Maine Charter School Commission

Executive Committee Meeting

Published on July 30, 2026 at 10:53 AM EDT
Amended on August 5, 2026 at 10:06 AM EDT

Date and Time

Thursday August 6, 2026 at 2:00 PM EDT

Location

Zoom

Agenda

		Purpose	Presenter
I.	**Opening Items**		
	A. Record Attendance		Amy Allen
	B. Call the Meeting to Order		Leigh Albert
II.	**Committee Reports**		
	A. School Performance Committee	FYI	Tom Keller
	B. Finance Committee	FYI	Brian Langley
III.	**Agenda Items - To Be Voted On**		

		Purpose	Presenter
A.	To Consider Revisions to the Commission's Travel & Expense Reimbursement Policy	Vote	Lana Ewing
B.	To Consider Revisions to the Commission's Payment and Signatory Policy	Vote	Lana Ewing

IV. Agenda Items - For Discussion

A.	Charter Contract Renewal Discussion	Discuss	Lana Ewing

- *Community Regional Charter School*
- *Maine Academy of Natural Sciences*

B.	Election of Officers/Committee Membership	Discuss	Lana Ewing
C.	Reflection on SY2025-26 Priorities and DRAFT SY2026-27 Proposed Priorities	Discuss	Lana Ewing

V. Updates / FYIs/Reminders

- *The August 11th Commission Meeting will be held at Maine Arts Academy (310 Cony Road, Augusta) beginning at 10am.*

VI. Upcoming Meetings (Zoom)

September 1, 2026

- 1:00-2:00pm
- Zoom

October 6, 2026

- 1:00-2:00pm
- Zoom

November 3, 2026

- 1:00-2:00pm
- Zoom

		Purpose	Presenter
VII.	**Closing Items**		
	A. Adjourn Meeting	FYI	Leigh Albert

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 Revisions to the Commission's Travel & Expense Reimbursement Policy

Section: III. Agenda Items - To Be Voted On
Item: A. To Consider Revisions to the Commission's Travel & Expense Reimbursement Policy
Purpose: Vote
Submitted by:
Related Material:
DRAFT Travel & Expense Reimbursement Policy - Proposed Revisions.pdf

MCSC
MAINE CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION

Travel & Expense Reimbursement Policy

Purpose

To provide clear guidance to Commission staff, Commission members, and authorized travelers on allowable travel, lodging, meals, and incidental expense reimbursements in the course of official Commission business. The Policy ensures transparency, fiscal responsibility, consistency, and alignment with federal per-diem practices.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- Employees of the Commission
- Commissioners when traveling on official Commission business
- Others approved in advance (e.g., contractors, invited guests) traveling at the Commission's expense

Policy Statement

The Commission will reimburse or directly pay (via Commission credit card) reasonable, necessary, and approved expenses incurred for travel on official business. Whenever possible, travelers should use the Commission credit card. If personal payment is used, reimbursement will follow submission of required documentation. For meals and incidental expenses while traveling, a current per diem allowance based on the federal GSA Meals & Incidental Expenses (M&IE) rate will be used.

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1. Travel Authorization & Approval

- All travel must be approved in advance by the Executive Director or the Executive Director's designee via email before any travel is purchased.
- Travel not pre-approved in advance may not be reimbursable unless justification is provided and approved by the Executive Director.

2. Use of Commission Credit Card vs. Personal Payment

- Whenever possible, travelers should use the Commission credit card.
- If not using the Commission card, the traveler may use a personal payment method and request reimbursement.

- Regardless of payment method, all expenditures must comply with this policy and be supported by receipts.
- All itemized receipts (except related to current per diem covered expenses (e.g. meals) should be provided by the traveler within **10 business days** of return.

3. Lodging

- Hotel/motel expenses must be reasonable and necessary.
- Lodging should be booked at a reasonable rate up to the specific daily maximum allowable lodging rate in effect at the time of travel for the specific area or locality, unless an exception is specifically provided by the Executive Director or designee. Typical exceptions include: a specific lodging recommended by the Conference the traveler is attending near the meeting/conference location, and/or the traveler is unable to find reasonable lodging within the GSA per diem lodging rates.
- The maximum allowable lodging rate shall be based on the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) per diem lodging rates for the specific travel location and date.
- Lodging taxes are reimbursable and are not included in the nightly lodging cap.
- These rates vary by geographic area and may fluctuate seasonally.
- If a traveler brings a guest or spouse any incremental costs for companion or upgraded room will be borne by the traveler.
- Receipts/invoices must show date(s) stayed, room rate, taxes, and any incidental charges (e.g., room service, mini-bar) must be separately identified and approved if reimbursed.

4. Meals & Incidental Expenses (Per Diem)

- The Commission will reimburse meals and incidentals via the current **per diem allowance** that equals the federal M&IE rate established by GSA for the destination for that travel date. See GSA's lookup tool. (U.S. General Services Administration)
- No separate reimbursement or receipts are required for each meal when the per diem method is used.
- The per diem covers breakfast, lunch, dinner, and other incidental expenses (e.g., meal tips, luggage handling).
- Receipts are not required for meals and incidentals reimbursed at the current GSA per diem rate; receipts are required for lodging and all other travel expenses.

5. Transportation

Airfare / Train / Bus

- Travel bookings should be coach/economy class unless prior authorization is given for upgraded travel.
- Travelers should book the lowest available fare that meets business needs and consider advance booking and cost-effectiveness.
- Receipts must accompany the reimbursement request.

Ground Transportation / Mileage

- When using a personal vehicle for travel, mileage reimbursement will follow the state rate for business-related travel.
- Parking, tolls, ride-share services (Uber/Lyft), taxi, and public transit costs for business travel are reimbursable with receipts.

Rental Cars

- Rental cars may be used if justified (e.g., necessity at destination). Prior authorization required. Costs should align with mid-sized standard vehicle ~~and insurance coverage limitations~~. Gasoline ~~Mileage~~/toll reimbursement is permitted for rental cars.
- Travelers should accept the rental car agency's insurance coverage, as personal auto insurance may not fully cover rental vehicles.

6. Miscellaneous / Incidentals

- Other reimbursable travel-related expenses include: conference registration fees, internet access fees (if necessary for business), baggage fees (coach class), reasonable gratuities, business phone calls.
- Non-reimbursable expenses include: personal entertainment or sightseeing, spouse/guest travel, mini-bar, in-room movies, fines/parking tickets, personal items, alcohol.

7. Reporting & Documentation

- Travelers must submit all travel related receipts within 10 business days of travel.
- For per diem meals-only claims, no individual meal receipts are required.
- Failure to submit within the time limit may result in forfeiture of reimbursement.

- All travel expense reimbursements are subject to review and audit by the Commission staff and external auditors.

8. Companion/Guest Travel

- Companion/guest travel is the responsibility of the traveler. If a traveler wishes to extend a personal stay (e.g., vacation added to business travel), the Commission will reimburse only the portion of lodging and per diem/proportional costs attributable to official business days.

9. Changes & Cancellations

- If travel plans change after approval, the traveler must notify the Executive Director and Business Manager and receive a revised authorization.
- Nonrefundable costs due to cancellation (e.g., conference fee, airline ticket) may be reimbursed if fully justified, approved in advance, and documented.

10. Exceptions

- Any request to exceed the current per diem must be requested with justification. Such exceptions must be approved by the Executive Director (or designated delegate) in advance.
- The Commission reserves the right to refuse reimbursement for expenses deemed excessive, non-business related, or non-compliant.

11. Policy Review

- This policy will be reviewed upon significant regulatory change by the finance committee to ensure continued alignment with current federal per diem rates, Commission budget, best practices, and audit requirements.
- The Commission's Business Manager will maintain a current link/reference to the GSA per diem rate tables. (U.S. General Services Administration)

Definitions

- **Per Diem** – A fixed daily allowance covering meals and incidental expenses for authorized travel, as defined by current GSA rates.
- **Incidental Expenses** – Minor costs of travel such as tips, baggage handling, in-room phone charges for business calls, etc.
- **Business Purpose** – The reason for travel must directly relate to the Commission's mission and benefit the Commission (e.g., training, meeting, conference).

Coversheet

To Consider Revisions to the Commission's Payment and Signatory Policy

Section: III. Agenda Items - To Be Voted On
Item: B. To Consider Revisions to the Commission's Payment and Signatory Policy
Purpose: Vote
Submitted by:
Related Material: DRAFT Payment and Signatory Policy - Proposed Revisions.pdf

Payment and Signatory Policy

Purpose & Context

The Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) was recently designated as a public instrumentality of the State of Maine. As a result, MCSC is establishing its own financial controls and signature policy for the first time, rather than relying on the policies of the State Controller's Office or State procurement rules. This policy sets forth the authority, thresholds, and processes for approving and executing payments, including checks, ACH payments, and credit card payments, to ensure proper oversight, internal controls, and alignment with the approved budget.

Scope

This policy applies to all disbursements of MCSC funds, including staff payroll, vendor and contractor payments, Commission member per diem, and other expenses, whether paid by check, ~~direct deposit~~ electric funds transfers including ACH or wires, or credit card.

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1. Authority and Thresholds

A. Budgeted Expenditures

- For expenses included in the MCSC-approved budget (or subsequent approved amendments) and properly authorized (e.g., payroll, vendor/contractor payments, Commission member per diem), the **Executive Director (ED)** may approve and sign the disbursement, whether by check, ACH, or credit card.

B. Non-Budgeted Expenditures

- Amounts up to $10,000: the **ED** may approve and execute as sole signer.
- Amounts over $10,000: two signers required — **ED** plus **Chair of the Commission** (or Vice Chair if the Chair is not available). Finance Committee review is recommended.

C. Payments to the Executive Director

- For any payment made to the **ED** (e.g., payroll, reimbursement, or other approved expense), the **Director of Operations** shall serve as the signer (or the Chair of the Commission or designee if the Director of Operations is not available).

D. Special Cases / Additional Signers

- For credit card payments: cardholders must have prior approval from the Executive Director for payments over $200. The Director of Operations will approve credit card purchases over $200 made by the Executive Director.

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2. Documentation and Approval

- **Payment Authorization and Processing (ACH, Check, and Credit Card):** All payments, regardless of method, must be supported by an approved invoice and documented authorization. Upon receipt of an invoice, the Business Manager will initiate an Invoice Approval Form, which must be routed first to the Operations Director and then to the Executive Director for review and approval. Once the Invoice Approval Form is signed by both parties, payment will be processed by the Business Manager using the appropriate payment method. If payment is made by check, the Business Manager will prepare the check, which will either be signed by the Executive Director or, when applicable, issued using the Executive Director's signature stamp with prior email authorization from the Executive Director. If payment is made by ACH, the Business Manager will initiate the ACH transaction, and the Executive Director must review and approve the ACH transaction prior to release. If payment is made by credit card, the Business Manager must receive initial approval via email from the Executive Director prior to use of the credit card. All credit card transactions must be supported by invoices or receipts, and a monthly credit card statement with all supporting documentation attached must be reviewed, approved, and signed by the Executive Director.
- Segregation of duties must be maintained: the preparer of a payment may not be the signatory.

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3. Internal Controls and Oversight

- Bank statements, canceled checks, credit card statements, and direct ACH payment reports shall be reviewed monthly by ~~someone not involved in initiating or approving payments, likely a member of~~ the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee will designate a representative to review monthly financial statements and approve items via email. ~~or the full Committee will vote to approve monthly financial statements via monthly Finance Committee vote.~~
- Blank checks will be secured in a locked cabinet and credit card holders must maintain physical security of cards issued to them.

- All payments require at least two individuals involved in the process (preparation, authorization, signing).

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4. Enforcement

Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action, audit review, and remedial steps as necessary.

Coversheet

Charter Contract Renewal Discussion

Section:	IV. Agenda Items - For Discussion
Item:	A. Charter Contract Renewal Discussion
Purpose:	Discuss
Submitted by:	
Related Material:	CRCS_2026_Renewal_Summary.docx.pdf MeANS_2026_Renewal_Summary.docx.pdf

MAINE CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION
182 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333-0182 | www.mainecharterschoolcommission.org

2026 Charter Renewal Summary — Community Regional Charter School

Prepared for the Commission | July 2026

The School and Where It Stands

Community Regional Charter School (CRCS) is a PreK–12 school operating across three campuses. CRCS is completing its 15th year of operation and its current 5-year charter term, making 2026 its third renewal cycle. The school has received the full monitoring sequence for this term — administration, board, and document-review visits in years 11–13, the Year 14 end-of-year visit alongside the Performance Report, and will receive the Year 15 renewal visit and public hearing — and is completing a two-year intervention plan, summarized below.

Statutory Basis (20-A M.R.S. §2411)

Renewal is governed by 20-A M.R.S. §2411 and MCSC Rule Chapter 3 (90-668). A charter may be renewed for successive 5-year terms (up to 15 years where performance warrants), and may be renewed with conditions. The Commission must issue a Performance Report and Renewal Application Guidance by June 30 of the fourth year of the term; the application must be filed by September 30 of the final year; and the Commission must rule by resolution within 45 days of filing. The decision must be grounded in evidence of performance over the term, measured against the §2409 Performance Framework and the charter contract — not on promises of future improvement.

The Review Team

The Review Team is Executive Director Lana Ewing and external expert David Hartman of Venn Education, who has led hundreds of high-stakes charter site visits and renewal reviews for authorizers nationally. Following the Commission's Site Visit Manual, they will conduct the one-day Renewal Site Visit — classroom observations and focus groups with students, families, and staff — and come to consensus on a Renewal Recommendation for the Commission. Venn is also supporting updates to the Commission's renewal tools ahead of the fall visits.

Independent Academic Evaluation (Momentum Strategy & Research)

MCSC engaged Momentum Strategy & Research in April 2026 for an independent read on CRCS's academic picture. Dr. Jody Ernst is analyzing three years of NWEA MAP data to answer four questions: whether longer-enrolled students show stronger outcomes; how far behind students arrive and whether incoming deficits explain state test results despite moderately strong MAP performance; whether a combined growth-and-achievement metric gives a clearer picture; and how CRCS compares to similar rural and alternative schools. The report has been received and speaks directly to the growth-versus-proficiency tension in the school's data.

Two-Year Intervention Plan (Level 2)

In spring 2024, MCSC and CRCS jointly developed a two-year improvement plan addressing proficiency and growth, high chronic absenteeism, and elevated attrition, with goals due by the end of SY25–26 — timed so results are in hand before the October renewal vote. In January 2026, the Commission designated CRCS as Level 2 under its Intervention Protocol, citing failure to satisfactorily remedy previously identified concerns and failure to meet multiple performance targets, with progress updates required at least every three months. The school's end-of-year results against these goals will come to the Commission as part of the renewal evidence packet.

Category under review	Goal by end of SY25–26
Student proficiency	NWEA MAP reading and math proficiency up at least 10 points overall and by subgroup, grades 3–8 and 10, Spring 2024 to Spring 2026
Student growth	NWEA MAP reading and math growth up at least 5 points overall and by subgroup, grades 3–8, Spring 2024 to Spring 2026
Chronic absenteeism	Dimensions Academy down 5 points (33% → 28%); Overman Academy down 7 points (48% → 41%)
Student persistence	95 or fewer student withdrawals per fiscal year by the end of June 2026

2026 Renewal Timeline

Date	Milestone

May 22, 2026	Preliminary Performance Framework outcomes and school Self-Assessment submitted via Epicenter
June 3, 2	Renewal check-in with the school's board and administration (Zoom)
June 30, 2026	MCSC issues the Performance Report and Renewal Application Guidance (statutory deadline: June 30 of Year 4 of the current term)
July 10, 2026	End-of-year data due to MCSC via Epicenter
July 13, 2026	MCSC issues the Renewal Application to the school
August 12, 2026	On-site end-of-year visit with board and administration
September 4, 2026	Renewal Application and any amendment requests for substantial changes due to MCSC
September 10,	One-day Renewal Site Visit: classroom observations and focus groups with students, families, and staff
September 2026	Review Team submits the Renewal Site Visit Report and Renewal Recommendation to the Commission
September 24,	Public hearing
October 13	Renewal vote (and any separate amendment votes) at the MCSC Business Meeting — 40 days after filing, within the 45-day statutory window
By June 30, 2027	Contract review and signing for the new charter term

If the Commission renews with conditions, a timeline of tasks will be developed in October 2026, reviewed at the November Business Meeting, with completion reports running November 2026 through May 2027.

The Evidence Before the Commission

Evidence	What it provides
Year 4 Performance Report	Issued June 30, 2026; the school's academic, financial, and organizational record over the term, with any concerns flagged and the school's response
Momentum Strategy & Research report	Independent three-year NWEA MAP evaluation: outcomes by length of enrollment, incoming deficits, a combined growth-and-achievement metric, and peer-school comparisons
Intervention Plan results	Final outcomes of the two-year Level 2 improvement plan, measured at the SY25–26 end-of-year meeting
Renewal Application	The school's case for renewal, due September 4 — supplemental evidence, improvements, and next-term plans, scored on the four-level rubric
Focus Group and Site Visit Summary	Findings from the one-day September visit — classroom observations and focus groups
Public testimony	Comments from community members, students, and teachers at the public hearing
Renewal Recommendation	The Review Team's consensus recommendation, drawing on all of the above and the historical record

Decision Points for the Commission

At the October 13 Business Meeting, the Commission may renew for a standard 5-year term, renew for a longer term (up to 15 years) where results warrant, renew with conditions, or non-renew. Any requested amendments for substantial changes — grade span, program delivery, or target population — are voted separately and require additional data analysis and research-based evidence. The renewed contract must be reviewed and signed no later than June 30, 2027.

MAINE CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION
182 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333-0182 | www.mainecharterschoolcommission.org

2026 Charter Renewal Summary — Maine Academy of Natural Sciences

Prepared for the Commission | July 2026

The School and Where It Stands

Maine Academy of Natural Sciences (MeANS) is completing its 15th year of operation and its current 5-year charter term, making 2026 its third renewal cycle. The school has received the full monitoring sequence for this term — administration, board, and document-review visits in years 11–13, and the Year 14 end-of-year visit alongside the Performance Report — and will receive the Year 15 renewal visit and public hearing this fall.

Statutory Basis (20-A M.R.S. §2411)

Renewal is governed by 20-A M.R.S. §2411 and MCSC Rule Chapter 3 (90-668). A charter may be renewed for successive 5-year terms (up to 15 years where performance warrants), and may be renewed with conditions. The Commission must issue a Performance Report and Renewal Application Guidance by June 30 of the fourth year of the term; the application must be filed by September 30 of the final year; and the Commission must rule by resolution within 45 days of filing. The decision must be grounded in evidence of performance over the term, measured against the §2409 Performance Framework and the charter contract — not on promises of future improvement.

The Review Team

The Review Team is Executive Director Lana Ewing and external expert David Hartman of Venn Education, who has led many high-stakes charter site visits and renewal reviews for authorizers nationally. Following the Commission's Site Visit Manual, they will conduct the one-day Renewal Site Visit — classroom observations and focus groups with students, families, and staff — and come to consensus on a Renewal Recommendation for the Commission. Venn is also supporting updates to the Commission's renewal tools ahead of the fall visits.

2026 Renewal Timeline

Date	Milestone
May 22, 2026	Preliminary Performance Framework outcomes and school Self-Assessment submitted via Epicenter
June 1, 2026	Renewal check-in with the school's board and administration (Zoom)
June 30, 2026	MCSC issues the Performance Report and Renewal Application Guidance (statutory deadline: June 30 of Year 4 of the current term)
July 10, 2026	End-of-year data due to MCSC via Epicenter
July 13, 2026	MCSC issues the Renewal Application to the school
August 12, 2026	On-site end-of-year visit with board and administration
September 4, 2026	Renewal Application and any amendment requests for substantial changes due to MCSC
September 9,	One-day Renewal Site Visit: classroom observations and focus groups with students, families, and staff
September 2026	Review Team submits the Renewal Site Visit Report and Renewal Recommendation to the Commission
September 23,	Public hearing
October 13, 2026	Renewal vote (and any separate amendment votes) at the MCSC Business Meeting — 40 days after filing, within the 45-day statutory window
By June 30, 2027	Contract review and signing for the new charter term

If the Commission renews with conditions, a timeline of tasks will be developed in October 2026, reviewed at the November Business Meeting, with completion reports running November 2026 through May 2027.

The Evidence Before the Commission

Evidence	What it provides
Year 4 Performance Report	Issued June 30, 2026; the school's academic, financial, and organizational record over the term, with any concerns flagged and the school's response

Renewal Application	The school's case for renewal, due September 4 — supplemental evidence, improvements, and next-term plans, scored on the four-level rubric
Focus Group and Site Visit Summary	Findings from the one-day September visit — classroom observations and focus groups
Public testimony	Comments from community members, students, and teachers at the public hearing
Renewal Recommendation	The Review Team's consensus recommendation, drawing on all of the above and the historical record

Decision Points for the Commission

At the October 13 Business Meeting, the Commission may renew for a standard 5-year term, renew for a longer term (up to 15 years) where results warrant, renew with conditions, or non-renew. Any requested amendments for substantial changes — grade span, program delivery, or target population — are voted separately and require additional data analysis and research-based evidence. The renewed contract must be reviewed and signed no later than June 30, 2027.

Coversheet

Election of Officers/Committee Membership

Section:	IV. Agenda Items - For Discussion
Item:	B. Election of Officers/Committee Membership
Purpose:	Discuss
Submitted by:	
Related Material:	Current Commission Membership.pdf

Current Commission Membership

Seat Number	Member	Commission Seat Expiration	SBOE Seat Expiration	Notes
Seat #1	Tom Keller	6/30/28	9/25/27	
Seat #2	James Ford	6/30/26	2/25/26	
Seat #3	Victoria Cohen	6/30/27	4/30/27	
Seat #4	Brian Langley	6/30/25	N/A	
Seat #5	Jim Handy	6/30/24	N/A	
Seat #6	Jeremy Ray	6/30/28	N/A	
Seat #7	Leigh Weisenburger Albert	6/30/25	N/A	Will officially step away from the Commission on 9/1/26

- *State Board of Education (SBOE) seat terms are 3-year terms*
- *Non-SBOE seat terms are 4-year terms*

Coversheet

Reflection on SY2025-26 Priorities and DRAFT SY2026-27 Proposed Priorities

Section: IV. Agenda Items - For Discussion
Item: C. Reflection on SY2025-26 Priorities and DRAFT SY2026-27 Proposed Priorities
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: DRAFT Reflection on SY2025-26 and Draft Priorities for SY2026-27.pdf

ANNUAL PRIORITIES

Reflection on SY 2025–2026

and Draft Priorities for SY 2026–2027

Maine Charter School Commission

Reflection on SY 2025–2026 Annual Priorities

All four SY 2025–2026 priorities were completed. The reflection below records what was accomplished under each priority and what the Commission carries forward into the coming year. Priority statements and outcome language are unchanged from the original plan.

BEFORE THIS GOES TO THE COMMISSION

Every **[bracketed, highlighted]** figure in this document is a placeholder awaiting data. These are concentrated in the *What went well* sections and in the draft SY 2026–2027 outcome targets. Search the document for "[" to find them all.

PRIORITY 1	OUTCOME BY CLOSE OF SY 2025–2026
New School Launch Support MOXIE Public Schools through its pre-operational year so the school is fully prepared to open.	MOXIE is fully prepared for a successful launch in Fall 2026. Executive tasks tracked in the Pre-Opening Tracker. **STATUS: COMPLETE**

WHAT WENT WELL

- Fulfilled all Maine DOE requirements for a new charter school entering its operational year.
- Met or exceeded fundraising goals, closing the year at **[$XXX raised against a $XXX goal]**.
- Met the Year 1 enrollment goal, with **[X students enrolled against a target of Y]**.
- Met the Year 1 staffing goal, with **[X of Y positions filled, including all instructional roles]**.
- Acquired and renovated a facility ready for Fall 2026 occupancy.

LESSONS LEARNED & CARRY-FORWARD

- MCSC coordination with Maine DOE across IT, finance, and enrollment functions needs to begin earlier and run through a single point of contact. Handoffs between MDOE units were a common source of delay this year.
- Build a standing pre-opening coordination checkpoint into the authorizer calendar so MDOE dependencies are surfaced on a predictable cycle rather than reactively.

- Capture what worked in the MOXIE pre-opening process as a reusable template for the next applicant cohort.

PRIORITY 2

Communications

Strengthen communications and charter school messaging capacity across the Commission, staff, school leaders, and school boards.

OUTCOME BY CLOSE OF SY 2025–2026

Participants demonstrate improved skills in messaging, policymaker engagement, media relations, and hosting policymaker visits through development sessions delivered by PLT Strategies.

STATUS: COMPLETE — CONTINUES INTO SY 2026–2027

WHAT WENT WELL

- Strong participation across four PLT Strategies professional development sessions.
- 7/9 School Boards participated in the March 10 School Board PD focused on communications and hosting policymakers.
- **[X%]** of schools opted into additional consultancy hours with PLT Strategies for school-specific communications support.
- The majority of schools hosted policymaker visits during the year.
- New Commission website launched with Ezra Smith Designs.
- The majority of schools adopted or refreshed their own website and media strategy.

LESSONS LEARNED & CARRY-FORWARD

- This is not a one-year priority. Communications capacity compounds, and the work carries forward into SY 2026–2027 as an ongoing priority.
- The PLT Strategies scope is being revised for next year to add a social media training component, responding directly to school-leader demand.
- An election year creates a specific window for policymaker engagement. Planning school visits and legislator touchpoints around the legislative and campaign calendar may be an effective strategy.

PRIORITY 3

Public Instrumentality Status

Implement the Commission's new organizational structure as an independent public instrumentality.

OUTCOME BY CLOSE OF SY 2025–2026

Finance, employment, and IT systems are fully operational and aligned to public instrumentality status.

STATUS: COMPLETE — RESIDUAL ITEMS OPEN

WHAT WENT WELL

- All core systems — finance, payroll, employment, and IT — are operating at increased efficiency under the new structure.
- Commission funds moved to Bangor Savings, where balances now accrue interest.
- Payroll transitioned to Bangor Payroll and the staffing agency relationship — along with its associated fees — was dissolved.
- IT is now managed by Adam Murray at Tech Resolve, with new hardware and software purchased and fully operational.
- Implemented additional AI tools that measurably increased staff capacity and effectiveness.
- Successfully navigated the evolving technical and administrative relationship with maine.gov.
- Launched a new Commission website with Ezra Smith Designs.

LESSONS LEARNED & CARRY-FORWARD

- “Public instrumentality” needs a clear definition the Commission can use consistently with vendors, state partners, and schools, which we have now generated.. Ambiguity about the Commission's legal status was a challenge.
- Insurance procurement remains in process and should carry into SY 2026–2027 as an open item.

PRIORITY 4

Charter School Board Development

Expand governance capacity for charter school boards and leaders.

OUTCOME BY CLOSE OF SY 2025–2026

Strong participation and improved governance capacity through near-monthly in-person and virtual trainings on critical governance topics, including:

- Using MAP Growth data
- Roles and responsibilities of charter boards
- Communication and advocacy
- Board recruitment, retention, and training
- Strategic planning
- School leader evaluation
- The annual board cycle — meetings, officer elections, committee assignments, recruitment, and onboarding

STATUS: COMPLETE — CONTINUES INTO SY 2026–2027

WHAT WENT WELL

- Delivered 6 board professional development sessions across the year. (6/9, 7/9, 5/9, 7/9, 6/9, 4/9)
- 8 of 9 schools participated in at least one professional development session.
- 6 of 9 schools participated in each session on average.
- Consistently strong participant feedback on session quality and relevance.
- Most - if not all (data pending) boards met their required professional development obligations under the Performance Framework, which is a substantial increase from last year.

LESSONS LEARNED & CARRY-FORWARD

- Governance capacity is built over years, not in a single cycle. This priority carries forward into SY 2026–2027 with outcomes that build on this year's foundation rather than repeating it.
- Near-monthly cadence worked. Schools engaged more consistently with a predictable schedule than with clustered or ad hoc sessions.
- Sequencing matters: foundational governance topics should precede advanced ones such as strategic planning and leader evaluation.

Draft Annual Priorities — SY 2026–2027

The four priorities below build directly on this year's work. Priorities 1 through 3 are new or newly sharpened; Priority 4 sustains the multi-year efforts that this year's reflection identified as ongoing. Outcome statements are drafted for Commission discussion and are not yet final.

DRAFT PRIORITY 1 **School Leader Development** Build instructional leadership capacity across all authorized schools through the Accelerate partnership, with targeted support for schools that need it.	**DRAFT OUTCOME BY CLOSE OF SY 2026–2027** • All school leaders in the inaugural cohort participate in the Accelerate leadership development sequence, with participation tracked against a defined attendance threshold. • Schools identified as needing targeted support receive a documented support plan with named milestones and a mid-year checkpoint. • Leading indicator: **[X%]** of schools show growth on their identified instructional goal by spring. • Lagging indicator: measurable movement in student achievement, expected to surface in SY 2027–2028 rather than within this cycle.

DRAFT PRIORITY 2 **Political Engagement** Position the Commission to engage effectively in an election year, with a clear legislative agenda and an intentional policymaker engagement strategy.	**DRAFT OUTCOME BY CLOSE OF SY 2026–2027** • A prioritized legislative agenda — statutory and rule changes — is drafted, vetted with counsel, and approved by the Commission. • A policymaker engagement strategy is in place, including a mapped target list, a school-visit calendar, and defined roles for Commissioners, staff, and school leaders. • All schools host at least one policymaker visit. • A defined engagement approach with the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, including timing for testimony and informational briefings.

DRAFT PRIORITY 3	DRAFT OUTCOME BY CLOSE OF SY 2026–2027
MOXIE Year One Support MOXIE Public Schools through a successful first operational year and hold the school to Performance Framework expectations from the outset.	• MOXIE meets the majority of applicable Year 1 Performance Framework targets. • The majority of financial metrics on the Performance Framework are low to moderate risk. • A first-year oversight cadence is established — site visits, data checkpoints, and board touchpoints — and documented for use with future new schools. • Enrollment does not fall below the enrollment range in the charter contract.

DRAFT PRIORITY 4	DRAFT OUTCOME BY CLOSE OF SY 2026–2027
Ongoing Priorities Sustain and deepen the multi-year work established in SY 2025–2026: board development, communications, and public instrumentality operations.	**BOARD TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT** • Near-monthly training cadence continues, with a sequence that advances beyond foundational governance into strategic planning, leader evaluation, and succession. • 100% of boards meet their full Performance Framework professional development requirement, up from this year's baseline. **COMMUNICATIONS** • Revised PLT Strategies scope delivered, including the new social media training component and quarterly consultancy meetings with Victoria Criado, PLT Strategies. • Schools move from skill-building to independent execution — each school maintains an active communications presence without direct Commission support. **PUBLIC INSTRUMENTALITY** • First independent audit completed with a clean opinion and any management letter items addressed. • A fund investment approach is adopted by the Commission and implemented, with reserve balances placed to earn a defined return. • Insurance coverage finalized, closing the last open item from SY 2025–2026.