

2022-23 Annual Monitoring Report

*Prepared for
Maine Academy of Natural Sciences*

November 2023





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.

Governing Board

Mike Muir, President	Sally Beaulieu, Vice Chair
Kim Patnode, Secretary	Dianna Gram
Dana Doran	Shannon Webber
Jesse Wechsler	Whitney King
Anna Perkins	Martha Harris
Robert Dodge	

Leadership Team

Matt Newberg, Head of School	Patrick Henyan, Assistant Head of School
Evan Coleman, Director of Curriculum and Instruction	Bonnie Violette, Director of Special Education
Becky Dennison, Dean of Threshold	Ashley Hyde, Business Manager

School Profile

Year Opened	2012-13
Years in Operation	10
Grades Served	9-12
Number of Sending Districts	30
Enrollment*	173
Students on Waiting List*	4

*On 10-1-22 (State Student Count Day)

School Year 2022-23 Demographic Table

Grade Level Enrollment		
9th Grade	33	19%
10th Grade	45	26%
11th Grade	47	27%
12th Grade	48	28%
Gender		
Female	88	51%
Male	85	49%
Race/Ethnicity		
American Indian or Alaska Native	2	1%
Asian	1	1%
Black or African American	0	0%
Hispanic/Latino	7	4%
Two or More Races	3	2%
White	160	92%
Special Education		
Students with IEPs	50	29%
General Education Students	123	71%
Economically Disadvantaged		
Yes	105	61%
No	68	39%

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Maine Charter School Commission is the authorizer of nine charter districts. Each charter district holds a contract with the Commission containing a Performance Framework of indicators and targets the district shall meet to continue operating in Maine. The charter districts are evaluated annually as required by state statute. Data are gathered through the Maine Department of Education, Charter Districts, and Site Visits, as applicable.

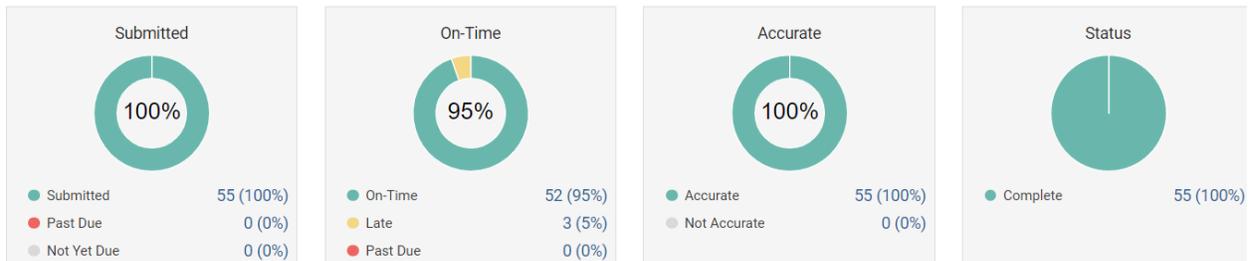
The Maine Charter School Commission has established a monitoring visit table for visit frequency and intensity. A copy of the Site Visit Manual can be found [HERE](#). Maine Academy of Natural Sciences was on cycle to have a Site Visit at the end of the 2022-23 school year.

Key documents and other information reviewed to determine progress on the charter district's performance framework and alignment with its mission are as follows:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Leader Evaluation Tool
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current enrollment and demographics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Roster
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current organizational chart 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panorama school climate survey results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Meeting Minutes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School's self-assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board member meeting attendance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous year's monitoring report [as applicable]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School's strategic plan [as applicable] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School's reported performance framework results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESP Contract and/or other important MOUs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of current recruitment materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Development Calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student enrollment application

Document is a major component of the Maine Charter School Commission's monitoring process, which happens throughout the year. Charter districts are required to submit reports and data for review. The table below

summarizes the charter districts' report and data submission completion throughout the 2022-23 school year:



2022-23 NARRATIVE

As a result of the 2022-2023 monitoring process, the charter district is encouraged to consider the following:

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM: MEANS demonstrated a significant improvement in attendance, with the reduction of the percentage of students who are chronically absent to 35%. We recommend that the school continue to implement the attendance strategies with fidelity with the goal of continuing to reduce the percentage of students who are chronically absent.

TEACHER/STAFF SCHOOL CLIMATE: Out of the four required scales on the Panorama Survey, the school **exceeded expectations** in two, and has room for growth in two, resulting in an overall rating of “does not meet expectations.” We recommend that the school work to understand the root cause of teacher/staff satisfaction rates and implement strategies for increasing teacher/staff investment.

In school year 2022-23, Maine Academy of Natural Sciences was successful in the following areas of the Performance Framework:

- **High School Completion:** With 88% of students graduating in 4 years, MEAN's graduation rate is **meeting expectations** on the Performance Framework and exceeding the state's annual goal for 2023, a significant increase from years past;
- **Academics/Postsecondary:** Accuplacer results will not be included on the Annual Report until SY2023-24. However, MEANS already has 76% (reading) and 86% (math) meeting the goal;
- **Postsecondary Activities:** MEANS is **exceeding expectations**, with 100% of students participating in at least one postsecondary opportunity;
- **Student and Family Satisfaction:** The school is exceeding expectations as measured by the Panorama survey;

- Governing Board Meetings: The school has held the required numbers of meetings;
- Timely and Accurate Reports: The school is **exceeding expectations** in the percentage of reports that are delivered on-time and accurate to the Commission;
- The Facility: The facility is welcoming and supports programming;
- Student Persistence: The school is **meeting expectations** in the number of students that remain at the school throughout the year, as well as the number of students that plan to return next year; and
- Customized NWEA Goal: The school **exceeded expectations** in four of the customized goals; including students meeting individual attendance goals, the percentage of students who graduated, the percentage of students at campus and threshold who participated in NWEA testing. Additionally, the school **met** the customized engagement goal for students in threshold.

At the conclusion of SY2022-23, MEANS successfully completed an Intervention Plan on which the school was placed in SY 2021-22. The Commission reviewed the progress that MEANS had made on the criteria in the Level 2 Intervention Plan and determined that the school had met the majority of targets, specifically related to improving low graduation rates and overall student performance. The school made strong progress in decreasing the chronic absenteeism rate.

The school provided context to support the areas of demonstrated strength in the SY2022-23 Self-Assessment Report, including:

- Academics: “We implemented a strengthened planning curriculum that supports our academic goals. Teachers also incorporated Habits of Work into all classes and advisory as outlined in our intervention letter goals. Our Director of Curriculum and Instruction has worked incredibly hard to bolster the instruction during Intensives to very positive effect. Students cite Intensives as one of their favorite aspects of our school’s curriculum.”
- Assessment: “Testing participation was incredibly high, a trend that we have seen over the last few years, and achievement for our seniors on Accuplacer is already at MCSC goal levels.”
- School Climate: “Our Panorama data is strong across all three stakeholder groups and above average for all three criteria in the Family category. School Climate is in the 80% for students and reflects the hard work we have put into creating a strong supporting school culture. We have done this through focused meetings, advisory curriculum, and Restorative Practices. Students arrive enthusiastic and engaged.”

- Staff Retention: “Organizationally, MeANS is very strong. We have spent the year preparing for some changes at the administrative level. We will boast no staff turnover this year except for one Threshold Teacher retirement and the departure of our Business Manager. It’s safe to say that faculty and staff are largely very happy at the school and excited about the new additions we have coming next year (Title I ELA teacher, two AmeriCorp volunteers, new Assistant Head of School, etc.).”
- Governing Board: “We have had some shifts on our Governing Board, but the new members are very active and contributing positively. Of note, is the fact that our Academic Affairs Committee has made upwards of 10 school visits this year! They have attended classes, field trips, Threshold Mondays, Intensives, etc. They have provided detailed written reflections which have been shared with teachers after their visits.

MEANS has demonstrated areas that require growth on the Performance Framework in the following areas:

- Teacher/Staff School Climate: Out of the four required scales on the Panorama Survey, the school exceeded expectations in two, and has room for growth in two, resulting in an overall rating of “does not meet expectations.”
- Governing Board Effectiveness: The Governing Board did not complete the required number of online board trainings, and did not meet expectations in timely publication of board meeting agendas and minutes.
- Attendance: While MEANS show a significant improvement in attendance, with the reduction of the percentage of students who are chronically absent to 35%, the school still has room for improvement to meet expectations on the Performance Framework.

Of note, the school reported that “We are no longer using GWH (Good Will Hinkley) for Finance and HR and are moving to a purchased services agreement instead. We are also currently creating a contract for IT services.”

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK OUTCOMES

Exceeded Expectation	Met Expectation	Approached Expectation	Did Not Meet Expectation
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In the spring of 2023, the Maine Department of Education changed its state-wide assessment **from** the NWEA MAP Assessment **to** the Through-Year Assessment. As the assessment was new, the Commission asked schools to report the percentage of students assessed at each grade level, the percentage of students “at state expectation” and “above state expectation” on proficiency in both ELA and Math. Ratings would be developed once baselines were established.

Due to the Maine Department of Education’s delay in releasing data from the Spring administration of the Through-Year Assessment, there are no proficiency outcomes that can be reported at this time.

An addendum to this report will be provided once the data are released and analyzed by school personnel and Commission staff.

SECTION 1: STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT			
Criterion	Indicator	Target	Rating
1.1a	Student Academic Proficiency - MDOE Through-Year Assessment, ELA	Schools will report the percentage of students assessed at each grade level, and at the campus and district levels. Schools will report the percentage of students “at state expectation” and “above state expectation” on proficiency.	This indicator will not be rated in SY22-23. Ratings will be developed after the baseline is established. Percentage of Students Assessed: Percentage of students “at state expectation”: Percentage of students “above state expectation”:
1.1b	Student Academic Proficiency - MDOE Through-Year Assessment, Math	Schools will report the percentage of students assessed at each grade level, and at the campus and district levels. Schools will report the percentage of students “at state expectation” and “above state expectation” on proficiency.	This indicator will not be rated in SY22-23. Ratings will be developed after the baseline is established Percentage of Students Assessed: Percentage of students “at state expectation”: Percentage of students “above state expectation”:

1.5	High School Completion	<p>4-year high school graduation rate (current cohort) Schools will meet annual goals*: 2023-86% 2024-87% 2025-87% 2026-88% 2027-88% 2028-89% 2029-89% 2030-90%</p> <p><i>*The state of Maine goal is 90% graduation rate by the end of 2030.</i> Maine Department of Education Graduation Rates by Year</p>	Exceeds Expectation Exceeds 90%
			Meets Expectation Meets annual target School reports 88% 4-year high school graduation rate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus - 95% • Threshold - 81%
			Approaching Expectation Less than 5% below target
			Does Not Meet Expectation 5% or more below target
1.6a	Post-Secondary Readiness	<p>Beginning in SY 2023-2024, school will meet goal of 75%-85% students meeting one of the following by the end of 12th grade:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accuplacer The College Readiness indicator with scores of 239 or above in reading and a 226 or above in math or; • SAT scores of ERBW 530 or higher and 520 or higher in math or; • ASVAB score of 31 or higher. <p><i>Participation under 95% may result in an investigation from MCSC to determine potential interventions.</i></p> <p>School reports 100% participation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 76% met college-readiness reading • 84% met college-readiness math score 	In SY 2022-23, schools will report the data, but will not be rated.
1.6b	Post-Secondary Readiness/ Achievement Gaps	<p>Achievement gaps in proficiency between major subgroups* on the Accuplacer, SAT or ASVAB.</p> <p>The school will provide achievement data of major subgroups (English learner, special education, sex, economically disadvantaged, 504, ethnic and racial minorities).</p> <p><i>*To be reported, subgroups must have at least 5 students or 5% of the student population.</i></p> <p>The school reported that the data was not available.</p>	In SY 2022-23, schools will report the data, but will not be rated.
1.6c	Post-Secondary Readiness: Post-Secondary Activity	<p>At the end of their graduating year, 70%-80% of each schools' students will have successfully¹ participated in at least one post-secondary activity such as (and not limited to) college course, Advanced Placement course, certificate program, career technical coursework or internship.</p>	Exceeds Expectation Exceeds 80%
			Meets Expectation 70%-79.9%

¹ Successfully is defined as passing, meeting appropriate standards, or other clearly defined measure of success.

			<p>Approaching Expectation 60%-69.9%</p>
			<p>Does Not Meet Expectation Fewer than 60%</p>
1.6d	Post-Secondary Readiness: FAFSA	Schools will report annual rates and school-supported opportunities for FAFSA support.	<p>The Commission will monitor a charter school's ability to support students with FAFSA completion.</p> <p>School reported 13 forms completed.</p>
SECTION 2: SCHOOL CLIMATE AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT			
2.1	State Compliance	<p>The school operates in compliance with the terms of its charter and applicable federal and state laws and regulations regarding public Charter District Leaderships, including exclusionary practices.</p> <p>MRSA 20-A Title 20-A, Chapter 112: Public Charter District Leaderships Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)</p>	No rating is provided for <i>Criterion 2.1: State Compliance</i> . Site visit reports that include a section for this criterion identify specific concerns the school must address.
2.2	Family Engagement: Panorama School Climate Survey -Family Results	<p>Results from 3/3 required scales* on the Family Panorama School Climate Survey will be within the average range (50% or higher) when compared to like schools (%FRL, grade band, urban/rural). Participation must be a minimum of 35% in order to qualify. Participation under 35% will automatically result in a "does not meet standard."</p> <p><i>*Required Scales: School Climate, Safety, and School Fit</i></p> <p>MeANS family participation was 37%. Results on the required scales are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Climate - In the 99th percentile nationally compared to like schools School Safety - In the 99th percentile nationally compared to like schools School Fit - In the 99th percentile nationally compared to like schools 	<p>Exceeds Expectation All 3 of the 3 required scales in the above average range for like schools</p>
			<p>Meets Expectation All 3 of the 3 required scales in the average range for like schools</p>
			<p>Approaching Expectation 2 of the 3 required scales in the average range for like schools</p>
			<p>Does Not Meet Expectation 0 or 1 of the 3 required scales in the average range for like schools or participation rate is less than 35%</p>
2.3	School Climate: Panorama School Climate Survey -Student Results	<p>Results from 4/4 of the required scales* on the Student Panorama School Climate Survey will be within the average range (50% or higher) when compared to like schools (%RFL, grade band, urban/rural). Participation among eligible students must be a minimum of 75% in order to qualify. Participation under 75% will automatically result in a "does not meet standard."</p> <p><i>*Required Scales: School Climate, Safety, Rigorous Expectations and Teacher-Student Relationships</i></p> <p>MeANS student participation rate was 78%. Results on the required scales are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Climate - In the 80th percentile nationally compared to like schools <p>NOTE - Due to an issue with the setup of the spring 2023 Panorama survey, only results from the School Climate were available.</p>	<p>Exceeds Expectation All 4 of the 4 required scales in the above average range for like schools</p>
			<p>Meets Expectation All 4 of the 4 required scales in the average range for like schools</p>
			<p>Approaching Expectation At least 3 of the 4 required scales in the average range for like schools</p>
			<p>Does Not Meet Expectation Fewer than 3 of the 4 required scales in the average range for like schools or participation rate is less than 75%</p>

2.4	School Climate: Panorama School Climate Survey-Teacher/Staff Results	<p>Results from at least 4/4 of the required scales* on the Teacher/Staff Panorama School Climate Surveys will be within the average range (50% or higher) when compared to like schools (%RFL, grade band, urban/rural). Participation must be a minimum of 75% in order to qualify. Participation under 75% will automatically results in a “does not meet standard.”</p> <p><i>*Required Scales: School Climate, Leadership, Professional Learning and Feedback and Coaching</i></p> <p>MeANS teacher/staff participation rate was 97%. Results on the required scales are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Climate - In the 91st percentile nationally compared to like schools • School Leadership - In the 53rd percentile nationally compared to like schools • Professional Learning - In the 44th percentile nationally compared to like schools • Feedback and Coaching - In the 39th percentile nationally compared to like schools 	<p>Exceeds Expectation All 4 of the 4 required scales in the above average range for like schools</p>
			<p>Meets Expectation All 4 of the 4 required scales in the average range for like schools</p>
			<p>Approaching Expectation At least 3 of the 4 required scales in the average range for like schools</p>
2.5	School Climate: Panorama Survey	<p>Annually, the school will review its Panorama Education School Climate survey results and develop an action plan to address areas for continued improvement. Plan and outcome will be submitted to the Commission.</p>	<p>Meets Expectation School develops and implements plan</p>
			<p>Approaching Expectation School develops and partially implements the plan</p>
			<p>Does Not Meet Expectation School does not develop or does not implement plan</p>
SECTION 3: ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY			
3.1	Governing Board effectiveness	<p>Legal and Fiduciary Responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of trustee members are active and engaged, fulfill their legal responsibilities and obligations, comply with the board's bylaws, and always act in the best interests of the school community. <p>Talent strategy and accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Governing Board demonstrates appropriate oversight of the Charter District Leadership administration, financial health, progress towards meeting academic and other school goals, and alignment with the mission and other terms of the charter, without managing the day-to-day operations of the school. The board conducts appropriate oversight of the officers and leaders of the organization, including an annual evaluation of the leader and considers succession planning. <p>Culture of Collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Governing Board has clear and well-understood systems for decision-making and communication processes; board of trustee's meetings are designed to foster open, deliberate, and thorough discussions to facilitate and ensure public accountability. <p>Focus on Improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Governing Board engages in continuous and strategic improvement planning by setting, and regularly monitoring progress relative to, priorities and goals that are aligned with the school's mission, vision, and educational philosophy and the accountability cycles of the authorizer. 	<p>Low Risk: Board has fulfilled contract obligations as charter contract holder in the State of Maine</p>
			<p>Moderate Risk: Board has demonstrated a lack of capacity to be a strong contracting partner and may have failed to fulfill some contract obligations as charter contract holder in the State of Maine. MCSC may develop a monitoring plan to ensure the solvency of the school</p>

			High Risk: Board has not fulfilled contract obligations as a charter contract holder in the State of Maine. MCSC may intervene with mitigation measures or other intervention protocols
3.2	Public Accountability: Transparent, responsive, and legally compliant Board operations	The Governing Board will hold a minimum of 6 meetings per school year ² in accordance with approved bylaws and in accordance with the Freedom of Access Act (FOAA).	Meets Expectation 6 or more meetings
			Does Not Meet Expectation 5 or fewer meetings
3.3	Public Accountability: Transparent, responsive, and legally compliant Board operations	Timely ³ publication of Board meeting agenda and minutes upon approval and submission to the Charter Commission, that thoroughly captures the discussion and decisions of the board.	Meets Expectation All minutes and agendas posted timely
			Approaching Expectation 1-2 items not posted timely
			Does Not Meet Expectation 3 or more not posted timely
3.4	Reporting Accuracy and Timeliness	80%-90% of reports are submitted on time and are accurate and complete. 95% of required reports/documents were submitted on time with 100% accuracy	Exceeds Expectation More than 90% of reports are submitted on time and are accurate and complete
			Meets Expectation 80%-89.9% of reports are submitted on time and are accurate and complete
			Approaching Expectation 70%-79.9% of reports are submitted on time and are accurate and complete
			Does Not Meet Expectation Fewer than 70% of reports are submitted on time and are accurate and complete
3.5	Board Training	Board members will engage in a baseline of annual training and development using the following guidelines. (LINK)	Exceeds Expectations Board provides evidence of development opportunities, such as: an annual board retreat, third-party consultation for board training on identified growth areas, an annual self-governance evaluation process, etc.
			Meets Expectations 100% of required courses have been taken and evidence is

² A school year is July 1 - June 30

³ Timely is defined as posting agenda a minimum of 5 business days before the meeting and for minutes, posting within 5 business days of approval.

			provided
			Approaching Expectations 80%-99.9% of required courses are taken and evidence is provided
			Does Not Meet Expectations Less than 80% of required courses have been completed
3.6	Facility meets Local and State requirements	The school certifies that its facility (or facilities) meets all local and state requirements for public school facilities, including current Certificate of Occupancy and a Plan for maintenance and capital improvements of school facilities consistent with 20-A M.R.S. §1001(2), 4001, 4502(5)(C); Maine DOE Rule Chapter 125.5.03 and 20-A M.R.S §6302, 6501: Maine DOE Rule Chapter 125.5.10 Public School Approval Requirements and Citation Chart	Exceeds Expectations Charter District Leadership has obtained an environmentally friendly certification such as LEED
			Meets Expectations Certified as required and approved by the Board
			Does Not Meet Expectations Not certified as required
3.7	Facility supports Programming	The facility provides a safe, clean, and aesthetically pleasing campus environment that optimizes learning, teaching, and working for all students, faculty, and staff.	Meets Expectation Facility provides a campus environment that optimizes learning, teaching, and working that supports mission and key design element implementation.
			Approaching Expectation Facility partly, but not fully, provides a campus environment that optimizes learning, teaching and working that supports mission and key design element implementation.
			Does Not Meet Expectation Facility does not provide a campus environment that optimizes learning, teaching and working that supports mission and key design element implementation.
SECTION 4: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND VIABILITY (Results will be available once the FY23 Financial Audit is received and outcomes will be reported once Commission staff and consultants have reviewed the information submitted.)			
4.1a	Current Ratio (Near-Term Measures)	Current ratio is greater than or equal to 1.1. <i>Current assets divided by current liabilities.</i>	Lower Risk Greater than 1.5
			Moderate Risk 1.0-1.5
			High Risk Less than 1
4.1b	Unrestricted Days Cash on Hand (Near-Term Measures)	Unrestricted days cash will be at least 30 days. <i>Unrestricted cash divided by ([total expenses minus depreciation expense]/365)</i>	Lower Risk 60 or more days
			Moderate Risk 30-60 days

			High Risk Fewer than 30 days
4.1c	Enrollment Variance (Near-Term Measures)	Actual enrollment is within 5% of the enrollment projected in the approved budget. <i>Actual Enrollment divided by Enrollment Projection in Charter District Leadership Board Approved Budget</i>	Lower Risk Actual within 2% of the projected enrollment
			Moderate Risk Variance is between 2 and 5%
			High Risk Variance is greater than 5% of the projected enrollment
4.1d	Financial Obligations Default (Near-Term Measures)	The school meets all debt and real estate lease obligations. <i>Failure to make required lease, principal and interest payments on-time or to meet covenant terms.</i>	Lower Risk Not in default and not delinquent
			Moderate Risk In default and/or delinquent and has obtained waivers from lenders and/or lessors
			High Risk In default and/or delinquent
4.2a	Total Margin (Sustainability Measures)	The School's Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin is positive, and the most recent year Total Margin is positive. <i>Net Surplus divided by Total Revenue</i>	Lower Risk Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin is at least 1.5% and the most recent year Total Margin is positive
			Moderate Risk Aggregated Two-Year Total Margin is at least 1.5%
			High Risk Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin is negative and/or the most recent year Total Margin is negative. Or the margin for the latest year is -10% or lower.
4.2b	Debt to asset ratio (Sustainability Measure)	The debt to asset ratio will be less than 0.9. <i>Total Liabilities divided by Total Assets</i>	Lower Risk Less than 90%
			Moderate Risk 90 to 100%
			High Risk Greater than 100%
4.2c	Cash Flow (Sustainability Measure)	Charter District Leadership maintains a positive cumulative 2-year cash flow. <i>Cash Flow = Net Annual Change in Unrestricted Cash. Cumulative Cash Flow is the sum of current and prior year Cash Flow</i>	Lower Risk A positive cumulative 2-year cash flow and positive cash flow in the most recent year.
			Moderate Risk A positive cumulative 2-year cash flow
			High Risk Does not have a positive

			cumulative 2-year cash flow and had negative cash flow in the most recent year.
4.2d	Financial Obligations Coverage Ratio (Sustainability Measure)	Charter District Leadership is able to pay current debt principal and interest and lease payments from the current year surplus. <i>(Net Surplus + Depreciation + Interest + Lease Expense)/(Annual Principal + Interest + Lease Payments)</i>	Lower Risk Exceeds 1.1
			Moderate Risk Is 1.0 to 1.1
			High Risk Is less than 1.0
4.3	Financial Planning and Budgeting	Charter District Leadership publishes a 3-year annual financial plan that includes a 2-year annual budget and a 1-year projection for year 3 that is board approved. The 3-year annual financial plan is due on August 31st.	Meets Expectation Charter District Leadership annually publishes a 3-year financial plan that includes a budget for the next 2-years and a 1-year projection for year 3.
			Does Not Meet Expectations Charter District Leadership has not published a current 3-year financial plan that includes a budget for the next 2-years and a 1-year projection for year 3.

SECTION 5: FAITHFULNESS TO THE CHARTER AND THE LAW

5.1	Mission and Key Design Implementation	<p>1.The school demonstrates its approved mission.</p> <p>2.The school implements the key design elements* in the approved charter and any subsequently approved amendments in a manner that serves all of its students.</p> <p>3.The Board and Administration share a common and consistent understanding of the school's mission and key design elements outlined in the charter.</p> <p><i>*Key Design Elements are aspects of the school, originally articulated in the charter application or in subsequent amendments, which make the school unique and distinct from other district or Charter Schools.</i></p>	Meets Expectation School is implementing the mission and design elements as outlined in the charter and amendments
			Approaching Expectation School is partially implementing the mission and design elements as outlined in the charter and amendments
			Does Not Meet Expectation School is not implementing the majority of the mission and design elements as outlined in the charter and amendments
5.2	Student Attendance	<p><u>Chronic absenteeism</u> rate</p> <p>Schools will have 10%-18% or fewer students classified as chronically absent⁴ on the last day of school.</p> <p>Chronic absenteeism rates will be reported at both the campus and district levels.</p>	Exceeds Expectation Fewer than 10%
			Meets Expectation 10%-18%
			Approaching Expectation 17.9%-25%
			Does Not Meet Expectation Greater than 25%

⁴ Chronically absent is defined as missing 10% or more of school days.

			School reports 36% chronic absenteeism.
5.3	Student Persistence - School Year	Persistence throughout the school year 85% or more of eligible ⁵ students enrolled on the last day of school will be the same students who were enrolled on State Student Count Day ⁶ .	Exceeds Expectation More than 90%
			Meets Expectation 85%-89.9%
			School reported 86% persistence throughout the school year.
			Approaching Expectation 75%-84.9%
			Does Not Meet Expectation Fewer than 75%
5.4	Student Persistence - Year-to-Year	Recurrent enrollment from one year to the next 85%-89.9% or more of eligible students enrolled on the last day of school will have completed an Intent to Reenroll form for the following SY by March 31 of current SY.	Exceeds Expectation Exceeds 90%
			Meets Expectation 85%-89.9%
			Approaching Expectation 75%-84.9%
			School reports 78% recurrent enrollment from one year to the next.
			Does Not Meet Expectation Fewer than 75%
SECTION 6: SCHOOL CUSTOMIZATION			
6.1	Campus: Attendance	75% of students will meet their individual attendance goal.	Exceeds Expectation Exceeds 85%
			School reported 94%.
			Meets Expectation 75%-84.9%
			Approaching Expectation 65%-74.9%
			Does Not Meet Expectation Fewer than 65%
6.2	Campus: Graduation	85% of eligible seniors enrolled on the last day of school will graduate at the end of the year.	Exceeds Expectation Exceeds 95%
			Meets Expectation 85%-94.9%
			Approaching Expectation

⁵ Student resident in the state of Maine

⁶ Student Count Day is October 1

			75%-84.9%
			Does Not Meet Expectation Fewer than 75%
6.3	Campus: Participation on NWEA MAP testing	90% Participation on Fall and Spring MAP (local) Testing for Campus	Exceeds Expectation Exceeds 95%
			Meets Expectation 90%-94.9%
			Approaching Expectation 75%-89.9%
			Does Not Meet Expectation Fewer than 75%
6.4	Threshold: Engagement Goals	75% of students will meet their Engagement Goals by the end of the year. Every student will create one specific, measurable goal with their teacher based on the data from the following criteria: I. Credit/Transcript Deficiencies (1-4) 1. Behind more than 10 credits (2 or more years behind) 2. Behind 5 credits or more (1 year behind) 3. Behind 1-5 credits 4. On pace II. Absenteeism History (1-4) 1. Absent 50% or more of previous year's calendar days 2. Chronically absent for entire year (17-87 absences) 3. Chronically absent for 1-4 quarters (absent 5-16 absences) 4. Not chronically absent in any quarter in previous year III. Graduation Likelihood (1-4) 1. Will take 2 or more years extra to graduate 2. Will take between one to two extra years to graduate 3. Will take less than one extra year to graduate 4. Will graduate within four years of entering high school IV. Familial and Community Support (1-4) 1. Little to No Support from Family and Community 2. Infrequent Support from Family and Community 3. Frequent Support from Family or Community 4. Consistency Strong Support from Family and Community	Exceeds Expectation Exceeds 85%
			Meets Expectation 75%-84.9%
			Approaching Expectation 65%-74.9%
			Does Not Meet Expectation Fewer than 65%
6.6	Threshold: Participation on NWEA MAP testing	80% Participation on Fall and Spring MAP (local) Testing for Threshold	Exceeds Expectation Exceeds 90%
			Meets Expectation 80%-89.9%
			Approaching Expectation 70%-79.9%
			Does Not Meet Expectation Fewer than 70%

2022-23 Mid-Year Meeting Maine Academy of Natural Sciences

April 7, 2023

On March 2, 2023, the Maine Charter School Commission staff completed a mid-year meeting in-person and via Zoom with Mike Muir, Maine Academy of Natural Sciences (MeANS) Governing Board Chairperson; Anna Perkins, Board Member; Evan Coleman, Director of Curriculum and Instruction; Beth Christopher, Business Manager; Becky Dennison, Dean of the Threshold Program; Christine Sullivan, Director of Special Education/Assistant Head of School; Matt Newberg, Head of School; and Dani Best, Dean of Students. Topics covered included academic proficiency and growth, student attendance, projected graduation rates, finances, student enrollment and recruitment, facilities, and the governing board.

Recommendations

- **College Readiness:** As you track college-readiness with the Accuplacer assessment, consider adding to that tracker your students who are currently taking college credits successfully as an additional way to illustrate the number of total students who are demonstrating college readiness.
- **Graduation:** Consider reporting to the Commission your 5-year and 6-year graduation rates. Although it is not currently part of the Performance Framework, because of the unique nature of the Threshold program, those metrics would be helpful for the Commission to review.
- **Threshold Survey:** The Director of Curriculum and Instruction mentioned that you collected survey data about why students enroll in Threshold. Consider if it would be helpful to summarize some of this information for the Commission when reporting program success.
- **Finance:** Use the 3-Year Plan as a platform for the Board and school to develop a financial plan that minimizes the deficit, especially while carrying debt. Consider cutting expenses and raising funds before the end of the year to finish with a surplus.

Academic

During SY2021-22, 81.8% of students met or exceeded the state benchmark on the NWEA MAP Growth Assessment in Reading. The school was approaching the state average of 83.8%. At the mid-year meeting, MeANS demonstrated

improvement in growth from the Spring 2022 to the Fall 2022 NWEA MAP Growth assessment, with 49.9% of 11th and 12th graders meeting their projected RIT scores in Reading, which is an increase of 3.9% from the previous year.

In SY2021-22, 73.5% of students met or exceeded the state benchmark on the NWEA MAP Growth Assessment in Math. The school was approaching the state average of 73.5%. At the mid-year meeting, MeANS demonstrated no change in growth from the Spring 2022 to the Fall 2022 NWEA MAP Growth assessment, with 53.3% of 11th and 12th graders meeting their projected RIT scores in math.

The school team reports that testing culture has improved dramatically at MeANS with a concerted effort from leadership and staff. The school notes that fall testing participation rates were all above 90% and that the Accuplacer participation rate on Campus was 100%. The school shared a grade-level growth data chart produced for MeANS from NWEA that showed the following high growth when comparing fall 2021 to fall 2022:

- 10th grade school conditional growth percentile in math: 31%
- 11th grade school conditional growth percentile in math: 98%
- 10th grade school conditional growth percentile in reading: 73%
- 11th grade school conditional growth percentile in reading: 89%
- 10th grade school conditional growth percentile in language arts: 96%
- 11th grade school conditional growth percentile in language arts: 97%

The leadership team reports that they attribute this growth to academic rigor increasing throughout the school, which has been the focus of the Director of Curriculum and Instruction. In particular, the leadership team has focused professional development on making Intensives, and project-based learning in general, more rigorous and likened this year's Intensives to be on-par with community college level learning. Additionally, professional development has focused on re-engagement with parts of their mission, such as outdoor learning.

The Dean of the Threshold Program noted that teachers use a variety of different modalities to help students engage in learning, such as projects, on-line courses, and direction toward areas of high interest. The Dean reports that seven Threshold students will graduate early this year, and one is currently taking 12 credits at University of Maine Farmington.

Attendance

In SY2021-22, MeANS's chronic absenteeism rate was 58.1%, a decrease of 17.7% from the previous year (SY2020-21). Campus chronic absenteeism was 61% as of mid-year and Threshold was 27%, a decrease from last year. The school is

reporting a full school chronic absenteeism rate of 48%, a decrease of 10% from last year.

The school is focused on attendance, and is closely monitoring each student who is demonstrating attendance challenges. The school attributes the improvement in chronic absenteeism to engaging programming and community building including a renewed focus on advisory, a new coffee house, more community events to celebrate learning, meetings with each senior to address any learning gaps toward graduation, high staff participation in events, truancy meetings and cash prizes for strong attendance.

The school acknowledges that the rates of chronic absenteeism remain too high, and notes the following barriers to all students being in school consistently:

- Sickness, including COVID quarantines;
- Transportation, including a large catchment area where some students are on the bus for more than two hours each day;
- High anxiety among students and families.

Graduation

In SY2021-22, MeANS graduation rate was 56.6%. The school anticipates that 81% of seniors will graduate from MeANS this year (88% from Campus and 78% from Threshold), which would be a significant improvement over past years.

The school attributes this success to proactive meetings with students outlining clear pathways to graduation, strong staff investment in building positive relationships with students, and multiple 1:1 meetings between seniors and the Dean of Students about plans to graduate.

Financial Performance

As of the mid-year meeting, four out of eight of the financial criteria in the Performance Framework are calculated as higher-risk, two are moderate risk and two are lower-risk. The school noted that they are currently operating at a financial loss, but are working on it and are not concerned with the current expenses. They are in year two of a 5-Year Plan that includes operating at a deficit, which is diminishing each year. Historically, the school operated with financial support from Good will-Hinckley, but they are operating with more and more independence from that organization. The school team and Board noted that they are meeting soon to discuss how financial gaps could be closed more quickly than originally planned. We ask that the school keep us updated on their plans.

The Board Chair notes that they recruited a member with a strong development background and the school has started a fundraising campaign, with the entire board contributing financially.

The school team and Board reported that low enrollment is a major driver of the financial situation. The school reports that interest in the Threshold program is increasing, with a current waitlist to be admitted to the program.

Student Enrollment and Recruitment

MeANS currently has 158 students enrolled. They plan to submit a proposal to amend their contracted enrollment, with a goal of 120 Campus students/70 Threshold students in SY2023-24, increasing to 120 Campus students/80 Threshold students in SY2024-25. The current plan is to remain constant at a school total of 200 students.

The Head of School recently presented the plan to decrease planned enrollment to the board, noting that when the Community Regional Charter School expanded to include high school students, student enrollment at MeANS from their largest sending district - Skowhegan - declined significantly.

The school believes that the 9th and 10th grade cohorts will support a strong family-to-family recruitment effort. They plan to maintain a cohort model, with 30 students per grade-level.

The school acknowledged that they could expand Threshold easily given the demand, but because of the specificity of the program, an additional teacher is required for each 10 students, which would contribute negatively to the school's financial concerns.

Facilities

MeANS is currently expanding the outdoor programming offered at their campus and will soon unveil a new agricultural barn, built with support from a RREV grant.

Governing Board

The school reports that "we currently have 12 Board members. The board is extremely active and involved in the school. We had 100% Board participation in our annual fund, contributing over double the previous year. We have developed voluntary pre-board meeting training workshops that have been well attended on topics such as School Budget, Project Based Learning and Curriculum. Additionally, we have developed an exciting launch to renew our Strategic Plan later this spring."