



# Maine Charter School Commission

## Monthly Commission Meeting

Published on February 8, 2024 at 3:03 PM EST

Amended on February 8, 2024 at 4:03 PM EST

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### Date and Time

Tuesday February 13, 2024 at 1:00 PM EST

### Location

Room #103, Cross Office Building, 111 Sewall Street, Augusta or via *Zoom*

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://mainestate.zoom.us/j/86500283769>

Meeting ID: 865 0028 3769

Passcode: 39679481

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The **Vision** of the Maine Charter School Commission is that "***All of Maine's children will have access to a vibrant ecosystem of diverse schools so that all of them can become happy, healthy and thriving citizens.***"

The **Mission** of the Maine Charter School Commission is "***To authorize, monitor and develop unique public charter schools that provide a dynamic, superlative education for every student.***"

### Reminders:

- This meeting is being recorded via Zoom.
- We ask members of the public to hold comments until public comments are heard.

Any person seeking special accommodation for the public meeting should contact Rachel Spell at (207)816-2187 or [rachel.spell@maine.gov](mailto:rachel.spell@maine.gov)

## Agenda

|  | Purpose         | Presenter                        |
|--|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>I. Opening Items</b>                                      |                 |                                  |
| A. Record Attendance   |                 | Rachel Spell                     |
| B. Call the Meeting to Order                                 |                 | Norm Higgins                     |
| C. To Consider the Approval of the 1/9/24 Commission Meeting | Approve Minutes | Norm Higgins                     |
| <b>II. Comments from Commission Chair</b>                    |                 |                                  |
| A. Comments  | Discuss         | Norm Higgins                     |
| <b>III. Additions or Adjustments to the Agenda</b>           |                 |                                  |
| A. Additions/Adjustments                                     | Discuss         | Norm Higgins                     |
| <b>IV. Committee Reports</b>                                 |                 |                                  |
| A. School Performance Committee                              | FYI             | Tori Kornfield                   |
| B. Finance Committee   | FYI             | Leigh Albert                     |
|  |                 | • <i>FY24 Spending Dashboard</i> |
| C. Executive Committee                                       | FYI             | Norm Higgins                     |
| <b>V. Public Comment*</b>                                    |                 |                                  |
| A. Public Comment  | Discuss         | Norm Higgins                     |
| <b>VI. Presentations</b>                                     |                 |                                  |
| <i>None</i>  |                 |                                  |

Purpose Presenter

**VII. Executive Director/Commission Staff Report**

- |           |                        |         |            |
|-----------|------------------------|---------|------------|
| <b>A.</b> | School Updates         | Discuss | Lana Ewing |
| <b>B.</b> | Organizational Updates | Discuss | Lana Ewing |
| <b>C.</b> | Media Updates          | FYI     | Lana Ewing |

- *Maine schools say path to fixing chronic absenteeism starts with building relationships*
- *Portland students collect trash after storm, hope to inspire and educate others*
- *Celebrating Excellence: Society of Women Engineers honors outstanding Maine high school juniors and seniors*

- |           |                    |     |            |
|-----------|--------------------|-----|------------|
| <b>D.</b> | New Charter School | FYI | Lana Ewing |
|-----------|--------------------|-----|------------|

**VIII. Monthly School Portfolio/Data Report**

- |           |                |         |              |
|-----------|----------------|---------|--------------|
| <b>A.</b> | Enrollment Map | Discuss | Rachel Spell |
|-----------|----------------|---------|--------------|

**IX. Unfinished Business**

- |           |                                    |         |              |
|-----------|------------------------------------|---------|--------------|
| <b>A.</b> | Unfinished Business<br><i>None</i> | Discuss | Norm Higgins |
|-----------|------------------------------------|---------|--------------|

**X. New Business Requiring Approval and/or Acceptance**

- |           |  |      |              |
|-----------|--|------|--------------|
| <b>A.</b> | To Consider the Approval of Ecology Learning Center's Request for New Facility       | Vote | Norm Higgins |
| <b>B.</b> | To Consider the Approval of Ecology Learning Center's Request to Increase Enrollment | Vote | Norm Higgins |
| <b>C.</b> | To Consider the Approval of Revisions to the Performance Framework for SY2023-24     | Vote | Norm Higgins |

**XI. New Business Requiring Notification to the Commission (No formal action to be taken by Commission)**

- |           |                             |     |              |
|-----------|-----------------------------|-----|--------------|
| <b>A.</b> | New Governing Board Members | FYI | Norm Higgins |
|-----------|-----------------------------|-----|--------------|

Purpose Presenter

- *Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences - Jamie Dickson*

- |           |  |     |              |
|-----------|--|-----|--------------|
| <b>B.</b> | Board Member Resignations<br><i>None</i> | FYI | Norm Higgins |
| <b>C.</b> | Board Member Term Outs<br><i>None</i>    | FYI | Norm Higgins |

**XII. Next Month's Topics**

- |           |                     |     |              |
|-----------|---------------------|-----|--------------|
| <b>A.</b> | Next Month's Topics | FYI | Norm Higgins |
|-----------|---------------------|-----|--------------|
- *Mid-Year Meeting Reports*
  - *Fiddlehead Request for Funds*

**XIII. Announcements**

- |           |   |     |              |
|-----------|---|-----|--------------|
| <b>A.</b> | Important Dates   | FYI | Norm Higgins |
| <b>B.</b> | Next Regular Business Meeting<br>March 12, 2024 (Baxter Academy for Technology and Science, 185 Lancaster Street, Portland)<br><i>or Zoom</i> | FYI | Norm Higgins |

**XIV. Closing Items**

- |           |                 |      |              |
|-----------|-----------------|------|--------------|
| <b>A.</b> | Adjourn Meeting | Vote | Norm Higgins |
|-----------|-----------------|------|--------------|

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\* The Charter School Commission does not allow airing of complaints in public meetings regarding Commission and charter school employees or school employment matters, in order to protect employee privacy, to comply with Maine law and pursuant to our contractual relation with the schools. To the extent that the Commission receives complaints and concerns relating to school employees in writing, those concerns will be reviewed and addressed by the Commission and its staff outside of a public meeting. This meeting is not the appropriate forum for such comments. You are free to direct your concerns in writing to the Commission's Executive Director, if you have not done so already.

# Coversheet

## To Consider the Approval of the 1/9/24 Commission Meeting

**Section:** I. Opening Items  
**Item:** C. To Consider the Approval of the 1/9/24 Commission Meeting  
**Purpose:** Approve Minutes  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** Minutes for Monthly Commission Meeting on January 9, 2024

APPROVED



## Maine Charter School Commission

### Minutes

#### Monthly Commission Meeting

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#### Date and Time

Tuesday January 9, 2024 at 1:00 PM

#### Location

Room #103, Cross Office Building, 111 Sewall Street, Augusta

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The **Vision** of the Maine Charter School Commission is that "***All of Maine's children will have access to a vibrant ecosystem of diverse schools so that all of them can become happy, healthy and thriving citizens.***"

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#### Directors Present

Brian Langley (remote), James Ford (remote), Jim Handy (remote), Leigh Albert, Norm Higgins, Tom Keller, Tori Kornfield

#### Directors Absent

None

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## Guests Present

Amy Allen (remote), Lana Ewing, Rachel Spell

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## I. Opening Items

### A. Record Attendance

### B. Call the Meeting to Order

Norm Higgins called a meeting of the board of directors of Maine Charter School Commission to order on Tuesday Jan 9, 2024 at 1:12 PM.

### C. To Consider the Approval of the 12/12/23 Commission Meeting

Tom Keller made a motion to approve the minutes from Monthly Commission Meeting on 12-12-23.

Tori Kornfield seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### Roll Call

James Ford Absent

Tori Kornfield Aye

Tom Keller Aye

Norm Higgins Aye

Brian Langley Aye

Jim Handy Aye

Leigh Albert Aye

## II. Comments from Commission Chair

### A. Comments

- Can We Project had two charter schools participate.
- On Thursday, Norm attending review of bill regarding tuition.
- Meeting on January 24th with Education Committee, Norm and Lana attending.
- Demographics map, more work being done on it.

## III. Additions or Adjustments to the Agenda

### A. Additions/Adjustments

Leigh Albert made a motion to To make Presentation by Mike Mizzoni from Board on Track earlier in agenda. and to make Presentation for Commissioner Makin from Education Committee earlier in agenda.

Tom Keller seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

Tori Kornfield Aye  
Norm Higgins Aye  
Brian Langley Aye  
James Ford Aye  
Tom Keller Aye  
Jim Handy Aye  
Leigh Albert Aye

**B. Presentation from Mike Mizzoni from BoardOnTrack**

- Will help manage and keep organized all charter school governance.
- Track and store all documents, policies, as well as prepare meeting agendas and minutes.
- Saves charter school time, staff, and money.
- Offers trainings and help via BoardOnTrack staff.

**IV. Committee Reports**

**A. Finance Committee**

- Summarized discussion about new calendar year for carryover funds as originally presented by Amy at finance committee. Leigh gave kudos to Amy's hard work on the report.
- Preparing documentation for budget office to access carryover, will go to governor for consideration and signing in February and then funds will be available for use in March (predicted 11th) if approved.
- Joe presented updates on school financial audits. 6 of 9 schools in portfolio, others left have extensions.
- Second fiscal year for commission dashboard report, still new.

**B. Presentation to Commissioner of Education Committee**

- Presenting about commission work to Pender Makin, Commissioner for Education Committee.
- Since Lana has been hired, the commission has re-written job descriptions, changed staffing model, and used professional development to help with roles.
- Required to submit annual boards and commission report to state, done on time and the report focused on accuracy, clarity, and transparency.
- Added graphs that showed data of performance framework.
- Largest part of report is all about the charter schools performance.



- Key points of framework are academic achievement, school climate, organizational sustainability (is school effect, financial management and viability, faithfulness to charter law, equitable access to all students, and a customized section where each school annually creates a goal or goals for the year that reflect something that is important or unique to the school allowing them to reflect on their own values within the performance framework.
- The headline of the report is that there has been improvement in multiple areas over past couple of years specifically in academic measures, attendance, graduation, and school climate.
- Governance and financial metrics strong on average as well.
- All schools surpassed state's annual target of last year of graduation rates.
- Sharing of panorama school climate survey (teachers, students, parents) results.
- Notable improvement in chronic absenteeism, something commission has been primarily focused on throughout schools. Four out of ten charter schools met or exceeded target and the other five did all show improvement.
- Student persistence targets, remains very strong throughout nine out of ten schools.
- All schools have improved since utilizing performance framework. Helpful with holding schools accountable and receiving helpful data trends.
- Commissioner Makin mentioned being interested in learning any additional metrics, what students in Maine are looking for in a wonderful school and how is it shown when a school has attained that.
- Plan to release new draft of application for 10th charter school to be hopefully opened Fall 2026. Official application will be released in July.
- Commission has a regular financial consultant working on financial framework and has been for about three years, monitoring several things on a monthly basis.
- Discussion of how foreign exchange students can be enrolled with waitlists for local students.
- Discussion of support for teachers getting help with full certification.
- Question of what is required from charter school that are not by traditional public schools.
- Applaud of work of closing team of HCA and ended with a financial surplus of around \$160,000.

### **C. School Performance Committee**

- New demographic and state level analysis review, particularly on enrollment increase by almost 30% and a decrease in brick & mortar schools by 4%.
- Discussion of Maine Connections Academy requests for staff to be able to work from home. Would help to hire people from further out in Maine.
- Discussion of MEaNS wanting to reduce contract enrollment number and plans to vote yes on this.
- Enrollment decrease and recruitment discussion.

### **D.**

## **Executive Committee**

- Education committee meeting with Lana and Norm attending and presenting on January 24th, recap of report and work of commission from year.
- Mention of looking over MeANS enrollment contract decrease from 220 to 200.

## **V. Public Comment\***

### **A. Public Comment**

*None.*

## **VI. Executive Director/Commission Staff Report**

### **A. New Charter School**

- Detailed timeline of new school application created. Draft of application releasing January 15th to start spreading word to interested parties.
- March will be beginning of monthly webinars.
- July 1st is official release date of application; letter of intent due by July 15th.
- No minimum of applicants.
- May 13th of 2025 is the vote on the applicants with hopes to open Fall of 2026.
- Accountability, student stories, and data breakdowns to help break perceptions.

### **B. School Updates**

- Article/study about enrollment will be sent out to commissioners.
- Schools opening up enrollment for next year soon and lotteries. Dates will be published on website.
- Mid-years happening within next month with each school.

### **C. Organizational Updates**

- Meeting with Education Committee, open to suggestions before the 24th for anything that should be shared during it.
- Plan performance framework follow up meeting.

### **D. Media Updates**

*None.*

## **VII. Monthly School Portfolio/Data Report**

### **A. 2023 Annual Boards and Commissions Report**

- Breaks down commission activity annually in a report sent to secretary of state; activity across calendar year, meetings and everything in between.

- 105 different activities across calendar year.
- Summarized work done by commission throughout the year (time, events, meetings, etc.)
- Helpful report to see work that's done and time involved, good for people interested in commission membership.

## VIII. Unfinished Business

### A. Unfinished Business

*None*

## IX. New Business Requiring Approval and/or Acceptance

### A. To Consider the Approval of Maine Academy of Natural Sciences' to Adjust Contracted Enrollment

Tori Kornfield made a motion to consider approval of Maine Academy of Natural Sciences to adjust contracted enrollment.

Leigh Albert seconded the motion.

- 10% plus or minus enrollment for any given school year.
- Wants to cap at a 200 student enrollment instead of increasing yearly.
- Q2 chronic absenteeism 45%, decrease from Q1 but still a focal point.
- Discussion of school making mission more prominent when enrolling to help with chronic absenteeism and students being engaged.
- Want new enrollment target to help with current needs and goals for school.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### Roll Call

Tom Keller Aye

Norm Higgins Aye

Jim Handy Aye

Tori Kornfield Aye

James Ford Aye

Leigh Albert Aye

Brian Langley Absent

## X. New Business Requiring Notification to the Commission (No formal action to be taken by Commission)

### A. New Governing Board Members

- *Maine Arts Academy*: Mitchell Thomas

### B. Board Member Resignations

*Maine Arts Academy: Andy Carlton*

### **C. Board Member Term Outs**

*None.*

## **XI. Next Month's Topics**

### **A. Next Month's Topics**

- State employees/contracted/help with benefits. Lana has a follow up meeting regarding this next week.
- Review policy.
- Strategic planning which will be discussed over next few months.
- Setting up continued meeting about performance framework; emails will be out to schedule.

## **XII. Announcements**

### **A. Important Dates**

- *January 15, 2024*: Release application of 10th charter school.
- *January 24, 2024*: Education Committee meeting where Norm and Lana are presenting.

### **B. Next Regular Business Meeting**

*February 13, 2024* at 1pm via Zoom or in person at 111 Sewall Street, Augusta, ME. Room 103.

## **XIII. Closing Items**

### **A. Adjourn Meeting**

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 3:26 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Norm Higgins

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## **Documents used during the meeting**

- MCSC New Charter School Application Process Timeline\_Final.docx
- 2023 Annual Boards and Commissions Report.pdf
- 2023-24 Amendment for Decreased Enrollment .docx.pdf

- Enrollment and Attendance.pdf
  - MeANS Org Chart 2023-24.pdf
  - MeAA New Govering Board Member (Mitchell Thomas).pdf
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# Coversheet

## Finance Committee

**Section:** IV. Committee Reports  
**Item:** B. Finance Committee  
**Purpose:** FYI  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** FY24\_MCSC\_Budget\_vs\_Actual\_Report\_as\_of\_2.5.24.pdf



# MCSC FY24 Budget vs. Actual *(As of 2-5-24)*

| Summary | Total FY23 Budget | Total Actual Cost | Total Difference |
|---------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
|         | \$839,374         | \$469,012         | \$370,362        |

## Personnel

|                      | Projected Cost   | Actual Cost      | Difference       |
|----------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Staff Salaries       | \$285,000        | \$181,639        | ↑ \$103,361      |
| Manpower Service Fee | \$104,880        | \$65,675         | ↑ \$39,205       |
| Benefits             | \$60,000         | \$35,000         | ↑ \$25,000       |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>\$449,880</b> | <b>\$282,314</b> | <b>\$167,566</b> |

## Contracted Services

|                             | Projected Cost   | Actual Cost     | Difference      |
|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Finance Consultant          | \$49,275         | \$24,545        | ↑ \$24,730      |
| Public Relations/Engagement | \$35,000         | \$10,951        | ↑ \$24,049      |
| Project-Based Support       | \$65,000         | \$28,888        | ↑ \$36,113      |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>\$149,275</b> | <b>\$64,384</b> | <b>\$84,891</b> |

## Projected Annual Revenue

|                            |                  |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Allotment                  | \$694,809        |
| Carryover Funds            | \$144,565        |
| Grants                     |                  |
| <b>Total Annual Income</b> | <b>\$839,374</b> |

## Actual Annual Revenue

|                                |                  |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Allotment                      | \$766,635        |
| Carryover Funds                | \$0              |
| Grants                         | \$2,163          |
| <b>Total Annual Income YTD</b> | <b>\$768,798</b> |

## Travel

|                    | Projected Cost  | Actual Cost    | Difference      |
|--------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Commission Members | \$12,782        | \$3,015        | ↑ \$9,767       |
| Staff              | \$7,641         | \$5,335        | ↑ \$2,306       |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>\$20,423</b> | <b>\$8,350</b> | <b>\$12,073</b> |

### Personal Services (Per Diem/Commission Members)

|              | Projected Cost  | Actual Cost    | Difference     |
|--------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Per Diem     | \$15,400        | \$6,765        | ↑ \$8,635      |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>\$15,400</b> | <b>\$6,765</b> | <b>\$8,635</b> |

### General Operations

|                                   | Projected Cost  | Actual Cost     | Difference     |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Insurance/Risk Management         | \$1,776         | \$798           | ↑ \$978        |
| Printing/Photocopying Services    | \$500           | \$516           | → (\$16)       |
| Dues and Subscriptions            | \$6,860         | \$6,122         | ↑ \$738        |
| Meeting Room Rental               | \$1,000         | \$0             | ↑ \$1,000      |
| Postage                           | \$500           | \$272           | ↑ \$228        |
| Advertising                       | \$500           | \$200           | ↑ \$300        |
| Food                              | \$500           | \$234           | ↑ \$266        |
| General Government Service Center | \$7,529         | \$14,093        | ↓ (\$6,564)    |
| Legal and Professional Services   | \$12,546        | \$5,429         | ↑ \$7,117      |
| Office and Other Supplies         | \$1,000         | \$413           | ↑ \$587        |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>\$32,711</b> | <b>\$28,077</b> | <b>\$4,634</b> |

### Sta-Cap

|              | Projected Cost | Actual Cost    | Difference     |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Sta-Cap      | \$9,775        | \$1,359        | ↑ \$8,416      |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>\$9,775</b> | <b>\$1,359</b> | <b>\$8,416</b> |

### Technology-For Schools

|                               | Projected Cost  | Actual Cost     | Difference      |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| NWEA MAP Test                 | \$13,039        | \$0             | ↑ \$13,039      |
| Panorama Education            | \$10,625        | \$0             | ↑ \$10,625      |
| Infinite Campus               | \$20,751        | \$19,615        | ↑ \$1,136       |
| Lotterease                    | \$3,750         | \$6,669         | ↓ (\$2,919)     |
| Epicenter                     | \$37,900        | \$38,710        | ↓ (\$810)       |
| College-Readiness Diagnostics | \$4,000         | \$2,580         | ↑ \$1,420       |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>\$90,065</b> | <b>\$67,574</b> | <b>\$22,491</b> |

### Contingency

|              | Projected Cost  | Actual Cost | Difference      |
|--------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Contingency  | \$20,000        | \$0         | ↑ \$20,000      |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>\$20,000</b> | <b>\$0</b>  | <b>\$20,000</b> |

### Technology-For MCSC

|                                  | Projected Cost  | Actual Cost     | Difference      |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Office of Information Technology | \$8,845         | \$2,332         | ↑ \$6,513       |
| Cell Phone Services              | \$2,000         | \$1,699         | ↑ \$301         |
| Website                          | \$5,000         | \$0             | ↑ \$5,000       |
| Remote CART Captioning Service   | \$5,000         | \$2,350         | ↑ \$2,650       |
| BoardOnTrack                     | \$6,000         | \$5,495         | ↑ \$505         |
| <b>Total</b>                     | <b>\$26,845</b> | <b>\$11,876</b> | <b>\$14,969</b> |



### Charter School Innovation/Collaboration

|  | Projected Cost  | Actual Cost  |   | Difference      |
|--|-----------------|--------------|---|-----------------|
| Innovation Fund/Professional Development | \$20,000        | \$0          | ↑ | \$20,000        |
| Board Chair Collaboration                | \$5,000         | \$476        | ↑ | \$4,524         |
| <b>Total</b>                             | <b>\$25,000</b> | <b>\$476</b> |   | <b>\$24,524</b> |

# Coversheet

## Media Updates

**Section:** VII. Executive Director/Commission Staff Report

**Item:** C. Media Updates

**Purpose:** FYI

**Submitted by:**

**Related Material:**

Maine schools say path to fixing chronic absenteeism starts with building relationships.pdf

Portland students collect trash after storm.pdf

Celebrating Excellence - Society of Women Engineers honors outstanding Maine high school junior  
s and seniors.pdf

Pearson's Connections Academy Partners with HOSA–Future Health Professionals to Engage and  
Connect Middle and High Schoolers Early to Healthcare Careers.pdf

Brunswick non-profit is helping all Mainers gear up for outdoors.pdf

# Maine schools say path to fixing chronic absenteeism starts with building relationships

Small steps like Sanford's 'walking school bus' help kids make it over that first barrier – getting to the bus stop – as a way to reduce absences in class.

Posted 4:00 AM



Lana Cohen Press Herald



Staff members from Sanford Pride Elementary School help children cross Main Street at a bus stop on Jan. 9. *Derek Davis/Staff Photographer*

[Buy Image](#)

On a gray, 15-degree January morning, 10-year-old Chris Smith stood outside his house near downtown Sanford. He was wearing black snow pants and an electric-blue puffer jacket.

A smile grew across his face as he saw Carol Lantagne, a Sanford pre-K education technician, and Kristin Daly, Pride Elementary School’s assistant principal, walking toward him, moving briskly down the street still snowy from the storm two days before.

Two years ago, Chris missed 43 days of school. Last year, he missed 25. But so far this year, the Sanford fourth grader has missed only one.

The difference? He’s now part of a “walking school bus.”

Every Monday through Friday, a school employee – almost always Lantagne – picks Chris up from his house and walks him to his bus stop a few blocks away.

On the five-minute walk, Chris chatted animatedly with Leah Marks, the outreach worker in the Sanford School District who organized the walking bus and occasionally joins in on its morning route. He recently turned 10 years old, he explained.

“I got a Rice Krispies Treat with M&M’s and a chocolate milk all to myself,” he said. “And next weekend, I’ll have a real birthday, with cake.”

He hoped it would be vanilla and decorated with characters from his favorite video game, Minecraft, he said.



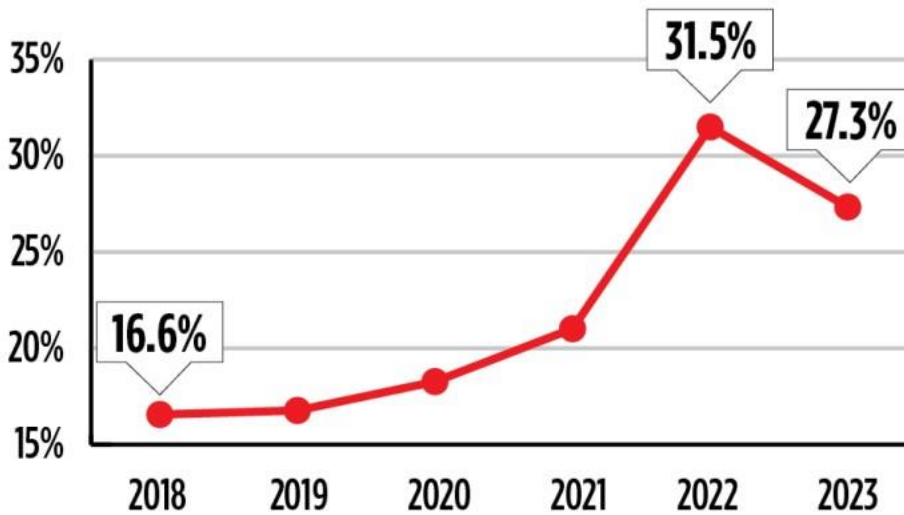
Carol Lantagne, an ed tech at Sanford Pride Elementary School, walks with third grader Christiano Mulamba on Jan. 9. School staff have been helping children get to the bus stop as a way to combat chronic absenteeism. *Derek Davis/Staff Photographer*  
[Buy Image](#)

Sanford’s walking school bus picks up multiple students from their homes and waits with them at their bus stop. It is one of many school- and district-run initiatives set up statewide to stymie the chronic absenteeism that reached record levels during the pandemic and has yet to significantly drop back down.

Students are labeled chronically absent if they miss more than 18 days, or 10% of the school year.

Before the pandemic, 16.8% of Maine’s K–12 students met this definition. During the pandemic by the 2021-22 school year, that number almost doubled to 31.5%. Last year, it [dropped slightly](#) to 27.3%.

## Chronic absenteeism in Maine schools



SOURCE: Maine Department of Education

STAFF GRAPHIC | JAKE LAWS

The key to getting students back is to help them and their families create strong and positive connections with their school and to reduce barriers that keep students from attending, said Marks, who has been working in school attendance for a dozen years.

### ‘I’M REALLY TRYING’

For Chris and his mother, Jessica Mullen, the walking bus did just that.

Mullen is a single mother to four children. Her youngest, Eric, has severe disabilities and requires significant and near-constant attention. She lives hours from family in Waterville and has only a small community in Sanford.

Getting Chris to the bus stop on time while also caring for Eric was a significant challenge and some days, just not possible, she said.

“As a mom I struggle to make sure I get everything done the way it’s supposed to be,” Mullen said. “I’m really trying. Sometimes it might not seem like it, but I really am,” she said.

She said the walking bus gave her the support she needed to be able to get Chris to school and give Eric the attention he needs.



Sanford Pride Elementary School students wait at a bus stop on Main Street on Jan. 9 after a big snowfall two days before. *Derek Davis/Staff Photographer*

[Buy Image](#)

And for Chris, it’s a highlight of his day.

He doesn’t really like school, Mullen said, but he loves the walk to the bus stop. On the one day he missed school this year because he was sick, he begged her to let him meet up with the group anyway, she said.

Mullen is proud of Chris' improved attendance record. It feels good, she said, to know he is getting to school most days.

Addressing chronic absenteeism is complicated because it's not a root issue, it's an indicator that there are other things going on, said Jess Anderson, executive director of Count ME in Maine, an organization working to increase school attendance in the state.

"It doesn't tell you what's wrong, it just tells you that there's a problem," she said

Generally, that problem is poverty, Anderson said.

"Think of it like Maslow's hierarchy of needs," she said. "If a student doesn't have a place to live, an emotionally safe environment to go home to or enough food to eat, then school is not going to be a priority," she said.



Luzineide Maunzanga, a student at Sanford Pride Elementary School, waits for her school bus in Sanford on Jan. 9. *Derek Davis/Staff Photographer*

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## **'POVERTY IS A MAJOR ISSUE'**

Difficult home lives, caring for younger siblings, having full-time day jobs and mental health challenges are all reasons that Dexter Regional High School students start missing significant amounts of school, Principal Stephen Bell said.

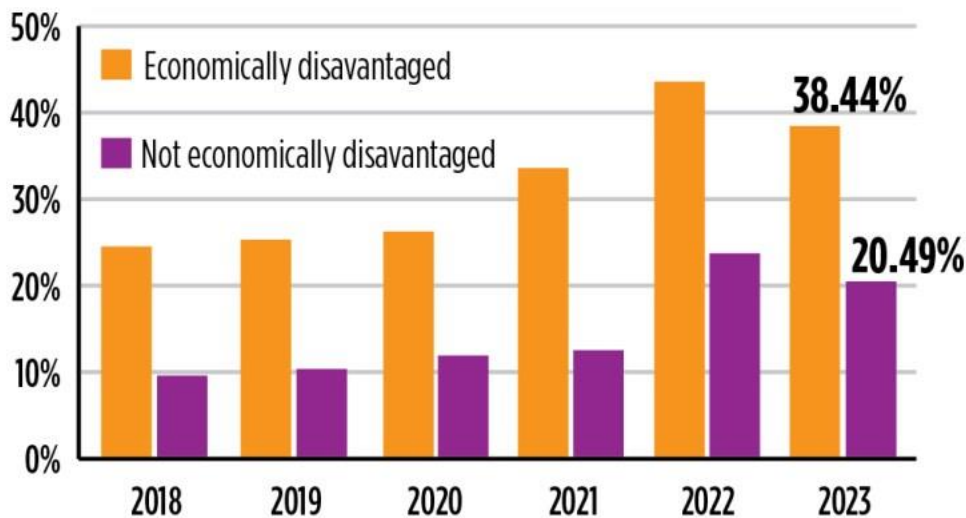
As with schools across the state, chronic absenteeism skyrocketed at the Penobscot County school during the pandemic.

Bell is hopeful that the school’s efforts to reengage students will help bring chronic absenteeism back down to at least pre-pandemic levels. But it’s challenging, he said, because the major issue leading to missed school days is poverty. And poverty is a behemoth to go up against.

Economically disadvantaged students are significantly more likely to be chronically absent than their counterparts, according to state data.

Last year, 20.49% of non-economically disadvantaged students (those living above the poverty line) were chronically absent. But the rate was almost double – 38.44% – for economically disadvantaged students (those living below the poverty line).

## Rate of Maine students who missed at least 18 days of school



SOURCE: Maine Department of Education

STAFF GRAPHIC | JAKE LAWS

At the outset, Bell said he works to make the school as welcoming as possible to its 270 students – a place where students feel safe, happy, successful and engaged.

But year after year, some students still stop showing up. That’s when the school social worker and school police officer come into play. They do home visits to try to find out why students aren’t coming to school and encourage them to return.



Sometimes they find that a student is home taking care of their younger siblings because their parents are at work and can't afford child care, sometimes the students themselves are working, sometimes they're struggling with mental health and sometimes they're homeless, couch surfing, and just trying to survive, Bell said.

Dexter's teachers, administrators, mental health professionals and social workers work together to bring kids back to school – to sell school as a safe, warm place with food, friends, adults who can be trusted and access to other resources. And this past year, with financial assistance from the state for training, they've started building individual plans for each kid who is chronically absent or otherwise struggling in an effort to get them back on track.



Carol Lantagne, left, an ed tech at Sanford Pride Elementary School, greets fourth graders Chris Smith and Isabel Soule before walking to the bus stop on Jan. 9. *Derek Davis/Staff Photographer*

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But as the school works to pull kids back into school, other forces push them away.

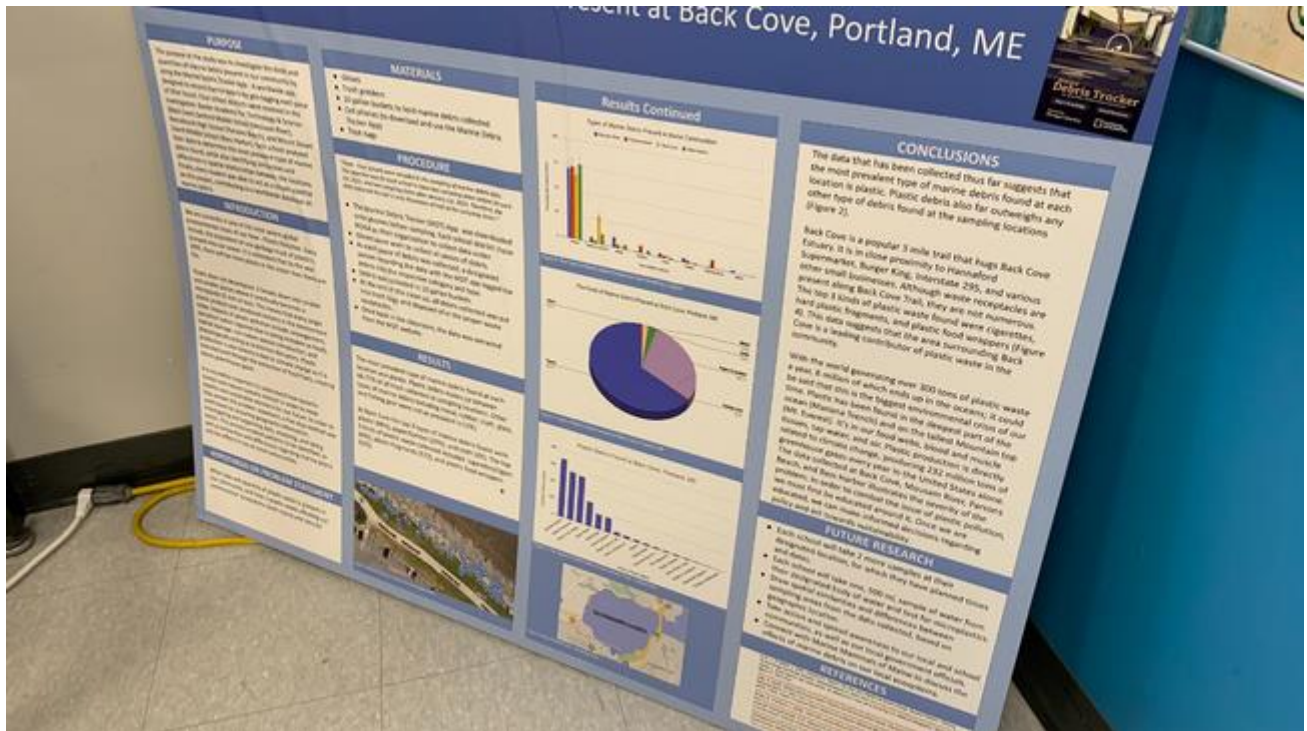
“Poverty is a major issue in rural Maine,” Bell said. “And with mental health on top of that, it can be tough to convince kids to come to school.”

# Portland students collect trash after storm, hope to inspire and educate others

by [Mal Meyer](#), WGME

Tue, January 16th 2024







*Saturday's storm is turning into a valuable lesson for some students in Portland. (WGME)*

PORTLAND (WGME) -- Saturday's storm is turning into a valuable lesson for some students in Portland.

A group went out to Higgins Beach and collected marine debris, which are still rolling in now days later.

A plastic bottle, lots of rope and part of a trap are just some of the things swept up in Scarborough by a historic high tide.

"I'm very fortunate to have grown up in Maine, and I'm very fortunate to live near beaches that I know and I love. Knowing for a fact that just not even very far out, there's this and so much more in those oceans is heartbreaking," Baxter Academy for Technology and Science senior Jack Forsyth said.

Some students at Baxter Academy for Technology and Science have learned this firsthand.

"This project has definitely been a big part of my life the past couple years," Baxter Academy for Technology and Science junior Julez Vazquez said.

They've been collecting and analyzing a certain kind of litter around Back Cove.

"Last year in four cleanups, we collected over 7,000 pieces of marine debris," Baxter Academy for Technology and Science Teacher Kate Strait said.

"We've found that about 70 percent of all trash in our community has been plastic," Baxter Academy for Technology and Science junior Eliot Verry-Gardella said.

That breaks down in the environment and creates tiny pieces called "microplastics."

"Humans eat about a credit card worth of microplastics every week," Vazquez said.

The group has uploaded information about what they've collected on a phone app, which they, or other citizen scientists, can then use.

"If you wanted to do your own individual study just within the United States, or say, on the East Coast, you could see everybody that's using the app on the East Coast and what they're finding as well," Strait said.

But what they've gathered isn't going back in the trash.

"All of this will be used to create some art," Baxter Academy for Technology and Science senior Martessa Vine said.

They haven't decided what it will look like exactly. Last year, they created big jellyfish out of some of the pieces.

# Celebrating Excellence: Society of Women Engineers honors outstanding Maine high school juniors and seniors



by [BDN Community](#) January 11, 2024



(Courtesy photo)

ORONO — The Society of Women Engineers University of Maine Section proudly acknowledges and congratulates five exceptional Maine high school seniors who received the prestigious Certificate of Merit Award on Dec. 2. This distinguished award recognizes female-identifying juniors and seniors who have demonstrated excellence in science or math-related activities. Selected through nominations by their school counselors, these outstanding students were invited to the Orono campus for a special reception, where they were celebrated, heard from faculty and students in the Maine College of Engineering and Computing, and toured the state-of-the-art Ferland Engineering and Design Center.



The deserving recipients of this year's Certificate of Merit Award are Chase Smith of Bangor High School, Veronika Davis of Baxter Academy for Technology and Science, Sonya Vesilli of Morse High School, Amelia Donovan of Presque Isle High School, and Julia Fitzgerald of Skowhegan High School. These young women have not only excelled in their math and science courses but have also demonstrated a dedicated commitment to their extracurricular activities.

The Certificate of Merit ceremony was marked by the presence of notable guests, including the first female dean of the Maine College of Engineering and Computing, Dr. Giovanna Guidoboni, members of the Maine State Professional SWE Section, current students from chemical engineering, civil engineering, and mechanical engineering, as well as student ambassadors from the Pulp and Paper Foundation.

During the ceremony, Dean Guidoboni shared her inspiring academic journey from Italy to the U.S. She emphasized the significance of interdisciplinary collaboration in addressing the world's most challenging problems. The dean highlighted the university's commitment to interdisciplinary work, which played a pivotal role in her decision to join the institution. She also shared her young daughter's enthusiastic reaction to the new engineering building, showcasing the world of opportunities awaiting behind its doors, filled with cutting-edge equipment, labs, and classrooms.

The Certificate of Merit Award holds global recognition, as it is presented to one outstanding junior or senior in each high school participating in the program. This prestigious accolade can be

highlighted on college and scholarship applications, serving as a testament to the recipients' academic achievements.

All speakers and the Society of Women Engineers extend heartfelt congratulations to the deserving recipients of the Certificate of Merit Award. As these exceptional young women embark on their future endeavors, we eagerly anticipate witnessing the inspiring accomplishments they are sure to achieve.

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Newsline

# Pearson's Connections Academy Partners with HOSA–Future Health Professionals to Engage and Connect

# Middle and High Schoolers Early to Healthcare Careers

eSchool News Staff

January 25, 2024

**Columbia, Md.** – [Pearson](#) (FTSE: PSON.L) and its [Connections Academy](#), the fully online public school program serving K-12 students for more than 20 years, announced today their partnership with [HOSA–Future Health Professionals](#), a career and technical student organization (CTSO), to connect middle and high school students to healthcare careers. Through the partnership, Connections Academy will introduce students to HOSA’s immersive experiences that will supercharge their explorations of hundreds of healthcare occupations.

Students will get hands-on experience in the healthcare industry, learn about growing opportunities in healthcare careers, as well as meet like-minded students from across the globe. HOSA students develop the skills prioritized by employers, according to [Pearson’s Skills Outlook](#), in leadership, communication and teamwork, as well as technical skills related to specific healthcare careers.

Their experience builds self-confidence, motivation, and enthusiasm for their future in healthcare through developing a professional network from HOSA’s collegiate and industry partners, alumni, and peers, and through participation in community service and the organization’s nearly 100 annual healthcare-related competitive events at the local, state and international levels.

Early exposure, as well as building durable skills and industry connections are critical for high school students interested in healthcare occupations, which are [growing at 13%](#), through 2031, much faster than the average for all other occupations. Participation in HOSA provides an advantage for students to be prepared for the [1.8 million openings](#) projected each year, on average, in these occupations due to employment growth and the need to replace workers who leave healthcare permanently, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

“Thirty percent of Connections Academy students begin thinking about their careers between 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade as compared to 16% of all students,” said Pearson Virtual Schools VP for Careers, Casey Welch. “HOSA’s mission to empower students early – starting in middle school – to become global health community leaders through education, collaboration, and experience aligns perfectly with the

goals of Connection Academy’s career readiness offerings to provide young people with direction, confidence, and connections to feel prepared for their next step after high school.”

With more than a quarter of a million members in 5,600 middle schools, high schools, community colleges, 4-year colleges and universities in 54 states, territories and countries, and 40,000 registered alumni, HOSA is one of the largest global student-led organizations that is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Department of Human and Health Services. Connections Academy students participating in HOSA will benefit from connections to their industry partners, including Fortune 100 healthcare companies, management consulting firms, US government, defense and humanitarian agencies, and top tier medical schools and organizations that serve millions of students and healthcare professionals ( [view list here](#)).

“HOSA-Future Health Professionals is pleased to establish a partnership with Pearson and its Connections Academy schools, which share our commitment to educational excellence and fostering a mindset of lifelong learning,” said HOSA Executive Director Sarah Walters, MMCH, MSN, RN, CPNP-AC. “Through these shared values and a vision for the future, we strive to expand opportunities for students to explore health careers, build technical expertise, and develop the essential leadership skills to thrive as future health professionals.”

The partnership with HOSA is the second for Connections Academy’s [expanded slate of college and career readiness offerings](#) for middle and high school students. Launched in spring 2023, the initiatives offer an innovative new tri-credit approach where courses can deliver high school credit, industry-recognized micro-credentials, and eligibility for college credit toward over 150 U.S. bachelor’s degree programs.



Connections Academy plans to launch several HOSA chapters by the end of the 23-24 school year with the goal of expansion to Connections Academy schools nationwide in future.

## About HOSA-Future Health Professionals

HOSA-Future Health Professionals is a global student-led organization that provides a unique program of leadership development, technical skills training, and recognition exclusively for middle school, secondary, postsecondary, and collegiate students enrolled in health and biomedical sciences. Recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, HOSA empowers its members to become leaders in the global health community through education, collaboration, and experience. HOSA actively promotes career opportunities in the health industry and enhances the delivery of quality health care to all people. Current membership is over 290,000 representing fifty-four states, countries, and territories including China, South Korea, Germany, Puerto Rico, and Trinidad and Tobago. For more information, go to [www.hosa.org](http://www.hosa.org) or contact: [hosa@hosa.org](mailto:hosa@hosa.org).

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# Brunswick non-profit is helping all Mainers gear up for outdoors

Maine GearShare provides outdoor gear rentals at a low cost to organizations, creating equal access to the outdoors.



By [Logan Hoffman](#)

Published: Jan. 30, 2024 at 5:22 PM EST



BRUNSWICK, Maine (WABI) -You've heard of libraries for books, but have you heard of them for outdoor gear?

Maine GearShare in Brunswick provides outdoor gear rentals at a low cost to organizations, creating equal access to the outdoors.

"Our goal is to create more equitable access to the outdoors. We do that by trying to level the playing field around outdoor equipment and apparel," says Josh Bossin, Maine GearShare Executive Director.

The mission with their program is to give every Mainer access to the outdoors.

They've partnered with organizations like the Augusta Teen Center, Maine Academy of Natural Sciences, Maine Recreation and Parks Association and more.



Bossin says they really can get everything.

"Long underwear, puffy coats, rain coats. You name it, we've got it," he says.

Zak Klein is the Vice President on the board for Maine GearShare and says every gear library has a different focus.

"This gear library is to support many people's programs," says Klein.

Advancement Manager Emily Mackeown has been with GearShare since 2021 and says, "When I joined, GearShare had no member organizations, no gear, no 501c3, no building. And here we are. We're serving over 1,000 participants. We're able to outfit 100 people in the field at a time. We have this incredible facility where people hopefully can feel really welcome to come in and ask questions, learn, try on gear, try on gear, check out gear. I can't even state how much it's grown because it's gone from not existing to being this fantastic resource that people seem really excited about."

Klein says he's seen his fair share of trips that are run with inadequate gear.

"This might be the first and, for a while, the last opportunity that someone has to have a positive opportunity outdoors," he says.

Since gear is their focus, they have an in-house repair shop and the public can come in and rent items a la carte. Every rental and repair goes back to supporting their goal of putting gear in every Mainer's hands.

"Just that weekend rental will pay for some of that cost goes into putting backpacks on kids in our mission program," says Bossin.

For more information on rentals, you can head to their website, [mainegearshare.org](http://mainegearshare.org).

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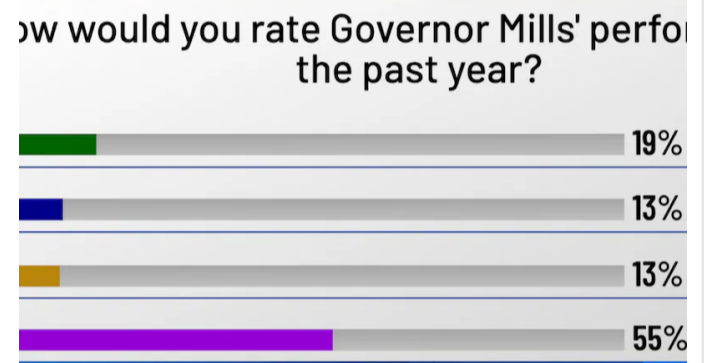
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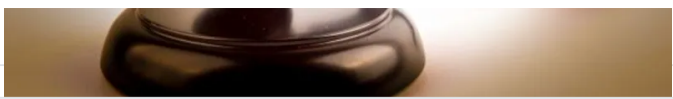
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## Coversheet

### To Consider the Approval of Ecology Learning Center's Request for New Facility

**Section:** X. New Business Requiring Approval and/or Acceptance  
**Item:** A. To Consider the Approval of Ecology Learning Center's Request for  
New Facility  
**Purpose:** Vote  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** ELC Facility Amendment.pdf

## Maine Charter School Commission Charter Amendment Cover Sheet Request to Change Facility, Additional Facility, or Make Substantial Facility Renovations

### School Information

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Date of Request</b>                  | January 31, 2024   |
| <b>School Name and Mailing Address:</b> | Ecology Learning Center<br>230 Main Street<br>Unity, ME 04988                                      |
| <b>Contact</b>                          | Lēza Packard, Head of School   |
| <b>Contact telephone number</b>         | 207-230-9275   |
| <b>Contact email address</b>            | <a href="mailto:leza.packard@ecologylearningcenter.org">leza.packard@ecologylearningcenter.org</a> |

### Provide a brief narrative description of the request.

The Ecology Learning Center requests permission to add a facility – the Unity College Center for the Arts – an 1800s farmhouse and barn beautifully restored in 2000 into a theater and educational facility for the arts. The building is located immediately adjacent to one of our current buildings. The facility is valued at \$886,100 and will be gifted to ELC for \$0 (zero dollars) with a proposed closing date of February 14, 2024.

**Attachments:**

- Interior & Exterior Images
  - E 1-5 Exterior photos
  - L 1-13 Lower level photos
  - M 1-11 Main level photos
  - U 1-9 Upper level photos
- Floor Plan
- Cash Flow Impact Analysis
- Classroom Square Footage

## **Maine Charter School Commission Charter Amendment Cover Sheet Request to Change Facility, Additional Facility, or Make Substantial Facility Renovations**

**Provide the address of the proposed location and interior / exterior images as available.**

Address: 42 Depot Street, Unity, Maine (currently named Unity College Center for the Arts).

[See attached interior and exterior images.](#)

**Provide a current floor plan.**

[See attached floor plan.](#)

**Describe the financing plans and proposed budget for acquisition of a facility and any necessary renovations to meet the school's needs, all local building requirements, and accessibility requirements.**

The facility is being gifted to the Ecology Learning Center by the Unity Foundation (UF). The financial arrangement is that Unity University (UU) will receive \$200,000 total for the building, \$150,000 from UF in residual interest (an arrangement made in 2010 when UF originally gifted the building to Unity College), and \$50,000 in grant funds from UF. ELC has already submitted the grant application for \$50K and has received verbal confirmation of the award. The Purchase & Sale agreement between Ecology Learning Center and UU is in the amount of \$50,000. ELC will pay title insurance (estimated at \$3101.35 on the full valuation of \$886,100) and transfer tax (1950.30). These are high estimates and may be lower as we negotiate the final Purchase & Sale agreement. Other than these two costs, the purchase will cost ELC \$0.

The building is turn-key ready for educational use, with no renovations necessary. The elevator, fully operational and up to date in inspections, provides wheelchair accessibility if needed between the lower, main, and upper levels.

ELC's finance committee has projected capital and operating expenses from February 2024 through June 30, 2027. Please [see attached Cashflow Impact Analysis](#). To meet these long-range projected costs, we have planned a capital campaign to raise \$150,000 by June 2024. We already received two pledges towards that goal – for \$24,000 and \$25,000. We are confident that we will reach our fundraising goal given our connections with Unity College

alums, Unity Foundation, and residents of Unity who want to see the Center for the Arts re-opened for educational use and the benefit of the whole community.

**Provide the estimated number of students and grade levels to be served at the new or additional location.**

The estimated number of students to be served is 120 in grades 9-12, an increase from our current enrollment of 106. We created budget projections for both our current number (106) and requested number (120), with the latter being a more sustainable financial model. If we end our lease at 5 Clifford Commons, the new building plus our original building at 230 Main Street will easily provide adequate space to accommodate the additional 14 students (120 total). [See attached Classroom Square Footage](#) spreadsheet that compares classroom space in the new building (5090 sq ft), our main building (3023 sq ft), and the rental building (1431 sq ft). We will gain more than 3600 square feet of classroom space (in addition to theater, restroom, kitchen, storage space) by replacing the rental with the new facility, a building we will own outright.

**Describe how transportation services will be provided.**

Transportation services will be provided in the same manner they currently are, with the same drop off and pick up location for the bus and vans. The Unity College Center for the Arts is located across the street and within sight of our main building at 230 Main Street. The Center for the Arts is located immediately adjacent to 5 Clifford Commons, the building we rent. The flow of pedestrian travel between 230 Main Street and the new building has therefore already been safely routinized, and parking secured. The Arts Center includes an ample parking lot.

**Describe the benefit to the school and students resulting from the new/additional school facility.**

The benefits of the Center for the Arts to the school and students are extraordinary. First, the new facility will provide space to gather as a whole school community. ELC was intentionally founded as a small school to foster *unity*, cohesion, and esprit de corps that transcend grade level, academic ability, and social class. We have been gathering as a whole school outside in the cold, in a greenhouse where condensation drips down on students, or squeezed into a foyer. The new facility will provide a proper space to gather for meals, all-school

announcements, performances, celebrations, fundraisers, open house events, graduations... and so much more.

Second, the Center for the Arts will strengthen our nutrition program. Eating well and studying sustainable food systems are central to ELC's curriculum. Every student takes a turn preparing lunch, working alongside our Nutrition Program Director. Our current facilities have no kitchen, so we move between two rented commercial kitchens contingent upon availability, and we transport meals which increases operating costs, wastes valuable time, and diminishes the quality of food served. The new facility has a commercial kitchen adjacent to a dining space.

Third, the new facility will exponentially benefit our arts program. As the name promises, the Center for the Arts is fully outfitted for collegiate arts: stage and theater that seats 200, 2 grand pianos, butcher block art tables, 12 pottery wheels, 2 kilns, and an upgraded ventilation system for the ceramics studio. All of this equipment comes with the facility, as part of the Purchase & Sale agreement for no added cost.

**Discuss how the proposed new / additional facility contributes to the realization of the school's mission and vision.**

The Center for the Arts will allow us to realize our mission to "foster real world learning through mentorship and craft, and cultivate compassionate, resilient leaders." As part of the school's Career Readiness graduation requirement, every student must complete an internship. Management of the theater - from scheduling performers to advertising, selling tickets, and serving refreshments - will provide a rich real-world learning opportunity.

The Center for the Arts was originally renovated and opened as the "Playhouse" in 2000, paid for by Bert & Coral Clifford, founders of Unity Foundation. On the opening night, Bert Clifford said, "The dream you are sitting in tonight was created by a couple who dream of how to make their hometown a better place for those who live, work and retire here. The Unity Centre for the Performing Arts will be the site for plays, musicals, movies, receptions and similar events. After the expense for fuel, lights and maintenance, all income will go to educational scholarships for area students. It is our gift to the community."

Twenty-three years later, our students can renew Bert Clifford's gift to the community by once again offering plays, musicals, movies and receptions to the townsfolk of Unity and beyond. The lead person who directed the performing arts center for many years is excited to work with our students and be an internship mentor. Students will gain leadership and entrepreneurial skills as they manage the Playhouse.



## Coversheet

### To Consider the Approval of Ecology Learning Center's Request to Increase Enrollment

**Section:** X. New Business Requiring Approval and/or Acceptance  
**Item:** B. To Consider the Approval of Ecology Learning Center's Request to Increase Enrollment  
**Purpose:** Vote  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** ELC Enrollment Increase Application.pdf



**Amendment Guide for Increasing Enrollment and/or Adding Grades Served**

**Charter District Information**

Date of Request: January 31, 2024

Charter District Name: Ecology Learning Center

Mailing Address: 230 Main Street Unity, ME 04988

Contact Person: Lēza Packard, Head of School

Contact Telephone Number: 207-230-9275

Contact Email Address: leza.packard@ecologylearningcenter.org

**Please address all the following criteria in your request.**

1. Describe how the amendment request is consistent with the school’s mission and vision.

We started as the smallest public charter school in Maine and will remain the smallest public charter school even with an enrollment increase to 120 students. The mission and vision of the school demands a small student - teacher ratio. Adding 14 more students will maintain a small school feel and add the financial capacity to continue providing rich hands-on, place-based experiences true to our mission. With more students, we will have the economy of scale to sustain quality field trips, outdoor adventures, backpacking expeditions, and robust community service projects.

2. Describe the need to adjust enrollment and/or increase the grade span. How was that need determined? Demonstrate a compelling case that there is demand for the expansion.

Since the Ecology Learning Center opened in 2020, our enrollment has been on target or higher than our stated enrollment goal. In AY21 amidst the pandemic, our enrollment projection was 48 students for grades 9-10. We had 47 students on October 1, and concluded the year with 48. Even though we had one spot

available on October 1, 2020, we had filled available spaces for students coming from RSU3 and sustained a waitlist for RSU3 students that year.

In AY22, our enrollment projection was 72 students for grades 9-11 and we had 77 on October 1. In total, 113 students submitted an Intent to Enroll for AY22. While some of those 113 students were offered a spot and chose to not submit a commitment to enroll, the high number of Intent to Enroll forms indicated a growing interest in our school.

In AY23, our enrollment projection was 96 students for grades 9-12 and we had 102 on October 1. We ended the year with 106 students enrolled and a waitlist. 139 students submitted an Intent to Enroll for AY23. Several of the students who declined their spot in AY22 or AY23 ended up attending the next year.

In AY24, our enrollment projection was 96 students for grades 9-12 and we had 106 on October 1, the maximum allowed, and a waitlist of 8 students. Once again, exactly 139 students submitted an Intent to Enroll for AY24. We have a high retention rate and a positive reputation, despite having done very little advertising and depending on word of mouth.

For AY25, open enrollment began January 5, the same day as the last 3 years, and the numbers have been remarkably higher. As of January 14, 2024, 59 students enrolled for AY25 compared with only 26 on January 14, 2023 - more than double! The ELC Bridge Program (homeschool enrichment for grades 6-8) has grown from 12 students to 16 with a waitlist, and every 8<sup>th</sup> grader currently in Bridge plans to attend the ELC high school next year. The consistent growth in both our feeder program and the high school indicates a demand for expansion.

3. Provide evidence that the school has engaged and responded to community stakeholders, including families and school staff.

The school holds regular PTA meetings, called "Friends of Ecology Learning Center." Families who participate have expressed how much they love the school's model of outdoor adventures, place-based studies, and field trips. An increase in enrollment will sustain those co-curricular trips.

Family event attendance has increased. We grew from only 10 family members attending our 2023 Passion Project Expo to 30 family members attending the 2024 Expo.

Our growth over the past 3 ½ years has been incremental and consistent, and staff and families alike have responded favorably (we have a 92% staff retention rate). An increase of 14 more students would be consistent with our pattern of growth, and staff have already demonstrated that they can thrive with that level of growth.

4. Describe the desired results from an enrollment adjustment and/or increase in grade span.

An increase in enrollment will allow us to increase the teaching staff and expand our course offerings. We would like to add a Science elective, a Wellness course, and two Art electives to our course catalog. This course expansion will require the addition of two full-time teachers (2 FTEs). By increasing our enrollment by 14 students (one more class), we can afford to add teachers and thereby add courses. Many students and parents have expressed a desire for more elective course offerings.

5. Provide a table showing the historical distribution of enrolled students in the present grade span, and the projected distribution of students by grade if the amendment request is granted.

**See attached tables:** Enrollment Trends, Enrollment Distribution

6. Explain any unique circumstances related to the school's academic performance and academic growth, and corrective actions taken to address challenges in these areas of school performance.

Our NWEA test scores for Math in all grades decreased from Fall 2022 to Fall 2023. As a corrective action, we are providing targeted support to students, especially in Algebra and Geometry, led by our Math department head. Additionally, we made a major revision to our weekly schedule this year with focused, leveled Math instruction 4 days per week and the possibility for students to move up or down in Math level if needed without disrupting the rest of their schedule. We anticipate seeing a positive change in NWEA Math scores in the spring. Increasing our enrollment by 14 students will further support our capacity to offer a diversity of courses at different levels.

7. Provide an action plan for implementation. Include: a timeline, action(s) to be taken, designated point person, and start date and projected completion date.

Timeline / Action

February - recruit students by holding Open Houses; post job positions

March - Open Houses, concerts & performances in Unity Center for the Arts

- April - Open Houses, concerts & performances; schedule “step up days” for incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders; interview staff & faculty candidates
- May - finalize contracts for returning and newly hired faculty
- June - finalize transportation routes; purchase additional van

Designated Point Person: Kayla Higgins, Dean of Students - student recruitment  
Lēza Packard, Head of School - hiring  
Jill Packard, Operations Manager - transportation

Start Date: February 2024

End Date: June 2024

8. Provide a staffing chart and narrative staffing plan to support the planning and implementation of the proposed increase in enrollment and/or grade span.

**See attached Staffing Chart**

The staffing plan to accommodate 14 additional students is to add the equivalent of 2 full time teachers (2 FTEs), 0.5 van driver, and 0.5 custodial / maintenance.

The increased time for instructional staff will be in the following subjects:

Math 0.3 (in response to our NWEA test scores),

Science 0.5 (in response to student & family requests for science electives)

English 0.3 (supports NWEA testing, SAT testing, and graduation)

Arts 0.7 (in response to new facility opportunity, to expand the arts)

World Languages 0.2 (in response to student & family requests for more rigor)

The Ecology Learning Center strives to create an interdependent team, in which content areas work collaboratively. The job postings will therefore offer flexibility as we seek the right mission-aligned person to join our team. The positions will be posted with the option to mix and match (Math + Art, or Science + World Languages) according to an applicant’s unique skill set and experience.

9. Describe the financial resources that are necessary to implement the school’s expansion, including the sources of revenue for the successful implementation of the proposed change. Describe contingency planning for potential challenges in cash flow or budget shortfalls.

The request to amend enrollment is aligned with and dependent upon the addition of a new facility. Our finance committee has created a 3-year Cash Flow Impact Analysis based upon 120 students and purchasing the Unity College Center for the Arts. The new facility will be gifted to the school. The long-term

costs of the new facility will be met by a capital campaign March through June 2024, and by the increase in per pupil allocation to be received starting in January of 2025. We also analyzed cash flow for 110 students and found that 120 students resulted in a more favorable cash flow projection over three years. We anticipate the addition of the Center for the Arts to attract new families to the school, which reinforces the need for an increase in enrollment.

10. Provide financial projections for the proposed expansion. Financial projections should reflect both immediate and long-term considerations that have been identified in implementation of the proposed amendment. Provide a detailed narrative explaining the financial forecasts, and the assumptions.  
Please **see attached Cash Flow Impact Analysis**.

11. Indicate if the current facility will accommodate the expansion, or if additional space and/or renovations will be required.  
The current facilities (230 Main Street and 5 Clifford Commons) will not accommodate 14 more students. The additional space provided by the Unity College Center for the Arts **will** accommodate the expansion. The new facility will provide more than 5000 square feet in classroom space so we can end our lease at 5 Clifford Commons. No additional space or renovations beyond the Center for the Arts will be needed.

12. If the school contracts with an ESP, describe how the ESP will support the planning and implementation of the proposed amendment.  
N/A

In addition to the above, for Grade Span Change please also address the following:

1. Provide an overview of how the current educational program will be adapted to serve younger or older students, as applicable.  
Not applicable; the increase of 14 students will only be for the grades currently offered, 9-12.
2. Indicate if the current assessment system used at the school will accommodate younger or older students, and any modifications required if the amendment request is granted.  
The current assessment system will continue to serve additional students for the grades currently offered, 9-12.

# Coversheet

## To Consider the Approval of Revisions to the Performance Framework for SY2023-24

**Section:** X. New Business Requiring Approval and/or Acceptance  
**Item:** C. To Consider the Approval of Revisions to the Performance Framework  
for SY2023-24  
**Purpose:** Vote  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** Performance Framework February 2024.docx.pdf

APPROVED MCSC Performance Framework June 23, 2022 - Revised May 2023  
DRAFT REVISION FEBRUARY 2024



## PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

Charter school authorizers are responsible for maintaining high standards for school performance, upholding school autonomy, and protecting student and public interests. Using a performance contract as both a guide and a tool, the Maine Charter School Commission maintains high standards and manages charter school performance—not by dictating inputs or controlling processes—but by setting expectations and holding charter districts accountable for results. The Maine Charter School Commission engages in responsible and effective performance management by ensuring charter districts have the autonomy to which they are entitled and the public accountability for which they are responsible.

The Maine Charter School Commission's relationship with the charter districts it authorizes begins with a bargain for performance. The Maine Charter School Commission agrees to entrust a charter district's governing board with public dollars and public school students and to give it broad autonomy over how it achieves agreed-upon goals. In return, the school's board commits to achieving specified results, managing public funds responsibly, complying with its legal obligations, and providing a quality education to the students in its care.

In order for this bargain of autonomy in exchange for accountability to work, it is essential that the Maine Charter School Commission establish, maintain, and enforce high performance standards for all schools in its portfolio. This includes not only holding schools accountable for the academic performance of all of their students, which should always be the primary measure of quality, but also holding schools accountable for financial and organizational performance. The critical first step in effective performance management is to set and communicate clear and rigorous expectations for performance. Schools need clearly defined standards so they know what is expected of them, and the Maine Charter School Commission needs them to manage performance effectively by holding schools accountable for outcomes without attempting to control inputs.

The National Association of Charter School Authorizers' (NACSA's) Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing



(2012) emphasizes that a quality authorizer establishes standards for school performance that are clear, quantifiable, rigorous, and attainable. NACSA also recommends that authorizers develop and formally adopt a Performance Framework that includes academic, financial, and organizational performance measures for use by schools and authorizers to establish expectations, guide practice, assess progress, and inform decision making over the course of the charter term and at renewal or revocation.

The three areas of performance covered by the framework—academic, financial, and organizational, form the backbone of the Maine Charter School Commission’s performance management system. This framework enables effective performance management and promotes school success by establishing and communicating performance expectations for all schools in the MCSC’s portfolio in a way that is objective, transparent, and directly related to school quality.

The Performance Framework benefits both the Maine Charter School Commission and charter districts it authorizes. The framework promotes transparency and objectivity in authorizing and protects school autonomy. It enables charter school performance contracting to function as intended by providing both charter districts and the Maine Charter School Commission with clarity about expected outcomes, objective evidence of achievement, and a comprehensive tool for evaluating results.

The framework promotes transparency and objectivity by putting the authorizer on record and schools, parents, stakeholders, and the public on notice about the performance standards that will be used to evaluate whether or not a school is successful and is living up to its end of the charter bargain. The framework helps to establish expectations at the beginning of the school’s operation so that there will be no surprises when a school is held accountable for meeting them over the course of the charter term and at renewal.

The framework protects school autonomy by clarifying in objective terms the performance data the Maine Charter School Commission will collect and the outcomes that it expects and will evaluate. The framework helps to establish the boundaries of the parties’ relationship and define the rights and responsibilities of both the charter school and the Maine Charter School Commission.

**SECTION 1: STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

**Student Performance: The school consistently makes progress in student academic achievement for all students.**

**FRAMING QUESTIONS:**

**Is the school an academic success?**

**Is the school adequately preparing students for their desired post-secondary outcomes?**

| Criterion | Indicator   | Target  | Rating  |
|-----------|---|---|---|
| 1.1a      | Student Academic Proficiency - MDOE Through-Year Assessment, <b>ELA</b> | <p>Schools will report the percentage of students assessed at each grade level, and at the campus and district levels.</p> <p>Schools will report the percentage of students “at state expectation” and “above state expectation” on proficiency.</p> | <p><del>This indicator will not be rated in SY 22-23.</del></p> <p><del>Ratings will be developed after the baseline is established.</del></p> <p><b>Exceeding Expectations:</b><br/>                     ≥5% of state average of schools “at or above state expectation”</p> <p><b>Meets Expectations:</b><br/>                     Between ≥-5% and &lt;5% of state average of schools “at or above state expectation”</p> <p><b>Approaching Expectations:</b><br/>                     Between ≥-15% and &lt;-5% of state average of schools “at or above state expectation”</p> <p><b>Not Meeting Expectations:</b><br/>                     &lt;-15% of state average of schools “at or above state expectation”</p> |

|             |   |  |   |
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| <p>1.1b</p> | <p>Student Academic Proficiency - MDOE Through-Year Assessment, <b>Math</b></p> | <p>Schools will report the percentage of students assessed at each grade level, and at the campus and district levels.</p> <p>Schools will report the percentage of students “at state expectation” and “above state expectation” on proficiency.</p>  | <p><del>This indicator will not be rated in SY 22-23.</del></p> <p><del>Ratings will be developed after the baseline is established.</del></p> <p><b>Exceeding Expectations:</b><br/>≥5% of state average of schools “at or above state expectation”</p> <p><b>Meets Expectations:</b><br/>Between ≥-5% and &lt;5% of state average of schools “at or above state expectation”</p> <p><b>Approaching Expectations:</b><br/>Between ≥-15% and &lt;-5% of state average of schools “at or above state expectation”</p> <p><b>Not Meeting Expectations:</b><br/>&lt;-15% of state average of schools “at or above state expectation”</p> |
| <p>1.1c</p> | <p>Proficiency by subgroup, Through-Year Assessment, <b>ELA</b></p>             | <p>Schools will report the percentage of students in each reportable subgroup* assessed at each grade level, and at the campus and district levels.</p> <p>Schools will report the percentage of students in each reportable subgroup “at state expectation” and “above state expectation” on proficiency.</p> <p>Comparable subgroups include: Students on IEPs, Multilingual Learners, Economically Disadvantaged, Race, Ethnicity</p> <p><i>*To be reported, subgroups must have <b>at least 10 students.</b></i></p> | <p><b>Exceeding Expectations:</b><br/>≥5% of state average of schools “at or above state expectation” for comparable subgroup</p> <p><b>Meets Expectations:</b><br/>Between ≥-5% and &lt;5% of state average of schools “at or above state expectation” for comparable subgroup</p> <p><b>Approaching Expectations:</b><br/>Between ≥-15% and &lt;-5% of state average of schools “at or</p>  |

|      |  |  |  |
|------|--|--|--|
|      |  |  | <p>above state expectation” for comparable subgroup<br/> <b>Not Meeting Expectations:</b><br/>                     &lt;-15% of state average of schools “at or above state expectation” for comparable subgroup</p>  |
| 1.1d | <p>Proficiency by subgroup, Through-Year Assessment, <b>Math</b></p> | <p>Schools will report the percentage of students in each reportable subgroup* assessed at each grade level, and at the campus and district levels.</p> <p>Schools will report the percentage of students in each reportable subgroup “at state expectation” and “above state expectation” on proficiency.</p> <p>Comparable subgroups include: Students on IEPs, Multilingual Learners, Economically Disadvantaged, Race, Ethnicity</p> <p><i>*To be reported, subgroups must have <b>at least 10 students.</b></i></p> | <p><b>Exceeding Expectations:</b><br/>                     ≥5% of state average of schools “at or above state expectation” for comparable subgroup<br/> <b>Meets Expectations:</b><br/>                     Between ≥-5% and &lt;5% of state average of schools “at or above state expectation” for comparable subgroup<br/> <b>Approaching Expectations:</b><br/>                     Between ≥-15% and &lt;-5% of state average of schools “at or above state expectation” for comparable subgroup<br/> <b>Not Meeting Expectations:</b><br/>                     &lt;-15% of state average of schools “at or above state expectation” for comparable subgroup</p> |
| 1.2  | <p>Reading on Grade Level - 3rd Grade</p>                            | <p>Students will read on grade level based on the school’s assessment tool by the end of third grade.</p> <p>Schools will provide the percentage of 3rd grade students reading on grade level at the end of the year.</p>  | <p>The Commission will monitor a charter school’s percentage of students reading on grade level at the end of third grade.</p>   |

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| 1.3.a | Student Academic Growth: <a href="#">NWEA MAP Growth</a> 3rd-8th<br><br><i>(Outcomes will be based on the NWEA MAP Growth Assessment - fall to spring - unless the school has received a waiver for the spring administration and is only administering the MDOE Through Year Assessment)</i> | School will meet the goal of 45%-55% of eligible <sup>1</sup> students meeting their projected growth on NWEA MAP <b>reading</b> .<br><br><i>Participation under 95% may result in an investigation from MCSC to determine potential interventions.</i> | <b>Exceeds Expectation</b><br>Exceeds 55%           |
|       |   |   | <b>Meets Expectation</b><br>Between 45%-54.9%       |
|       |   |   | <b>Approaching Expectation</b><br>Between 35%-44.9% |
|       |   |   | <b>Does Not Meet Expectation</b><br>Below 35%       |
| 1.3.b | Student Academic Growth: <a href="#">NWEA MAP Growth</a> 3rd-8th<br><br><i>(Outcomes will be based on the NWEA MAP Growth Assessment - fall to spring - unless the school has received a waiver for the spring administration and is only administering the MDOE Through Year Assessment)</i> | School will meet the goal of 45%-55% of eligible students meeting their projected growth on NWEA MAP <b>language</b> .<br><br><i>Participation under 95% may result in an investigation from MCSC to determine potential interventions.</i>             | <b>Exceeds Expectation</b><br>Exceeds 55%           |
|       |   |   | <b>Meets Expectation</b><br>Between 45%-54.9%       |
|       |   |   | <b>Approaching Expectation</b><br>Between 35%-44.9% |
|       |   |   | <b>Does Not Meet Expectation</b><br>Below 35%       |
| 1.3.c | Student Academic Growth: <a href="#">NWEA MAP Growth</a> 3rd-8th<br><br><i>(Outcomes will be based on the NWEA MAP Growth Assessment - fall to spring - unless the school has</i>   | School will meet the goal of 45%-55% of eligible students meeting their projected growth on NWEA MAP <b>math</b> .  | <b>Exceeds Expectation</b><br>Exceeds 55%           |
|       |   |   | <b>Meets Expectation</b><br>Between 45%-54.9%       |
|       |   |   | <b>Approaching Expectation</b><br>Between 35%-44.9% |

<sup>1</sup> Eligible is defined as having both a fall and spring score.

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|      | <p><i>received a waiver for the spring administration and is only administering the MDOE Through Year Assessment)</i></p>   | <p>Participation under 95% may result in an investigation from MCSC to determine potential interventions.</p>  | <p><b>Does Not Meet Expectation</b><br/>Below 35%</p>       |
| 1.4a | <p>Subgroup Performance:<br/>Maine State Assessment (NWEA MAP) 3rd-8th</p> <p><i>(Outcomes will be based on the NWEA MAP Growth Assessment - fall to spring - unless the school has received a waiver for the spring administration and is only administering the MDOE Through Year Assessment)</i></p> | <p>Subgroups* of students will meet the goal of 45%-55% of eligible students meeting their projected growth on NWEA MAP <b>reading</b>.</p> <p>Participation under 95% may result in an investigation from MCSC to determine potential interventions.</p> <p><i>*To be reported, subgroups must have <b>at least 10 students.</b> <del>of 5% of the student population.</del></i></p>  | <p><b>Exceeds Expectation</b><br/>Exceeds 55%</p>           |
|      |   |  | <p><b>Meets Expectation</b><br/>Between 45%-54.9%</p>       |
|      |   |  | <p><b>Approaching Expectation</b><br/>Between 35%-44.9%</p> |
|      |   |  | <p><b>Does Not Meet Expectation</b><br/>Below 35%</p>       |
| 1.4b | <p>Subgroup Performance:<br/>Maine State Assessment (NWEA MAP) 3rd-8th</p> <p><i>(Outcomes will be based on the NWEA MAP Growth Assessment - fall to spring - unless the school has received a waiver for the spring administration and is only administering the MDOE Through Year Assessment)</i></p> | <p>Subgroups* of students will meet the goal of 45%-55% of eligible students meeting their projected growth on NWEA MAP <b>language</b>.</p> <p>Participation under 95% may result in an investigation from MCSC to determine potential interventions.</p> <p><i>*To be reported, subgroups must have <b>at least 10 students.</b> <del>of 5% of the student population.</del></i></p> | <p><b>Exceeds Expectation</b><br/>Exceeds 55%</p>           |
|      |   |  | <p><b>Meets Expectation</b><br/>Between 45%-54.9%</p>       |
|      |   |  | <p><b>Approaching Expectation</b><br/>Between 35%-44.9%</p> |
|      |   |  | <p><b>Does Not Meet Expectation</b><br/>Below 35%</p>       |
| 1.4c | <p>Subgroup Performance:</p>  | <p>Subgroups* of students will meet the goal of 45%-55% of eligible students meeting their projected growth on NWEA MAP <b>math</b>.</p>   | <p><b>Exceeds Expectation</b><br/>Exceeds 55%</p>           |

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|      | <p>Maine State Assessment (NWEA MAP) 3rd-8th</p> <p><i>(Outcomes will be based on the NWEA MAP Growth Assessment - fall to spring - unless the school has received a waiver for the spring administration and is only administering the MDOE Through Year Assessment)</i></p> | <p>Participation under 95% may result in an investigation from MCSC to determine potential interventions.</p> <p><i>*To be reported, subgroups must have <b>at least 10 students.</b> <del>or 5% of the student population.</del></i></p>   | <p><b>Meets Expectation</b><br/>Between 45%-54.9%</p> <p><b>Approaching Expectation</b><br/>Between 35%-44.9%</p> <p><b>Does Not Meet Expectation</b><br/>Below 35%</p>   |
| 1.5  | <p>4 Year High School Completion</p>  | <p>4 year high school graduation rate (current cohort)</p> <p>Schools will meet annual goals*:<br/>                 2023- 86%<br/>                 2024- 87%<br/>                 2025- 87%<br/>                 2026- 88%<br/>                 2027- 88%<br/>                 2028- 89%<br/>                 2029- 89%<br/>                 2030- 90%</p> <p><i>*The <u>state of Maine goal is 90% graduation rate</u> by the end of 2030.</i></p> <p><a href="#">Maine Department of Education Graduation Rates by Year</a></p> | <p><b>Exceeds Expectation</b><br/>Exceeds 90%</p> <p><b>Meets Expectation</b><br/>Meets annual target</p> <p><b>Approaching Expectation</b><br/>Less than 5% below target</p> <p><b>Does not meet expectation</b><br/>5% or more below target</p> |
| 1.5a | <p>5 and 6 Year High School Completion</p>  | <p>4 year high school graduation rate (current cohort)</p> <p>Schools will meet annual goals*:<br/>                 2023- 86%<br/>                 2024- 87%<br/>                 2025- 87%</p>   | <p><b>Exceeds Expectation</b><br/>Exceeds 90%</p> <p><b>Meets Expectation</b><br/>Meets annual target</p> <p><b>Approaching Expectation</b></p>   |

|       |                          |   |  |
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|       |                          | <p>2026- 88%<br/>                 2027- 88%<br/>                 2028- 89%<br/>                 2029- 89%<br/>                 2030- 90%</p> <p><i>*The state of Maine goal is 90% graduation rate by the end of 2030.</i></p> <p><u>Maine Department of Education Graduation Rates by Year</u></p>   | <p>Less than 5% below target</p> <p><b>Does not meet expectation</b><br/>                 5% or more below target</p>  |
| 1.6.a | Post Secondary Readiness | <p><del>Beginning in SY 2023-2024,</del> School will meet goal of 75%-85% students meeting one of the following by the end of 12th grade:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">Accuplacer</a> The College Readiness indicator with scores of 239 or above in reading and a 226 or above in math or;</li> <li>● <a href="#">SAT scores</a> of EBRW 530 or higher and 520 or higher in math or;</li> <li>● <a href="#">ASVAB score</a> of 31 or higher.</li> </ul> <p><i>Participation under 95% may result in an investigation from MCSC to determine potential interventions.</i></p> | <p><del>In SY 2022-2023, schools will report the data, but will not be rated.</del></p> <p><b>Exceeding Expectations:</b><br/>                 85% or more students are meeting or exceeding the goal in both reading and math</p> <p><b>Meets Expectation:</b><br/>                 75%-85% of students are meeting or exceeding the goal in both reading and math</p> <p><b>Approaching Expectations:</b><br/>                 60%-75% of students are meeting or exceeding the goal in both reading and math OR the school is meeting expectations in reading OR math, but not both.</p> <p>Not Meeting Expectations:<br/>                 60% or fewer students are meeting or exceeding the goal in both reading and math</p> |



|       |  |   |  |
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| 1.6.b | <p>Post Secondary Readiness: Subgroups</p> <p><del>/Achievement Gaps</del></p> | <p>Student subgroups will meet goal of 75%-85% students meeting one of the following by the end of 12th grade:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Accuplacer</u> The College Readiness indicator with scores of 239 or above in reading and a 226 or above in math or;</li> <li>• <u>SAT scores</u> of EBRW 530 or higher and 520 or higher in math or;</li> <li>• <u>ASVAB score</u> of 31 or higher.</li> </ul> <p><del>Achievement gaps in proficiency between major subgroups* on the Accuplacer, SAT or ASVAB.</del></p> <p>The school will provide achievement data of major subgroups (English learner, special education, sex, economically disadvantaged, 504, ethnic and racial minorities).</p> <p><del>*To be reported, subgroups must have at least 10 students. or 5% of the student population.</del></p> | <p><del>In SY 2022-2023, schools will report the data, but will not be rated.</del></p> <p><b>Exceeding Expectations:</b><br/>85% or more students are meeting or exceeding the goal in both reading and math</p> <p><b>Meets Expectation:</b><br/>75%-85% of students are meeting or exceeding the goal in both reading and math</p> <p><b>Approaching Expectations:</b><br/>60%-75% of students are meeting or exceeding the goal in both reading and math OR the school is meeting expectations in reading OR math, but not both.</p> <p>Not Meeting Expectations:<br/>60% or fewer students are meeting or exceeding the goal in both reading and math</p> |
| 1.6.c | <p>Post Secondary Readiness: Post-Secondary Activity</p>                       | <p>At the end of their graduating year, 70% -80% of each schools' students will have successfully<sup>2</sup> participated in at least one post-secondary activity such as <u>(and not limited to)</u> college course, Advanced Placement course, certificate program, career technical coursework or internship.</p>   | <p><b>Exceeds Expectation</b><br/>Exceeds 80%</p> <p><b>Meets Expectation</b><br/>70% - 79.9%</p> <p><b>Approaching Expectation</b></p>  |

<sup>2</sup> Successfully is defined as passing, meeting appropriate standards, or other clearly defined measure of success.

|       |  |   |   |
|-------|--|---|---|
|       |  |   | 60% - 69.9%   |
|       |  |   | <b>Does Not Meet Expectation</b><br>Fewer than 60%                                |
| 1.6.d | Post-Secondary Readiness:<br><a href="#">FAFSA</a> | The Commission will monitor a charter school's ability to support students with FAFSA completion.<br><br>Schools will report annual rates and school-supported opportunities for FAFSA support.   | School has reported the annual rates and provided opportunities for FAFSA support |
| 1.7   | Student Attendance                                 | <a href="#">Chronic absenteeism</a> rate<br><br>Schools will have 10%-18% or fewer students classified as chronically absent on the last day of school. <sup>3</sup><br><br>Chronic absenteeism rates will be reported at both the campus and district levels.<br><br>PreK rates are not part of MDOE's chronic absenteeism calculations. Schools will report preK chronic absenteeism rates, though this target outcome will not be rated. | <b>Exceeds Expectation</b><br>Fewer than 10%                                      |
|       |  |   | <b>Meets Expectation</b><br>10%-18%   |
|       |  |   | <b>Approaching Expectation</b><br>17.9% - 25%                                     |
|       |  |   | <b>Does Not Meet Expectation</b><br>Greater than 25%                              |

**RATINGS AND EVALUATION IN THIS SECTION IS DEPENDANT ON PERFORMANCE IN THE PREVIOUS SECTION**

Program Delivery: The school delivers a high-quality academic program that meets the needs of all students.

(Only used for a Charter District Leadership's evaluation when **two** CRITERIA in SECTION 1 are Approaching Expectations or Does Not Meet Expectations for **two or more evaluation cycles in the same criteria.**

| Criterion | Indicator | Target | Rating |
|-----------|-----------|--------|--------|
|-----------|-----------|--------|--------|

<sup>3</sup> Students are labeled chronically absent if they miss more than 18 days, or 10% of the school year.

|      |                          |   |  |
|------|--------------------------|---|--|
| 1.8  | Curriculum               | The school's documented curriculum is aligned to the Maine Learning Results; is aligned vertically between grades and horizontally across classrooms at the same grade level; provides lessons and materials that represent a variety of cultures and perspectives; and supports opportunities for all students to master these skills and concepts. The curriculum is regularly reviewed and revised.  | <p>Refer to the Commission's Intervention Protocol.</p> <p>Schools will likely be required to submit a self-assessment and the Commission conducts classroom observations, interviews/focus groups/document review as applicable to analyze each Program Delivery Component.</p> |
| 1.9  | Instruction              | The school staff has a common understanding of high-quality instruction. Instructional practices are aligned to this common understanding. Instructional practices are based on high expectations for all students and reflect cultural proficiency. Instruction fosters student engagement. Classroom environments are conducive to learning.  |  |
| 1.10 | Assessment               | Teachers and administrators use disaggregated qualitative and quantitative data to modify instruction to improve academic and non-academic outcomes for all students and subgroups. School staff and administrators use disaggregated data to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of its program to serve all students and modify the program in order to improve student outcomes.  |  |
| 1.11 | Support for All Learners | The school has a proactive system (such as MTSS/RTI) to effectively identify and address all students' strengths and needs for academic, behavioral, and social-emotional development through a tiered support model, as well as providing Special Education and English Learner services as required by law. Data and progress monitoring are used to ensure that all students across all subgroups have equal access and equitable support, interventions, and resources to |  |

|   |                    |  |   |
|---|--------------------|--|---|
|   |                    | achieve, grow, and advance. The school regularly uses data to evaluate and modify its support programming to ensure student success. |   |
| <p><b>If the school has more than 18% students chronically absent OR the school maintains approaching for 2 successive accountability cycles, MCSC will measure:</b></p> <p>1.12 is only used for an Charter District Leadership's evaluation when, on CRITERIA 1.7, the school is above 18% students chronically absent OR the school maintains approaching expectations for 2 successive accountability cycles.</p> |                    |  |   |
| 1.12  | Student Attendance | Chronic absenteeism rate   | Chronic absenteeism as it relates to the state average<br><br>Absentee trends over time (growth)/ability to change trends |

## SECTION 2: SCHOOL CLIMATE AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

The school creates safe, positive, healthy, culturally responsive, inclusive, and welcoming learning environments. These environments cultivate supportive, authentic relationships and a strong sense of belonging and connection, which value the diverse assets and voices of all students, staff, and families.

### Framing Question:

Does the school provide the conditions for students to be successful?

| Criterion | Indicator        | Target   | Rating  |
|-----------|------------------|--|---|
| 2.1       | State Compliance | The school operates in compliance with the terms of its charter and applicable federal and state laws and regulations regarding public Charter District Leaderships, including exclusionary practices. | No rating is provided for <i>Criterion 2.1: State Compliance</i> . Site visit reports that include a section for this criterion identify specific concerns the school must address. |

|            |   |   |   |
|------------|---|---|---|
|            |   | <p><a href="#">MRSA 20-A</a><br/> <a href="#">Title 20-A, Chapter 112: Public Charter District Leaderships</a><br/> <a href="#">Individuals with Disabilities Education Act</a> (IDEA)</p>  |   |
| <p>2.2</p> | <p>Family Engagement:<br/> <a href="#">Panorama School Climate Survey- Family Results</a></p> | <p>Results from 3/3 required scales* on the Family Panorama School Climate Survey will be <del>within the average range</del> 50% or higher when compared to like schools (%FRL, grade band, urban/rural).</p> <p>Participation must be a minimum of 35% in order to qualify. Participation under 35% will automatically result in a “does not meet standard.”</p> <p><i>*Required Scales: School Climate, Safety, and School Fit</i></p> | <p><b>Exceeds Expectation</b><br/> <del>All 3 of the 3 required scales in the above average range for like schools</del></p> <p>3 of the 3 required scales are 50% or higher when compared to like schools</p> <hr/> <p><b>Meets Expectation</b><br/> <del>All 3 of the 3 required scales in the average range for like schools</del></p> <p>2 of the 3 required scales are 50% or higher when compared to like schools</p> <hr/> <p><b>Approaching Expectation</b><br/> <del>2 of the 3 required scales in the average range for like schools</del></p> <p>1 of the 3 required scales are 50% or higher when compared to like schools</p> <hr/> <p><b>Does Not Meet Expectation</b><br/> <del>0 or 1 of the 3 required scales in the average range for like schools or participation rate is less than 35%</del></p> <p>0 of the 3 required scales are 50% or higher when compared to like schools<br/> OR participation rate is less than 35%</p> |

|            |   |  |   |
|------------|---|--|---|
| <p>2.3</p> | <p>School Climate:<br/> <a href="#">Panorama School Climate Survey- Student Results</a></p> | <p>Results from 4/4 of the required scales* on the Student Panorama School Climate Survey will be <del>within the average range</del> 50% or higher when compared to like schools (%FRL, grade band, urban/rural).</p> <p>Participation among eligible students must be a minimum of 75% in order to qualify. Participation under 75% will automatically result in a “does not meet standard.”</p> <p><i>*Required Scales: School Climate, Safety, Rigorous Expectations and Teacher-Student Relationships</i></p> | <p><b>Exceeds Expectation</b><br/> <del>All 4 of the 4 required scales in the above average range for like schools</del><br/>                 4 of the 4 required scales are 50% or higher when compared to like schools</p> <p><b>Meets Expectation</b><br/> <del>All 4 of the 4 required scales in the average range for like schools</del><br/>                 3 of the 4 required scales are 50% or higher when compared to like schools</p> <p><b>Approaching Expectation</b><br/> <del>A least 3 of the 4 required scales in the average range for like schools</del><br/>                 2 of the 4 required scales are 50% or higher when compared to like schools</p> <p><b>Does Not Meet Expectation</b><br/> <del>Fewer than 3 of the 4 required scales in the average range for like schools or participation rate is less than 75%</del><br/>                 Fewer than 2 of the required scales are 50% or higher when compared to like schools OR participation rate is less than 75%</p> |
| <p>2.4</p> | <p>School Climate:<br/> <a href="#">Panorama School Climate Survey- Teacher Results</a></p> | <p>Results from at least 4/4 of the required scales* on the Teacher Panorama School Climate Surveys will be <del>within the average range of</del> 50% or higher when compared to like schools (%FRL, grade band, urban/rural).</p>  | <p><b>Exceeds Expectation</b><br/> <del>All 4 of the 4 required scales in the above average range for like schools</del></p>  |

|     |  |   |  |
|-----|--|---|--|
|     |  | <p>Participation must be a minimum of 75% in order to qualify. Participation under 75% will automatically result in a “does not meet standard.”</p> <p><i>*Required Scales: School Climate, Leadership, Professional Learning and Feedback and Coaching</i></p> | <p>4 of the 4 required scales are 50% or higher when compared to like schools</p> <hr/> <p><b>Meets Expectation</b><br/> <del>All 4 of the 4 required scales in the average range for like schools</del></p> <p>3 of the 4 required scales are 50% or higher when compared to like schools</p> <hr/> <p><b>Approaching Expectation</b><br/> <del>A least 3 of the 4 required scales in the average range for like schools</del></p> <p>2 of the 4 required scales are 50% or higher when compared to like schools</p> <hr/> <p><b>Does Not Meet Expectation</b><br/> <del>Fewer than 3 of the 4 required scales in the average range for like schools or participation rate is less than 75%</del></p> <p>Fewer than 2 of the required scales are 50% or higher when compared to like schools OR participation rate is less than 75%</p> |
| 2.5 | <p>School Climate: <a href="#">Panorama School Climate Survey- Staff Results</a></p> | <p>Results from at least 4/4 of the required scales* on the Staff Panorama School Climate Surveys will be <del>within the average range of 50% or higher</del> when compared to like schools (%FRL, grade band, urban/rural).</p>                               | <p><b>Exceeds Expectation</b><br/>                 4 of the 4 required scales are 50% or higher when compared to like schools</p>  |

|            |   |   |  |
|------------|---|---|--|
|            |   | <p>Participation must be a minimum of 75% in order to qualify. Participation under 75% will automatically result in a “does not meet standard.”</p> <p><i>*Required Scales: School Climate, Leadership, Professional Learning and Feedback and Coaching</i></p> | <p><b>Meets Expectation</b><br/>3 of the 4 required scales are 50% or higher when compared to like schools</p>   |
|            |   |   | <p><b>Approaching Expectation</b><br/>2 of the 4 required scales are 50% or higher when compared to like schools</p>   |
|            |   |   | <p><b>Does Not Meet Expectation</b><br/>Fewer than 2 of the required scales are 50% or higher when compared to like schools OR participation rate is less than 75%</p> |
| <p>2.6</p> | <p>School Climate:<br/>Panorama Survey<br/><b>Action Plan</b></p> | <p>Annually, the school will review its Panorama Education School Climate survey results and develop an action plan to address areas for continued improvement. Plan and outcome will be submitted to the Commission.</p>                                       | <p><b>Meets Expectation</b><br/>School develops and implements plan</p>  |
|            |   |   | <p><b>Approaching Expectation</b><br/>School develops and partially implements plan</p>  |
|            |   |   | <p><b>Does Not Meet Expectation</b><br/>School does not develop or does not implement plan</p>   |



**RATINGS AND EVALUATION IN THIS SECTION IS DEPENDANT ON PERFORMANCE IN THE PREVIOUS SECTION**

Capacity: The school sustains a well-functioning organizational structure and creates a professional, inclusive, respectful, and welcoming working climate for all staff.

Only use for a Charter District Leadership’s evaluation when **two of the** CRITERIA in SECTION 2 fall into Approaching Expectations or Does Not Meet Expectations for **two or more evaluation cycles in the same criteria.**

| Criterion | Indicator                     | Target   | Rating  |
|-----------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| 2.7       | School Systems and Leadership | <p>The school’s leadership team implements school academic programming and operations in a manner to meet a clearly defined mission and set of goals. The school defines and delineates clear roles and responsibilities among leaders, staff, management, and board of trustee members. The school has clear and well-understood systems for decision-making and communication processes among all members of the school community.</p> <p>School leadership fosters a culture of accountability, trust, and collaboration with school stakeholders to promote joint responsibility for student learning. Based on data, school leadership takes concrete and ambitious steps to close identified achievement, access, and opportunity gaps. School leadership sets goals and establishes systems and structures for the recruitment, development, and retention of educators reflective of the racial and ethnic composition of the students and families it serves. School leadership ensures an inclusive, respectful environment for all staff.</p> | <p>Refer to the Commission’s Intervention Protocol.</p> <p>School will likely be required to submit a self-assessment and the Commission staff conducts interviews/focus groups/document review as applicable to analyze each Capacity Component.</p> |

|     |                      |  |  |
|-----|----------------------|--|--|
| 2.8 | Professional Climate | <p>The school staff frequently collaborate and engage in professional development to improve implementation of the curriculum and instructional practice. The school implements a comprehensive professional learning culture that supports the development of effective educators. The school develops staff capacity to examine and dismantle implicit biases and systemic inequalities in order to create environments in which all students can deeply learn, grow, and thrive.</p> <p>All school staff are provided the tools and resources to perform their responsibilities and meet expectations for performance. An objective and transparent system is in place for monitoring individual staff performance against established expectations, which includes a formal process of evaluation for all employees, including teachers.</p> |  |
|-----|----------------------|--|--|

**SECTION 3: ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY**

**Effective Governing Boards: Members of the Governing Board uphold their responsibilities under Maine law and regulations to act as public agents authorized by the state and provide competent and appropriate governance to ensure the success and sustainability of the school.**

**Facilities: The school maintains a facility that allows the school’s mission to excel.**

**Framing Question:  
Is the school an effectively run and sustainable organization?**

| Criterion | Indicator                     | Target  | Rating   |
|-----------|-------------------------------|---|--|
| 3.1       | Governing Board effectiveness | <p>Legal and Fiduciary Responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board of trustee members are active and engaged, fulfill their legal responsibilities and obligations, comply with the board’s bylaws, and always act in the best interests of the school community.</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Low Risk:</b> Board has fulfilled contract obligations as charter contract holder in the State of Maine</p>  |
|           |                               | <p>Talent strategy and accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Governing Board demonstrates appropriate oversight of the Charter District Leadership administration, financial health, progress towards meeting academic and other school goals, and alignment with the mission and other terms of the charter, without managing the day-to-day operations of the school. The board conducts appropriate oversight of the officers and leaders of the organization, including an annual evaluation of the leader and considers succession planning.</li> </ul> <p>Culture of Collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Governing Board has clear and well-understood systems for decision-making and communication processes; board of trustee’s meetings are designed to foster open, deliberate, and thorough discussions to facilitate and ensure public accountability.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Moderate Risk:</b> Board has demonstrated a lack of capacity to be a strong contracting partner and may have failed to fulfill some contract obligations as charter contract holder in the State of Maine. MCSC may develop a monitoring plan to ensure the solvency of the school</p> |
|           |                               | <p>Focus on Improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Governing Board engages in continuous and strategic improvement planning by setting, and regularly monitoring progress relative to, priorities and goals that are aligned with the school’s mission, vision, and educational philosophy and the accountability cycles of the authorizer.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>High Risk:</b> Board has not fulfilled contract obligations as a charter contract holder in the State of Maine. MCSC may intervene with mitigation measures or other intervention protocols</p>  |

|     |  |  |  |
|-----|--|--|--|
| 3.2 | Public Accountability: Transparent, responsive, and legally compliant Board operations | The Governing Board will hold a minimum of 6 meetings per school year <sup>4</sup> in accordance with approved bylaws and in accordance with the Freedom of Access Act ( <a href="#">FOAA</a> ). | <b>Meets Expectation</b><br>6 or more meetings   |
|     |  |  | <b>Does Not Meet Expectation</b><br>5 or fewer meetings  |
| 3.3 | Public Accountability: Transparent, responsive, and legally compliant Board operations | Timely <sup>5</sup> publication of Board meeting agenda and minutes upon approval and submission to the Charter Commission, that thoroughly captures the discussion and decisions of the board.  | <b>Meets Expectation</b><br>All minutes and agendas posted timely  |
|     |  |  | <b>Approaching Expectation</b><br>1-2 items not posted timely  |
|     |  |  | <b>Does Not Meet Expectation</b><br>3 or more not posted timely  |
| 3.4 | Reporting Accuracy and Timeliness  | 80%-90% of reports are submitted on time and are accurate and complete.  | <b>Exceeds expectation</b><br>More than 90% of reports are submitted on time and are accurate and complete |
|     |  |  | <b>Meets Expectation</b><br>80%-89.9% of reports are submitted on time and are accurate and complete       |
|     |  |  | <b>Approaching Expectation</b><br>70%-79.9% of reports are submitted on time and are accurate and complete |

<sup>4</sup> A school year is July 1 – June 30

<sup>5</sup> Timely is defined as posting agenda a minimum of 5 business days before the meeting and for minutes, posting within 5 business days of approval.

|     |   |   |  |
|-----|---|---|--|
|     |   |   | <p><b>Does Not Meet Expectation</b><br/>Fewer than 70% of reports are submitted on time and are accurate and complete</p>  |
| 3.5 | Board Training                              | Board members will engage in a baseline of annual training and development using the following guidelines. ( <a href="#">LINK</a> )   | <p><b>Exceeds expectations:</b> Board provides evidence of development opportunities, such as: an annual board retreat, third-party consultation for board training on identified growth areas, an annual self-governance evaluation process, etc. <b>and has completed 100% of required courses</b></p> |
|     |   |   | <p><b>Meets expectations:</b> 100% of required courses have been taken and evidence is provided</p>  |
|     |   |   | <p><b>Approaching expectations:</b> 80%-99.9% of required courses are taken and evidence is provided</p>   |
|     |   |   | <p><b>Does not meet expectations:</b> Less than 80% of required courses have been completed</p>  |
| 3.6 | Facility meets Local and State requirements | The school certifies that its facility (or facilities) meets all local and state requirements for public school facilities, including current Certificate of Occupancy and a Plan for maintenance | <p><b>Exceeds expectation</b><br/>Charter District Leadership has obtained an</p>  |

|            |                                      |  |  |
|------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|
|            |                                      | <p>and capital improvements of school facilities consistent with <i>20-A M.R.S. §§ 1001(2), 4001, 4502(5)(C); Maine DOE Rule Chapter 125.5.03 and 20-A M.R.S. §§ 6302, 6501; Maine DOE Rule Chapter 125.5.10</i><br/> <a href="#">Public School Approval Requirements and Citation Chart</a></p> | <p>environmentally friendly certification such as <a href="#">LEED</a> and it approved by the Board</p> <p><b>Meets Expectation</b><br/>                 Certified as required and approved by the Board</p> <p><b>Does Not Meet Expectation</b><br/>                 Not certified as required</p>  |
| <p>3.7</p> | <p>Facility supports Programming</p> | <p>The facility provides a safe, clean, and aesthetically pleasing campus environment that optimizes learning, teaching, and working for all students, faculty, and staff.</p>   | <p><b>Meets Expectation</b><br/>                 Facility provides a campus environment that optimizes learning, teaching and working that supports mission and key design element implementation</p> <p><b>Approaching Expectation</b><br/>                 Facility partly, but not fully, provides a campus environment that optimizes learning, teaching and working that supports mission and key design element implementation</p> <p><b>Does Not Meet Expectation</b><br/>                 Facility does not provide a campus environment that optimizes learning, teaching and working that supports mission and key design element implementation</p> |

**SECTION 4: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND VIABILITY**

The school maintains a sound and stable financial condition and operates in a financially sound and publicly accountable manner.

**Framing Question:**  
Is the school financially viable?

| Criterion | Indicator   | Target  | Rating  |
|-----------|---|---|---|
| 4.1.a     | Current Ratio<br>(Near-Term Measures)               | Current ratio is greater than or equal to 1.1.<br><br><i>Current assets divided by current liabilities</i>                                    | <b>Lower Risk</b><br>Greater than 1.5                             |
|           |   |   | <b>Moderate Risk</b><br>1.0 - 1.5                                 |
|           |   |   | <b>High Risk</b><br>Less than 1                                   |
| 4.1.b     | Unrestricted Days Cash on Hand (Near-Term Measures) | Unrestricted days cash will be at least 30 days.<br><br><i>Unrestricted cash divided by ([total expenses minus depreciation expense]/365)</i> | <b>Lower Risk</b><br>60 or more days                              |
|           |   |   | <b>Moderate Risk</b><br>30-60 days                                |
|           |   |   | <b>High Risk</b><br>Fewer than 30 days                            |
| 4.1.c     | Enrollment Variance (Near-Term Measures)            | Actual enrollment is within 5% of the enrollment projected in the approved budget.  | <b>Lower Risk</b><br>Actual within 2% of the projected enrollment |

|       |  |  |  |
|-------|--|--|--|
|       |  | <i>Actual Enrollment divided by Enrollment Projection in Charter District Leadership Board Approved Budget</i>   | <p><b>Moderate Risk</b><br/>Variance is between 2 and 5%</p> <p><b>High Risk</b><br/>Variance is greater than 5% of the projected enrollment</p>   |
| 4.1.d | Financial Obligations Default (Near-Term Measures) | <p>The school meets all debt and real estate lease obligations.</p> <p><i>Failure to make required lease, principal and interest payments on-time or to meet covenant terms.</i></p> | <p><b>Lower Risk</b><br/>Not in default and not delinquent</p>   |
|       |  |  | <p><b>Moderate Risk</b><br/>In default and/or delinquent and has obtained waivers from lenders and/or lessors</p>  |
|       |  |  | <p><b>High Risk</b><br/>In default and/or delinquent <b>and has not obtained waivers from lenders and/or lessors</b></p>   |
| 4.2.a | Total Margin (Sustainability Measures)             | <p>The School's Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin is positive, and the most recent year Total Margin is positive.</p> <p><i>Net Surplus divided by Total Revenue</i></p>            | <p><b>Lower Risk</b><br/>Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin is at least 1.5% and the most recent year Total Margin is positive</p>   |
|       |  |  | <p><b>Moderate Risk</b><br/><del>Aggregated Two-Year Total Margin is at least 1.5%</del><br/>Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin is positive or zero AND the current year Total Margin <math>\geq</math> -10%</p> |
|       |  |  | <p><b>High Risk</b></p>  |



|       |   |  |   |
|-------|---|--|---|
|       |   |  | <p><del>Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin is negative and/or the most recent year Total Margin is negative. Or the margin for the latest year is -10% or lower. Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin is negative OR the current year Total Margin is &lt; -10%</del></p> |
| 4.2.b | Debt to asset ratio<br>(Sustainability Measure) | <p>The debt to asset ratio will be less than <del>0.9</del> 90%.</p> <p><i>Total Liabilities divided by Total Assets</i></p>   | <p><b>Lower Risk</b><br/>Less than 90%</p>  |
|       |   |  | <p><b>Moderate Risk</b><br/>90 to 100%</p>  |
|       |   |  | <p><b>High Risk</b><br/>Greater than 100%</p>   |
| 4.2.c | Cash Flow<br>(Sustainability Measure)           | <p>Charter District Leadership maintains a positive cumulative 2-year cash flow.</p> <p><i>Cash Flow = Net Annual Change in Unrestricted Cash.<br/>Cumulative Cash Flow is the sum of current and prior year Cash Flow</i></p> | <p><b>Lower Risk</b><br/>A positive cumulative 2-year cash flow and positive cash flow in the most recent year.</p>   |
|       |   |  | <p><b>Moderate Risk</b><br/>A positive cumulative 2-year cash flow</p>  |
|       |   |  | <p><b>High Risk</b><br/>Does not have a positive cumulative 2-year cash flow <del>and had negative cash flow in the most recent year.</del></p>   |

|   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| 4.2.d   | Financial Obligations Coverage Ratio (Sustainability Measure) | <p>Charter District Leadership is able to pay current debt principal and interest and lease payments from the current year surplus.</p> <p><i>(Net Surplus + Depreciation + Interest + Lease Expense) / (Annual Principal + Interest + Lease Payments)</i></p> | <p><b>Lower Risk</b><br/>Exceeds 1.1</p> <p><b>Moderate Risk</b><br/>Is 1.0 to 1.1</p> <p><b>High Risk</b><br/>Is less than 1.0</p>  |
| 4.3   | Financial Planning and Budgeting                              | <p><del>Charter District Leadership School</del> publishes a 3-year annual financial plan that includes a 2-year annual budget and a 1-year projection for year 3 that is board approved.</p> <p>The 3-year annual financial plan is due on June 30th.</p>     | <p><b>Meets Expectations</b><br/><del>Charter District Leadership School</del> annually publishes a 3-year financial plan that includes a budget for the next 2-years and a 1-year projection for year 3.</p> <p><b>Does Not Meet Expectations</b><br/><del>Charter District Leadership School</del> has not published a current 3-year financial plan that includes a budget for the next 2-years and a 1-year projection for year 3.</p> |
| <p><b><i>If Oct 1st number is 10% or more below the contracted enrollment, the school must submit a Recruitment Plan and Supporting Materials to the Commission by January 1st.</i></b></p> <p><del>5.1a</del> 4.4 is only used <del>for a Charter District Leadership's evaluation</del> when, on CRITERIA 4.1c, the school is 10% or more below the contracted enrollment on October 1st.</p> |   |  |  |
| <del>5.1a</del> 4.4   | Student Recruitment and Enrollment                            | The <del>Charter District Leadership</del> School has a recruitment strategy that yields consistent enrollment within the charter's contracted enrollment range.   | Commission reviews Oct 1st enrollment figure.  |

**SECTION 5: FAITHFULNESS TO THE CHARTER AND THE LAW SCHOOL MISSION AND STUDENT PERSISTENCE**

**Mission and Key Design Elements: The school is faithful to its mission, implements the key design elements outlined in its charter.**

**Access: The school ensures access for all students eligible to attend the school. Student enrollment and persistence is a leading indicator of school health.**

| Criterion             | Indicator                             | Target  | Rating   |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| 5.1                   | Mission and Key Design Implementation | 1. The school demonstrates its approved mission.<br><br>2. The school implements the key design elements* in the approved charter and any subsequently approved amendments in a manner that serves all of its students.<br><br>3. The Board and Administration share a common and consistent understanding of the school's mission and key design elements outlined in the charter.<br><br><hr/> <i>* Key Design Elements are aspects of the school, originally articulated in the charter application or in subsequent amendments, which make the school unique and distinct from other district or Charter Schools.</i> | <b>Meets Expectation</b><br>School is implementing the mission and design elements as outlined in the charter and amendments                             |
|                       |                                       |   | <b>Approaching Expectation</b><br>School is partially implementing the mission and design elements as outlined in the charter and amendments             |
|                       |                                       |   | <b>Does Not Meet Expectation</b><br>School is not implementing the majority of the mission and design elements as outlined in the charter and amendments |
| 5.2<br><del>5.3</del> | Student Persistence - School Year     | Persistence throughout the school year  | <b>Exceeds Expectation</b><br><del>Exceeds 90% or more</del>   |

|            |                                    |   |  |
|------------|------------------------------------|---|--|
|            |                                    | 85% or more of eligible <sup>6</sup> students enrolled on the last day of school will be the same students who were enrolled on State Student Count Day. <sup>7</sup>   | <b>Meets Expectation</b><br>85% - 89.9%                      |
|            |                                    |   | <b>Approaching Expectation</b><br>75% - 84.9%                |
|            |                                    |   | <b>Does not meet Expectation</b><br>Fewer than 75%           |
| 5.3<br>5.4 | Student Persistence - Year-to-year | Recurrent enrollment from one year to the next<br><br>85% <del>89.9%</del> or more of eligible students enrolled on the last day of school will have completed an Intent to Reenroll form for the following SY <b>by the last day of school. <del>March 31 of current SY.</del></b> | <b>Exceeds Expectation</b><br><del>Exceeds 90% or more</del> |
|            |                                    |   | <b>Meets Expectation</b><br>85% - 89.9%                      |
|            |                                    |   | <b>Approaching Expectation</b><br>75% - 84.9%                |
|            |                                    |   | <b>Does not meet Expectation</b><br>Fewer than 75%           |

## SECTION 6: SCHOOL CUSTOMIZATION

- Schools will work with the Commission to design and execute customized criteria that enhances the context and connection to the school's mission.

| Criterion | Indicator | Target | Rating |
|-----------|-----------|--------|--------|
|-----------|-----------|--------|--------|

<sup>6</sup> Student residing in the state of Maine

<sup>7</sup> Student Count day is October 1.

|       |  |  |                                  |
|-------|--|--|----------------------------------|
| 6.1.a |  |  | <b>Exceeds Expectation</b>       |
|       |  |  | <b>Meets Expectation</b>         |
|       |  |  | <b>Approaching Expectation</b>   |
|       |  |  | <b>Does Not Meet Expectation</b> |
| 6.1.b |  |  | <b>Exceeds Expectation</b>       |
|       |  |  | <b>Meets Expectation</b>         |
|       |  |  | <b>Approaching Expectation</b>   |
|       |  |  | <b>Does Not Meet Expectation</b> |

**Acknowledgements:**

The Maine Charter School Performance Framework was developed with the support and collaboration of our partners. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the team at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education that developed the Massachusetts Charter School Performance Criteria, from which we adopted much of our Program Delivery, Capacity, School Leadership, Governing Board, and Mission and Key Design Elements language. For their thoughtful feedback and contributions, we would like to thank the National Association of Charter School Authorizers, the National Charter Schools Institute, WestEd, the Charter School Resource Center, Ryan Marks at the Colorado Charter Schools Institute, Dr. Kenneth Holder at Northern Michigan University, and Erin Kupferberg at Verite Educational Services. Finally, we would like to thank the Maine Charter Schools

for their feedback, continued partnership, and for the work they do on behalf of the students and families in Maine.

# Coversheet

## New Governing Board Members

**Section:** XI. New Business Requiring Notification to the Commission (No formal action to be taken by Commission)  
**Item:** A. New Governing Board Members  
**Purpose:** FYI  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** FSAS New Governing Board Member (Jamie Dickson).pdf

## Public Charter School Governing Board Member Information Sheet

Name of Public Charter School Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences

Name of Board Member Jamie Dickson

Email Address jamiewdickson@hotmail.com

Occupation Systems Administrator

Please respond to the following questions:

1. Why do you wish to serve on the governing board? **I wish to give back to a school that has benefitted my son's growth as a person and a student.**
2. What is your understanding of the educational needs of students in the catchment area? **First and foremost, it is to be welcoming and accepting of all children. Then meet them where they are and provide them with the support needed to grow as a person and a student.**
3. Please list any previous or present educational involvement; such as board member, budget committee, citizens committees, etc. List school(s) or district(s). **I have no prior educational involvement. I have prior experience on my church board and also served as the chair.**
4. What special qualifications do you have that will help you to be a board member? **As a technology professional for 26 years, I can help the school with any technology challenges. As a parent for 15 years and one of a special needs child, I understand that what works for one child may not work for all children and to consider that with my work on the board.**
5. What is your understanding of the role you will play as a public charter school board member? **My understanding of my role is to ensure that as a board we are staying true to Fiddlehead's Mission.**



Sign Jamie Dickson Date 1/3/2024

This form MUST be submitted to the Maine Charter School Commission via Epicenter.

# Coversheet

## Important Dates

**Section:** XIII. Announcements  
**Item:** A. Important Dates  
**Purpose:** FYI  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** MeAA Public Events.docx

## **Maine Arts Academy Public Events 2024**

**February 9**

**7:30pm-8:45pm**

*'Of This Place' Dance Show.* Located at Colby College in Waterville.

**February 10**

**2pm and 7:30pm**

*Dance Performances.* Located at Colby College in Waterville.

**May 3 & May 4**

**Time TBD.**

*Comedy Theater Production of 'The Servant of Two Masters'.* Location TBD.

**May 8 & May 9**

**Time TBD.**

*Music Department Performance.* Located at UMA Farber Theater in Augusta.

**June 2**

**12:00pm**

*Maine Arts Academy Graduation Ceremony.* Located at Augusta Civic Center in Augusta.