

March 12, 2024

Lennel Hunter, Chair Board of Directors
The Leadership School
1785 Pennsylvania Ave
Pagedale, MO 63133

RE: Transmittal of MCPSC's 2022-2023 Annual Report

Dear Mr. Hunter,

This letter transmits the Missouri Charter Public School Commission's 2022-2023 Annual Report of The Leadership School (TLS).

This report reflects the second year of the LEA's five-year contract. TLS's overall rating for FY23 is ***Falls Far Below***. TLS is **at risk for non-renewal**.

Charter schools sponsored by the Commission are reviewed annually as to their progress in meeting the Commission's performance framework standards, provisions of their performance contracts and Commission policies. Commission staff review required submissions provided by the school for accuracy, timeliness, and compliance. This report is one item in the *comprehensive body of evidence* used in evaluating schools sponsored by the Commission.

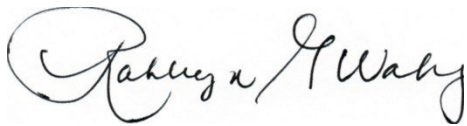
Our review determined TLS is ***Falls Far Below*** based on:

- The financial performance is designated ***Falls Far Below***. TLS ended the year with a fund balance below the statutory required 3%. Two other near-term measures were falls far below, unrestricted days cash on hand and enrollment variance. Additionally, total margin and cash flow, both indicators of the organizations long term financial sustainability, were rated does not meet. The Commission recognizes that the board has taken steps to safeguard the viability of the organization and the board should continue to monitor the monthly financials closely to ensure resources are available to support student achievement.
- The learning environment and governance were designated ***Meets***.
- Operational Compliance is designated ***Partially Meets***. This is due to the timeliness of compliance submission submitted to both DESE and the Commission. The Commission worked closely with staff throughout the year and timeliness did improve over time. The board should monitor this on a regular basis to ensure benchmarks are met in the future.
- The academic performance of the school is designated NA. TLS does not yet have students in the grades tested on the MO MAP and therefore this report does not include a rating for academics.

The Commission strongly encourages your board to review the information in this report thoroughly and use this information as you plan for the 2024-2025 school year. A member of our team will be presenting the report at the March 26 board meeting and will be able to answer any questions from you or your board at that time.

We have attached some questions you and your board may find helpful as you review the annual report. MCPSC recognizes that the board has already taken action, including hiring new leadership for FY25. The board should continue to analyze the identified areas of improvement in this report. These are leading indicators of distress that if not addressed could lead to more significant concerns.

Sincerely,



Robbyn G. Wahby
Executive Director

CC: Kimberly Townsend, Executive Director
Members, The Leadership School Board of Directors
Members, Missouri Charter Public School Commission

Attachments

Examining your Annual Report Questions
2022-2023 Annual Report
FY23 DESE Assurance Checklist
FY23 Site Visit Report
August 17, 2023 Letter of Concern and School Response

Charter Boards: Examining Your Annual Report from the Commission

The Missouri Charter Public School Commission has a contract with the Board of each of our sponsored charter public schools. The Annual Report is one of the Commission’s tools to promote a positive and forward-looking relationship with the Charter School Board relative to their accountability for the performance of the school and to the conditions of the contract.

Student, school, and education system data is reasonably complex. The Annual Report, by itself, may not tell a complete story about the progress and circumstances of the school enterprise. Here are some questions that members of Boards may find useful in working with, and supporting, their School Leader in using the Annual Report data to focus the efforts of the Board.

	Considerations When You Look at the Annual Report
For Board Chairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does our Board’s Annual Calendar force us to routinely examine the key elements of the Annual Report? • Does our Board, collectively, have a clear understanding of both where we are and where we expect to be? • Does our Board, collectively, understand what it will take in resources and support to accelerate achievement gains? • Has our Board taken the necessary Policy, Program, and Partnership actions to support the School Leader and team?
For Board Members Chairing or Serving on a Student Performance Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do our current and future approaches to Curriculum Alignment and Quality Instruction assure accelerating gains in student performance? • What are the specific Policies, Programs, or Partnership options that are most likely to improve student learning? What is required for local implementation/adaptation as well as fidelity to best practice? • What unique assets and impediments to improvements exist in our school, student population, and community?
For All Members of the Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is our expected rate of improvement for the MAP Performance Index, Student Growth, and Annual Performance Review Points? • How do our most recent results compare to our Performance Contact expectations? • What are the Board and school’s most important levers for accelerating student performance in the next 18 to 36 months?

The Leadership School

2022-2023 Annual Report

Annual Performance: **Falls Far Below**

Year Opened: 2022-2023
Next Renewal: 2026-2027
Location: Normandy
Enrollment: 85
Grades Served: K-2
Contract Year: 1/5








Performance Summary

STANDARDS AND INDICATORS	SECTION STANDARD RATING
I. ACADEMICS	
Federal & State Accountability	Meets
Student Academic Proficiency	N/A
Student Academic Growth	N/A
Postsecondary Readiness	N/A
School-Specific Academic Measure(s)	N/A
II. FINANCE	
Near-Term Financial Health	Falls Far Below
Financial Sustainability	Partially Meets
III. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	
School Environment	Meets
Education Program Compliance	Meets
Student Rights and Requirements	Meets
School Specific Measures	Partially Meets
IV. GOVERNANCE	
Board Operations	Meets
Holding Management Accountable	Meets
Compliance and Reporting	Meets
School Specific Goal	Partially Meets
V. OPERATIONS	
Financial Management	Partially Meets
Compliance and Reporting	Partially Meets
Employee Rights and Requirements	Meets





Understanding this Report

Dear Reader,



This report is distributed annually for each school sponsored by the Commission so parents/care givers, community members, elected officials and other stakeholders are informed about the performance of the schools we sponsor. The Commission monitors five key performance areas:

- I.  **Academics** – *How well are the students performing on national, state and interim assessment? Is the school meeting their performance contract goals? Is the school meeting its mission?*
- II.  **Finance** – *Has the school appropriately managed tax payer and philanthropic dollars to ensure the school is sustainable?*
- III.  **Learning Environment** – *Has the school met federal and state requirements so students are safe and have all the rights afforded to them?*
- IV.  **Governance** – *Has the board of directors provided the stewardship, oversight and accountability required of a public school board and a Missouri non-profit?*
- V.  **Operations** – *Has the school operated effectively, safely and in compliance with policies, regulations and statutes?*

The first two pages of this report provide readers with a quick summary of the schools performance. The Annual Performance of the school is rated **Meets**, **Partially Meets/Does Not Meet** or **Falls Far Below** based on results in each of the performance areas. Academics can also be rated **Exceeds** if it is higher than the state average. Targets for each indicator can be found in the [performance framework](#). Ratings are color coded throughout the report, as outlined in this chart.

PERFORMANCE RATINGS DEFINED	
 Exceeds	Exceeding expectations and showing exemplary performance. Academic Performance is the only standard eligible for Exceeds.
 Meets	Generally meets the criterion, is performing well, is meeting expectations for performance, and/or minor concern(s) are noted.
 Partially Meets or Does Not Meet	Meets some aspects of the criterion, but not others and/or moderate concern(s) are noted.
 Falls Far Below	Falls far below the stated expectations and/or significant concern(s) are noted. The failures are material and significant to the viability to the school.

Each key performance area contains a specific indicators and measures. Indicators gage these essential compliance and performance areas. The direction of the arrow will tell you if the school’s performance for each specific area is improving or declining since last year’s report.

PERFORMANCE OVER TIME	
	Increasing, moving in the right direction over time
No Arrow	Neither increasing or decreasing
	Decreasing, moving in the wrong direction over time

Each indicator is made up of measures, based on observations and data collected by the Commission. The following pages detail the results of these measures for the current year. When possible, prior year performance and a three year average are noted. Explanations of the various measures, computations (where appropriate), and the source of the data can be found <https://mcpssc.mo.gov/media/pdf/annual-report-terms-calculations-and-sources>.

The Commission wishes to express its gratitude to the National Association of Charter School Authorizers for use of its research and publications, especially Core Performance Framework and Guidance. The Commission has adopted NACSA’s Principles and Standards for authorizing. We have built our performance framework and annual report on NACSA’s research and continue to strengthen our work based on national best practices in charter school accountability.

Sincerely,

Missouri Charter Public School Commission

The Leadership School Overview

GRADES SERVED	K-2
SCHOOL ADDRESS	1785 Pennsylvania Ave. St. Louis, MO 63133
SCHOOL WEBSITE	www.theleadershipschoolstl.org
AREAS SERVED	Normandy
LEADERSHIP	Lennel Hunter, Board Chair Dr. Kimberly Townsend, Executive Director
SCHOOL MISSION	The Leadership School exists to grow our students' leadership capacity through earnest engagement in an academically rigorous, culturally relevant, and relationship-oriented environment.

Student Demographics

TOTAL ENROLLMENT	85
ATTENDANCE	57.1%/90%
RACE/ETHNICITY	% OF TOTAL
Asian/Pacific Islander	*
Black	92.9%
Hispanic/Latino	1.1%
Multiracial & Other	3.5%
Native American	*
White/Caucasian	2.4%

HISTORICALLY UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS % OF TOTAL	% OF TOTAL
Free or Reduced-Price Lunch	100%
Students with Disabilities	14.1%
English Language Learners	*
Homeless/Migrant Students	*

DISCIPLINE INCIDENTS - TOTAL	0
RACE/ETHNICITY	% OF TOTAL
Asian/Pacific Islander	0%
Black	0%
Hispanic/Latino	0%
Multiracial & Other	0%
Native American	0%
White/Caucasian	0%

STUDENT ENROLLMENT BY GRADE	
K	22
1	30
2	33

STAFF AND BOARD DEMOGRAPHICS			
	BOARD	ALL EMPLOYEES	TEACHERS
TOTAL NUMBER	5	16	4
RACE/ETHNICITY % OF TOTAL			
Asian/Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%
Black	80%	75%	75%
Hispanic/Latino	0%	6%	0%
Multiracial & Other	0%	6%	25%
Native American	0%	0%	0%
White/Caucasian	20%	13%	0%

I. Academic Performance

N/A

This section provides an overview of the school’s performance in the year reviewed on a variety of academic measures, and a view of recent historical trends the school is accountable for achieving, as established by applicable federal and state law and the charter contract. The measures provide information about student growth and outcomes.

INDICATORS AND MEASURES	STANDARD	SCHOOL PERFORMANCE				RATING		NOTES
		3YR AVG	FY21	FY22	FY23	Rating	Direction	
FEDERAL & STATE ACCOUNTABILITY								
ESEA Designation	In Compliance (IC)		N/A	N/A	IC	Meets		
State Rating	≥70%		N/A	N/A	91.6%	Meets		This is a combination of performance and continuous improvement points established by DESE for districts in MSIP 6.
State Rating Academic Achievement	≥70%			N/A	N/A			This number only includes academic achievement points generated using MSIP 6 calculation for the APR.
STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT								
Proficiency – English(All)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	The school’s first year was 2022/23 and did not have any tested grade levels.
Proficiency – English (student group)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Proficiency Comparison – English	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Proficiency – Math (All)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Proficiency – Math (student group)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Proficiency Comparison – Math	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Proficiency – Science (All)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Proficiency – Science (student group)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Proficiency Comparison – Science	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	

INDICATORS AND MEASURES	STANDARD	SCHOOL PERFORMANCE				RATING		NOTES
		3YR AVG	FY21	FY22	FY23	Rating	Direction	
SCHOOL SPECIFIC ACADEMIC MEASURES - ACHIEVEMENT								
Proficiency - English	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	By year five, at least 70% of students enrolled at The Leadership School for three consecutive years will score proficient or advanced on the state assessment in English Language Arts.
Proficiency - Math	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	By year five, at least 60% of students enrolled at The Leadership School for three consecutive years will score proficient or advanced on the state assessment in Mathematics.
Proficiency - Science	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	By year five, at least 60% of students enrolled at The Leadership School for three consecutive years will score proficient or advanced on the state assessment in Science.
Achievement Improvement - Reading	50%	N/A	N/A	N/A	62%	Meets	N/A	Annually, decrease the number of students that are 2 grade levels and below by half (50%) as measured by the iReady reading diagnostic test
Achievement Improvement - Math	50%	N/A	N/A	N/A	65%	Meets	N/A	Annually, decrease the number of students that are 2 grade levels and below by half (50%) as measured by the iReady math diagnostic test
Achievement - Reading	50th	N/A	N/A	N/A	18 th	Falls Far Below	N/A	By year five, our students will score in the 75th percentile of test-takers in reading on NWEA, a nationally norm-referenced growth measured assessment.
Achievement - Math	50th	N/A	N/A	N/A	18 th	Falls Far Below	N/A	By year five, our students will score in the 75th percentile of test-takers in math on NWEA, a nationally norm-referenced growth measured assessment.
STUDENT ACADEMIC GROWTH								
Growth – English (All)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	The school's first year was 2022/23 and did not have any tested grade levels.
Growth – English (Student Group)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Growth – Math (All)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Growth – Math (Student Group)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	

II. Financial Performance

Falls Far Below

This section provides an overview of the school's performance in the year reviewed and a view of recent historical trends on financial measures the school is accountable for achieving. They provide information about the school's financial health and sustainability.

INDICATORS AND MEASURES	STANDARD	3-YR AVG.	FY21 VALUE	FY22 VALUE	FY23 VALUE	RATING	NOTES
NEAR-TERM MEASURES							
Current Ratio	>1.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	No liabilities	Meets	
Unrestricted Days Cash on Hand	30/60/90	N/A	N/A	N/A	8	Falls Far Below	School-specific goal to maintain 30 days at all times by year three.
Enrollment Variance	=>95%	N/A	N/A	N/A	65%	Falls Far Below	
Debt Default	Making payments; comply with covenants	N/A	N/A	N/A	Meets	Meets	
Fund Balance	3% or greater	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.39%	Falls Far Below	
INDICATORS AND MEASURES	STANDARD	3-YR AVG.	FY21 VALUE	FY22 VALUE	FY23 VALUE	RATING	NOTES
SUSTAINABILITY MEASURES							
Total Margin	Positive	N/A	N/A	N/A	-0.1%	Does Not Meet	
Debt to Asset Ratio	<.09	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.0	Meets	
Cash Flow	Multiple years positive	N/A	N/A	N/A	Negative \$1,652	Does Not Meet	
Debt Service Coverage Ratio	=>1.1	N/A	N/A	N/A	No Debt	Meets	

III. Learning Environment Compliance

Meets

This section reports the school’s overall performance in fulfilling its obligation to provide a safe, healthy and equitable place for children to learn and grow. These measures are established in mostly in federal and state statutes, as well as those items required in the school’s charter and contract.

INDICATORS AND MEASURES	STANDARD	RATING	NOTES
SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT			
Complying with facilities and transportation requirements	Material Compliant	Meets	
Complying with health and safety requirements	Material Compliant	Meets	
Handling student information and data appropriately	Material Compliant	Meets	
EDUCATION PROGRAM COMPLIANCE			
Implementing the material terms of the education program as defined in the current charter contract	Material Compliant	Meets	
Complying with applicable education requirements	Material Compliant	Meets	
Protecting the rights of students with disabilities	Material Compliant	Meets	
Protecting the rights of English Language Learner (ELL) students	Material Compliant	Meets	
STUDENT RIGHTS AND REQUIREMENTS			
Protecting the rights of all students	Material Compliant	Meets	
Open, free access to apply and enroll	Material Compliant	Meets	

INDICATORS AND MEASURES	STANDARD	RATING	NOTES
SCHOOL SPECIFIC GOALS			
Attendance	90%	Meets	Annually, for the first three years, we will have at least a 90% average daily attendance rate. By year five, we will increase to 93% average daily attendance rate. Year 1 ADA = 92%
Student Leadership	Certified	Meets	Before renewal, The Leadership School will achieve Leader in Me Lighthouse School Certification.
Positive School Culture – Student Satisfaction	85%	Meets	Annually, at least 85% of students will respond positively to a formal survey that their voice matters beginning with 3 rd grade and up with the first report beginning in the 2023-2024 school year. By year five, student voice will increase to 95% of students.
Positive School Culture – Family Satisfaction	85%	Does Not Meet	Annually, for the first three years, 85% of parents/family members will respond positively on a formal survey that they are satisfied with the school. By year five, satisfaction will increase to 95% of parents/family members. MRA Score = 80%
Student Retention	85%	Meets	Annually, at least 85% of students enrolled on October 1 will be re-enrolled the following year, as measured by the percent of students who leave the school for reasons other than moving out of the enrollment zone. 75/86 = 86% re-enrolled for Year 2
Staff Satisfaction	90%	Meets	Annually, 90% of staff members will respond positively on a formal survey that their voice matters in the school and that they are satisfied with our culture.
Staff Retention	90%	Does Not Meet	Annually, 90% of staff members will respond positively on the TNTP Instructional Insight survey.

IV. Governance

Meets

This section reports the board of directors overall performance in the year in fulfilling legal requirements and fiduciary/public stewardship responsibilities. Compliance with state statutes and Commission policies relevant to governing a public school and Missouri non-profit are also rated in this section.

INDICATORS AND MEASURES	STANDARD	RATING	NOTES
BOARD OPERATIONS			
Board Training	100% of board members have participated in training	Meets	
Committee Structure	Structure is in place and committees are meeting	Meets	
Review and Updates Board Policies Annually	Material Compliant	Meets	
Strategic Plans, Board Goals	Annual goals and plans adopted by Board	Meets	
Strategic Planning	The Board of Directors will lead the efforts to update AFIA's strategic plan by Spring 2020.	Meets	
Board Attendance	Each year, 100% of board members will attend, at a minimum, 80% of the scheduled board meetings.	Meets	
HOLDING MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTABLE			
CEO Evaluation	Completed	Meets	
Monitor Performance, School and Board Goals	Demonstrated Consistent Monitoring	Meets	
COMPLIANCE AND REPORTING			
Missouri Ethic Commission Filings	Material Compliant	Meets	
ASBR	Material Compliant	Meets	
Missouri Sunshine Law Compliance	Material Compliant	Meets	
Registered with the Secretary of State	Material Compliant	Meets	
SCHOOL SPECIFIC GOAL			
Board Engagement	For each fiscal year, 100% of board members will contribute financially to fundraising goals.	Does Not Meet	

V. Operational Compliance

Partially Meets

This section reports the school’s overall performance in the year reviewed in fulfilling legal and contractual requirements and responsibilities relevant to organizational reporting and monitoring requirements.

INDICATORS AND MEASURES	STANDARD	RATING	NOTES
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT			
Meeting financial reporting and compliance requirements: School Specific Goal – For each fiscal year, the annual audit will have no material findings and unqualified opinion.	Material Compliant	Does Not Meet	During the SY23 audit, it was noted that TLS had not posted, at least quarterly, a searchable expenditure and revenue document or database detailing actual income, expenditures, and disbursement for the current calendar or fiscal year on the school website as required by Section 160.066, RSMo.
Following Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)	Material Compliant	Meets	
EMPLOYEE RIGHTS AND REQUIREMENTS			
Respecting employee rights	Material Compliant	Meets	
Completing required background checks	Material Compliant	Meets	
Meeting teacher and other staff credentialing requirements	Material Compliant	Meets	
COMPLIANCE AND REPORTING			
Federal and State reporting requirements: School Specific Goal of State Data to be accurate and on time	Material Compliant	Does Not Meet	DESE Compliance: On time: 67%; Accurate: 100%
Local Reporting requirements	Material Compliant	Meets	
Commission reporting requirements: Annually, at least 90% of state data, reporting and compliance submissions to the sponsor and to DESE will be accurate and on time.	Material Compliant and 90% on time 90% accurate	Falls Far Below	MCPSC Compliance: On time: 70%; Accurate: 97%
Document Retention requirements	Material Compliant	Meets	



MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
OFFICE OF QUALITY SCHOOLS – MISSOURI SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

2022-23 MISSOURI CHARTER SCHOOL ASSURANCE CHECKLIST

CHARTER SCHOOL NAME The Leadership School	COUNTY-DISTRICT CODE 096-901
CHARTER SCHOOL CONTACT NAME Kimberly Townsend	CHARTER SCHOOL CONTACT PHONE NUMBER 314-227-1777
CHARTER SCHOOL CONTACT EMAIL ktownsend@tlsstl.org	FORM DUE DATE June 30, 2023

INSTRUCTIONS

Charter schools are required to be compliant with state and federal laws and State Board of Education regulations. The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has created this assurance checklist to assist charter schools with this compliance as well as to assist charter sponsors in the review of charters. Administrative Rules are located on the Missouri Secretary of State’s website at: www.sos.mo.gov/adrules. All charters shall send responses to their sponsor by the date specified by the sponsor. Sponsors must submit the completed forms by June 30, 2023 to charters@dese.mo.gov or mail to:

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Office of Quality Schools
Attn: Charter Schools
P.O. Box 480
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480

Mark each item in the left column as Yes, No, K-8 or N/A (not applicable). If answering “No” or “N/A,” you must provide an explanation and plan for resolution of the deficiency in the comment box below.

QUESTIONS: Contact your Area Supervisor or the Charter School Section at 573-751-8247 or charters@dese.mo.gov.

CERTIFICATION

	1. At least 80 percent of teachers are appropriately licensed or certificated to teach in Missouri public schools (Section 160.420, RSMo).
YES (1)	a. Teachers
YES (1)	b. Other certificated staff
YES (1)	2. Districts and charter schools shall annually provide information to DESE regarding: use of third party employment agencies for substitute teachers, daily rate of substitute pay, employment of full-time and part-time substitute teachers, substitute teacher recruitment efforts, the substitute teacher interview process, and use of current school staff as substitute teachers during other assigned time, in accordance with Section 168.037, RSMo .
YES (1)	3. The charter school provides all substitute teachers with a link to a web-based survey each day as required by Section 168.037, RSMo .

FINANCE

	1. The charter is organizationally and fiscally viable as defined in (Section 160.405, RSMo), not having:
YES (1)	a. a negative balance in its operating funds;
YES (1)	b. a combined balance of less than three percent of the amount expended for such funds during the previous fiscal year; or
YES (1)	c. expenditures that exceed receipts for the most recently completed fiscal year.
YES (1)	2. The charter school implements effective and efficient fiscal management systems that ensure accountability of charter school funds and provides charter financial and budgetary information to the public (Sections 160.066, RSMo and 5 CSR 30-4.030).
NA (9)	3. If the charter contracts for pre-kindergarten services and claims attendance for state purposes, the pre-kindergarten provider meets the state pre-kindergarten program standards (Sections 163.018, 163.161, RSMo and 5 CSR 25-100.320).

GOVERNANCE

	1. The charter school employs appropriate procedures to assure the accurate and timely reporting of data to state and federal agencies.
YES (1)	a. In accordance with the annual data acquisition calendar (160.405.4(2), RSMo)
YES (1,4)	b. Self-Monitoring Documents
YES	c. Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline (Section 210.115, RSMo)
YES (1,3,5)	d. School Safety Provisions (Sections 160.522, 162.680.2, 167.023, 167.117, 167.627, 302.272, 569.155, 571.030, 574.115, 575.090, and 579.030.1(1), RSMo)

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, age, veteran status, mental or physical disability, or any other basis prohibited by statute in its programs and activities. Inquiries related to department programs and to the location of services, activities, and facilities that are accessible by persons with disabilities may be directed to the Jefferson State Office Building, Director of Civil Rights Compliance and MOA Coordinator (Title VI/Title VII/Title IX/504/ADA/ADAAA/Age Act/GINA/USDA Title VI), 5th Floor, 205 Jefferson Street, P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480; telephone number 573-526-4757 or TTY 800-735-2966; email civilrights@dese.mo.gov.

YES (1)	2. The charter school complies with federal laws relating to the protection of pupil rights, 20 U.S.C 1232h(b).
NA (9)	3. The charter school reports school dropouts to the Missouri Literacy Hotline (Section 167.275, RSMo) .
YES (1)	4. The charter school waives proof of residency requirements for a child whose parent or guardian is serving on specified active duty military orders (Section 160.2000, RSMo).
YES (1)	5. The charter provides for student religious liberties in a manner consistent with Section 160.405.4(1) .
YES (1)	6. The charter school ensures that an American Flag is displayed in front of each school building and the Pledge of Allegiance is recited in at least one scheduled class of every pupil enrolled in the school, no less often than once per school day (Section 171.021, RSMo).
YES (1)	7. The charter school ensures that, if requested by any recognized organization, it allows at least 30 minutes to provide unbiased information on organ, eye and tissue donation to the governing body of a charter (Section 170.311, RSMo).
INSTRUCTION/CURRICULUM/ASSESSMENT	
NA (6)	1. The charter school has developed standards for teaching (Section 160.045, RSMo).
NA (9)	2. The charter school complies with state high school graduation requirements (Section 170.345, RSMo and 5 CSR 20-100.190).
NA (9)	3. The charter school provides one-half unit of high school health and personal finance credit for graduates (5 CSR 20-100.190).
NA (9)	4. The charter school provides regular instruction in the United States and Missouri Constitutions , as well as American history, American institutions and American civics. Unless an exception applies, students are required to successfully complete a course of such instruction that is at least one semester in length, as required by (Section 170.011, RSMo).
NA (9)	5. The charter school ensures that all students entering ninth grade after July 1, 2017, pass an examination on the provisions and principles of American Civics as required by (Section 170.345, RSMo).
NA (8, 9)	6. The charter school ensures that each high school distributes to its students the information on critical need occupations as provided by the DESE each year before November 1 st (Section 167.902, RSMo).
	7. The charter school ensures that it has policies and procedures in place allowing students to participate in the Missouri Course Access and Virtual School Program (MOCAP) (Section 161.670, RSMo).
YES (1)	a. The charter school has adopted an enrollment policy that requires enrollment requests for MOCAP to be treated similarly to those for traditional courses.
YES (1)	b. The charter school provides for an appeal process upon denial of enrollment in MOCAP courses.
YES (1)	c. The charter school informs parents of their child's right to participate in the program by making program availability clear in the parent handbook, registration documents and by featuring it on the home page of the charter school's website.
YES (1)	8. The charter school shall determine a child is gifted only if the child meets the definition of "gifted children" as provided in (Section 162.675, RSMo).
YES (1)	9. The charter school's course materials relating to sexual education instruction shall comply with statute (Section 170.015, RSMo).
YES (1)	10. The charter school ensures that it conducts dyslexia screenings for students and provides reasonable classroom support consistent with the guidelines developed by DESE (Section 167.950, RSMo).
NA (9)	11. The charter school ensures that all pupils (during the pupil's four years of high school) receive 30 minutes of cardiopulmonary resuscitation instruction and training in the proper performance of the Heimlich maneuver or other first aid for choking. Instruction is to be included in the charter school's existing health or physical education curriculum and must meet the requirements of (Section 170.310, RSMo).
	12. The charter school will: (Section 167.268, RSMo)
YES (2)	a. Implement a reading success plan policy (Section 167.268, RSMo);
YES (2)	b. Assess all students enrolled in kindergarten through grade three at the beginning and the end of each school year for their level of reading or reading readiness on state-approved reading assessments (Section 167.645, RSMo);
YES (2)	c. Assess any newly enrolled student in grades one through five for their level of reading or reading readiness on a reading assessment from the state-approved list (Section 170.014, RSMo); and
YES (2)	d. Provide reading success plans to students with substantial reading deficiencies and to those students who have been identified as being at risk of dyslexia. (Section 167.645, RSMo).
YES (2)	13. The charter school assesses all students enrolled in kindergarten through grade three at the beginning and end of each school year for their level of reading or reading readiness on a reading assessment from state-approved reading assessments (Section 167.645, RSMo).
	14. The charter school provides a reading success plan at the beginning of the school year to any student who:
YES (2)	a. Exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading which creates a barrier to a child's progress learning to read;
YES (2)	b. Has been identified as being at risk of dyslexia in the statewide dyslexia screening or has a formal diagnosis of dyslexia (Section 167.645, RSMo).
YES (2)	15. The charter school has established a reading program in kindergarten through grade five based in scientific research (Section 170.014, RSMo).

	16. The charter school provides instruction: in Braille reading and writing to eligible students as outlined in the BRITE Act (Section 167.225, RSMo).
YES (1)	a. In Braille reading and writing to eligible students as outlined in the BRITE Act; and
YES (1)	b. In orientation and mobility training for blind and visually impaired students (Section 167.225, RSMo).
NA (9)	17. The charter school provides mental health awareness training to students in accordance with Section 170.307, RSMo .
NA (9)	18. The charter school, if it is a high school, offers at least one computer science course in an in-person setting or as a virtual or distance course option (Section 170.018, RSMo).
NA (9)	19. The charter school provides student IDs with the three digit dialing code that directs calls and routes text messages to the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (Section 170.048, RSMo).
PROFESSIONAL LEARNING	
YES (1,6)	1. The charter school ensures that all educators in its employ, who hold a career continuous certificate, complete a minimum of 15 contact hours of professional development annually unless exempt (Section 168.021, RSMo).
YES (1)	2. The charter school provides two hours of in-service training for all practicing teachers annually regarding dyslexia and related disorders (Section 167.950, RSMo).
This is optional	3. All school personnel may participate in a simulated active shooter and intruder response drill conducted by law enforcement professionals, as described in statute. Program instructors must be certified by the Department of Public Safety's Peace Officers Standards Training Commission (Section 170.315, RSMo). This is not a required training.
SAFETY	
YES (1, 5)	1. The charter school has a written discipline policy; provides the policy to students, parents and guardians; and follows the requirements of Sections 160.261 and 160.405, RSMo .
YES (1)	2. The charter school complies with statute related to posting child abuse and neglect hotline information (Section 160.975, RSMo).
YES (1)	3. The charter school requires the reporting of child abuse, including allegations of sexual misconduct involving a teacher or other employee of the charter school, and provides employee training in accordance with law (Sections 160.261.2, 162.069 and 210.115, RSMo).
YES (1)	4. The charter school maintains immunization records as required by statute and reports such data required by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (Sections 167.181 and 167.183, RSMo).
YES (1, 3)	5. The charter school complies with all statutes related to the transportation of students (Sections 162.064, 162.065, and 167.231 RSMo).
	6. The charter school complies with the Persistently Dangerous Schools provision of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (P.L. 114-95) and (5 CSR 20-100.210).
NA (8)	a. Allow students who attend a persistently dangerous school to attend a safe public school within the charter school Local Education Agency (LEA).
NA (8)	b. Allow students who have been a victim of a violent criminal offense while in or on the grounds of the public school to attend a safe public school within the charter school LEA.
YES (1)	7. The charter school is required to disclose to any public school about any former employee, information regarding any violation of the published regulations of the state board of education, the district, or the governing body of the charter school by the former employee if such violation related to sexual misconduct with a student and was determined to be an actual violation of the board, of the district, or the governing body of the charter after a contested case due process hearing has been conducted, pursuant to board policy (Section 162.068, RSMo).
YES (2)	8. The charter school complies with the provisions of the Get the Lead Out of School Drinking Water Act. Effective 2023-24 school year and beyond (Section 160.077, RSMo).
YES (1)	9. The charter school complies with the provisions of Will's Law related to individualized emergency health care plans for epilepsy and seizure disorders (Section 167.625, RSMo).
COMPLIANCE	
YES (1)	1. The charter school complies with all the regulations of the state and federal programs in which the charter school participates (5 CSR 20-100.130, and 5 CSR 20-300.110 to.120.)
YES (1)	2. The charter school meets state and federal special education requirements for students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, migratory children, students whose native or home language is other than English and homeless youth (Sections 162.680 and 167.020, RSMo, and 5 CSR 20-300.110 to .120).
	3. The charter school complies with statutory standards including:
YES (1)	a. Administration of the statewide system of academic assessments, as designated by the State Board of Education under (Section 160.518, RSMo).
YES (1, 3, 5)	b. Assurances for the completion and distribution of an annual report card as prescribed in (Section 160.522, RSMo).
YES (1)	c. Collection of baseline data during the first three years of operation to determine the longitudinal success of the charter school (Section 160.405.7, RSMo).

YES (1)	d. Measurement of pupil progress toward the pupil academic standards adopted by the State Board of Education under (Sections 160.514 , and 160.405.6(a) RSMo).
YES (1,5)	e. Publication of each charter school's Annual Performance Report (Section 160.405, RSMo).
YES (1)	f. Compliance with laws and regulations of the state, county or city relating to health, safety and state minimum educational standards, including requirements relating to student discipline under (Sections 160.261 , 160.261.2 , 167.161 , 167.164 and 167.171, RSMo).
YES (1)	g. Notification to law enforcement authorities of criminal conduct under (Sections 167.115 and 167.117, RSMo).
YES (1)	h. Transmittal of school records as required by (Section 167.020, RSMo).
YES (1)	i. Provision of the minimum amount of school time as required by (Section 171.031, RSMo).
YES (1)	j. Performance of employee background checks as required by (Section 168.133, RSMo).
YES (5)	k. Protections to students and families with respect to certain surveys and evaluations as required by (Section 167.113, RSMo).
NA (8)	4. The charter school notifies parents if the local education agency (LEA) or school within the LEA scores in the bottom 5% of the Annual Performance Report (Section 162.084, RSMo).

COMMENTS

Comment(s) are required for any item that has been marked as No or N/A.

- The stated purpose of this form is "assuring that it has or will comply with state law, federal law, and State Board of Education regulations included during the 2022-23 school year." All charter schools sponsored by MCPSC have a signed contract on file at DESE. It assures compliance with all Missouri statutes related to charter public schools. MCPSC monitors throughout the year. MCPSC annually requests verification from DESE offices that monitor compliance to specific programs at the end of each fiscal year. MCPSC monitors schools compliance of annual items on the timeline dictated by the work function.
- Statute(s) go into effect in FY24.
- The following statutes do not applicable to charter schools: 571.030, 569.115, 574.115, 575.090, 597.030(1), 167.275, 160.522, 167.231
- Self-monitoring document list is not provided.
- One or more statutes in this section does not apply to charter schools, is a definition or the duty of another agency/board.
- Only applicable to charter schools operated by a school district.
- The statue cited is incorrect.
- This statute does not apply to this charter school.
- This school do not offer this or does not serve the grades where this applies.

ASSURANCES

If you provide any "personal information" as defined in Section 105.1500, RSMo, concerning an entity exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, you understand and agree that you are voluntarily choosing to seek a state contract and providing such information for that purpose. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will treat such personal information in accord with Section 105.1500, RSMo, unless such information is subject to disclosure pursuant to federal or state law.

The superintendent/chief executive officer assures compliance with each of the items on the checklist.

SIGNATURE OF SUPERINTENDENT	DATE
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The Charter Sponsor annually reviews the charter school's compliance with statutory standards, as required by [Section 160.405.7, RSMo](#).

SIGNATURE OF SPON	DATE
	Jun 29, 2023

boxSIGN 157ZLLZ1-4KWZPJKR

SCHOOL: THE LEADERSHIP SCHOOL

YEAR: SY2022 – 2023

DATE: February 2nd, 2023

School Overview and History

The Leadership School (TLS) opened its doors in the fall of 2022 as a K-2 school serving **87** students. As a result of the challenges that continue to plague the Normandy Schools Collaborative, including the impact low-quality schools are having on minority students and those of low socioeconomic status, TLS aimed to meet the needs of the surrounding community by creating a school centered on growing the whole child. Their goal is to foster, within students, a sense of belonging, coupled with a rigorous academic experience that will lay the foundation for authentic student leadership.

Through a philosophical belief that educating children in the 21st century requires school experiences that prepare students to design and lead their own versions of a successful life, TLS has employed a school model aligned by three primary tenants: 1) developing a sense of belonging, 2) rigorous academic experiences and 3) authentic leadership. Ensuring that all students are safe, feel seen and thrive in a context of strong relationships, including creative and innovative learning opportunities that cultivate the skills needed to thrive in the 21st century, they seek to focus on leveraging relationships that help students establish a sense of belonging as well as provide them with a toolkit of academic skills needed to practice and exercise leadership in one's own life and the world around them.

With a desire to grow The Leadership School to a K-8 charter by the 2026-27 school year, serving approximately 450 students within the boundaries of the Normandy School Collaborative, TLS' vision is to create students that will lead transformational change for their communities and our world by becoming thoughtful citizens who understand the responsibility of leaders to shape and create equitable spaces. Currently completing their first year of its five-year contract, The Leadership School is made up of a student body population consisting of 93% African American, 1% Hispanic, 3.5% White and 2.5% multi-racial students. 75% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch and 15% receive special education services.

Site Visit Process Overview

MCPSC will conduct compliance site visits every year with TLS, as they hold a 5-year charter. The team consisted of Martha McGeehon, Deputy Director of Accountability, and Dr. Tonya Richardson, Program Specialist, of Missouri Charter Public School Commission. Marisol Rodriguez, Founder of Insignia Partners, has been contracted to serve as the Site Visit Coordinator for the Commission's site visits in 2023.

Dr. Kimberly Townsend, Executive Director, organized the focus groups and interviews. The site visit included interviews with the Executive Director, Operations Manager, Director of Student & Community Affairs, and focus groups with elementary school teachers, families and the board. The site visit team observed the January 31st board meeting.

Observations were not intended to assess the academic quality of the school, or the actual performance of any group or individual, but were focused on all compliance issues as outlined in the Site Visit Protocol.

General Observations

TLS appears to be moving in the right direction. The theme heard throughout the site visit was that from the start of the school year (August) to present, there has been a major shift in the culture of the school. Operationally, there have been significant improvements and the focus has shifted from organization to academics. Teachers feel supported, heard and respected. Leadership is collaborative and has a strong working relationship with the Executive Director. Parents feel as though the school pushes their students to be better by providing rigorous academics and smaller classes with more one-on-one focus. The board feels as though the school is doing a good job in aligning with its mission of promoting student leadership and although getting the school started was “hard”, they are beginning to have academic conversations around the direction of the school.

Findings

Criteria 1: Faithfulness to Charter

Areas of Strength

Teachers, parents, school leadership and board members all shared a common and consistent understanding of the school’s mission to grow their student’s leadership capacity through rigorous academics, cultural relevance and relationships. Actions such as daily positive affirmations, Leader-In-Me sessions, individualized learning and culturally relevant activities were mentioned to demonstrate ways in which the school was employing its mission. Teachers noted seeing a positive trend in student behaviors as a result of the daily creed quoted by students every morning; leadership discussed academic gains beginning to show up in data as a result of the rigorous coursework happening in classrooms and parents discussed their students being happy to come to school because of the relationships they were building at The Leadership School. The message conveyed by all interviewed stakeholders is that in order to build leaders, students need to be in charge of and at the center of their own learning. This articulation demonstrates that The Leadership School’s is beginning to align their strategic plan with their contractual goals.

TLS houses all application material in School Mint and readily provides information regarding non-discriminatory enrollment practices and the availability of specialized services to parents, students, and the general public. The site visit team noted no concerns about equity and access when it comes to recruitment and enrollment processes. The Leadership School participates in a formal lottery as needed and currently does not have a waiting list as they are looking to expand one grade level next year.

Areas of Growth

Although processes and procedures have gotten better since the start of school, sentiments were heard on all levels regarding the need to continue refining the school culture and tighter procedures around staff culture and expectations.

Criteria 2: Students' Opportunities to Learn

Areas of Strength

Given the landscape that Covid has presented for many schools, data is beginning to show that students are growing academically but not at the rate the leadership in the building would like to see. Having a lot of teachers new to the field and substitutes on staff, the focus has been placed on teacher development, coaching and building academic partnerships with families. Leadership and teachers state that students are monitoring their own growth through platforms such as IReady and NWEA that helps provide data to individualize learning. Students are setting their own goals, are updated regularly on their progress then establish new goals once their previous goal has been met. There are different methods TLS uses for tracking data such as the Wall Tracker, snapshot & formative assessments, data binder, etc. These methods keep leadership, teachers and staff informed on how students are progressing academically. Parents commented that they are seeing progression in their child's growth and feels as though the school is holding their child to high expectations academically. Board members feel like the data is trending in the right direction and with a few tweaks, are more than capable of reaching their goal by the end of the first year. Currently, the board, along with building leadership are working to learn more about the required state assessments and are in the process of setting goals around proficiency levels that will aim to move students across tiers from year-to-year.

All staff members of The Leadership School were able to identify the processes in place to support students with varying needs (from academic to behavior). Targeted time has been incorporated into the schedule for students who need additional support alongside personalized learning blocks. Restorative practices have also been put in place to combat suspension and parents voiced that the school is proactive and does a very good job in dealing with student's emotions prior to breakdowns. As an added measure, TLS has built a CARE team to help cater to students with specific learning challenges. There was consensus that the S.E.L. practices in place in the building were very strong.

Leadership, teachers and parents all felt that students were building confidence through the practices in place within the building and that the pillars: leading with love, discipline and accountability are evident. Being a Leader-In-Me school, the school culture of leadership can be seen in student behaviors (displayed through their leadership roles to self-correcting their own behaviors), students are continuing to acclimate new students to the culture of the school. Teachers view that the students understand the rules and know that consequences carry from class to class. "There is a common language spoken that supports the schools mission." Parents appreciate that their student(s) are growing in confidence and are happy to come to school.

Areas of Growth

While TLS is working to rebound from the effects of Covid, leadership feels as though more teacher development is needed to grow students at the desired rate to reach their goal. Teachers feel as though they need more personnel to help combat the learning challenges they are faced with in the classroom. It was also noted that the Director of Teaching and Learning

had recently resigned (for health reasons) and not all classrooms have a highly qualified teacher leading instruction. Parents would like more personalized communication around their child's academic performance and to understand the proper protocol on how they can help reach out to staff members so that they can help at home; and the board, being in their first year of school, is working to create baseline data to identify ways in which the school needs to move forward academically.

Another common theme heard throughout the building is that getting support for students is a pain point. Teachers stated that they feel like TLS "is at the bottom of SSD's concerns; the low man on the totem pole". While the relationship with the support services provider seems to be getting better, the school continues to struggle with getting the appropriate resources to care for students with accommodations. There have been delays in such things as getting staff, gaining access to SSD's management system (Phoenix), providing students with the required SPED services, and the referral of new students for services, that has made implementation rather cumbersome. Parents also voiced concern around the lack of communication on their child's progress from SSD.

There were mixed feelings around the safety of the school. While the relationship with Pagedale police was mentioned, some parents and teachers felt as though stronger measures could be put in place to prohibit a tragedy from occurring. Parents would like to see additional security or a buzzer installed at the front door because it can be hard to gain access to the building if someone is not at the front desk and teachers voiced concern around the classroom structure and only have one entry/exit point out of their classroom since their windows do not open.

Criteria 3: Instructional Leadership

Areas of Strength

Professional development is provided to teachers and staff through weekly PLCs and half days built in for professional development. Teachers feel like professional development has been informative and feels like it is becoming more responsive to their needs. Spring professional development has been focused on developing personalized plans so leadership has been developing goals based on student data and using that to inform instruction and focus on areas of improvement.

The adults in the building feel the professional working climate is positive and everyone is willing to step in and support as needed. Teachers feel supported and believe there is a good rapport in the building. They feel like their professional opinion matters and the school sets a good example for the students. There is an open door policy to speak freely if there are any concerns and everyone agrees that there is strong administrative support. A lot of great conversations are happening through collaboration around data and strategy and the faculty is building comradery. A culture of love and care is evident and everyone feels they are playing a part in the overall success of the school. Faculty enjoy coming to work and believe the objective is to create a warm environment that provides a familial feel while remaining professional.

Accountability systems have been implemented with building leadership and staff through weekly check-in that aligns priorities and provides feedback around areas of improvement/focus. The Board has monthly check-ins with the Executive Director to measure performance as outlined by the performance indicators and will have an end-of-year review as a means of providing extra governance.

Areas of Growth

With the vast array of teaching experience on staff, concern was voiced around adding slightly more differentiation to professional development to meet specific needs of faculty. As the student body population grows in numbers and in needs, staff would like to see more development around scaffolding. In addition, mention was given to have some topics presented in a timelier manner (i.e. Smart board training) but staff is aware that some things are out of the school's control.

As focus continues to be on academics and shifts to more teacher support with weekly observations, additional support is needed to help teachers meet their goals. For example, teachers mentioned having set goals but the person overseeing their implementation resigned so they are in the "weird" spot of waiting to see what happens with them. TLS has also struggled with teacher absences and the instructional coaching staff have spent a great deal of time this year filling in for teachers.

Criteria 4: Organizational Viability

Areas of Strength

The relationship between the board and building leadership is good. The standing check-ins have been helpful and board members visit the school frequently (as some are parents of students in the school). MCPSC attended the January 31st board meeting. The board meets monthly, along with their established committees, to discuss functions of specific areas of the school (i.e. finance, academics, governance and development). In addition, monthly meetings are held with EdOps, who maintains their finances, to review financials and address concerns. The board and building leadership work closely to track records and make sure all information is up-to-date and that internal checks and balance systems exist. TLS behaviors are transparent and they are open in their financial processes.

Operationally, there was consensus that things have improved significantly from August to now. The start of the school year was hard in terms of the culture and climate and the adults felt like the rating was more around a 4 but since fall has come to an end, the school has gotten into the groove of defining roles, processes and procedures that has provided faculty with a lot more clarity on what to do and who to report to if there are concerns. Post fall, the rating came in favorable at around 8 ½ - 9 on a 10 point scale. The adults in the building, as well as parents, feel like they have adequate resources to meet the needs of their job and students, respectively, and feel like the system is operating where it needs to be. Even when things can get a little off track (i.e. late lunch/buses), administration does a good job with pivoting and keeping everyone informed of the plan.

Areas of Growth

With the school currently in its first year, the board does not have their own goals in place but it is an area that they are planning to address at their retreat. They are also looking to bring in an additional board member and complete the governance profile with Kent Peterson.

As the school continues to grow, consideration will need to continue to be given to additional resources, space and staff needed to meet the needs of the school. Teachers and parents mentioned adding a school library to help with the reading initiative and a playground for student social interaction as important components missing from the school. Keeping an eye on finances to make sure that this is feasible in the future will be important.



Missouri
Charter Public School Commission

August 17, 2023

Mr. Lennel Hunter
Chair, The Leadership School Board of Directors
1785 Pennsylvania Ave
Pagedale, MO 63133

RE: Letter of Concern – FY23 Ending Fund Balance – via email

Dear Mr. Lennel:

Dr. Townsend informed the Commission that The Leadership School's FY23 fund balance was below the statutory minimum balance of 3% when the FY23 fiscal year ended on June 30. The Commission has notified the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and we are issuing this Letter of Concern to communicate the Commission's concern and to acknowledge the board's attention to this serious matter.

The Leadership School ended FY23 with a fund balance of 2.3%. This is below the statutory requirement of 3% and the 5% required by the Commission. This will result in The Leadership School being placed on the financially stressed list by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and will require the board to submit to DESE specific financial plans following the submission of the Annual Secretary of the Board Report (ASBR). The Commission will continue to monitor the financial statements provided via EpiCenter submissions and may require contingency budgets or other interventions based on information reported in the monthly financials.

In conversations over the last few weeks, it is clear the board of directors and administration are aware of this situation and have created a plan to assure the school meets its financial obligations, state regulations and contract requirements in FY24. The FY24 budget projects an ending fund balance of 11%, which exceeds the 3% Fund Balance requirement and meets the contractual goals with The Commission. The Commission will continue to monitor this situation and may require additional reporting measures or interventions – including probation - if expenses exceed revenues or if the fund balance will be less than 3%. If after the first two quarters of the fiscal year, The Leadership School demonstrates a strong financial position and year end projections continue to track above the required minimums the Commission will remove the letter of concern.

Thank you for your leadership and your swift attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Martha McGeehon
Deputy Director of Accountability

cc: Board Members, The Leadership School Board of Directors
Dr. Kimberly Townsend, Executive Director, The Leadership School
Ms. Shanika Williams, Director Charter School Office, Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education
Commissioners, Missouri Charter Public School Commission



The Leadership School

STUDENT LEADERSHIP AT THE CENTER OF LEARNING

1785 Pennsylvania Ave
St. Louis, MO 63133
Phone: (314) 492-2301
Fax: (314) 786-7507
www.theleadershipschoolstl.org

August 29, 2023

Martha McGeehon
Deputy Director of Accountability
Missouri Charter Public School Commission

Dear Ms. McGeehon,

The Leadership School's (TLS) Board of Directors has received the Commission's August 17th letter regarding the school's FY23 fund balance and understands the budget adjustments we must make this school year. The Board has continued to closely monitor this situation. Both Dr. Kimberly Townsend and our financial consultant have been transparent, ensuring that we remain well-informed about our fiscal standing.

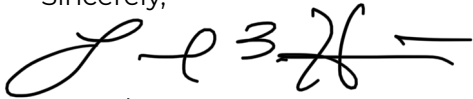
We have already commenced an evaluation to determine the factors leading to a fund balance below the statutory requirement of 3% as well as the Commission's requirement of 5%. I'd like to highlight what we believe are the two most significant circumstances for contextual purposes:

1. As a new school, we anticipated a number of one-time expenses and knew we would not be able to rely on precedent in the way a long-standing district would. We worked with our financial advisor to build a budget based on an expected per pupil reimbursement amount that was ultimately overstated by approximately 25%. Once we recognized this discrepancy, we immediately took action to revise the budget downward and made the appropriate adjustments in spending for the remaining four months of the fiscal year. The fact that we maintained positive cash flow under these conditions speaks to Dr. Townsend's ability to navigate limited funding with careful and targeted expenditures.
2. The second factor was the school lunch program. During our first year of operation, we participated in the non-pricing meal service option, Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). Despite reaching the necessary threshold for meal reimbursements through CEP, our lowered percentage of students directly certified as qualifying for free- or reduced-price lunch resulted in less revenue than budgeted.

With the lessons from these experiences firmly in mind, we expect to exceed the statutory fund balance requirement by October 2023 and our contractual goal with the Commission by January 2024. We have developed our FY24 budget with an accurate per-pupil reimbursement amount and used a conservative enrollment projection that is below our current enrollment. As you've stated, with our adjustments, the FY24 budget projects an ending fund balance above both the statutory and contractual goals, which should put us on solid footing heading into the following fiscal year.

TLS's Board of Directors and executive director will continue to be proactive and transparent in our progress reporting to the Commission. Thank you for your valuable partnership and the Department of Education and Secondary Education's guidance in this matter. TLS looks forward to meeting the stated fund balance goal, checking in with the Commission regularly, and demonstrating a strong financial position as we continue to serve our student leaders and their families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lennel Hunter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Lennel Hunter
Board Chair
The Leadership School

cc: Board Members, The Leadership School Board of Directors
Dr. Kimberly Townsend, Executive Director, The Leadership School
Ms. Shanika Williams, Director Charter School Office, Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education
Commissioners, Missouri Charter Public School Commission