procedures and establishing effective practices for monitoring schools' academic, operational, and financial performance is partially developed. MCSC has an established site visit protocol based on the Commission's performance framework guidance document. The protocol as written and as interpreted may contribute to authorizer overreach as more fully discussed in the Autonomy section of this report.

Furthermore, site visit data collections are dependent on the review team expertise, rather than a systematic approach led by staff trained to do site visits. Review teams do not use a research-based observation template to guide the site visit (e.g., objectives provided ahead of the visit informing schools of the qualitative evidence of good standing). In some cases, Commissioners lead the reviews without taking into consideration staff observations. In other cases, staff lead the reviews and provide the Commissioners with their analysis. The latter is a more systematic approach, with less potential bias in collection and analysis of qualitative data. In the past two years, staff has created some tools for site visits and some teams are leading more structured visits, though the visits are currently mostly focused on school climate.

In addition to site visits, the Commission monitors school compliance and finance through data collection, which is currently done in a time-consuming manner. School leaders find data collection to be burdensome because MCSC requests and collects information via email rather than through a data collection system, and often collects it in an ad hoc fashion with sporadic due dates. MCSC is aware of this burden on schools and has created a calendar of submissions to provide more lead time for required reports. In addition, MCSC recently invested in a data collection and monitoring program to help manage its data submission and storage, which it hopes will reduce work for schools and provide staff with more time to interpret data. MCSC staff also works with the DOE to streamline and coordinate data collection requests.

Finally, the Commission relies on survey data to measure school climate, which can provide a one-sided view of the school and can be easily manipulated through selection bias. Assessment of school climate is very important to the Commission and is referenced in Maine's charter school law. MCSC conducts a school climate survey, but the results are not fully reliable because administration of the survey is not consistent across all schools. Per the non-academic performance guidance, MCSC does not mandate the minimum number of surveys to be returned, and families who leave the school do not have an opportunity to complete it. In addition to the survey, the authorizer meets with parents and staff, chosen by the school, during annual school site visits. The authorizer insists on interviewing a different group of parents each year. However, it is unclear how the results of these interviews provide more or better information than what is captured through the climate survey, though neither provide objective information about a school's outcomes.

With regard to intervention, MCSC does not have clear intervention policy, which leads to ambiguity of expectations for schools identified for intervention. Despite collecting tremendous amounts of data through its site visits, the authorizer does not have an established protocol outlining when intervention is warranted or how observational data ultimately informs and supports findings of school performance. There is evidence of Commissioners feeling too close to schools to be objective. One school claims that it has had three meetings in one month with the Commission about its status, but did not have anything in writing stating that it was officially on probation, why it was on probation, and what it needed to achieve to be removed from probation. This school recognized a need to remedy and did proactively develop a school improvement plan to address concerns MCSC communicated without formal notice. However, every person that we spoke to about this school had a different reason for the school being on probation. The school itself was unsure of what standards it needed to meet to exit probation.

The Commission does not differentiate between higher-performing schools and others, expending the same amount of staff and Commission energy on both types of schools. There is no "reward" for doing well, such as fewer site visits or decreased monitoring documents. For example, a school with high re-enrollment rates and satisfaction scores on the

climate survey may not need family interviews as part of its site review. A school in strong financial health may only need to submit financials quarterly while another school may need to do so monthly.

As mentioned in the Accountability section of this report, MCSC financial performance measures do not effectively measure short- and long-term financial health and viability. Additionally, partly due to lack of staff expertise, MCSC does not monitor financial performance, leading to a lack of focus on schools' financial health. Last year, one school struggled in its first year of operation in a number of areas, including financial performance and viability, due to lower than expected enrollment and a significant lease payment. MCSC became very involved in providing technical assistance to the school as it worked to become viable. In some ways, MCSC appropriately identified critical areas of concern and required modifications to the school's operating budget. However, these interventions were implemented without clear alignment with established performance expectations or monitoring tools. In the future, MCSC could struggle to monitor and hold schools accountable without clear benchmarks and corresponding monitoring tools to ensure financial issues are caught before a school is in significant financial distress.

Recommendation: Assign monitoring activities to authorizing staff to allow for consistent and efficient communication of expectations.

Recommendation: Build systems to streamline data collection requests and mitigate ad hoc requests throughout the year.

Recommendation: Develop an intervention protocol based on performance expectations and communicate expectations for performance to the charter schools.

Recommendation: Develop differentiated monitoring practices and communicate thresholds of performance that schools must reach to receive modified monitoring.

Recommendation: Set clear financial performance requirements and build capacity to monitor schools against expectations.


The authorizer publicly reports on the academic, financial, and organizational performance of its schools.

 Partially Developed

MCSC reports publicly on the performance of its schools, but the reports are dense, making the information difficult for a parent or community member to access and fully comprehend. For example, MCSC's public-facing annual report contains so much detail that it is difficult to discern the Commission's assessment of each school. Further, the format of the report does not allow for the general public to quickly absorb critical information about a particular school or its standing with the Commission.

Recommendation: Simplify the annual report for quick and easy consumption of critical performance data and school information, and provide standards or comparative data, aligned with contractual performance expectations, so that the reports are meaningful. Post the annual report more prominently on the Commission's website.

The authorizer runs a clear and well-structured renewal process, which includes meaningful school participation in the process through an application and opportunity to review and correct or supplement factual information, and timely notification of decisions.

 Approaching Well-developed

The renewal process has many positive attributes, and renewal is based on the applicant's ability to reflect on its past performance and describe any substantive changes to its program going forward.

MCSC has established a clear renewal process and timeline, which includes a site visit, a renewal application, a public hearing, and a vote. The process has strengthened over time and this past year, MCSC created a renewal application. The standards are clear; however, in some instances the application focuses more on plans for the future rather than past performance. Specifically, the application requires schools to look back and highlight their strengths and weaknesses, and outline their future plans. This leads to concerns that renewal decisions may be based on promises for future success rather than assessment and reflection of past performance.

Additionally, while the application asks schools to reflect on their performance, it does not require them to respond to data that could provide objective insight on their past performance, such as state assessment results, subgroup performance, retention or attendance. Schools report that they are not certain of the basis for renewal decisions (e.g., proficiency, growth, supplemental assessments such as NWEA, school climate, or a combination of these indicators). Finally, the renewal process is not connected to MCSC's annual monitoring of schools, which includes a summary analysis of performance on a list of measures dictated by the charter law. A more streamlined approach would require schools to reflect on their annual monitoring reports and have MCSC staff determine renewal standards based on these reports.

Furthermore, the composition of renewal review teams may lead to potential bias in decision-making. As noted earlier in this Authorizing Procedures and Capacity section, review teams include Commissioners that are heavily involved in school monitoring. Some of these Commissioners become intimately involved in the school's operation. This is evidenced by Commissioners referring to schools as "my school" or "your school" and schools referencing members of their review team by name. Some Commissioners could not speak to specific schools that were not "theirs" and may be inclined to vote based on the advice of their colleagues rather than the quality of the school's performance. Once intimately involved with a school, objectivity is easily compromised.

Lastly, evidence that should be considered for renewal is not normed. Commissioners do not all look at the same evidence; some referred to looking primarily at staff reports while others said they based their decision primarily on their own findings. No one mentioned a norming process or standardization among Commissioners when recommending schools for renewal. However, staff, who work with all schools, showed deep knowledge of all schools and demonstrated a more direct focus on student outcomes.

Recommendation: Align renewal standards with clearly established performance expectations. Revise the renewal application and process to ensure charter schools earn renewal based on a track record of success, not promises of future performance.

Recommendation: Delegate management of the renewal process to MCSC staff and implement a standardized process for all schools when undergoing renewal.

Following non-renewal, revocation, or voluntary return of the charter, the authorizer effectively ensures the orderly closure of the school. Undeveloped

MCSC does not currently have a plan for school closure. Given how relatively new the Commission is, it is not surprising that the Commission has not closed a school or experienced a voluntary relinquishment of a charter or that it has not prioritized development of closure policies and practices. Notwithstanding, if there is an unexpected closure, the Commission must be prepared to act in the best interests of the students and, therefore, should have necessary plans in place.

Per state statute, every school must develop a closure plan for inclusion in the charter contract but MCSC has not established clear expectations for plan development, such as setting aside a portion of the budget for closure-related costs; preparing for student records transfer; and providing families with clear closure communication and school choice fairs to explain options.


The focus on technical assistance and improvement may inhibit MCSC from seeking closure.

Recommendation: Establish a closure plan and guide to clarify closure responsibilities for MCSC, the charter governing board, and school leadership. Within this guide, establish clear expectations for charter-developed closure plans.

AUTHORIZING PROCEDURES AND CAPACITY | IN DEPTH

AUTHORIZER CAPACITY

The authorizer plans well for the future and uses quality authorizing principles to guide its work as an authorizer.

 Partially Developed

MCSC is quickly moving from “startup” to “foundational” in that it has a clear mission and vision, and is working to align its practices with NACSA's *Principles & Standards*. The next phase of its work is to migrate the practices currently done by volunteer Commissioners to its highly capable staff. The Commission is aware of this critical next step; it is one of the reasons that the Commission sought this review.

To understand its current situation, it is important to understand the Commission's context and history. The Commission has been in existence for fewer than 10 years and does not have salaried employees—all employees, including the executive director, are hired through a temporary placement agency and work hourly. Until recently, the Commissioners did almost all of the work. The Commission is feeling the tension of needing to be accountable for its decisions while letting go of the day-to-day activities of the authorizer. A number of individuals interviewed called the situation “Founder's Syndrome,” in that the Commissioners, in the early days, needed to roll up their sleeves and do the hard work because there was no staff to do the work. Now that there is a strong staff, MCSC must transition to a new role.

To become a highly capable strategic authorizer, MCSC must create goals and a strategic plan. The Commission is in the process of drafting a strategic plan. We encourage the Commission to empower the executive director and its staff to develop the plan, as they may be better positioned to develop the details for the Commission to review, respond to, and ultimately approve. Commissioners should be focused on building a future vision for the organization.

Recommendation: Transfer development of the strategic plan to the executive director. Refocus the work of Commissioners on planning, policies, and decision-making.

The office is purposefully and economically staffed to carry out its authorizing duties effectively.

 Undeveloped

Now that the Commission is beyond its start-up phase, it must revisit its staffing structure to ensure that this structure supports high-quality authorizing practices. As mentioned above, the Commission needs to clarify and refine the core responsibilities of staff and the Commissioners. Staff expressed confusion when asked about the role of Commissioners, and Commissioners gave different responses when asked about the role of staff. Specifically, some Commissioners referred to staff as “the administration” responsible for “carrying out the decisions” made by the Commissioners and saw themselves as responsible for evaluating schools and writing reports. Until the Commissioners and staff delineate roles and responsibilities, this confusion will persist. The charter law describes the roles of the Commission and staff, and may be a good place to start the work of redefining responsibilities. The law states that “the Executive Director supervises the staff and is responsible for all day-to-day operations and to implement the goals and objectives of the Commission. In the interim between Commission meetings, the Executive Director reports to the Chair.”

Another example of this confusion is in the hiring and evaluation process. Currently, Commissioners make hiring decisions, sitting in on interviews and choosing all staff, not just the executive director, as permitted by law. This is confusing to staff who, when asked, stated that they report to “both, the Board and the executive director.”

As previously noted, the Commission employs temporary employees. None of the Commission staff are full-time employees, not even the executive director. This translates into staff not getting paid vacation or sick days and limits working hours to 1,000 hours per temporary contract, which may limit the Commission's ability to attract and retain high-quality staff.

Recommendation: Ask for full-time positions in the budgeting process or identify other creative solutions to create a highly capable, stable staff environment.

Recommendation: Clarify and confirm the roles of the Commissioners and staff; revisit all tasks currently completed by staff and Commissioners, and assign tasks based on defined roles.

The authorizer's budget aligns with its strategic goals and supports organizational effectiveness.

Minimally Developed

The Commission has sufficient funds to staff a strong authorizing agency, but is not yet fully staffed. Instead, the Commission is considering returning funding to schools rather than using such funds to staff a full office and create a strong strategic plan.

The Commissioners currently create the budget in collaboration with the executive director. The agency prides itself on being frugal and not top-heavy with employees. However, there are opportunities for investing in staffing and structures to support and sustain of a high-quality charter school authorizing program.

Recommendation: Before determining whether to return funds to schools, evaluate the organization's budget to ensure execution of mission and core authorizing responsibilities.

The authorizer leadership and decision-making body understand their roles and responsibilities, and have the expertise to make well-informed decisions that support the tenets of high-quality authorizing.

Partially Developed

The Commission believes in the principles of high-quality authorizing and members are reflective and open to feedback. However, as previously discussed, MCSC authorizing staff and decision-maker roles are conflated and must be clarified to ensure objective decision-making.

Recommendation: Ensure that Commissioners are able to make objective charter school decisions, free of any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

SOURCES

Background and Organizational Capacity

Charter School Law
 Portfolio Information
 Staff Job Descriptions
 Board Member List & Biographies
 Strategic Planning Notes
 Charter Facts Sheet
 Office Budget

School Performance Data

Application Decision-Making

Charter School Application
 Virtual Charter School Application
 Charter School Application Reviewer Rubrics
 Charter School Application Guidance and Materials
 Application Decision-Making Policies
 Evaluator Training Materials
 Completed Application Evaluations
 Capacity Interview Notes
 Findings of Fact Reports
 Application Recommendation Reports
 Application Recommendation Report Responses

Monitoring Operations

Charter School Contracts & Amendments
 Pre-Opening Plan & Checklists
 Pre-Opening Reports
 Annual Monitoring Plans
 Annual Monitoring Reports
 Year 4 Performance Reports
 90-Day Site Visit Reports
 Closure Plan
 Guidance for School Self-Assessment

Performance-Based Accountability

Performance Measure Guidance
 Non-Academic Performance Measures Guidance
 Charter School Renewal Applications
 Completed Renewal Rubrics
 Renewal Recommendation Reports
 Concern & Violation Communications
 Corrective Action Plans
 Annual Report to the Commissioner

School Histories

Charter School Applications
 Charter School Application Reviewer Rubrics
 Charter School Contracts & Amendments
 Pre-Opening Reports
 90-Day Site Visit Reports
 Annual Monitoring Reports
 Renewal Applications
 Financial Statements

BIOGRAPHIES

Katie Plehl is a director of Authorizer Development at NACSA. Katie, formerly the director of authorizing with Volunteers of America-Minnesota and a legislative program evaluation analyst focusing on education reform issues, brings her knowledge of improving charter school and authorizer accountability through state policy reform to the organization. In her role at NACSA, Katie leads implementation of model practices for authorizers and develops comprehensive authorizer partnerships that focus on improved practice. Katie is a former teacher and holds an M.P.P. from the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota.

Naomi DeVeaux is a national expert in charter school education and the deputy director of the DC Public Charter School Board (DC PCSB). Since her start as an English teacher more than 20 years ago, Naomi has developed new tools and measurements, curricula, and policy initiatives that have shaped public education across the country. She has testified, presented, and written extensively on the role of charter schools in providing quality educational choices to K-12 students and their families. At DC PCSB, Naomi manages the team responsible for charter authorizing, including negotiating charter agreements and holding schools accountable for meeting quality academic and non-academic standards. She and the DC PCSB team have developed an innovative suite of monitoring strategies—now used by charter authorizers elsewhere—which measure school performance; examine non-academic indicators, such as attendance and discipline; and evaluate learning based on classroom observations. Before joining DC PCSB in 2012, Ms. DeVeaux was deputy director at Friends of Choice in Urban Schools (FOCUS), based in Washington, DC. Naomi earned her bachelor's degree from Reed College, a teaching credential from Chapman University, and a master in Curriculum and Instruction from California State University, Long Beach.

Appendix AA

Silver Analytics Part 1 Report

**An External Review of the Maine Public Charter School
Performance and Annual Report Frameworks, and Student
Performance**

Part I

Dr. Richard E. Barnes

Dr. David L. Silvernail

December 2017

An External Review of the Maine Charter School Performance and Annual Report Frameworks, and Student Performance

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Dr. David L. Silvernail

Background

The following report describes the preliminary findings and recommendations from Part I of an external review of Maine's Public Charter School Performance and Annual Report Frameworks, and Student Performance. In August 2017, the Maine Charter School Commission ("Commission") requested an external analysis of the Commission's Academic and School Social and Climate Performance Framework ("Framework") and an analysis of charter school student performance. The Commission contracted with *Silver Analytics Consulting Services* to undertake a three part study: (1) a review of the Maine Charter School Academic and Social/Cultural performance framework, measures and prescribed metrics; (2) an analysis of the components to be included in a yearly annual assessment framework of charter schools; and (3) an analysis of charter school student performance. Based on these analyses and review, the Commission requested a series of recommendations for any suggested modifications in the performance and annual report frameworks, and the ongoing evaluation of student performance.

Part I of the three-part study has included a series of tasks: (a) a review of the Maine statutes related to the creation, monitoring and review of Maine's charter schools; (b) a review of the national literature on charter school performance frameworks and charter school assessments; (c) an analysis of yearly Maine charter school reports and other Commission documents; (d) a series of interviews with Commission members and Commission staff; and (e) site visits and interviews with school leaders at each of the nine public charter schools.

A semi-structured interview protocol was used in both the interviews with Commission members and Commission staff, and the interviews with charter school leaders. The guiding questions in the interview protocol included:

1. *How, and when, were the academic measures established for the individual schools?*
2. *Have they been reviewed and/or modified? If so, when and why?*
3. *Do you think the state assessments are an appropriate measure of their performance measures? Why or why not?*
4. *How are the state assessment results used in their work?*
5. *What training/professional development has the staff been given in interpreting and using assessment data?*

6. *How did the schools determine the school-selected assessments? Are they satisfied with these?*
7. *How do they use the school-selected assessments in their work?*
8. *Do they use other academic indicators as performance measures? If yes, how are they selected and used?*
9. *Are the reporting requirements of academic performance appropriate? Why or why not?*
10. *Who oversees the monitoring and reporting of academic performance? How much time over the course of the year does it take to collect and report on academic performance?*
11. *What one suggestion would you have for improving the application of the academic performance measures requirements?*
12. *How is the survey data used to document and understand social/cultural characteristics of the school?*
13. *Do the surveys help describe/document accurately the school climate?*
14. *What training/professional development has the staff been given in interpreting and using the survey data?*
15. *What one suggestion would you have for improving the application of the social/cultural performance measures?*

The following material provides a preliminary report on the results of the review and a set of recommendations based on the Part I work. Some modifications may be made in the future, based on the completion of Part II and Part III of the external review. Once all phases of the work are completed a final integrated report will be submitted to the Commission.

Based on the review, analyses and interviews, we have reached several findings and recommendations. But before we turn to these, we would like to commend the Commission for their work on developing and using the Performance Framework in the processes of approving, monitoring, and renewing charters. We believe the framework provides an excellent model for monitoring the charter schools and insuring that they are making good progress in providing their students a high quality education. Further, we believe the Framework provides an excellent model that should be implemented in **all** public schools in Maine to insure that all Maine's schools are held to high standards and accountable for educating Maine students.

The following reflects our major findings and recommendations.

Findings and Recommendations:

- 1. Retain all the Performance Framework Data Elements currently listed in Title 20-A, Chapter 112 of Maine Revised Statutes.**

We believe the current Performance Framework Data Elements provided in Title 20-A, Chapter 112 are fair, reasonable, and realistic data elements for approving, monitoring and reviewing Maine's public charter schools. Accordingly, we believe the Commission should continue to require all

charter schools to document and report on all of the following elements each year:

- A. Student academic proficiency;
- B. Student academic growth;
- C. Achievement gaps in both proficiency and growth between major student subgroups;
- D. Attendance;
- E. Recurrent enrollment from year to year;
- F. With respect to high school, postsecondary readiness; and
- G. Parent and community engagement

We see no need at this time to modify these or to add other data elements. However, we do recommend some changes in the requirements and rules applicable to the collection and reporting of these data elements, and these are discussed below.

2. Retain the Maine Education Assessments (MEAs) in reading, mathematics, and science as a required indicator and measure of student academic proficiency.

One key measure of academic performance included in the Framework is the requirement that the charter schools document and report proficiency level student performance using the Maine Educational Assessments (MEAs), a series of statewide tests given annually to all Maine students in grades 3-8, and grade 11, and through the use of a school selected assessment. The school selected growth assessment is discussed in the next section, but in the case of the MEAs, we believe the MEAs should continue to be required to be used as an academic measure in all the charter schools, regardless of their academic missions and visions. The current MEAs provide an useful status measure of academic performance and proficiency (i.e., a measure of student performance at a particular point in time), and as such, provide the State an accountability measure of student and school-level performance. The MEA reports provide schools with an overall profile of student performance in four proficiency levels, and provide key subgroup analyses the charter schools may use in identifying gaps in performance.

The MEA reports also provide growth scores, and thus can provide an aggregate picture on student growth and provide the State and charter schools an overall accountability measure for demonstrating progress being made in helping students grow academically. However, the information provided on individual students, and the delayed time in reporting scores, limit the usefulness of this data to inform and guide instruction. Thus, we believe the MEAs should be used primary as a yearly status measure of proficiency.

3. Require all charter schools to use a common assessment to measure student academic growth.

A second key measure of academic performance included in the Framework is an indicator of student academic growth. The Framework requires that all the charter schools measure, document and report academic growth using two assessments: (1) the MEAs; and (2) a school selected assessment. As we stated above, we recognize that the MEA reporting includes a growth measure, but beyond its use for accountability purposes, we find the MEA growth measure of limited value to inform and guide instruction.

Currently, six of the nine charter schools use the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) assessments as their school-selected growth measure. While all the school-selected growth assessments used by the schools have merit, we believe that at present the NWEAs are a good, reliable measure of student academic growth.

In fact, we believe the NWEAs can serve multiple purposes. They not only: (1) provide a way to document student academic growth for accountability purposes; but they can also (2) provide an assessment that can be used to inform instruction; and (3) an assessment that may be used to guide individual student growth plans. Additionally, because they are what are called Adaptive Assessments, assessments that adjust test items to individual levels of proficiency, they may provide a more accurate measure of individual growth.

Accordingly, we recommend that all the charter schools be required to administer the NWEA at least twice each year (fall and spring).

Further, we recommend that the Commission pay for the fall and spring administrations of the NWEAs, and that the Commission provide school staff with professional development and technical assistance in interpreting and using the NWEA data.

We recommend that schools continue the practice of using additional school selected assessments (as many of them already do), as they deem appropriate, but in the interest of greater parsimony, that schools not be required, nor necessarily be encouraged, to report the results of these assessments as part of their annual reports to the Commission.

4. Require all charter schools to document and report on achievement gaps in both proficiency and growth between major student subgroups.

As part of the performance framework established by state law, charter schools are required to address achievement gaps for major student subgroups. However, we found little evidence through our analyses that this

was occurring on a consistent basis and in all the charter schools. There was scant evidence in the monitoring reports documenting gap analyses on the part of the charter schools, and too few explicit written comments in the yearly reports from the Commission addressing this deficiency. In our interviews, some charter school leaders made reference to attempts to address achievement gaps, but we uncovered very little evidence of this actually occurring. It is unclear why this is the case, but we believe this issue needs to be addressed. More specifically, and at a minimum, we recommend that all the charter schools be required to document on a yearly basis achievement gaps for subgroups of students based on student demographics, including by gender, economic advantaged status, and special needs.

We also recommend that the charter schools be required to report performance by subgroups based on MEA proficiency levels/performance and describe movement between levels each year.

Further, we recommend that baseline data on subgroup performance be used to establish yearly targets designed to close the achievement gaps over time.

5. Require each charter school to establish realistic proficiency and growth targets, based on prior student performance, and to establish target progression schemes and timelines in order to insure that all students in a cohort achieve proficiency.

Considerable time, effort, and expertise have been spent in establishing, revising, and reporting proficiency and growth target performance. We applaud this work, and we hope traditional Maine public schools learn from the charter school experience.

At the same time, we believe that some of the individual charter school performance targets are unrealistic, and thereby do not reflect well on individual student performance and may present a skewed assessment of school level performance. In many cases we found that the initial targets were unrealistic because they were established before the charter school even admitted their first class of students. We understand the reasons for this, but in many cases it resulted in schools setting unrealistic proficiency and growth targets.

We recommend that once a school charter is established, the incoming cohort of students be assessed and this information be used in setting academic targets. These should be rigorous, but achievable academic targets, and reflect different levels of prior achievement on the part of members of the cohort. This process should be repeated for each new cohort.

Even in some cases where schools have revised their original performance targets, they may not be realistic targets for all students in a given year. For

example, one school has set the target: “Percent of grade 3-8 students scoring proficient on the ELA portion of the Maine State Assessment *will meet or exceed the state average* (italics added).” As mentioned above, this is a very laudable goal, but may be an unrealistic one for some students to reach in one year. We believe it would be more appropriate to set yearly targets based on the subgroup proficiency analysis mentioned above.

We also found through our review that while all the charter schools have yearly proficiency targets, most do not have a set of progressive improvement targets for cohorts of students over multiple years. For example, one charter school set as a target that “60% of 8th graders will demonstrate proficiency.” Another set a target as the “Percent of students at proficiency level will increase every year by at least 2% over the prior year”. We believe both types of targets are problematic. In the case of the first example, there is no new, higher target set for this cohort in subsequent years. In theory, only 60% of the cohort may ever demonstrate proficiency. In the second example, there is a set of progressive growth targets, but the targets do not necessary apply to the same cohort of students and are too low to insure all students will achieve proficiency in a reasonable time period.

We recommend that academic targets should include a progression for demonstrating improved performance and deadlines for all students in a cohort to achieve proficiency. An example might look something like this: For those students in any given cohort demonstrating Level 2 achievement, “Below State Expectations”, 50% of the students in the cohort will achieve proficiency in Year 1, an additional 25% will achieve proficiency in Year 2, and the final 25% will achieve proficiency in Year 3. The progression targets should be based on the different proficiency levels of an incoming cohort of students, but should be both realistic and rigorous. We firmly believe that all students should be held to the same high academic standards, but that the timeline for individual students to achieve proficiency in the standards should be more reflective of individual student learning curves, and not seat time nor on the same timeline for all students.

6. Continue the requirement of social/culture surveys of parent, students and staff, but explore alternative options for the makeup and administration timelines of the surveys.

Although not part of the Performance Framework Data Elements in Maine statute, the Commission requires that each charter school have at least two measures of School Social and Academic Climate: (1) a measure of instances of bullying, harassment, or other abusive practices; and (2) confidential survey of parent, staff, and students. We believe that both of these measures are appropriate and important measures of charter school success, as well as being appropriate and important measures of success for all Maine schools.

We see no need for modifications in the first measure, but would like to offer some thoughts for consideration on the second measure.

We applaud the effort on the part of the Commission to support the charter schools in documenting parent, student, and staff perceptions and funding the annual survey process. The survey program selected for use in the charter schools, Panorama Education, is sound and includes documented valid and reliable survey studies. However, we heard mixed views about the set of surveys. Some school leaders found the surveys and reports useful. Several charter school administrators indicated that the Panorama Education surveys provided them interesting, and in many cases, useful information, and provided a way for them to compare themselves to other Maine charter schools and to national samples. However, other school leaders thought that survey questions were sometimes confusing, too complex, and that the surveys were too long. Still others commented that while they thought the standard surveys provided important information, they did not always match the information needs of particular charter schools.

Accordingly, we recommend that the Commission review the survey program in light of the concerns raised by charter schools leaders. More specifically, we recommend the Commission consider developing a set of surveys that address the Commission's areas of interest and that will provide for cross-case (charter school) data by means of a set of common survey items, and at the same time provide each charter school the opportunity to address their particular areas of interest by means of a unique set of items designed specifically for and by each charter school.

We recognize that making any substantial changes in the surveys would not be easy, and would raise issues surrounding the validity and reliability of the instruments, and for the administration, management, and reporting of survey results. But we think it may be timely to step back and consider if the Panorama Education set of surveys are meeting the needs of both the Commission and the individual charter schools.

Whatever the decision about the makeup of the surveys, we think that in some cases, the yearly administration of all three surveys provides too little time for schools to: (1) identify concerns and issues; (2) design programs or activities to address these concerns and issues; (3) implement these programs and activities; and (4) document observable results, which in many cases may require multiple years of intervention before results are observable. Thus, we recommend that consideration be given to staggering the administration of the surveys, depending upon the particular issues the schools identify through the surveys, and the plans they develop for addressing specific concerns or issues.

7. Consider alternative models for calculating daily attendance rates.

Another measure in the Framework is the monitoring of student attendance by having the charter schools report average daily attendance rates each school year. Historically, attendance in school was basically a prerequisite for insuring that students had opportunities to learn. And even today attendance is still used as a barometer for measuring the availability of learning opportunities.

The charter schools enrolling secondary students are all using an academic proficiency based model to earn graduation credit, yet they are reporting their daily attendance rate using state guidelines that defines a school “day” using hours of “seat time” in a day or week as the measure. As Maine implements a proficiency-based diploma program, daily class attendance will become less important than students having opportunities to learn in multiple ways, in multiple settings and on multiple timelines. Seat time in attending a traditional school will no longer be a prerequisite for accessing and demonstrating learning. We are not at that point yet, but as charter schools (in fact, all Maine schools) demonstrate that students are achieving proficiency and meeting high standards, less emphasis should be placed on achieving an arbitrary level of average daily attendance. Accordingly, we urge the Commission to consider alternative proposals for documenting attendance, pilot one or more proposals with selected charter schools, and monitor the impact of these proposals. This strategy will not only reflect more closely the individual missions and visions of Maine’s charter schools, but also provide models that could be adopted or adapted in Maine’s more traditional schools.

8. Expand the categories for reporting student retention, dropout and transfer data, including by major subgroup.

Maintaining data on year-to-year student retention rates is an important measure for assessing a charter school’s effectiveness in providing high satisfaction among parents and students for both academic and social/cultural goal achievement. However, using a single statistic, based on an individual student’s contiguous enrollment on the two state benchmark dates in October and April could be misleading, especially in schools with relatively small overall enrollments. Several schools reported that students entered late or exited early for a variety of reasons, including family relocations to a different area, the desire to avoid a particular grade level in an otherwise satisfactory local school, participation in an extra curricular program open only to regular district students, or recovery from an illness or accident that had precluded attendance at a regular public school.

Thus, it is also important to both the schools and the Commission that documenting retention by major subgroups be required of all the charter schools.

We recommend that the Commission work with the charter schools to develop a small number of standard categories listing reasons why students leave the school, as well as listing retention rates by subgroup populations such as special education or economic advantage level. The overall year-to-year retention rate will still be measured, but the documenting of dropout and transfer numbers by sub-categories would provide important additional information.

9. Clarify the guidelines on reporting post-secondary readiness.

Our review of the annual reports from those schools enrolling secondary school students shows a great deal of variation in the data reported from school to school. Some report graduation statistics for those students listed as enrolled seniors the previous June, and others report those listed as seniors as of October 1. Some schools report the number of graduates who have earned college credits from dual enrollment programs, and others do not. Some report the number or percentage of students who have matriculated in a post-secondary program as of eight months following the school's graduation date, others do not. We encourage the Commission to work with the schools to clarify what the school should be required to report, and encourage schools to report all other post-secondary readiness information that they deem relevant to their mission in an appendix in their annual reports.

10. Continue and refine parent and community engagement requirements.

We found a wide variation in schools' annual reports on parent and community engagement. How parents engage with individual teachers and the school as a whole obviously will vary depending on whether the school enrolls students at the elementary, middle or high school level, whether it has a student boarding option, and whether it primarily offers a virtual learning environment. We recommend that the Commission work with the schools to offer a few required categories for parent-school contact. This might include the number and percentage of parents who have at least one face-to-face or a synchronous virtual meeting with a teacher during the year. The Panorama Education survey provides additional data on parents' perceptions about parent-school communication and engagement. However, because the overall parental return and/or response rate is often not reported, it is difficult both for the school and the Commission to develop useful conclusions from the data.

Similarly, there is an absence of data about community engagement or involvement in most of the schools' reports. All of the schools have, to one degree or another, listed such engagement as a goal for the school, and that community resources are used as part of students' learning experiences. The Commission should work with the schools and decide on one or more measures that can be defined broadly enough to work across all the schools and would also assure the Commission that such engagement is present. Again, those schools who have included specific community-based or public performance goals as part of their mission should be encouraged to add such data in an appendix in their annual reports.

11. Develop a standardized form for the yearly reporting on the academic and social/cultural performance framework by the charter schools.

As we reviewed the yearly reports we were impressed by the wealth of information provided by the charter schools for their various constituencies and stakeholders. At the same time, it was sometimes difficult to understand and interpret the results and difficult to look across the charter schools for consistent data and trends.

Therefore, we recommend that a standardized form be developed and that all the charter schools be required to use this form in reporting their yearly progress in reaching the targets and benchmarks included in the Framework. This form should require consistent information across all the charter schools. Charter schools may be given the option of submitting additional information if they wish in appendices to the standardized form.

12. Modify the yearly reports to more specifically address the academic and social/cultural performance of the charter schools.

In the interviews with charter school administrators we learned of many examples where the Commission members or Commission staff had met with the schools to address specific questions and concerns related to the charter school's performance. And in all cases the administrators reported that these meetings were useful. However, in reviewing the yearly reports we found little evidence where these questions or concerns were raised by the Commission and documented in the report.

Thus, we recommend a two-step process be used in producing the yearly reports. As we described above, we think that each charter school should be required to submit evidence through a standardized reporting form. Secondly, we recommend that the Commission staff review these reports and issue a separate report (or addendum) listing specific commendations for the charter school and the specific areas of concern that they wish to address with the charter school. We believe this two-step process will improve the transparency of reporting the charter school evidence and performance, and

provide the charter schools with clearer evidence of the areas of concern and the areas that need to be addressed by the charter school.

13. Revise the timelines for the submission of reports, and the number of reports, to more closely reflect the realities of running schools and the availability of data.

The review of the timelines established by the Commission for reports from the charter schools revealed that some reports are due before data is available (e.g., MEA assessment data). In addition, through our interviews we documented many requests from the Commission or Commission staff to the charter schools for what might be best described ad hoc reports.

We recognize that sometimes there is a specific need for some of these ad hoc reports, but we believe that if not monitored closely, these ad hoc requests for data can over time result in what might be called “information creep”; that is, the continued expansion of the collection of information which may have limited value or limited shelf life. Thus, we recommend that the Commission and Commission staff periodically review the number, substance, and timelines for requested reports, both regular and ad hoc reports, and determine how the efficiency of data collection and timeliness of reports may be improved.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we believe the Commission should be commended for their continuous work on creating and implementing a Framework for reporting the academic performance and the social/cultural development of Maine’s charter schools and their students. We believe the current Framework, as described in state statute and in the Performance Measures Guidance document, provides a good framework for monitoring the development and performance of the charter schools. And after analyzing the Framework and how the Commission, Commission staff, and the charter schools use it, we reached a set of findings and recommendations that have been described above.

Part II of the external review will entail conducting a review and analysis of existing charter school annual performance assessment frameworks used in other states to assess and report on the performance of their charter schools. We believe that Maine should develop such a framework in order to, in the words of the 2017 National Association of Charter School Authorizers Report on Maine,

Develop a public annual report of school performance to present to the public the status of charter school academic progress in Maine and to support accountability decision-making, transparency, and access to quality school option for parents (p.8).

Further we believe the annual report of academic performance should include a weighting system to indicate the value placed on each of the major academic measures in the Framework used by the Commission to assess annually the performance of Maine's charter schools.

Part II of the external review will be designed to provide the Commission with examples of public charter school performance reports, as well as options for weighting measures, and assessments of strengths and shortcomings of various reports and weighting systems.

References

2017 NASCA Authorizer Evaluation Report. National Association of Charter School Authorizers, Chicago, IL.

Biographic Sketches of the Authors

Silver Analytics Consulting Services is a Maine-based firm of professional consultants with over 50+ years combined expertise and experience in education policy, practice, and technical experience. Sketches of the authors of this report are presented below.

Dr. Richard E. Barnes is professor emeritus of Educational Leadership at the University of Southern Maine. While at USM, he served as dean of the former College of Education for ten years, and for nine years taught courses in educational leadership and served as project director on several long-term projects to enhance leadership skills for teachers and administrators. Prior to his work at USM, Barnes was a teacher, principal and superintendent of schools in central and southern Maine in addition to earlier work as a teacher in Boston and Philadelphia. Since retiring from USM, Barnes has been a senior research associate for two long-term policy research and evaluation projects at USM's Center for Applied Research and Evaluation (CEPARE), and a consultant to several small rural schools. Along with his research work, he was a facilitator for the UM and USM faculty planning committee for the University of Maine Center for Graduate Education, and served as a founding member of the Maine Charter School Commission for its first three years. In addition to being a contributing author to CEPARE policy reports, Barnes published several articles and book chapters on school-university collaboration for school renewal and teacher leadership through the National Network for Educational Renewal and the late John Goodlad.

Dr. David L. Silvernail is adjunct research professor and professor emeritus at the University of Southern Maine. He was the founder and director of the Center for Education Policy, Applied Research and Evaluation (CEPARE) at the University of Southern Maine, and a founder and co-director of the Maine Education Policy Research Institute (MEPRI), a non-partisan research institute of the Maine Legislature and the University of Maine System. For the past 20+ years Dr. Silvernail has been conducting policy research and analysis, and providing technical assistance to the Maine Legislature, Maine State Board of Education, Maine Department of Education, Maine State Planning Office, and other state and regional education agencies. He has published over 40 journal articles, monographs and book chapters, and prepared over 50 research reports and briefing papers for agencies and states on a variety of topics including school funding, school district reorganization, student assessment systems, student equity, poverty and achievement, higher performing, more efficient schools, and higher education participation and performance. Additionally Dr. Silvernail has provided research and evaluation assistance for over 60 school districts in Maine and across the nation, and he started his professional education career as a middle and high school mathematics and political science teacher.