



Maine Charter School Commission

Finance Committee Meeting

Published on December 3, 2024 at 5:05 PM EST

Date and Time

Thursday December 5, 2024 at 12:00 PM EST

Location

Zoom

Agenda

Purpose Presenter

I. Opening Items

- | | | |
|------------------------------|--|---------------|
| A. Record Attendance | | Susan Whipkey |
| B. Call the Meeting to Order | | Leigh Albert |

II. Ad-Hoc Agenda Items

- | | | |
|--|---------|------------|
| A. Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences' Request to Use Yurt for Classroom Space | Discuss | Lana Ewing |
| B. SY2024-25 Demographic Data Breakdowns | Discuss | Amy Allen |

- SY2024-25 School Enrollment Statistics
- SY2024-25 Demographic Data Breakdowns

	Purpose	Presenter
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C. Carryover Funds Proposal (Financial Order)	Discuss	Amy Allen
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III. Standard Agenda Items

A. School Finance Report	Discuss	Susan Whipkey
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B. FY25 Budget vs. Actual Dashboard/Spending Report	Discuss	Susan Whipkey
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C. Amendment Requests/Fund Requests	Discuss	Amy Allen
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None

D. Requests to Incur Debt	Vote	Amy Allen
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None

E. Updates/Announcements/Reminders	FYI	Amy Allen
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- Strategic Plan Meeting will be held December 10th from 10-12pm before the Commission Meeting

IV. Next Month's Topics

V. Next Meeting Date/Time

January 9, 2025 (Zoom)

VI. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting	FYI	Leigh Albert
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Coversheet

Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences' Request to Use Yurt for Classroom Space

Section: II. Ad-Hoc Agenda Items
Item: A. Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences' Request to Use Yurt for Classroom Space
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material:
Fiddlehead_Amendment_Guide_for_New_or_Additional_School_Facility_or_Major_Renovations__2_.pdf
Revised_Additional_Information_about_Fiddlehead_School_s_Yurt_Request__1_.docx



MAINE CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION

Charter Amendment Guide for

New Facility, Additional Facility, or Make Substantial Facility Renovations

Please Note – The school’s Amendment Request must be submitted at least 3 weeks prior to the next MCSC Business Meeting (held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month) in order to make it onto the agenda. In some cases, 3 weeks may not allow enough time for review and schools are encouraged to contact the office with questions.

Maine Charter School Commission
182 State House Station
Augusta, Maine
04333-0182
www.maine.gov/csc

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

School Information

Date of Request

October 22, 2024

School Name and Mailing Address	Fiddlehead School of Arts and Science, 25 Shaker Road, Gray, ME 04039
Contact	William Doughty, Board Chair; Jacinda Cotton Castro, Executive Director
Contact telephone number	Doughty: 207 400-7081; Jacinda: 207 212-5774
Contact email address	doughty.william@gmail.com ; jacinda@fiddleheadschoo.org

Provide a brief narrative description of the request.

This proposal seeks MCSC permission to use a 27' yurt erected in August 2024 to house one upper elementary grade (approximately 20 students) starting in the 2025-2026 school year.

Please see the attached sheet for answers to additional questions.

The completed Amendment Request must be uploaded and submitted to the Maine Charter School Commission through Epicenter.

On an additional page, please address the following criteria in your request, as applicable.

- Provide the address of the proposed location and interior and exterior images as available.
- Provide a current floor plan, and, if applicable, an anticipated floor plan if renovations will be done.
- Describe the financing plans and proposed budget for acquisition/rental of a facility and any necessary renovations to meet the school's needs, all local building requirements, and accessibility requirements.

- Provide the estimated number of students and grade levels to be served at the new or additional location.
- Describe how transportation services will be provided.
- Describe the benefit to the school and students resulting from the new/additional school facility.
- Discuss how the proposed new/additional facility contributes to the realization of the school's mission and vision.

Additional Information about Fiddlehead School's Yurt Request

Prepared by Bill Doughty, October, 2024

1. **Location:** The yurt is located behind the school at 25 Shaker Road, Gray, ME 04039
2. **Floorplan:** The yurt is a circular structure with 27' diameter. It provides 530 square feet of instructional space in a circular floor plan.
3. **Financing:** The yurt was purchased in 2022 for \$27,000 with funds from the Fiddlehead reserve account for facilities. It was erected for approximately \$42,000 in late summer of 2024 with funds from the same source. Ongoing costs of electricity and maintenance will be integrated in the Fiddlehead budget for FY26.
4. **Students/grade level:** We expect to serve 20 students in one upper elementary grade from grade 2 upwards. The most likely choice at this time is grade 2. The classroom vacated within the Fiddlehead main building would serve a new section of preK (approximately 20 students) or a 3 year old program with the number of students yet to be determined, but not more than 20.
5. **Transportation:** Students in the yurt would use the same transportation as students in the main building since the yurt is about 50' from the back door of the school. Our students either ride the bus or are dropped off/picked up by their parents.
6. **Benefit to students and school:** The main benefit to students is that about 20 more students would have access to high quality preK instruction or a quality program for 3 year olds. (Note that preK or 3 year old classes would not be in the yurt. The yurt provides the capacity to vacate a classroom in the main building). The benefit to the school is that we can stabilize our enrollment without adding new students to middle school grades.
7. **Contribution to vision/mission:** From its inception, Fiddlehead has focused on the Reggio Emilio approach to early childhood education which supports emergent curriculum based on student needs and interests and high integration of the arts in the classroom. Outdoor education has emerged as a strong focus for all of Fiddlehead. Simply put, this proposal would allow Fiddlehead to double the number of early childhood students who benefit from our approach to early childhood education.
8. **Safety:** The safety plan for the yurt would be the same as for the main building. For a fire drill staff and students would evacuate and make their way to the meeting area. For a shelter in place the shades

would be closed. For an active shooter staff would follow ALICE procedures.

9. **Bathrooms:** Students would walk to the main building about 50' away. The bathrooms are immediately on the left after entering at the rear of the building. Teaching Assistants attend all specials with their class. They are available to escort students to and from the building.
10. **Heating/Cooling:** The yurt is heated/cooled by a heat pump. 11. **Lunch:** Students at Fiddlehead eat lunch in their room or on the playground. We do not have a school lunch program.
12. **Outdoor activities:** Recess takes place on the playground outside the yurt. Our part-time art and Spanish class already use the yurt during that time without any more interruption than a regular classroom at the back of the building receives.
13. **Special Classes:** Our part time Spanish and art classes will move back into the main building. Both classes will be offered in the regular classrooms as they were before the yurt became available.
14. **Pictures:** See photo below.
15. **Better than portables:** compared to portable classrooms, yurts are more sightly, more affordable, more flexible and equally safe.
16. **Additional information:** Other public schools in Maine already use yurts as classrooms. They include:
 - **Agnes Gray Elementary School:** In West Paris, this school has a yurt classroom that's used for science, environment, and ecological curriculum. The yurt was built with a grant from the Maine Department of Education's Rethinking Remote Education Ventures.
 - **Surry Elementary School:** This school has a yurt that's used as a pandemic classroom.
 - **Five Town district in coastal Camden:** This district has four heated yurts that are used as winter classrooms.







Coversheet

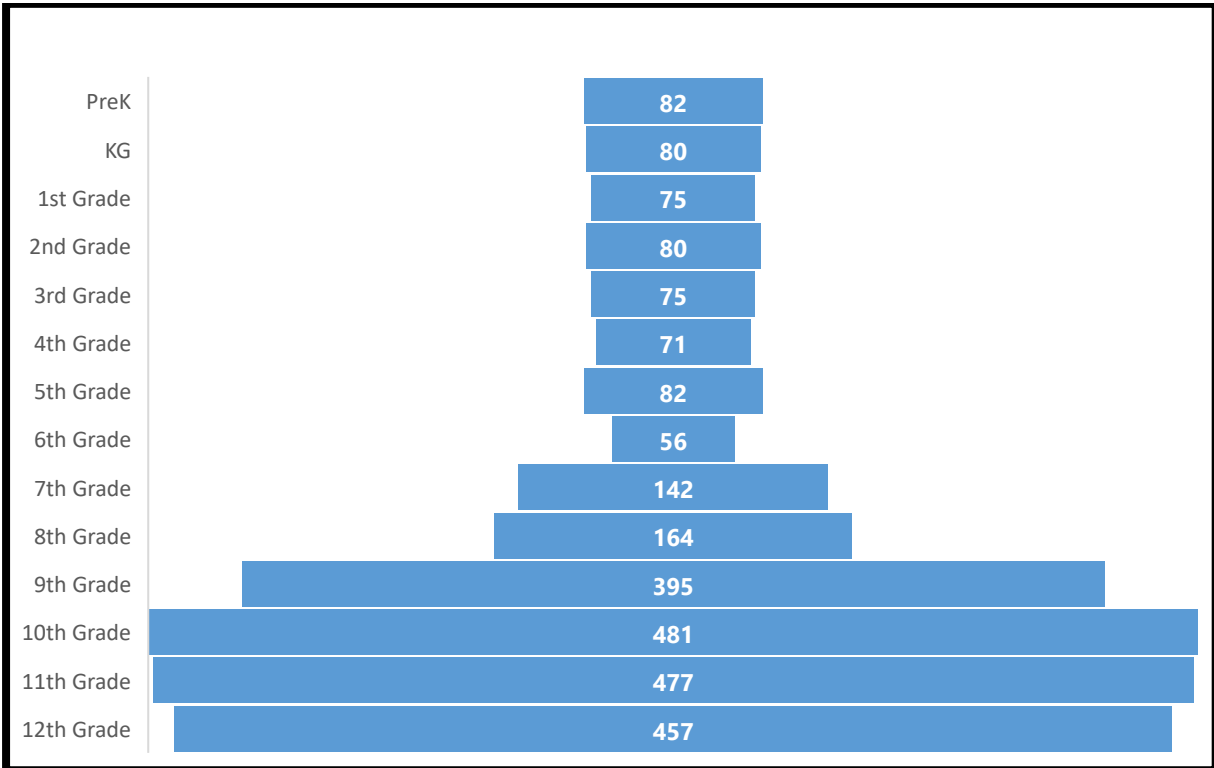
SY2024-25 Demographic Data Breakdowns

Section: II. Ad-Hoc Agenda Items
Item: B. SY2024-25 Demographic Data Breakdowns
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: 2024-25_School_Enrollment_Statistics.pdf
School Year 2024-25 Demographic Data Breakdowns.pdf

School	Grades Served	Contracted Enrollment (+/-10%)	Actual Enrollment	Number on Waiting List	Special Education Count	Special Education Percentage	Economically Disadvantaged Count	Economically Disadvantaged Percentage	
ACADIA Academy	PreK-6	272 (245-299)	250	0	46	18.40%	80	32.00%	
Baxter Academy for Technology and Science	9-12	400 (360-441)	384	0	84	21.88%	77	20.05%	
Community Regional Charter School	PreK-12	352 (317-387)	385	7	91	23.64%	271	70.39%	
Ecology Learning Center	9-12	120 (108-132)	120	0	32	26.67%	43	35.83%	
Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences	PreK-8	208 (187-229)	177	60	51	28.81%	50	28.25%	
Maine Academy of Natural Sciences	9-12	190 (171-209)	177	39	41	23.16%	126	71.19%	
Maine Arts Academy	9-12	220 (198-242)	245	0	42	17.14%	100	40.82%	
Maine Connections Academy	7-12	500 (Maximum Enrollment)	504	263	110	21.83%	260	51.59%	
Maine Virtual Academy	7-12	450 (405-495)	475	127	116	24.42%	231	48.63%	
Totals			2717	496	613		1238		
						2022-23 State Average	19.50%	2022-23 State Average	36.10%

School Year 2024-25 Demographic Data Breakdowns

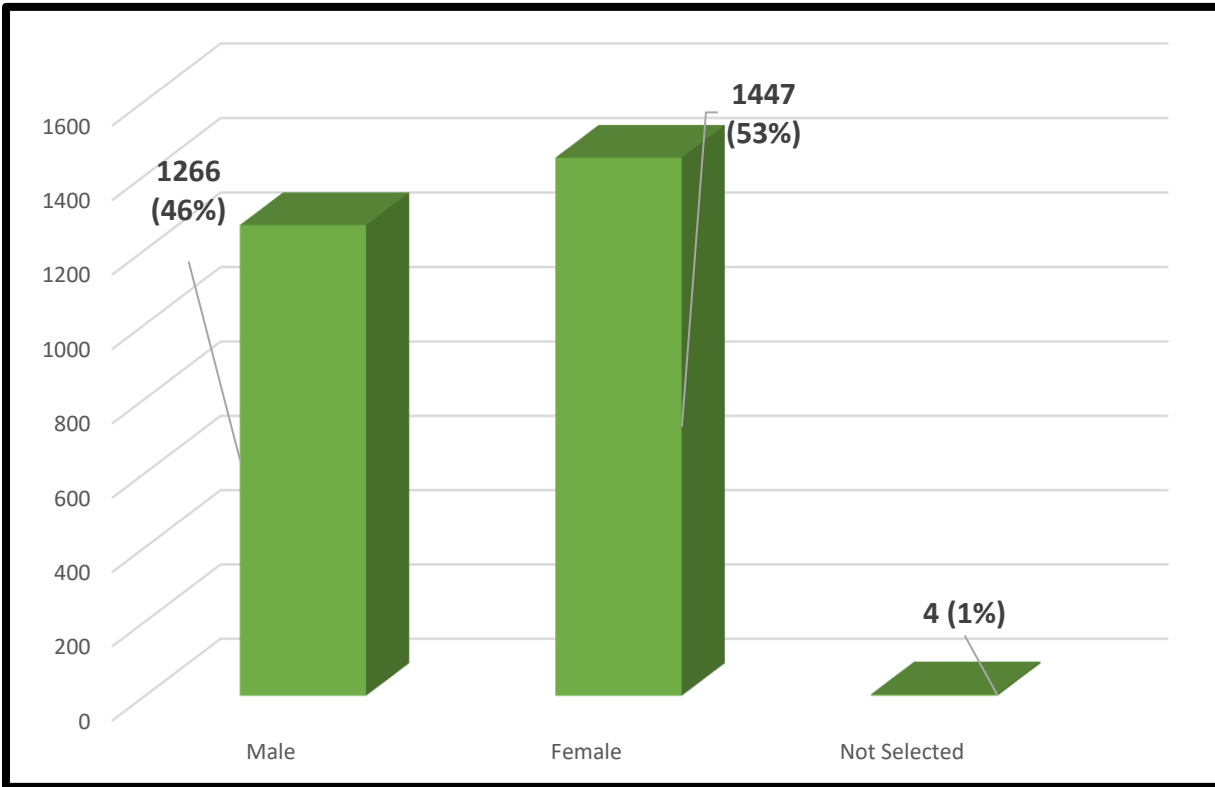
Grade



	ACADIA	Baxter	CRCS	ELC	FSAS	MCA	MeAA	MeANS	MeVA
PreK	32		30		20				
KG	32		28		20				
1st	33		21		21				
2nd	32		27		21				
3rd	33		24		18				
4th	32		22		17				
5th	34		29		19				
6th	22		23		11				
7th			20		14	70			38
8th			20		16	97			31
9th		94	28	36		69	63	28	77
10th		105	33	28		84	60	49	122
11th		96	38	27		92	59	49	116
12th		89	42	29		92	63	51	91

School Year 2024-25 Demographic Data Breakdowns

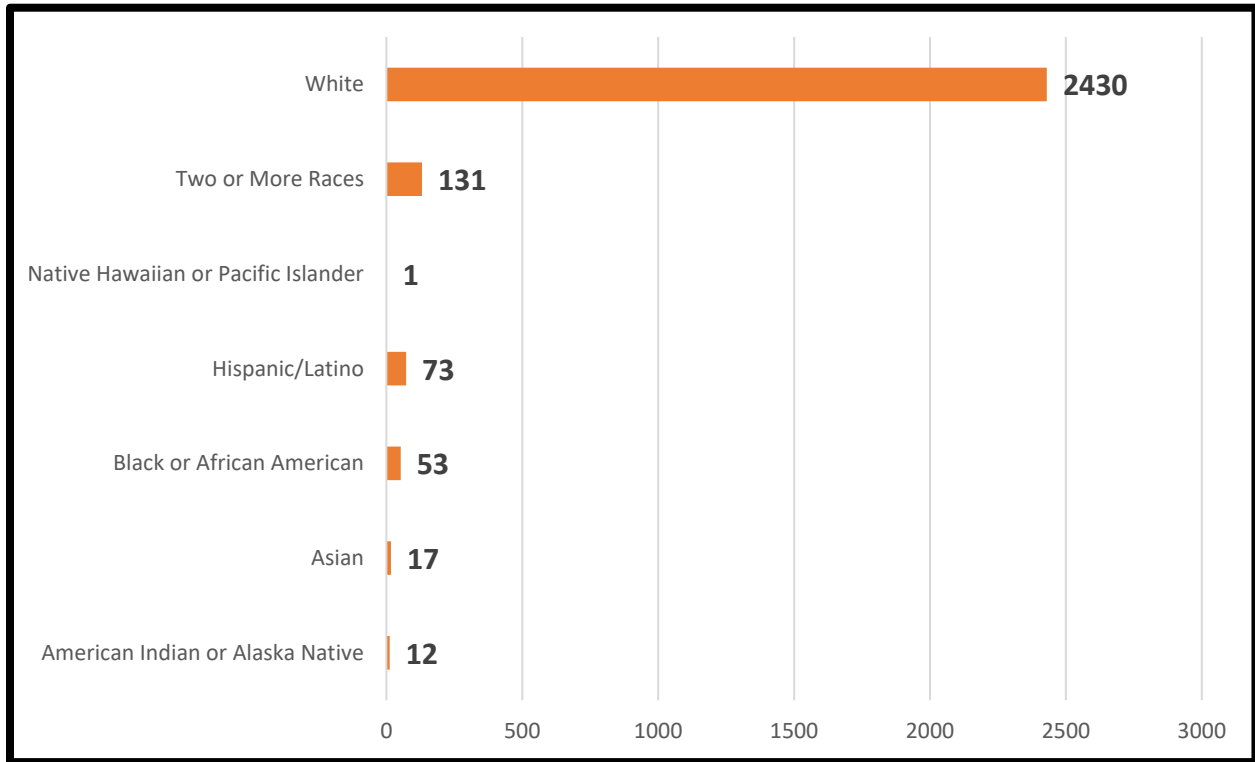
Gender



	Male		Female		Not Selected	
ACADIA	119	48%	131	52%		
Baxter	226	59%	158	41%		
CRCS	207	54%	178	46%		
ELC	57	48%	61	51%	2	1%
FSAS	98	55%	79	45%		
MCA	212	42%	292	58%		
MeAA	42	17%	202	82%	1	1%
MeANS	95	54%	82	46%		
MeVA	210	44%	264	55%	1	1%

School Year 2024-25 Demographic Data Breakdowns

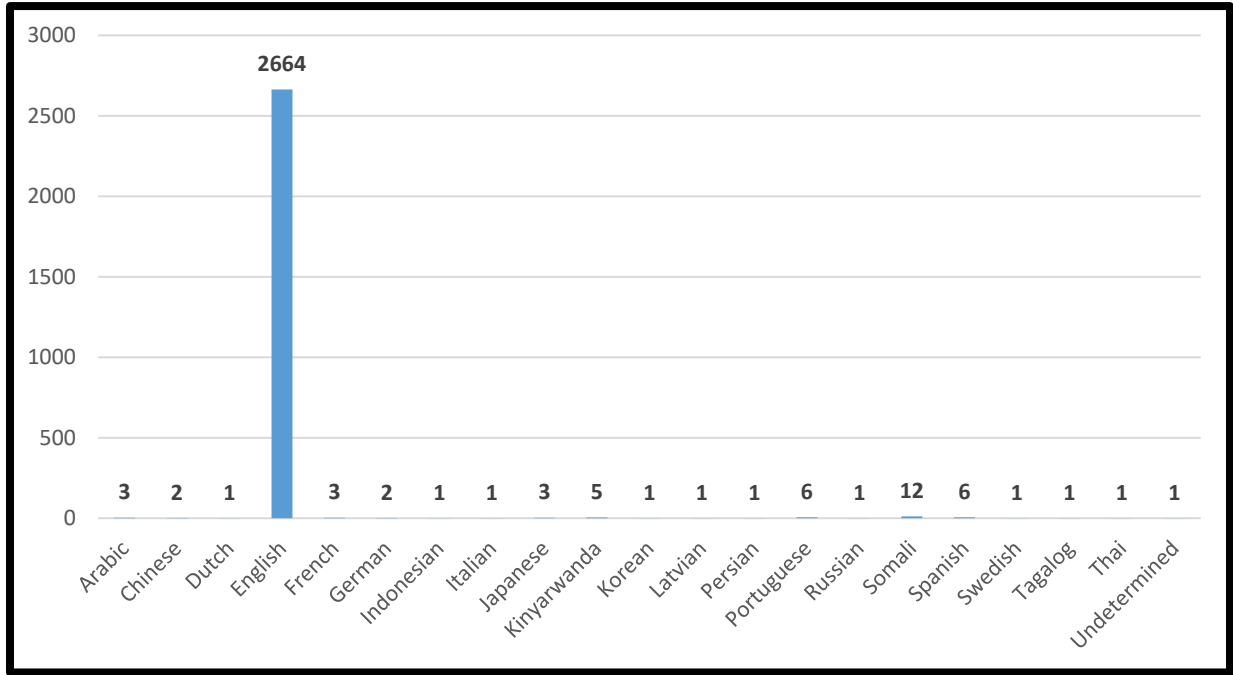
Race/Ethnicity



	ACADIA	Baxter	CRCS	ELC	FSAS	MCA	MeAA	MeANS	MeVA
White	218	335	355	111	163	446	220	166	416
Two or More Races	13	18	18	5	7	26	13	3	28
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander						1			
Hispanic/Latino	4	6	11	2	5	10	10	4	21
Black or African American	14	16		2	1	15		1	4
Asian	1	9				2	2		3
American Indian or Alaska Native			1		1	4		3	3

School Year 2024-25 Demographic Data Breakdowns

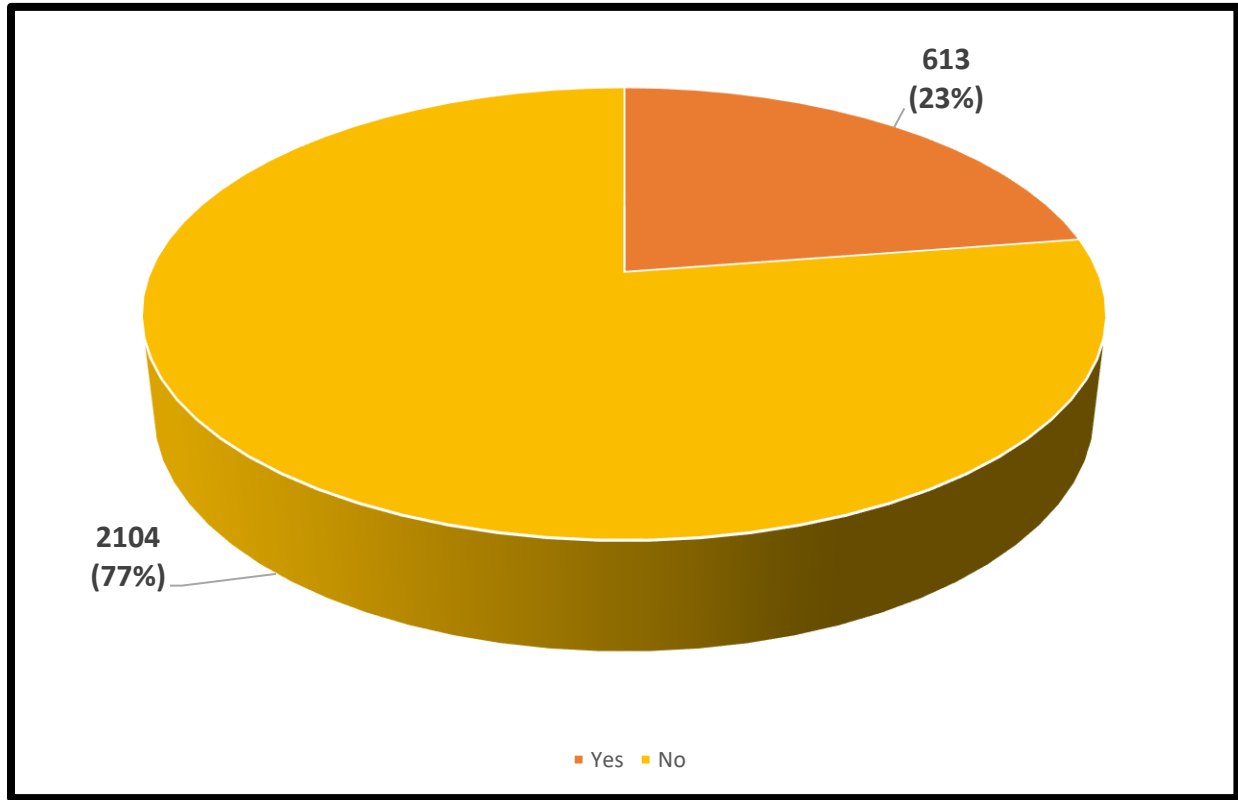
Language



	ACADIA	Baxter	CRCS	ELC	FSAS	MCA	MeAA	MeANS	MeVA
Arabic							1	2	
Chinese		1							1
Dutch							1		
English	247	362	384	119	175	492	238	175	472
French		2				1			
German		2							
Indonesian							1		
Italian		1							
Japanese		2					1		
Kinyarwanda	3	2							
Korean		1							
Latvian							1		
Persian						1			
Portuguese		6							
Russian							1		
Somali		3				9			
Spanish			1	1	2				2
Swedish		1							
Tagalog						1			
Thai							1		
Undetermined		1							

School Year 2024-25 Demographic Data Breakdowns

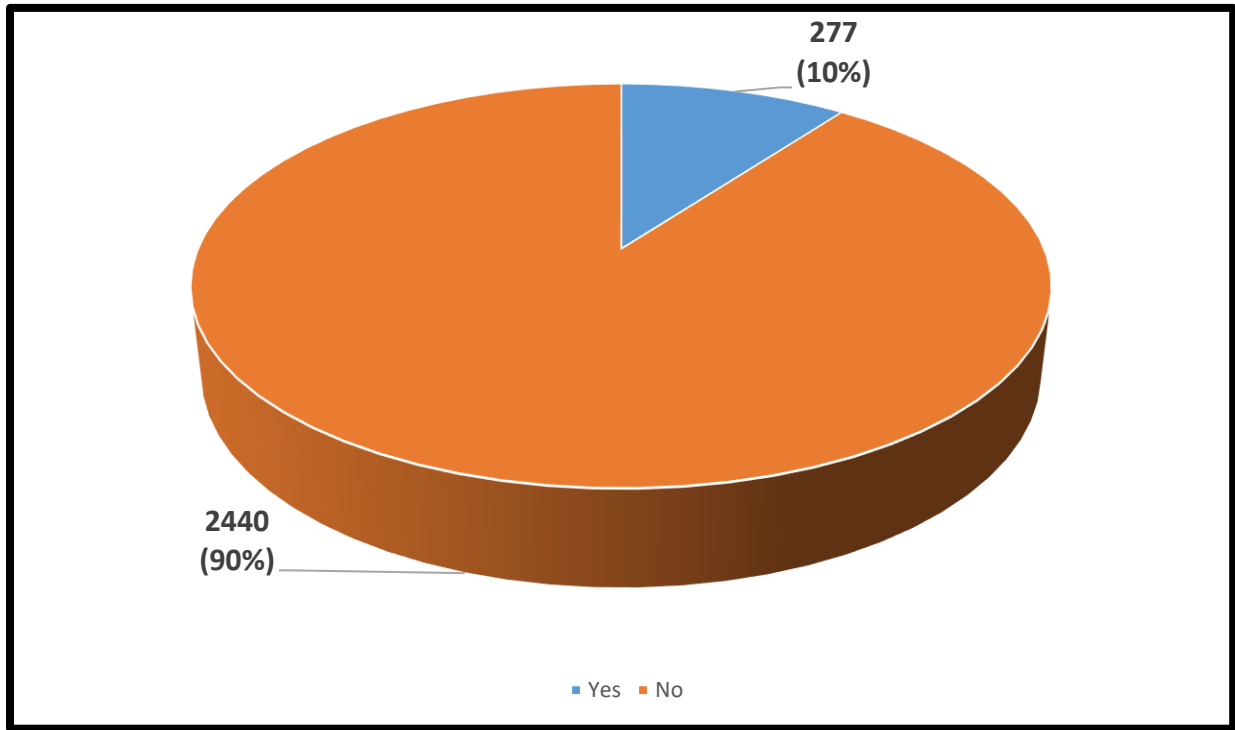
Special Education



	Yes		No	
ACADIA	46	18%	204	82%
Baxter	84	22%	300	78%
CRCS	91	24%	294	76%
ELC	32	27%	88	73%
FSAS	51	29%	126	71%
MCA	110	22%	394	78%
MeAA	42	17%	203	83%
MeANS	41	23%	136	77%
MeVA	116	24%	359	76%

School Year 2024-25 Demographic Data Breakdowns

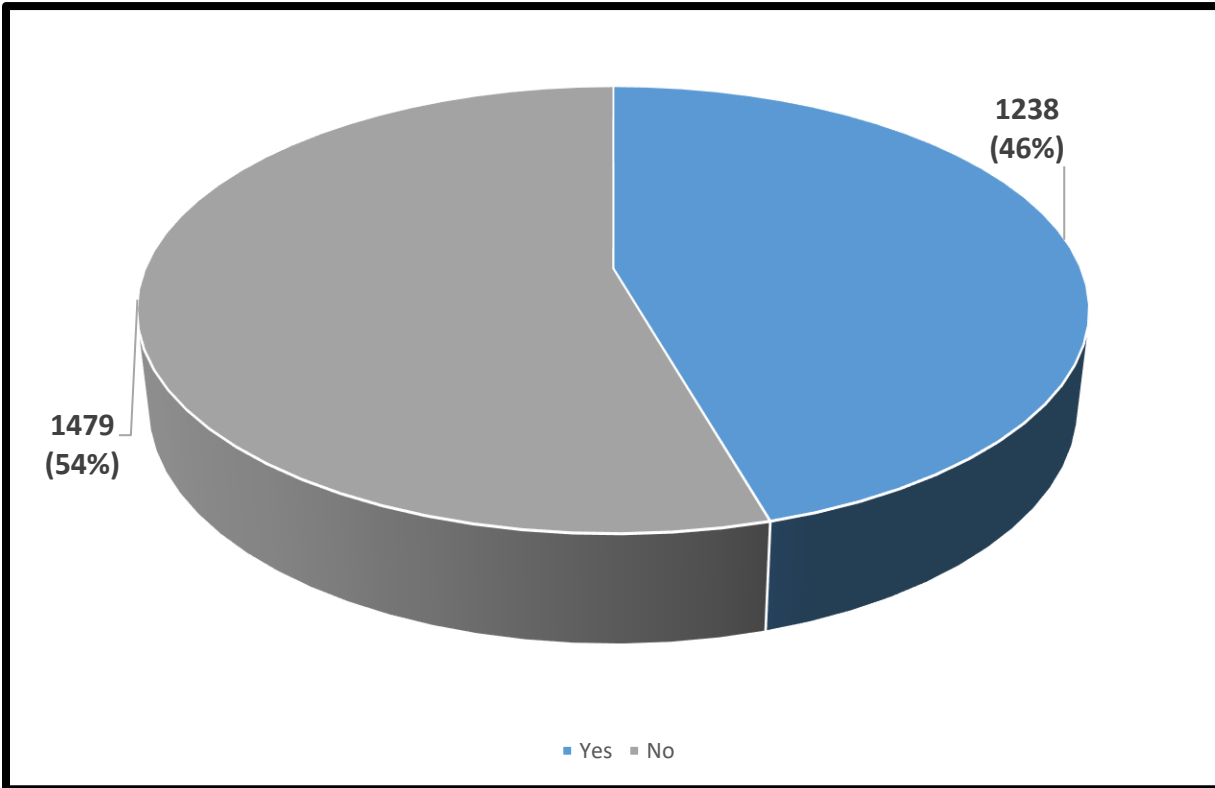
504 Plan



	Yes		No	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
ACADIA	17	7%	233	93%
Baxter	51	13%	333	87%
CRCS	10	3%	375	97%
ELC	1	1%	119	99%
FSAS	13	7%	164	93%
MCA	77	15%	427	85%
MeAA	49	20%	196	80%
MeANS	22	12%	155	88%
MeVA	37	8%	438	92%

School Year 2024-25 Demographic Data Breakdowns

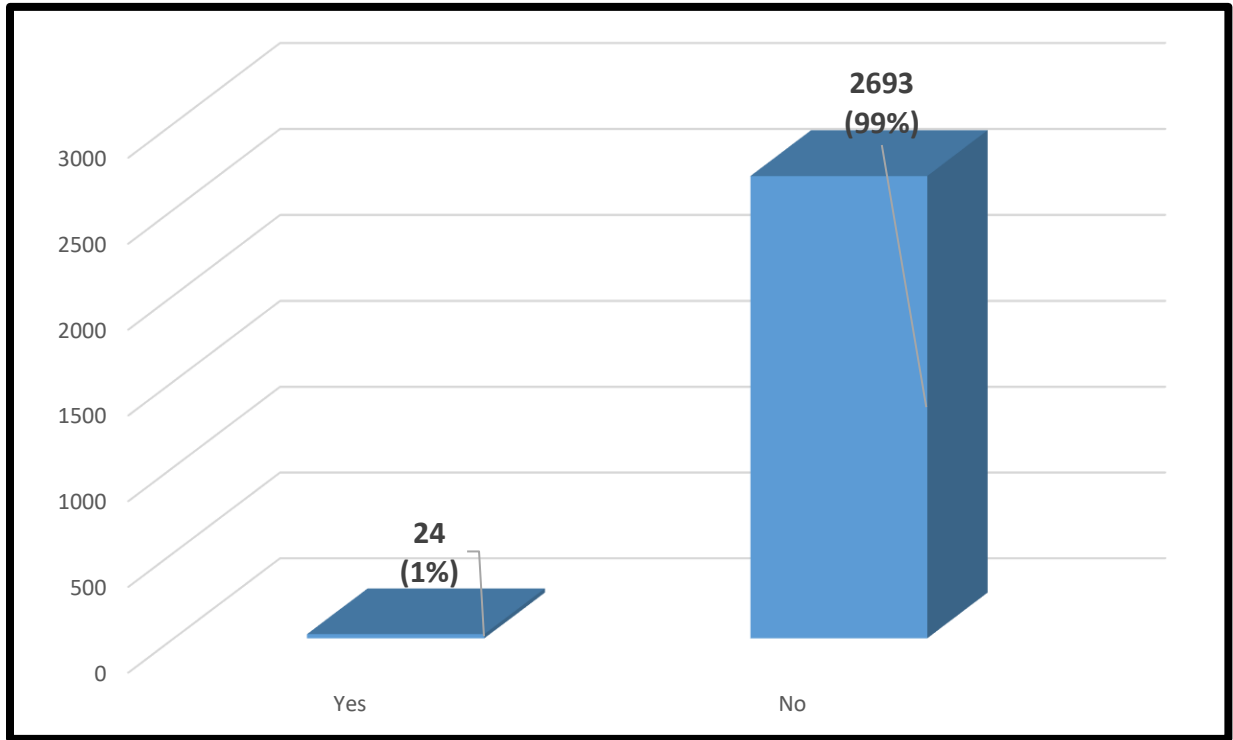
Economically Disadvantaged



	Yes		No	
ACADIA	80	32%	170	68%
Baxter	77	20%	307	80%
CRCS	271	70%	114	30%
ELC	43	36%	77	64%
FSAS	50	28%	127	72%
MCA	260	52%	244	48%
MeAA	100	41%	145	59%
MeANS	126	71%	51	29%
MeVA	231	49%	244	51%

School Year 2024-25 Demographic Data Breakdowns

English Learner



	Yes	No
ACADIA	2	248
Baxter	10	374
CRCs	0	385
ELC	1	119
FSAS	1	176
MCA	5	499
MeAA	1	244
MeANS	1	176
MeVA	3	472

Coversheet

Carryover Funds Proposal (Financial Order)

Section: II. Ad-Hoc Agenda Items
Item: C. Carryover Funds Proposal (Financial Order)
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: MCSC Carryover Fund Proposal January 2025.pdf



Carryover Funds Proposal - January 2025

The Maine Charter School Commission is seeking approval to execute a portion of its reserved carryover funds as an investment in supporting students attending Maine’s public charter schools. The Commission requests **\$118,602** of the available reserve which will cover the cost of the following:

- Atlantic Staffing – The Maine Charter School Commission is staffed by three full-time employees -- Executive Director, Operations Director, and Business Manager. Under the current structure, these staff positions are filled using one of the state-approved temporary staffing services. In June of 2024 when the paperwork was put in place to establish these positions, the state's Master Agreement with Atlantic Staffing was due to expire on December 31, 2024. That Master Agreement has been extended, so the Commission is able to extend the required paperwork for these positions through the end of the fiscal year. The cost to cover salaries, benefits, and the required mark-up fees will be approximately **\$53,602**. The Commission will look at its current staffing model as the next 3-year financial forecast is being considered.
- Public Relations/Engagement – After making significant progress toward the priorities outlined in the Commission’s “Strategic Plan 2021-2024”, the Commission is well-positioned to outline priorities for the next three years. The Commission recently revised the organization’s Mission, Vision and Values, thus paving the way for ambitious future planning that will bring us closer to our purpose that Maine students have access to excellent educational options. Part of the plan includes highlighting the work of charter schools in Maine, both to the public and to Maine’s policymakers. We are in the early stages of rolling out a marketing/public relations plan and project that the cost for 2025 will be **\$25,000**. Future annual costs will be accounted for in the Commission's 3-Year financial forecast.
- Innovation Grants – In its annual internal budget, the Commission has consistently dedicated funds for professional development with a process in place for Maine’s public charter schools to apply for a portion of the funds. Recently, the Commission has put an emphasis on innovation and rebranded these funds as “Innovation Grants” and has dedicated **\$40,000** to support this initiative. There are multiple goals for the funds, all to serve increasing student achievement, improve student opportunities, and enhance services to students. A charter school may apply for up to \$10,000 for a single project or multiple projects. If the school achieves successful program outcomes, they will share best practices and lessons learned with the other charter schools in Maine to encourage program replication. Grant funds are allocated on an annual basis and the total amount of funding will be determined annually by the Commission.

If approved, the requested funds will support the operations of charter operators and provide the Commission with additional capacity to monitor school performance.

Coversheet

FY25 Budget vs. Actual Dashboard/Spending Report

Section: III. Standard Agenda Items
Item: B. FY25 Budget vs. Actual Dashboard/Spending Report
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: Dashboard for FY25 11_27_24.pdf



MCSC FY25 Budget vs. Actual (As of November 27, 2024)

Revenue	Projection FY25	Actual FY25	Difference FY25	Actual FY24
Allotment - Legislatively Mandated	\$694,809	607,726.00	(\$87,083)	\$694,809
Additional State Subsidy Available	\$110,603		(\$110,603)	\$29,395
Total Allotment - ED279	\$805,412	\$607,726	(\$197,686)	\$724,204
Carryover Funds	\$38,285	\$0	(\$38,285)	\$82,096
Grants	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,163
TOTAL Annual Revenue	\$843,697	\$607,726	(\$235,971)	\$808,463

Costs (1)	Projection FY25	Actual FY25	Difference FY25	Actual FY24
Total Cost Summary	\$849,472	\$317,896	\$531,577	\$714,491

(1) Detail of Costs

	Projection FY25	Actual FY25	Difference FY25	Actual FY24
Personnel				
Staff Salaries	\$302,779	\$131,176	↑ \$171,603	\$275,491
Manpower Service Fee	\$67,669	\$28,468	↑ \$39,201	\$101,932
Benefits	\$63,000	\$26,250	↑ \$36,750	\$60,000
TOTAL Personnel	\$433,448	\$185,893	\$247,555	\$437,423

	Projection FY25	Actual FY25	Difference FY25	Actual FY24
Contracted Services				
Financial Consultant	\$51,739	\$4,725	↑ \$47,014	\$38,408
Public Relations/ Engagement	\$25,000	\$0	↑ \$25,000	\$20,843
Project-Based Support	\$45,000	\$5,494	↑ \$39,506	\$51,563
Operational/Financial Support	\$0	\$0	→ \$0	\$0
TOTAL Contracted Services	\$121,739	\$10,219	\$111,520	\$110,814

	Projection FY25	Actual FY25	Difference FY25	Actual FY24
Personal Services - Per Diem / Commission Members				
Per Diem	\$15,400	\$3,575	↑ \$11,825	\$12,729
NACSA	\$0	\$0	→ \$0	\$0
TOTAL Personal Services	\$15,400	\$3,575	\$11,825	\$12,729

	Projection FY25	Actual FY25	Difference FY25	Actual FY24
Travel				
Commission Members	\$8,400	\$1,082	↑ \$7,318	\$3,958
Staff	\$13,000	\$5,798	↑ \$7,202	\$7,772
TOTAL Travel	\$21,400	\$6,880	\$14,520	\$11,730

	Projection FY25	Actual FY25	Difference FY25	Actual FY24
General Operations				
Insurance/Risk Management	\$893	\$27	↑ \$866	\$822
Printing/Photocopying Services	\$1,000	\$0	↑ \$1,000	\$516
Dues and Subscriptions	\$7,203	\$2,328	↑ \$4,875	\$6,926
Meeting Room Rental	\$1,050	\$0	↑ \$1,050	\$0
Postage	\$315	\$0	↑ \$315	\$272
Advertising	\$525	\$200	↑ \$325	\$200
Food	\$420	\$234	↑ \$186	\$234
General Government Service Center	\$11,825	\$10,427	↑ \$1,398	\$9,395
Legal and Professional Services	\$11,401	\$500	↑ \$10,901	\$10,858
Office and Other Supplies	\$525	\$0	↑ \$525	\$413
TOTAL General Operations	\$35,157	\$13,716	\$21,441	\$29,636

	Projection FY25	Actual FY25	Difference FY25	Actual FY24
Technology for Schools				
NWEA MAP Test	\$14,400	\$0	↑ \$14,400	\$13,351
Panorama Education	\$11,500	\$0	↑ \$11,500	\$10,625
Infinite Campus	\$21,789	\$22,024	↓ (\$235)	\$19,615
Lotterease	\$2,625	\$1,701	↑ \$924	\$6,669
Epicenter	\$40,646	\$34,210	↑ \$6,436	\$33,710
College-Readiness Diagnostics	\$4,725	\$2,040	↑ \$2,685	\$4,500
Board on Track	\$35,000	\$27,495	↑ \$7,505	\$0
TOTAL Technology for Schools	\$130,684	\$87,470	\$43,215	\$88,470

	Projection FY25	Actual FY25	Difference FY25	Actual FY24
Technology for MCSC				
Office of Information Technology	\$3,675	\$2,302	↑ \$1,373	\$8,636
Cell Phone Services	\$2,730	\$598	↑ \$2,132	\$2,664
Website	\$5,000	\$0	↑ \$5,000	\$0
Remote CART Captioning Service	\$0	\$0	→ \$0	\$2,350
BoardOnTrack	\$5,775	\$5,495	↑ \$280	\$5,495
TOTAL Technology for MCSC	\$17,180	\$8,395	\$8,785	\$19,145

	Projection FY25	Actual FY25	Difference FY25	Actual FY24
Charter School Innovation/Collaboration				
Innovation Fund/Professional Development	\$40,000	\$0	↑ \$40,000	\$0
Board Chair Collaboration	\$1,700	\$0	↑ \$1,700	\$1,511
CountMe In	\$1,500	\$0	↑ \$1,500	\$0
TOTAL Charter School Innovation/C	\$43,200	\$0	\$43,200	\$1,511

	Projection FY25	Actual FY25	Difference FY25	Actual FY24
Sta-Cap				
Sta-Cap	\$10,264	\$1,748	↑ \$8,516	\$3,033
TOTAL Contingency	\$10,264	\$1,748	\$8,516	\$3,033

	Projection FY25	Actual FY25	Difference FY25	Actual FY24
Contingency				
Contingency	\$21,000	\$0	↑ \$21,000	\$0
TOTAL Contingency	\$21,000	\$0	\$21,000	\$0