



Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education
From: Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D., Commissioner
Date: March 14, 2014
Subject: Charter Schools – Charters Renewed for Conservatory Lab Charter School, River Valley Charter School, Roxbury Preparatory Charter School, Barnstable Community Horace Mann Charter Public School, and KIPP Academy Lynn Charter School

At its meeting in February 2013, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) voted to authorize the Commissioner to act on its behalf in “(a) granting charter renewals that do not involve probation; (b) approving charter amendments that do not involve changes in grade span, maximum enrollment, or districts served; and (c) removing or continuing conditions imposed on charters of charter schools; provided that the Commissioner shall report to the Board on all charter renewals, charter amendments, and conditions that have been so approved; and provided further, that the Commissioner shall notify the Board in advance of all such intended actions, and a Board member may request that the Commissioner place the charter matter(s) on the agenda of the Board for discussion and action.”

On February 14, 2014, I notified the Board that I intended to renew, without conditions, the charters of three schools: Conservatory Lab Charter School, River Valley Charter School, and Roxbury Preparatory Charter School. Additionally, I notified the Board that I intended to renew the charters of two schools and impose conditions on the charters of Barnstable Community Horace Mann Charter Public School and KIPP Academy Lynn Charter School. Because no Board member requested that any of these matters be brought to the full Board for review, I am now notifying the Board that I have renewed the charters of these five schools.

Summary information regarding these four schools is provided in this memorandum. Each charter is renewed for the period of July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2019. In the case of charters renewed with conditions, the corrective actions that these schools must take are also included. The charter of each school is renewed for the maximum enrollment, grades served, and district(s) served, as described below, and shall be operated in accordance with the provisions of G.L. c. 71, § 89; 603 CMR 1.00; and all other applicable state and federal laws and regulations and such additional conditions as the Commissioner or the Board may establish, all of which shall be deemed conditions of the charter.

		Exceeds	The school fully and consistently meets the criterion and is a potential exemplar in this area.				
		Meets	The school generally meets the criterion and/or minor concern(s) are noted.				
		Partially Meets	The school meets some aspects of the criterion but not others and/or moderate concern(s) are noted.				
		Falls Far Below	The school falls far below the criterion and/or significant concern(s) are noted.				
Criteria		Conservatory Lab	River Valley	Rox Prep	Barnstable Community HM	KIPP Lynn	
Faithfulness to Charter	1. Mission and Key Design Elements	● Meets	● Meets	● Meets	● Partially Meets	● Partially Meets	
	2. Access and Equity	● Meets	● Meets	● Meets	● Meets	● Meets	
	3. Compliance	● Partially Meets	● Meets	● Partially Meets	● Meets	● Falls Far Below	
	4. Dissemination	● Exceeds	● Meets	● Exceeds	● Meets	● Meets	
Academic Program Success	5. Student Performance	● Meets	● Meets	● Partially Meets *	● Partially Meets	● Partially Meets	
	6. Program Delivery	Curriculum	● Meets	● Meets	● Meets	● Partially Meets	● Meets
		Instruction	● Meets	● Meets	● Meets	● Partially Meets	● Meets
		Assessment/Program Evaluation	● Meets	● Meets	● Meets	● Partially Meets	● Meets
		Supports for Diverse Learners	● Meets	● Meets	● Meets	● Partially Meets	● Meets
7. Culture and Family Engagement	● Exceeds	● Meets	● Meets	● Meets	● Meets		
Organizational Viability	8. Capacity	● Meets	● Partially Meets	● Meets	● Partially Meets	● Meets	
	9. Governance	● Meets	● Meets	● Meets	● Meets	● Meets	
	10. Finance	● Meets	● Meets	● Meets	● Meets	● Partially Meets	
Intended Action		Unconditional Renewal	Unconditional Renewal	Unconditional Renewal	Renewal with Conditions	Renewal with Conditions	

Conservatory Lab Charter School

<i>Conservatory Lab Charter School (CLCS)</i>			
Type of Charter	Commonwealth	Location	Boston
Regional/Non-Regional	Non-Regional	Districts in Region	N/A
Maximum Enrollment	444	Grade Span in Charter	Pre-K to Grade 8
Mission: Conservatory Lab Charter School empowers a diverse range of children as scholars, artists, and leaders through a unique and rigorous academic and music education. We enrich the larger community through performance, service, and collaboration. As a laboratory school, we develop and disseminate innovative educational approaches that will positively impact children in other schools and program.			

River Valley Charter School

<i>River Valley Charter School (RVCS)</i>			
Type of Charter	Commonwealth	Location	Newburyport
Regional/Non-Regional	Regional	Districts in Region	Newburyport, Amesbury, Salisbury, Newbury, West Newbury
Maximum Enrollment	288	Grade Span in Charter	K-8
Mission: The mission of River Valley Charter School is to provide a rigorous academic program based on the Montessori philosophy and rooted in the history, culture and ecology of the Merrimack River Valley. Students will reach their full potential as scholars and become self-reliant, productive members of society. They will be adept at critical thinking and creative problem solving and will be fully prepared to succeed in future schools, careers and civic life.			

Roxbury Preparatory Charter School

<i>Roxbury Preparatory Charter School</i>			
Type of Charter	Commonwealth	Location	Boston
Regional/Non-Regional	Non-Regional	Districts in Region	N/A
Maximum Enrollment	1,800	Grade Span in Charter	5-12
Mission: Roxbury Preparatory Charter School is founded on the philosophy that all students are entitled to, and can succeed in, college preparatory programs when: 1) the curriculum is rigorous, engaging, and well-planned; 2) the school emphasizes student character, community responsibility, and exposure to life's possibilities; and 3) a community network supports student academic, social, and physical well-being.			

Barnstable Community Horace Mann Charter Public School

<i>Barnstable Community Horace Mann Charter Public School (BCHMCPS)</i>			
Type of Charter	Horace Mann	Location	Hyannis
Regional/Non-Regional	Non-Regional	Districts in Region	N/A
Maximum Enrollment	475 ¹	Grade Span in Charter	K-3
Mission: The mission of Barnstable Community Horace Mann Charter Public School is to be a whole school community that provides a challenging and enriching learning environment for all children Kindergarten through Grade 3; and where all children achieve high academic standards and develop character. We support the whole child and continuous improvement in the teaching process, and consider a whole school community as integral to success.			

The renewal of the charter of BCHMCPS is explicitly conditioned as follows. Failure to meet these conditions may result in the Board placing BCHMCPS on probation, revoking its charter, or imposing additional conditions on its charter.

1. By June 30, 2014, BCHMCPS shall submit to the Department a comprehensive evaluation of the school’s mathematics and English language arts programs, including how such programs meet the needs of special education students and English language learners, conducted by an external consultant(s). Such consultant(s) must be acceptable to and approved in advance by the Department.
2. By July 31, 2014, BCHMCPS shall submit to, and subsequently receive approval from the Department for an action plan that specifies strategies to improve mathematics and English language arts performance, including the performance of students in special education and English language learners. The action plan must address implementation of a proven curriculum and instruction program for mathematics and English language arts. The action plan must set clear and specific implementation benchmarks, with a clear timetable and deadlines for completion of key tasks, to allow the school’s board of trustees and the Department to monitor implementation.
3. By July 31, 2014, BCHMCPS shall implement all key elements of its educational program model in alignment with its charter or request an amendment to its charter to accurately reflect the school’s educational program.
4. By September 30, 2015, BCHMCPS must demonstrate that it is an academic success by providing evidence that the school has met or is making substantial progress toward meeting benchmarks in its approved Accountability Plan and, in particular, has demonstrated significant and sustained academic improvement in mathematics and English language arts.

¹ Please note: the February 14, 2014 memo contained an error: it listed BCHMCPS’s maximum enrollment as 304. The correct maximum enrollment is 475.

- By September 30, 2015, BCHMCPS shall provide written evidence of consistent implementation of its educational program in alignment with its charter. The Department must be able to corroborate such evidence through the site visit process.

KIPP Academy Lynn Charter School

<i>KIPP Academy Lynn Charter School (KALCS)</i>			
Type of Charter	Commonwealth	Location	Lynn
Regional/Non-Regional	Non-Regional	Districts in Region	N/A
Maximum Enrollment	850	Grade Span in Charter	5-12
Mission: KIPP Academy Lynn will create an environment where the students of Lynn will develop the academic skills, intellectual habits, and character traits necessary to maintain their potential in high school, college, and in life.			

The renewal of the charter of KALCS is explicitly conditioned as follows. Failure to meet these conditions may result in the Board placing KALCS on probation, revoking its charter, or imposing additional conditions on its charter.

- By the close of business on May 1, 2014, KIPP Academy Lynn Charter School (KALCS) will submit to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department), at charterschools@doe.mass.edu or 75 Pleasant St., Malden, MA, 02148, a minor amendment request to modify the school’s hours and annual schedule.
- By August 30, 2014, all members of the Board of Trustees of KIPP Lynn will complete the series of six web trainings on the Open Meeting Law offered by the Office of the Attorney General. All board members will sign an certificate stating that they have received, read, and viewed the following materials: the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §§ 18-25; regulations promulgated by the Attorney General under G.L. c. 30A, § 25; and educational materials available from the Attorney General explaining the Open Meeting Law and its requirements.
- By September 15, 2014, all teachers who have responsibility for the delivery of English as a Second Language instruction will be licensed as required by state law.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Cliff Chuang, Associate Commissioner, at 781-338-3222; Jeff Wulfson, Deputy Commissioner, at 781-338-6500; or me.