

Audubon Center of the North Woods Renewal Performance Evaluation

Executive Summary

The Audubon Center of the North Woods (ACNW), consistent with Minnesota Statutes Chapter 124E and as part of our commissioner approved authorizing plan and the charter contracts with each school we authorize, evaluates the Academic, Financial, Operations, and Environmental Education performance of each school. These evaluations determine whether ACNW will renew the school for a new contract term and are completed to answer the following questions:

- Is the school's learning program fulfilling the primary purpose of charter schools, which is to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement?
- Is the school financially viable and are its finances well managed?
- Is the school organization effective and is the school well governed?
- Is the school's learning program increasing students' environmental literacy?

These evaluations are summative, and ratings are given based on a school's performance over the course of the current contract term.

Renewal Decisions

Improving all pupil learning and all student achievement is the most important factor ACNW will consider in determining charter school renewal, which determination shall be based substantially on the school's attainment of its academic and academic-related goals.

ACNW will consider other factors in its renewal determination as well; these factors are considered secondary to improving all pupil learning and all student achievement. Specifically, ACNW will consider the school's environmental education performance specified in the contract, achievement of any additional identified purposes specified in the contract, and financial and operational performance obligations and compliance with applicable law as set forth in the contract.

Recommendation

Academic Performance Evaluation

Overview

The Academic Performance Framework is conducted to determine progress on overall student achievement at the school as well as progress on contractual goals in the charter contract. The framework was derived through a review of model authorizer practices and expertise in the field. No single performance area can fully describe a school's academic performance. The performance areas must be used together to construct a complete academic picture of a school. As appropriate, this evaluation should provide guidance to the school on areas for improvement.

ACNW considers a number of variables when analyzing academic data and the conclusions that can be reached from the data, including the frequency of assessments, the levels of internal controls, the number of students tested, the level of triangulation, and the confidence level in the assessment instrument(s) to measure the desired result. In addition, in a data driven culture, an important purpose of assessment and data is to identify areas for improvement.

Performance can best be evaluated when multiple data sets on a given indicator are available for analysis. Just as poor results from a single measure tell an incomplete story, so do positive results from only one measure. ACNW is committed to evaluating the academic performance a school using all data available, including published state level assessment data as well as school level assessment data provided by the schools.

Performance Ratings Criteria

Since FY15, performance rating criteria for each applicable indicator area are defined in Exhibit G – Academic and Academic-Related Goals (and reinforced in Exhibit P - Ongoing Evaluation Criteria, Processes, and Procedures) of the charter contract. (A sample Exhibit G containing potential performance measures and rating criteria is included at the end of this document.) A school will have a contractual goal in each applicable indicator area, and the school's performance on attaining these goals will be evaluated according to the measures included in Exhibit G. Each measure is weighted to indicate its overall significance in fulfilling the primary purpose of charter schools as outlined in statute which is to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement. These weights are agreed upon by ACNW and the school and are included in Exhibit G. The school earns a rating on each measure based on the school's performance over the term of the contract. Each performance rating is assigned a point value according to the weight of the measure:

- Exceeds Target: ×1.5 points
- Meets Target: ×1.0 points
- Approaches Target: ×0.5 points
- Does Not Meet Target: ×0.0 points

Indicator areas are then assigned a rating based on the percentage of points earned:

- Exceeds Standard = 100.1-150.0% of points earned
- Meets Standard = 75.0-100.0% of points earned
- Approaches Standard = 50.0-74.9% of points earned
- Does Not Meet Standard = 0.0-49.9% of points earned

In cases where such performance rating criteria are not defined in Exhibit G (because the school has an older charter contract with ACNW or because the school is seeking authorization from ACNW), performance will be evaluated according to criteria set forth in this framework.

Academic Performance Indicators

The Academic Performance Framework includes eleven indicators, or general categories, used to evaluate a school's overall academic performance. Not all performance indicators are applicable to each school; for example, one indicator is only for high schools. Following are the key questions each indicator addresses:

Indicator 1: Mission Related Outcomes	Are all students achieving significant academic and/or personal growth, knowledge and skill development, and accomplishments related to the school's mission?
Indicator 2: English Language Learners	Are EL students at the school achieving adequate progress towards English Language Proficiency?
Indicator 3: Reading Growth	Are all and subgroups of students meeting expected growth targets in reading?
Indicator 4: Math Growth	Are all and subgroups of students meeting expected growth targets in math?
Indicator 5: Reading Proficiency	Are all and subgroups of students achieving proficiency in reading?
Indicator 6: Math Proficiency	Are all and subgroups of students achieving proficiency in math?
Indicator 7: Science Proficiency (and Growth)	Are all and subgroups of students achieving proficiency in science? And, if applicable, are all and subgroups of students meeting expected growth targets in science?
Indicator 8: Proficiency or Growth in Other Curricular Areas or Educational Programs	Are all and subgroups of students achieving proficiency or meeting expected growth targets in other curricular areas or educational programs?
Indicator 9: Post Secondary Readiness	Are all and subgroups of high school students prepared for post secondary success?
Indicator 10: Attendance	Are students attending the school at high rates?
Indicator A: Federal and State Accountability	How is the school performing according to federal and state accountability measures?

Definition of “SMART” Goal

ACNW defines SMART as an abbreviation for:

- **Strategic** and **Specific**: The goal focuses on an area of high priority for the school and specifically states who will be measured and what will be measured.
- **Measurable**: The goal includes concrete criteria for measuring progress towards attainment of the goal.
- **Ambitious** and **Achievable**: The goal represents high and realistic standards.
- **Relevant**: The goal is meaningful and pertinent to the school’s approach, curriculum, and students.
- **Time-bound**: The goal statement clearly identifies a timeframe for accomplishment and measurement.

Minnesota Statewide Assessment Data and Graduation Rates

ACNW reviews Minnesota Statewide Assessment data for all schools in assessing overall academic performance. Key elements of this data are described below.

Data Element	Description
Proficiency Rate	The percentage of students who “meet” or “exceed” standards based on performance on statewide assessments in math, reading, and science. Data is reported for students enrolled as of October 1. Data is only presented for groups of 10 or more students.
Proficiency Index	This calculation includes students who perform at both a proficient and partially proficient level on statewide assessments in math and reading. Each student who “meets” or “exceeds” the standard on statewide assessments earns 1.0 point. Each students who “partially meets” the standard on statewide assessments earns 0.5 points. Points are totaled and divided by the total number of students tested. Data is only presented for groups of 10 or more students.
Growth Z-Score	This calculation reports variations around a mean in standard deviation units. The average student in any group would be expected to earn the group mean, or a z-score of zero. A negative z-score would represent growth below expectation, whereas a positive z-score would represent better than expected growth. Data is only presented for groups of 10 or more students.
On Track for Success	This percentage is calculated by adding the percentage of non-proficient students who made high growth and the percentage of proficient students who made high or medium growth based on the previous year’s proficiency status. Data is only presented for groups of 10 or more students.
Graduation Rates: 4-Year 5-Year 6-Year	Calculations are based on a cohort model. For example, the 4-Year Graduation for 2013 is defined as the percentage of students in the Class of 2013 who graduated in 2013. The 5-Year Graduation for 2013 is defined as the percentage of students in the Class of 2012 who graduated in 2012 or 2013. The 6-Year Graduation for 2013 is defined as the percentage of students in the Class of 2011 who graduated in 2011, 2012, or 2013. Data is only presented for cohort groups of 10 or more.

Academic Performance Indicator 1: Mission Related Outcomes

Are all students achieving significant academic and/or personal growth, knowledge and skill development, and accomplishments related to the school's mission?

Students are measured in aspects of student learning (e.g., critical thinking, problem solving, 21st Century skills, personal responsibility) directly related to the school's mission and show significant academic and/or personal growth, knowledge and skill development, and accomplishments.

Contractual SMART Goal:

Goal Results:

Additional Data:

Performance Rating Criteria *(if not defined in Exhibit G of the charter contract):*

Meets Standard

The school met its contractual SMART goal.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school did not meet its contractual SMART goal.

Rating and Analysis:

Academic Performance Indicator 2: English Language Learners

Are EL students at the school achieving adequate progress towards English Language Proficiency?

Schools with EL students must assess these students' progress towards English Language Proficiency. All EL students take the ACCESS for ELLs, which is designed to measure their progress in acquiring academic English. English learners' average progress toward targets is one of the indicators in Minnesota's North Star accountability system, and this measure is applicable for schools that receive Title III funding are expected to meet Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO) for English Learners.

Contractual SMART Goal:

Goal Results:

State AMAO Progress Target:

Results:

State AMAO Attainment Target:

Results:

Additional Data:

Performance Rating Criteria *(if not defined in Exhibit G of the charter contract):*

Exceeds Standard

- The school met its contractual SMART goal (if applicable);
- The school's performance on the aggregate percentage of English Learners meeting target on the ACCESS test is at least 10.0 percentage points greater than that of the state percentage of English Learners meeting target; and
- The school's performance on the average progress toward target for English Learners grades on the ACCESS test is at least 10.0 percentage points greater than the state average progress toward target.
- The school's performance on the AMAO Progress toward English Language Proficiency is 10.0 percentage points or higher than the State Progress Target; and
- The school's performance on the AMAO Attainment of English Language Proficiency is 5.0 percentage points or higher than the State Attainment Target.

Meets Standard

- The school met its contractual SMART goal (if applicable);
- The school's performance on the aggregate percentage of English Learners meeting target on the ACCESS test will be equal to or greater than that of the state percentage of English Learners meeting target; and
- The school's performance on the average progress toward target for English Learners grades on the ACCESS test will be equal to or greater than the state average progress toward target.

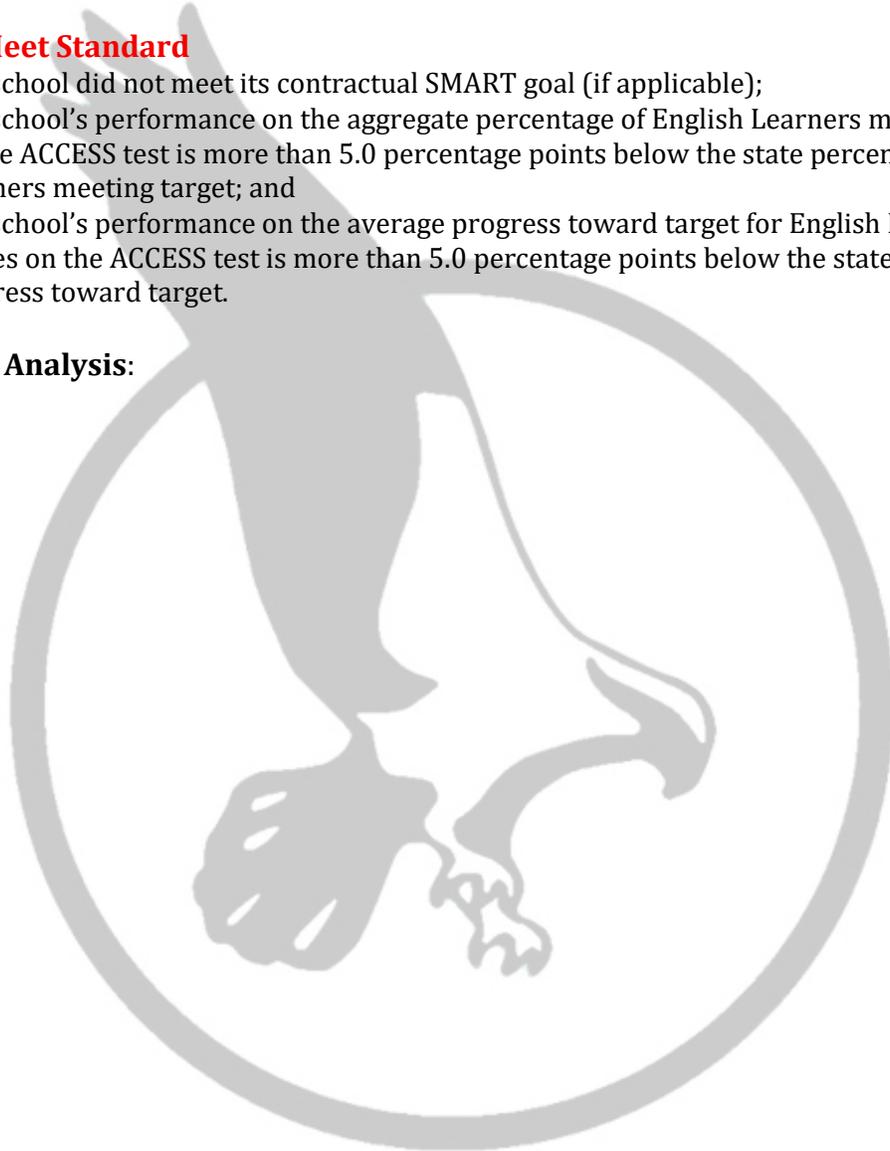
Approaches Standard

- The school did not meet its contractual SMART goal (if applicable);
- The school's performance on the aggregate percentage of English Learners meeting target on the ACCESS test is within 5.0 percentage points of the state percentage of English Learners meeting target; and
- The school's performance on the average progress toward target for English Learners grades on the ACCESS test is within 5.0 percentage points of the state average progress toward target.

Does Not Meet Standard

- The school did not meet its contractual SMART goal (if applicable);
- The school's performance on the aggregate percentage of English Learners meeting target on the ACCESS test is more than 5.0 percentage points below the state percentage of English Learners meeting target; and
- The school's performance on the average progress toward target for English Learners grades on the ACCESS test is more than 5.0 percentage points below the state average progress toward target.

Rating and Analysis:



Academic Performance Indicator 3: Reading Growth

Are all and subgroups of students meeting expected growth targets in reading?

The school measures and reports on student growth in reading achievement over the course of a school year (fall to fall, fall to spring, and/or spring to spring). Data may be from a variety of sources: MCA series growth data, normative assessments such as NWEA or STAR, and curriculum-based assessments.

Contractual SMART Goal:

Goal Results:

Additional Data:

Performance Rating Criteria *(if not defined in Exhibit G of the charter contract):*

Exceeds Standard

The school met its contractual SMART goal and two or more of the following criteria. If the school has no goal, the school met at least three of the criteria listed below.

- The percentages of students, including students in all subgroups, identified as “on track for success” on MCA series tests is high relative to state/resident district/comparable schools or has improved significantly over the past three years.
- The school’s average z-score is positive, and the average z-score for all subgroups is positive.
- High percentages of students, including students in all subgroups, achieved expected growth targets on norm-referenced tests (e.g., NWEA, STAR).
- High percentages of students who are significantly below grade level (2 or more years) demonstrated accelerated growth on norm-referenced tests (e.g., NWEA, STAR).
- High percentages of students, including students in all subgroups, enrolled for 2, 3, or more years at the school achieved expected growth targets on state tests or norm-referenced tests.
- High percentages of students, including students in all subgroups, achieved growth targets on curriculum-based measures.

Meets Standard

The school met its contractual SMART goal. If the school has no goal, the school met two of the criteria listed above.

Approaches Standard

The school did not meet its contractual SMART goal but met at least one of the criteria listed above. If the school has no goal, the school met one of the criteria listed above.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school did not meet its contractual SMART goal or any of the criteria listed above.

Rating and Analysis:

Academic Performance Indicator 4: Math Growth

Are all and subgroups of students meeting expected growth targets in math?

The school measures and reports on student growth in math achievement over the course of a school year (fall to fall, fall to spring, and/or spring to spring). Data may be from a variety of sources: MCA series growth data, normative assessments such as NWEA or STAR, and curriculum-based assessments.

Contractual SMART Goal:

Goal Results:

Additional Data:

Performance Rating Criteria *(if not defined in Exhibit G of the charter contract):*

Exceeds Standard

The school met its contractual SMART goal and two or more of the following criteria. If the school has no goal, the school met at least three of the criteria listed below.

- The percentages of students, including students in all subgroups, identified as “on track for success” on MCA series tests is high relative to state/resident district/comparable schools or has improved significantly over the past three years.
- The school’s average z-score is positive, and the average z-score for all subgroups is positive.
- High percentages of students, including students in all subgroups, achieved expected growth targets on norm-referenced tests (e.g., NWEA, STAR).
- High percentages of students who are significantly below grade level (2 or more years) demonstrated accelerated growth on norm-referenced tests (e.g., NWEA, STAR).
- High percentages of students, including students in all subgroups, enrolled for 2, 3, or more years at the school achieved expected growth targets on state tests or norm-referenced tests.
- High percentages of students, including students in all subgroups, achieved growth targets on curriculum-based measures.

Meets Standard

The school met its contractual SMART goal. If the school has no goal, the school met two of the criteria listed above.

Approaches Standard

The school did not meet its contractual SMART goal but met at least one of the criteria listed above. If the school has no goal, the school met one of the criteria listed above.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school did not meet its contractual SMART goal or any of the criteria listed above.

Rating and Analysis:

Academic Performance Indicator 5: Reading Proficiency

Are all and subgroups of students achieving proficiency in reading?

Students are assessed to evaluate grade level competency in reading. MCA series assessment data is evaluated. Schools may also provide additional data from norm-referenced assessments showing grade level equivalencies and curriculum-based assessments.

Contractual SMART Goal:

Goal Results:

Additional Data:

Performance Rating Criteria *(if not defined in Exhibit G of the charter contract):*

Exceeds Standard

The school met its contractual SMART goal and two or more of the following criteria. If the school has no goal, the school met at least three of the criteria listed below.

- The school's MCA proficiency index is high relative to state/resident district/comparable schools or has improved significantly over the past three years.
- The school's MCA proficiency rate is high relative to state/resident district/comparable schools or has improved significantly over the past three years for all students and all subgroups of students.
- Proficiency data from other standardized or norm-referenced tests (for instance, NWEA-MAP provides grade level equivalencies) shows high percentages of students reaching grade level competency across all subgroups.
- Data from curriculum-based measures show high percentages of students reaching grade level competency across all subgroups.
- Data on students that have been continuously enrolled for 2, 3, or more years shows increasing percentages of students reaching grade level competency.

Meets Standard

The school met its contractual SMART goal. If the school has no goal, the school met two of the criteria listed above.

Approaches Standard

The school did not meet its contractual SMART goal but met at least one of the criteria listed above. If the school has no goal, the school met one of the criteria listed above.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school did not meet its contractual SMART goal or any of the criteria listed above.

Rating and Analysis:

Academic Performance Indicator 6: Math Proficiency

Are all and subgroups of students achieving proficiency in math?

Students are assessed to evaluate grade level competency in math. MCA series assessment data is evaluated. Schools may also provide additional data from norm-referenced assessments showing grade level equivalencies and curriculum-based assessments.

Contractual SMART Goal:

Goal Results:

Additional Data:

Performance Rating Criteria *(if not defined in Exhibit G of the charter contract):*

Exceeds Standard

The school met its contractual SMART goal and two or more of the following criteria. If the school has no goal, the school met at least three of the criteria listed below.

- The school's MCA proficiency index is high relative to state/resident district/comparable schools or has improved significantly over the past three years.
- The school's MCA proficiency rate is high relative to state/resident district/comparable schools or has improved significantly over the past three years for all students and all subgroups of students.
- Proficiency data from other standardized or norm-referenced tests (for instance, NWEA-MAP provides grade level equivalencies) shows high percentages of students reaching grade level competency across all subgroups.
- Data from curriculum-based measures show high percentages of students reaching grade level competency across all subgroups.
- Data on students that have been continuously enrolled for 2, 3, or more years shows increasing percentages of students reaching grade level competency.

Meets Standard

The school met its contractual SMART goal. If the school has no goal, the school met two of the criteria listed above.

Approaches Standard

The school did not meet its contractual SMART goal but met at least one of the criteria listed above. If the school has no goal, the school met one of the criteria listed above.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school did not meet its contractual SMART goal or any of the criteria listed above.

Rating and Analysis:

Academic Performance Indicator 7: Science Proficiency (and Growth)

Are all and subgroups of students achieving proficiency in science? And, if applicable, are all and subgroups of students meeting expected growth targets in science?

Students are assessed to evaluate grade level competency in science. MCA series assessment data is evaluated. Schools may also provide additional data from norm-referenced assessments showing grade level equivalencies and curriculum-based assessments.

Additionally, the school can measure and report on student growth in science achievement over the course of a school year (fall to fall, fall to spring, and/or spring to spring). Data may be from a variety of sources, including normative assessments, such as NWEA or STAR, and curriculum-based assessments.

Contractual SMART Goal:

Goal Results:

Additional Data:

Performance Rating Criteria *(if not defined in Exhibit G of the charter contract):*

Exceeds Standard

The school met its contractual SMART goal and two or more of the following criteria. If the school has no goal, the school met at least three of the criteria listed below.

- The school's MCA proficiency index is high relative to state/resident district/comparable schools or has improved significantly over the past three years.
- The school's MCA proficiency rate is high relative to state/resident district/comparable schools or has improved significantly over the past three years for all students and all subgroups of students.
- Proficiency data from other standardized or norm-referenced tests (for instance, NWEA-MAP provides grade level equivalencies) shows high percentages of students reaching grade level competency across all subgroups.
- Data from curriculum-based measures show high percentages of students reaching grade level competency across all subgroups.
- Data on students that have been continuously enrolled for 2, 3, or more years shows increasing percentages of students reaching grade level competency.
- High percentages of students, including students in all subgroups, achieved expected growth targets on norm-referenced tests (e.g., NWEA, STAR).
- High percentages of students who are significantly below grade level (2 or more years) demonstrated accelerated growth on norm-referenced tests (e.g., NWEA, STAR).
- High percentages of students, including students in all subgroups, enrolled for 2, 3, or more years at the school achieved expected growth targets on norm-referenced tests.
- High percentages of students, including students in all subgroups, achieved growth targets on curriculum-based measures.

Meets Standard

The school met its contractual SMART goal. If the school has no goal, the school met two of the criteria listed above.

Approaches Standard

The school did not meet its contractual SMART goal but met at least one of the criteria listed above. If the school has no goal, the school met one of the criteria listed above.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school did not meet its contractual SMART goal or any of the criteria listed above.

Rating and Analysis:



Academic Performance Indicator 8: Proficiency or Growth in Other Curricular Areas or Educational Programs

Are all and subgroups of students achieving proficiency or meeting expected growth targets in other curricular areas or educational programs?

Students are assessed to evaluate grade level competency or student growth in other curricular areas, such as writing, social studies, and art, or educational programs, such as early learning/kindergarten readiness programs. Schools may provide data from norm-referenced assessments, college-readiness assessments, curriculum-based assessments, or other competency or growth assessments.

Contractual SMART Goal:

Goal Results:

Additional Data:

Performance Rating Criteria *(if not defined in Exhibit G of the charter contract):*

Meets Standard

The school met its contractual SMART goal.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school did not meet its contractual SMART goal.

Rating and Analysis:

Academic Performance Indicator 9: Post Secondary Readiness

Are all and subgroups of high school students prepared for post secondary success?

Students are assessed to evaluate post secondary readiness. A variety of data points can be considered including graduation rate data, placement test data, college and career awareness data, college credits earned, and post secondary skill development data.

Contractual SMART Goal:

Goal Results:

Additional Data:

Performance Rating Criteria *(if not defined in Exhibit G of the charter contract):*

Exceeds Standard

The school met its contractual SMART goal and two or more of the following criteria. If the school has no goal, the school met at least three of the criteria listed below.

- The school's graduation rate is high relative to state/resident district/comparable schools or has improved significantly over the past three years for all students and all subgroups of students.
- High or increasing percentages of students in all subgroups are taking college entrance/placement tests (e.g., ACT, Accuplacer, SAT).
- High or increasing percentages of students in all subgroups are achieving "college ready" scores on college entrance/placement tests.
- High or increasing percentages of students in all subgroups are earning college credits through Postsecondary Enrollment Options, College in the Schools, or Advanced Placement exams.
- All students demonstrate college and career awareness (data could include: job shadow experiences recorded, career options identified, internship data, etc.).

Meets Standard

The school met its contractual SMART goal. If the school has no goal, the school met two of the criteria listed above.

Approaches Standard

The school did not meet its contractual SMART goal but met at least one of the criteria listed above. If the school has no goal, the school met one of the criteria listed above.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school did not meet its contractual SMART goal or any of the criteria listed above.

Rating and Analysis:

Academic Performance Indicator 10: Attendance

Are students attending school regularly?

ACNW compares the school's consistent attendance rates as reported by MDE to the statewide rates.

Contractual SMART Goal:

Goal Results:

Additional Data:

Performance Rating Criteria *(if not defined in Exhibit G of the charter contract):*

Exceeds Standard

The school met its contractual SMART goal (if applicable), and the school's overall consistent attendance rate is above the state attendance rate.

Meets Standard

The school met its contractual SMART goal (if applicable). If the school has no goal, the school's overall consistent attendance rate is at least 90.0%.

Approaches Standard

The school did not meet its contractual SMART goal (if applicable), but the school's overall consistent attendance rate is at least 85.0%.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school did not meet its contractual SMART goal (if applicable), and the school's overall consistent attendance rate is less than 85.0%.

Rating and Analysis:

Environmental Education Performance Evaluation

Overview

The Audubon Center of the North Woods defines environmental education as the implementation of values and strategies that foster learning and create environmentally literate citizens who engage in creating healthy outcomes for individuals, communities, and the Earth. The overarching goal of environmental education is an environmentally literate citizenry. The test of environmental literacy is the capacity of an individual to work individually and collectively toward sustaining a healthy natural environment. This requires sufficient awareness, knowledge, skills, and attitudes in order to create a healthy planet where all people live in balance with the Earth.

The Environmental Evaluation (EE) Performance Framework was derived through a review of ACNW’s charter contract, Minnesota’s plan for environmental education, as well as the “Awareness to Action Continuum,” identified in the Tbilisi Declaration (1977) and outlined from left to right below. Also known as the “environmental literacy ladder,” this loose hierarchy lays out the five essential components of environmental literacy. Each area is designed to build on the previous steps, although there may be some overlap.



No single indicator describes the full picture of a school’s environmental focus or performance on its EE-related goals. The performance areas are to be used together to indicate the total picture of the school’s EE efforts. As appropriate, this evaluation should provide guidance for the school on areas of improvement.

This evaluation is informed by data from state assessments, data provided by the school, ACNW site visits to the school, interviews, and other information available to ACNW. Its purpose is to determine the strength and level of the school’s overall environmental focus, as well as progress on contractual goals in the charter contract. Results of this evaluation become part of the body of information used to inform charter school renewal decisions made by the ACNW Board of Directors.

The Audubon Center of the North Woods (ACNW), as part of the charter contracts with each school we authorize, evaluates each school’s progress towards its environmental education (EE) related goals. Each school is required, as a condition of its contract, to provide opportunities to instill a connection and commitment to the environment through experiential learning. While environmental education is a pervasive educational strategy intended to permeate all curricular components, it is particularly useful in science learning and as a component of other curricula through hands-on, place-based learning activities.

ACNW’s approach to measuring a school’s commitment to and performance of environmental education is evolving. This evaluation framework reflects ACNW’s current established guidelines for determining mission match; however, as the expectations and processes become more defined, the evaluation metrics will reflect that definition. ACNW will work closely with schools during their contract renewal period to clarify the expectations, goals, and reporting procedures.

Environmental Education Performance Indicators

The Environmental Education Performance Framework includes eight indicators, or general categories, used to evaluate a school’s environmental education performance.

OUTCOMES	Indicator 1: Awareness	Students demonstrate an awareness of the relationship between the environment and human life and the diversity of life that shares the earth with humans.
	Indicator 2: Knowledge	Students have knowledge of how natural systems function and how human systems interact with and depend on them.
	Indicator 3: Attitudes	Students demonstrate respect and concern for the earth’s health and the motivation to participate in environmental stewardship.
	Indicator 4: Skills	Students possess the skills needed to identify and critically analyze environmental issues, and to contribute to resolving the root of environmental challenges.
	Indicator 5: Action	Students have the capacity, or are increasing their capacity, to perceive and interpret the health of environmental and social systems and take appropriate action to maintain, restore, or improve the health of those systems.
INPUTS	Indicator 6: Environmental Education Program	The school implements values and strategies that foster learning and create environmentally literate citizens who engage in creating healthy outcomes for individuals, communities, and the Earth.
	Indicator 7: Governance	The board of directors allocates the appropriate financial, human, and organizational resources to carry out environmental education and monitors the school’s progress toward its goals.
	Indicator 8: Operations	Operational decision-making by school leadership, staff, and faculty reflects a commitment to environmental sustainability. The school has a waste reduction and recycling program in place.

Ratings

Each measure will receive one of five ratings based on evaluation of the established indicators. Again, no one measure identifies the full picture of a school's operational standing. The measures are to be used together to indicate the total strength of the school's EE program.

OUTCOMES:

Exceeds Standard

The school met its contractual goal, implements fully established EE programs, and provided evidence of increasing environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Meets Standard

The school met its contractual goal and provided evidence of increasing environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Approaches Standard

The school nearly met its contractual goal and provided evidence of emergent environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school did not meet its contractual goal or did not provide evidence to demonstrate an emergent level of environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

INPUTS:

Well-Developed

The school's performance is commendable in that it meets or exceeds ACNW's standard.

Approaching Well-Developed

The school's performance is fundamentally sound in that it contains most aspects of a well-developed practice but requires one or more material modifications to meet ACNW's standard.

Partially Developed

The school's performance is incomplete in that it contains some aspects of a well-developed practice but is missing key components, is limited in its execution, or otherwise falls short of meeting ACNW's standard.

Minimally Developed

The school's performance is inadequate in that the school has minimally undertaken the practice or is carrying it out in a way that falls far short of meeting ACNW's standard.

Undeveloped

The school's performance is wholly inadequate in that the school has not undertaken the practice at all or is carrying it out in a way that is not recognizably connected to ACNW's standard.

EE Performance Indicator 1: Awareness

Standard:

Students demonstrate an awareness of the relationship between the environment and human life and the diversity of life that shares the earth with humans.

School Goal:

1. Students and staff *NAME OF SCHOOL* have the awareness, or are increasing their awareness, of the relationship between the environment and human life.

Rating:

Exceeds Standard

The school met its contractual goal, implements fully established EE programs, and provided evidence of increasing environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Meets Standard

The school met its contractual goal and provided evidence of increasing environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Approaches Standard

The school nearly met its contractual goal and provided some evidence of environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school did not meet its contractual goal or provided insufficient evidence of environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Analysis:

EE Performance Indicator 2: Knowledge

Standard:

Students have knowledge of how natural systems function and how human systems interact with and depend on them.

School Goal:

1. Students and staff at *NAME OF SCHOOL* have the knowledge, or are increasing their knowledge, of human and natural systems and processes.

Rating:

Exceeds Standard

The school met its contractual goal, implements fully established EE programs, and provided evidence of increasing environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Meets Standard

The school met its contractual goal and provided evidence of increasing environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Approaches Standard

The school nearly met its contractual goal and provided some evidence of environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school did not meet its contractual goal or provided insufficient evidence of environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Analysis:

EE Performance Indicator 3: Attitudes

Standard:

Students demonstrate respect and concern for the earth's health and the motivation to participate in environmental stewardship.

School Goal:

1. Students and staff at *NAME OF SCHOOL* have an attitude, or are increasing their attitude of, appreciation and concern for the environment.

Rating:

Exceeds Standard

The school met its contractual goal, implements fully established EE programs, and provided evidence of increasing environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Meets Standard

The school met its contractual goal and provided evidence of increasing environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Approaches Standard

The school nearly met its contractual goal and provided some evidence of environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school did not meet its contractual goal or provided insufficient evidence of environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Analysis:

EE Performance Indicator 4: Skills

Standard:

Students possess the skills needed to identify and critically analyze environmental issues, and to contribute to resolving the root of environmental challenges.

School Goal:

1. Students and staff at *NAME OF SCHOOL* have or are increasing their problem solving and critical thinking skills as it relates to the environment and human life.

Rating:

Exceeds Standard

The school met its contractual goal, implements fully established EE programs, and provided evidence of increasing environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Meets Standard

The school met its contractual goal and provided evidence of increasing environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Approaches Standard

The school nearly met its contractual goal and provided some evidence of environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school did not meet its contractual goal or provided insufficient evidence of environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Analysis:

EE Performance Indicator 5: Action

Standard:

Students have the capacity, or are increasing their capacity, to perceive and interpret the health of environmental and social systems and take appropriate action to maintain, restore, or improve the health of those systems.

School Goal:

1. Students and staff at *NAME OF SCHOOL* demonstrate the capacity, or are increasing their capacity, to work individually and collectively toward sustaining a healthy natural environment.

Rating:

Exceeds Standard

The school met its contractual goal, implements fully established EE programs, and provided evidence of increasing environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Meets Standard

The school met its contractual goal and provided evidence of increasing environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Approaches Standard

The school nearly met its contractual goal and provided some evidence of environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school did not meet its contractual goal or provided insufficient evidence of environmental literacy among its students and faculty.

Analysis:

EE Performance Indicator 6: Environmental Education Program

Standard:

The school implements values and strategies that foster learning and create environmentally literate citizens who engage in creating healthy outcomes for individuals, communities, and the Earth.

6.1 Curriculum and Instruction

Environmental education is integrated into the core curricula or used as an integrating theme across the curriculum.

Rating:

Well-Developed

The school and employs environmental education as a strategy for teaching and learning across the majority of disciplines; ample cross-curricular collaborations are evident.

Approaching Well-Developed

The school employs environmental education as a strategy for teaching and learning within its science curriculum and at least one other discipline (e.g. language arts or physical education).

Partially Developed

The school employs environmental education as a strategy for teaching and learning within its science curriculum. Its application is not evident in other disciplines.

Minimally Developed

The school occasionally teaches concepts related directly to the natural environment but does not employ environmental education as a pervasive educational strategy for teaching and learning in any discipline.

Undeveloped

The school does not employ environmental education as a strategy for teaching and learning.

Analysis:

6.2 School Culture

The school creates a positive social and academic environment to support students in the process of learning, asking questions and thinking critically about environmental issues and solutions.

Rating:

Well-Developed

Evidence of a school culture of environmental sustainability and stewardship is observable in the classroom, work spaces, and school yard and readily evident when interviewing students, leadership, and faculty.

Approaching Well-Developed

Evidence of a school culture of environmental sustainability and stewardship is observable in some classrooms or other areas of the school and evident in most interviews with students, leadership, and faculty.

Partially Developed

Evidence of a school culture of environmental sustainability and stewardship is inconsistent and limited across classrooms and individuals.

Minimally Developed

Evidence of a school culture of environmental sustainability and stewardship is inadequate or falls far short of satisfying the standard.

Undeveloped

All or nearly all students, school leadership, staff, and faculty are unaware of the school's environmental education requirements or are actively resistant to environmental stewardship, sustainability, or education.

Analysis:

6.3 Alignment to Mission or Community

The school adapts environmental education to the needs and unique aspects of the school's educational program or the needs of the school community.

Rating:

Well-Developed

The school fully integrates environmental education in the majority of school-related activities and events, and is central to mission fulfillment.

Approaching Well-Developed

Environmental education values and strategies are readily evident in the school's projects and programs, but not central to its mission fulfillment.

Partially Developed

Environmental education values and strategies are evident in some of the school's projects and programs, but not central to its mission fulfillment and limited in execution.

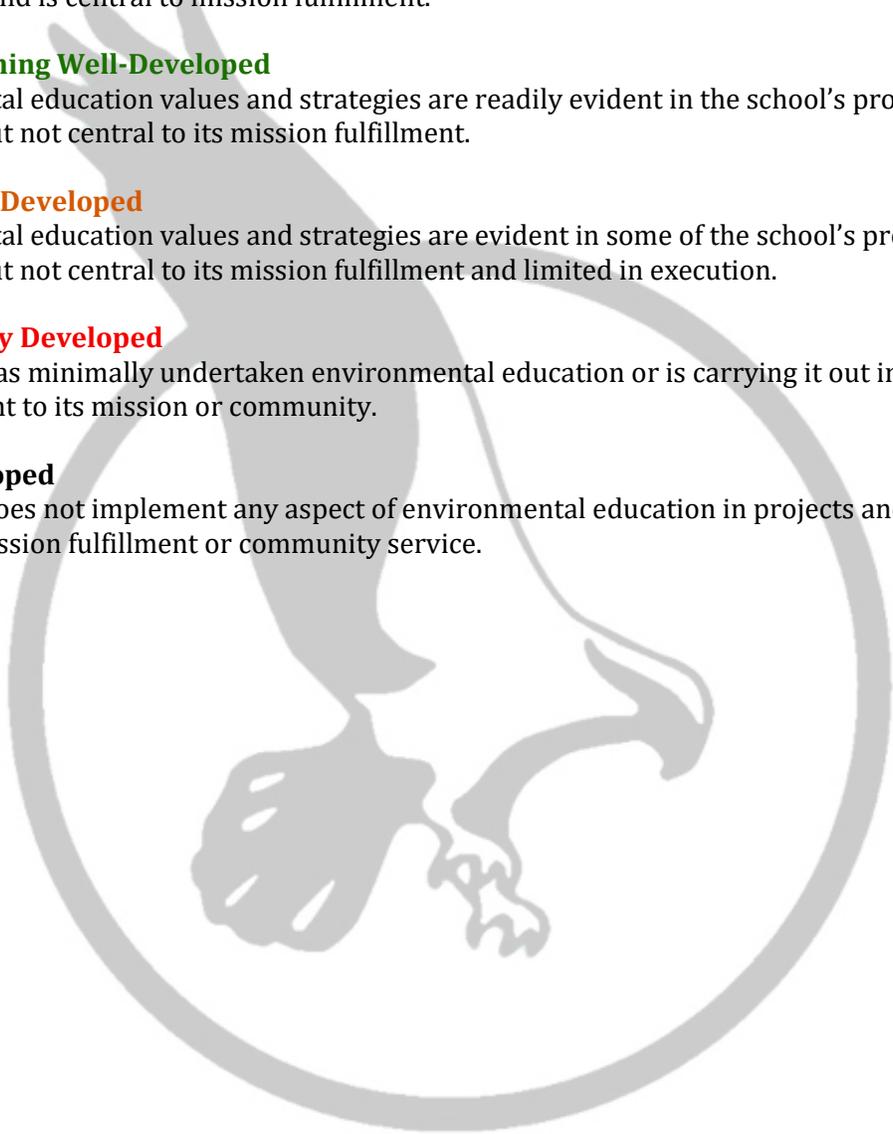
Minimally Developed

The school has minimally undertaken environmental education or is carrying it out in a way that is not relevant to its mission or community.

Undeveloped

The school does not implement any aspect of environmental education in projects and programs related to mission fulfillment or community service.

Analysis:



EE Performance Indicator 7: Governance

Standard:

The board of directors allocates the appropriate financial, human, and organizational resources to carry out environmental education and monitors the school's progress toward its goals.

Rating:

Well-Developed

The school meets four or more of the following criteria:

- The board of directors allocates appropriate funding to implement an environmental education program, as evidenced by the school budget and budget discussion recorded in the board meeting minutes;
- The board of directors monitors the school's progress toward its EE goals at a minimum quarterly, as evidenced by board meeting minutes;
- Discussions about facilities, food program, transportation, schoolyard, and purchasing include consideration for environmental sustainability, as evidenced by board meeting minutes;
- The school's mission statement indicates a strong commitment to EE principles or practices;
- Staff and faculty receive appropriate training to implement the school's environmental education and recycling programs; and
- The school has systems in place to track its progress toward increasing student, faculty, and school leader environmental literacy.

Approaching Well-Developed

The school meets three of the criteria listed above.

Partially Developed

The school meets two of the criteria listed above.

Minimally Developed

The school meets one of the criteria listed above.

Undeveloped

The school meets none of the criteria listed above.

Analysis:

EE Performance Indicator 8: Operations

Standard:

Operational decision-making by school leadership, staff, and faculty reflects a commitment to environmental sustainability. The school has a waste reduction and recycling program in place.

Rating:

Well-Developed

The school has a waste reduction and recycling program in place and provides ample, observable evidence that its decision-making and operations reflect a commitment to environmental sustainability in four or more of the following areas:

- Facilities (e.g. lowering energy costs, refillable water bottle stations, low-VOC cleaners)
- Food (e.g. locally sourced food, low or no waste packaging, ort collection, composting)
- Schoolyard and outdoor areas (e.g. school garden, native plantings)
- Transportation (e.g. incentivizing carpools or biking, offset carbon footprint of buses)
- Purchasing (e.g. purchasing office supplies made from recycled materials, contracting with low-impact service providers, ensuring end-of-life recycling for purchases)
- Teacher training (e.g. school-wide or individual professional development, EE in PLCs)

Approaching Well-Developed

The school has a waste reduction and recycling program in place and meets three of the criteria listed above.

Partially Developed

The school has a waste reduction and recycling program in place and meets two of the criteria listed above.

Minimally Developed

The school has a waste reduction and recycling program in place and meets one of the criteria listed above.

Undeveloped

The school does not have a waste reduction and recycling program in place or does not meet any of the criteria listed above.

Analysis:

Financial Performance Evaluation

Overview

The Financial Performance Evaluation is conducted to determine whether the school is compliant with legal requirements, the charter contract, and generally accepted principles of financial oversight and management, as well as to assess the financial health and viability of the school. This framework was derived through a review of model authorizer practices, charter school lender guidance, and expertise in the field. In completing the evaluation, ACNW has reviewed the school's financial audit, board meeting minutes, monthly financials, school policies, state reports, and other relevant documents. In addition, the evaluation may incorporate information learned through site visits, attendance at board meetings, and interviews or discussions with key individuals at the school including the director, board chair, board treasurer, and financial service provider. No one measure provides the full picture of a school's financial situation. The measures are to be used together to indicate the total financial picture of the school.

Financial Performance Indicators

The Financial Performance Framework includes three indicators, or general categories, used to evaluate a school's financial performance.

1. Financial Management

This portion of the evaluation focuses on the school's performance relative to required financial management. Quality management and oversight of financials is a critical indicator of financial health. Schools that fail to meet the standards are not implementing best practices or those required by law or the charter contract and may be at greater risk for financial challenges in the present or future. This indicator includes the following measures: **Budgeting, Financial Policies and Practices, Financial Reporting, and Financial Audit.**

2. Near-Term Financial Health

This portion of the evaluation tests a school's near term financial health and is designed to depict the school's financial position and viability in the coming year. Schools that fail to meet the standards may currently be experiencing financial difficulties and/or have a higher likelihood for financial hardship. These schools may require additional review and/or corrective action by ACNW. This indicator includes the following measures: **Current Ratio, Days Cash on Hand, and Enrollment Variance.**

3. Financial Sustainability

This portion of the evaluation includes longer-term financial sustainability measures and is designed to depict the school's financial position and viability over time. Schools that fail to meet the standards are more likely to face financial hardship in the future. This indicator includes the following measures: **Fund Balance Percentage, Total Margin and Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin, and Debt to Asset Ratio.**

Summary of Financial Performance

Financial Statements - Three-year Summary			
	20XX	20XX	20XX
Balance Sheet			
Cash			
Current Assets			
Non-Current Assets			
Total Assets			
Current Liabilities			
Non-Current Liabilities			
Total Liabilities			
Net Assets			
Income Statement (All Funds)			
Total Revenue			
Total Expenditures			
Surplus (Deficit)			
Total Fund Balance			
Enrollment Information - Pupil Units (P.U.)			
Budgeted Enrollment			
Actual Enrollment			

Financial Performance Evaluation - Summary			
Management Indicators	20XX	20XX	20XX
Budgeting			
Financial Policies and Practices			
Financial Reporting			
Financial Audit			
Near-Term Indicators			
Current Ratio			
Days Cash on Hand			
Enrollment Variance			
Sustainability Indicators			
Fund Balance Percentage			
Total Margin/Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin			
Debt to Asset Ratio			

Financial Performance Indicator 1: Financial Management

1.1 Budgeting: *Does the school effectively establish and monitor budgets?*

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Meets Standard

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations and provisions of the charter contract relating to budgets.

- Board meeting minutes and/or audit notes document approval of fiscal year budget on or prior to the June 30 statutory deadline.
 - The board appropriately monitors the budget, which may include:
 - Monthly review of budget to actuals;
 - Mid-year budget updates approved by the board as appropriate;
- The board reviews and approves quality monthly financial statements which include recommended reports: balance sheet, income/expense statement, cash flow statement (at least quarterly), budget vs. actual report, enrollment report, disbursements.
- Budget variances are reasonable. The variance compares actuals to projected revenues and expenditures based on the school's approved budget as of December 1* for all fund areas.
 - Revenue variance: Does the school meet or exceed overall revenue projections?
 - Expenditure variance: Does the school stay within or below expenditure projections?

*Our intention is to compare year-end actuals to the December 1 approved budget. In lieu of that we will compare to the revised budget that we have available to us. Please ensure ACNW has your approved budget as of December 1 of each fiscal year.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Calculation

$$\text{Revenue Variance} = (\text{Actual Revenue} - \text{Projected Revenue}) \div \text{Projected Revenue}$$
$$= (\$ \quad - \$ \quad) \div \$$$

$$\text{Expenditure Variance} = (\text{Actual Expenditures} - \text{Projected Expenditures}) \div \text{Projected Expenditures}$$
$$= (\$ \quad - \$ \quad) \div \$$$

Analysis

1.2 Financial Policies and Practices: *Does the school implement appropriate financial policies and practices?*

Meets Standard

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations and provisions of the charter contract relating to financial policies and practices, including but not limited to:

- Contracting/Purchasing Policy
- Fund Balance Policy
- Credit Card Policy
- Use of Public Funds
- Assessing Student Fees
- Internal Controls

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Analysis

1.3 Financial Reporting: *Did the school complete timely and accurate financial reporting?*

Meets Standard

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations and provisions of the charter contract relating to financial reporting.

- Financial audit, including required supplemental information, is submitted to ACNW and MDE no later than December 31.
- Preliminary and final UFARS data are appropriately submitted (September 15 and November 30 respectively.)
- MDE School Finance Award
- CSP grant reports, SOD plans and reports and/or other required financial reports are submitted in a timely and accurate fashion.
- Financial reporting to ACNW is timely and accurate.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Analysis

1.4 Financial Audit: *Did the school receive an unqualified/unmodified audit opinion absent any significant deficiencies or material weaknesses?*

Meets Standard

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations and provisions of the charter contract relating to the annual financial audit.

- The most recent financial audit includes no significant deficiencies or material weaknesses.
- The most recent financial audit included an unqualified/unmodified opinion.
- Any previous year audit findings have not been repeated in most recent audit
- Appropriate corrective action plan is in place to ensure any finding is not repeated in the next fiscal year.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Analysis



Financial Performance Indicator 2: Near-Term Financial Health

2.1 Current Ratio: *Does the school have enough current assets to pay off its current liabilities?*

The current ratio measures a school's ability to pay its obligations over the next 12 months. A current ratio of greater than 1.0 indicates that the school's current assets exceed its current liabilities, thus indicating ability to meet current obligations. A ratio of less than 1.0 indicates that the school does not have sufficient current assets to cover the current liabilities and is not in a satisfactory position to meet its financial obligations over the next 12 months.

Calculation

Current Ratio = Current Assets divided by Current Liabilities

$$= \$ \quad \div \quad \$$$

Meets Standard

Current Ratio is greater than or equal to 1.1, or Current Ratio is between 1.0 and 1.1 and one-year trend is positive (current year ratio is higher than last year's).

Does Not Meet Standard

Current Ratio is between 0.9 and 1.0 or equals 1.0, or Current Ratio is between 1.0 and 1.1 and one-year trend is negative.

Does Not Meet Standard

Current Ratio is less than or equal to 0.9.

Analysis

2.2 Days Cash on Hand: *Does the school have sufficient cash on hand to fund operations?*

The days cash measure calculates the extent to which a school has sufficient cash to meet its cash obligations. Depreciation expense is removed from the total expenses because it is not a cash expense. This critical measure takes on additional importance given the timing of school payments in Minnesota. For this measure, target levels may be adjusted based on the holdback percentage to ensure reasonable expectations, while still evaluating a school for cash levels necessary for financial health. Measures below are based on the holdback rate of 10%.

December 31 data is also included to provide a fuller picture of the school's cash position throughout the year and is averaged with June 30. In addition, any short-term borrowing done by the school to manage cash flow will be documented here, though it will not figure into calculations. Short-term borrowing will also be evident in the Current Ratio.

Calculation

Days Cash = Cash divided by [(Total Expenses - Depreciation Expense)/365]

Previous fiscal year end (June 30):

$$\text{days} = \$ \quad \div \quad [(\$ \quad - \$ \quad) \div 365]$$

December 31 of current fiscal year:
days = \$ ÷ [(\$ - \$) ÷ 365]

days = Average days cash

Meets Standard:

- Average days cash is 60 or higher; or
- Average days cash is between 30 and 60 days and one-year trend is positive.

Does Not Meet Standard:

- Average days cash is between 15 and 30 days; or
- Average days cash is between 30 and 60 days and one-year trend is negative.

Falls Far Below Standard:

- Average days cash is less than 15 days cash.

Analysis

2.3 Enrollment Variance: *Does the school meet enrollment projections?*

The enrollment variance analysis will indicate whether the school is on target with enrollment targets from approved budgets and compares actuals to projected enrollment based on the school's originally approved budget. A school that fails to meet its enrollment targets may not be able to meet its budgeted expenses, and a poor enrollment variance is an important indicator of potential financial issues. Enrollment variance is used to evaluate a charter school's financial health as well as board and management capacity to forecast. Thus, while enrollment variance is a primary measure of financial health, it can also be seen as a secondary measure for organizational aptitude. Enrollment Variance is based on Per Pupil Units (PP) as this is the primary driver of funding.

Calculation

Enrollment Variance = Actual Enrollment divided by Projected Enrollment
= ÷

- Meets Standard:**
Enrollment Variance exceeds 95%.
- Does Not Meet Standard:**
Enrollment Variance is between 85% and 95%.
- Falls Far Below Standard:**
Enrollment Variance is less than 85%.

Analysis

Financial Performance Indicator 3: Financial Sustainability

3.1 Fund Balance Percentage: *Does the school have sufficient reserves on hand to serve as a cushion for unexpected situations or to help fuel growth or investment in new programs?*

The fund balance percentage measures the equity a school has built up in its general fund. Using the Fund Balance in the General Fund, this calculation indicates the percentage of available funds that the school has in reserve in relation to its Total General Fund Annual Expenditures.

Calculation

Fund Balance Percentage = General Fund Balance divided by Total General Fund Annual Expenditure

$$\% = \$ \div \$$$

Meets Standard:

Fund Balance Percentage is greater than or equal to 25.0%.

Does Not Meet Standard:

Fund Balance Percentage is between 10.0-24.9%.

Falls Far Below Standard:

Fund Balance Percentage is less than 10.0%.

Analysis

3.2 Total Margin and Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin: *Does the school operate with an annual surplus or has the school needed to deplete its fund balance to operate?*

The total margin measures whether a school added to its fund balance in a current year (positive total margin) or if the school depleted the fund balance in the current year (negative total margin).

The aggregated three-year total margin is helpful for measuring the long-term financial stability of the school by smoothing the impact of single-year fluctuations on the single-year total margin indicator. The performance of the school in the most recent year, however, is indicative of the sustainability of the school. It is expected that the school has a positive total margin in the most recent year, however in some instances, a school with a larger fund balance may have a planned spend down as part of a strategy to invest in some aspect of its program. Such instances will be noted in the analysis.

Calculation

Total Margin = Most recent year Surplus (or Deficit) divided by Total Revenue

$$= \$ \div \$$$

Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin = Total Three-Year Surplus (or Deficit) divided by Total Three-Year Revenue

$$= \$ \div \$$$

Meets Standard:

- Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin is positive and the most recent year Total Margin is positive; or
- Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin is greater than -1.5%, the trend is positive for the last two years, and the most recent year Total Margin is positive; or
- Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin is greater than -1.5%, the fund balance Meets Standard, and the school has executed a planned spending of its fund balance to invest in program needs.

Does Not Meet Standard:

- Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin is greater than -1.5%, but trend does not Meet Standard.

Falls Far Below Standard:

- Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin is less than or equal to -1.5%; or
- the most recent year Total Margin is less than -10.0%.

Analysis

3.3 Debt to Asset Ratio: *Does the school have sufficient resources to manage its debt?*

The debt to asset ratio compares the school’s liabilities to its assets. Simply put, the ratio demonstrates what a school owes against what it owns. A lower debt to asset ratio generally indicates stronger financial health. Charter schools in Minnesota generally do not own buildings; therefore the assets are not recorded in the books of the school. The target levels are therefore set to reflect organizations which do not own their own facilities or land. In cases where a school has an affiliated building company, this measure does not take into account the building company’s assets or liabilities. Additionally, this measure does not include any long-term liabilities related to TRA and PERA.

Calculation

Debt to Asset Ratio = Total Liabilities divided by Total Assets

$$= \$ \quad \div \quad \$$$

Meets Standard:

- Debt to Asset Ratio is less than 0.5.

Does Not Meet Standard:

- Debt to Asset Ratio is between 0.5 and 1.0.

Falls Far Below Standard:

- Debt to Asset Ratio is greater than 1.0.

Analysis

Operations Performance Evaluation

Overview

The Operations Performance Evaluation is conducted not only to determine whether the school is compliant with legal requirements, the charter contract, and generally accepted principles of governance, oversight, and management, but also to assess the operational standing of the school. In completing this evaluation, ACNW has reviewed the school's board meeting minutes, school policies, state reports, compliance with Epicenter tasks and deadlines, and other relevant documents and information. In addition, the evaluation incorporates information learned through site visits, attendance at board meetings, and interviews or discussion with key individuals at the school including the director, board chair, teachers, or others. Results of this evaluation become part of the body of information used to inform charter school renewal decisions made by the board of directors of ACNW.

Operations Performance Indicators

The Operations Performance Framework includes six indicators, or general categories, used to evaluate a school's operations performance.

1. Educational Program

This portion of the evaluation focuses on how the school has implemented key components of the educational program. This indicator includes the following measures: **Mission & Vision, Instruction & Assessment, Educational Requirements, Special Education, English Learners, and Parent & Student Satisfaction.**

2. Governance

This portion of the evaluation focuses on the board's governance, oversight, and evaluation. This indicator includes the following measures: **Board Composition & Capacity, Board Decision-Making & Oversight, and Management Accountability.**

3. School Environment

This portion of the evaluation focuses on the environment that the school has created for students. This indicator includes the following measures: **Facilities & Transportation and Health & Safety.**

4. Student Rights

This portion of the evaluation focuses on the practices and procedures of the school related to student enrollment and privacy rights. This indicator includes the following measures: **Admissions & Enrollment and Due Process & Privacy.**

5. Personnel Practices

This portion of the evaluation focuses on the school's practices and successes related to staffing. This indicator includes the following measures: **Licensure, Staff Retention and Employment Practices.**

6. Compliance & Reporting

This portion of the evaluation focuses on the school's ability to meet various authorizer and state compliance and reporting deadlines and activities. This indicator includes the following measures: **Charter School Annual Reports, Insurance and Authorizer & State Compliance.**

Operations Performance Indicator 1: Education Program

1.1 Mission & Vision: Does the school demonstrate fidelity to the mission and vision outlined in the contract?

Meets Standard

The school implements programs that align to the mission and vision outlined in its current charter contract, including but not limited to:

- Implementation of statutory purposes
- Instructional program, including key pedagogical approach
- Staffing levels and assignments
- Stakeholders identify with school mission

Approaches Standard

The school implements programs that align to the mission and vision outlined in its current charter contract, with one or more of the above elements developing or in need of improvement.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Data sources: Exhibits D & F of the charter contract, site visit, annual report, school website

Analysis:

1.2 Instruction & Assessment: Does the school implement instructional and assessment programming that focuses on student achievement?

Meets Standard

The school implements instructional and assessment programs focused on student achievement, with the following elements fully developed and functioning effectively:

- Instructional leadership
- Instructional approach
- Formative assessments
- Professional development
- Aligning curriculum to state standards
- Implementation of evidence-based practices
- Remediation and acceleration practices
- Data collection and analysis
- Equitable opportunities for all students
- A broad, deep and rich curriculum
- Educational programming engages students in ways that are culturally and linguistically appropriate, responsive, and relevant

Approaches Standard

The school implements instructional and assessment programs focused on student achievement, with one or more of the above elements developing or in need of improvement.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

n.b. The only way to merit a ratio of “meets standard” is to also receive 50% or more of the possible points on the Academic Performance Evaluation.

Data sources: Annual report, site visit

Analysis:

1.3 Educational Requirements: Does the school comply with applicable educational requirements?

Meets Standard

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to education requirements, including but not limited to:

- School calendar meets state requirements.
- Graduation requirements meet state standards.
- School administers state assessments as required.
- Evidence suggests the school complies with requirements of Title or federal and state programs.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Data sources: MDE report, annual report, school submissions to Epicenter, site visits, MDE Title reviews and school corrective action plans

1.4 Special Education: Does the school protect the rights of students with disabilities and implement a program that appropriately serves their needs?

Meets Standard

Consistent with the school’s status and responsibilities as a Local Education Agency (LEA), the school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract (including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act) relating to the treatment of students with identified disabilities and those suspected of having a disability, including but not limited to:

- Identification and referral including evaluation of representation of subgroups (a Child Find screening is in place and the school adheres to this process)
- Operational compliance including the academic program, assessments, staffing and all other aspects of the school’s program and responsibilities (school adheres to Special Education laws/IDEAS and CAPs)
- Discipline, including due process protections, manifestation determinations, and behavioral intervention plans
- Carrying out Individual Education Plans and Section 504 plans

- Access to the school's facility and program to students and parents in a lawful manner and consistent with students' abilities
- Accommodations on assessments
- Securing all applicable funding
- TSES manual submitted in Epicenter.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Data sources: Site visits, annual reports, TSES manual, MDE compliance reviews

Analysis:

1.5 English Learners: Does the school protect the rights of English Learners (EL) and implement a program that appropriately serves their needs?

Meets Standard

Consistent with the school's status and responsibilities as a Local Education Agency (LEA), the school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract (including Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act [ESEA] and U.S. Department of Education authorities) relating to English Learners (EL) requirements, including but not limited to:

- School has an English Learner Plan of Service.
- Evidence suggests the school complies with its EL plan of service and applicable requirements.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Data sources: Site visits, annual reports, Home language questionnaire and EL plan of service

Analysis:

1.6 Parent & Student Satisfaction: Are parents and students satisfied with the school's educational program?

Meets Standard

Parent and students satisfaction data consistently documents a high degree of satisfaction with the school's educational program.

- Administers both parent and student satisfaction surveys.
- Evidence suggests there is a high degree of parents and students satisfied with the academic program of the school.

Approaches Standard

Parent and students satisfaction data documents a moderate and/or inconsistent degree of satisfaction with the school's educational program.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Data sources: Data Sources: Site visits, annual reports, survey data

Analysis:



Operations Performance Indicator 2: Governance

2.1 Board Composition & Capacity: Does the school's board demonstrate the capacity to effectively govern a successful charter school?

Meets Standard

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract and school bylaws relating to school board composition and training, and the board demonstrates the capacity to govern an effective charter school, with the following elements fully developed and functioning effectively:

- Board complies with applicable laws and its own bylaws with respect to board composition.
- Board conducts required background checks of members.
- Board completes statutorily mandated training.
- Board elections are consistent with statute and bylaws.
- Meeting minutes document election of officers consistent with statute and bylaws.

Approaches Standard

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to the school board, however one or more of the above elements is developing or in need of improvement.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Data sources: Annual report, school submission to Epicenter, board meeting minutes, ACNW site visits and board observations, school bylaws, board roster

Analysis:

2.2 Board Decision-Making & Oversight: Is the board engaged in appropriate decision-making and oversight through effective and transparent board meetings?

Meets Standard

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to board decision-making and oversight, with the following elements fully developed and functioning effectively:

- Meeting minutes are complete.
- Meetings are held consistent with Open Meeting Law
 - Meeting times and location are posted properly on the school website and/or onsite at the school, including for special or emergency meetings.
 - If meeting includes board member participation via interactive TV (e.g. Skype), it is done so consistent with MN Stat. 13D.
 - A quorum is present when the board meeting is convened.
 - One set of board materials is available for public inspection.

- If meeting is closed, it is done so in accordance with MN Stat. 13D: agenda and minutes show statutory authority to close the meeting, and minutes appropriately summarize actions taken during the closed meeting.
- The board monitors performance on the charter contract at least quarterly in areas of Academic, Environmental Education, Finance and Operations and other aspects of the contract.
- The board takes appropriate action to ensure the school's success based on its review of school performance.
- Required policies are in place and policies that must be approved or reviewed annually are addressed.
- The board reviews and approves or accepts key organizational documents (e.g. Annual Report, Financial Audit, Contract with Authorizer, and other Authorizer related documents).
- The board ensures that the school's affiliated building company complies with all applicable legal requirements (if applicable).

Approaches Standard

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations and provisions of the charter contract relating to the board decision-making and oversight, however one or more of the above elements is developing or in need of improvement.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Data sources: Board meeting minutes, ACNW board reviews and observations, and site visit interviews, director evaluation policy

Analysis:

2.3 Management Accountability: Does the board hold management accountable for clear and measurable outcomes?

Meets Standard

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to holding management accountable for reaching performance targets, including but not limited to:

- Board established qualification for persons holding leadership positions.
- Board implements a formal evaluation process for Director/Lead Admin or EMO/CMO.
- Board engages in periodic review of school performance in relation to contractual goals and expectations.

Approaches Standard

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations and provisions of the charter contract relating to management accountability, however one or more of the above elements is developing or in need of improvement.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Data sources: Board meeting minutes, ACNW board review and observations, and ACNW site visit interviews

Analysis:



Operations Indicator 3: School Environment

3.1 Facilities & Transportation: Do the school's facilities and transportation practices effectively serve students?

Meets Standard

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to the school facilities, grounds and transportation, including but not limited to:

- Fire Inspections and Records are maintained.
- Certificate of occupancy is on file.
- School has a plan for transportation services.
- Evidence suggests the physical space is safe.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Data sources: Site visits, annual report, lease aid application

3.2 Health & Safety: Is the school an effective steward of the health and safety of all students?

Meets Standard

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to health and safety, including but not limited to:

- Crisis Management Policy is aligned to statute and applied.
- School complies with MDE food and nutrition program requirements.
- School has a plan for nursing services and dispensing pharmaceuticals.
- Evidence suggests parents/students perceive the school provides a safe learning environment.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Data sources: Site visit, annual report, crisis mgmt. policy

Operations Performance Indicator 4: Student Rights

4.1 Admissions & Enrollment: Does the school implement open, impartial and transparent admissions and enrollment practices?

Meets Standard

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to the admission and enrollment rights of students, including but not limited to policies and practices related to admissions, lottery, waiting lists, fair and open recruitment.

- Lottery policy is in alignment with applicable laws and implemented with fidelity.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Data sources: Lottery policy, school website

Analysis:

4.2 Due Process & Privacy: Does the school honor due process and privacy for all students?

Meets Standard

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to the due process, privacy, and civil rights of students, including but not limited to:

- Transfer of student records
- Evidence indicates the school implements equitable discipline practices and due process protections in compliance with the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act.
- Evidence suggests school complies with laws prohibiting religious instruction.
- Evidence suggests school complies with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), laws related to student records and privacy.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Data sources: School policy, student & family handbook, annual charter school assurance, lease aid application

Analysis:

Operations Indicator 5: Personnel Practices

5.1 Licensure: Is the school's staff appropriately licensed?

Meets Standard

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to appropriate licensure of school staff.

School staff is appropriately licensed.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Data sources: Annual report, STAR report, requests for special permissions

Analysis:

5.2 Staff Retention: Does the school retain staff at a level that is conducive to operating a successful school?

Meets Standard

The school demonstrates stability in instructional and non-instructional staffing that is conducive to operating a successful school. This is evidenced by reasonable staff turnover rates.

80% retention ratio or system that is designed to negate negative effects of high turnover as evidenced by positive academic outcomes

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Data sources: annual report, STAR report

Analysis:

5.3 Employment Practices: Does the school engage in appropriate and equitable hiring, evaluation and termination practices?

Meets Standard

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to employment including transparent hiring, evaluation and dismissal policies and practices, including but not limited to:

Evidence suggests the school has open and fair hiring practices based on clear job descriptions.

The school has clear employment and evaluation policies outlined in the employee / staff handbook.

- Evidence suggests the school follows the evaluation and termination processes and policies outlined in its employee / staff handbook.
- The school conducts appropriate background checks on staff and volunteers.
- The school disseminates a clear staff handbook.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Data sources: Staff/ employee handbook, staff interviews, background check reviews



Operations Performance Indicator 6: Compliance & Reporting

6.1 Charter School Annual Reports: Does the school comply with statutory and contractual requirements regarding annual reports?

Meets Standard

The school complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to charter school annual reports, including but not limited to:

- Statutory and contractual requirements
- Report submitted to ACNW by deadline
- Posted to school website and distributed to stakeholders
- World's Best Workforce reporting requirements

Approaches Standard

The school complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to charter school annual reports, but only after the school makes revisions in response to compliance feedback.

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Data sources: Annual reports

Analysis:

6.2 Insurance: Does the school secure and maintain insurance coverages required by statute and the charter contract?

Meets Standard

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to insurance coverages, including but not limited to:

- Worker's compensation
- Unemployment
- Property
- Commercial general liability consistent with MN Stat. 124E.09 and MN Stat. 466.04
- Providing ACNW in a timely fashion with certificate of coverage that includes ACNW as certificate holder

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Data sources: Certificate of Liability Insurance

6.3 Authorizer & State Compliance: Does the school comply with authorizer and state deadlines and compliance requirements?

Meets Standard

The school materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to relevant compliance and reporting requirements to the authorizer, state education agency, and federal authorities, including but not limited to:

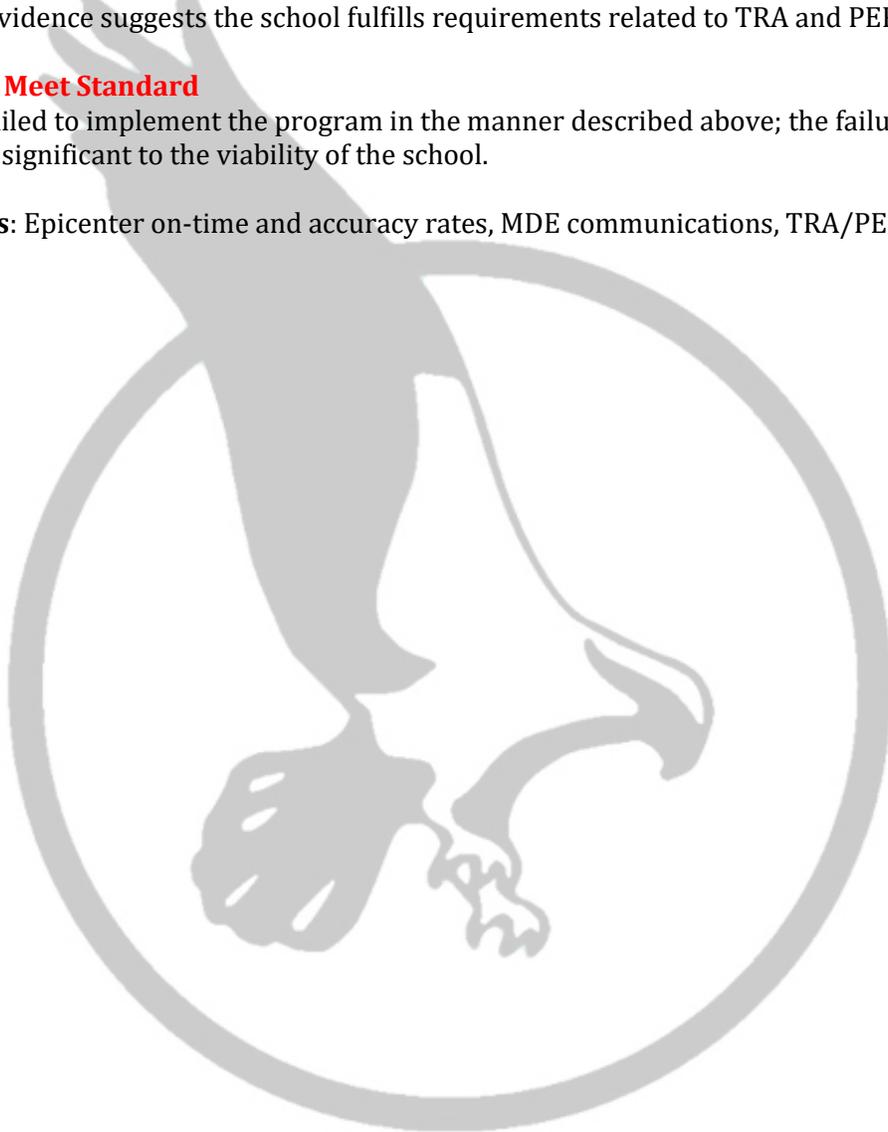
- Evidence suggests the school completes state reporting on time.
- School website meets statutory requirements.
- Minimum 80% on-time and accuracy percentages in Epicenter
- Evidence suggests the school fulfills requirements related to TRA and PERA

Does Not Meet Standard

The school failed to implement the program in the manner described above; the failure(s) were material and significant to the viability of the school.

Data sources: Epicenter on-time and accuracy rates, MDE communications, TRA/PERA, school website

Analysis:



Appendix A: World's Best Workforce Alignment

Overview

As articulated in MN Stat. Chapter 124E.10, Subd. 1, "A charter school must design its programs to at least meet the outcomes adopted by the commissioner for public school students," which means striving for the world's best workforce (WBWF) as outlined in MN Stat. 120B.11. As an authorizer, ACNW must evaluate the school's performance on meeting outcomes adopted by the commissioner (i.e., WBWF). Therefore, the school's academic contractual goals and measures have been aligned to WBWF goal areas. Measures are assigned to WBWF goal areas as appropriate and as outlined below:

Ready for Kindergarten [R4K]

All students are ready for kindergarten.

Reading Well by 3rd Grade [RG3]

All students in third grade achieve grade-level literacy.

Achievement Gap Closure [AGC]

All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.

Career and College Readiness [CCR]

All students are career- and college-ready before graduating from high school.

Graduate from High School [GRAD]

All students graduate from high school.

Some contractual measures are not directly related to WBWF goal areas, and thus are unassigned. These measures tend to be aligned to performance in the areas of mission-fulfillment and attendance.