

MCSC

MAINE CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION

TO: Michael Muir, Governing Board Chair, Maine Academy of Natural Sciences
Matthew Newberg, Executive Director, Maine Academy of Natural Sciences

FROM: Lana Ewing, Chief Program Officer
Maine Charter School Commission

DATE: August 23, 2022 **(REVISED CRITERIA ON DECEMBER 15, 2022)**

RE: Intervention Level 2

During the Commission Meeting on July 21, 2022, the Commission voted to approve that the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences' (MEANS) charter contract conditions had been met allowing MEANS to continue operating in its 5-year charter contract term. These contract conditions were voted on by the Commission on October 14, 2021, to be substantially executed by May 1, 2022.

While the Commission found that MEANS had met the contracted conditions to its satisfaction, the Commission will continue to progress monitor the SY 2021-2022 conditions to gauge continued satisfactory performance during SY 2022-2023.

The Commission continues to be concerned with the high chronic absenteeism rate, low graduation rates and overall student performance at MEANS. The Commission assigns the school to Intervention Level 2 for the following reason:

- Failure to meet multiple performance targets.

Currently, MEANS performance in the identified areas of concern are as follows:

- Percentage of students who are chronically absent: 53%
- Percentage of 4th Year (senior) students graduating:
 - Campus: 78%
 - Threshold: 76%
- Percentage of students meeting the NWEA MAP RIT target benchmark:
 - Math: 47%
 - Reading: 42%
 - Language: 54%

Because the school continues to not meet performance targets, the Maine Charter School Commission is initiating its [Intervention Protocol - Level 2](#) (attached below). MEANS will provide a status update on progress toward meeting the following benchmarks at least once every three months during the 2022-2023 school year. Additionally, MEANS will provide progress updates on conditions previously identified during SY 2021-2022.

- MEANS will meet the chronic absenteeism benchmark in the Performance Framework: less than 18% of students are chronically absent.

- MEANS will meet the graduation rate benchmark in the Performance Framework: 86% of senior students will graduate MEANS.
- MEANS will meet student assessment NWEA MAP RIT target benchmark in the Performance Framework: 60-70% of students will meet RIT at grade 10.
- MEANS will meet the post-secondary assessment benchmark in the Performance Framework: 75-85% of students will be college ready as measured by SAT, Accuplacer, or ASVAB. **(To be measured in SY23-24, as required by the Performance Framework.)**

INTERVENTION PROTOCOL Maine Charter School Commission

The fundamental responsibility of the Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) is to ensure quality charter school oversight that maintains high standards of school performance, upholds school autonomy, and safeguards student and public interests. One of the primary mechanisms for fulfilling this purpose is a comprehensive accountability system that sets clear standards of performance, protects school accountability, and includes oversight to evaluate performance and monitor compliance.

Through its ongoing monitoring of schools' performance, the MCSC may uncover academic, financial, or operational performance that does not meet its established standards. The MCSC has established an Intervention Protocol for how it will respond to areas of deficiency.

If at any time the MCSC determines, as the result of receiving a complaint or on its own review of the information obtained through the monitoring process, that it has significant concerns regarding a school's failure to comply with the terms of the charter contract or governing law, or concerns regarding the school's ability to meet its performance targets, the Commission will deliver a Letter of Concern to the governing board of the School. Such notice shall identify the specific concerns, stating that the concerns represent potential violations of law or the Charter that could lead to sanctions by the Commission up to and including revocation of the Charter. The Commission shall require a written response within ten calendar days of receipt of the notice by the School.

If the school's response to the Commission's Letter of Concern results in confirmation that the school's performance and/or compliance is unsatisfactory the Intervention Protocol will be followed.

Some conditions that could trigger intervention are (and are not limited to):

- Failure to meet academic performance expectations, as identified in the Performance Framework;
- Failure to meet indicators of financial liability or sustainability;
- Non-compliance;
- Violations of federal or state statutes and applicable board policy and/or breaches of contract;
- Issues pertaining to student safety, equity, or access;
- Adverse findings in routine oversight; or
- Substantiated complaints.

The Intervention Protocol is intended to be used to assist in the decision making process which will be guided by the professional judgment of MCSC staff and commissioners.

The MCSC reserves the right to skip levels of intervention, as necessary, and to move toward immediate closure of a school upon a finding that the health, welfare or safety of pupils enrolled is at imminent risk.

Status	Conditions that may trigger status (may meet one, some or all)	Consequences (may require one, some or all)
Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indications of weak or declining performance identified through routine monitoring, site visits, or other means; • Repeated failure to submit requirements by due date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter of Concern sent to school board from MCSC detailing the concern • As applicable, MCSC's requirements for resolution, timeline, and consequences if not satisfactorily remedied
Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to satisfactorily remedy or make substantial progress toward remedying previously-identified concern; • Failure to meet multiple performance targets; • Failure to comply with applicable law or breach of contract 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter of Concern sent to school board from MCSC detailing the concern • As applicable, MCSC's requirements for resolution, timeline, and consequences if not satisfactorily remedied • Specialized site visit, as necessary; • Meeting with school board as necessary; • Corrective action plan developed by the school and approved by the MCSC, as necessary; • Probation with interview and public hearing, as necessary
Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple "does not meet expectation" ratings on Performance Framework; • Continued failure to comply with applicable law or with the charter contract; • Failure to meet or make sufficient progress toward meeting terms of corrective action plan, as relevant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corrective action plan developed by the school and approved by the MCSC, as necessary; • Meeting with the school board; • Probation with interview and public hearing, as necessary; • As relevant, the MCSC may appoint an agent to monitor the implementation of a corrective action plan
Level 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended pattern of failure to comply or to meet performance targets; • Failure to satisfactorily address or make sufficient progress toward meeting terms of probation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialized site visit, as necessary; • Proposal of Termination - written notice from MCSC stating reason for proposed termination at least 60 days prior to proposed effective date of termination

MEANS SY 2022-2023 Conditions Tracker

Intervention Level 2



MeANS will provide a status update on the below areas of concerns at least once every three months during the 2022-2023 school year.

92% of MEANS 11th and 12th grade students will participate in the Accuplacer Pilot in school year 2021-2022 (one administration per student per grade level)

REVISED AUGUST 2022

- Intervention Level 2 Condition: SY 2022-2023: Increase participation rate to 95% to be inline with Performance Framework.

<p>SY 2021-2022 Mid year meeting: Mar 7, 2022 FAILED TO ACHIEVE GOAL</p>	<p>83% (78% for Threshold/89% for campus) 79/95 (needed 88 students to achieve 92%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing a new test was a struggle for some teachers; remote administration for Threshold was a barrier (11 students did not test) On campus, there are students who have not shown up to campus (5 students did not test) Have not conducted an analysis of the results at the time of the meeting
<p>SY 2021-2022 April 14, 2022 SCHOOL PLANS TO CONTINUE TESTING</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reported that campus students felt like the test was reasonable and positive experience School is sharing results with the Commission, so that the Commission can include it in its pilot study School misunderstood the testing window. Commission supported the effort of school leaders to continue testing students to meet this expectation
<p>2022 Summer Progress Check</p>	<p>Commission voted that enough progress was made on this stipulation to approve the overall contract stipulations</p>
<p>SY 2022-2023 BoY Meeting</p>	
<p>SY 2022-2023 Mid year meeting MAKING PROGRESS</p>	<p>The Accuplacer participation rate was 100% for Campus. The overall school rates were 89% for math and 81% for reading. These figures are in the table provided later in the doc.</p>

SY 2022-2023 EoY Meeting	100% participation rate for seniors, including both Campus and Threshold.
MET	

By June 2022, develop a plan for implementing a clarified process for measuring student achievement and wellbeing to be implemented within the next 3 years (i.e. [graduate profiles](#))

REVISED AUGUST 2022:

- Provide update on operationalizing the process for measuring student achievement and wellbeing

SY 2021-2022 Mid year meeting: Mar 7, 2022 INDICATORS OF PROGRESS	<p>Operator has developed a plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing habits of mind rubric which is being rolled out in teacher training on March 7 • Post Secondary pathways are being explored • Assessing <i>The Core Project</i> for social emotional well-being • Grading and rubrics are being developed for standards completion
SY 2021-2022 April 14, 2022 ON TRACK WITH SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched habits of mind rubric • Capstone projects are being built into curriculum • Provided resources on the student clearinghouse for data • Analyzing the effectiveness of advisory curriculum as it is currently being implemented inconsistently • Increasing graduation rates moderately year over year and have plans to continue to monitor this progress and implement strategies • Implementing attendance protocols with clear action steps • Operator has custom performance framework domains in draft
2022 Summer Progress Check	Commission voted that this stipulation was met
SY 2022-2023 BoY Meeting	
SY 2022-2023 Mid year meeting ON TRACK	Habits of Mind are incorporated into the class grading. They are being reported in the quarterly progress reports. In addition to Habits of Mind, a student's achievement is tracked by individual classes in Infinite Campus' Progress Monitor Tool as well as the school's weekly MTSS process.
SY 2022-2023 EoY Meeting	See above. Habits of Mind has been successful - the grading has been incorporated into all classes. Teachers use Infinite Campus with fidelity and produce use-friendly quarterly progress reports.
MET	

The course “Intensives” are designed to meet state standards not met consistently in core content classes, such as: Health + Wellness, Career Prep, Guiding Principles (Clear and Effective Communication, etc.), Visual + Performing Art

The Governing Board will establish regular routines for analyzing student performance data, including graduation rates and absenteeism

REVISED AUGUST 2022:

- MEANS will provide an update on the regular reports to board for analyzing student performance data, including graduation rates and absenteeism

SY 2021-2022 Mid year meeting: Mar 7, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board member has agreed to put together a document that would track progress; this is being conducted on an ad hoc basis • ED drafts a report for the board on a regular basis, but needs
SY 2021-2022 April 14, 2022 ON TRACK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operator is tracking data in specific domains every quarter; has created a template and is on the board calendar for Nov, March, May, and June. • Commission encouraged the operator to find additional data sources for domains that were off-cycle during certain quarters
2022 Summer Progress Check	Commission voted that this stipulation was met
SY 2022-2023 BoY Meeting	
SY 2022-2023 Mid year meeting ON TRACK	The board reviews the academic dashboard at each meeting. The first dashboard was provided to the board during the last meeting. This practice will continue. The informational dashboard was to be provided to the Board four times: November, March, May and June. November has been completed.
SY 2022-2023 EoY Meeting MET	The Head of School reports monthly to the Board on included categories. Included in the Head of School Quarterly Dashboard to the Board. Report includes graduation rate, attendance, chronic absenteeism, % of students on-track to graduation, unit compilation rates and NWEA results.

MEANS will ensure that its financial statement format breaks out enough detail to provide the clarity and information necessary to assess the school's financial position and performance, and to support informed resource allocation decisions.

REVISED AUGUST 2022:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MEANS will review financial statements to ensure enough detail continues to be provided. 	
SY 2021-2022 Mid year meeting: Mar 7, 2022 STALLED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance committee has analyzed this and is looking into a dashboard Shared how break out into broad categories would allow for stronger strategic planning
SY 2021-2022 April 14, 2022 ON TRACK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board chair verified in email to Commission staff that expectations were being met; Staff verified these changes Will provide March data for breaking out the personnel data Adjusting balance sheet based on recommendations
2022 Summer Progress Check	Commission voted that enough progress was made on this stipulation to approve the overall contract stipulations
SY 2022-2023 BoY Meeting	
SY 2022-2023 Mid year meeting ON TRACK	The Finance Committee created a finance dashboard to present to the Commission and Board, which is produced on a quarterly basis. Next step: how can we make this reporting more straightforward for those not used to financial dashboards?
SY 2022-2023 EoY Meeting MET	The Board analyzes the quarterly reports on finances. The school's business manager and the Head of School complete the reports together. The Board asks questions in the board meeting based on the sheets provided.

New Intervention Level 2 Conditions

Intervention Level 2 Condition: MEANS will meet the chronic absenteeism benchmark in the Performance Framework: less than 18% of students are chronically absent. Please provide in aggregate and by program (on campus and threshold).	
SY 2022-2023 BoY Meeting	
SY 2022-2023 Mid year meeting MAKING PROGRESS	<i>"The school has put significant emphasis on this area of concern. We developed a new Attendance Policy which was shared with families in person during our New Family Orientations in September as well as sent to all returning families. We have included bulletins in several newsletters and sent targeted letters in October. Additionally, every Friday, Advisors have included attendance data in their weekly parent contacts. During fall SLCs, administration attended targeted meetings to highlight concerns directly to students and families. And finally, we recognized positive attendance for our campus students at the end of the first quarter with cash prizes and certificates. We had 14 students (13.8%) who didn't miss a single day, and another 14 who missed less than 2 days (27.7%). Overall, we feel good about the</i>

improvements but remain concerned about the effects of COVID, RSV, and other winter illnesses that drive up absenteeism.

Historical Data

Year	MeANS	Lawrence HS	Waterville HS	Bangor HS	State Av.
17-18	36.5	25.7	40.7	29.1	16.5
18-19	27.0	28.6	38.8	31.2	16.8
19-20	64.6	35.8	38.4	30	18.0
20-21	75.8	49.1	34.9	28.7	20.9
21-22	53.0	NA	NA	NA	NA
22-23	35.6*	NA	NA	NA	NA

Data observations:

- MeANS has returned to pre-pandemic levels.
- From 17-18 to 20-21 MeANS experienced a 107% increase while Lawrence experienced a 91% increase, Statewide average increased 27%.
- All four schools have been well above the State Average and nowhere near the Commission’s goal of 18%”

SY 2022-2023 EoY Meeting

NOT MET

36% total (both campuses) - reduced from 53% in SY 21-22.

Note: The state ended the MEANS school year on June 30th (based on 162 days of school). Because the school ends on July 31, the state is reporting inaccurate data. ESSA Dashboard is incorrect.

Intervention Level 2 Condition: MEANS will meet the graduation rate benchmark in the Performance Framework: 86% of senior students will graduate MEANS. Please provide in aggregate and by program (on campus and threshold).

SY 2022-2023 BoY Meeting

SY 2022-2023 Mid year meeting
ON TRACK

“Given our relatively small size, enrollment changes throughout the year effect these figures dramatically. These rates are current estimates based upon most recent enrollment data and standards completion.

- Campus: 88% (21/24)
- Threshold: 84% (16/19)
- Overall: 86% (37/43)”

SY 2022-2023 EoY Meeting
MET

High School Completion/4 Year HS Graduation Rate (current cohort)

For SY 2022-23, schools will meet annual goal of 86%

	Total Number of Students Eligible for Graduation	Number of Students Graduating in 4 Years	Percentage of Students Graduating in 4 Years
Campus	21	20	95
Threshold	26	21	81
School Total	47	41	87

Optional:

	Number of Students
Percentage of Students Graduating in 5 Years Campus	1
Percentage of Students Graduating in 5 Years Threshold	3

	Percentage of Students Graduating in 6 Years Campus	0
	Percentage of Students Graduating in 6 Years Threshold	2

Intervention Level 2 Condition: MEANS will meet student assessment NWEA MAP RIT target benchmark in the Performance Framework: 60-70% of students will meet RIT growth. Please provide in aggregate and by program (on campus and threshold).

SY 2022-2023 BoY Meeting	
SY 2022-2023 Mid year meeting	<i>Will assess the Maine Through Year results when they are available. MEANS is no longer required to administer the MAP assessment.</i>
SY 2022-2023 EoY Meeting	

Intervention Level 2 Condition: MEANS will meet the post-secondary assessment benchmark in the Performance Framework: 75-85% of students will be college ready as measured by SAT, Accuplacer, or ASVAB. Please provide in aggregate and by program (on campus and threshold).

SY 2022-2023 BoY Meeting																									
SY 2022-2023 Mid year meeting	<p>" F22 Accuplacer Data</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Total Students</th> <th># Tested</th> <th>% Tested</th> <th># Met Target*</th> <th>% Met Target</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Threshold</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Math</td> <td>21</td> <td>16</td> <td>76</td> <td>12</td> <td>57</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Reading</td> <td>21</td> <td>17</td> <td>81</td> <td>10</td> <td>48</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Total Students	# Tested	% Tested	# Met Target*	% Met Target	Threshold						Math	21	16	76	12	57	Reading	21	17	81	10	48
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**This will be measured starting in SY 23-24. Current participation rates are strong. The school is currently not meeting the performance targets that will be evaluated in SY23-24 (expectation: Campus math scores).																									

	Campus					
	Math	26	26	100	20	77
	Reading	26	26	100	15	58
	Total					
	Math	47	42	89	32	68
	Reading	47	43	81	25	53
	"					
SY 2022-2023 EoY Meeting	Reading: 76%/Math: 84%					
MET	100% senior participation					