Maine Charter School Commission

Business Meeting

Published on November 9, 2026 at 7:20 AM EST
Amended on November 24, 2026 at 4:04 PM EST

Date and Time

Tuesday November 10, 2026 at 10:00 AM EST

Location

Baxter Academy for Technology and Science, 185 Lancaster Street, Portland

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The **Vision** of the Maine Charter School Commission is that ***"Innovative public charter schools will provide Maine students with an equitable opportunity for an excellent education where students are valued, supported and challenged."***

The **Mission** of the Maine Charter School Commission is ***"To authorize, monitor and support innovative public charter schools that provide a dynamic, high-quality 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 Amy Allen at (207)592-6364 or amy@mainecharterschoolcommission.org

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Agenda

		Purpose	Presenter
I.	**Opening Items**		
A.	Record Attendance		Amy Allen
B.	Call the Meeting to Order		Brian Langley
C.	To Consider the Approval of the 10/13/26 Commission Meeting Minutes	Approve Minutes	Brian Langley
II.	**Comments From Commission Chair**		
A.	Comments	Discuss	Brian Langley
III.	**Additions or Adjustments to the Agenda**		
A.	Additions/Adjustments	Discuss	Brian Langley
IV.	**Committee Reports**		
A.	School Performance Committee	FYI	Tom Keller
B.	Finance Committee	FYI	Jim Handy
C.	Executive Committee	Vote	Brian Langley
V.	**Public Comment***		
A.	Public Comment	FYI	Brian Langley
VI.	**Presentation(s)**		
A.	The Children's Academy's Presentation of Maine Connections Academy's Independent Third Party Evaluation	FYI	Chris Indorf
B.	Unity Environmental University	FYI	Angel Laredo
C.	Welcome and Innovation Grant Update: Baxter Academy for Technology and Science	FYI	Anna Klein Christie
VII.	**Executive Director/Commission Staff Report**		

		Purpose	Presenter
A.	School Updates	Discuss	Lana Ewing
B.	Organizational Updates	Discuss	Lana Ewing
C.	Media Updates	FYI	Lana Ewing

- *None*

VIII. Monthly School Portfolio/Data Report

- *None*

IX. Unfinished Business

- *None*

X. New Business Requiring Approval and/or Acceptance

A.	To Receive and Place on File SY2025-26 Annual Monitoring Reports	Vote	Brian Langley

- SY2025-26 Annual Monitoring Reports
  - ACADIA Academy
  - Baxter Academy for Technology and Science
  - Community Regional Charter School
  - Ecology Learning Center
  - Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences
  - Maine Academy of Natural Sciences
  - Maine Arts Academy
  - Maine Connections Academy
  - Maine Virtual Academy

B.	To Receive and Place on File the SY2025-26 Annual Charter School Report	Vote	Brian Langley

	Purpose	Presenter

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

A. New Governing Board Members — FYI — Brian Langley

- *None*

B. Board Member Resignations/Left the Board — FYI — Brian Langley

- *None*

C. Board Member Term Outs — FYI — Brian Langley

- *None*

XII. Executive Session

The Commission will enter into executive session pursuant to 1 M.R.S. §405(6)(F), to discuss information contained in records that are confidential by statute, specifically personnel records of a charter public school that are confidential under 20-A M.R.S. §6101(2)(B)(3) and (6). No action will be taken in executive session.

XIII. Future Topics

A. Future Topics — FYI — Brian Langley

December

- NO MEETING

January/February

- FOAA Training
- 2026 Boards and Commissions Report
- 2026-27 School Enrollment Statistics
- 2026-27 Demographic Data Breakdowns
- 2026-27 Resident District Breakdown
- 2026-27 Resident Town Breakdown
- Charter Student Residence & Legislative Crosswalk

	Purpose	Presenter

March

- Mid-Year Meeting Updates

XIV. Announcements

A. Important Dates — FYI — Brian Langley

Events

- *Monday, January 25th (8:00am-12:00pm) - Charter Public School Day at the Hall of Flags*

Professional Development

- *Thursday, January 14th (10:00-11:30am) - Board effectiveness and strategic oversight*
- *Wednesday, February 3rd (10:00-11:30am) - Social media Deep Dive and Toolkit*
- *Thursday, March 11th (10:00-11:30am) - Mid-year reflection on board performance and school outcomes*
- *Tuesday, April 27th (9:30-11:00am) - Writing for Clarity and Precision*
- *Thursday, May 13th (10:00-11:30am) - Year-end board assessment and planning for the year ahead*
- *Thursday, May 27th (9:30-11:00am) - Communications & Advocacy Planning for SY2027-28*
- *Wednesday, June 26th (10:00am-12:00pm) - Spring 2027 Panorama Survey Results Deep Dive*

B. Upcoming Business Meeting(s) — FYI — Brian Langley

- Tuesday, January 12th (10:00am-12:00pm) - Location TBD
- Tuesday, February 9th (10:00am-12:00pm) - Location TBD

XV. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting — Vote — Brian Langley

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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.

As of September 24, 2025, state law reclassified the Maine Charter School Commission as "a public body corporate and politic and an incorporated public instrumentality of the State." This means the Commission is now its own legal entity within state government. It can act in its own name — entering into contracts, managing state, federal, and private funds, and employing its own staff — while remaining a public body that performs essential government functions and stays accountable to the State.

Coversheet

To Consider the Approval of the 10/13/26 Commission Meeting Minutes

Section: I. Opening Items
Item: C. To Consider the Approval of the 10/13/26 Commission Meeting Minutes
Purpose: Approve Minutes
Submitted by:
Related Material: Minutes for Business Meeting on October 13, 2026

APPROVED

Maine Charter School Commission

Minutes

Business Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday October 13, 2026 at 10:00 AM

Location
Randall Student Center Fireside Lounge, University of Maine Augusta, 46 University Drive, Augusta

The **Vision** of the Maine Charter School Commission is that ***"Innovative public charter schools will provide Maine students with an equitable opportunity for an excellent education where students are valued, supported and challenged."***

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Directors Present

Brian Langley, James Ford (remote), Jeremy Ray, Jim Handy, Tom Keller, Victoria Cohen

Directors Absent
None

Guests Present
Amy Allen (remote), Lana Ewing, Susan Whipkey (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Brian Langley called a meeting of the board of directors of Maine Charter School Commission to order on Tuesday Oct 13, 2026 at 10:03 AM.
Moment of Silence: The Chair noted the recent passing of Norm Higgins, a former member of the Commission who served two terms as Chair. The Commission observed a moment of silence in his memory.

C. To Consider the Approval of the 9/8/26 Commission Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes from Business Meeting on 09-08-26.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Brian Langley	Aye
James Ford	Aye
Tom Keller	Aye
Victoria Cohen	Aye
Jeremy Ray	Aye
Jim Handy	Aye

II. Additions or Adjustments to the Agenda

A. Additions/Adjustments

None were proposed.

III. Committee Reports

A. School Performance Committee

The School Performance Committee met via Zoom on Monday, October 5, 2026, at 9:00 a.m., with Tom Keller presiding. The Committee considered approval of the minutes from its September 1, 2026 meeting and staff led discussion of the renewal recommendations for Community Regional Charter School and Maine Academy of Natural Sciences.

B. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee met via Zoom on Tuesday, October 6, 2026, at 11:00 a.m., with Jim Handy presiding. The Committee considered approval of the minutes from its September 1, 2026 meeting. Staff presented the FY27 Financial Report Packet for year-to-date through August 2026. The packet included a summary, budget-to-actual spending, carryforward funds, the balance sheet, and statements and reconciliations for the operating and investment bank accounts. It also included the credit card statement dated August 25, 2026. Staff also reviewed the renewal recommendations for Community Regional Charter School and Maine Academy of Natural Sciences.

C. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee met via Zoom on Tuesday, October 6, 2026, at 1:00 p.m., with Brian Langley presiding. The Committee received reports from Tom Keller on the School Performance Committee and Jim Handy on the Finance Committee. The Committee considered approval of the minutes from its September 1, 2026 meeting. Staff led discussion of the renewal recommendations for Community Regional Charter School and Maine Academy of Natural Sciences.

IV. Public Comment*

A. Public Comment

Emanuel Pariser, a founder of the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences (MeANS) and a current member of its Board, addressed the Commission. Mr. Pariser expressed his gratitude to the Commission and Commission staff for the thoughtfulness and support they showed throughout the school's renewal process.

V. Executive Director/Commission Staff Report

A. School Updates

There were no individual school updates this month.

B. Organizational Updates

Staff gave an overview of recent staff professional development. This included a September 23 session with Panorama on analyzing and using survey results, a September 30 meeting with the Maine DOE Finance and Federal teams, and an October 7 Leadership Cohort with Accelerate Education, a full-day, in-person training in Portland in which seven schools took part.

Lana will present on the Commission's Performance Framework at the MSMA Conference on October 30, and recognized the Maine Alliance for Public Charter Schools for hosting its first annual conference which will be held on October 23.

C. Media Updates

Two articles - "51 Maine Students Named National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists" and "County residents among Maine Connections Academy graduates" - were included in the packet for informational purposes. No discussion was held.

VI. New Business Requiring Approval and/or Acceptance

A. To Consider the Approval of Community Regional Charter School's Renewal Application

Jim Handy made a motion to renew the charter of Community Regional Charter School for a five-year term commencing July 1, 2027 and concluding June 30, 2032, subject to the two conditions set forth in Section 6 of the Renewal Recommendation; that the conditions take effect upon this vote and be incorporated into the renewed charter contract to be reviewed and signed no later than June 30, 2027.
Tom Keller seconded the motion.
Staff presented the Renewal Review Team's recommendation to renew the charter of Community Regional Charter School for a five-year term, July 1, 2027 through June 30, 2032, with two conditions.

The recommendation draws on the school's four-year Performance Framework record, the results of its Level 2 Intervention Plan, an independent analysis by Momentum Strategy & Research, the renewal application, the September 10 site visit, and testimony from the September 24 public hearing.

The Team noted strengths in reading proficiency and growth, graduation rates, school climate and family engagement, improving attendance, sound financial management, and mission fidelity. The Team noted concerns about mathematics, which has been rated Not Meeting throughout the charter term. Other concerns were growth that does not close proficiency gaps, chronic absenteeism (particularly at Overman), enrollment and student persistence, inconsistent classroom implementation of the school's ungraded model, instructional support capacity, and leadership sustainability.

The recommended conditions are (1) heightened oversight through quarterly Performance Framework meetings with school leaders and board representatives, including a mid-year site visit and two rounds of classroom observations at all three campuses each year, and (2) annual Performance Framework milestones over five years, leading to Meeting or better on all indicators of concern by Year 5.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call
Victoria Cohen Aye
Brian Langley Aye

Roll Call

Jim Handy	Aye
Tom Keller	Aye
Jeremy Ray	Aye
James Ford	Aye

B. To Consider the Approval of Maine Academy of Natural Science's Renewal Application

Jim Handy made a motion to renew the charter of the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences for a five-year term commencing September 1, 2027 and concluding August 31, 2032, without conditions; and that the renewed charter contract be reviewed and signed no later than June 30, 2027.
Tom Keller seconded the motion.
Staff presented the Renewal Review Team's recommendation to renew the charter of the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences for a five-year term, July 1, 2027 through June 30, 2032, without conditions.

The recommendation draws on the school's four-year Performance Framework record, the renewal application, the school's FY25 surplus plan and enrollment strategy, the September 9 site visit, and testimony from the September 23 public hearing.

The Team noted strengths in mission fidelity, school climate and family engagement, student persistence and re-enrollment, post-secondary readiness, the Threshold Program, governance, and financial management. It also noted that the school outperformed its enrollment-recovery financial plan in FY25 and FY26. Areas where performance has not yet met expectations include chronic absenteeism, which has improved substantially but remains above target; Grade 10 mathematics; year-to-year inconsistency in state proficiency results; the state-reported graduation rate; and some financial sustainability measures. The Team found that the school had already identified each of these areas itself and has plans in place to address them, so conditions were not warranted.

The report sets out four advisory areas of continued focus: mathematics; chronic absenteeism; financial sustainability and enrollment growth; and visibility, marketing, and brand differentiation. These are not conditions of the renewed charter and will be tracked through the existing Performance Framework.

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

Roll Call

Jim Handy	Aye
Jeremy Ray	Aye
James Ford	Aye
Tom Keller	Aye
Brian Langley	Aye

Roll Call
Victoria Cohen Aye

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

A. New Governing Board Members

The Commission received notice that Maine Virtual Academy has appointed Erin Shanahan to its board of directors.

B. Board Member Resignations/Left the Board

None reported.

C. Board Member Term Outs

None reported.

VIII. Future Topics

A. Future Topics

The following future topics were included in the agenda for reference. No discussion was held.

November

- Presentation of Maine Connections Academy's Independent 3rd Party Evaluation
- Presentation by Unity Environmental University
- To Receive and Place on File SY2025-26 Annual Monitoring Reports
- To Receive and Place on File SY2025-26 Annual Charter School Report

December

- NO MEETING

IX. Announcements

A. Important Dates

The following events were included in the agenda for reference. No discussion was held:

- *Monday, January 25th (8:00am-12:00pm) - Charter Public School Day at the Hall of Flags*

The following professional development opportunities were included in the agenda for reference. No discussion was held:

- *Thursday, October 22nd (10:00-11:30am)/BoardOnTrack PD - "Governance and Fiduciary Duties"/Zoom*
- *Thursday, November 5th (10:00-11:30am)/PLT Strategies - "Communications and Advocacy 101"/Zoom*

B. Upcoming Business Meeting(s)

The following upcoming Business Meeting dates were included in the agenda for reference. No discussion was held:

- *Tuesday, November 10th (10:00am-12:00pm)*
- *Tuesday, January 12th (10:00am-12:00pm)*

X. 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 11:15 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amy Allen

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Coversheet

The Children's Academy's Presentation of Maine Connections Academy's Independent Third Party Evaluation

Section: VI. Presentation(s)
Item: A. The Children's Academy's Presentation of Maine Connections Academy's Independent Third Party Evaluation
Purpose: FYI
Submitted by:
Related Material: MCA Independent 3rd Party Evaluation.pdf

Chris Indorf, Educational Consultant
20 Sofia Road · Saco, ME 04072 · 207.710-3120 · christopher.indorf@gmail.com

September 2026

Dear Members of the Maine Charter School Commission,

It is my pleasure to present the Commission with the sixth Third Party Evaluation (TPE) of the Maine Connections Academy (MCA). It has again been a privilege to work alongside a dedicated team in assessing the school's performance and offering informed recommendations for its continued growth.

I want to commend Principal Wallace and his team for their sustained engagement with stakeholders. Family and faculty participation continued the strong upward trend the Commission asked for: 35 families and 23 faculty and staff completed this year's instruments, and many made themselves available for follow-up conversation. I am also glad to report a marked turnaround in Board participation. When this evaluation began the Board had returned a single questionnaire; through the Board chair's and Principal Wallace's efforts, three of the five seated members ultimately responded. The two who did not are accounted for -- one newly seated and, rightly, abstaining for lack of tenure, and a parent representative who relocated over the summer. Participation across all three stakeholder groups is therefore, for the first time in several cycles, functionally complete.

The findings reaffirm that MCA remains at the forefront of delivering a responsive, highly individualized program for remote learners, and that stakeholders overwhelmingly value both the school's people and its relationship with its Educational Service Provider. The themes worth watching are the ones every growing school, and every virtual school, works on continually: keeping capacity in step with enrollment as MCA grows toward its 500-student cap, and the persistent desire -- among families and students alike -- for more in-person connection. Student anxiety and mental health now stand, for the first time, tied as the single most common reason families choose MCA.

The recommendations that close this report are offered in the spirit of continued growth, not correction. None identifies a deficiency at MCA; each describes a practice that strong schools everywhere pursue as a matter of course: continue using longitudinal assessment data to drive instruction; periodically review social-emotional support capacity as enrollment grows; keep building on in-person connection; and align required assessment with the school's online modality where testing rules permit.

I look forward to meeting with the Commission to present this report and to answering any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Chris Indorf, M.S., M.Ed., C.A.G.S.
Consultant for the SMAC

MAINE CONNECTIONS ACADEMY

Maine's first full-time virtual public charter school · Grades 7–12

THIRD PARTY EVALUATION

Sixth Report · School Year 2025–2026

Prepared for the Maine Charter School Commission
and the MCA Board of Directors

Chris Indorf, M.S., M.Ed., C.A.G.S.
Southern Maine Administrative Collaborative
September 2026

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Page references are approximate and will be finalized before presentation. The cover letter, cover page, and this table of contents are not paginated.

Agreement

Maine Connections Academy engaged the Southern Maine Administrative Collaborative (SMAC) to conduct a wholly independent third-party evaluation (hereafter, "TPE") to assess the school's execution of its educational program as detailed in its charter application. This year marks the sixth Third Party Evaluation conducted by the SMAC, following evaluations in 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024. Principal Wallace communicated regularly with the evaluator and with stakeholders throughout the process.

Six years of comparable data now provides the Board, school leadership, and the Commission with genuine trendlines -- a longitudinal resource that few schools of any kind possess, and one that grows more valuable with each cycle.[1]

Maine Charter Schools & MCA

The Maine Charter School Commission consists of seven (7) members. Three commissioners must be members of the State Board of Education, appointed by the State Board for three-year terms. The remaining four members are appointed by the Governor, subject to review by the Joint Standing Committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters and to confirmation by the Senate, for four-year terms.

Commission Membership (carried forward -- verify before finalizing)

Seat 1: Thomas E. Keller -- STEM Education Strategies LLC; former Maine State Science Supervisor (term ends 6/30/28)

Seat 2: James Ford -- Restorative Practices Coordinator, Lewiston Public Schools (term ends 6/30/26)

Seat 3: Victoria Cohen --Former teacher, math coach, and math interventionist (term ends 6/30/27)

Seat 4: Brian Langley -- Educator and former State Senator; sponsor of Maine's 2011 charter law (term ends 6/30/25)

Seat 5: James Handy -- Educator and former State Representative and Senator

Seat 6: Jeremy Ray --Superintendent at Biddeford, Dayton and Saco Schools (term ends 6/30/28)

Seat 7: Vacant

Maine Connections Academy (MCA) is Maine's first full-time virtual public charter school, offering a rigorous program to students in grades 7–12 under the authorization of the Maine Department of Education and the Maine Charter School Commission. MCA was founded in the 2014–15 school year and enrolls students from more than 100 districts statewide; roughly one in five students receives special education services and approximately two in five are identified as economically disadvantaged. MCA is fully accredited by Cognia, and its curriculum is aligned with the Maine Learning Results, including the Common Core State Standards.[2]

[1]Qualitative research, in addition to being cost-effective, is an open-ended process that more fully incorporates the human experience. It can provide actionable insights and accounts for the nexus of the art and science of education. In this evaluation, "quantitative" refers specifically to the Likert-scaled survey items.

[2]Commission membership is carried forward from the prior evaluation cycle. Several seats show terms lapsing on 6/30/25, and Seat 5 was unconfirmed at last writing. This roster must be re-verified against the Maine Charter School Commission website before the report is finalized and presented.

Requirement

The requirement to conduct an independent third-party evaluation is set out in Exhibit B (#13) of MCA's charter contract:

> *The school shall hire a mutually agreeable independent third-party to evaluate the school's execution of the educational program contained in the charter application, including an evaluation of the performance of the ESP. The evaluation report shall be provided to the Commission annually no later than September. Upon request the Commission shall have access to the underlying data and information. In addition, the individual(s) who prepared the report shall be made available to the commission, at the sole expense of the School, to present and discuss the report at a commission meeting.*

Introduction

This TPE contemplates the current state of the school and progress toward recommendations made in prior evaluations. To remain a practical, usable tool for decision-makers, the report largely mirrors the structure of previous years, and a number of survey items are held verbatim year-over-year so the Commission and Board can make at-a-glance, apples-to-apples comparisons. The objective is to assess how well MCA functioned during 2025–2026, how leadership responded to prior recommendations, and how stakeholders regard the school and its Educational Service Provider (ESP), Connections Academy (formerly branded Pearson, and referred to throughout as CA or the ESP).

A note on this year's data: family and faculty participation is the strongest it has been in the life of this evaluation. Board participation is the weakest. Both facts are reported here without adjustment.[3]

Methodology and Rationale

The evaluation uses a qualitative research framework, which is well suited to portraying how an organization operates and the extent to which it attains its objectives. Qualitative methods -- interviews, survey design, open-response analysis -- are paired here with Likert-scaled items that serve as a quantitative complement. Both the evaluator and the Principal agreed early on that a qualitative-forward design would resonate more meaningfully with the Academy's needs while still yielding defensible numbers.

Throughline questions -- items worded identically across stakeholder groups -- allow cross-validation and comparison between families, faculty, and the Board. Where a group's response is thin, as with the Board this year, the report says so rather than letting a single voice stand in for a constituency.

Process

The evaluator developed three instruments in collaboration with MCA leadership: one for Administration and Faculty, one for Families, and one for the Board of Directors. The instruments draw on established self-study tools (including the New England Association of Schools and Colleges) and on the Perceptions

[3]Response totals this year: families/parents n = 35; faculty and staff n = 23; Board of Directors n = 3 (of five seated members; the two non-respondents are accounted for in the Findings). All three figures continue the strong, Commission-requested upward trend in participation.

of the Blended Learning Environment Questionnaire, supplemented by MCA-specific items probing the ESP relationship. Letters of introduction were sent to stakeholders in advance; surveys were administered electronically, and respondents were offered follow-up interviews in an open-forum format.

Principal Wallace again cast a wide net for families and faculty, and the response reflects it. For the Board, the same outreach was made and repeated; the response, documented below, did not follow.

Why a Comprehensive Assessment of the ESP Is Mission Critical

Connections Academy supplies curriculum and instructional materials, the online learning platform and student information system, assessment tools, professional development, data analytics, technical support, and a range of back-office functions. MCA's relationship with the ESP is extensive and represents a significant annual investment -- historically in excess of one million dollars. Because so much of the student and teacher experience is platform-mediated, stakeholder perceptions of the ESP are not a side inquiry; they are central to judging whether the charter's program is being executed as promised.

Findings

Faculty: Quantitative

Twenty-three faculty and staff completed this year's instrument, sustaining the fourfold increase in participation first achieved in response to the Commission's request. Agreement is strong and broad. On being treated with respect, being supported in professional development, and being given a program broad enough to serve all students, faculty responses cluster overwhelmingly in "strongly agree." The two clearest relative soft spots are having a voice in decision-making (still positive, but with the largest share of merely "agree" rather than "strongly agree") and the ESP platform's day-to-day usability.

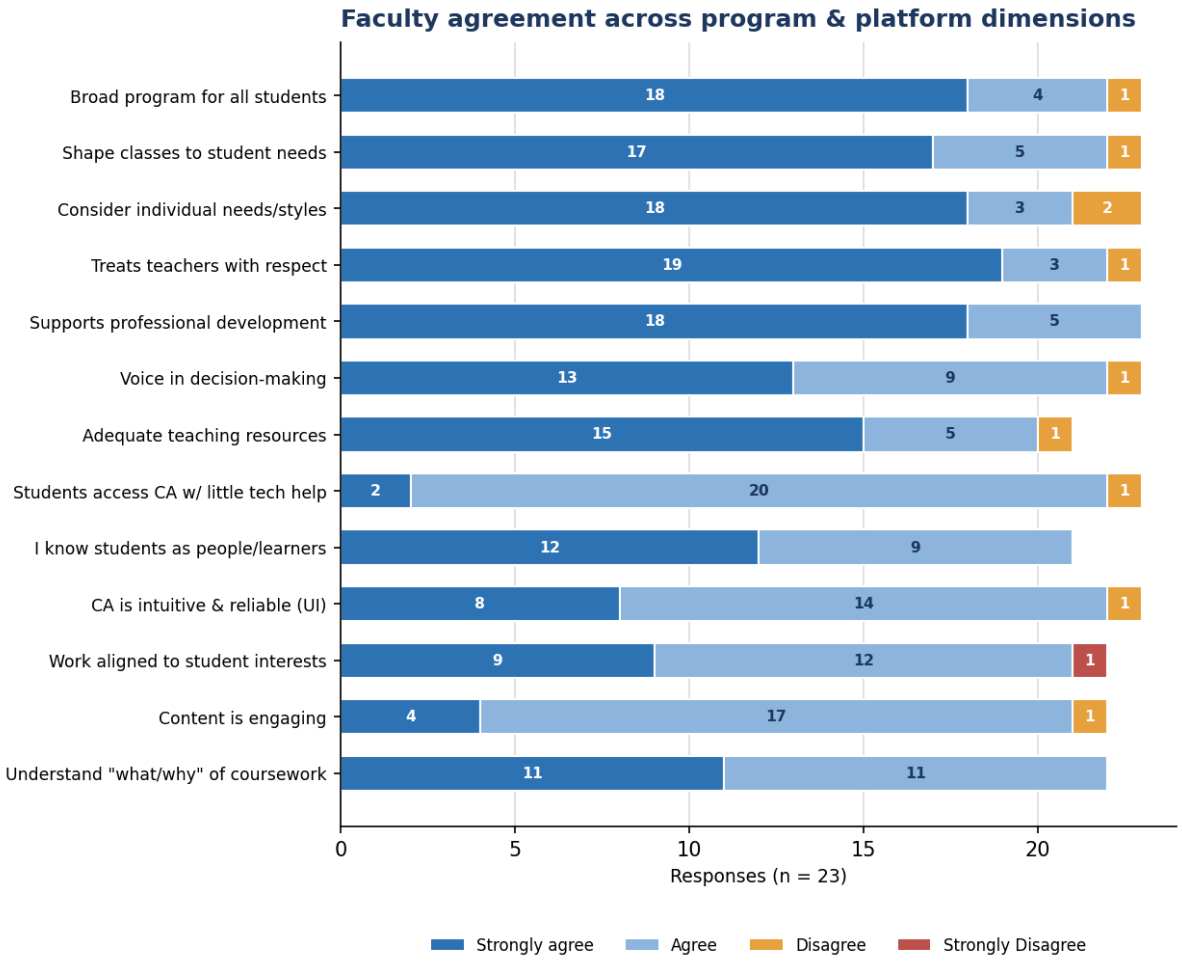

Figure 1. Faculty agreement across thirteen program and platform dimensions (n = 23).

On the platform specifically, faculty split their agreement between “strongly agree” and “agree” on whether CA is intuitive and reliable and whether content is engaging -- a warmer-than-lukewarm endorsement rather than an unqualified one. A single faculty member registered the only “strongly disagree” in the entire faculty instrument, on whether the work shepherded through CA is aligned to student interests. That dissent is noted, not buried.

Faculty: Qualitative

Open-response themes are consistent with prior years and with one another: flexibility, individualized pacing, strong student relationships, and a genuinely student-centered culture. Faculty describe colleagues as “compassionate,” “dedicated,” and willing to “go above and beyond,” and they credit administration with listening and with building community among students, staff, and families.

> *“MCA has strong supports and competent, compassionate, and dedicated teachers... working with students as a large group, small group, or individually to help support students that may otherwise not have been successful in a traditional school environment.”*
>
> -- MCA faculty member, on the school’s strengths

On the ESP, faculty praise is real and specific: fast technical response, an abundance of professional development, and, in the words of one teacher, "SO MUCH DATA." The new Live Lesson platform ("Class") drew repeated, unprompted praise, as did dedicated staff-only tech support. But the faculty file is not uniformly positive, and the dissent is instructive.

First, the ESP has a skeptic. One respondent flatly declined to credit the platform, calling the curriculum "difficult for a lot of students, a bit irrelevant, and too focused on assessments, grades, and rubrics."[4] Second, HR responsiveness is uneven: most respondents who had contact reported a turnaround of a few days, but several had no touchpoint at all, and one offered a memorably barbed non-answer.[5]

> *"The turnover seems to be high for the faculty here. This makes things difficult for our students, as well as other faculty members. We need to look at the 'why' for this and address it."*
>
> -- MCA faculty member, on areas for improvement

Two concerns surface in the faculty comments, and both deserve to be read carefully rather than at face value. The first is a perception of faculty turnover.[6] The school's separation record does not bear that perception out. One faculty member left MCA this year, and he left because he relocated to another state -- indeed, he asked whether he could continue working for MCA from his new home. One departure, driven by a move and accompanied by a request to stay, is not an attrition pattern; if anything, it speaks to attachment. The second concern -- raised directly, and the single most pointed comment in the dataset -- is that the enrollment expansion toward 500 students has not been matched by capacity, and that the workload is beginning to threaten the very people who make the school work. It is one voice, not a pattern, but it describes a structural condition rather than an incident, and it warrants monitoring rather than alarm.[7]

That caution should also be read in context. In seventeen years as an administrator in public and private schools -- including accreditation work in Africa, Asia, and three New England states -- this evaluator has found three themes that recur in every school, no matter how high-functioning, well-endowed, or well-respected: communication could be better, teachers are overworked, and teachers want more say in decision-making. These are not MCA-specific issues; they are innate to schools as institutions, and their absence here would be more surprising than their presence. MCA's faculty data fits that profile closely -- workload surfaces in open comments, and voice in decision-making is the relative soft spot in the Likert results -- and should be understood as the ordinary friction of a working school rather than a sign of distress. What distinguishes a healthy school is not the absence of these themes but whether leadership keeps listening to them, and on that measure MCA's faculty give their administration high marks.

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[4]Verbatim faculty response to "How does Pearson help you perform your job better?" The lone sustained ESP skeptic among faculty. The critique -- curriculum "difficult for a lot of students, a bit irrelevant, and too focused on assessments, grades, and rubrics" -- is worth the Commission's attention precisely because it is singular.

[5]Verbatim faculty response to "How responsive is the Human Resources department at Pearson?" This is an outlier -- most respondents reported responses within a few days -- but it is preserved here rather than smoothed away, and it points to a real theme: several teachers simply have no HR touchpoint and cannot speak to responsiveness.

[6]Verbatim faculty response, "areas for improvement." Turnover was mentioned by more than one respondent, but the perception is not supported by the school's separation record for the year: one departure, attributable to an out-of-state relocation, per Principal Wallace. It is reported here as a perception, not a finding.

[7]Verbatim faculty response, open comment. This single comment is the clearest forward-looking caution in the dataset. It is one voice rather than a pattern, but it concerns a structural condition -- enrollment growth -- and is offered as context rather than as a recommendation.

> *"While I believe that it is a good thing that we are able to add more students to MCA, the faculty is struggling to keep up with the increase in the workload that comes with that. I fear that if this is not addressed, we will lose some invaluable people."*
>
> -- MCA faculty member, open comment

Compensation relative to area districts and a weekly in-office requirement round out the improvement themes; the latter was framed by one respondent as a matter of institutional trust.[8] None of this displaces the dominant finding -- faculty are proud of MCA and speak of it warmly -- but a healthy evaluation reports the friction as well as the affection.

Families: Quantitative

Thirty-five families completed this year's instrument. The results are, frankly, remarkable in their positivity. Across all eleven Likert items, disagreement is nearly absent: only two responses in the entire family dataset fell below "agree," one on whether the child's work is aligned to their interests. On the throughline item that once dogged this evaluation -- whether the school uses fair and accurate methods to assess schoolwork -- families this year again registered no disagreement whatsoever.

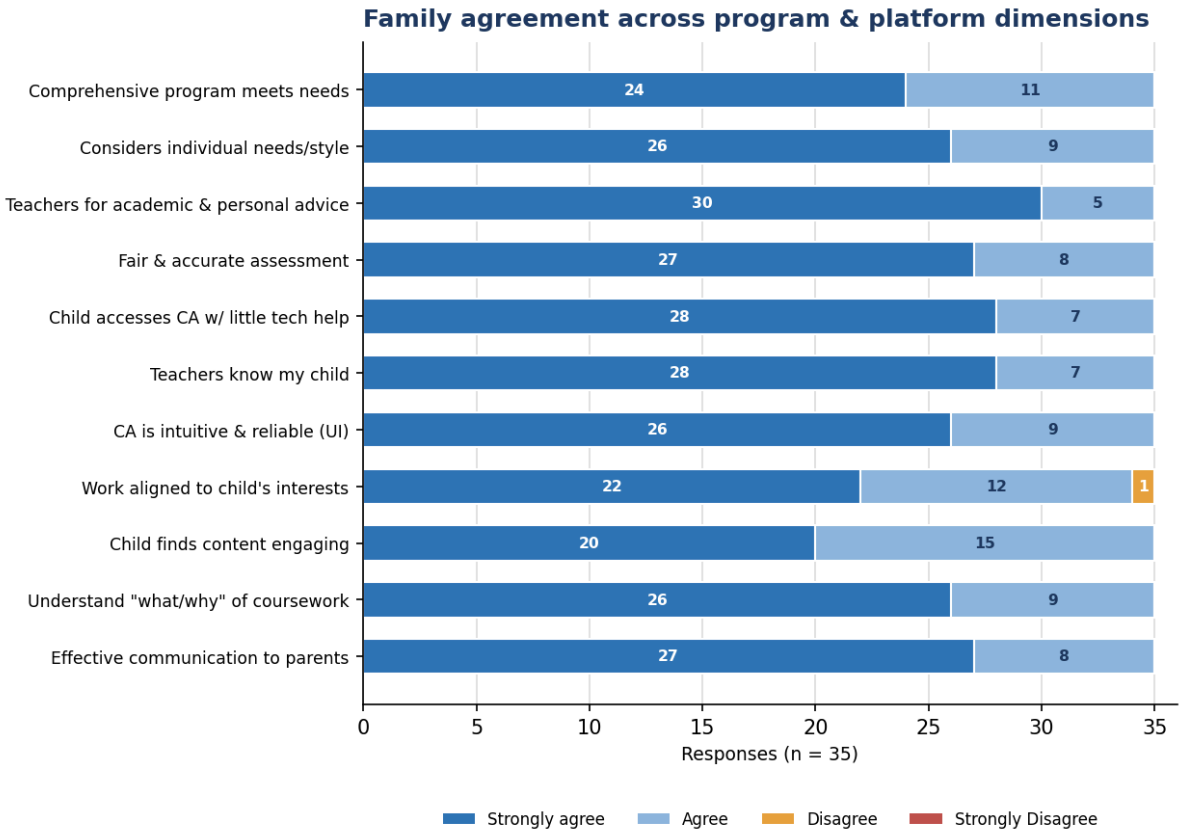


Figure 2. Family agreement across eleven program and platform dimensions (n = 35).

[8]Verbatim faculty response, "areas for improvement," lightly trimmed. The in-office requirement was framed by this respondent as rooted in "mistrust of teachers by the charter commission." Reproduced without endorsement; the perception itself is the datum. Compensation relative to area districts was raised separately by more than one respondent.

Because MCA operates in a genuine choice environment, why families come is as revealing as whether they stay. This year marks a milestone the Commission should note: anxiety and health issues and escape from bullying or an unhealthy school climate are now tied as the single most common reasons families choose MCA. Prior-school teacher or program quality follows, then the generalized sense that a previous school simply "didn't work." Poor special education support -- once a leading driver -- has receded well down the list.

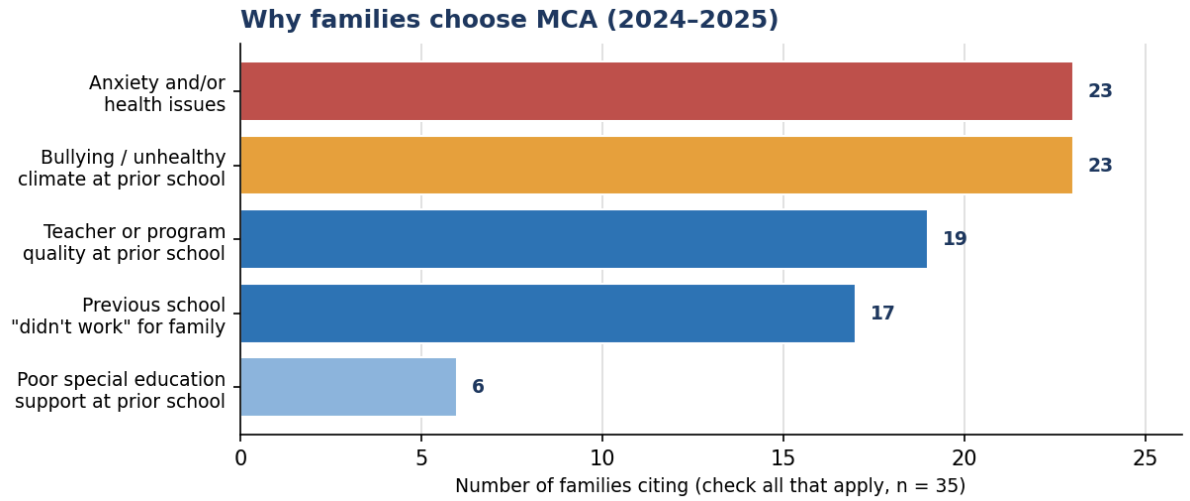


Figure 3. Primary reasons families choose MCA (check all that apply, n = 35). A handful of write-in responses -- rural location, an athlete needing schedule flexibility -- are not charted.

Families: Qualitative

Family open responses echo the faculty themes almost exactly: flexibility, responsive and caring teachers, individualized pacing, and a safe environment free of the social pressures that drove many students here. The word that recurs is "thriving." Several families were unable to name any area for improvement at all, and said so emphatically.

> *"MCA is a tremendous asset to our state's learning environment. It is one thing to say education is the key, but MCA finds the key that fits."*
>
> -- MCA parent, open comment

The critiques, though a minority, are specific and worth surfacing. Families ask -- as they have every year -- for more in-person opportunities and more non-academic ways for students to connect, and one parent named the limit honestly.

A parent flagged repetitive course content and exams that do not always reflect what was taught[9]; another described some ESP-supplied "national-level" teachers as abrupt and hard to approach, a

[9]Verbatim family response, "areas for improvement." One of the few substantive critiques of assessment quality, notable because the fair-assessment Likert item drew no disagreement at all.

friction notably distinct from the affection families feel for MCA's own staff[10]; and one named the structural ceiling of the model directly.[11]

> *"They are doing their best, but loneliness will always be an issue."*
>
> -- MCA parent, on areas for improvement

Board of Directors

The Board is one of three stakeholder groups this evaluation is charged with hearing from, and in prior drafts of this report it was the group heard from least. That has changed. The Board is composed of five seated members; three returned substantive questionnaires, and the two who did not are accounted for. One had only recently joined the Board and, in the evaluator's view rightly, declined to opine on functions he had not yet had occasion to observe. A second, a parent representative, relocated out of the catchment over the summer. The three responses in hand therefore represent the full complement of members positioned to offer informed, seasoned judgment[12] -- a marked advance over the single response contemplated when this report was first assembled, and a direct answer to the Commission's standing request that the evaluator hear from more of the Board.

On the fundamentals, the Board speaks with one voice. All three respondents affirmed that MCA has the requisite resources to carry out its mission, a judgment unchanged year over year. Asked how the school is functioning, members answered "excellent," "exceptionally well... with excellent support from staff and administration," and "very well," the last adding that the school "is on track with enrollment and is financially stable." One member singled out the clarity of the School Leader and Financial reports as a particular strength -- a pointed vote of confidence in the transparency of the information the Board is given to govern by.

> *"I am impressed by the close working relationship that exists between administration, faculty and students. Teachers and administration have strong knowledge of student progress and needs for support."*
>
> -- Board member, on how the school is functioning

Board questionnaire item	Board respondents (n = 3)
Is the Board working well together -- "everyone paddling in the same direction"?	**Yes -- engaged and aligned (3 of 3)**
Does MCA have the requisite resources to carry out its mission?	**Yes (3 of 3)**
How is the school functioning?	**"Excellent" · "Exceptionally well" · "Very well -- on track with enrollment, financially stable"**

[10]Verbatim family response, "areas for improvement." "National-level" teachers are ESP-supplied instructors outside the local MCA faculty; the friction this parent describes is structurally distinct from the near-universal praise for MCA's own teachers.
[11]Verbatim family response, "areas for improvement." A candid acknowledgment of the structural limit of any virtual model, echoed across six years of this evaluation.
[12]Board composition shifts between cycles. For a five-seat body, the share of eligible, experienced members heard from is a more meaningful figure than a raw respondent count -- and this cycle that share is effectively complete: three substantive responses, with the two non-respondents (one newly seated, one relocated) accounted for.

Board questionnaire item	Board respondents (n = 3)
Is the school working well for most of its students?	**Yes (2 of 3 answered; both affirmative, citing follow-up and support for exceptionalities)**
How is the partnership with the ESP working for the Board's purposes?	**Excellent · "extremely proactive" · "very strong partnership"**
How responsive has the ESP been to requests for information?	**Very responsive (3 of 3)**
Most valuable services within the ESP agreement?	Curriculum support; technology support; the staff & administration relationship
Perceived strengths of the school?	Leadership; family communication; curricular flexibility; collaboration; clarity of the School Leader & Financial reports
Perceived areas for improvement?	**More in-person & social connection; align required testing to an online modality; pathways for students to accelerate**
Open comments?	None submitted

The strengths the Board names -- leadership, family communication, curricular flexibility, and collaboration -- mirror those volunteered by faculty and families, continuing the multi-year pattern in which the Board's read of the school tracks closely with that of its front-line users.

On the partnership with the ESP, sentiment is uniformly warm and, notably, grounded in direct observation rather than reputation. Members describe Pearson as "extremely proactive with school and board" and the partnership as "very strong," naming curriculum support, technology support, and the working relationship with staff as its most valuable elements. One member's account of the ESP's conduct in the boardroom is worth preserving.

> *"The interaction at board meetings with Pearson staff is cordial, informative and helpful. They always answer questions or provide the information quickly if they are unable to answer it right then."*
>
> -- Board member, on the ESP partnership

This echoes the "silent partner" sentiment recorded in earlier evaluations and reaffirms the conclusion, reached elsewhere in this report, that the school's substantial annual investment in the ESP is one its governing body considers prudent.

The Board did not confine itself to praise. Consistent with every other stakeholder group, members want more in-person contact and more enrichment and social opportunities for students and families -- the perennial tension of a virtual model. A second member raised a specific and, in the evaluator's judgment, well-founded governance concern about the modality of required standardized testing[13]:

[13]The evaluator recommends the Board and leadership formally document this concern and, where state testing requirements and the assessment vendor permit, pursue remote or online-proctored administration. See Recommendation 4.

> *"Students who are used to an online platform may experience test anxiety by going to an unfamiliar location to test. This may also be a hardship for families and may impact test results."*
>
> -- Board member, on required standardized testing

The point is not merely pastoral. It bears directly on the validity of the data the school and the Commission rely upon, and it dovetails with the assessment recommendations already advanced in this report; it is taken up again as Recommendation 4 below. A third observation, rarer and worth naming, was a call to build pathways for students to accelerate their learning -- a reminder that differentiation runs upward as well as down.

Finally, the Board reports that it functions cohesively. Asked whether everyone is pulling hard on the oars in the same direction, members answered "yes," that "the board works very well," and that "everyone on the board seems interested and engaged." For a governing body that a predecessor evaluator once characterized in far less flattering terms, that sustained cohesion is not a small thing.

Summary

FAMILIES. Overwhelmingly positive, with near-total agreement across every measured dimension and unanimous confidence in fair assessment. Anxiety/health and escape from bullying are now tied as the top reasons families choose MCA. The recurring asks are for more in-person connection and more non-academic community; the recurring praise is for teachers and flexibility.

TEACHERS. Proud, committed, and warm about MCA's culture and leadership, and largely appreciative of the ESP's tools, training, and the new Live Lesson platform. Faculty raise two cautions: a perception of turnover that the school's separation record does not bear out (one departure this year, prompted by an out-of-state move), and workload pressure from growth toward 500 students, which is forward-looking and worth monitoring. One sustained ESP skeptic and uneven HR touchpoints are noted rather than smoothed away.

BOARD. Now functionally complete. Three of five seated members responded; the two who did not are accounted for, one newly seated and appropriately abstaining, one relocated over the summer. The Board affirms the fundamentals unanimously -- resources, cohesion, and a strong ESP partnership -- and, unlike the prior lone respondent, names real work to do: more in-person connection, pathways for students to accelerate, and, most substantively, the modality of required standardized testing, which a member warns may distort results for online-native students.

Convergence: PSS vs. Independent TPE

MCA administers the Connections Academy Parent Satisfaction Survey (PSS), a vendor instrument benchmarked against the national Connections Academy network. This TPE is independent of the ESP's commercial interest. Reading the two together is valuable: where they converge, confidence in the finding strengthens; where they diverge, the independent data serves its intended function. The domain

comparison below now populates the TPE column with this year's actual findings, replacing the placeholders carried in the prior draft.[14]

Domain	PSS (vendor-administered)	TPE (independent)	Verdict
1. Program Satisfaction	Very high: strong "would recommend" and top-grade share; MCA reported above the CA network average on headline satisfaction measures.	Confirmed and then some. Across 35 families, disagreement was nearly nonexistent; multiple parents could name no area for improvement. Independent data is if anything warmer than the PSS.	**Aligned**
2. Academic & SEL Success	High agreement that students are progressing and that teachers personalize; special education satisfaction reported above network average.	Largely confirmed on progress and personalization. On special education, TPE interviews continue to surface more complexity than a satisfaction score captures, though SpEd has receded sharply as an enrollment driver -- a genuinely good sign.	**Partial**
3. Student & Family Engagement	In-person socialization and some teacher-contact measures flagged below the CA network average -- the platform's structural soft spot.	Confirmed, and confirmed more strongly in open responses. Requests for in-person connection and non-academic community recur across families and faculty; one parent named "loneliness" directly.	**Partial**
4. Teacher Support & Responsiveness	MCA outperforms the CA network on teacher helpfulness, quality/responsiveness, and response time -- a clear strength.	Emphatically confirmed. Teacher quality is the strongest, least-qualified finding in the entire independent dataset, cited by families, students, and faculty alike.	**Aligned**

Where the sources agree: teacher quality and overall program satisfaction. These are not findings that require qualification -- both the vendor instrument and the independent evaluation land in the same place, year over year. Families who chose MCA, many under difficult circumstances, are overwhelmingly glad they did.

Where caution is warranted: in-person connection, which both sources flag and the independent data flags harder; and special education, where a strong satisfaction score should be read alongside the more textured picture that interviews provide. One family this year drew an explicit line between MCA's teachers, whom she credited with her son's success, and the ESP platform, which she did not -- a distinction the Commission may wish to keep in view as it weighs the ESP relationship going forward.

[14]PSS figures are drawn from the Connections Academy Parent Satisfaction Survey provided by the school. They are vendor-administered and reproduced here for comparison; the exact network-average deltas should be re-confirmed against the current PSS file before finalization.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Maine Connections Academy enters its second decade in a position of genuine institutional strength. The charter renewal through 2029 reflects the Commission's confidence; the data in this report -- both independent and vendor-reported -- largely justifies it. Six years of longitudinal evidence tell a consistent story: stakeholders across groups regard MCA favorably, trust its leadership, and value the ESP relationship. The concerns that dominated earlier reports -- Board-faculty tension, assessment validity, academic rigor -- have been substantively addressed.

The pressing challenges ahead are structural and societal: the rising prevalence of student mental-health need; the inherent limits of online learning as a vehicle for peer connection; keeping faculty capacity in step with enrollment growth; and the ongoing work of serving a large, complex special education population.[15]

A word on how these recommendations should be read. A third-party evaluation is obligated to recommend something; a report that offered none would be of little use to the Commission or the Board. The recommendations below should therefore not be read as findings of fault. Nothing in this year's data indicates a deficiency in MCA's program, governance, or leadership. Each recommendation describes a practice that high-functioning schools -- public and private, in Maine and well beyond it -- pursue continually, and that this evaluator would offer to any school in MCA's position. Several build on work MCA has already begun. Items raised by a single respondent and not corroborated elsewhere in the data are reported in the Findings for completeness but are not carried forward as recommendations. The one exception, the modality of required testing, is advanced on the evaluator's independent judgment of its merit and concerns state testing rules rather than any practice of the school.

On the basis of this year's survey and interview data, and in light of the PSS comparison, and because the evaluation now runs on a two-year cycle, the following recommendations for continued growth are offered for the interregnum between now and the next Third Party Evaluation:

1. **Use the longitudinal assessment data.** Continue leveraging NWEA and Throughyear data to drive instruction and flag at-risk students. Six years of comparable data is a genuine asset that few schools possess, and MCA is already using it well; the recommendation is simply to keep doing so systematically. MCA may wish to share examples of this practice with the Commission at its next monitoring meeting, as a strength worth showcasing.
2. **Keep social-emotional support in step with enrollment.** Anxiety and mental-health need is now tied as the leading driver of enrollment. The full-time social worker added after the 2022 report was the right call; as the student body approaches 500, a periodic caseload review is simply good practice, of the kind any growing school should build into its routine.
3. **Keep building on in-person connection.** Families, faculty, and the Board all value the in-person opportunities MCA offers and would welcome more. This is the inherent challenge of every virtual

[15]Means, B. et al. (2014), Learning Online: What Research Tells Us; Hattie, J. (2009), Visible Learning; and NWEA research on belonging as a predictor of academic growth. "Student control over learning" remains a well-supported correlate of achievement and is a defining feature of the MCA model.

school, not a shortcoming particular to MCA. Academic Summits are a strong foundation; a short written calendar of events, with attention to geographic reach across a statewide student body, would help families plan and would make the school's existing efforts more visible.

4. **Align required assessment with the school's modality where permitted.** A Board member observes that requiring online-native students to test in person at unfamiliar sites may induce test anxiety, burden families, and compromise the validity of the results. Within state and vendor constraints, the Board and leadership should document this concern formally and pursue remote or online-proctored administration; at minimum, familiar, low-stress testing arrangements and clear family guidance should be provided. This complements the first recommendation: longitudinal data is only worth using if the conditions under which it is collected do not themselves distort it.

Appendix: Instruments, Response Counts, and Notes

Response counts

Stakeholder group	Responses (n)	Participation
Families / parents	35	Solid sample; corroborated by the vendor PSS
Faculty & staff	23	**~4x pre-request level; sustained**
Board of Directors	3	**Functionally full**

Notes on method and this year's data

- Likert items use a four-point scale (Strongly agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly disagree). Non-responses are excluded from the item denominator; a small number of respondents left individual items blank.
- Enrollment-motivation counts reflect a "check all that apply" item, so totals exceed n. A few free-text write-ins (rural location; an athlete needing schedule flexibility) are reported in narrative rather than charted.
- Pull quotes are reproduced verbatim, with only light trimming for length where noted; spelling in respondents' own words is preserved. Dissenting and critical responses are retained deliberately.

Coversheet

To Receive and Place on File SY2025-26 Annual Monitoring Reports

Section: X. New Business Requiring Approval and/or Acceptance
Item: A. To Receive and Place on File SY2025-26 Annual Monitoring Reports
Purpose: Vote
Submitted by:
Related Material:
DRAFT SY2025-26 Annual Monitoring Report - ACADIA Academy.docx.pdf
DRAFT SY2025-26 Annual Monitoring Report - Baxter Academy for Technology and Science.docx.pdf
DRAFT SY2025-26 Annual Monitoring Report - Community Regional Charter School.docx.pdf
DRAFT SY2025-26 Annual Monitoring Report - Ecology Learning Center.docx.pdf
DRAFT SY2025-26 Annual Monitoring Report - Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences.docx.pdf
DRAFT SY2025-26 Annual Monitoring Report - Maine Academy of Natural Sciences.docx.pdf
DRAFT SY2025-26 Annual Monitoring Report - Maine Arts Academy.docx.pdf
DRAFT SY2025-26 Annual Monitoring Report - Maine Connections Academy.docx.pdf
DRAFT SY2025-26 Annual Monitoring Report - Maine Virtual Academy.docx.pdf

Annual Monitoring Report SY2025-26

DRAFT

November 2026

ACADIA Academy

Board President: Meredith Morrison
Head of School: Heather Bucklin

SCHOOL MISSION

MISSION

• **ACADIA will...** provide a rigorous, comprehensive educational program for children of the Lewiston/Auburn area in grades Pre-K through 5th.

• **We will...** promote high educational achievement through direct teaching opportunities that are entwined with extensive experiential learning opportunities.

• **ACADIA faculty and staff will...** support the development of the whole child as each student develops academically, socially and emotionally in a safe community that requires personal accountability and meaningful participation.

• **We will...** support our individual students in developing their full potential, while teaching them the value of belonging, connectedness and contribution to our larger community.

VISION

• ***ACADIA staff will...*** *provide for a unique and innovative educational experience.*

• ***ACADIA students will...*** *fully participate within our learning community, experiencing rigorous daily instruction consisting of carefully selected curricula to allow for academic acceleration, small group interaction and meaningful application.*

• ***Authentic, relevant experiential activities will...*** *provide critical opportunities for our students to grasp real world application of concepts and skills, through the delivery of multi-modal learning opportunities that are necessary to meet the learning preferences of our students.*

• ***Our students will...*** *be challenged to meet high expectations for academic performance, social and emotional competence, and demonstrate evidence of commitment to their community.*

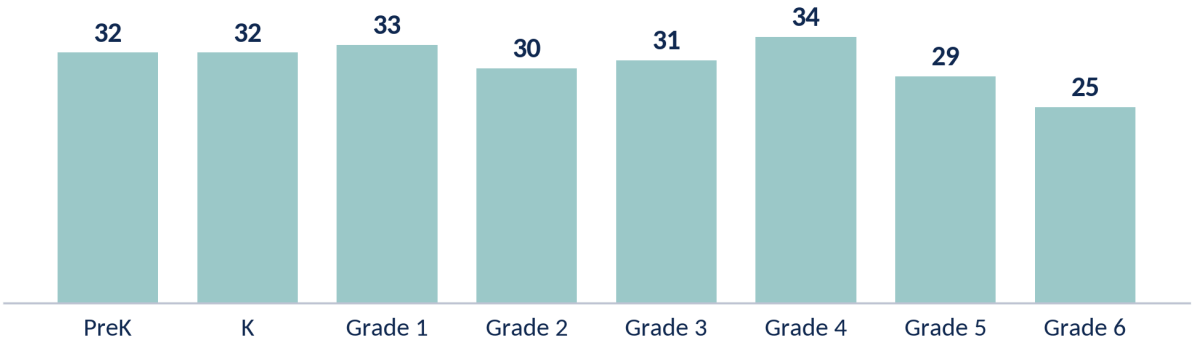
• ***We expect students to...*** *embrace high standards of personal accountability and commitment to their personal learning journey through innovative, projects of self-study and interest.*

SCHOOL PROFILE

ACADIA Academy serves students in PreK through grade 6 in the Lewiston/Auburn area. Figures reflect enrollment on October 1, 2025.

246	14	22.4%	32.9%
Students Enrolled	**Cities and Towns Served**	**Students with IEPs**	**Economically Disadvantaged**
SY2024-25: 250	SY2024-25: 18	SY2024-25: 18.4%	SY2024-25: 32%

Enrollment by Grade



Where Students Came From

In SY2025-26, ACADIA enrolled 57 new students, 32 **entering school for the first time** and 25 transferring from another Maine public school district. No students joined from homeschooling or a private school this year.



Source: ACADIA Academy SY2025-26 demographic data (October 1, 2025). Categories with fewer than 10 students are combined or omitted.

NARRATIVE

CHARTER RENEWAL

In October 2025, the Maine Charter School Commission renewed ACADIA Academy's charter for another five-year term.

ACADIA Academy, located in Lewiston, completed its tenth year of operation in SY2025-26 and marked its first decade with a 10-Year Anniversary Celebration organized and sponsored by its governing board. The school enrolled 246 students in PreK through grade 6 on October 1, 2025 (compared with 250 the prior year) from 14 cities and towns in the Lewiston/Auburn area.

22.4% of ACADIA students have an IEP, up from 18.4% last year and now above the most recent statewide average (20.9%). 32.9% are economically disadvantaged, about the same as last year's 32% and below the statewide average of 45.9%.

High-level takeaways from SY2025-26:

Strengths:

- Grade 3 proficiency – third graders outperformed the state in both reading (76%) and math (72%)
- Student attendance – chronic absenteeism fell to 5.75%, from 12% last year
- Student persistence – 94% of students enrolled on October 1 remained through the last day of school
- Math growth improved to Meeting, and reading growth held steady
- Family and grades 3–5 student Panorama results improved substantially
- An engaged governing board that met monthly, led new fundraising efforts, and began strategic planning
- Growth for economically disadvantaged students – Exceeding in both reading and math

Areas of Focus:

- Reading and math proficiency in grades 4–6
- Growth for students with IEPs, and math growth for male students and students with 504 plans
- Teacher and staff climate, and the grade 6 student experience
- Instructional leadership capacity, teacher coaching, and staff retention
- Financial sustainability
- On-time reporting and timely posting of board agendas and minutes

DRAFT

Year-over-Year Snapshot

Reading the proficiency results: "ACADIA" is the percentage of ACADIA students who scored at or above state expectations on the Maine Through Year Assessment; "State" is the percentage of students statewide in the same grade. Ratings are based on the gap between the two: Exceeding is 5 or more percentage points above the state, Meeting is within 5 points, Approaching is 5 to 15 points below, and Not Meeting is more than 15 points below.

▲ Stronger than SY2024-25 ▼ Lower than SY2024-25 ● About the same

Measure				SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Proficiency – Maine Through Year Assessment: % of students at or above state expectations						
Reading	ACADIA	State	Rating	*All tested grades* **ACADIA 47.3%** State 65.8% **Not Meeting**	■ Meeting	▼
Grade 3	**76%**	62%	Exceeding			
Grade 4	**24%**	64%	Not Meeting			
Grade 5	**41%**	67%	Not Meeting			
Grade 6	**48%**	71%	Not Meeting			
Math	ACADIA	State	Rating	*All tested grades* **ACADIA 29.0%** State 55.6% **Not Meeting**	■ Not Meeting	▼
Grade 3	**72%**	64%	Exceeding			
Grade 4	**7%**	57%	Not Meeting			
Grade 5	**11%**	54%	Not Meeting			
Grade 6	**24%**	46%	Not Meeting			
Grade 3 Reading on Grade Level (not rated)				*Reported as required*	Reported	–
Subgroup Proficiency – reportable subgroups[1]						
Reading	ACADIA	State	Rating	*Subgroup average* **Average 3.50** of 4 **Exceeding**	■ Meeting	▲
With IEPs	**42%**	35.3%	Exceeding			
Econ. Disadv.	**73%**	54.4%	Exceeding			
Male	**64%**	62.2%	Meeting			
Female	**73%**	69.2%	Meeting			
Math	ACADIA	State	Rating	*Subgroup average* **Average 2.50** of 4 **Meeting**	■ Approaching	▲
With IEPs	**37%**	24.6%	Exceeding			
Econ. Disadv.	**39%**	41.4%	Meeting			
Male	**47%**	57.6%	Approaching			
Female	**37%**	52.2%	Not Meeting			
Growth – NWEA MAP, grades 3–6 (% meeting projected growth)						
Reading				**48% Meeting**	■ Meeting	▲
Math				**45% Meeting**	■ Approaching	▲
Subgroup Growth – reportable subgroups[1]						

[1] **How subgroup ratings are combined.** Used for subgroup proficiency and growth. Each subgroup with 10 or more students is rated and given points: Exceeding = 4, Meeting = 3, Approaching = 2, Not Meeting = 1. The average sets the overall rating: 3.5 or higher is Exceeding; 2.5 to 3.49 is Meeting; 1.5 to 2.49 is Approaching; below 1.5 is Not Meeting. *Example:* ACADIA's reading proficiency subgroups scored 4, 4, 3 and 3, an average of 3.5 (Exceeding).

Measure			SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Reading	Met growth	Rating	*Subgroup average* **Average 3.00** of 4 **Meeting**	Meeting	▲
With IEPs	32%	Not Meeting			
Male	47%	Meeting			
Female	49%	Meeting			
504 Plan	64%	Exceeding			
Econ. Disadv.	55%	Exceeding			
Math	Met growth	Rating	*Subgroup average* **Average 2.20** of 4 **Approaching**	Approaching	▼
With IEPs	37%	Approaching			
Male	31%	Not Meeting			
Female	47%	Meeting			
504 Plan	27%	Not Meeting			
Econ. Disadv.	65%	Exceeding			
Attendance					
Chronic Absenteeism			**5.75% Exceeding**	12%	▲
School Climate – Panorama Surveys (percentile compared to like schools nationally)					
Family	2025-26	2024-25	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **2 of 3** Participation 54% (35% required) **Meeting**	Approaching	▲
School Climate	**30th**	20th			
Safety	**70th**	50th			
School Fit	**60th**	40th			
Student (grades 3–5)	2025-26	2024-25	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 99% (75% required) **Exceeding**	Not Meeting	▲
School Climate	**90th**	10th			
Safety	**90th**	30th			
Rigorous Expectations	**70th**	10th			
Teacher-Student Relationships	**80th**	20th			
Student (grade 6)	2025-26	2024-25	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **0 of 4** Participation 96% (75% required) **Not Meeting**	Not Meeting	▼
School Climate	**10th**	10th			
Safety	**10th**	90th			
Rigorous Expectations	**10th**	10th			
Teacher-Student Relationships	**10th**	20th			
Teacher	2025-26	2024-25	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **0 of 4** Participation 90% (75% required) **Not Meeting**	Not Meeting	▼
School Climate	**10th**	20th			
Leadership	**10th**	10th			
Professional Learning	**10th**	10th			
Feedback & Coaching	**10th**	10th			
Staff	2025-26	2024-25	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **0 of 4** Participation 77% (75% required) **Not Meeting**	Not Meeting	▲
School Climate	**10th**	10th			
Leadership	**20th**	10th			
Professional Learning	**20th**	20th			
Feedback & Coaching	**10th**	10th			
Organizational Sustainability					
Governing Board Effectiveness			**Moderate Risk**	Low Risk	▼
Board Meetings and Timely Posting			**12 held, 5 late Not Meeting**	12 held, 2 late	▼

Measure	SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Reporting – on time and accurate	**76% / 100% Approaching**	Not Meeting	▲
Board Training	**100% Meeting**	Not Meeting	▲
School Mission and Student Persistence			
Student Persistence – School Year	**94% Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Student Persistence – Year to Year	*Pending (Oct. 1, 2026 count)*	Exceeding	–

Note: The revised Performance Framework (approved 2/11/26) no longer includes NWEA Language Usage.

Student Achievement

Proficiency

ACADIA administers the Maine Through Year Assessment (MTY) in reading and math to students in grades 3–6. All 110 students in the tested grades participated in both subjects.

Reading proficiency declined this year. Across tested grades, 47.3% of ACADIA students scored at or above state expectations, compared with about 66% statewide, moving the school from Meeting to Not Meeting. Third grade was the clear bright spot: 76% of third graders met state expectations, up from 51% last year and well above the state. Results in grades 4 through 6 fell sharply, to 24%, 41%, and 48%, after last year's grades 4–6 scored between 66% and 78% and met or exceeded the state. Last year's third-grade class, which scored 51% in reading, scored 24% as fourth graders this year.

Math proficiency remains Not Meeting, with 29.0% of ACADIA students at or above state expectations compared with about 56% statewide. Third graders again stood out at 72%, up from 45% last year and above the state. Results in the upper grades fell further: 7% in grade 4 (23% last year), 11% in grade 5 (27%), and 24% in grade 6 (32%).

Compared with students in the same groups statewide, in schools serving grades 3–6, ACADIA's subgroup results as reported by the school were stronger in reading than in math. In reading, students with IEPs (42%, compared with 35.3% of students with disabilities statewide) and economically disadvantaged students (73% vs. 54.4%) were well above the state, and male (64% vs. 62.2%) and female students (73% vs. 69.2%) were close to it. Combined, subgroup reading proficiency was Exceeding, up from Meeting last year. In math, students with IEPs again outperformed the state (37% vs. 24.6%) and economically disadvantaged students were close (39% vs. 41.4%), but male (47% vs. 57.6%, Approaching) and female students (37% vs. 52.2%, Not Meeting) trailed. Combined, subgroup math proficiency was Meeting, up from Approaching. The subgroup figures are higher than the school's grade-level results would suggest and are being confirmed with the school.

Academic outcomes for economically disadvantaged students were identified as an area of focus last year; at the end-of-year meeting, the school indicated that it had not yet completed a detailed analysis of this group's results.

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In its self-assessment, the school acknowledges that its scores "do not show the growth or performance we would like to see" and reports that the leadership team and a committee of teachers will review trends over the past two years and develop an action plan. At the end-of-year meeting, the team identified implementation of the new math curriculum as a key factor: teachers received limited professional development, and some components of the curriculum were not being fully used. The Head of School, who serves as the instructional lead, has had limited time for teacher support and professional development because of other administrative demands. Next steps include ongoing math professional development, particularly for new teachers, and working with the curriculum provider to ensure all components are implemented. The school also noted that mid-year vacancies required two teaching assistants to serve as long-term substitutes, reducing the staff available for interventions and small-group instruction, and raised the question of whether technology issues during testing affected results.

The school reported that 62% of third graders met or exceeded their projected reading growth on NWEA MAP. The Framework's grade 3 reading targets changed for SY2025-26, and this measure is reported as required rather than rated in its first year.

Growth

Academic growth on NWEA MAP held steady in reading and improved in math. In grades 3–6, 48% of students met their projected growth in reading (Meeting), compared with 47% last year, and 45% met their projected growth in math, up from 41% and moving from Approaching to Meeting. Results for all students in grades K–6 were similar (48% in reading and 50% in math), and participation was 100%.

Among subgroups in grades 3–6, results were stronger in reading than in math. In reading, economically disadvantaged students (55%) and students with 504 plans (64%) exceeded the growth target, male (47%) and female (49%) students met it, and students with IEPs trailed at 32% (Not Meeting). Combined, subgroup reading growth was Meeting, the same rating as last year. In math, 65% of economically disadvantaged students met their projected growth (Exceeding) and female students met expectations (47%), but students with IEPs (37%, Approaching), male students (31%), and students with 504 plans (27%) did not; male students and students with 504 plans were both Meeting last year. Combined, subgroup math growth remained Approaching. Economically disadvantaged students showed the largest improvement of any group, an area of focus last year: their growth rose from Approaching to Exceeding in reading and from Not Meeting to Exceeding in math.

Attendance

Attendance continues to be one of ACADIA's greatest strengths. Chronic absenteeism fell to 5.75%, from 12% last year, compared with an Androscoggin County rate of roughly 25–28% cited at the end-of-year meeting. Rates by grade ranged from 7% (kindergarten, grade 2, and grade 5) to 13% (grades 3 and 4).

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School Climate and Family Engagement

This year's Panorama results show a widening gap between the experience of families and younger students and that of adults in the building and the school's oldest students.

Family results improved to Meeting, up from Approaching. More than half of families responded (87 of 162). Safety rose from the 50th percentile to the 70th and School Fit from the 40th to the 60th, both above the national midpoint; School Climate also rose, from the 20th percentile to the 30th, but remains below it. The student survey for grades 3–5 improved dramatically, from Not Meeting to Exceeding: nearly every eligible student responded (85 of 86), and all four scales rose sharply, with School Climate and Safety both reaching the 90th percentile (from the 10th and 30th), Teacher-Student Relationships the 80th (from the 20th), and Rigorous Expectations the 70th (from the 10th). These results, along with well-attended exhibitions of student projects twice a year, reflect the strong family involvement the school describes.

Sixth-grade students responded much less favorably. All four scales were at the 10th percentile (Not Meeting). Safety dropped sharply from the 90th percentile last year, and Teacher-Student Relationships slipped from the 20th.

Teacher and staff results remain Not Meeting. All four teacher scales were at the 10th percentile; School Climate slipped from the 20th, and the other three were unchanged. Staff results were similar: Leadership rose from the 10th percentile to the 20th, Professional Learning held at the 20th, and School Climate and Feedback and Coaching remained at the 10th. The school's self-assessment states that observation, coaching, and feedback are "clearly called for" in the coming year, and notes that day-to-day incidents often pull its three-person administrative team away from scheduled observations and coaching. The Head of School began a weekly staff communication this year, and the board followed up on the Panorama results with an anonymous survey of teachers and teaching assistants; nearly all eligible staff responded, and the findings inform leadership planning and the school's strategic plan. The board and school leadership also plan to establish school-wide core values and review student behavioral expectations.

Improving adult culture has been identified as a priority in each of the last several reports. The Commission encourages the governing board and school leadership to make staff climate, instructional coaching, and teacher support a central focus for SY2026-27.

Organizational Sustainability

Staffing was a significant challenge this year. ACADIA welcomed nine new teachers, more than half of its classroom teachers, and experienced mid-year turnover: the grade 2 position was left without a teacher in February after a new teacher and her replacement both resigned, a grade 4 teacher was dismissed, and the art teacher resigned. Each position was filled by a long-term substitute. The school reports that only one of this year's new hires has chosen to leave, which should mean more returning staff next year.

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The business manager position created last year was vacated in January and is not in the coming year's budget; the school's Chief Financial Officer has resumed responsibility for its finances.

Leadership capacity was a central theme of the end-of-year meeting. With a three-person administrative team, the Head of School has had little time for instructional leadership. The board is exploring sustainable revenue strategies, including enrollment growth and expanded summer programming, that could fund an assistant principal or dean focused on student culture, behavior, and operations. The board and Head of School plan to co-create a more structured evaluation process with clear goals in September. The board also acknowledged that no succession plan for school leadership is in place and that it needs stronger documentation to preserve institutional memory.

The governing board held 12 meetings this year, well above the Framework minimum, but five agendas and/or approved minutes were posted late, compared with two late agendas last year. Because more than four were late, board meeting compliance is Not Meeting. The board is smaller than in prior years after long-serving trustees completed their terms and two members resigned, but every current trustee holds an officer role, leads a committee, or leads a school initiative. The Membership Committee added two ACADIA staff members and is redesigning trustee recruitment and onboarding, and a new Strategic Planning Committee is developing the school's first comprehensive multi-year strategic plan. Student achievement and strategic plan progress will become standing board agenda items. The board also reports that formal concerns raised by staff and families, some of which were shared with the Commission, required increased attention this year.

Governing board effectiveness is rated Moderate Risk, down from Low Risk last year. The board fulfills many of its responsibilities, including approving and overseeing the budget, maintaining sound financial management, and ensuring compliance with laws and the charter contract, but its practice is inconsistent in others, particularly oversight of academic performance, the annual evaluation of the school leader, and setting and tracking goals for academics, finance, and compliance.

ACADIA submitted 45 required reports. 76% were submitted on time, up from 67% last year, and 100% were accurate, up from 98%. Reporting improved from Not Meeting to Approaching; on-time submission remains the area to strengthen. Board training improved to Meeting: every board member completed at least one governance professional development opportunity, up from 78% of training requirements completed last year.

Financial Management and Viability

ACADIA Academy's financial results for SY2025-26 show a school meeting its day-to-day obligations but with limited cash reserves and longer-term financial pressures. Based on fourth-quarter financials, half of the school's financial metrics were rated High Risk[2] including Days Cash on Hand, 3-Year Aggregated Margin, 2-Year Cash Flow and the Obligation Coverage Ratio. The school's strengths include Low Risk ratings for Enrollment Variance and Debt to Assets Ratio, and it is not in default on any financial

[2] The Commission will review these ratings against the school's audited financial statements when they become available and will amend this report if any ratings change.

obligations. The school was rated Moderate Risk for its Current Ratio, a measure of its ability to cover obligations due within the next year.

The school describes its financial outlook as “an ever evolving situation.” After errors by the former business manager, the Chief Financial Officer resumed oversight of the school’s finances, and MaineCare reimbursement projections were revised downward after earlier estimates proved unrealistic.

The school has taken several steps to strengthen its position: raising aftercare rates, forming a fundraising committee, budgeting high-cost out-of-district placements separately from the main operating budget, and switching to a self-funded health insurance platform expected to save approximately $100,000 in FY27. Board-led events raised nearly $4,000 at the school’s first Fall Fest and fully covered the cost of the 10-Year Anniversary Celebration through local sponsorships, and the PTO continues to support field trips and special purchases. The board and school leadership also discussed concerns about sustainability at current enrollment levels and possible charter amendments, including changes to the summer program and year-round model and to the school’s grade configuration.

School Mission and Student Persistence

Of the 246 students enrolled on October 1, 2025, 231 (94%) were still enrolled on the last day of school. This exceeds the Framework’s 90% target, though it is down from 98% last year. Year-to-year persistence will be confirmed following the October 1, 2026 count.

Core elements of ACADIA’s model remain in place, including Universal Groups, which group students for reading and math by academic level rather than grade; an exploratory learning block in which students drive their own projects; and social-emotional learning across the school day.

School Customization

ACADIA’s first customized measure tracks implementation of the BARR (Building Assets, Reducing Risks) framework. This year was the school’s third and final year working with a BARR coach. 61% of students had individual goals written by the end of the year, down from 66% last year. The school will continue BARR and its U-Time social-emotional curriculum independently, with a staff member designated as coordinator.

The second measure tracks writing growth for students in grades K–2. The school is still compiling these results; last year, 65% of students showed growth (Approaching).

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Baxter Academy for Technology and Science

Annual Monitoring Report SY2025-26

DRAFT

November 2026

Baxter Academy for Technology and Science

Board Chair: Ruth Dean

Executive Director: Anna Klein-Christie

SCHOOL MISSION

MISSION

Inquiry leads learning at Baxter Academy for Technology and Science, a public charter high school free to Maine students. Our project-based STEM curriculum emphasizes real-world problem solving and is paired with a humanities program that connects ideas across disciplines and cultivates strong communication skills. Students design innovative projects through Flex Friday, a unique program requiring initiative, perseverance, and collaboration, as well as reflection on the work and its impact in the community.

VISION

Our curriculum is driven by a commitment to leveraging a STEM education to address what are universal human problems and their impact on the environment - through our leadership in marine research, healthcare, housing, energy, and fast track employment certifications. Our faculty support our students as they choose work that inspires their imaginations. They persevere through setbacks and innovate with curiosity, conscience, and creativity. They solve real-world problems. Baxter believes it is our responsibility to teach our students to care for that which is around them.

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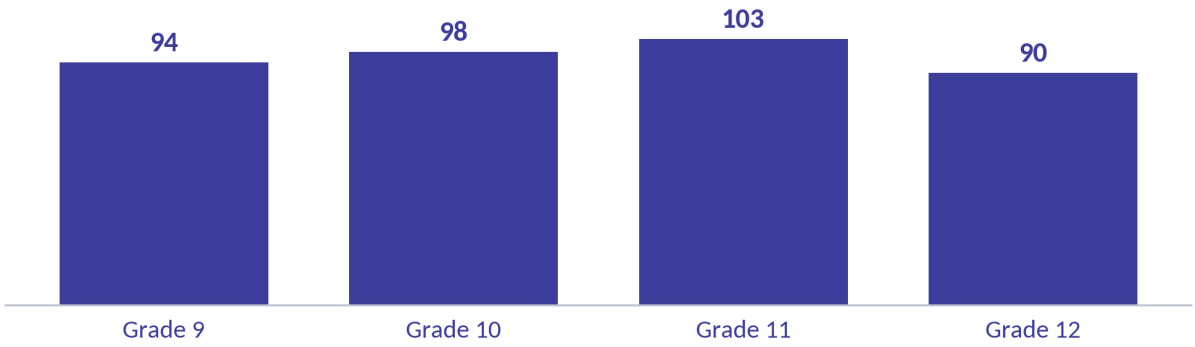
SCHOOL PROFILE

Baxter Academy for Technology and Science serves students in grades 9–12 from across southern Maine. Figures reflect enrollment on October 1, 2025.

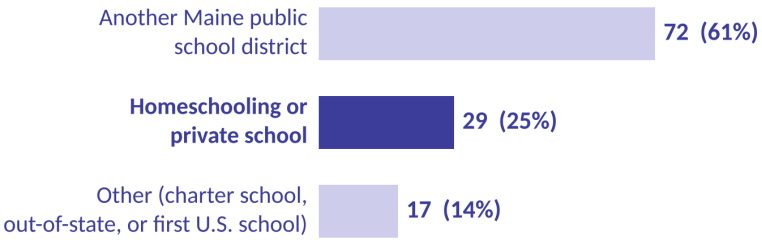
385	59	24.2%	20.3%
Students Enrolled	**Cities and Towns Served**	**Students with IEPs**	**Economically Disadvantaged**
SY2024-25: 384	SY2024-25: 59	SY2024-25: 21.9%	SY2024-25: 20.1%

Enrollment by Grade



Where Students Came From

In SY2025-26, Baxter enrolled 118 new students. Of those, 29 (about one in four) came from homeschooling (17) or a private school (12), **entering or returning to Maine's public education system.**



Source: Baxter Academy SY2025-26 demographic data (October 1, 2025). Categories with fewer than 10 students are combined.

NARRATIVE

Baxter Academy for Technology and Science, located in Portland, completed its thirteenth year of operation in SY2025-26. The school enrolled 385 students in grades 9–12 on October 1, 2025, compared with 384 the prior year, from 59 cities and towns. The school reports that extensive construction surrounding the campus in fall 2025 affected recruitment and retention, with 15 students withdrawing within the first week of school.

24.2% of Baxter students have an IEP, up from 21.9% last year, and 20.3% are economically disadvantaged, essentially unchanged from 20.1%. As last year, the IEP rate is higher than the statewide average and the economically disadvantaged rate is lower. Another 13.8% of students have a 504 plan.

High-level takeaways from SY2025-26:

Strengths:

- Math proficiency – grade 10 students continue to outperform the state
- Science proficiency – Baxter 59.3% vs. State 38.3% at or above expectation (grade 10)
- State/National recognition: Cyber Patriot – Cyber Security Competition, Maine State Science Fair, State and National Robotics competition, Maine State Chess Championship, Maine Region Scholastic Art Awards, and others.
- Graduation – a 93.4% four-year graduation rate, above the state target
- School climate – the student survey rebounded from Not Meeting to Exceeding, and all four surveys exceeded expectations
- Board training – 100% of board members completed governance training, up from 62%
- Student persistence, reporting, and Flex Friday

Areas of Focus:

- Chronic absenteeism, which rose for the second year in a row to 30.7%
- Participation in state testing
- Reading proficiency, which slipped to Meeting overall and for subgroups, with female students Approaching

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Year-over-Year Snapshot

Key SY2025-26 results are shown below alongside the results reported for SY2024-25.

Reading the proficiency results: "Baxter" is the percentage of Baxter students who scored at or above state expectations on the Maine Through Year Assessment; "State" is the percentage of students statewide in the same grade. Ratings are based on the gap between the two: Exceeding is 5 or more percentage points above the state, Meeting is within 5 points, Approaching is 5 to 15 points below, and Not Meeting is more than 15 points below.

▲ Stronger than SY2024-25 ▼ Lower than SY2024-25 ● About the same

Measure				SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Proficiency – Maine Through Year Assessment: % of students at or above state expectations						
Reading	Baxter	State	Rating	*All tested grades* **Baxter 59.2%** State 62% **Meeting**	■ Exceeding	▼
Grade 10	**59.2%**	62%	**Meeting**			
Math	Baxter	State	Rating	*All tested grades* **Baxter 57.7%** State 49% **Exceeding**	■ Exceeding	▼
Grade 10	**57.7%**	49%	**Exceeding**			
Subgroup Proficiency – reportable subgroups[1]						
Reading	Baxter	State	Rating	*Subgroup average* **Average 3.0** of 4 **Meeting**	■ Exceeding	▼
With IEPs	60%	31.7%	**Exceeding**			
Econ. Disadv.	50%	54.3%	**Meeting**			
Male	58%	59.7%	**Meeting**			
Female	61%	69.7%	**Approaching**			
Math	Baxter	State	Rating	*Subgroup average* **Average 4.0** of 4 **Exceeding**	■ Exceeding	●
With IEPs	35.3%	12.7%	**Exceeding**			
Econ. Disadv.	42%	30.7%	**Exceeding**			
Male	61%	45%	**Exceeding**			
Female	52%	42.7%	**Exceeding**			
Graduation and Post-Secondary Readiness						
4-Year Graduation Rate				**93.4% Exceeding**	■ Exceeding	▼
5- and 6-Year Graduation Rates				*Not reported (under 10 students)*	■ Exceeding	–
Accuplacer – Reading / Math				**82% / 80.3% Meeting**	■ Meeting	●
Accuplacer subgroups	Reading	Math	Rating	*Subgroup average*[1] **Average 3.67** of 4 **Exceeding**	■ Meeting	▲
With IEPs	77%	69%	**Meeting**			
Male	89%	91%	**Exceeding**			
Female	96%	93%	**Exceeding**			
College and Career Readiness Activity				**77% Meeting**	■ Exceeding	▼

[1] **How subgroup ratings are combined.** Used for subgroup proficiency and Accuplacer subgroups. Each subgroup with 10 or more students is rated on its own and given points: Exceeding = 4, Meeting = 3, Approaching = 2, Not Meeting = 1. The points are averaged, and the average determines the overall rating: 3.5 or higher is Exceeding; 2.5 to 3.49 is Meeting; 1.5 to 2.49 is Approaching; below 1.5 is Not Meeting. *Example:* Baxter's reading subgroups were rated Exceeding (4), Meeting (3), Meeting (3), and Approaching (2), an average of 3.0, which is Meeting.

Measure	SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
FAFSA Support (not rated)	*Reported as required*	Reported	–
Chronic Absenteeism	**30.7% Not Meeting**	Not Meeting	▼
School Climate – Panorama Surveys (percentile compared to like schools nationally)			
Family 2025-26 / 2024-25 School Climate **90th** / 99th Safety **90th** / 90th School Fit **90th** / 99th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **3 of 3** Participation 61% (35% required) **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Student 2025-26 / 2024-25 School Climate **70th** / 20th Safety **80th** / 70th Rigorous Expectations **60th** / 20th Teacher-Student Relationships **70th** / 40th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 84% (75% required) **Exceeding**	Not Meeting	▲
Teacher 2025-26 / 2024-25 School Climate **90th** / 99th Leadership **90th** / 90th Professional Learning **90th** / 99th Feedback and Coaching **80th** / 99th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 92% (75% required) **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Staff 2025-26 / 2024-25 School Climate **90th** / 99th Leadership **90th** / 99th Professional Learning **90th** / 99th Feedback and Coaching **90th** / 80th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 100% (75% required) **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Organizational Sustainability			
Board Meetings Held	**9 Meeting**	Meeting	●
Reporting – on time / accurate	**99% / 96% Exceeding**	Exceeding	●
Board Training	**100% Meeting**	Not Meeting	▲
School Mission and Student Persistence			
Student Persistence – School Year	**94.5% Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Student Persistence – Year to Year	*Pending (Oct. 1, 2026 count)*	Exceeding	–

Note: Baxter serves grades 9–12, so the Framework's NWEA growth measures (grades 3–8) do not apply.

Student Achievement

Proficiency

Baxter administers the Maine Through Year Assessment (MTY) in reading and math to students in grade 10. In reading, 59.2% of tested students scored at or above state expectations compared with 62% statewide, which is Meeting, down from 67% and Exceeding last year. In math, 57.7% of students reached state expectations compared with 49% statewide. Baxter continues to exceed expectations and outperform the state by nearly 9 points, although the result is down from 64% last year.

Participation was a concern this year. Of 92 tenth graders, 76 (82.6%) were tested in reading and 78 (84.8%) in math. Participation was lowest among economically disadvantaged students (12 of 18). The school identifies increasing testing participation as an area for improvement.

Last year, the reportable subgroups (students with IEPs and economically disadvantaged students) exceeded expectations in both subjects. This year, subgroup results are Meeting in reading and Exceeding in math. In reading, students with IEPs outperformed their statewide peers by more than 28 points (60% vs. 31.7%), economically disadvantaged students (50% vs. 54.3%) and male students (58% vs. 59.7%) were within 5 points of the state, and female students were Approaching (61% vs. 69.7%). In math, every subgroup exceeded the state: students with IEPs (35.3% vs. 12.7%), economically disadvantaged students (42% vs. 30.7%), male students (61% vs. 45%), and female students (52% vs. 42.7%).

Even so, the school names math achievement for students with IEPs and economically disadvantaged students as a priority. Baxter is partnering with the Maine Math and Science Alliance for department-wide visioning and professional development, mentoring new math teachers, and has restructured its math curriculum to rebuild foundational Algebra skills. The school is also applying for Title I status, which would bring additional federal support.

Graduation and Post-Secondary Readiness

Graduation rates remain a strength. The four-year graduation rate is 93.4% (85 of 91 students), which is Exceeding, well above the state target of 88% though down from 97% last year. The 5- and 6-year cohorts fall below the Framework's 10-student reporting minimum and are not rated this year. The school notes that most students who do not graduate in four years entered Baxter late, for example after homeschooling.

On the Accuplacer, 82% of students met the reading benchmark and 80.3% met the math benchmark, which is Meeting, consistent with last year. Subgroup results improved from Meeting to Exceeding. Male students (89% in reading, 91% in math) and female students (96% and 93%) exceeded 85% in at least one subject, and students with IEPs met the benchmark at a rate of 77% in reading and 69% in math, which is Meeting. Results for economically disadvantaged students were not reported.

77% of students successfully participated in at least one college and career readiness activity, which is Meeting, down from 82% (Exceeding) last year. The most common activities were college courses (39%), internships (32%), and AP or dual enrollment courses (31%). The school offered 10 school-supported opportunities for FAFSA support, and 60 families or students completed the FAFSA. Last year, the school reported supporting 81% of families and students with the FAFSA.

Attendance

Chronic absenteeism continues to rise. 30.7% of students were chronically absent in SY2025-26, up from 27% last year and 20.7% the year before, which is Not Meeting. Rates were highest in grade 11 (36.5%) and grade 10 (32%). The school lists reducing chronic absenteeism across all grade levels as a priority for the coming year.

School Climate and Family Engagement

School climate improved dramatically this year. Last year, the student survey was Not Meeting for the first time, and the Commission encouraged the board and administration to prioritize school climate and culture. This year the student survey exceeded expectations on all four scales: School Climate rose from the 20th to the 70th percentile, Teacher-Student Relationships from the 40th to the 70th, Safety from the 70th to the 80th, and Rigorous Expectations from the 20th to the 60th. 84% of students participated. School leaders attribute the turnaround to intentional community-building, including off-campus field trips, the school van, and events such as the Maker Fair.

Family, teacher, and staff results all remained Exceeding, though several scales eased from last year's very high levels. Family results were at the 90th percentile on all three scales, with School Climate and School Fit down from the 99th and Safety unchanged; 61% of families participated. Teacher results declined on three of four scales, with School Climate and Professional Learning down from the 99th to the 90th percentile and Feedback and Coaching from the 99th to the 80th, while Leadership held at the 90th; 92% of teachers participated. Staff results were at the 90th percentile on all four scales: Feedback and Coaching rose from the 80th, while School Climate, Leadership, and Professional Learning eased from the 99th. Every staff member responded.

Rigorous Expectations remains the lowest student result. To raise rigor, the school is expanding Advanced Placement offerings, sending staff to AP training, focusing professional development on consistent grading practices, and strengthening its cell phone policy during instructional time.

Organizational Sustainability

Baxter submitted 91 required documents, 99% on time and 96% accurate and complete, which exceeds expectations. The board held 9 meetings this year, down from 10. Board training improved significantly: 100% of board members completed governance training, compared with 62% (Not Meeting) last year, when the Commission identified training as an area of focus.

During the year the board oversaw leadership transition planning, approved required policy updates, monitored enrollment, program delivery, and fundraising, and guided planning for the Center for Innovation and Technology. A new school leader was hired through an inclusive process that involved about 30 people, including students, and will be mentored through the Maine Principals' Academy. The board expressed strong support for the Executive Director and identified the need for a formal annual evaluation process with board-defined goals, led by the full board. The school's self-assessment was prepared by the school team rather than the board.

Financial Management and Viability

Baxter Academy's financial results for SY2025-26 show a school in sound overall financial health, with no measures rated High Risk. Based on fourth-quarter financials, the school was rated Low Risk for six of eight measures: Current Ratio, Enrollment Variance, Financial Obligations Default, Debt to Assets Ratio,

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Two-Year Cash Flow, and Obligation Coverage Ratio. It was rated Moderate Risk for Days Cash on Hand and Three-Year Aggregated Margin[2]. The school reports that construction-related enrollment losses and a decline in small donors put pressure on operating revenue this year. Baxter also serves students who are not eligible for state subsidy because of their age, and it educates them without that funding. Fundraising has been strong: $500,000 has been raised toward a $1 million goal, and a decision is pending on an additional $500,000 foundation gift. The school capitalized a $35,000 bus loan and reported it to the Commission, engaged a new audit firm, and is exploring group insurance options through the Maine School Boards Association. The planned Center for Innovation and Technology is intended to expand enrollment capacity, regional partnerships, and revenue.

School Mission and Student Persistence

Of the students enrolled on October 1, 2025, 94.5% were still enrolled on the last day of school, which exceeds the Framework's 90% target, though it is slightly below last year's 96%. Year-to-year persistence will be confirmed following the October 1, 2026 count.

Enrollment is the school's most pressing operational challenge. Freshman enrollment fell short of target, and leaders described construction around the campus as a serious threat to recruitment.

School Customization

Baxter's customized measures compare its results with the state. On the PSAT 10, Baxter averaged 939 compared with 966 statewide, narrowing last year's gap from 43 points to 27. On the SAT 11, Baxter averaged 1032 compared with 1030 statewide, a much smaller margin than last year (1092 vs. 1038). On the PSAT 11, reported for the first time, Baxter averaged 985 compared with 990. On the MTY, Baxter's average scale score was 1507 in math (state 1501) and 1504 in reading (equal to the state). In science, 59.3% of Baxter's grade 10 students scored at or above expectations on the 2026 Maine Science Assessment, compared with 38.3% statewide.

Flex Friday remains the defining feature of the Baxter experience. Public presentations this year included Elevator Pitches (October 17, 2025), BaxterVentures (February 6, 2026), a Women in STEM event (April 2, 2026), and two days of Flex Friday Exhibitions (May 18–19, 2026). Student projects included EMT certification, PFAS research, a second prototype of an off-road wheelchair, a national marine plastics monitoring project, and an e-recycling program.

[2] The Commission will review these ratings against the school's audited financial statements when they become available and will amend this report if any ratings change.

Annual Monitoring Report

SY2025-26

November 2026

Community Regional Charter School

Board Chair: Dr. Theresa Overall

Executive Director: Travis Works

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SCHOOL MISSION

MISSION

"Community-Centered, Uncompromisingly Learner Focused"

CRCS creates a safe, respectful, and nurturing learning environment where everyone is accepted and celebrated. The Community Regional Charter School provides a customized learning environment designed to allow every child to thrive socially, emotionally, and academically through the integration of STEAM projects and community connections aimed at unlocking a passion for life-long learning.

VISION

To create a school where learning is built around each student so that they become engaged learners with relevant and challenging work.

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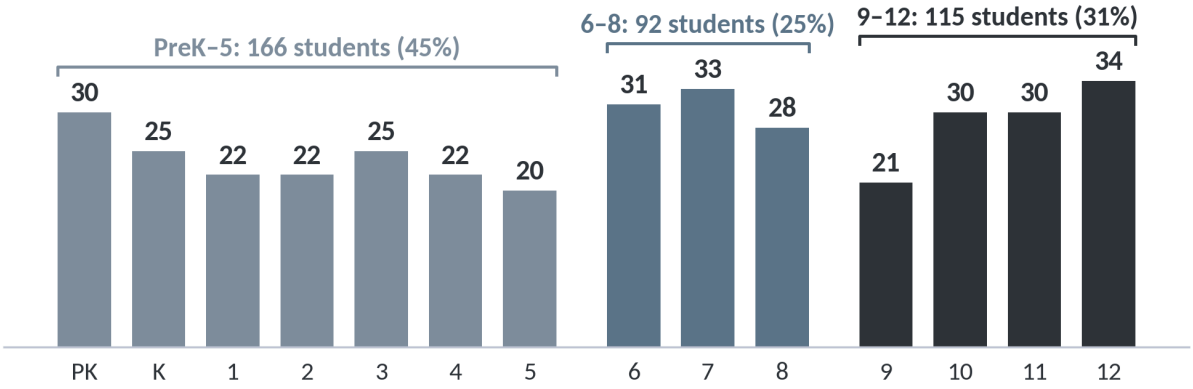
SCHOOL PROFILE

Community Regional Charter School serves students in PreK through grade 12 at three campuses: Creative Children's Academy and Overman Academy in Skowhegan, and Dimensions Academy in Cornville. Figures reflect enrollment on October 1, 2025.

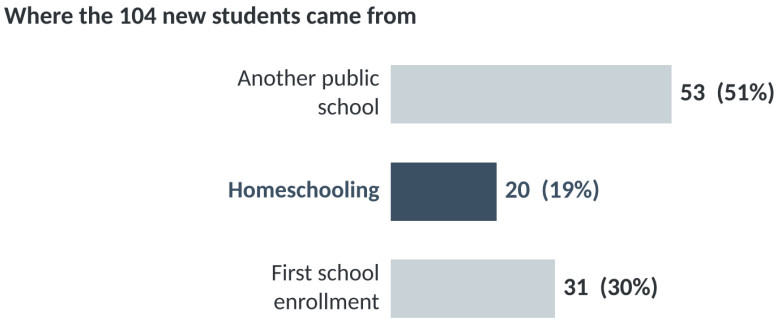
373	40	22.3%	72.3%
Students Enrolled	**Cities and Towns Served**	**Students with IEPs**	**Economically Disadvantaged**
SY2024-25: 385	SY2024-25: 43	SY2024-25: 23.6%	SY2024-25: 70.4%

Enrollment by Grade



Where Students Came From

In SY2025-26, CRCS enrolled 104 new students. Of these, 20 (about one in five) came from homeschooling, **entering or returning to Maine's public education system.**



Source: Community Regional Charter School SY2025-26 demographic data (October 1, 2025). Categories with fewer than 10 students are combined.

NARRATIVE

Community Regional Charter School (CRCS) completed its fourteenth year of operation in SY2025-26. CRCS operates three campuses: Creative Children's Academy and Overman Academy in Skowhegan and Dimensions Academy in Cornville. The school enrolled 373 students in PreK through grade 12 on October 1, 2025 (down from 385 the prior year) from 40 cities and towns across central Maine. CRCS describes its program as ungraded: learners are grouped by readiness and proficiency rather than by grade level.

Because CRCS operates more than one campus, statute requires that performance at each campus be reported separately. In this report, student achievement and the student, teacher, and staff Panorama surveys are reported by campus, beginning with Dimensions Academy and Overman Academy, which account for most of the data, followed by Creative Children's Academy where results were available, while the family survey, district staff survey, organizational sustainability, financial management, and school mission are reported for the school as a whole. School-year student persistence is shown for each campus and for the school overall.

CRCS serves a population with significant needs. 22.3% of students have an IEP (down slightly from 23.6%) and 72.3% are economically disadvantaged (up from 70.4%).

> **CHARTER RENEWAL**
>
> CRCS completed the Commission's charter renewal process in 2026, which included a renewal application, a site visit, and a public hearing. On October 13, 2026, the Commission voted unanimously to renew the charter, with conditions, for a term of five years.
>
> The renewed charter contract includes conditions related to heightened oversight, through quarterly meetings and on-site visits, and annual Performance Framework milestones, which the Commission will monitor beginning in SY2026-27.
>
> This report covers Performance Framework outcomes for SY2025-26. The renewal decision was based on the school's full record over its charter term, as documented in the renewal report.

High-level takeaways from SY2025-26:

Strengths:

- Reading growth – Dimensions Academy exceeds expectations overall and across its subgroups, and Overman Academy improved from Not Meeting to Meeting
- Reading proficiency gains, including grade 3 (21% to 60%) and grade 7, which outperformed the state

- Graduation (96%) and college readiness – Accuplacer results and subgroups now exceed expectations
- School climate – the grades 3–5 student survey improved from Not Meeting to Exceeding, and every Panorama survey with reported results exceeded expectations
- Math gains at Overman Academy in grades 7 and 10
- Board governance – reporting 100% on time and accurate, and 100% of required board training completed (up from 71%)

Areas of Focus:

- Math proficiency at both campuses, and math growth at Dimensions Academy
- Subgroup proficiency (Approaching at both campuses), especially female students and students with IEPs at Overman Academy, and grade 8 reading
- Chronic absenteeism (33% district-wide; 58% in grade 9)
- College and career readiness activity participation
- Declining enrollment and facility needs
- Timely posting of board agendas and minutes
- Student persistence during the school year (78.8%), particularly at Overman Academy (75.7%)

DRAFT

Year-over-Year Snapshot – Dimensions Academy

Results are shown by campus, beginning with Dimensions Academy and Overman Academy, followed by Creative Children's Academy and the school as a whole. Dimensions Academy results are shown below alongside the results reported for SY2024-25.

Reading the proficiency results: "CRCS" is the percentage of CRCS students who scored at or above state expectations on the Maine Through Year Assessment; "State" is the percentage of students statewide in the same grade (for the campus overall, the average across the grades shown; for subgroups, the statewide figure for that subgroup). Ratings are based on the gap between the two: Exceeding is 5 or more percentage points above the state, Meeting is within 5 points, Approaching is 5 to 15 points below, and Not Meeting is more than 15 points below.

▲ Stronger than SY2024-25 ▼ Lower than SY2024-25 ● About the same

Measure	SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Proficiency – Maine Through Year Assessment: % of students at or above state expectations			
Reading Grade 3 — **60%** — 62% — Meeting Grade 4 — **35%** — 64% — Not Meeting Grade 5 — **41%** — 67% — Not Meeting	*All tested grades* **CRCS 49%** State 64.2% **Approaching**	■ Not Meeting	▲
Math Grade 3 — **25%** — 64% — Not Meeting Grade 4 — **41%** — 57% — Not Meeting Grade 5 — **12%** — 54% — Not Meeting	*All tested grades* **CRCS 23%** State 58.6% **Not Meeting**	■ Not Meeting	●
Subgroup Proficiency – reportable subgroups[1]			
Reading With IEPs — **26%** — 31.7% — Approaching Econ. Disadv. — **45%** — 54.3% — Approaching Male — **47%** — 59.7% — Approaching Female — **55%** — 69.7% — Approaching	*Subgroup average* **Average 2.00** of 4 **Approaching**	■ Not Meeting	▲
Math With IEPs — **14.3%** — 12.7% — Meeting Econ. Disadv. — **23.4%** — 30.7% — Approaching Male — **22.4%** — 45% — Not Meeting Female — **24.1%** — 42.7% — Not Meeting	*Subgroup average* **Average 1.75** of 4 **Approaching**	■ Not Meeting	▲
Growth – NWEA MAP (% meeting projected growth)			
Reading	**56% Exceeding**	■ Meeting	▲
Math	**28% Not Meeting**	■ Meeting	▼

[1] **How subgroup ratings are combined.** Used for subgroup proficiency and subgroup growth. Each subgroup with 10 or more students is rated on its own and given points: Exceeding = 4, Meeting = 3, Approaching = 2, Not Meeting = 1. The points are averaged, and the average determines the overall rating: 3.5 or higher is Exceeding; 2.5 to 3.49 is Meeting; 1.5 to 2.49 is Approaching; below 1.5 is Not Meeting. *Example:* Dimensions Academy's math proficiency subgroups were rated Meeting (3), Approaching (2), Not Meeting (1), and Not Meeting (1), an average of 1.75, which is Approaching.

Measure	SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Grade 3 reading on grade level (NWEA)	*Reported as required*	Reported	–
Subgroup Growth – reportable subgroups[1]			
Reading / Met growth / Rating With IEPs 51.5% Meeting Econ. Disadv. 59.0% Exceeding Male 52.7% Meeting Female 62.1% Exceeding	*Subgroup average* **Average 3.50** of 4 **Exceeding**	Approaching	▲
Math / Met growth / Rating With IEPs 40.6% Approaching Econ. Disadv. 23% Not Meeting Male 31.5% Not Meeting Female 21.4% Not Meeting	*Subgroup average* **Average 1.25** of 4 **Not Meeting**	Meeting	▼
Student Attendance			
Chronic Absenteeism	**CRCS 27%** State 23.4% **Approaching**	Approaching	▼
School Climate – Panorama Surveys (percentile compared to like schools nationally)			
Student (grades 3–5) / 2025-26 / 2024-25 School Climate **90th** 20th Safety **80th** 70th Rigorous Expectations **70th** 10th Teacher-Student Relationships **90th** 20th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 91% (75% required) **Exceeding**	Not Meeting	▲
Teacher / 2025-26 / 2024-25 School Climate **80th** 99th Leadership **90th** 90th Professional Learning **99th** 99th Feedback and Coaching **80th** 80th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 100% (75% required) **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Staff / 2025-26 / 2024-25 School Climate **90th** 80th Leadership **90th** 60th Professional Learning **99th** 70th Feedback and Coaching **80th** 70th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 78% (75% required) **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▲
School Mission and Student Persistence			
Student Persistence – School Year	**78.8% Approaching**	Not provided	–

Note: State figures are SY2025-26 statewide averages. Grade-level results were reported school-wide and are shown by campus as in last year's report; the overall figure is the campus total. Chronic absenteeism is compared with the most recently published statewide rate (23.4%, SY2024-25).

Year-over-Year Snapshot – Overman Academy

Overman Academy results are shown below alongside the results reported for SY2024-25.

▲ Stronger than SY2024-25 ▼ Lower than SY2024-25 ● About the same

Measure				SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Proficiency – Maine Through Year Assessment: % of students at or above state expectations						
Reading	CRCS	State	Rating	*All tested grades* **CRCS 46%** State 66.5% **Not Meeting**	Approaching	▲
Grade 6	**61%**	71%	Approaching			
Grade 7	**72%**	70%	Meeting			
Grade 8	**18%**	62%	Not Meeting			
Grade 10	**45%**	62%	Not Meeting			
Math	CRCS	State	Rating	*All tested grades* **CRCS 25%** State 43.9% **Not Meeting**	Not Meeting	▲
Grade 6	**25%**	46%	Not Meeting			
Grade 7	**34%**	40%	Approaching			
Grade 8	**10%**	42%	Not Meeting			
Grade 10	**36%**	49%	Approaching			
Subgroup Proficiency – reportable subgroups[2]						
Reading	CRCS	State	Rating	*Subgroup average* **Average 1.50** of 4 **Approaching**	Approaching	●
With IEPs	**7.1%**	31.7%	Not Meeting			
Econ. Disadv.	**42.9%**	54.3%	Approaching			
Male	**51.5%**	59.7%	Approaching			
Female	**39.0%**	69.7%	Not Meeting			
Math	CRCS	State	Rating	*Subgroup average* **Average 1.50** of 4 **Approaching**	Approaching	●
With IEPs	**7.1%**	12.7%	Approaching			
Econ. Disadv.	**14.3%**	30.7%	Not Meeting			
Male	**36.4%**	45%	Approaching			
Female	**14.6%**	42.7%	Not Meeting			
Growth – NWEA MAP (% meeting projected growth)						
Reading				**46% Meeting**	Not Meeting	▲
Math				**37% Approaching**	Not Meeting	▲
Subgroup Growth – reportable subgroups[2]						
Reading	Met growth		Rating	*Subgroup average* **Average 2.75** of 4 **Meeting**	Meeting	●
With IEPs	51.6%		Meeting			
Econ. Disadv.	43.8%		Approaching			
Male	45.8%		Meeting			
Female	46.0%		Meeting			

[2] **How subgroup ratings are combined.** Used for subgroup proficiency, subgroup growth, and Accuplacer subgroups. Each subgroup with 10 or more students is rated on its own and given points: Exceeding = 4, Meeting = 3, Approaching = 2, Not Meeting = 1. The points are averaged, and the average determines the overall rating: 3.5 or higher is Exceeding; 2.5 to 3.49 is Meeting; 1.5 to 2.49 is Approaching; below 1.5 is Not Meeting. *Example:* Overman Academy's reading proficiency subgroups were rated Not Meeting (1), Approaching (2), Approaching (2), and Not Meeting (1), an average of 1.5, which is Approaching.

Measure	SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Math — With IEPs: 35.5% Approaching; Econ. Disadv.: 33.8% Not Meeting; Male: 35.6% Approaching; Female: 38.0% Approaching	*Subgroup average* **Average 1.75** of 4 **Approaching**	Approaching	▼
Graduation and Post-Secondary Readiness			
4-Year Graduation Rate	**96% Exceeding**	Exceeding	●
5- and 6-Year Graduation Rates	*None reported*	Not applicable	–
Accuplacer – Reading / Math	**90% / 83% Exceeding**	Meeting	▲
Subgroups — Econ. Disadv.: Reading 86%, Math 86%, Exceeding; Male: Reading 89%, Math 89%, Exceeding; Female: Reading 91%, Math 82%, Exceeding	*Subgroup average*[2] **Average 4.00** of 4 **Exceeding**	Meeting	▲
College and Career Readiness Activity	**≤57% Not Meeting**	Meeting	▼
FAFSA Support (not rated)	*Reported as required*	Reported	–
Chronic Absenteeism	**CRCS 39%** State 23.4% **Not Meeting**	Not Meeting	●
School Climate – Panorama Surveys (percentile compared to like schools nationally)			
Student (grades 6–12) — School Climate: **80th** / 99th; Safety: **70th** / 99th; Rigorous Expectations: **50th** / 90th; Teacher-Student Relationships: **60th** / 99th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 78% (75% required) **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Teacher — School Climate: **90th** / 99th; Leadership: **70th** / 99th; Professional Learning: **99th** / 99th; Feedback and Coaching: **99th** / 99th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 100% (75% required) **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Staff — School Climate: **99th** / 99th; Leadership: **50th** / 80th; Professional Learning: **60th** / 90th; Feedback and Coaching: **90th** / 70th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 100% (75% required) **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
School Mission and Student Persistence			
Student Persistence – School Year	**75.7% Approaching**	Not provided	–

Note: State figures are SY2025-26 statewide averages. Grade-level results were reported school-wide and are shown by campus as in last year's report; the overall figure is the campus total. Chronic absenteeism is compared with the most recently published statewide rate (23.4%, SY2024-25).

Year-over-Year Snapshot – Creative Children's Academy

Creative Children's Academy serves the school's youngest learners and does not participate in state testing. Its results are shown below alongside the results reported for SY2024-25.

▲ Stronger than SY2024-25 ▼ Lower than SY2024-25 ● About the same

Measure	SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Student Attendance			
Chronic Absenteeism (not rated)	**36%**	Not reported	–
School Climate – Panorama Surveys (percentile compared to like schools nationally)			
Teacher (2025-26 / 2024-25) School Climate — 99th Leadership — 99th Professional Learning — 99th Feedback and Coaching — 99th	*Not reported (confidentiality threshold)*	■ Exceeding	–
Staff	*Not reported (confidentiality threshold)*	—	–
School Mission and Student Persistence			
Student Persistence – School Year	**90.9% Exceeding**	Not provided	–

Note: Teacher and staff results were not publicly reported because the groups were below Panorama's confidentiality threshold; all Creative Children's Academy teachers and staff responded. Their responses are included in the district teacher and staff results.

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Year-over-Year Snapshot – District (All Campuses)

Results reported for the school as a whole are shown below alongside the results reported for SY2024-25.

▲ Stronger than SY2024-25 ▼ Lower than SY2024-25 ● About the same

Measure	SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
School Climate – Panorama Surveys (percentile compared to like schools nationally)			
Family 2025-26 / 2024-25 School Climate **70th** / 70th Safety **80th** / 50th School Fit **80th** / 60th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **3 of 3** Participation 42% (35% required) **Exceeding**	■ Exceeding	▲
Teacher 2025-26 / 2024-25 School Climate **80th** / — Leadership **80th** / — Professional Learning **99th** / — Feedback and Coaching **80th** / —	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 100% (75% required) **Exceeding**	—	–
Staff 2025-26 / 2024-25 School Climate **90th** / 99th Leadership **90th** / 90th Professional Learning **99th** / 99th Feedback and Coaching **90th** / 80th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 88% (75% required) **Exceeding**	■ Exceeding	●
Organizational Sustainability			
Board meetings (11 held) – timely posting	**3 late Approaching**	■ Not Meeting	▲
Reporting – on time and accurate	**100% Exceeding**	■ Exceeding	▲
Board training	**100% Meeting**	■ Not Meeting	▲
School Mission and Student Persistence			
Student Persistence – School Year	**78.8% Approaching**	Not provided	–
Student Persistence – Year to Year	*Pending (Oct. 1, 2026 count)*	Not provided	–

Note: Year-to-year persistence will be calculated after the October 1, 2026 enrollment count.

Student Achievement

CRCS administers the Maine Through Year Assessment (MTY) in reading and math in grades 3–8 and 10. Participation was high: 100% at Dimensions Academy in both subjects, and 95% in reading and 97% in math at Overman Academy. Growth is measured with the NWEA MAP assessment. Grade-level MTY results were reported for the school as a whole; in the tables, grades 3–5 are shown with Dimensions Academy and grades 6, 7, 8, and 10 with Overman Academy, as in last year's report. Results are compared with SY2025-26 statewide averages.

Dimensions Academy

Proficiency. Reading proficiency improved. 49% of Dimensions students scored at or above state expectations, up from 38% last year, moving the campus from Not Meeting to Approaching. Grade 3 results rose from 21% to 60%, essentially at the state average. Grades 4 (35%) and 5 (41%) remain more than 15 points below the state. The school attributes the gains to its adoption of the science of reading, expanded phonics instruction, the i-Ready intervention program, and voluntary reading challenges.

Math proficiency remains Not Meeting, with 23% of students at or above state expectations. Grade 4 improved sharply, from 6% to 41%, while grade 3 (25%, from 29%) and grade 5 (12%, from 22%) declined.

With statewide subgroup averages now available, subgroup proficiency is rated Approaching in both subjects, up from Not Meeting. In reading, all four reportable subgroups were 5 to 15 points below their statewide averages: students with IEPs (26%), economically disadvantaged students (45%), male students (47%), and female students (55%). In math, students with IEPs (14%) were slightly above the statewide average for students with IEPs and economically disadvantaged students (23%) were Approaching, but male (22%) and female (24%) students were more than 15 points below the state.

Growth. Reading growth was a clear strength: 56% of students met their projected growth, up from 52%, moving from Meeting to Exceeding. Math growth declined from 53% (Meeting) to 28% (Not Meeting). The school attributes the decline to a heavy emphasis on literacy that left math instruction out of balance. After mid-year goal setting focused on algebraic reasoning, the share of students meeting winter-to-spring growth targets (46%) was well above the fall-to-spring rate, and every grade level improved in the later window. For SY2026-27, the school plans spiral review across all math domains, a focus on measurement, data, and geometry, and a school-wide schedule with specialist-led math blocks.

Subgroup growth followed the same pattern. In reading, female (62%) and economically disadvantaged (59%) students exceeded expectations and students with IEPs (52%) and male students (53%) met them, raising the combined subgroup rating from Approaching to Exceeding. In math, students with IEPs were Approaching (41%) while male (31%), female (21%), and economically disadvantaged (23%) students fell below 35%, moving the combined rating from Meeting to Not Meeting. The school noted that girls make up a smaller share of tested students and has committed to more intentional engagement with that subgroup.

Grade 3 reading. Half of third graders (50%) scored at or above the 50th percentile on NWEA MAP reading, and 50% met their projected growth.

Attendance. Chronic absenteeism at Dimensions rose from 24% to 27%, 3.6 points above the most recently published statewide rate of 23.4% (SY2024-25), which is Approaching (Approaching last year). It remains the lowest of the three campuses.

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Overman Academy

Proficiency. The school reports reading proficiency rose 12 points, to 46% of Overman students at or above state expectations. Because that remains well below the state, the campus is Not Meeting (Approaching last year). Grade 7 outperformed the state (72%), and grade 10 improved from 40% to 45%, though it remains more than 15 points below this year's statewide average of 62%. Grade 6 declined from 71% to 61%, and grade 8 from 35% to 18%; the school notes that half of its eighth graders were new to CRCS and that many of the returning eighth graders have IEPs.

Math proficiency improved from 15% to 25% but remains Not Meeting. Grade 7 rose from 4% to 34%, close to the state, and grade 10 from 17% to 36%. Grade 6 was unchanged at 25%, and grade 8 remains low at 10%; the school notes that this class improved from 4% as seventh graders last year.

Subgroup proficiency was Approaching in both subjects, unchanged from last year, with significant gaps. 7% of students with IEPs met expectations in each subject, Not Meeting in reading and Approaching in math compared with the statewide averages for students with IEPs. Economically disadvantaged students were Approaching in reading (43%) and Not Meeting in math (14%), and female students were Not Meeting in both subjects (39% in reading and 15% in math, compared with 52% and 36% for male students). The school is extending the science of reading to the middle and high school levels, aligning its math learning targets and lessons, introducing daily spiral warm-ups focused on state priority standards, and strengthening its MTSS plans. With the campus's certified math teacher on leave until October, the principal and a science facilitator will cover math groups.

Growth. Growth improved in both subjects. 46% of students met their projected growth in reading (Meeting), up from 31% (Not Meeting), and 37% in math (Approaching), up from 32%. Testing participation was 98%. Combined subgroup growth was Meeting in reading and Approaching in math, the same ratings as last year; economically disadvantaged students had the lowest growth in both subjects, falling just below 35% in math. The school reports that students with IEPs showed stronger reading growth than their peers.

Graduation and Post-Secondary Readiness. 96% of seniors graduated in four years, exceeding the state target of 88% (97% last year). As last year, the school reported no 5- or 6-year graduation cohorts. On the Accuplacer, 90% of students met the reading benchmark (up from 76%) and 83% met the math benchmark (up from 76%). Because at least 90% of students met one or both benchmarks, college readiness is Exceeding, up from Meeting. Each reportable subgroup also exceeded expectations – economically disadvantaged students (86% in both subjects), male students (89% in both), and female students (91% in reading, 82% in math) – raising the subgroup rating from Meeting to Exceeding.

Participation in college and career readiness activities declined. Twelve seniors took college courses, and others earned certificates, completed career and technical coursework, or held an internship; even if no senior took part in more than one activity, no more than 57% of the 30 seniors participated (Not Meeting), down from 71%. The school offered two formal FAFSA support opportunities as well as individual appointments, and five families completed the FAFSA.

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Attendance. Chronic absenteeism at Overman remained high at 39% (38% last year), 15.6 points above the most recently published statewide rate of 23.4%, which is Not Meeting (Not Meeting last year). It reached 58% in grade 9. The school cites poverty, including students working to support their families, and mental health needs as root causes. Its response includes an attendance incentive program, follow-up meetings after attendance plans are set, and more accurate attendance coding.

Creative Children's Academy

Creative Children's Academy serves the school's youngest learners and does not participate in state testing. Its chronic absenteeism rate was 36%; the district-wide rate was 33%.

School Climate and Family Engagement

Family survey results, reported for the district, continued to exceed expectations and improved: School Climate held at the 70th percentile, Safety rose from the 50th to the 80th, and School Fit from the 60th to the 80th. 128 families responded (42% of families, above the 35% minimum). In the school's own analysis, family ratings of climate (80% favorable), fit (76%), and safety (82%) each rose by three to four points.

The most notable change came from students in grades 3–5 at Dimensions Academy, whose results moved from Not Meeting to Exceeding. School Climate rose from the 20th to the 90th percentile, Safety from the 70th to the 80th, Rigorous Expectations from the 10th to the 70th, and Teacher-Student Relationships from the 20th to the 90th, with 91% of students participating. The school credits a project that explained survey questions to younger learners through kid-friendly analogies, alongside its climate initiatives, and plans to focus next on peer behavior and respect. Students in grades 6–12 at Overman Academy remained Exceeding, although every scale declined (School Climate from the 99th to the 80th percentile, Safety from the 99th to the 70th, Rigorous Expectations from the 90th to the 50th, and Teacher-Student Relationships from the 99th to the 60th), and participation (78%) was close to the 75% minimum.

Teacher and staff results exceeded expectations at both tested campuses and for the district as a whole, with 100% teacher participation. At Dimensions, teacher results were at or above the 80th percentile on every scale (School Climate down from the 99th to the 80th), and staff results improved on every scale, including Leadership from the 60th to the 90th percentile; staff participation was 78%. At Overman, teacher results remained at or above the 90th percentile except Leadership (70th, from the 99th). Overman staff Leadership and Professional Learning declined to the 50th and 60th percentiles (from the 80th and 90th), while Feedback and Coaching rose from the 70th to the 90th. District-wide staff results held at or above the 90th percentile on every scale, with 88% participation. District-wide, teacher results were at or above the 80th percentile on every scale, with all 29 teachers responding. All Creative Children's Academy teachers and staff responded, but their results fell below Panorama's confidentiality threshold for public reporting; their responses are included in the district results. The school reports strong staff retention and few open positions at year end.

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Organizational Sustainability

The board held 11 meetings in SY2025-26 (12 last year). Three agendas and/or approved minutes were posted late, which is Approaching and an improvement from Not Meeting last year. Reporting was 100% on time and accurate (Exceeding; 91% on time last year), and the board completed 100% of its required training (Meeting), up from 71% (Not Meeting). The school did not report its facility outcomes, so those measures are not rated in this draft.

The board reports continued work on its capacity. Dr. Theresa Overall, who served as acting chair last year, became board chair in September 2025, and the board held a retreat in January 2026 with full attendance to revise board goals and review the Performance Framework, the renewal process, roles and responsibilities, and recruitment. To address board training, the chair held monthly check-ins with members and the school attorney led a training on the Freedom of Access Act and board roles. The board has written a board member job description, completed a needs assessment, and is recruiting a member with capital fundraising expertise as it works toward its goal of nine members.

Facilities remain the school's most significant operational challenge. The school describes its three buildings as a major drain on its budget and programming, with a $500,000 roof repair needed at Dimensions. The school plans to raise consolidation to a single location with the Commission after renewal, and the end-of-year meeting discussed a neutral third-party study of possible locations based on enrollment, staffing, utilities, and long-term operating costs.

Other operational changes include bringing meal production in-house when the school's food service partner ends school meal service after SY2025-26, with Dimensions serving as the production kitchen beginning in fall 2026; the school has requested Commission approval to finance up to $100,000 in kitchen equipment. To address a shortage of substitute bus drivers across its six routes serving more than 40 towns, CRCS has been approved as a commercial driver's license training site and aims to train three to five staff members as substitute drivers by the end of SY2026-27.

Financial Management and Viability

Community Regional Charter School has historically maintained a strong financial position, but its SY2025-26 results show challenges in the near term. Based on fourth-quarter financials, the school was rated Low Risk for Financial Obligations Default, Three-Year Aggregated Margin, Debt to Assets Ratio, and Two-Year Cash Flow; Moderate Risk for Current Ratio, Days Cash on Hand, and Obligation Coverage Ratio; and High Risk for Enrollment Variance.[3]

The school reports that it has operated with a balanced budget throughout its history and passed a balanced FY26 budget despite the first enrollment decline in its history. In the end-of-year meeting, leadership described FY26 as financially tight, with revenue barely covering costs, and expects FY27 to be tighter because of lower enrollment. Pressures include higher depreciation, special education costs over

[3] The Commission will review these ratings against the school's audited financial statements when they become available and will amend this report if any ratings change.

budget, and a nutrition program that required general funds for the first time. The school has eliminated some teaching positions, joined the Maine School Boards Association to pursue property and liability insurance savings, and budgeted for a 12% increase in health insurance premiums.

The school's audits have required recurring restatements related to the classification of capital assets, such as leased equipment. The school renewed its contract with its audit firm for three years and has set a goal of getting the numbers right the first time to avoid restatements in the future.

School Mission and Student Persistence

The school did not report its Section 4 outcomes for mission implementation. In its self-assessment, CRCS describes its ungraded, proficiency-based model as central to its mission of being community-centered and uncompromisingly learner focused. This year the school expanded its Learning Coach program so each learner has a consistent adult, moved its intervention tracking to a new data platform, piloted a mental health screening program, and connected learners across its three buildings through shared seminars and projects. Dimensions Academy represented Somerset County in the Winter Kids competition, placing second.

Of the students enrolled on October 1, 2025, 78.8% were still enrolled on the last day of school or graduated, which is Approaching; the school did not provide this measure last year. Persistence was highest at Creative Children's Academy (90.9%, Exceeding), followed by Dimensions Academy (78.8%) and Overman Academy (75.7%), both Approaching. In its self-assessment, the school reports that 54 learners withdrew during the year and that the most common enrollment lengths for those learners were very short (one, two, or six months). The school enrolls on a rolling basis and is responding to declining enrollment by offering a hybrid option for a small number of students with medical or family needs, strengthening outreach to families of preschool-age children, and counseling families on whether CRCS is the right fit. Year-to-year persistence will be confirmed following the October 1, 2026 count.

School Customization

CRCS's customized measures report the percentage of students meeting projected NWEA MAP growth within one standard error of measurement. At Dimensions Academy, 77% of students met this measure in reading, 74% in language usage, and 45% in math; at Overman Academy, 62% in reading, 64% in language usage, and 50% in math. Last year, the school reported this measure for the district only (reading 62%, math 63%, language usage 66%). Reading and language results are higher at both campuses this year, while math is lower, consistent with the school's other growth results.

DRAFT

the Ecology Learning Center

Annual Monitoring Report

SY2025-26

DRAFT

November 2026

Ecology Learning Center

Board President: Josh Kercsmar
Head of School: Leza Packard

SCHOOL MISSION

MISSION

The mission of the Ecology Learning Center is to deeply root students in Maine's ecological & cultural landscapes, foster authentic real-world learning through mentorship & craft, and cultivate compassionate and resilient leaders prepared to engage in the challenges of today & tomorrow.

VISION

The vision for the Center is to inspire high school students from Waldo County and beyond to roll up their sleeves and engage in their local communities through service learning and apprenticeships. Guided by the unifying theme of "ecology" (the study of the relations between organisms and their environment), students will enact and embody ecological principles by making meaningful connections between school and community. The Center will help students develop the knowledge, skills, and commitment to work collaboratively to address important local challenges. Students will take active roles in every aspect of their education, with the support and guidance of teachers and local experts.

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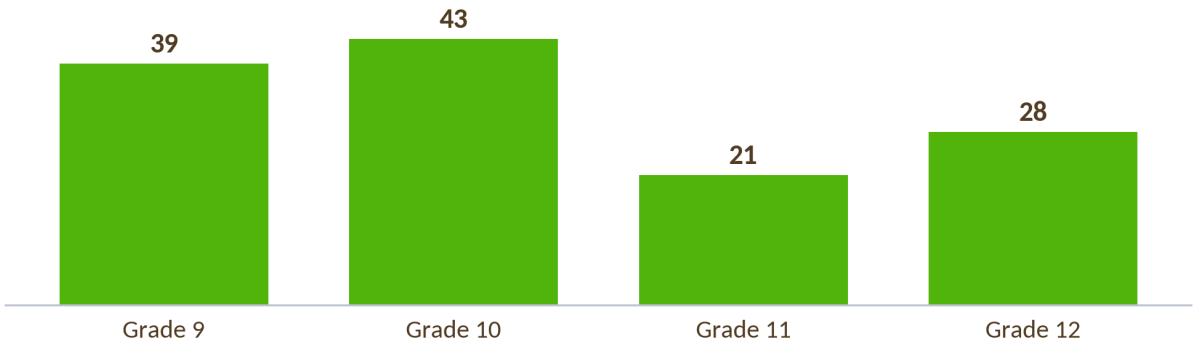
SCHOOL PROFILE

Ecology Learning Center serves students in grades 9–12 from Waldo County and the surrounding area. Figures reflect enrollment on October 1, 2025.

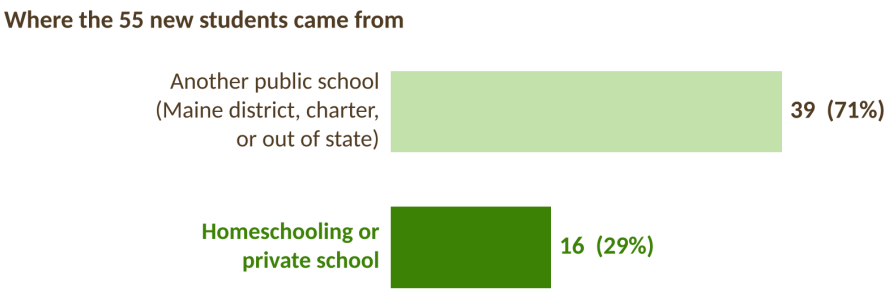
131	36	22.1%	44.3%
Students Enrolled	**Cities and Towns Served**	**Students with IEPs**	**Economically Disadvantaged**
SY2024-25: 120	SY2024-25: 33	SY2024-25: 26.7%	SY2024-25: 35.8%

Enrollment by Grade



Where Students Came From

In SY2025-26, ELC enrolled 55 new students; 16 (nearly three in ten) came from homeschooling or a private school, **entering or returning to Maine's public education system.**



Source: Ecology Learning Center SY2025-26 demographic data. Categories with fewer than 10 students are combined.

NARRATIVE

Ecology Learning Center (ELC), located in Unity, completed its sixth year of operation in SY2025-26. The school enrolled 131 students in grades 9–12 on October 1, 2025 (up from 120 the prior year) from 36 cities and towns and 17 school administrative units in the surrounding area.

22.1% of ELC students have an IEP (down from 26.67%) and 44.3% are economically disadvantaged (up from 35.83%); last year, both rates were higher than the statewide average. Another 19.1% of students have a 504 plan.

High-level takeaways from SY2025-26:

Strengths:

- Reading proficiency – above the state overall, with economically disadvantaged and male students also above statewide rates
- College readiness – Accuplacer results improved from Meeting to Exceeding, overall and for subgroups
- Graduation – 100% of seniors graduated, and every senior completed an internship
- School climate – all four Panorama surveys exceeded expectations
- Student persistence improved to 93%, with strong demand for enrollment
- Reporting – 100% of required reports submitted on time, up from Approaching
- A mission-driven outdoor program that logged a record number of field days
- Continued progress in serving students with IEPs in general education classrooms

Areas of Focus:

- Chronic absenteeism, which rose to 24%
- Math proficiency – 38% of tenth graders met state expectations, below the state's 49%
- Long-term financial sustainability, including the Clifford Arts & Student Center

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Year-over-Year Snapshot

Key SY2025-26 results are shown below alongside the results reported for SY2024-25.

Reading the proficiency results: "ELC" is the percentage of ELC students who scored at or above state expectations on the Maine Through Year Assessment; "State" is the percentage of students statewide in the same grade. Ratings are based on the gap between the two: Exceeding is 5 or more percentage points above the state, Meeting is within 5 points, Approaching is 5 to 15 points below, and Not Meeting is more than 15 points below.

▲ Stronger than SY2024-25 ▼ Lower than SY2024-25 ● About the same

Measure	SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Proficiency – Maine Through Year Assessment: % of students at or above state expectations			
Reading — Grade 10: ELC **65%**, State 62%, Rating **Meeting**	*All tested grades* **ELC 65%** State 62% **Meeting**	Meeting	▲
Math — Grade 10: ELC **38%**, State 49%, Rating **Approaching**	*All tested grades* **ELC 38%** State 49% **Approaching**	Approaching	▼
Subgroup Proficiency – reportable subgroups[1]			
Reading — Econ. Disadv.: ELC **64%**, State 54.3%, **Exceeding**; Male: ELC **65%**, State 59.7%, **Exceeding**; Female: ELC **65%**, State 69.7%, **Meeting**	*Subgroup average* **Average 3.67** of 4 **Exceeding**	Approaching	▲
Math — Econ. Disadv.: ELC **27%**, State 30.7%, **Meeting**; Male: ELC **35%**, State 45%, **Approaching**; Female: ELC **41%**, State 42.7%, **Meeting**	*Subgroup average* **Average 2.67** of 4 **Meeting**	Approaching	▲
Graduation and Post-Secondary Readiness			
4-Year Graduation Rate	**100% Exceeding**	Exceeding	●
5- and 6-Year Graduation Rates	*None*	Exceeding	–
Accuplacer – met at least one benchmark	**96% Exceeding**	Meeting	▲
Accuplacer subgroups — Male: Reading 80%, Math 100%, **Exceeding**; Female: Reading 91%, Math 85%, **Exceeding**	*Subgroup average*[1] **Average 4.0** of 4 **Exceeding**	Meeting	▲
College and Career Readiness Activity	**100% Exceeding**	Exceeding	●
FAFSA Support (not rated)	*Reported as required*	Reported	–

[1] **How subgroup ratings are combined.** Used for subgroup proficiency and Accuplacer subgroups. Each subgroup with 10 or more students is rated on its own and given points: Exceeding = 4, Meeting = 3, Approaching = 2, Not Meeting = 1. The points are averaged, and the average determines the overall rating: 3.5 or higher is Exceeding; 2.5 to 3.49 is Meeting; 1.5 to 2.49 is Approaching; below 1.5 is Not Meeting. *Example:* ELC's reading subgroups were rated Exceeding (4), Exceeding (4), and Meeting (3), an average of 3.67, which is Exceeding.

Measure	SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Chronic Absenteeism	**ELC 24%** State 23.4% **Approaching**	14.95%	▼
School Climate – Panorama Surveys (percentile compared to like schools nationally)			
Family 2025-26 2024-25 School Climate **90th** 99th Safety **90th** 99th School Fit **90th** 99th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **3 of 3** Participation 48% (35% required) **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Student 2025-26 2024-25 School Climate **90th** 99th Safety **90th** 99th Rigorous Expectations **90th** 90th Teacher-Student Relationships **90th** 99th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 87% (75% required) **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Teacher 2025-26 2024-25 School Climate **90th** 99th Leadership **70th** 90th Professional Learning **70th** 80th Feedback and Coaching **60th** 60th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 100% (75% required) **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Staff 2025-26 2024-25 School Climate **90th** 99th Leadership **90th** 99th Professional Learning **90th** 90th Feedback and Coaching **90th** 70th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 100% (75% required) **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Organizational Sustainability			
Board Meetings Held	**11 Exceeding**	14	–
Reporting – on time and accurate	**100% Exceeding**	Approaching	▲
Board Training	**100% Meeting**	Exceeding	▼
School Mission and Student Persistence			
Student Persistence – School Year	**93.1% Exceeding**	Meeting	▲
Student Persistence – Year to Year	*Pending (Oct. 1, 2026 count)*	Exceeding	–

Note: ELC serves grades 9–12, so the Framework's NWEA growth measures (grades 3–8) do not apply.

Student Achievement

Proficiency

ELC administers the Maine Through Year Assessment (MTY) in reading and math to students in grade 10. This year 37 of 38 tenth graders (97%) were tested.

Results were stronger in reading than in math. 65% of tenth graders scored at or above state expectations in reading, compared with 62% statewide, and 38% did so in math, compared with 49% statewide. Reading rose from 58% last year and remains Meeting. Math fell from 42% and remains

Approaching, 11 points below the state. Because these are single-grade results for a cohort of fewer than 40 students, they can shift considerably from year to year.

Among subgroups with at least 10 students tested, 64% of economically disadvantaged students, 65% of male students, and 65% of female students met expectations in reading, compared with statewide rates of 54.3%, 59.7%, and 69.7%. Economically disadvantaged and male students were above the state and female students were within 5 points, for an overall reading subgroup rating of Exceeding, up from Approaching. In math, 27% of economically disadvantaged students, 35% of male students, and 41% of female students met expectations, compared with 30.7%, 45%, and 42.7% statewide, for an overall rating of Meeting, up from Approaching. Results for students with IEPs are not rated because fewer than 10 students were tested.

The school also reports that in SY2024-25, 41% of its students met state expectations in science, compared with 36% and 24% at its two largest sending districts.

ELC continues to move students with IEPs into general education classrooms. All students take science, social studies, wellness, and career readiness in general education settings. In math, the school added a Pre-Algebra course co-taught by a math teacher and a special education teacher, reducing the size of its separate Essential Math class from 12 to 5 students; for SY2026-27, the school expects 32 of its 38 students with IEPs to be in general education math and 33 in general education English. The special education team grew from one teacher to two full-time teachers, reducing caseloads from about 35 to about 15 students each, and a new part-time special education director has joined the school. The school has also added a full-time math teacher.

Growth

The Framework's growth measures apply to grades 3–8, so ELC is not rated on growth. The school continues to administer the NWEA MAP assessment in grades 9 and 11 to track progress over time. In SY2025-26, 42% of ninth graders met their projected growth in math and 44% in reading; among eleventh graders, 36% met projected growth in math and 55% in reading. The school sets goals using NWEA's “low average” benchmark, which it considers better aligned with the college-readiness benchmarks students face as juniors and seniors.

Graduation and Post-Secondary Readiness

All 28 seniors in ELC's fourth graduating class graduated, a 100% four-year graduation rate that well exceeds the state target of 88%, matching last year's result. There were no 5- and 6-year cohorts reported.

College readiness improved. On the Accuplacer, 86% of test-takers (18 of 21) met the reading benchmark of 239 and 92% (23 of 25) met the math benchmark of 226, up from 78% and 75% last year. Overall, 24 of the 25 seniors who took at least one test (96%) met at least one benchmark, moving the rating from Meeting to Exceeding. Among subgroups with at least 10 test-takers, 80% of male students and 91% of female students met the reading benchmark, and 100% of male students and 85% of female students met the math benchmark. Because a student counts as college ready by meeting either benchmark, both

groups are rated Exceeding, for an overall subgroup rating of Exceeding, up from Meeting last year, when students with IEPs were below the benchmark.

Every senior completed an internship, so 100% of students participated in at least one college and career readiness activity (Exceeding, as last year), and 71% of seniors took a college course. ELC students earned 78 college credits through dual enrollment courses taught by ELC teachers certified through the University of Maine at Farmington, saving an estimated $23,166 in tuition; all students passed their courses and 57% earned a B or better. The school offered eight FAFSA support opportunities and reports that 24 families or students completed the FAFSA.

Attendance

Chronic absenteeism rose to 24%, from 14.95% last year. Rates were highest in grade 12 (29%) and grades 9 and 10 (26% each), and lowest in grade 11 (14%). The most recent published statewide rate is 23.4% (SY2024-25), so ELC's rate is slightly above the state, rated Approaching. During the end-of-year review, the school noted a gap between its internal attendance reports (in the high teens) and the rate submitted to the state, which it attributes in part to how remote-learning days and students who are in the building but not in class are recorded. A new registrar with systems experience is reviewing these procedures, and the school plans to strengthen teacher follow-up when families report remote learning.

School Climate and Family Engagement

All four Panorama School Climate Surveys again exceeded Framework expectations, with every required scale at or above the 50th percentile, although several scales were lower than last year. Family results were at the 90th percentile on all three required scales, down from the 99th. On the student survey, School Climate, Safety, and Teacher-Student Relationships eased from the 99th to the 90th percentile, and Rigorous Expectations held at the 90th. Teacher results declined on School Climate (99th to 90th), Leadership (90th to 70th), and Professional Learning (80th to 70th), with Feedback and Coaching unchanged at the 60th. Staff results were at the 90th percentile on all four scales: School Climate and Leadership eased from the 99th, Feedback and Coaching rose from the 70th, and Professional Learning held at the 90th.

Participation met Framework minimums for every group: 48% of families and 87% of students, with 100% of teachers and staff responding. Family and student participation were lower than last year (58% and 90%). The school reports that favorable responses on School Fit and Safety dipped slightly, which it attributes to an unfounded bomb threat in the spring that unsettled the school community.

ELC identifies student vaping, concentrated among a small group of students, as its most significant climate and discipline challenge. The school is shifting to restorative responses: community health partners visit monthly and will join restorative justice circles beginning next year, families will be invited to take part in those circles, and in-school suspension is being reframed around learning about vaping rather than punishment.

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Organizational Sustainability

ELC submitted 93 required reports this year and reports that all were on time and accurate, a marked improvement from last year, when 79% were on time (Approaching). The board held 11 meetings, down from 14, with agendas and minutes meeting Framework requirements (Exceeding), and 100% of board members completed governance training. Four new members joined the board, bringing experience in outdoor educational leadership, restorative justice, and financial management; two joined the finance committee. At its June 27 annual retreat, the board reviewed the results of a nonprofit capacity diagnostic and identified fundraising as an area for greater board focus. The board also adopted a teacher salary scale benchmarked to three local districts; the school notes that administrator pay remains below that of peer charter and district leaders.

During the end-of-year review, the board and Head of School discussed the sustainability of the school's leadership model, including delegating more day-to-day management so the Head of School can focus on mission, advocacy, and fundraising. The board agrees that a formal succession plan is needed; none is yet in place.

Staff retention remains strong, with 27 of 33 staff members returning (last year, 23 of 28). The school reports that its facility meets local and state requirements and supports its programming (Meeting, as last year).

Financial Management and Viability

The Ecology Learning Center's financial results for SY2025-26 show a school in generally sound financial health, with one area of concern in its longer-term results. Based on fourth-quarter financials, the school was rated Low Risk for Enrollment Variance, Financial Obligations Default, Debt to Assets Ratio, Two-Year Cash Flow, and Obligation Coverage Ratio, and Moderate Risk for Current Ratio and Days Cash on Hand. Having run deficits in two of the last three years, the school was rated High Risk for Three-Year Aggregated Margin.[2] Based on the May 2026 Treasury Report included in the self-assessment, ELC finished FY26 in a stronger position than FY25, even though its state funding was based on 120 students, fewer than it enrolled this year. ELC also serves students who are not eligible for state subsidy because of their age, and it educates them without that funding. Days cash on hand rose to 48.4, from 30 at the end of FY25 (both in the Moderate Risk range), and the debt-to-asset ratio was 14% (Low Risk). The school reports net income in six of ten months through May. Last year, ELC was low to moderate risk on all measures except two-year cash flow, which was High Risk.

Fundraising grew 39% over FY25, with $71,427 raised by April 1, 2026. The school also reports that a long-time donor intends to establish a $700,000 endowment, and the board plans a campaign to raise an additional $300,000 to reach a $1 million investment threshold. Transportation costs have stabilized, and a renegotiated busing contract with RSU 3 is expected to save about $6,000 in FY27.

[2] The Commission will review these ratings against the school's audited financial statements when they become available and will amend this report if any ratings change.

The Clifford Arts & Student Center remains under financial pressure. Repair, maintenance, and utility costs continued to run high, the program operates at a loss, and a required sprinkler system upgrade is estimated at $30,000–$34,000. The school has assigned a staff member to manage the Center with revenue-based performance incentives and monthly reporting to the finance committee.

School Mission and Student Persistence

ELC's outdoor program remains central to its mission. Students logged 1,527 field days, a 20% increase over last year, across fall orientations, Adventure Wednesdays, and spring expeditions and explorations, which included every student. New this year, students received instruction in sea kayaking, canoeing, whitewater canoeing, and wilderness medicine. Participation in Adventure Wednesdays averaged 76% of students (down 3 points), and fall orientation participation was 83% (down 2 points). The school reports that it actively fulfills its mission and implements its core approaches in ways that serve all students, and that the board and administration share a clear understanding of both (Meeting, as last year).

Student persistence improved. Of the students enrolled on October 1, 2025, 93.1% were still enrolled on the last day of school, up from 88% last year and moving the rating from Meeting to Exceeding. Demand remains strong: as of mid-June, 130 students had committed to enroll for SY2026-27 against a budget of 132, and 146 prospective students submitted an intent to enroll. Year-to-year persistence will be confirmed following the October 1, 2026 count.

School Customization

ELC's customized measure is its week-long winter Passion Projects, scored on a rubric covering planning, process, product, and presentation. This year, 70% of students earned an overall score of 80–100%, above the measure's threshold of 65% of students. Last year's result was rated Exceeding.

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Annual Monitoring Report

SY2025-26

November 2026

Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences

Board Co-Chairs: Alison Moser and Joanne D'Arcangelo

Executive Director: Jacinda Cotton-Castro

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SCHOOL MISSION

MISSION

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

VISION

To provide for the foundational needs of growing children in a community where children, teachers, and families learn together in a nurturing environment.

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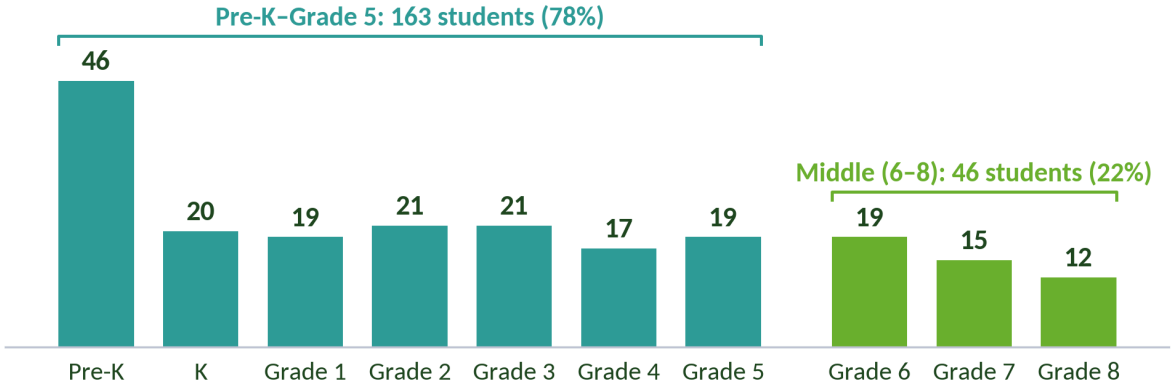
SCHOOL PROFILE

Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences serves students in Pre-K through grade 8 from communities in and around Gray. Figures reflect enrollment on October 1, 2025.

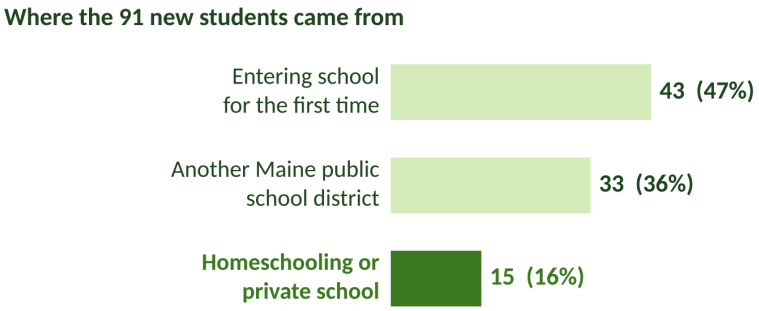
209	33	26.3%	17.2%
Students Enrolled	**Cities and Towns Served**	**Students with IEPs**	**Economically Disadvantaged**
SY2024-25: 177	SY2024-25: 28	SY2024-25: 28.81%	SY2024-25: 28.25%

Enrollment by Grade



Where Students Came From

In SY2025-26, FSAS enrolled 91 new students, 15 of whom (about one in six) came from homeschooling or a private school, **entering or returning to Maine's public education system.**



Source: Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences SY2025-26 demographic data (October 1, 2025). Categories with fewer than 10 students are combined.

NARRATIVE

Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences (FSAS), located in Gray, completed its thirteenth year of operation in SY2025-26. The school enrolled 209 students in Pre-K through grade 8 on October 1, 2025, up from 177 the prior year, from 33 cities and towns and 23 school administrative units. Much of the growth came from adding a second Pre-K classroom; 46 students were enrolled in Pre-K.

26.3% of FSAS students have an IEP, down from 28.81% last year, and 17.2% are economically disadvantaged, down from 28.25%. As last year, the IEP rate is higher than the statewide average and the economically disadvantaged rate is lower.

High-level takeaways from SY2025-26:

Strengths:

- Reading – growth and subgroup proficiency Exceeding; overall proficiency in line with the state
- School climate – grades 6–8 students and families Exceeding; staff now Meeting
- Board training – much improved, from Not Meeting to Approaching
- Enrollment growth, Pre-K expansion, and student persistence

Areas of Focus:

- Math – proficiency in grades 4 and 6 and for most subgroups; growth for students with IEPs
- Grade 4 results in both subjects
- Chronic absenteeism – much improved, but still nearly a third of students
- School climate for students in grades 3–5 and for teachers – both still Not Meeting
- Timely posting of board agendas and minutes; financial sustainability

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LEVEL 1 INTERVENTION – YEAR ONE STATUS

In December 2025, the Commission placed FSAS on Level 1 Intervention because of concerns about chronic absenteeism, student and teacher school climate results, and financial reporting and oversight. The plan sets goals to be met by the end of SY2026-27, with progress reviewed at least once a quarter. After the first year, the school has made progress but has not yet met all of its goals.

Chronic absenteeism fell to 31.9%, meeting the SY2025-26 target of 32%; the June 2027 goal is 28%. On the Panorama surveys, students in grades 6–8 rated all four required scales at or above the 50th percentile, meeting their goal. Teacher results (one of four scales) did not meet the goal, and results for students in grades 3–5 were unchanged from last year. The board revised and approved its financial policies and updated its bylaws to match. Reports to the Commission were submitted on time, with an extension granted for the FY26 fourth-quarter financials. However, one state deadline was missed and some submissions needed later corrections. Based on FY26 fourth-quarter financials, two financial indicators improved from High to Moderate Risk. The three-year total margin and cash flow remain High Risk, so the goal of no high-risk indicators has not been met. The Commission will continue to monitor progress through SY2026-27.

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Year-over-Year Snapshot

Key SY2025-26 results are shown below alongside the results reported for SY2024-25.

Reading the proficiency results: "FSAS" is the percentage of FSAS students who scored at or above state expectations on the Maine Through Year Assessment; "State" is the percentage of students statewide in the same grade. Ratings are based on the gap between the two: Exceeding is 5 or more percentage points above the state, Meeting is within 5 points, Approaching is 5 to 15 points below, and Not Meeting is more than 15 points below.

▲ Stronger than SY2024-25 ▼ Lower than SY2024-25 ● About the same

Measure	SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Proficiency – Maine Through Year Assessment: % of students at or above state expectations			
Reading Grade 3 — **65%** — 62% — Meeting Grade 4 — **45%** — 64% — Not Meeting Grade 5 — **67%** — 67% — Meeting Grade 6 — **65%** — 71% — Approaching Grade 7 — **75%** — 70% — Exceeding Grade 8 — **75%** — 62% — Exceeding	*All tested grades* **FSAS 65%** State 66% **Meeting**	■ Meeting	●
Math Grade 3 — **65%** — 64% — Meeting Grade 4 — **20%** — 57% — Not Meeting Grade 5 — **39%** — 54% — Approaching Grade 6 — **24%** — 46% — Not Meeting Grade 7 — **33%** — 40% — Approaching Grade 8 — **67%** — 42% — Exceeding	*All tested grades* **FSAS 42%** State 50.5% **Approaching**	■ Approaching	●
Grade 3 Reading on Grade Level (not rated)	*Reported as required*	Reported	–
Subgroup Proficiency – reportable subgroups[1]			
Reading With IEPs — **46%** — 35.3% — Exceeding Econ. Disadv. — **60%** — 54.4% — Exceeding Male — **53%** — 62.2% — Approaching Female — **75%** — 69.2% — Exceeding	*Subgroup average* **Average 3.5** of 4 **Exceeding**	■ Meeting	▲
Math With IEPs — **29%** — 24.6% — Meeting Econ. Disadv. — **32%** — 41.4% — Approaching Male — **45%** — 57.6% — Approaching Female — **39%** — 52.2% — Approaching	*Subgroup average* **Average 2.25** of 4 **Approaching**	■ Meeting	▼
Growth – NWEA MAP (% meeting projected growth)			
Reading	**65.4% Exceeding**	■ Exceeding	▲

[1] **How subgroup ratings are combined.** Used for subgroup proficiency and subgroup growth. Each subgroup with 10 or more students is rated on its own and given points: Exceeding = 4, Meeting = 3, Approaching = 2, Not Meeting = 1. The points are averaged, and the average determines the overall rating: 3.5 or higher is Exceeding; 2.5 to 3.49 is Meeting; 1.5 to 2.49 is Approaching; below 1.5 is Not Meeting. *Example:* FSAS's reading proficiency subgroups were rated Exceeding (4), Exceeding (4), Approaching (2), and Exceeding (4), an average of 3.5, which is Exceeding.

Measure	SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Math	**40% Approaching**	Meeting	▼
Subgroup Growth – reportable subgroups[1]			
Reading / Met growth / Rating With IEPs 54.8% Meeting Male 62.1% Exceeding Female 74.5% Exceeding 504 Plans 73.3% Exceeding	*Subgroup average* **Average 3.75** of 4 **Exceeding**	Exceeding	●
Math / Met growth / Rating With IEPs 26.2% Not Meeting Male 36.2% Approaching Female 40.4% Approaching 504 Plans 46.7% Meeting	*Subgroup average* **Average 2.0** of 4 **Approaching**	Meeting	▼
Attendance			
Chronic Absenteeism	**FSAS 31.9%** State 23.4% **Not Meeting**	Not Meeting	▲
School Climate – Panorama Surveys (percentile compared to like schools nationally)			
Family / 2025-26 / 2024-25 School Climate **70th** 99th Safety **80th** 99th School Fit **70th** 99th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **3 of 3** Participation 61.4% (35% required) **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Student – Grades 3–5 / 2025-26 / 2024-25 School Climate **10th** 10th Safety **40th** 40th Rigorous Expectations **10th** 10th Teacher-Student Relationships **10th** 10th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **0 of 4** Participation 90.6% (75% required) **Not Meeting**	Not Meeting	●
Student – Grades 6–8 / 2025-26 / 2024-25 School Climate **70th** 40th Safety **80th** 40th Rigorous Expectations **60th** 40th Teacher-Student Relationships **50th** 40th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 93.2% (75% required) **Exceeding**	Not Meeting	▲
Teacher / 2025-26 / 2024-25 School Climate **60th** 60th Leadership **30th** 40th Professional Learning **30th** 40th Feedback and Coaching **20th** 10th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **1 of 4** Participation 100% (75% required) **Not Meeting**	Not Meeting	▼
Staff / 2025-26 / 2024-25 School Climate **60th** 50th Leadership **60th** 40th Professional Learning **80th** 60th Feedback and Coaching **40th** 30th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **3 of 4** Participation 100% (75% required) **Meeting**	Approaching	▲
Organizational Sustainability			
Board Meetings – held and timely posting	**11 held, 9 late Not Meeting**	Not Meeting	●

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Measure	SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Reporting – % on time / % accurate	**88% / 95% Meeting**	Approaching	▲
Board Training	**86% Approaching**	Not Meeting	▲
School Mission and Student Persistence			
Student Persistence – School Year	**90.4% Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Student Persistence – Year to Year	*Pending (Oct. 1, 2026 count)*	Exceeding	–

Student Achievement

Proficiency

FSAS administers the Maine Through Year Assessment (MTY) in reading and math to students in grades 3–8. Across tested grades, 65% of FSAS students scored at or above state expectations in reading, compared with 66% statewide (Meeting), and 42% in math, compared with 50.5% statewide (Approaching). Both ratings are unchanged from last year; the school's own rates rose two points in each subject, from 63% in reading and 40% in math.

Results varied considerably by grade. In reading, grades 7 (75%, compared with 70% statewide) and 8 (75%, compared with 62%) were Exceeding, grades 3 (65%) and 5 (67%) were Meeting, grade 6 (65%, compared with 71%) was Approaching, and grade 4 (45%, compared with 64%) was Not Meeting. Grade 3 (up from 47%) and grade 5 (up from 44%) improved the most, while grade 4 fell from 67% and grade 8 from 85%. In math, grade 3 nearly doubled, from 34% to 65% (Meeting), and grade 8 rose from 50% to 67%, 25 points above the state (Exceeding). Grade 4 fell from 53% to 20%, compared with 57% statewide, and grade 6 fell from 33% to 24%, compared with 46%; both are Not Meeting. Grades 5 (39%, up from 31%) and 7 (33%, down from 40%) were Approaching. Because each grade is a different group of students from year to year, and because few students were tested in grades 4, 7, and 8, individual grade results can shift substantially. Participation was low in grade 4 (79% in reading and 71% in math) and grade 8 (75% in both).

The school reports that its current fourth grade cohort has high special education needs and chronic absenteeism of 52%. In response, the class is moving to a larger classroom with a new teacher, and the school is adding a third special education teacher. Math is a school-wide focus for SY2026-27; the school is exploring new math intervention programs and math-specific professional development, particularly to support students with IEPs.

Reading subgroups averaged 3.5 of 4 (Exceeding), up from Meeting last year. Students with IEPs (46%, compared with 35.3% statewide), economically disadvantaged students (60%, compared with 54.4%), and female students (75%, compared with 69.2%) were Exceeding, while male students were Approaching (53%, compared with 62.2%). Math subgroups averaged 2.25 (Approaching), down from Meeting last year. Students with IEPs were Meeting (29%, compared with 24.6% statewide), but economically disadvantaged (32%, compared with 41.4%), male (45%, compared with 57.6%), and female students (39%, compared with 52.2%) were all Approaching.

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In grade 3, 57% of students scored at or above the 50th percentile on the spring NWEA MAP reading assessment and 65% met their projected reading growth. The Framework's targets for this measure changed in SY2025-26 and are not rated in their first year, so the measure is reported as required this year and will be rated in future years.

Growth

Reading growth remained a strength. 65.4% of students met their projected growth on NWEA MAP (Exceeding), up from 59% last year. Reading subgroups combined to an average of 3.75 of 4 (Exceeding): male students (62.1%, up from Meeting), female students (74.5%), and students with 504 plans (73.3%) were Exceeding, and students with IEPs (54.8%) were Meeting, just below the 55% Exceeding threshold after being Exceeding last year.

Math growth declined: 40% of students met their projected growth (Approaching), down from 45% (Meeting). Students with IEPs (26.2%) were Not Meeting, male (36.2%) and female (40.4%) students were Approaching, and students with 504 plans (46.7%) were Meeting, an average of 2.0 (Approaching), down from Meeting last year. Participation was 91% in reading and 92% in math, below the 95% level at which the Framework notes the Commission may review participation. The revised Framework no longer includes NWEA Language Usage.

Attendance

Chronic absenteeism fell substantially, from 47.62% to 31.9%, but nearly a third of students remain chronically absent, 8.5 points above the most recent statewide average of 23.4% (Not Meeting). Part of the decline reflects more accurate data: working with the state's data team, the school corrected errors in how it had coded attendance. Rates were highest in grades 4 (52%) and 6 (44%) and lowest in grades 2 (14%) and 8 (16%). The school is working to strengthen staff reporting of attendance and is reviewing its policies on remote learning.

School Climate and Family Engagement

Panorama results were mixed this year after three consecutive years of unfavorable student, teacher, and staff results. Students in grades 6–8 rated the school at or above the 50th percentile on all four scales (Exceeding), up from Not Meeting: School Climate rose from the 40th to the 70th percentile, Safety from the 40th to the 80th, Rigorous Expectations from the 40th to the 60th, and Teacher-Student Relationships from the 40th to the 50th. Results for students in grades 3–5 did not change: School Climate, Rigorous Expectations, and Teacher-Student Relationships remained at the 10th percentile and Safety at the 40th, so the survey remains Not Meeting.

Staff results improved from Approaching to Meeting, with School Climate (60th, up from 50th), Leadership (60th, up from 40th), and Professional Learning (80th, up from 60th) at or above the benchmark; Feedback and Coaching rose from the 30th to the 40th percentile but remains below it. Teacher results remain Not Meeting. School Climate (60th, unchanged) is the only scale at or above the benchmark; Leadership and Professional Learning each fell from the 40th to the 30th percentile, while

Feedback and Coaching rose from the 10th to the 20th. The school implemented its staff evaluation process with full fidelity this year and plans to gather further staff feedback on supervision and evaluation.

Family results remain Exceeding, although all three scales declined from the 99th percentile last year, to the 70th (School Climate and School Fit) and the 80th (Safety). Participation met Framework minimums for every group: 61% of families, 90.6% of students in grades 3–5, 93.2% of students in grades 6–8, and 100% of teachers and staff. The school reports improved safety protocols this year, including risk assessment and suicide prevention training.

Organizational Sustainability

The board held 11 meetings, the same as last year, but 9 agendas and/or approved minutes were posted late. The revised Framework combines meetings held and the timely posting of agendas and approved minutes into a single measure, and more than four late postings is Not Meeting. The school plans to use Epicenter's transparency feature to post agendas and minutes within five business days of approval.

86% of board members completed governance training (Approaching), up from Not Meeting last year, when the board completed 26% of its training requirements. Commission records show that 88% of required submissions were on time and 95% of those were accurate (Meeting), up from 70% on time (Approaching) last year.

The board held a strategic planning retreat on May 30, 2026 to set priorities for the next three years and plans additional sessions with a wider group of stakeholders. Board leadership is changing: Board President Bill Doughty is moving to an advisory role, and Alison Moser and Joanne D'Arcangelo are now Co-Chairs. The board has also prioritized a Development Director position to strengthen fundraising.

The school retained 93% of its lead classroom teachers (95% last year), added a Positive Behavior Interventionist and a crisis team, onboarded a new Special Education Coordinator, and will add a school psychologist in SY2026-27.

Financial Management and Viability

Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences' financial results for SY2025-26 show a school meeting its current obligations but facing longer-term financial pressures. Based on fourth-quarter financials, the school was rated Low Risk for Enrollment Variance, Financial Obligations Default, and Debt to Assets Ratio, and Moderate Risk for Current Ratio, Days Cash on Hand, and Obligation Coverage Ratio. It was rated High Risk for Three-Year Aggregated Margin and Two-Year Cash Flow.[2]

Last year, half of the school's financial measures were High Risk based on FY25 fourth-quarter financials, and financial statements were submitted late. The school reports that it operated under a balanced

[2] The Commission will review these ratings against the school's audited financial statements when they become available and will amend this report if any ratings change.

budget, updated its financial procedures and internal controls, strengthened its business office, and reduced its reliance on outside consultants. The FY26 audit was scheduled to begin in August 2026. Enrollment growth and the expanded Pre-K program were expected to increase the school's state subsidy in FY26; financial sustainability and staffing levels remain areas of focus for the board and leadership.

School Mission and Student Persistence

Of the 209 students enrolled on October 1, 2025, 189 (90.4%) were still enrolled on the last day of school. This meets the Framework's Exceeding threshold, though it is down from 96% last year. Year-to-year persistence will be confirmed following the October 1, 2026 count.

The school continues to implement its curriculum framework, which connects learning to the seasons, local ecology, and community: emergent learning in Pre-K–2, inquiry in grades 3–5, and project-based learning in grades 6–8, with place-based education, climate studies, and social justice as lenses and partnerships with local farms, orchards, and conservation groups.

School Customization

FSAS's customized measures address clear classroom standards and the assessments used to document learning; both were rated Exceeding last year. This year, the school describes interdisciplinary studies aligned with the Maine Learning Results and a balanced assessment system combining NWEA MAP, curriculum-based assessments, portfolios, and Reggio Emilia-inspired documentation. The school and Commission have discussed revisiting these targets.

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Annual Monitoring Report SY2025-26

DRAFT

November 2026

Maine Academy of Natural Sciences

Board President: Dr. Mary Callan
Head of School: Ryan Anthony

SCHOOL MISSION

MISSION

The Maine Academy of Natural Sciences (MeANS) is a public charter high school that inspires and engages students through project-based, student-centered instruction immersed in the natural sciences of Maine with a focus on agriculture, forestry, and the environment. MeANS challenges all students to connect with their education to grow as individuals, interact with their communities, and lead fulfilling lives.

VISION

Respect: *With an emphasis on honoring differences, MeANS encourages students to be compassionate and empathetic. Faculty, staff, and students employ restorative practices for community building and conflict resolution.*

Responsibility: *Our individualized instruction builds confidence and empowers students to take ownership of their education. Skills such as self-advocacy and goal setting are developed alongside a commitment to helping others.*

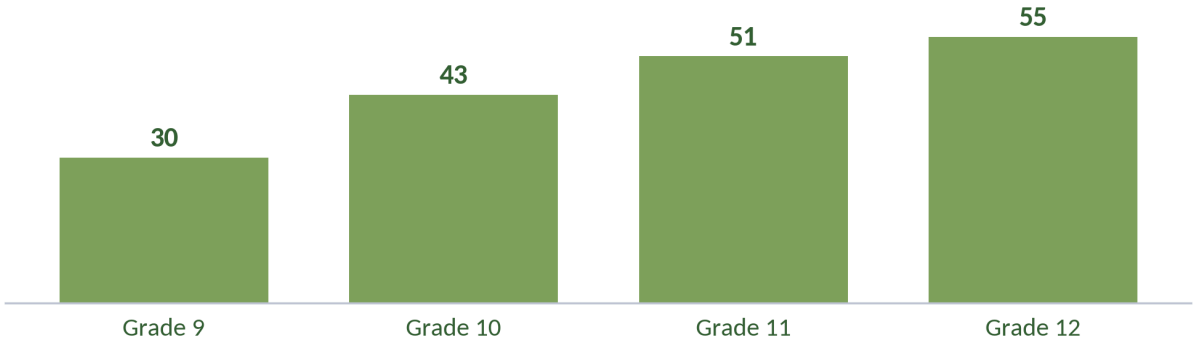
Community: *MeANS connects with students and families through close relationships with advisors, teachers, and administrators. Students are expected to contribute positively to the school and are encouraged to take advantage of the larger learning context through volunteerism, internships, and college courses.*

SCHOOL PROFILE

Maine Academy of Natural Sciences serves students in grades 9–12 through its campus program in Hinckley and its Threshold program. Figures reflect enrollment on October 1, 2025.

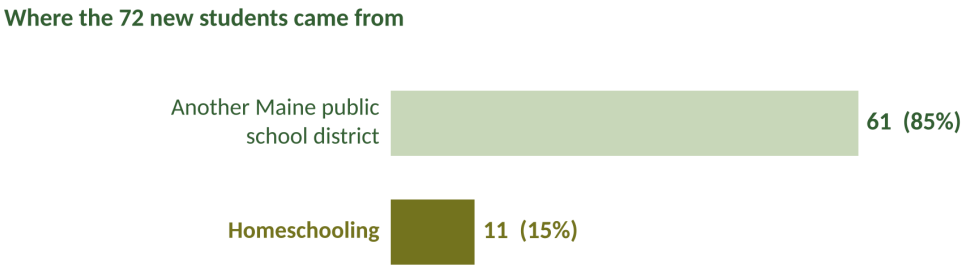
179	43	22.9%	79.9%
Students Enrolled	**Cities and Towns Served**	**Students with IEPs**	**Economically Disadvantaged**
SY2024-25: 177	SY2024-25: 51	SY2024-25: 23.2%	SY2024-25: 71.2%

Enrollment by Grade



Where Students Came From

In SY2025-26, MeANS enrolled 72 new students: 61 transferred from another Maine public school district and 11 came from homeschooling, **entering or returning to Maine's public education system.**



Source: Maine Academy of Natural Sciences SY2025-26 demographic data (October 1, 2025).

NARRATIVE

Maine Academy of Natural Sciences (MeANS), located on the Good Will-Hinckley campus in Hinckley, completed its fourteenth year of operation in SY2025-26. The school enrolled 179 students in grades 9–12 on October 1, 2025 (up from 177 the prior year) from 43 cities and towns, down from 51, with most students living in Kennebec and Somerset Counties. In addition to its campus program, MeANS operates the Threshold program for students who are significantly behind in credits.

MeANS serves a population with significant needs. 22.9% of students have an IEP (down slightly from 23.2%) and 79.9% are economically disadvantaged (up from 71.2%); the economically disadvantaged rate is roughly twice the statewide average.

CHARTER RENEWAL

MeANS completed the Commission's charter renewal process in 2026, which included a renewal application, a full-day site visit, and a public hearing. On October 13, 2026, the Commission voted unanimously to renew the charter for a term of five years, with no conditions.

This report covers Performance Framework outcomes for SY2025-26. The renewal decision was based on the school's full record over its charter term, as documented in the renewal report.

High-level takeaways from SY2025-26:

Strengths:

- Graduation – the four-year rate rose from 65% to 88%, meeting the state target
- Proficiency gains – grade 10 reading and math results more than doubled, with reading now above the state and economically disadvantaged students above the state in both subjects
- College readiness – Accuplacer results rose to Exceeding, overall and for subgroups
- Governance – board training rose from 11% to 100%, and agendas and minutes were posted on time
- Mission – Natural Science Intensives, expanded AP offerings, and far fewer suspensions

Areas of Focus:

- Chronic absenteeism, which rose to 37% and reached 44% in grade 12
- Math proficiency, which remains below the state average, particularly for male students
- Leadership capacity and sustainability of the Threshold program

- Teacher survey results on feedback and coaching (20th percentile) and leadership (down from 90th to 50th)
- Rebuilding enrollment to support the school's budget

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Year-over-Year Snapshot

Key SY2025-26 results are shown below alongside the results reported for SY2024-25.

Reading the proficiency results: "MeANS" is the percentage of MeANS students who scored at or above state expectations on the Maine Through Year Assessment; "State" is the percentage of students statewide in the same grade. Ratings are based on the gap between the two: Exceeding is 5 or more percentage points above the state, Meeting is within 5 points, Approaching is 5 to 15 points below, and Not Meeting is more than 15 points below.

▲ Stronger than SY2024-25 ▼ Lower than SY2024-25 ● About the same

Measure	SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Proficiency – Maine Through Year Assessment: % of students at or above state expectations			
Reading — Grade 10: MeANS **74%**, State 62%, Rating **Exceeding**	*All tested grades* **MeANS 74%** State 62% **Exceeding**	■ Not Meeting	▲
Math — Grade 10: MeANS **41%**, State 49%, Rating **Approaching**	*All tested grades* **MeANS 41%** State 49% **Approaching**	■ Not Meeting	▲
Subgroup Proficiency – reportable subgroups[1]			
Reading — Econ. Disadv.: **73%**, 54.3%, **Exceeding**; Male: **64%**, 59.7%, **Meeting**; Female: **80%**, 69.7%, **Exceeding**	*Subgroup average* **Average 3.67** of 4 **Exceeding**	■ Not Meeting	▲
Math — Econ. Disadv.: **43%**, 30.7%, **Exceeding**; Male: **36%**, 45%, **Approaching**; Female: **42%**, 42.7%, **Meeting**	*Subgroup average* **Average 3.0** of 4 **Meeting**	■ Approaching	▲
Graduation and Post-Secondary Readiness			
4-Year Graduation Rate	**88% Meeting**	■ Not Meeting	▲
5- and 6-Year Graduation Rates	*Not reported (under 10 students)*	■ Not Meeting	–
Accuplacer – Reading / Math	**84% / 90% Exceeding**	■ Meeting	▲
Accuplacer subgroups — Econ. Disadv.: 90%, 93%, **Exceeding**; Male: 84%, 90%, **Exceeding**; Female: 85%, 80%, **Meeting**	*Subgroup average*[1] **Average 3.67** of 4 **Exceeding**	■ Meeting	▲
College and Career Readiness Activity	**90% Exceeding**	■ Exceeding	▼
FAFSA Support (not rated)	*Reported as required*	Reported	–

[1] **How subgroup ratings are combined.** Used for subgroup proficiency and Accuplacer subgroups. Each subgroup with 10 or more students is rated on its own and given points: Exceeding = 4, Meeting = 3, Approaching = 2, Not Meeting = 1. The points are averaged, and the average determines the overall rating: 3.5 or higher is Exceeding; 2.5 to 3.49 is Meeting; 1.5 to 2.49 is Approaching; below 1.5 is Not Meeting. *Example:* MeANS's reading subgroups were rated Exceeding (4), Meeting (3), and Exceeding (4), an average of 3.67, which is Exceeding.

Measure	SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Chronic Absenteeism	**37% Not Meeting**	35%	▼
School Climate – Panorama Surveys (percentile compared to like schools nationally)			
Family 2025-26 2024-25 School Climate **90th** 99th Safety **90th** 99th School Fit **90th** 99th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **3 of 3** Participation pending **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Student 2025-26 2024-25 School Climate **90th** 90th Safety **90th** 90th Rigorous Expectations **80th** 80th Teacher-Student Relationships **90th** 99th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation pending **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Teacher 2025-26 2024-25 School Climate **90th** 99th Leadership **50th** 90th Professional Learning **90th** 70th Feedback & Coaching **20th** 40th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **3 of 4** Participation pending **Meeting**	Meeting	▼
Staff 2025-26 2024-25 School Climate **90th** 90th Leadership **90th** 60th Professional Learning **90th** 80th Feedback & Coaching **80th** 40th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation pending **Exceeding**	Meeting	▲
Organizational Sustainability			
Board Meetings – held and posted on time	**7 Exceeding**	4 posted late	▲
Reporting – on time / accurate	**90% / 98% Exceeding**	Meeting	▲
Board Training	**100% Meeting**	Not Meeting	▲
School Mission and Student Persistence			
Student Persistence – School Year	**94% Exceeding**	Exceeding	▲
Student Persistence – Year to Year	*Pending (Oct. 1, 2026 count)*	Exceeding	–

Note: MeANS tests grade 10 only on the MTY. Last year's board meetings entry reflects late posting of 2 agendas and 2 sets of minutes.

Student Achievement

Proficiency

MeANS administers the Maine Through Year Assessment (MTY) in reading and math to students in grade 10. Of 37 tenth graders, 34 (92%) took the reading assessment and 33 (89%) took math. Because only one grade is tested, results reflect a single class of about 35 students and can change considerably from year to year.

Results improved sharply from last year. In reading, 74% of tenth graders scored at or above state expectations compared with 62% statewide, up from 35% and moving from Not Meeting to Exceeding. In

math, 41% scored at or above expectations compared with 49% statewide, up from 17% and moving from Not Meeting to Approaching.

Subgroup results also improved. Economically disadvantaged students, who make up most of the tested class, outperformed the state in both subjects: 73% in reading compared with 54.3% statewide, and 43% in math compared with 30.7%, both Exceeding, up from Approaching in reading and Not Meeting in math last year. Female students exceeded the state in reading (80% vs. 69.7%) and met expectations in math (42% vs. 42.7%). Male students met expectations in reading (64% vs. 59.7%) but were Approaching in math (36% vs. 45%). Both groups were Not Meeting in reading and math last year. Taken together, subgroup results are Exceeding in reading, up from Not Meeting, and Meeting in math, up from Approaching. Students with IEPs and multilingual learners fell below the 10-student reporting minimum.

The school attributes its progress to a maturing assessment culture, with testing now part of routine practice, and to departmental collaboration supported by Rural Aspirations and GEAR UP. The math department spent the year reviewing data and student work and is shifting instruction toward foundational numeracy, project-based learning, and reducing math anxiety.

Graduation and Post-Secondary Readiness

The four-year graduation rate rose to 88% (43 of 49 students), up from 65% (Not Meeting) last year, and meets the state target of 88% for 2026 (Meeting). Most of the six students who did not graduate in four years were enrolled in the Threshold program, which serves students who are significantly behind in credits. Leadership described the program's focus on each student's readiness for life after high school and long-term success, including giving students who need it additional time to complete their requirements. On campus, 100% of students developed a post-secondary plan, and 18 of 25 seniors were accepted to a two- or four-year college. The 5- and 6-year cohorts fall below the Framework's 10-student reporting minimum and are not rated this year.

College readiness improved. On the Accuplacer, 84% of students met the reading benchmark of 239 and 90% met the math benchmark of 226, up from 82% and 84%. Under the revised Framework, a student is college ready by meeting the benchmark in at least one subject; with at least 90% of students doing so, the result is Exceeding, up from Meeting. Subgroup results are also Exceeding: economically disadvantaged students (90% reading, 93% math) and male students (84%, 90%) exceeded expectations, and female students (85%, 80%) met them. Last year, subgroup results were Meeting.

MeANS reports that 90% of seniors completed career and technical coursework, and students also took college courses (12), AP courses (17), and certificate programs (7). The school expanded AP to four subject areas and had a National Technical Honor Society member and two SkillsUSA medalists in Outdoor Leadership. The school supported families with FAFSA completion through two FAME nights and year-round one-on-one meetings through GEAR UP; 49% of families (25 of 51) completed the FAFSA, up from 41%. Leadership reports that this year's college acceptance rate was the school's highest to date.

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Attendance

Chronic absenteeism remains the school's most significant challenge. The rate rose to 37% from 35% last year, higher than the state average (Not Meeting) and above the rates in Kennebec (24%) and Somerset (32%) Counties, where most students live. Rates were highest in grade 12 (44%) and lowest in grade 11 (31%), and female students were chronically absent at a higher rate (42%) than male students (36%).

Leadership described past attendance efforts as largely reactive and is implementing a tiered intervention model: daily calls home for absent students, weekly advisor updates, involvement of the professional learning community after two absences, administrative follow-up after five, and home visits after ten. The school is strengthening coordination with outside supports such as Count Me In, holding meetings with families to identify barriers, and offering Monday academic support and new Friday make-up sessions. Leadership also noted that strong graduation results alongside high absenteeism raise questions about how students with significant absences meet requirements, as no formal system currently links attendance to credit.

School Climate and Family Engagement

Panorama School Climate Survey results remained strong overall, though most scales declined from last year's very high levels. Family results were at the 90th percentile on all three required scales (School Climate, Safety, and School Fit), down from the 99th on each, and remain Exceeding. Student results also remain Exceeding: School Climate, Safety, and Rigorous Expectations held steady (90th, 90th, and 80th), while Teacher-Student Relationships moved from the 99th to the 90th percentile. Staff results improved on three of four scales, with Leadership rising from the 60th to the 90th percentile and Feedback and Coaching from the 40th to the 80th, moving staff from Meeting to Exceeding. Teacher results remain Meeting, but declined on three of four scales: School Climate fell from the 99th to the 90th percentile, Leadership from the 90th to the 50th, and Feedback and Coaching from the 40th to the 20th, the lowest result on any survey. Professional Learning rose from the 70th to the 90th. The school reports continued high satisfaction among students and families.

MeANS launched its first MeANS Family Association this year to strengthen family engagement and gather regular feedback, and advisors continue to communicate weekly with each advisee's family. Through a consensus-based process, staff and students refined the school's restorative practices and graduated discipline plan; the school reports a reduction of more than 80% in suspensions from the prior year.

Organizational Sustainability

Board compliance improved significantly this year. Last year, two board meeting agendas and two sets of approved minutes were posted late, and only 4 of 37 board training requirements (11%) were completed (Not Meeting). This year the school reports that all agendas and minutes were posted on time and 100% of board members completed governance training. The board also worked with a BoardOnTrack coach on committee structure, and offered six in-house professional development sessions. MeANS submitted

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90% of required documents on time and 98% accurately (Exceeding), compared with 89% and 100% last year (Meeting).

The board added five new members over the past year, including alumni and the school's founder, and works through standing committees in Finance, Development, Academic Affairs, Human Resources, and an Executive Committee. Its priorities include building fundraising capacity, establishing a small endowment, and adding communications and marketing expertise. Two long-serving members of the Academic Affairs Committee plan to step down at the same time, which the board recognizes will leave a gap.

SY2025-26 was the first full year for Head of School Ryan Anthony, and the board reported that leadership is stable. The board and leadership also identified the workload of the Threshold program's lead, who also teaches, as a sustainability concern, and plan to provide additional operational support from the main campus leadership team.

MeANS leases its building from Good Will-Hinckley under a lease that runs through June 30, 2027. Rent increased by $20,000 under the FY26–FY27 lease, and the school reports rising utility costs related to aging infrastructure and reduced solar output. Leadership noted that new leadership at Good Will-Hinckley may offer an opportunity to revisit facility improvements.

Financial Management and Viability

The Maine Academy of Natural Sciences' financial results for SY2025-26 show a school in generally sound financial health, with one area of concern in its longer-term results. Based on fourth-quarter financials, the school was rated Low Risk for Current Ratio, Financial Obligations Default, Debt to Assets Ratio, Two-Year Cash Flow, and Obligation Coverage Ratio, and Moderate Risk for Days Cash on Hand and Enrollment Variance. It was rated High Risk for Three-Year Aggregated Margin.[2]

For FY26, the school adopted a planned deficit budget as part of a multi-year enrollment recovery plan, using its FY25 surplus to cover planned losses while it added a Threshold teaching position and rebuilt enrollment. Because state subsidy is based on the prior year's October 1 count, the financial benefit of enrollment growth arrives a year later.

The school reports that it was trending favorably against budget, with savings from an unfilled transportation position and controlled operating expenses. MeANS paid off its vehicle lease, received a clean audit opinion with one minor recommendation on journal entry review, and moved its accounting to Microsoft Business Central. Cost pressures include the higher rent, utilities, an approximately 8% increase in employee health insurance, and higher food service administrative fees. The school reports its best fundraising year to date.

[2] The Commission will review these ratings against the school's audited financial statements when they become available and will amend this report if any ratings change.

School Mission and Student Persistence

Of the students enrolled on October 1, 2025, 94% were still enrolled on the last day of school (Exceeding), up from 91% last year. Year-to-year persistence will be confirmed following the October 1, 2026 count; last year, 96% of students returned the following fall (Exceeding). The school reports that students who enroll at MeANS overwhelmingly choose to return, and staff retention remains high, with two classroom teaching positions turning over in the past three years.

Natural Science Intensives remain at the center of the school's mission, and three other Maine schools are now piloting their own versions. Hands-on courses include agriculture, woodworking, blacksmithing, fiber arts, and maple sugaring. Enrollment on October 1, 2025 was 179, and leadership reports growing demand, with a goal of 187 students and an incoming class of about 35 freshmen for SY2026-27. The school is expanding outreach through radio ads, community events, and student-managed social media, as many families in its area are still unaware that MeANS is an option.

School Customization

MeANS's customized measures track participation in its Natural Science Intensives, exposure to natural science post-secondary opportunities, campus graduation, and NWEA MAP participation. 89% of students earned credit in at least three of four intensives (88% last year, Exceeding), and 100% of students were exposed to eight or more natural science post-secondary opportunities (100% last year, Exceeding). Campus graduation reached 100% (25 of 25 seniors), up from 92% (Meeting). NWEA MAP participation on campus was 98% in math and reading, up from 96% (Exceeding last year), and Threshold participation was 89%, up from 83% (Meeting last year), for overall participation of 96%.

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Annual Monitoring Report

SY2025-26

DRAFT

November 2026

Maine Arts Academy

Board President: Linda Warner

Head of School: Heather King

SCHOOL MISSION

MISSION

Providing a rigorous academic and well-rounded visual and performing arts curriculum, educating students in grades 7-12 from across the State of Maine.

VISION

Nurturing the next generation of leaders to become invaluable citizens at the heart of Maine's cultural, economic and social well being.

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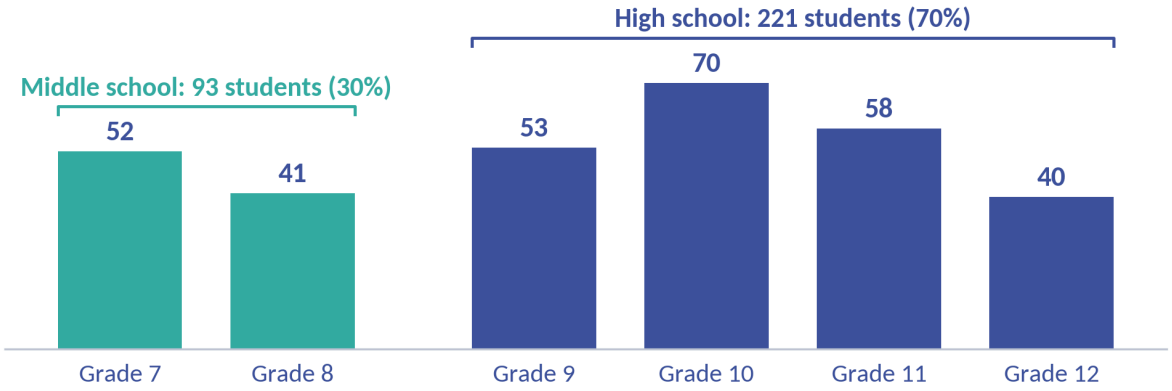
SCHOOL PROFILE

Maine Arts Academy serves students in grades 7–12 from across the state, and added grades 7 and 8 this year. Figures reflect enrollment on October 1, 2025.

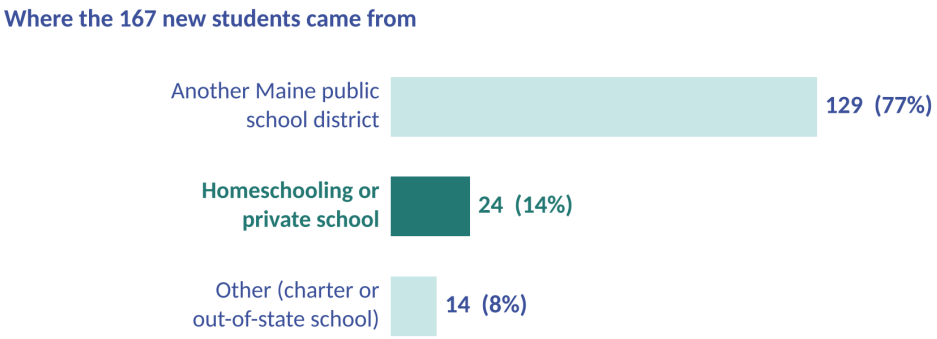
314	76	18.8%	43.9%
Students Enrolled	**Cities and Towns Served**	**Students with IEPs**	**Economically Disadvantaged**
SY2024-25: 245	SY2024-25: 71	SY2024-25: 17.14%	SY2024-25: 40.82%

Enrollment by Grade



Where Students Came From

In SY2025-26, MeAA enrolled 167 new students, of whom 24 (about one in seven) came from homeschooling or a private school, **entering or returning to Maine's public education system.**



Source: Maine Arts Academy SY2025-26 demographic data (October 1, 2025). Categories with fewer than 10 students are combined.

NARRATIVE

CHARTER RENEWAL

In October 2025, the Maine Charter School Commission renewed Maine Arts Academy's charter for another five-year term.

Maine Arts Academy (MeAA), located in Augusta, completed its tenth year of operation in SY2025-26 and opened its middle school this year, adding grades 7 and 8. The school enrolled 314 students in grades 7–12 on October 1, 2025 (up from 245 the prior year) from 76 cities and towns and 42 school administrative units across Maine.

18.8% of MeAA students have an IEP (up from 17.14%) and 43.9% are economically disadvantaged (up from 40.82%); both are slightly below the most recent statewide averages of 20.3% and 45.8% (SY2024-25). The school reports that 105 students had 504 plans during the year, along with significant behavioral and mental health needs.

High-level takeaways from SY2025-26:

Strengths:

- Reading proficiency – grade 10 well above the state (74.6% vs. 62%); grades 7 and 8 meeting expectations
- Reading proficiency of subgroups, including students with IEPs
- Graduation (92.3%) and college readiness (Accuplacer 98% reading, 95% math)
- Student persistence improved to 90.4%
- Arts – 100% of graduates shared their art with the community at least twice
- Expanded academic options, including the school's first on-campus AP courses
- Timely, accurate reporting and full board training completion
- Board meetings – timely posting of agendas and approved minutes, an area of focus last year, now exceeds expectations
- Math growth – 45.5% of students in grades 7 and 8 met their projected growth, meeting the school's own 45% target

Areas of Focus:

- Math proficiency, especially in grades 7 and 8; both male and female students scored below the state in math
- Reading growth in grades 7 and 8
- School climate – student results did not meet expectations for a fourth year, and family and teacher results declined

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- Chronic absenteeism, which rose from 15% to 23.1%
- Leadership stability during the principal search

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Year-over-Year Snapshot

Key SY2025-26 results alongside SY2024-25. MeAA added grades 7 and 8 this year, so last year's proficiency ratings reflect grade 10 only, and NWEA growth is reported for the first time.

Reading the proficiency results: "MeAA" is the percentage of MeAA students who scored at or above state expectations on the Maine Through Year Assessment; "State" is the percentage of students statewide in the same grade. Ratings are based on the gap between the two: Exceeding is 5 or more percentage points above the state, Meeting is within 5 points, Approaching is 5 to 15 points below, and Not Meeting is more than 15 points below.

▲ Stronger than SY2024-25 ▼ Lower than SY2024-25 ● About the same

Measure				SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Proficiency – Maine Through Year Assessment: % of students at or above state expectations						
Reading	MeAA	State	Rating	*All tested grades* **MeAA 69.4%** State 64.6% **Meeting**	Exceeding	▼
Grade 7	**70.2%**	70%	**Meeting**			
Grade 8	**58.8%**	62%	**Meeting**			
Grade 10	**74.6%**	62%	**Exceeding**			
Math	MeAA	State	Rating	*All tested grades* **MeAA 26.3%** State 44.4% **Not Meeting**	Approaching	▼
Grade 7	**23.4%**	40%	**Not Meeting**			
Grade 8	**8.8%**	42%	**Not Meeting**			
Grade 10	**38%**	49%	**Approaching**			
Subgroup Proficiency – reportable subgroups[1]						
Reading	MeAA	State	Rating	*Subgroup average* **Average 3.50** of 4 **Exceeding**	Exceeding	●
With IEPs	**33.3%**	31.7%	**Meeting**			
Econ. Disadv.	**70.6%**	54.3%	**Exceeding**			
Male	**71.8%**	59.7%	**Exceeding**			
Female	**68.6%**	69.7%	**Meeting**			
Math	MeAA	State	Rating	*Subgroup average* **Average 2.50** of 4 **Meeting**	Meeting	●
With IEPs	**23.8%**	12.7%	**Exceeding**			
Econ. Disadv.	**26.5%**	30.7%	**Meeting**			
Male	**30.8%**	45%	**Approaching**			
Female	**24.8%**	42.7%	**Not Meeting**			
Growth – NWEA MAP, grades 7–8 (% meeting projected growth)						
Reading				**32.9% Not Meeting**	New measure	–
Math				**45.5% Meeting**	New measure	–
Subgroup Growth – reportable subgroups[1]						

[1] **How subgroup ratings are combined.** Used for subgroup proficiency, subgroup growth and Accuplacer subgroups. Each subgroup with 10 or more students is rated on its own and given points: Exceeding = 4, Meeting = 3, Approaching = 2, Not Meeting = 1. The points are averaged, and the average determines the overall rating: 3.5 or higher is Exceeding; 2.5 to 3.49 is Meeting; 1.5 to 2.49 is Approaching; below 1.5 is Not Meeting. *Example:* MeAA's reading subgroups were rated Meeting (3), Exceeding (4), Exceeding (4), and Meeting (3), an average of 3.5, which is Exceeding.

Measure				SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Reading	Met growth	Rating		*Subgroup average* **Average 1.60** of 4 **Approaching**	New measure	–
With IEPs	30.7%	Not Meeting				
Econ. Disadv.	52%	Meeting				
Male	40.9%	Approaching				
Female	29.6%	Not Meeting				
504 Plans	21.1%	Not Meeting				
Math	Met growth	Rating		*Subgroup average* **Average 2.20** of 4 **Approaching**	New measure	–
With IEPs	23%	Not Meeting				
Econ. Disadv.	41.1%	Approaching				
Male	40.9%	Approaching				
Female	47.3%	Meeting				
504 Plans	52.6%	Meeting				
Graduation and Post-Secondary Readiness						
4-Year Graduation Rate				**92.3% Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
5- and 6-Year Graduation (under 10 students)				*Reported; not published*	Not applicable	–
Accuplacer – Reading / Math				**98% / 95% Exceeding**	Exceeding	●
Accuplacer subgroups	**Reading**	**Math**	**Rating**	*Subgroup average*[1] **Average 4.00** of 4 **Exceeding**	Exceeding	●
With IEPs	92%	83%	Exceeding			
Econ. Disadv.	100%	92%	Exceeding			
Female	98%	95%	Exceeding			
College and Career Readiness Activity				**100% Exceeding**	Exceeding	●
FAFSA Support (not rated)				*Reported as required*	Reported	–
Chronic Absenteeism				**MeAA 23.1%** State 23.4% **Meeting**	15% (not rated)	▼
School Climate – Panorama Surveys (percentile compared to like schools nationally)						
Family	**2025-26**	**2024-25**		*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **1 of 3** Participation 41% (35% required) **Approaching**	Exceeding	▼
School Climate	**30th**	99th				
Safety	**50th**	99th				
School Fit	**20th**	99th				
Student	**2025-26**	**2024-25**		*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **1 of 4** Participation 80% (75% required) **Not Meeting**	Not Meeting	▼
School Climate	**30th**	10th				
Safety	**60th**	90th				
Rigorous Expectations	**10th**	20th				
Teacher-Student Relationships	**20th**	30th				
Teacher	**2025-26**	**2024-25**		*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **3 of 4** Participation not reported separately **Meeting**	Exceeding	▼
School Climate	**80th**	99th				
Leadership	**70th**	90th				
Professional Learning	**70th**	99th				
Feedback and Coaching	**40th**	90th				

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Measure			SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Staff	**2025-26**	**2024-25**	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 92% (75% required) **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
School Climate	**90th**	99th			
Leadership	**90th**	99th			
Professional Learning	**90th**	90th			
Feedback and Coaching	**90th**	99th			
Organizational Sustainability					
Board Meetings Held			**11 Exceeding**	Meeting	▲
Reporting – on time / accurate			**98% / 99% Exceeding**	Exceeding	▲
Board Training			**100% Meeting**	Approaching	▲
School Mission and Student Persistence					
Student Persistence – School Year			**90.4% Exceeding**	Meeting	▲
Student Persistence – Year to Year			*Pending (Oct. 1, 2026 count)*	Meeting	–

Student Achievement

Proficiency

MeAA administers the Maine Through Year Assessment (MTY) in reading and math to students in grades 7, 8, and 10. This is the first year the school has tested middle school students, so last year's ratings, which were based on grade 10 alone, are not a like-for-like comparison. Participation was strong: 97.9% in grade 7, 100% in grade 8, and 92.9% in grade 10.

Reading remains a strength. Across tested grades, 69.4% of MeAA students scored at or above state expectations compared with 64.6% statewide (Meeting), just short of the Exceeding range and down from Exceeding. Grade 10 students outperformed the state by more than 12 points (74.6% vs. 62%), although this is lower than last year's 89%. Grade 7 matched the state (70.2% vs. 70%), and grade 8 was slightly below it (58.8% vs. 62%).

Math is the school's most significant challenge. Overall, 26.3% of MeAA students scored at or above state expectations compared with 44.4% statewide (Not Meeting), down from Approaching. Grade 10 results were essentially unchanged from last year (38%, compared with 39%) and remain Approaching. Results for the new middle school students were much lower: 23.4% in grade 7 (state 40%) and 8.8% in grade 8 (state 42%). All of these students were in their first year at MeAA, and the school reports that many entered below grade level, including a number who were previously homeschooled. The school notes that eighth graders scored below seventh graders in both subjects despite having the same instructional team, and plans further analysis.

Subgroup reading results exceeded expectations (Exceeding, unchanged from last year). Economically disadvantaged students (70.6% vs. 54.3% statewide) and male students (71.8% vs. 59.7%) both outperformed the state by more than 12 points, while students with IEPs (33.3% vs. 31.7%) and female students (68.6% vs. 69.7%) were in line with the state. Subgroup math results were Meeting, unchanged

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from last year. Students with IEPs outperformed the state (23.8% vs. 12.7%) and economically disadvantaged students were close to it (26.5% vs. 30.7%), but male students (30.8% vs. 45%) and female students (24.8% vs. 42.7%) were well below it.

To strengthen math, the school is adding a supplemental program aligned with Maine standards and targeted using NWEA data, strengthening follow-through on its Response to Intervention (RTI) process, and planning a competitive math team for SY2026-27. As a longer-term step, the school is considering a common math curriculum for all grades to provide greater consistency from middle school through high school.

Growth

With the addition of grades 7 and 8, NWEA MAP growth is reported for the first time. 80 of 82 eligible students tested (97.6%). Based on the NWEA growth reports the school provided, 45.5% of students met their projected growth in math (Meeting), reaching the school's own 45% target, while 32.9% met their projected growth in reading (Not Meeting).

Subgroup growth was Approaching in both subjects. In reading, economically disadvantaged students met expectations (52%) and male students were Approaching (40.9%), while students with IEPs (30.7%), female students (29.6%), and students with 504 plans (21.1%) were below 35%. In math, students with 504 plans (52.6%) and female students (47.3%) met expectations, male and economically disadvantaged students were Approaching (40.9% and 41.1%), and students with IEPs (23%) were below 35%.

Graduation and Post-Secondary Readiness

MeAA's four-year graduation rate was 92.3%: 36 of 39 students in the 2026 cohort graduated, exceeding the state target of 88% (Exceeding), though down from 98% last year. The school reported 5- and 6-year graduation rates, but because fewer than 10 students were in each of those groups, the rates are not publicly reported or rated.

College readiness remains a clear strength. On the Accuplacer, 98% of seniors met the reading benchmark and 95% met the math benchmark, compared with 97% in both last year, so at least 98% met the benchmark in at least one subject (Exceeding). Every reportable subgroup was above 85%: students with IEPs (92% reading, 83% math), economically disadvantaged students (100%, 92%), and female students (98%, 95%), so subgroup results also exceeded expectations.

The school reports that 100% of students participated in a college and career readiness activity (Exceeding). This year MeAA offered Advanced Placement courses on campus for the first time (AP U.S. History and AP Pre-Calculus), offered AP Biology through the University of Maine system, and became an AP testing site; 12% of students took an AP course and 15% a college course. An Extended Learning Opportunities grant supported job shadows and career exploration, and the school organized visits to nine colleges and universities.

MeAA supported families with FAFSA completion through individual meetings, weekly reminders, and 40 workshop dates.

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Attendance

Chronic absenteeism rose to 23.1%, up from 15% last year, just below the most recent published statewide rate of 23.4% (Meeting). Rates were highest in grade 10 (28%), grade 12 (27%), and grade 7 (25%), and lowest in grade 9 (13%). The school reports that many incoming students have histories of truancy and that transportation is a major barrier for families across its wide service area. Staff support attendance through individual outreach, breakfast incentives, and help with transportation.

School Climate and Family Engagement

Panorama results declined for every group this year. For the fourth year in a row, the student survey did not meet Framework expectations (Not Meeting). Only Safety (60th percentile, down from the 90th) was at or above the 50th percentile. School Climate rose from the 10th to the 30th percentile, while Rigorous Expectations fell from the 20th to the 10th and Teacher-Student Relationships from the 30th to the 20th. Student participation was 80%.

The family survey, which has been the school's strongest result, fell from Exceeding, with all three scales at the 99th percentile, to Approaching: School Climate at the 30th percentile, Safety at the 50th, and School Fit at the 20th. Participation was 41%. Teacher results declined from Exceeding to Meeting: School Climate fell from the 99th to the 80th percentile, Leadership from the 90th to the 70th, Professional Learning from the 99th to the 70th, and Feedback and Coaching from the 90th to the 40th. Staff results remained strong (Exceeding), with every scale at the 90th percentile, although three scales were down from the 99th. Staff participation was 92%.

School leaders attribute much of the decline to the transition of opening the middle school, which changed schedules, facilities, and routines for high school students, as well as to leadership turnover. They also raised questions about how the family survey is administered. A school-administered student survey in February 2026 was more positive: 81% of students were satisfied with the academic program, 89.2% said they had an adult to turn to if bullied, and students rated the overall atmosphere 8 out of 10. In SY2026-27 the school will form a School Climate Focus Group of students and parents, gather student feedback at the start of the year, and expand family communication. The Commission continues to encourage the board and administration to make the student experience of school climate a priority.

Organizational Sustainability

MeAA continues to submit required reports on time and accurately: 98% of 88 submissions were on time and 99% were accurate, compared with 96% and 100% last year. The board held 11 meetings (12 last year), and 100% of board members completed governance training, up from 85%. The board also improved in an area the Commission identified as a focus last year: its meetings met every Framework requirement, including the timely posting of agendas and approved minutes, and this measure rose from Meeting to Exceeding.

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Leadership was a significant challenge this year. The principal in place in SY25-26 will not be returning for SY26-27. During summer 2026, the board hired a new principal. Head of School Heather King provided interim leadership, and the board has provided weekly check-ins with her. The board president and treasurer are serving a final year, and the board is planning mentoring for incoming officers; there is not yet a formal succession plan. The board is also considering additional vice principal positions for SY2027-28.

Special education and student support needs continue to grow. The school expanded to three special education teachers, partners with Kennebec Behavioral Health for a full-time on-campus therapist, and is exploring a behavioral specialist position. The school reports a Tier 1 rating in state special education monitoring. Leaders also identified technology infrastructure as a constraint: aging devices and limited internet made state testing difficult, and the building will need phased wiring upgrades. Facility and mission compliance items could not be read in the outcomes document.

Financial Management and Viability

Maine Arts Academy's financial results for SY2025-26 show a school in sound overall financial health, with no measures rated High Risk. Based on fourth-quarter financials, the school was rated Low Risk for six of eight measures: Current Ratio, Enrollment Variance, Financial Obligations Default, Debt to Assets Ratio, Two-Year Cash Flow, and Obligation Coverage Ratio. It was rated Moderate Risk for Days Cash on Hand and Three-Year Aggregated Margin[2].

The school reports that its operating budget remains balanced, with about 82% of budgeted expenditures spent as of the April review and June budget-to-actuals at 97%. Reserves of about $400,000 represent 61 days of cash on hand, up from 36 days (Moderate Risk) at the end of FY25. Transportation and building maintenance exceeded budget; the school plans to apply to the State School Bus Grant Program to replace aging vehicles. MeAA has about $200,000 of a required $250,000 capital reserve and plans to complete it in FY27. Renovations for the middle school included new classrooms and sprinkler and HVAC upgrades, and the sprinkler work reduced insurance premiums by 8%. MeAA changed audit firms in FY26 and will participate in the Community Eligibility Provision for school meals beginning in FY27. Grant funding this year included a $93,000 school safety grant and a $58,088 Title I summer school grant.

School Mission and Student Persistence

Student persistence improved this year. Of the 314 students enrolled on October 1, 2025, 284 (90.4%) were still enrolled on the last day of school (Exceeding), up from 88% (Meeting) last year and 65% two years ago. Year-to-year persistence will be confirmed following the October 1, 2026 count. The school

[2] The Commission will review these ratings against the school's audited financial statements when they become available and will amend this report if any ratings change.

reports strong demand: its expansion to grades 7–12 attracted students from more than 30 districts, and it describes itself as Maine's only public arts school serving these grades.

School Customization

MeAA continues to exceed both of its customized arts measures. 100% of graduating students participated in at least two activities sharing their art with the community (up from 98%), and 97.3% met proficiency in two or more performances (98% last year). Students took part in 22 community art exhibitions (up from 17 opportunities last year), two full-length theater productions, and four public dance performances, along with numerous music performances.

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MAINE CONNECTIONS ACADEMY

Annual Monitoring Report

SY2025-26

DRAFT

November 2026

Maine Connections Academy

Board President: Billy Thompson

Executive Director: Walter Wallace

SCHOOL MISSION

MISSION

The mission of MCA is to maximize learner-centered instruction and effectively leverage 21st century education resources to provide a high-quality education to students in grades 7–12 throughout the state who need expanded educational options. MCA personalizes each student's education path to maximize his or her potential with a focus on meeting and exceeding the highest performance standards.

VISION

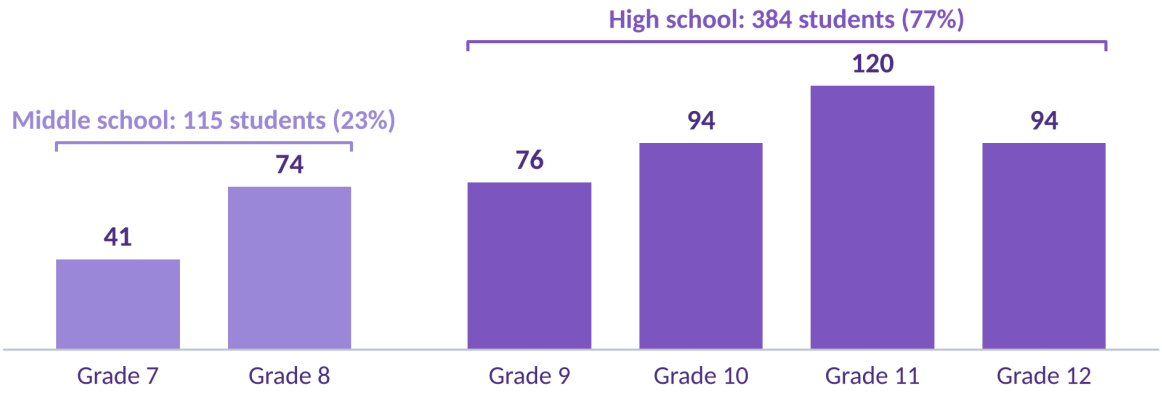
The vision of MCA is to reach students throughout Maine for whom a cutting-edge virtual approach provides the best pathway to school success. MCA implements a uniquely individualized learning program for each student in a way that most districts simply cannot offer in the traditional educational model. MCA combines the best in virtual education with real connections among students, families, teachers, and the community to promote academic and emotional success for every learner. Every single day, MCA lives its mission and vision by focusing on the students, the curriculum, and leveraging 21st century education resources.

SCHOOL PROFILE

Maine Connections Academy is a full-time virtual school serving students in grades 7–12 from across the state. Figures reflect enrollment on October 1, 2025.

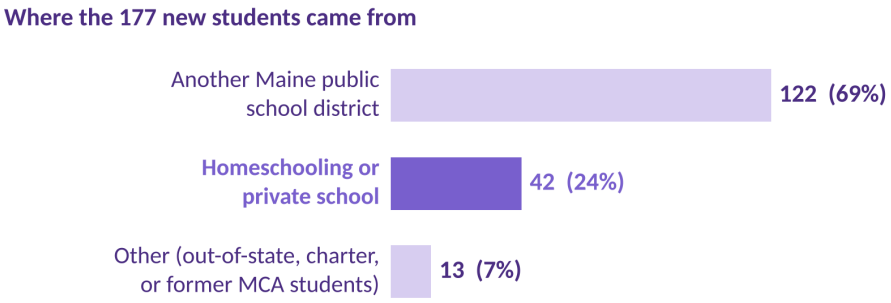
499	194	22.4%	49.7%
Students Enrolled	**Cities and Towns Served**	**Students with IEPs**	**Economically Disadvantaged**
SY2024-25: 504	SY2024-25: 195	SY2024-25: 21.83%	SY2024-25: 51.59%

Enrollment by Grade



Where Students Came From

In SY2025-26, MCA enrolled 177 new students, 42 of whom (about one in four) came from homeschooling or a private school, entering or returning to Maine's public education system.



Source: Maine Connections Academy SY2025-26 demographic data and student roster (October 1, 2025) and 2024-25 year-end enrollment records. Categories with fewer than 10 students are combined.

NARRATIVE

Maine Connections Academy (MCA), Maine's first full-time virtual public charter school, is based in South Portland and completed its twelfth year of operation in SY2025-26. The school enrolled 499 students in grades 7–12 on October 1, 2025 (down slightly from 504 the prior year) from 194 cities and towns and 117 school administrative units across Maine. In June 2026, MCA graduated its twelfth senior class.

MCA serves a population with significant needs. 22.4% of students have an IEP (up slightly from 21.83%) and 49.7% are economically disadvantaged (down from 51.59%); both remain higher than the statewide average. Another 15.6% of students have a 504 plan. Enrollment is weighted toward the high school: 77% of students are in grades 9–12, while grades 7 and 8 together enroll 115 students.

High-level takeaways from SY2025-26:

Strengths:

- Math growth – 56% of middle school students met their projected growth, exceeding expectations for another year
- College readiness – Accuplacer results improved in reading (86%) and math (92%) and now exceed expectations overall and across subgroups
- Reading proficiency in line with the state average (63.4% vs. 64.7%), with male students above the state
- Graduation – an 89.32% four-year graduation rate, above the state target of 88%
- Student attendance – chronic absenteeism remains low at 9.26%
- School climate – all four Panorama surveys exceeded expectations, with every scale at or above the 70th percentile
- Board training – all board members completed governance training, up from 13% last year
- Strong student persistence and timely, accurate reporting

Areas of Focus:

- Math proficiency – below the state average in every tested grade for the third consecutive year
- Math proficiency of female students (25% vs. 42.7% statewide) and a new gap between female and male students
- Reading growth for students with IEPs

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Year-over-Year Snapshot

Key SY2025-26 results are shown below alongside the results reported for SY2024-25.

Reading the proficiency results: "MCA" is the percentage of MCA students who scored at or above state expectations on the Maine Through Year Assessment; "State" is the percentage of students statewide in the same grade. Ratings are based on the gap between the two: Exceeding is 5 or more percentage points above the state, Meeting is within 5 points, Approaching is 5 to 15 points below, and Not Meeting is more than 15 points below.

▲ Stronger than SY2024-25 ▼ Lower than SY2024-25 ● About the same

Measure				SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Proficiency – Maine Through Year Assessment: % of students at or above state expectations						
Reading	MCA	State	Rating	*All tested grades* **MCA 63.4%** State 64.7% **Meeting**	Meeting	●
Grade 7	**73%**	70%	**Meeting**			
Grade 8	**58%**	62%	**Meeting**			
Grade 10	**64%**	62%	**Meeting**			
Math	MCA	State	Rating	*All tested grades* **MCA 32.8%** State 43.7% **Approaching**	Approaching	▲
Grade 7	**25%**	40%	**Approaching**			
Grade 8	**29%**	42%	**Approaching**			
Grade 10	**40%**	49%	**Approaching**			
Subgroup Proficiency – reportable subgroups[1]						
Reading	MCA	State	Rating	*Subgroup average* **Average 3.00** of 4 **Meeting**	Meeting	●
With IEPs	**30%**	31.7%	**Meeting**			
Econ. Disadv.	**58%**	54.3%	**Meeting**			
Male	**66%**	59.7%	**Exceeding**			
Female	**61%**	69.7%	**Approaching**			
Math	MCA	State	Rating	*Subgroup average* **Average 2.25** of 4 **Approaching**	Approaching	●
With IEPs	**14%**	12.7%	**Meeting**			
Econ. Disadv.	**21%**	30.7%	**Approaching**			
Male	**43%**	45%	**Meeting**			
Female	**25%**	42.7%	**Not Meeting**			
Growth – NWEA MAP (% meeting projected growth)						
Reading				**51% Meeting**	Exceeding	▼
Math				**56% Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Subgroup Growth – reportable subgroups[1]						

[1] **How subgroup ratings are combined.** Used for subgroup proficiency, subgroup growth and Accuplacer subgroups. Each subgroup with 10 or more students is rated on its own and given points: Exceeding = 4, Meeting = 3, Approaching = 2, Not Meeting = 1. The points are averaged, and the average determines the overall rating: 3.5 or higher is Exceeding; 2.5 to 3.49 is Meeting; 1.5 to 2.49 is Approaching; below 1.5 is Not Meeting. *Example:* MCA's reading proficiency subgroups were rated Meeting (3), Meeting (3), Exceeding (4), and Approaching (2), an average of 3.0, which is Meeting.

Measure	SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Reading — Met growth / Rating With IEPs 32% Not Meeting Econ. Disadv. 57% Exceeding Male 45% Meeting Female 56% Exceeding 504 Plan 77% Exceeding	*Subgroup average* **Average 3.20** of 4 **Meeting**	Meeting	●
Math — Met growth / Rating With IEPs 63% Exceeding Econ. Disadv. 63% Exceeding Male 53% Meeting Female 58% Exceeding 504 Plan 62% Exceeding	*Subgroup average* **Average 3.80** of 4 **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Graduation and Post-Secondary Readiness			
4-Year Graduation Rate	**89.32% Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
5- and 6-Year Graduation Rates	*Not reported (under 10 students)*	Exceeding	–
Accuplacer – Reading / Math	**86% / 92% Exceeding**	Meeting	▲
Subgroups — Reading / Math / Rating With IEPs 61% 78% Meeting Econ. Disadv. 63% 90% Exceeding Male 82% 90% Exceeding Female 88% 94% Exceeding	*Subgroup average*[1] **Average 3.75** of 4 **Exceeding**	Meeting	▲
College and Career Readiness Activity	**100% Exceeding**	Exceeding	●
FAFSA Support (not rated)	*Reported as required*	Reported	–
Chronic Absenteeism	**MCA 9.26%** State 23.4% **Exceeding**	9.69%	▲
School Climate – Panorama Surveys (percentile compared to like schools nationally)			
Family — 2025-26 / 2024-25 School Climate **90th** 99th Safety **90th** 99th School Fit **80th** 90th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **3 of 3** Participation 36% (35% required) **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Student — 2025-26 / 2024-25 School Climate **90th** 99th Safety **90th** 99th Rigorous Expectations **80th** 70th Teacher-Student Relationships **90th** 99th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 77.3% (75% required) **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Teacher — 2025-26 / 2024-25 School Climate **90th** 90th Leadership **80th** 70th Professional Learning **90th** 99th Feedback and Coaching **90th** 99th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 100% (75% required) **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼

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Measure	SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Staff 2025-26 2024-25 School Climate **70th** 99th Leadership **90th** 90th Professional Learning **90th** 99th Feedback and Coaching **90th** 99th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 100% (75% required) **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Organizational Sustainability			
Board Meetings Held	**9 Exceeding**	9	●
Reporting – on time and accurate	**100% Exceeding**	Exceeding	●
Board Training	**100% Meeting**	Not Meeting	▲
School Mission and Student Persistence			
Student Persistence – School Year	**90.8% Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Student Persistence – Year to Year	*Pending (Oct. 1, 2026 count)*	Exceeding	–

Student Achievement

Proficiency

MCA administers the Maine Through Year Assessment (MTY) in reading and math to students in grades 7, 8, and 10. Students take the assessment in person at proctored sites around the state, and the school tested 100% of eligible students in grades 7 and 8 and 98.7% in grade 10.

Reading results were similar to last year and in line with the state. 73% of seventh graders and 58% of eighth graders scored at or above state expectations, compared with 69% and 61% last year and 70% and 62% statewide; 64% of tenth graders reached expectations, up from 63% and above the state's 62%. Across tested grades, 63.4% of MCA students met expectations compared with 64.7% statewide, a Meeting rating for the second year.

Math proficiency remains the school's most significant challenge and, for the third consecutive year, results in every tested grade fell below the state average. Grade 8 results improved markedly, from 16% to 29% (42% statewide), and grade 10 rose from 37% to 40% (49% statewide). Grade 7 declined from 34% to 25% (40% statewide), falling from Meeting to Approaching. Across tested grades, 32.8% of students met expectations, up from about 28% last year but below the state's 43.7%, and math remains Approaching.

Among subgroups, reading results were Meeting overall: students with IEPs (30%) and economically disadvantaged students (58%) scored close to or above their statewide peers (31.7% and 54.3%), and male students (66%) outperformed male students statewide (59.7%). Female students' reading proficiency (61%, compared with 69.7% statewide) slipped from Meeting to Approaching. Math subgroup results were Approaching overall. Students with IEPs (14%) and male students (43%) were close to their statewide peers (12.7% and 45%), while economically disadvantaged students (21%) were below the state (30.7%).

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A gap between female and male students emerged this year. In math, 25% of female students met state expectations compared with 43% of male students, an 18-point difference, even though growth results for the two groups were similar. Female students' math result was more than 15 points below the statewide figure for female students (42.7%), in the Not Meeting range. The school noted the gap as well, reporting that this is the first year it has seen a difference this large and that it is looking into the cause.

School leadership describes math as "the known problem" and points to two contributing factors: many students enter MCA below grade level, and the students with the lowest results are often those with attendance concerns. The school and its Education Service Provider, Pearson, are reviewing whether the curriculum is a factor. To improve results, Pearson has assigned staff to a focus goal around grade 7 math; MCA has contracted with the Maine Mathematics and Science Alliance to observe middle school math instruction and provide individual feedback, supporting the school's single middle school math teacher; NWEA is assisting with score analysis; and the school uses IXL for practice and intervention. MCA is also hiring a one-year attendance assistant, funded by a state grant, to reach out to families before attendance becomes a problem. The school is using the Performance Framework proficiency goals as its targets for closing the gap between strong growth and proficiency.

Growth

Growth, as measured by the NWEA MAP assessment in grades 7 and 8, remains a strength, though results were somewhat lower than last year. All 97 eligible students were tested. In math, 56% met their projected growth (Exceeding), down from 61%. In reading, 51% met their projected growth (Meeting), down from 57% (Exceeding).

Subgroup growth in math was strong and Exceeding overall: students with IEPs (63%), economically disadvantaged students (63%), students with 504 plans (62%), and female students (58%) exceeded expectations, while male students (53%) met expectations, down from Exceeding last year. Reading subgroup growth was Meeting overall, the same as last year. Female students (56%), economically disadvantaged students (57%), and students with 504 plans (77%) exceeded expectations, and male students (45%) met them. Reading growth for students with IEPs was the lowest: 6 of 19 students (32%) met their projected growth, in the Not Meeting range.

Graduation and Post-Secondary Readiness

MCA's four-year graduation rate was 89.32%, above the state target of 88% (Exceeding) but below last year's 92.63%. Five- and six-year graduation rates are not reported this year because fewer than 10 students took a fifth or sixth year.

College readiness results improved. On the Accuplacer, 86% of students met the reading benchmark of 239 (up from 85%) and 92% met the math benchmark of 226 (up from 83%). Under the Framework, a student is college ready by meeting the benchmark on at least one assessment, so at least 92% of students were college ready (Exceeding, up from Meeting). Every reportable subgroup reached the 75% goal on at least one assessment: students with IEPs (61% reading, 78% math) were Meeting, and

economically disadvantaged (63%, 90%), male (82%, 90%) and female (88%, 94%) students were Exceeding, raising the subgroup rating from Meeting to Exceeding. Reading results for students with IEPs and economically disadvantaged students remain below the 75% goal.

The school reports that 100% of seniors took a college and career readiness course through its counseling department (Exceeding, the same as last year). Its breakdown of other readiness activities includes career and technical coursework (14.6%), college courses (10.7%), Advanced Placement (3.9%), and certificate programs (2.9%). MCA offered two formal FAFSA support opportunities, and families could also schedule individual appointments. The school did not report the number of families supported or FAFSA completions this year; last year, it supported 28.8% of families and students.

Attendance

Chronic absenteeism remains low at 9.26%, a slight improvement from 9.69% last year and well below the statewide average of 23.4% (Exceeding). Rates were highest in grade 11 (18.3%) and grade 7 (12%) and lowest in grade 8 (3.4%). The school's new attendance assistant position is intended to address attendance concerns earlier.

School Climate and Family Engagement

MCA continues to exceed Framework expectations on all four Panorama School Climate Surveys, with every required scale at or above the 70th percentile compared with similar schools nationally. Most results declined from last year's very high levels, however. On the family survey, School Climate and Safety each fell from the 99th to the 90th percentile and School Fit from the 90th to the 80th. On the student survey, School Climate, Safety, and Teacher-Student Relationships each fell from the 99th to the 90th percentile, while Rigorous Expectations rose from the 70th to the 80th.

Among teachers, Leadership rose from the 70th to the 80th percentile, while Professional Learning and Feedback and Coaching fell from the 99th to the 90th; School Climate was unchanged at the 90th. Staff results also declined, most notably School Climate (99th to 70th), Professional Learning (99th to 90th), and Feedback and Coaching (99th to 90th); Leadership was unchanged at the 90th. Participation met the Framework minimum for every group: families 36% (35% required), students 77.3%, and teachers and staff 100%.

Organizational Sustainability

MCA continues to submit required documents on time and accurately, with 100% of its 85 submissions on time and complete. The governing board held nine meetings, the same as last year (Exceeding). Board training improved significantly: 100% of board members completed at least one governance training, up from 13% of requirements last year, when this measure was Not Meeting. The five-member board, led by President Billy Thompson, includes members with backgrounds in education, finance, and environmental health and safety. Pearson facilitated an update of the board's long-term strategic plan in 2025 and will help review it in fall 2026.

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The school reports a stable teaching staff, with two voluntary separations among 31 teachers this year (down from three).

Financial Management and Viability

Maine Connections Academy's financial results for SY2025-26 show a school in sound financial health across both near-term and long-term measures. Based on fourth-quarter financials, the school was rated Low Risk for seven of eight measures and Moderate Risk for Three-Year Aggregated Margin[2].

The school reports that it has ended every year with a balanced budget, does not engage in fundraising, and contracts with a third-party CFO. MCA continues to contract with Pearson Virtual Schools (Connections Academy) as its Education Service Provider.

School Mission and Student Persistence

Student persistence remains strong. Of the 499 students enrolled on October 1, 2025, 453 (90.8%) were still enrolled on the last day of school, exceeding the Framework's 90% target, though slightly below last year's 92%. Year-to-year persistence will be confirmed following the October 1, 2026 count; last year, 96% of students persisted into the following year.

School Customization

MCA's customized measure tracks participation in school-sponsored field trips, activity days, special events, and clubs. 83% of students participated in at least one activity, the same as last year (Meeting). The school continues to place students in region-based teams that compete throughout the year, connecting students with one another and with staff in their part of the state.

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[2] The Commission will review these ratings against the school's audited financial statements when they become available and will amend this report if any ratings change.



Annual Monitoring Report

SY2025-26

November 2026

Maine Virtual Academy

Board President: Donna Pelletier

Head of School: Dr. Melinda Browne

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SCHOOL MISSION

MISSION

Maine Virtual Academy's (MEVA) mission is to develop each student's full potential with learner-centered instruction, research-based curriculum and educational tools and resources to provide a high-quality learning experience for grade 7-12 students who are in need of alternative educational options. MEVA will develop an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) with specific learning goals to meet each student's needs. MEVA's rigorous curriculum is aligned to the eight Maine content areas, the Maine Learning Results, the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards.

VISION

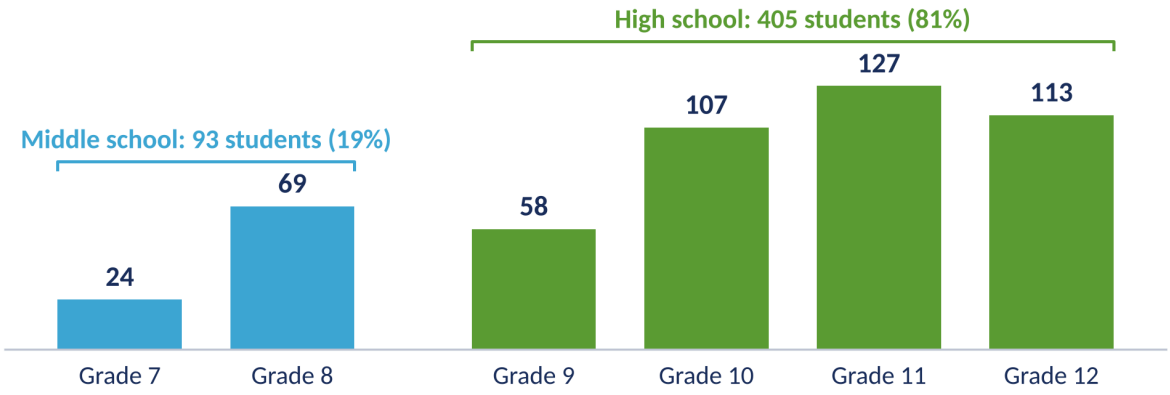
MEVA will be a leading 21st century public charter school in Maine and will improve student learning outcomes through individualized instruction, as evidenced by student academic proficiency, student academic growth, post-secondary readiness, and the demonstration of 21st century skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and self-direction. MEVA will empower students to acquire the academic and life skills needed to succeed in post-secondary education and career opportunities. Our graduates will be prepared for college or other postsecondary career training opportunities.

SCHOOL PROFILE

Maine Virtual Academy serves students in grades 7–12 from across the state. Figures reflect enrollment on October 1, 2025.

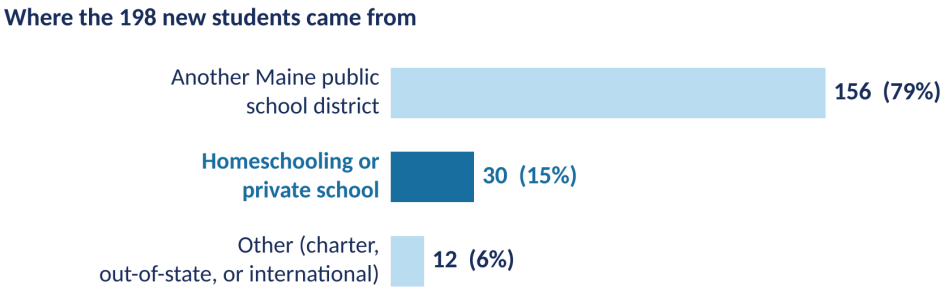
498	185	23.5%	50.2%
Students Enrolled	**Cities and Towns Served**	**Students with IEPs**	**Economically Disadvantaged**
SY2024-25: 475	SY2024-25: 182	SY2024-25: 24.4%	SY2024-25: 48.6%

Enrollment by Grade



Where Students Came From

In SY2025-26, MeVA enrolled 198 new students, 30 of whom (about one in seven) came from homeschooling or a private school, entering or returning to Maine's public education system.



Source: Maine Virtual Academy SY2025-26 demographic data (October 1, 2025). Categories with fewer than 10 students are combined.

NARRATIVE

Maine Virtual Academy (MeVA), based in Augusta, completed its eleventh year of operation in SY2025-26. The school enrolled 498 students in grades 7–12 on October 1, 2025 (up from 475 the prior year) from 185 cities and towns and 108 school administrative units across Maine.

MeVA continues to serve a population with significant needs. 23.5% of students have an IEP (down slightly from 24.4%) and 50.2% are economically disadvantaged (up from 48.6%); both remain higher than the statewide average. Another 7.2% of students have a 504 plan. Enrollment is weighted toward the high school: 81% of students are in grades 9–12, while grades 7 and 8 together enroll 93 students.

High-level takeaways from SY2025-26:

Strengths:

- Graduation – a 100% four-year graduation rate for the fifth consecutive year
- College readiness – Accuplacer results continue to exceed Framework expectations
- Improved reading proficiency, with grade 10 now outperforming the state
- Student attendance – chronic absenteeism remains low at 7.51%
- School climate – all four Panorama surveys exceeded expectations, with the student survey improving from Meeting
- Strong student persistence, enrollment demand, reporting, and financial management
- An active, engaged governing board that met monthly

Areas of Focus:

- Math proficiency across all tested grades
- Proficiency of male students and students with IEPs
- Reading growth, particularly among female and economically disadvantaged students

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Year-over-Year Snapshot

Key SY2025-26 results are shown below alongside the results reported for SY2024-25.

Reading the proficiency results: "MeVA" is the percentage of MeVA students who scored at or above state expectations on the Maine Through Year Assessment; "State" is the percentage of students statewide in the same grade. Ratings are based on the gap between the two: Exceeding is 5 or more percentage points above the state, Meeting is within 5 points, Approaching is 5 to 15 points below, and Not Meeting is more than 15 points below.

▲ Stronger than SY2024-25 ▼ Lower than SY2024-25 ● About the same

Measure				SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Proficiency – Maine Through Year Assessment: % of students at or above state expectations						
Reading	MeVA	State	Rating	*All tested grades* **MeVA 55%** State 64.7% **Approaching**	Not Meeting	▲
Grade 7	**61%**	70%	Approaching			
Grade 8	**39%**	62%	Not Meeting			
Grade 10	**65%**	62%	Meeting			
Math	MeVA	State	Rating	*All tested grades* **MeVA 31.7%** State 43.7% **Approaching**	Approaching	●
Grade 7	**22%**	40%	Not Meeting			
Grade 8	**26%**	42%	Not Meeting			
Grade 10	**38%**	49%	Approaching			
Subgroup Proficiency – reportable subgroups[1]						
Reading	MeVA	State	Rating	*Subgroup average* **Average 2.25** of 4 **Approaching**	Approaching	●
With IEPs	**25.6%**	31.7%	Approaching			
Econ. Disadv.	**51.5%**	54.3%	Meeting			
Male	**41.7%**	59.7%	Not Meeting			
Female	**64.8%**	69.7%	Meeting			
Math	MeVA	State	Rating	*Subgroup average* **Average 1.75** of 4 **Approaching**	Approaching	▼
With IEPs	**7%**	12.7%	Approaching			
Econ. Disadv.	**24.3%**	30.7%	Approaching			
Male	**27.8%**	45%	Not Meeting			
Female	**34.3%**	42.7%	Approaching			
Growth – NWEA MAP (% meeting projected growth)						
Reading				**41.7% Approaching**	Meeting	▼
Math				**54.2% Meeting**	Exceeding	▼
Subgroup Growth – reportable subgroups[1]						

[1] **How subgroup ratings are combined.** Used for subgroup proficiency, subgroup growth and Accuplacer subgroups. Each subgroup with 10 or more students is rated on its own and given points: Exceeding = 4, Meeting = 3, Approaching = 2, Not Meeting = 1. The points are averaged, and the average determines the overall rating: 3.5 or higher is Exceeding; 2.5 to 3.49 is Meeting; 1.5 to 2.49 is Approaching; below 1.5 is Not Meeting. *Example:* MeVA's reading subgroups were rated Approaching (2), Meeting (3), Not Meeting (1), and Meeting (3), an average of 2.25, which is Approaching.

Measure				SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Reading	Met growth	Rating		*Subgroup average* **Average 2.25** of 4 **Approaching**	Meeting	▼
With IEPs	47.8%	Meeting				
Econ. Disadv.	41%	Approaching				
Male	51.6%	Meeting				
Female	34.1%	Not Meeting				
Math	Met growth	Rating		*Subgroup average* **Average 3.5** of 4 **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
With IEPs	60.9%	Exceeding				
Econ. Disadv.	51%	Meeting				
Male	51.6%	Meeting				
Female	56.1%	Exceeding				
Graduation and Post-Secondary Readiness						
4-Year Graduation Rate				**100% Exceeding**	Exceeding	●
5- and 6-Year Graduation Rates				*Not reported (under 10 students)*	Exceeding	–
Accuplacer – Reading / Math				**87% / 90% Exceeding**	Exceeding	●
Accuplacer subgroups	Reading	Math	Rating	*Subgroup average*[1] **Average 3.5** of 4 **Exceeding**	Exceeding	●
With IEPs	64%	72%	Approaching			
Econ. Disadv.	79%	89%	Exceeding			
Male	88%	90%	Exceeding			
Female	87%	91%	Exceeding			
College and Career Readiness Activity				**100% Exceeding**	Exceeding	●
FAFSA Support (not rated)				*Reported as required*	Reported	–
Chronic Absenteeism				**7.51% Exceeding**	Exceeding	●
School Climate – Panorama Surveys (percentile compared to like schools nationally)						
Family	2025-26	2024-25		*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **3 of 3** Participation 39% (35% required) **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
School Climate	**90th**	99th				
Safety	**90th**	99th				
School Fit	**90th**	90th				
Student	2025-26	2024-25		*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 78% (75% required) **Exceeding**	Meeting	▲
School Climate	**90th**	99th				
Safety	**90th**	99th				
Rigorous Expectations	**60th**	40th				
Teacher-Student Relationships	**90th**	90th				
Teacher	2025-26	2024-25		*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 100% (75% required) **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▲
School Climate	**90th**	80th				
Leadership	**90th**	70th				
Professional Learning	**90th**	90th				
Feedback and Coaching	**90th**	90th				

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Measure	SY2025-26	SY2024-25	Change
Staff 2025-26 2024-25 School Climate **90th** 90th Leadership **90th** 99th Professional Learning **90th** 99th Feedback and Coaching **90th** 99th	*Scales at or above the 50th percentile* **4 of 4** Participation 100% (75% required) **Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Organizational Sustainability			
Board Meetings Held	**12 Exceeding**	Exceeding	▲
Reporting – on time and accurate	**100% Exceeding**	Exceeding	●
School Mission and Student Persistence			
Student Persistence – School Year	**90.8% Exceeding**	Exceeding	▼
Student Persistence – Year to Year	*Pending (Oct. 1, 2026 count)*	Exceeding	–

Note: The revised Framework (2/11/26) dropped NWEA Language Usage and changed how Accuplacer subgroups are rated.

Student Achievement

Proficiency

MeVA administers the Maine Through Year Assessment (MTY) in reading and math to students in grades 7, 8, and 10. Although MeVA is a virtual school, students take the assessment in person. Overall participation was 94.2% in reading and 94.7% in math; grade 7 participation was lower, at 85.2% in both subjects.

Reading proficiency improved this year. Across tested grades, 55% of MeVA students scored at or above state expectations compared with 64.7% statewide, moving the school from Not Meeting to Approaching. Grade 10 students outperformed the state (65% vs. 62%), a gain of 13 points over last year, and grade 7 rose from 43% to 61%. Grade 8 remains the exception: 39% of eighth graders reached state expectations compared with 62% statewide, slightly below last year's 42%.

Math proficiency remains Approaching overall, with 31.7% of MeVA students at or above state expectations compared with 43.7% statewide. Grade 8 results doubled, from 13% to 26%, but remain more than 15 points below the state. Grade 10 was essentially unchanged (38%, compared with 37% last year), and grade 7 declined from 26% to 22%, falling from Approaching to Not Meeting. Grade 7 results should be read with some care given the small number of students tested (23).

The gap between male and female students is the most significant subgroup finding. Male students trailed the state by 18 points in reading (41.7% vs. 59.7%) and 17.2 points in math (27.8% vs. 45%), and both results fall in the Not Meeting range; male math performance declined from Approaching last year. Female students met expectations in reading (64.8% vs. 69.7%) and were Approaching in math (34.3% vs. 42.7%). Students with IEPs, who met expectations in both subjects last year, slipped to Approaching (25.6% vs. 31.7% statewide in reading; 7% vs. 12.7% in math). Economically disadvantaged students continued to meet expectations in reading (51.5% vs. 54.3%) and remained Approaching in math (24.3%

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vs. 30.7%). Averaged across reportable subgroups, subgroup proficiency remains Approaching in both reading and math, the same rating as last year.

Administration attributes much of the proficiency gap to students entering MeVA below grade level, and shared an analysis showing that proficiency improves the longer students remain at the school. To accelerate progress, MeVA is focusing on pacing students toward grade-level standards, supported by i-Ready data, instructional coaching, and teacher feedback, while continuing its curriculum mapping and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) work. The school also reports that the percentage of students with IEPs in the least restrictive environment increased from 30% to 85%, and it has set a goal of 90% to expand these students' access to grade-level instruction.

Growth

Academic growth, as measured by the NWEA MAP assessment in grades 7 and 8, softened this year. 41.7% of eligible students met their projected growth in reading (Approaching), down from 47% (Meeting) last year. In math, 54.2% met their projected growth (Meeting), down from 57% and ending a multi-year run of Exceeding. Participation in the math assessment (94.5%) fell just below the 95% level at which the Framework notes the Commission may review participation.

Subgroup growth was mixed. In math, students with IEPs (60.9%) and female students (56.1%) exceeded expectations, while male students (51.6%) and economically disadvantaged students (51%) met expectations, down from Exceeding. Averaged together, subgroup math growth remains Exceeding. In reading, students with IEPs improved from Approaching to Meeting (47.8%), but female students (34.1%) fell to Not Meeting and economically disadvantaged students (41%) fell from Exceeding to Approaching, so subgroup reading growth is Approaching, down from Meeting. Notably, the gender pattern in reading growth is the reverse of the proficiency results: male students met their growth targets at a higher rate (51.6%) than female students (34.1%).

Graduation and Post-Secondary Readiness

For the fifth consecutive year, MeVA's four-year graduation rate is 100%. All 112 students in the 2026 cohort graduated, well above the state target of 88%. The 5- and 6-year cohorts fall below the Framework's 10-student reporting minimum and are not rated this year.

MeVA continues to exceed expectations for college readiness. On the Accuplacer, 87% of students met the reading benchmark of 239 (down from 91%) and 90% met the math benchmark of 226 (unchanged). At least 89% of economically disadvantaged, male, and female students met a benchmark in reading or math, which is Exceeding for each group. Students with IEPs reached 64% in reading and 72% in math, which is Approaching. Averaged across reportable subgroups, Accuplacer subgroup results are Exceeding, the same rating as last year.

The school reports that 100% of graduates successfully participated in at least one college and career readiness activity, most commonly internships (49%) and college courses (11%). Students completed 67 early college courses during the year. MeVA supported families with FAFSA completion through a Finance

Authority of Maine presentation, regular family communications, and individual meetings with the school counselor.

Attendance

Chronic absenteeism remains a strength at 7.51%, exceeding Framework expectations for another year. The rate is up slightly from 6.95% last year. Rates were highest in grade 9 (11.29%) and grade 11 (10%) and lowest in grade 12 (4.31%).

School Climate and Family Engagement

All four Panorama School Climate Surveys exceeded Framework expectations this year, an improvement from last year, when the student survey was Meeting. On the student survey, Rigorous Expectations rose from the 40th to the 60th percentile, moving the survey from Meeting to Exceeding. Teacher-Student Relationships held at the 90th percentile, while School Climate and Safety eased from the 99th to the 90th. Teacher results improved on two scales (School Climate from the 80th to the 90th percentile and Leadership from the 70th to the 90th) and held at the 90th on the other two, while staff results were at the 90th percentile on all four scales, down from the 99th on three of them. Family results, while still Exceeding, were at the 90th percentile on all three scales, down from the 99th percentile on School Climate and Safety and unchanged on School Fit.

Participation met Framework minimums for every group, although the family (39%) and student (78%) response rates were close to the 35% and 75% thresholds. Teacher and staff participation was 100%.

Building on these results, MeVA has proposed a new customized performance measure for SY2026-27 that would track year-over-year improvement in the percent of favorable responses on the Rigorous Expectations and Teacher-Student Relationships scales of the Panorama student survey.

Organizational Sustainability

MeVA continues to submit required reports on time and accurately (100%). The board held 12 meetings this year, up from 11, and 100% of board members completed governance training. The six-member volunteer board completed its SY2025-26 goals, which included developing a curriculum review schedule, reviewing policies on a five-year cycle, and broadening board membership, and it added a new member this year. The board will welcome its first student representative in September 2026.

Proposed board goals for FY27 center on academic rigor, including reading the mission at the start of each meeting and reviewing and updating the school's strategic plan (last adopted in May 2022), along with governance training and meeting attendance. During the end-of-year meeting, the board chair and Head of School also discussed distributing teacher supervision and curriculum oversight more broadly across the leadership team, as well as succession planning for the Head of School role; no formal succession plan is yet in place.

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MeVA's special education program received a Tier I determination in state monitoring, with a single corrective action item related to evaluation timelines for new referrals, which the school is addressing. The school reports that its facility meets local and state requirements and supports its programming.

Financial Management and Viability

MeVA's financial results for SY2025-26 show a school in sound financial health across both near-term and long-term measures. Based on fourth-quarter financials, the school was rated Low Risk for all eight financial measures in the Commission's Performance Framework[2].

About 92% of FY26 revenue came from Essential Programs and Services (EPS) funding, 7% from federal grants (IDEA and ESEA), and 1% from other sources. Health insurance is a significant share of the budget, and the board is exploring coverage options through the Maine School Boards Association as a potential cost savings. All teaching positions are filled, and the board approved 6% salary increases for staff. MeVA continues to contract with Stride (K12) as its Education Service Provider for student recruitment and faculty IT support.

School Mission and Student Persistence

The school reports that it is fulfilling its mission and implementing the core approaches in its charter, and that the board and administration share a clear understanding of both. Demand for MeVA remains strong. Of the 498 students enrolled on October 1, 2025, 452 (90.8%) were still enrolled on the last day of school. This exceeds the Framework's 90% target, though it is slightly below last year's 93.3%. Year-to-year persistence will be confirmed following the October 1, 2026 count; the school reports it is currently on track to meet or exceed this measure.

School Customization

MeVA's customized measure tracks the median conditional growth percentile on NWEA MAP for grades 7–11. Reading and language results improved in nearly every testing window this year: fall-to-spring reading rose from the 53rd to the 55th percentile, and language from the 50th to the 61st. Math moved in the opposite direction, with the fall-to-spring median falling from the 65th to the 46th percentile and winter-to-spring from the 59th to the 47th. The school plans to begin a curriculum review with its math department in the coming year.

[2] The Commission will review these ratings against the school's audited financial statements when they become available and will amend this report if any ratings change.

Coversheet

To Receive and Place on File the SY2025-26 Annual Charter School Report

Section: X. New Business Requiring Approval and/or Acceptance
Item: B. To Receive and Place on File the SY2025-26 Annual Charter School Report
Purpose: Vote
Submitted by:
Related Material: DRAFT SY2025-26 Annual Charter Public School Report.docx.pdf

Annual Charter Public School Report

School Year 2025–26

OUR VISION

Innovative charter public schools will provide Maine students with an equitable opportunity for an excellent education where students are valued, supported, and challenged.

MAINE
CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION

Submitted to the Commissioner of Education and the Maine Legislature pursuant to 20-A MRSA §2405(4) · November 2026

November 2026

Commissioner Makin,

We are pleased to submit the SY2025-26 Annual Charter Public School Report for your review and for the Legislature. This report fulfills our statutory obligation under 20-A MRSA §2405(4) to report on the performance of Maine's charter public schools and the Commission's work as their authorizer.

Maine's nine charter public schools served 2,834 students on October 1, 2025, a 4.3% increase over the prior year. 22.7% of those students were identified with disabilities and 46.0% were considered economically disadvantaged, both above the most recent statewide averages (20.3% and 45.8%). Demand continues to grow: waitlists reached 714 students.

Executive Summary

- **Strong results at a lower public cost.** Across the portfolio, 73% of rated Performance Framework outcomes met or exceeded expectations, up from 64% in SY2024-25. Every charter public high school met the state's graduation target and the Commission's college-readiness expectation. In FY25, the most recent year the Department of Education has published, charters spent an average of $13,195 per student, one-third less than the statewide average of $19,804. Charter public schools receive the state's per-pupil operating allocation, less a 2.45% Commission oversight fee, with no local tax dollars or building funds.
- **Students coming back to public education.** At least 228 charter students came to their school from homeschooling or a private school. That is 8% of all charter enrollment, and about one in six new students this year.

Portfolio Strengths:

- High school graduation rates: all seven charter public high schools met or exceeded the state target, and Maine Virtual Academy graduated 100% of its seniors for the fifth consecutive year
- College readiness: all seven high schools met or exceeded Accuplacer expectations, and six exceeded them
- Reading proficiency in grade 10: five of seven high schools outperformed the state
- Family, teacher, and staff satisfaction, with family surveys meeting or exceeding expectations at eight of nine schools
- Turnarounds in student school climate, including grades 3–5 at ACADIA Academy and Community Regional Charter School, which rose from Not Meeting to Exceeding
- Board training: eight of nine governing boards completed 100% of required training, up from fewer than half last year
- Student persistence: eight of nine schools kept at least 90% of their students through the school year

Areas of Growth:

- Math proficiency on the Maine Through Year Assessment: only one of ten campuses met or exceeded expectations
- Reading and math in grades 4 through 6, where several elementary programs fell below the state
- Chronic absenteeism at five campuses, which remains above 30%
- Teacher and staff climate at two schools

- Timely posting of governing board agendas and approved minutes at three schools
- Long-term financial health as enrollment, facility, and health insurance costs rise

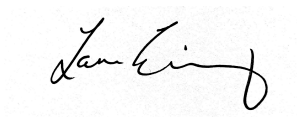
The Commission is made up of seven (7) seats, with six members currently serving and one vacancy: Brian Langley, Commission Chair; Tom Keller, Vice Chair; Vicky Cohen; James Ford; Jeremy Ray; and Jim Handy. Their work is supported by three staff members: myself; Amy Allen, Operations Director; and Sue Whipkey, Business Manager.

In October 2025, the Commission renewed the charters of ACADIA Academy and Maine Arts Academy for five-year terms, and during the year it conducted renewal reviews of Community Regional Charter School and the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences. MOXIE Public Schools completed its pre-opening year. SY2025-26 was also the Commission's first full year as a body corporate and politic under LD 1718, and its first under a revised Performance Framework adopted on February 11, 2026.

Since the close of the fiscal year. MOXIE Public Schools opened its doors to students in fall 2026, bringing the portfolio to ten operating schools. On October 13, 2026, the Commission renewed the charters of Community Regional Charter School (with conditions) and the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences for five-year terms. Both will be reported in full in the SY2026-27 report.

We look forward to another year of collaboration with the Maine Department of Education to ensure the best education for Maine's students and families. We welcome the opportunity to discuss the details of this report with you and your team.

Sincerely,



Lana M. Ewing
Executive Director

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Highlights from the Portfolio

Nine charter public schools, 2,834 students, and one standout result from each school in SY2025-26.

ACADIA Academy

246 students · Grades PreK–6 · Lewiston

Kept chronic absenteeism to 5.75%, about one-fifth of the Androscoggin County rate. Third graders outperformed the state in reading (76%) and math (72%).

Baxter Academy for Technology and Science

385 students · Grades 9–12 · Portland

Grade 10 students outperformed the state in science (59.3% vs. 38.3%) and math (57.7% vs. 49%). Students earned state and national recognition in cybersecurity, robotics, science, chess, and art.

Community Regional Charter School

373 students · Grades PreK–12 · Skowhegan and Cornville

Raised grade 3 reading proficiency at Dimensions Academy from 21% to 60%, and graduated 96% of its seniors.

Ecology Learning Center

131 students · Grades 9–12 · Unity

Every senior graduated and completed an internship, and 96% met a college-readiness benchmark. All four school climate surveys exceeded expectations.

Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences

209 students · Grades PreK–8 · Gray

Doubled PreK to 46 students, exceeded expectations for reading growth, and met its chronic absenteeism target.

Maine Academy of Natural Sciences

179 students · Grades 9–12 · Hinckley

Students who are pregnant, parenting, or facing physical or emotional challenges can earn a diploma through Threshold, working from home three days a week. Grade 10 reading proficiency more than doubled, from 35% to 74%, now 12 points above the state.

Maine Arts Academy

314 students · Grades 7–12 · Augusta

Opened its middle school and its first on-campus AP courses. 98% of seniors met the Accuplacer reading benchmark.

Maine Connections Academy

499 students · Grades 7–12 · Statewide (virtual)

Tested every eligible seventh and eighth grader in person, exceeded expectations for math growth, and kept chronic absenteeism to 9.26%.

Maine Virtual Academy

498 students · Grades 7–12 · Statewide (virtual)

Graduated all 112 seniors, a 100% four-year graduation rate for the fifth consecutive year.

SY2025-26 at a Glance

1. Performing well with fewer public dollars

Charter public schools receive less public money per student than traditional public schools, by design. Under 20-A MRSA §2413, each charter receives the EPS per-pupil operating allocation for its students, and "debt service and capital outlays may not be included." The Commission's authorizer fee is deducted from that allocation (2.45% in FY26). Charters must find and pay for their buildings out of that operating allocation.

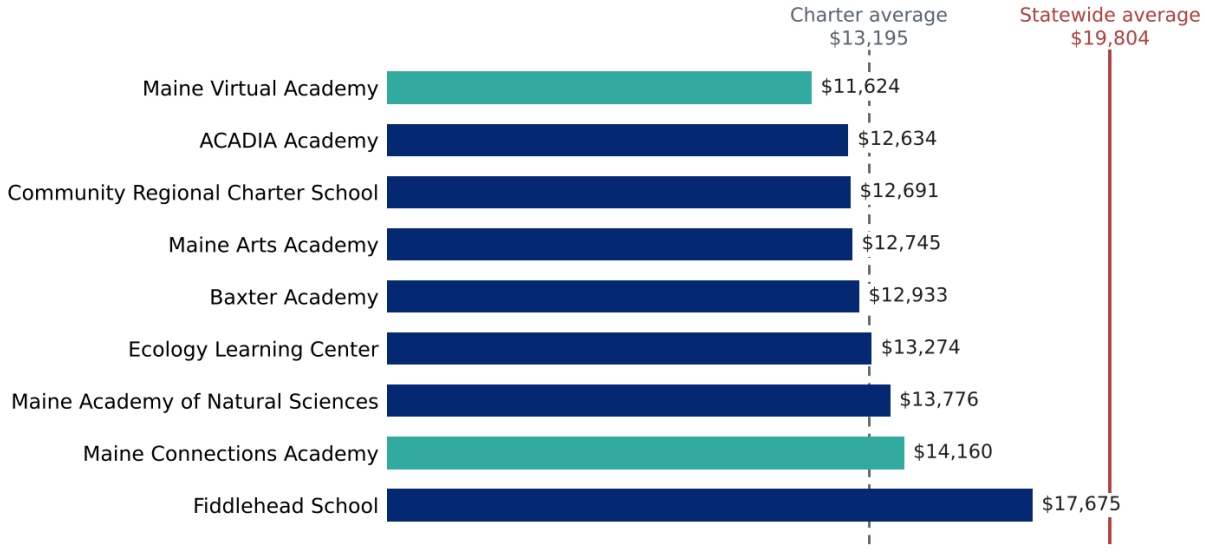
Districts, by contrast, can raise more than the EPS formula amount, and nearly all do. In FY25, 201 of the 216 districts that reported budget data raised more state and local operating funding than their EPS allocation. Together they budgeted 28.5% above EPS, about $645 million more, not counting debt service (Maine DOE, FY 2024-25 Over/Under EPS Report). Charter public schools have no local tax base to raise those additional dollars, and they receive no public funding for debt service or buildings.

Baxter Academy and Ecology Learning Center also educate students who are past the age of state subsidy, with no state funding for them.

On that funding, the portfolio met or exceeded expectations on 73% of rated Performance Framework outcomes, up from 64% the year before. All seven charter public high schools met the state's 88% graduation target, and five posted rates above 90%. All seven met or exceeded the college-readiness expectation on the Accuplacer, the benchmark the Maine Community College System uses for placement into credit-bearing courses.

The Department of Education's most recent per-pupil spending report, for FY25 (SY2024-25), shows the difference. Charter public schools spent an average of $13,195 per student, compared with a statewide average of $19,804, about one-third less. Every charter spent less than the state average. Even with debt service set aside, which charters largely do not carry, charters spent about 30% less ($13,124 compared with $18,792).

Charter public schools spent about one-third less per student than the state average



Source: Maine DOE, Resident Expenditures by Budget Category, FY 2024-25 (Per Pupil Amounts), Jan. 7, 2026. Charter average weighted by resident pupils. Teal = virtual charter schools.

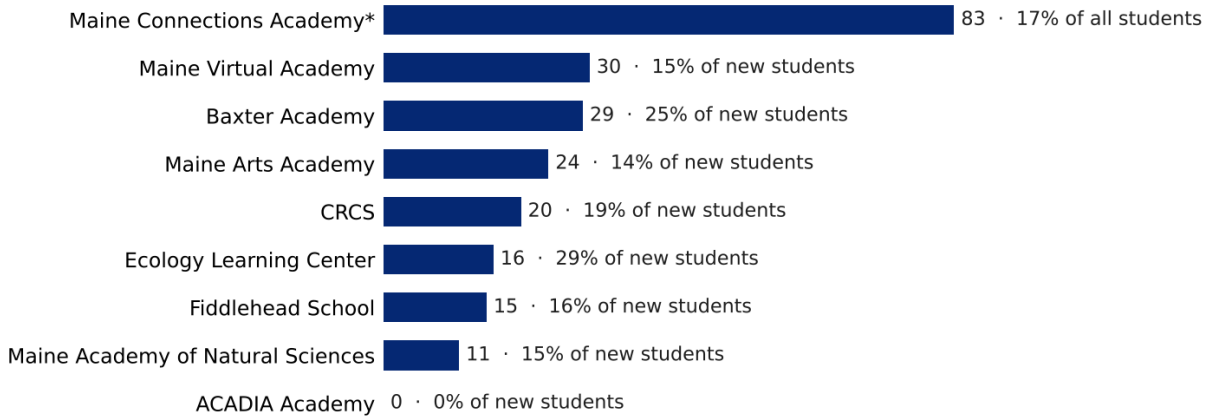
Per-pupil spending from all sources, FY 2024-25. These are the most recent figures the Department has published (released January 2026); FY 2025-26 figures are not yet available.

Taken together, the 2,546 charter students counted in FY25 were educated for about $16.8 million less than the same number of students would cost at the statewide average.

2. Students returning to public education

At least 228 of the 2,834 students enrolled in a charter public school on October 1, 2025 came from homeschooling or a private school. That is 8% of all charter enrollment. At eight schools, 145 of the 862 students who were new this year (17%) came from these settings. At Maine Connections Academy, which reports where every current student first enrolled from, the share was the same: 83 of 499 students (17%).

At least 228 of 2,834 charter students came from homeschooling or private school



Source: SY2025-26 draft AMRs, October 1, 2025 enrollment.
*MCA reports where all current students first enrolled from; the other schools report new students only.

The figure is a floor: at eight of the nine schools it counts only students who were new this year, not those who returned to public education in earlier years and are still enrolled.

Another 106 new students at ACADIA Academy, Community Regional Charter School, and Fiddlehead School were starting school for the first time.

Why families come back

Across the portfolio, school leaders describe the same reasons families give for leaving a traditional school setting: a child's anxiety, depression, or other physical or mental health needs; bullying, or a school where the child did not feel safe; and the search for a program that fits how the child learns. Many of these families had stepped outside the public system altogether to meet those needs, through homeschooling or a private school.

Families report that charter public schools give them a way back. Students return to a free public education, and with it to the same accountability as every other public school student: state assessments, the Commission's Performance Framework, and public reporting of results. For families who had run out of options inside the system, a charter public school is often the reason they came back in.

3. Virtual charter public schools and in-person state testing

Many families choose a virtual school because a traditional building has not worked for their child. Anxiety, depression, and other physical and mental health conditions are among the most common reasons, along with bullying, medical needs, and family circumstances. Around 35% of students who enroll in a virtual charter public school cite anxiety as their reason for choosing it. For these students, the virtual setting is not a convenience. It is what makes school possible.

State law requires students at virtual charter public schools to take state assessments "in a proctored setting" (20-A MRSA §2408(2)(D)(5)). In practice, this means testing in person at sites the schools arrange across the state. Maine Connections Academy and Maine Virtual Academy enroll students from 194 and 185 cities and towns, and families arrange their own travel to the test sites. For some students, testing in an unfamiliar building is a real challenge.

Both schools go to considerable lengths to make in-person testing work. In spring 2026, Maine Connections Academy tested students at 22 locations over 57 testing days, from Sanford to Presque Isle and Madawaska, at university campuses, community centers, and public libraries. Maine Virtual Academy averages seven testing locations each fall and spring session, with two to three testing days at each, and a travel team follows up with make-ups and one-on-one testing until the state window closes.

School	Communities served	Economically disadvantaged	In-person testing, spring 2026
Maine Connections Academy	194 cities and towns; 117 SAUs	50.1%	22 locations over 57 testing days, including make-ups
Maine Virtual Academy	185 cities and towns; 108 SAUs	50.2%	About 7 locations per session, 2–3 days each, plus a travel team for make-ups and one-on-one testing

An opportunity ahead. This is the last school year the Maine Through Year Assessment will be administered through NWEA; the Department of Education has contracted with a new vendor for the state assessment. The transition is a natural time to look at how students in virtual schools are assessed. The Commission shares the goal behind the proctoring requirement: valid, comparable results for every student. We would welcome the opportunity to join early conversations with the Department, the new vendor, and the virtual schools about options that keep that goal while easing the burden on students and families, such as remote proctoring where test security allows, testing sites closer to students' homes, or help with travel.

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A. Our Strategic Vision and Progress

SY2025-26 was the first full school year under the Commission's Strategic Plan 2025-2028, launched in January 2025. Our mission is "to authorize, monitor, and support innovative charter public schools that provide a dynamic, high-quality education for every student." Our vision is that "innovative charter public schools will provide Maine students with an equitable opportunity for an excellent education where students are valued, supported, and challenged."

Maine's charter public schools add to the range of options in public education, from virtual schools serving students in more than 180 cities and towns each to arts and STEAM academies in more populated areas. Demand continues to grow. Charter enrollment rose 4.3% this year to 2,834 students, and waitlists reached 714 students.

Our work is guided by six values: Excellence, Students First, Equity, Collaboration, Innovation, and Accountability.

Progress on the four strategic priorities

At the plan's halfway point, the Commission's September 2026 mid-plan reflection found the plan substantially on track. Priority 4 is largely complete, ahead of schedule. Priority 2 reached its defining milestone with the authorization and launch of a new school. Priorities 1 and 3 are on track and moving from activities to lasting systems.

Strategic priority	Status (mid-plan, 2026)	Where it stands
1. Encourage excellent, innovative schools	On track	Year-round professional learning for school leaders and boards; revised Performance Framework; Innovation Fund applications and awards increased
2. Authorize excellent new charter school(s)	On track; launch achieved	Maine's tenth charter public school authorized and through its pre-opening year, meeting every pre-opening goal
3. Good to great authorizing	On track	Renewal practice strengthened; policymaker engagement growing; national learning and Commission professional development continuing
4. Organizational excellence	Largely complete, ahead of schedule	Reclassification enacted; new financial, payroll, and IT systems in place; redundant staffing fee eliminated

Priority 1: Encourage excellent, innovative schools

- Revised the Performance Framework, approved February 11, 2026, and adapted it to set Year 1 expectations for a brand-new school.
- Held six board professional development sessions, three times the plan's semi-annual goal. Eight of nine schools attended at least one, and an average of six schools attended each session.
- Ran monthly School Leader Meetings throughout the year.
- Built communications capacity across the network: four communications sessions, a March 10 board session attended by seven of nine boards, and school-specific consulting for five schools.
- Awarded $32,070 in Innovation Fund grants to four schools: Baxter Academy ($10,000), MOXIE Public Schools ($9,320), Fiddlehead School ($8,000), and the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences ($4,750). More schools applied and received awards than the year before.
- Maine Arts Academy opened grades 7 and 8 under a charter amendment approved on the plan's criteria of demand, innovation, and performance.

- Analyzed NWEA MAP Growth against the Maine Through Year Assessment, leading to a proposal to make MAP Growth optional while keeping growth reporting through state assessment data, which would reduce testing for schools.

Priority 2: Authorize excellent new charter school(s)

- Guided MOXIE Public Schools, Maine's tenth charter public school, through a pre-opening year in which it met every pre-opening goal: all Department of Education requirements fulfilled; $1,171,000 raised against a $1,000,000 goal; 115 students enrolled against a target of 108; all 11 staff positions filled; and a facility acquired and renovated.
- Worked with MOXIE through a shared Pre-Opening Tracker and set Year 1 Performance Framework targets with the school's input.
- Built a first-year oversight schedule of site visits, data checkpoints, and board touchpoints, to be documented as a model for future new schools.

Priority 3: Good to great authorizing

- Strengthened renewal practice for the CRCS and Maine Academy of Natural Sciences reviews by adding an external expert reviewer, an independent third-party evaluation of CRCS, site visits, focus groups, public hearings, and complete evidence packets.
- Engaged policymakers: a majority of charter public schools hosted visits from policymakers during the year.
- Continued national learning through the NACSA annual conference and twice-yearly Commission professional development.
- Adopted or updated governance policies on conflicts of interest, records retention, reserve fund investment, and insurance and risk management, and refreshed onboarding materials for new Commission members.

Priority 4: Organizational excellence

- Completed the plan's central action: legislation reclassifying the Commission as a body corporate and politic and a public instrumentality of the State took effect in September 2025.
- Put core systems in place under the new structure: an interest-bearing account with Bangor Savings, payroll through Bangor Payroll, and managed IT on new hardware and software.
- Eliminated the redundant fee named in the plan by ending the temporary staffing agency arrangement for full-time staff.
- Launched a new Commission website.

Looking ahead. The second half of the plan turns on a few proof points: MOXIE's Year 1 results, a clean first independent audit of the Commission (FY26, under way this fall), renewal decisions for Baxter Academy and Fiddlehead School in October 2027, and continuing policymaker engagement.

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B. Performance of Operating Charter Public Schools

Across the portfolio, 73% of rated Performance Framework outcomes met or exceeded expectations in SY2025-26, up from 64% in SY2024-25. Looking only at the 128 outcomes rated in both years, 18 moved up to Meeting or Exceeding and 5 fell below it. Results are strongest in graduation, college readiness, school climate, and governance compliance. Math proficiency and chronic absenteeism are the clearest areas for improvement. Statute requires campus-level reporting for Community Regional Charter School, so its Dimensions and Overman campuses are shown separately.

SY2025-26 Performance Framework Outcomes:

Exceeding	Meeting	Approaching	Not Meeting

Measure	ACADIA	Baxter	CRCS Dim.	CRCS Ovr.	ELC	FSAS	MeANS	MeAA	MCA	MeVA
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT										
Reading proficiency (MTY)										
Math proficiency (MTY)										
Reading growth (NWEA, gr 3–8)		—			—		—			
Math growth (NWEA, gr 3–8)		—			—		—			
4-year graduation rate	—		—			—				
College readiness (Accuplacer)	—		—			—				
College & career readiness activity	—		—			—				
Chronic absenteeism										
SCHOOL CLIMATE AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT										
Family survey										
Student survey (grades 3–5)		—		—	—		—	—	—	—
Student survey (grades 6–12)			—							
Teacher survey										
Staff survey										
ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY										
Board meetings & timely posting										
Reporting on time & accurate										
Board training										
SCHOOL MISSION AND STUDENT PERSISTENCE										
Student persistence (school year)										

— = measure does not apply. ACADIA's grades 6–12 student survey covers grade 6 only. Family, governance, reporting, and persistence results for CRCS are district-wide and appear under both campuses. Creative Children's Academy (CRCS PreK–K) does not take state assessments, and its chronic absenteeism (36%) is not rated. Financial risk ratings are shown separately in Section 4. SY2024-25 comparisons use the prior-year ratings reported in each school's SY2025-26 AMR, on the same measures; outcomes not rated last year (such as chronic absenteeism at several schools, and MeAA's new middle-school growth measures) are left out of the prior-year rate.

SECTION 1: STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Academic Achievement – Proficiency

Maine's charter public schools administer the Maine Through Year Assessment to measure reading and math proficiency in grades 3–8 and 10. To meet the Commission's target, a school's share of students at or above expectations must be within 5 points of the state average.

Reading is a strength. Six of ten campuses met or exceeded expectations, and five of seven high schools outperformed the state in grade 10. Maine Arts Academy (74.6% vs. 62% statewide) and the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences (74%, up from 35%) led the portfolio.

Math remains the portfolio's most significant academic challenge. Only Baxter Academy (57.7% vs. 49%) met or exceeded expectations, and four campuses were Not Meeting. Results were weakest in grades 4 through 6 at the elementary schools and in grades 7 and 8 at schools whose middle-school students were new this year. Several schools note that many new students arrive below grade level. Most have new math plans in place for SY2026-27, including partnerships with the Maine Mathematics and Science Alliance at Baxter Academy and Maine Connections Academy.

Academic Achievement – Growth

Schools serving grades 3–8 administer NWEA MAP to measure growth. To meet expectations, 45–55% of students must meet their projected growth from fall to spring. Reading growth was solid: five of seven programs met or exceeded expectations, with Fiddlehead School (65.4%) and CRCS–Dimensions Academy (56%) exceeding. Math growth was mixed: four of seven met or exceeded, led by Maine Connections Academy (56%). The revised Framework no longer includes NWEA Language Usage.

High School Graduation

Graduation rates continue to be a strength. All seven charter public high schools met or exceeded the state's 2026 target of 88%. Maine Virtual Academy graduated 100% of its seniors for the fifth consecutive year, and Ecology Learning Center graduated all 28 seniors. The Maine Academy of Natural Sciences raised its rate to 88%. Most 5- and 6-year cohorts fell below the 10-student reporting minimum this year. Maine Connections Academy's were large enough to report, and both exceeded the target (90.62% and 93.08%).

Post-Secondary Readiness

The Commission expects 75–85% of students to meet the Accuplacer college-readiness benchmark (239 in reading or 226 in math). All seven high schools met or exceeded that expectation, and six exceeded it, led by Maine Arts Academy (98% reading, 95% math). Six of seven also met or exceeded the goal that 70–80% of graduates complete at least one post-secondary activity, such as a college course, AP course, certificate program, career and technical coursework, or internship. Ecology Learning Center students earned 78 college credits through dual enrollment, saving an estimated $23,166 in tuition.

Student Attendance

The revised Performance Framework expects schools to "demonstrate lower chronic absenteeism than the state average." Because the Maine Department of Education publishes statewide attendance data about a year after each school year ends, SY2025-26 school results can be compared only with the most recent published state rate: 23.4%, for SY2024-25. The SY2025-26 attendance ratings are therefore provisional. The Commission will confirm them against the SY2025-26 state rate once it is released and report the final comparison in next year's report.

Against the most recent state rate, four of ten campuses had lower chronic absenteeism in SY2025-26, and five were above 30%. Rates ranged from 5.75% to 39%. Now that final state data is published for SY2024-25, the like-for-like comparison for that year is also available: five of ten campuses had lower rates than the state that year.

SECTION 2: SCHOOL CLIMATE AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Each spring, schools administer the Panorama School Climate survey to families, students, teachers, and staff. The Commission expects results at or above the 50th percentile compared with similar schools nationally.

Family satisfaction remains strong: eight of nine schools met or exceeded expectations. The biggest change came from younger students. Last year we reported that grades 3–5 results were historically low. This year, grades 3–5 results at ACADIA Academy and CRCS–Dimensions Academy rose from Not Meeting to Exceeding, with School Climate reaching the 90th percentile at both. CRCS credits a project that explained survey questions to younger learners in kid-friendly terms. Baxter Academy and Fiddlehead School's grades 6–8 students also moved from Not Meeting to Exceeding.

Three results need attention. Grades 3–5 at Fiddlehead School remain Not Meeting. The Maine Arts Academy student survey did not meet expectations for a fourth year, and its family results fell from Exceeding to Approaching during the transition to a middle school. Teacher and staff results at ACADIA Academy, and teacher results at Fiddlehead School, remain Not Meeting.

SECTION 3: ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

Board Training

Board training improved more than any other measure. Eight of nine governing boards completed 100% of required governance training, up from fewer than half last year. Fiddlehead School's board reached 86%, up from 26%. Maine Connections Academy (13% to 100%) and the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences (11% to 100%) made the largest gains.

Public Accountability

Agendas must be posted 5 business days before each board meeting, and approved minutes within 5 business days after. Six of nine boards met or exceeded the requirement. Maine Arts Academy and the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences resolved last year's concerns. ACADIA Academy (5 late) and Fiddlehead School (9 late) remain Not Meeting.

Reporting Accuracy and Timeliness

Schools submit required documents through Epicenter, with a goal of 80–90% on time and accurate. Of the 645 required submissions in SY2025-26, 94% were submitted on time, up from 88% of 403 submissions last year. Eight of nine schools met or exceeded the goal, and four reported 100%. ACADIA Academy improved from 67% to 76% on time (Approaching).

SECTION 4: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND VIABILITY

Financial oversight is among the most important work an authorizer does. Nationally, financial problems are the most common reason charter public schools close: 42% of closures, compared with 19% for academic performance, with mismanagement accounting for another 24% (Center for Education Reform, 2011). Close financial monitoring is how an authorizer spots trouble early, while there is still time to correct it.

The Commission reviewed all four quarters of financials for all nine schools in SY2025-26, along with each school's FY25 annual audited financial statements, and rates each school on the Performance Framework's eight financial measures. Four measures look at near-term health and four at long-term sustainability. Each is rated Low, Moderate, or High Risk.

Maine's charter public schools are meeting their financial obligations. Based on FY26 fourth-quarter financials, no school is in default on any obligation, and all nine are Low Risk on debt to assets. Maine Virtual Academy was Low

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Risk on all eight measures and Maine Connections Academy on seven. Baxter Academy and Maine Arts Academy had no High Risk ratings.

Low Risk	Moderate Risk	High Risk

Measure (FY26 Q4)	ACADIA	Baxter	CRCS	ELC	FSAS	MeANS	MeAA	MCA	MeVA
NEAR-TERM									
Current ratio									
Days cash on hand									
Enrollment variance									
Financial obligations default									
SUSTAINABILITY									
Three-year aggregated margin									
Debt to assets									
Two-year cash flow									
Obligation coverage ratio									

Source: FY26 fourth-quarter financials reviewed by Commission staff. The Commission will review these ratings against each school's audited financial statements when they become available and will note any changes in next year's report.

Long-term margins are the most common concern. Four schools were High Risk on three-year aggregated margin: ACADIA Academy, Ecology Learning Center, Fiddlehead School, and the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences. For the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences, the result reflects a planned deficit budget in FY26, funded from its FY25 surplus while it rebuilds enrollment. Ecology Learning Center ran deficits in two of the last three years. Community Regional Charter School, historically one of the strongest in the portfolio financially, was High Risk on enrollment variance after the first enrollment decline in its history.

ACADIA Academy's results need the closest attention. Half of its measures were High Risk, including days cash on hand, three-year margin, two-year cash flow, and obligation coverage. The Commission will continue to monitor ACADIA's finances closely. It will also monitor Fiddlehead School, whose Level 1 Intervention plan includes financial oversight, as both schools carry out the savings and revenue steps described in their AMRs.

Pressures are common across the portfolio: health insurance increases of 8–12%, aging facilities (including a $500,000 roof repair at CRCS–Dimensions Academy), transportation, and enrollment softness at three schools. Several schools are pursuing savings through Maine School Boards Association insurance programs, renegotiated contracts, and stronger fundraising.

SECTION 5: SCHOOL MISSION AND STUDENT PERSISTENCE

The Commission expects at least 90% of students to persist through the school year. Eight of nine schools met or exceeded it, with rates from 90.4% to 94.5%. Community Regional Charter School was Approaching at 78.8%; the school did not report the measure, so the Commission calculated it from state enrollment records. Year-to-year persistence will be confirmed after the October 1, 2026 count.

All schools continue to implement the key design elements in their charters, from ACADIA's Universal Groups and Baxter's Flex Friday to the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences' Natural Science Intensives, which three other Maine schools are now piloting.

SECTION 6: SCHOOL CUSTOMIZATION

Each school measures progress on goals tied to its own mission.

- **ACADIA Academy:** 61% of students had BARR individual goals in the school's third and final year with a BARR coach; K–2 writing growth results are pending.
- **Baxter Academy:** narrowed the PSAT 10 gap with the state from 43 points to 27, and matched the state on the SAT 11 (1032 vs. 1030).
- **Community Regional Charter School:** 77% of Dimensions students and 62% of Overman students met NWEA reading growth within one standard error.
- **Ecology Learning Center:** 70% of students scored 80–100% on winter Passion Projects, above the 65% threshold.
- **Fiddlehead School:** documented classroom standards and a balanced assessment system; customized targets will be revisited.
- **Maine Academy of Natural Sciences:** 89% earned credit in at least three Natural Science Intensives, and campus graduation reached 100%.
- **Maine Arts Academy:** 100% of graduates shared their art with the community at least twice, and 97.3% met performance proficiency.
- **Maine Connections Academy:** 83% of students took part in at least one in-person activity, field trip, or club.
- **Maine Virtual Academy:** median NWEA growth rose in reading and language usage but fell in math; a math curriculum review begins this year.

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C. Status of the Portfolio

As of June 30, 2026, the Commission's portfolio held ten approved charters: nine operating schools and one approved but not yet open. No charter was transferred, terminated, or closed during SY2025-26, and every approved school has opened or is on track to open.

Statutory status	School	Detail
Approved, not yet open	MOXIE Public Schools	Approved May 13, 2025; pre-opening year in SY2025-26; opened in fall 2026
Operating	ACADIA Academy	Originally opened in 2016
Operating	Baxter Academy for Technology and Science	Originally opened in 2013
Operating	Community Regional Charter School	Originally opened in 2012
Operating	Ecology Learning Center	Originally opened in 2020
Operating	Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences	Originally opened in 2013
Operating	Maine Academy of Natural Sciences	Originally opened in 2012
Operating	Maine Arts Academy	Originally opened in 2016
Operating	Maine Connections Academy	Originally opened in 2014
Operating	Maine Virtual Academy	Originally opened in 2015
Renewed	ACADIA Academy	Renewed in October 2025 for a five-year term
Renewed	Maine Arts Academy	Renewed in October 2025 for a five-year term
Transferred	*None*	
Terminated	*None*	
Closed	*None*	
Never opened	*None*	

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D. Oversight and Services Provided to Charter Public Schools

The Commission oversees schools through the Performance Framework, site visits, and year-round reporting, and it funds shared platforms that every school uses. Its oversight rests on a simple bargain: schools get autonomy over how they reach agreed-upon goals and are held accountable for results, not inputs.

Oversight in SY2025-26

Activity	Purpose	SY2025-26
Performance Framework revision	Keep measures clear, rigorous, and aligned with state assessments	Revised Framework adopted February 11, 2026. Key changes: chronic absenteeism now measured against the state average; new targets for the percentage of third graders reading at grade level; NWEA Language Usage removed; Accuplacer subgroup rating revised
Annual Monitoring Reports	Report each school's Performance Framework outcomes, with a factual-accuracy review by the school	9 reports, including campus-level results for CRCS; drafts to schools October 14, 2026
End-of-year meetings	Review self-assessments and outcomes with each school's leaders and board	9 schools
Monitoring site visits	Gather evidence on progress toward mission and contract goals, following the Site Visit Manual	8 of 9 schools visited; Maine Connections Academy was in a document-review-only year under the Site Visit Manual
Mid-year check-ins	Meet with each school's administrative team and board chair on progress toward end-of-year criteria	All 9 schools
Renewals	Renewal application, site visit, public hearing, and decision	ACADIA Academy and Maine Arts Academy renewed October 2025. CRCS and Maine Academy of Natural Sciences reviews conducted in 2026, adding an external expert reviewer, an independent evaluation of CRCS, site visits, focus groups, public hearings, and full evidence packets
Interventions	Notices of concern, intervention plans, or conditions	Fiddlehead School placed on Level 1 Intervention in December 2025 (chronic absenteeism, school climate, and financial reporting and oversight), with goals due by the end of SY2026-27; after year one, progress was made but not all goals yet met. Community Regional Charter School was designated Level 2 Intervention in January 2026, formalizing a two-year improvement plan (student achievement, chronic absenteeism, and student persistence); the plan closed at the end of SY2025-26, and remaining

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Activity	Purpose	SY2025-26
		goals carry forward through the school's renewal
Pre-opening oversight	Track Ready-to-Open milestones for a new school	MOXIE Public Schools met every pre-opening goal, tracked through a shared Pre-Opening Tracker; Year 1 Performance Framework targets set with the school; pre-opening walk-through of the school conducted in August 2026
Financial review	Track near-term and sustainability risk and catch problems early	All four quarters of financials reviewed for all 9 schools, along with each school's FY25 annual audited financial statements. Each year, once audited financials are reconciled against fourth-quarter results, the Commission issues an addendum to the financial metrics if any ratings change.
Requests and amendments	Review financing requests, charter amendments, and changes to governing documents	Four requests reviewed: Maine Arts Academy's revised mission statement; Maine Academy of Natural Sciences bylaw amendments; ACADIA Academy's request for a line of credit; and CRCS's request to finance kitchen equipment

Services to support excellent performance

- **Panorama Education** (since 2016): spring school climate surveys of families, students, teachers, and staff, benchmarked against similar schools nationally. Schools also have access to Panorama's optional Social Emotional Learning surveys, which no school used in SY2025-26. The Commission is funding a pilot of Panorama's Student Success Platform at the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences.
- **NWEA MAP Growth**: the fall and spring growth assessment the Commission requires for grades 3–8, funded by the Commission.
- **Infinite Campus**: a student information system available to every charter through the Commission's contract. Five schools used it through the Commission in SY2025-26, and two more use it under their own contracts.
- **Epicenter**: the compliance, governance, and reporting platform (since fall 2016). It also hosts the renewal and new school applications through EdLusion.
- **Lotterease** (since 2020): an enrollment and lottery platform that helps schools follow the enrollment requirements of 20-A MRSA §2404.
- **BoardOnTrack**: governance tools and coaching for charter boards.
- **Professional learning and networking**: monthly School Leader Meetings all year; six board professional development sessions, attended by eight of nine schools; four communications sessions with school-specific consulting for five schools; and $32,070 in Innovation Fund grants to four schools.

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E. Funds Collected and Oversight Costs

State law allows the Commission to retain up to 3% of the annual per-pupil allocation received by each charter public school it authorizes (20-A MRSA §2405(5)(B)). In FY26 the Commission retained 2.45%, the same rate as FY25.

Funds collected from each school

School	Enrollment (Oct. 1, 2025)	Fees collected (FY26)
ACADIA Academy	246	$80,912.97
Baxter Academy for Technology and Science	385	$126,829.99
Community Regional Charter School	373	$123,673.34
Ecology Learning Center	131	$38,800.55
Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences	209	$64,542.55
Maine Academy of Natural Sciences	179	$58,876.12
Maine Arts Academy	314	$99,501.73
Maine Connections Academy	499	$149,629.11
Maine Virtual Academy	498	$138,313.47
Total	**2,834**	**$881,079.83**

Costs of oversight

Based on the FY26 ED279s, the Commission's revenue was $887,264: the $881,079.83 in fees collected from schools, plus $6,184 in interest earned on the Commission's bank account. The Commission spent $875,295 on monitoring performance and supporting the success of Maine's charter public schools, leaving a balance of $11,969 that was carried over to FY27.

The Commission's oversight costs are shared across the portfolio rather than incurred school by school. Staff time, site visits, renewal reviews, and the platforms every school uses (Epicenter, Panorama, Infinite Campus, Lotterease, BoardOnTrack, and NWEA MAP) serve all schools at once, so they are reported for the portfolio as a whole, using the categories in the Commission's annual budget.

FY26 expenditures	Amount
Commission operations (staff, Commission meetings, monitoring and renewals, travel, professional development, legal, and other operating costs)	$688,891
School-provided services (platforms and services the Commission provides to schools, such as Epicenter, Panorama, Infinite Campus, Lotterease, BoardOnTrack, and NWEA MAP)	$171,404
Contingency (used to fund the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences pilot of Panorama's Student Success Platform)	$15,000
Total FY26 expenditures	**$875,295**

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