*****Massachusetts Department of***

***Elementary and Secondary Education***

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| Jeff Wulfson  *Acting Commissioner* |  |

# MEMORANDUM

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| **To:** | Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education |
| **From:** | Jeff Wulfson, Acting Commissioner |
| **Date:** | February 16, 2018 |
| **Subject:** | Charter Schools - Charters Renewed for Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School, Baystate Academy Charter Public School, Boston Day and Evening Academy Charter School, Mystic Valley Regional Charter School, Sturgis Charter Public School, and UP Academy Charter School of Dorchester. |

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 January 11, 2018, I notified the Board that I intended to renew the charters of six schools. These schools were Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School (AKFCPS), Boston Day and Evening Academy Charter School (BDEA), Mystic Valley Regional Charter School (MVRCS), and Sturgis Charter Public School (SCPS). In addition, I notified the Board that I would be renewing the charters of Baystate Academy Charter Public School (BACPS) and UP Academy Charter School of Dorchester (UAD) with conditions. 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 six schools.

Summary information regarding the six schools for which I renewed charters is provided in this memorandum. Each charter is renewed for the period of July 1, 2018, through June 30, 2023. The charter of each school is renewed for the maximum enrollment, grades served, and district(s) served, as indicated in this memorandum. All of the schools shall operate 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.

**Charter School Performance Criteria – Ratings and Recommendation Summary**

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| ** Exceeds** | ** Meets** | ** Partially Meets** | ** Falls Far Below** |

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|  | **Criteria** | **Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School** | **Baystate Academy Charter Public School** | **Boston Day and Evening Academy Charter School** | **Mystic Valley Regional Charter School** | **Sturgis Charter Public School** | **UP Academy Charter School of Dorchester** |
| **Faithfulness to Charter** | 1. Mission and Key Design Elements | ** Meets** | ** Meets** | ** Exceeds** | ** Meets** | ** Meets** | ** Partially Meets** |
| 2. Access and Equity | ** Meets** | ** Meets** | ** Meets** | ** Meets** | ** Meets** | ** Partially Meets** |
| 4. Dissemination | ** Meets** | ** Meets** | ** Exceeds** | ** Meets** | ** Meets** | ** Meets** |
| **Academic Program Success** | 5. Student Performance | **No Level** | **No Level** | **Level 3** | **No Level** | **Level 1**  **96th Percentile** | **No Level** |
| In 2017, schools administering only the 10th grade legacy MCAS, schools with participation rates lower than 90 percent, and schools with persistently low graduation rates received a Level according to the statewide accountability system. | | | | | |
| **Organizational Viability** | 9. Governance | ** Meets** | ** Meets** | ** Meets** | ** Meets** | ** Meets** | ** Partially Meets** |
|  | Commissioner Action | Unconditional Renewal | Renewed with conditions | Unconditional Renewal | Unconditional Renewal | Unconditional Renewal | Renewed with conditions |

**Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School**

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| **Type of Charter**  (Commonwealth or Horace Mann) | Commonwealth | **Location** | Worcester, MA |
| **Regional or Non-Regional** | Regional | **Districts in Region**  (if applicable) | Auburn, Holden, Leicester, Millbury, Oxford, Shrewsbury, Sutton, West Boylston, Worcester |
| **Year Opened** | 1998 | **Year(s) Renewed**  (if applicable) | 2003, 2008, 2013 |
| **Maximum Enrollment** | 1,426 | **Current Enrollment** | 1,425 |
| **Chartered Grade Span** | K-12 | **Current Grade Span** | K-12 |
| **Students on Waitlist** | 659[[1]](#footnote-1) | **Current Age of School** | 20 years |
| **Mission Statement**  The mission of the Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School is to assist parents in their role as primary educators of their children by providing a classical liberal arts education grounded in the great works of Western Civilization and aimed at academic excellence, musical competence and character formation. | | | |

**Baystate Academy Charter Public School**

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| **Type of Charter**  (Commonwealth or Horace Mann) | Commonwealth | **Location** | Springfield |
| **Regional or Non-Regional** | Non-regional | **Districts in Region**  (if applicable) | N/A |
| **Year Opened** | 2013 | **Year(s) Renewed**  (if applicable) | N/A |
| **Maximum Enrollment** | 560 | **Current Enrollment** | 445 |
| **Chartered Grade Span** | 6-12 | **Current Grade Span** | 6-11 |
| **Students on Waitlist** | 309[[2]](#footnote-2) | **Current Age of School** | 5 years |
| **Mission Statement**  Baystate Academy Charter Public School is a college preparatory school that provides challenging academic standards in professional health career settings in order to prepare 6-12th grade students in Springfield to be inspired leaders in the 21st century workforce. | | | |

The renewal of the charter of Baystate Academy Charter Public School (BACPS) is explicitly conditioned as follows. Failure to meet these conditions may result in the Board placing BACPS on probation, revoking its charter, or imposing additional conditions on its charter.

Condition 1: By April 30, 2018, BACPS must submit to the Department a comprehensive evaluation of the school’s mathematics, English language arts, and science programs. Such comprehensive evaluation must be conducted by an external consultant(s) acceptable to and approved in advance by the Department.

Condition 2: By May 31, 2018, the school must submit to the Department for approval an action plan for improving academic performance. Such action plan must specify the strategies to improve performance in mathematics, English language arts, and science for all student groups. The action plan must set clear and specific implementation benchmarks, with a clear timetable and deadlines for completion of key tasks, sufficient to allow the school's board of trustees and the Department to monitor implementation.

Condition 3: By December 31, 2019, the school must demonstrate that it is an academic success by providing evidence that the school has exhibited significant and sustained academic improvement in mathematics, English language arts, and science.

**Boston Day and Evening Academy Charter School**

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| **Type of Charter**  (Commonwealth or Horace Mann) | Horace Mann | **Location** | Boston |
| **Regional or Non-Regional** | Non-Regional | **Districts in Region**  (if applicable) | N/A |
| **Year Opened** | 1998 | **Year(s) Renewed**  (if applicable) | 2003, 2008, 2013 |
| **Maximum Enrollment** | 405 | **Current Enrollment** | 404 |
| **Chartered Grade Span** | 9-12 | **Current Grade Span** | 9-12 |
| **Students on Waitlist** | 55[[3]](#footnote-3) | **Current Age of School** | 20 years |
| **Mission Statement**  Boston Day and Evening Academy re-engages off-track students in their education preparing them for high school graduation, post-secondary success and meaningful participation in their community. | | | |

**Mystic Valley Regional Charter School**

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| **Type of Charter**  (Commonwealth or Horace Mann) | Commonwealth | **Location** | Malden |
| **Regional or Non-Regional** | Regional | **Districts in Region**  (if applicable) | Everett, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Stoneham, Wakefield |
| **Year Opened** | 1998 | **Year(s) Renewed**  (if applicable) | 2003, 2008, 2013 |
| **Maximum Enrollment** | 1,900[[4]](#footnote-4) | **Current Enrollment** | 1,571 |
| **Chartered Grade Span** | K-12 | **Current Grade Span** | K-12 |
| **Students on Waitlist** | 3,078[[5]](#footnote-5) | **Current Age of School** | 20 years |
| **Mission Statement**  The Mission of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School is to provide the opportunity of a world class education characterized by a well-mannered, disciplined and structured academic climate. Central to Mystic Valley's academic environment is the incorporation of selected core virtues and the fundamental ideals of our American Culture, which are embodied in the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution. | | | |

**Sturgis Charter Public School**

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| **Type of Charter**  (Commonwealth or Horace Mann) | Commonwealth | **Location** | Hyannis |
| **Regional or Non-Regional** | Regional | **Districts in Region**  (if applicable) | Barnstable, Bourne, Carver, Dennis-Yarmouth, Falmouth, Mashpee, Monomoy, Nauset, Plymouth, Provincetown, Sandwich, Wareham |
| **Year Opened** | 1998 | Year(s) Renewed  (if applicable) | 2003, 2008, 2013 |
| **Maximum Enrollment** | 850 | Current Enrollment | 816 |
| **Chartered Grade Span** | 9-12 | Current Grade Span | 9-12 |
| **Students on Waitlist** | 550[[6]](#footnote-6) | **Current Age of School** | 20 years |
| **Mission Statement**  Sturgis Charter Public School is dedicated to an “International Baccalaureate (IB) for All” philosophy, preparing high school students for higher education in a supportive learning environment. Sturgis provides each student a rigorous world-class educational program, encouraging academic achievement, intellectual confidence, and personal growth. | | | |

**UP Academy Charter School Dorchester**

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| **Type of Charter**  (Commonwealth or Horace Mann) | Horace Mann | **Location** | Boston |
| **Regional or Non-Regional** | Non-Regional | **Districts in Region**  (if applicable) | N/A |
| **Year Opened** | 2013 | **Year(s) Renewed**  (if applicable) | N/A |
| **Maximum Enrollment** | 820[[7]](#footnote-7) | **Current Enrollment** | 739 |
| **Chartered Grade Span** | PK-8 | **Current Grade Span** | PK-8 |
| **Students on Waitlist** | 749[[8]](#footnote-8) | **Current Age of School** | 5 years |
| **Mission Statement**  UP Academy Dorchester will ensure that its students acquire the knowledge, skills, and strength of character necessary to succeed on the path to college and to achieve their full potential. | | | |

The renewal of the charter of UP Academy Dorchester (UAD) is explicitly conditioned as follows. Failure to meet these conditions may result in the Board placing UAD on probation, revoking its charter, or imposing additional conditions on its charter.[[9]](#footnote-9)

Condition 1: Until further notice, the school must submit to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department), at [charterschools@doe.mass.edu](mailto:charterschools@doe.mass.edu) or 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA, 02148, board meeting agendas, materials, and minutes prior to each board meeting at the same time that these items are sent to the school’s board members. Additionally, if board materials do not already include this information, the school must also submit monthly financial statements.

Condition 2: By February 28, 2018, the school’s board of trustees must engage in training conducted by an external consultant, acceptable to and approved in advance by the Department, on the roles and responsibilities of a board of trustees for a charter school and on the Open Meeting Law.

Condition 3: By March 30, 2018, the school’s board of trustees must have completed a comprehensive self-evaluation of its practices and its capacity. **The self-evaluation must be submitted to the Department.**

Condition 4: By April 15, 2018, the school’s board of trustees will revise its bylaws to increase the number of total board meetings each year and align them with current laws and regulations, and submit them to the Department for approval.

Condition 5: By April 30, 2018, the **board of trustees** will also conduct a comprehensive review of school programming and submit an action plan to address areas in need of improvement to the Department. The review and action plan must address: implementation of the school’s mission and key design elements; academic programming and performance; appropriate board oversight of the school’s leader(s); and how the board will annually evaluate the school’s educational management organization.

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If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Alison Bagg, Director (781-338-3218); Cliff Chuang, Senior Associate Commissioner, (781-338-3222); or me.

Attachments: Charter Schools – Notification of Intended Actions

1. As reported on March 15, 2017, in the Massachusetts Charter School Waitlist Initial Report for 2017-2018 (FY18). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. As reported on March 15, 2017, in the Massachusetts Charter School Waitlist Initial Report for 2017-2018 (FY18). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. As reported on March 15, 2017, in the Massachusetts Charter School Waitlist Initial Report for 2017-2018 (FY18). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. MVRCS’s enrollment of students from the districts of Everett and Malden is currently capped at 300 and 835 respectively. These “subcaps” set limits for the total enrollment from relevant districts but do not guarantee full tuition for the specified number of students. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. As reported on March 15, 2017, in the Massachusetts Charter School Waitlist Initial Report for 2017-2018 (FY18). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. As of March 15, 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. In 2016, UAD was granted a temporary enrollment increase from 750 to 820 for three fiscal years, returning to the originally chartered maximum enrollment of 750 by 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. As reported on March 15, 2017, in the Massachusetts Charter School Waitlist Initial Report for 2017-2018 (FY18). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. In my memorandum of January 11, 2018, the Department incorrectly reported that UAD had high rates of attrition for all students and for subgroups. This statement was inaccurate and the fifth condition, below, was modified to remove the requirement for the school’s board to develop action steps to remedy student attrition rates. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)