

**Greenfield Commonwealth Virtual School – Summary of Review**

February 2019

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Commissioner

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# Introduction

According to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual Schools (CMVS) [regulations](http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr52.html?section=04)[[1]](#footnote-1), the decision of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) to renew the certificate of a virtual school “shall be based upon the presentation of affirmative evidence regarding the faithfulness of the virtual school to the terms of its certificate, the virtual school's academic program, and the viability of the virtual school as an organization.” This Summary of Renewal Review (SOR) rated the performance of the Greenfield Commonwealth Virtual School (GCVS) in these areas, as codified in the CMVS [Performance Criteria](http://www.doe.mass.edu/odl/cmvs/PerformanceCriteria.pdf)[[2]](#footnote-2).

Sources of information and data for this SOR included (but were not limited to) the absolute performance of GCVS at the time of its renewal application, its progress over the three years of its second certificate term (2015-16 through 2018-19), annual reports, financial audits, test results, accountability review reports, renewal application, and October 2018 renewal inspection report.

# Executive summary of virtual school performance

| **Year opened:** | July 1, 2013 |
| --- | --- |
| **Year(s) renewed:** | 2016 (with probationary conditions) |
| **Educational management organization:** | None (former contract with K12, Inc. was terminated in October 2017) |
| **Location of administrative offices:** | 238 Main Street  3rd Floor  Greenfield, MA 01301 |
| **Maximum enrollment:** | 750 |
| **Current enrollment** | 590 as of October 1, 2018 |
| **Grade span:** | K-12 |
| **Number of sending districts:** | 168 as of October 1, 2018 |
| **Instructional days per year:** | 180 |
| **Students waitlisted:** | 0 as of October 1, 2018 |
| **Mission statement:** | The Greenfield Commonwealth Virtual School, a public school of choice, serves students from across Massachusetts who need a learning community that is accessible and flexible. We give our students and their families choices in what, how, when, and where they learn.  As a pioneer of online personalized learning, we empower our educators to tailor learning experiences to each student’s strengths, interests, and challenges. We redefine and change how students and teachers engage through innovative technology, while ensuring mastery of competencies embedded in a rigorous curriculum. |

# Accountability ratings

| **Massachusetts Virtual Academy at Greenfield Commonwealth Virtual School**   | **Rating Scale:** | | | | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  **Exceeds** | | | Fully and consistently meets the criterion and is a potential exemplar in this area. | |  **Meets** | | | Generally meets the criterion; minor concerns are noted. | |  **Partially meets** | | | Meets some aspects of the criterion but not others and/or moderate concerns are noted. | |  **Falls far below** | | | Falls far below the criterion; significant concern(s) are noted. | |  |  |  |  | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Guiding area** | **Criteria** | | **Rating** |
| **Faithfulness to certificate** | 1. **Mission and key design elements:** The school is faithful to its mission, implements the key design elements outlined in its certificate, and substantially meets its accountability plan goals. | |  **Partially meets** |
| 1. **Access and equity**: The school ensures program access and equity for all students eligible to attend the school. | |  **Partially meets** |
| 1. **Compliance**: The school compiles a record of compliance with the terms of its certificate and applicable state and federal laws and regulations. | | **N/A** |
| **Academic and program success** | 1. **Student performance**: The school consistently meets state student performance standards for academic growth, proficiency, and college and career readiness. | |  **Falls far below** |
| 1. **Program delivery**: The school delivers an academic program that delivers improved academic outcomes and educational success for all students. | **Curriculum** |  **Partially meets** |
| **Instruction** |  **Partially meets** |
| **Assessment and program evaluation** |  **Partially meets** |
| **Diverse learners** |  **Partially meets** |
| 1. **Culture and family engagement:** The school supports students’ social and emotional health in a safe and respectful learning environment that engages families. | **Social, emotional, and health needs** |  **Meets** |
| **Family and community engagement** |
| **Organizational viability** | 1. **Capacity:** The school sustains a well-functioning organizational structure and creates a professional working climate for all staff. | **School leadership** |  **Partially meets** |
| **Professional climate** |  **Partially meets** |
| **Contractual relationships** | **N/A** |
| 1. **Governance:** The Board of Trustees act as public agents authorized by the state and provide competent governance to ensure the success and sustainability of the school. | |  **Meets** |
| 1. **Finance:** The school maintains a sound and stable financial condition that operates in a fiscally responsible and publicly accountable manner. | |  **Meets** |

# School history and amendments

Greenfield Commonwealth Virtual School (GCVS) opened in 2010 as the Massachusetts Virtual Academy of Greenfield (MAVA) under the innovation school law (G.L. c. 71, § 92). On January 2, 2013, Governor Patrick signed into law Chapter 379 of the Acts of 2012, “An Act Establishing Commonwealth Virtual Schools” (Act), most of which is codified as G.L. c. 71, § 94[[3]](#footnote-3). By statute, MAVA ceased to exist on July 1, 2013. Section 6 of the Act required the Board to grant a certificate to operate a CMVS to Greenfield upon submission of a timely application that addressed the information specified in the statute.

The Department received an application from Greenfield on April 22, 2013 to establish a new CMVS beginning in the 2013-14 school year. On June 25, 2013, the Board granted a three-year certificate to GCVS to a board of trustees formed to assume governance of MAVA from the Greenfield Public Schools. During the transition, the Greenfield Public Schools provided services to GCVS under a memorandum of understanding through April 1, 2014.

The Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education’s recommendation to award a CMVS certificate was consistent with the requirements of section 6 of the Act, in which the Legislature intentionally set a unique bar for the award of an initial certificate to Greenfield. In doing so, the Legislature acknowledged Greenfield's pioneering role in establishing a virtual innovation school and expressed its intent to give Greenfield a fair opportunity to adjust to the extensive requirements of the new statute. To assist GCVS in meeting those high standards, the Commissioner recommended, and the Board approved, that several conditions be placed on its operating certificate, with each of these items subject to the review and approval of the Department.[[4]](#footnote-4)

**June 2014 accountability review**

On June 5, 2014, the Department conducted an accountability review of GCVS in accordance with CMR 52.08. The report was completed on September 17, 2014, after the results of the Spring 2014 MCAS tests became official. The resulting site visit report documented concerns about the school’s faithfulness to its certificate, the quality of the academic program, the quality and amount of supports for diverse learners, and the school's lack of compliance with regulatory requirements and Department guidance.

**Placement on probation**

Due to the concerns from the June 2014 accountability review, pursuant to the CMVS regulations at 603 CMR 52.12(2) the Commissioner recommended, and the Board approved, to place GCVS on probation for the remainder of the school's certificate term (until June 30, 2016) with conditions requiring the school to: submit board of trustees minutes to the Department; submit a final contract with K12, Inc.; align its curriculum with the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks; submit a comprehensive evaluation of its academic program; submit an action plan outlining strategies to improve academic performance; and demonstrate significant academic improvement by 2015.

**March 2015 accountability review**

The Department conducted a second review of GCVS on March 2, 2015 in accordance with CMR 52.08. The review indicated that GCVS had made progress toward meeting the terms of its probation, and noted that the GCVS board and leadership had taken affirmative steps to improve instruction and professional learning. However, the review noted a dependency on teacher-developed materials to ensure curriculum alignment; the lack of a formal curriculum for English language learners; the lack of a formal inclusion model for students with disabilities; variation in the execution of the school’s expectations for teaching higher-order thinking skills; and uneven instruction.

**2016 Renewal**

The school’s initial certificate expired at the end of the 2015-16 school year. Pursuant to [CMR 52.11](http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr52.html?section=11), and in accordance with ESE [guidelines](http://www.doe.mass.edu/odl/cmvs/RenewalApp.pdf), on June 28, 2015, GCVS submitted an application to renew its certificate. During the certificate term, GCVS also requested and received permission from the Commissioner to amend the following terms of its certificate: mission statement, annual goals, and additional board members. ESE conducted a renewal inspection in November 2015; the [report](http://www.doe.mass.edu/odl/cmvs/GCVS-2015-12Renewal.pdf) from this inspection was issued to the school on December 14, 2015 and documented concerns regarding the school’s instructional practices and Spring 2015 assessment results. At its [February 23, 2016](http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/minutes/2016/0223reg-0222spec.pdf) meeting, in accordance with General Laws chapter 71, section 94, and 603 CMR 52.00, the Board renewed the school’s certificate for a three-year period from July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2019 with a maximum enrollment of 750 students in grades K through 12. Further, pursuant to 603 CMR 52.12(2), the Board extended the school’s probationary status and directed it to meet specified terms of probation, as recommended by the Commissioner in his [memorandum to the Board dated February 12, 2016](http://www.doe.mass.edu/bese/docs/fy2016/2016-02/). The probationary conditions required the school to: submit board of trustees meeting materials; submit weekly student enrollment reports; submit projected budgets to meet requirement for enrolling at least 5 percent of students from Greenfield; submit a corrective action plan to ensure at least 95 percent of students and student groups participated in MCAS; establish an escrow account to pay for potential closure; and to demonstrate significant and sustained academic improvement by 2017.

**February and December 2017 Accountability Reviews**

On February 14, 2017 and again on December 14, 2017, ESE conducted accountability reviews of GCVS.

The February report indicated that GCVS had made progress toward providing a program aligned to its mission and addressing concerns related to compliance and finance. The review, however, noted a lack of procedures for assessing, identifying, or serving potential English learners, poor academic performance, turnover in school leadership, a lack of systems for educator evaluation, and uneven instruction.

The school applied for amendments to its certificate on June 30, 2017. The Board approved these amendments on October 19, 2017, granting the termination of K12 Inc. as the primary learning management system and curriculum. The amendments allowed the school to adopt the Canvas learning management system by Instructure, Inc.; to adopt new curricula, including EngageNY (K-5, English language arts [ELA] and math), and Florida Virtual Schools Global (FLVS) (grades 6-12, all subjects); and to hire 10 additional staff members.

The December 2017 report reflected recent changes made by the board of trustees to the school’s mission, a changed relationship with K12 Inc., and a new executive director. The December 2017 report also included evidence that the school’s academic program and results were not meeting the Department’s criteria. The report outlined a continued lack of programming for its small population of English learners.

In January 2018, the Commissioner approved amendments submitted by GCVS to amend its mission statement, the board’s bylaws, and the school’s accountability plan for school years 2018 and 2019. At its March 27, 2018, meeting, pursuant to 603 CMR 52.12(2), the Board extended the school’s probationary status, maintained the prior probationary conditions, and added a new condition related to the provision of services for English learners , as recommended by the Acting Commissioner in his [memorandum to the Board dated March 16, 2018.](http://www.doe.mass.edu/bese/docs/fy2018/2018-03/item7.html)

**2019 Application for Renewal and Renewal Inspection**

The school’s current certificate expires at the end of the 2018-19 school year. Pursuant to [CMR 52.11](http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr52.html?section=11), and in accordance with Department [guidelines](http://www.doe.mass.edu/odl/cmvs/RenewalApp.pdf), on June 27, 2018, GCVS submitted an application to renew its certificate. A vendor hired by the Department conducted a renewal inspection in October 2018 and wrote the renewal inspection report assessing the school’s performance in terms of the following Commonwealth Virtual School Performance Criteria: Mission and key design elements; Student performance; Program delivery (instruction, assessment and program evaluation, and diverse learners); Culture and family engagement; Capacity (school leadership and professional climate); and Governance.

The following report summarizes evidence from the February 2017, December 2017, and October 2018 accountability site visits, as well as other data.

# Areas of accountability

**Faithfulness to certificate**

**1. Mission and key design elements**

**Partially meets **

Evidence from online lesson observations and other sources indicates a gap between the school’s mission as stated and as enacted with respect to the school’s goal of engagement “through innovative technology” to ensure “mastery of competencies embedded in a rigorous curriculum.”

On October 16, 2017 the GCVS board adopted a revised mission statement (its third since founding) that emphasized the provision of an accessible, flexible, personalized education through innovative technology and rigorous curriculum that ensures mastery. Similar to findings from the first certificate term, evidence from lesson observations conducted during accountability reviews and the renewal inspection cited variability in implementation of “innovative technology” or instruction that would lead to “mastery of competencies embedded in a rigorous curriculum,” a key aspect of the revised mission.

On October 16, 2017 the GCVS board of trustees approved revised accountability goals and progress measures for the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years. The revised goals were approved by the Commissioner on January 30, 2018. Of the 20 goals, 10 (50 percent) were not met for 2017-2018 (Appendix A).

Sources: *Renewal Inspection (October 2018), Accountability Reviews (February and December 2017), Certificate Renewal Application (June 2018), 2017-19 School Goals (GCVS), FY17 and FY18 Annual Reports, Application for Certificate (April 2013)*

**2. Access and equity**

**Partially meets **

Available evidence indicates that GCVS has not consistently ensured program access and equity for all students eligible to attend the virtual school.

GCVS has not consistently ensured program access and equity for students with disabilities and English learners (ELs). The school’s website and student and family handbook contain very little information about the school’s programs for students with disabilities or ELs. Accountability reviews conducted in February and December 2017 pointed to a lack of policies and procedures to identify, assess, or serve English learners (ELs). As a condition of the school’s 2018 probationary status, GCVS was required to develop a detailed plan to serve ELs. This condition was similar to the 2015 condition, requiring GCVS to implement a “system to identify and serve English language learners and special education students that is consistent with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations.” As of the renewal inspection, GCVS had developed and was implementing a plan to identify and serve its ELs. October 2017 student Information Management System (SIMS) data show that GCVS served 1 EL student. October 2018 SIMS data show that GCVS currently serves 1 EL student, or 0.2 percent of its student population. In 2018-2019, GCVS serves 125 students with disabilities, or 21.2 percent of its population. Currently, 57.6 percent of GCVS’ population is high needs.

Sources: *Accountability Reviews (February and December 2017), English Language Learner Plan, Department SIMS data.*

**3. Compliance**

**N/A**

GCVS is scheduled to receive a [tiered focused monitoring](http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa/review/) (TFM) visit from the Department’s Office of Public School Monitoring during the 2019-2020 school year. The school is currently participating in training and preparing for the TFM visit.

Sources: *TFM schedule*

**Academic and program success**

**4. Student performance**

**Falls far below **

Over its second three-year certificate term, GCVS has consistently struggled to meet state student performance standards for academic growth and proficiency.

During the charter term, GCVS performance on statewide assessments fell far short of statewide averages. The school did not meet gap narrowing goals in 2015 and 2016 and was placed in Level 3 due to low academic performance. In 2017, schools such as GCVS that administered the Next-Generation MCAS assessment in grades 3-8 were not assigned a level. In 2018, GCVS partially met targets for indicators included in the new statewide accountability system. In 2018, GCVS is classified as requiring assistance or intervention due to low graduation rates and low participation rates. A majority of student performance data, such as achievement rates, growth scores, and graduation rates have been consistently below state rates since 2015. Dropout rates have been consistently above state rates as well. See Appendix C for detailed information.

Sources: *FY17 and FY18 Annual Reports, Spring 2015-2018 statewide assessment results*

**5a. Program delivery - Curriculum**

**Partially meets **

In 2017-2018, GCVS adopted a new set of curricula and adapted it to a new learning management system: Canvas. The curricula are only partially aligned to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

In July 2017, GCVS transitioned from K12 Inc. as the contracted provider of the educational program and learning management system to using the Canvas learning platform for instruction. Additionally, the school began implementing a new set of curricula during the 2017-2018 school year: the EngageNY curriculum for grades K-5 and the Florida Virtual School curriculum for grades 6-12. GCVS’ accountability goals show that the school is still working to align the curriculum to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. During the current school year, teachers and administrators are still adapting the newly chosen curricula to the new platform.

Sources: *FY17 and FY18 Annual Reports curriculum materials, Renewal Inspection (October 2018), Accountability Reviews (February and December 2017), Certificate Renewal Application (June 2018)*

**5b. Program delivery - Instruction**

**Partially meets **

Similar to the prior certificate term, online lessons observed over the school’s three-year certificate term continue to exhibit variability in implementation of high quality instruction, in the execution of the school’s model for instruction, in the degree to which students were held to high expectations, and in engagement of all students.

In accordance with probationary conditions imposed by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in 2014, GCVS developed a strategic plan for improving instruction in the core academic subjects, the leadership team developed a rubric to monitor delivery of instruction, and the school doubled the amount of synchronous lessons taught each week and required students to attend them. In 2016-2017, GCVS began recording all online lessons for students, learning coaches, and teachers to review later as needed. In 2017-2018, GCVS implemented a new learning management platform: Canvas, to deliver live lessons.

Evidence from lesson observations conducted over the course of the school’s certificate term noted persistent issues in the implementation of the school’s instructional model. Each year of the certificate term, evidence from lesson observations did not consistently reflect alignment to the Department’s criteria for instruction, did not reflect high expectations for all students, did not consistently engage all students, and did not always align to the school’s own expectations for instruction.

Sources: *Renewal Inspection (October 2018), Accountability Reviews (February and December 2017), GCVS’ expected practices for instruction (2018-2019)*

**5c. Program delivery - Assessment and program evaluation**

**Partially Meets **

Over the course of the school’s three-year certificate term, GCVS has continued to implement assessment systems and used data to identify students in need of intervention. There is limited evidence that GCVS uses such data to evaluate its own programming and drive improvement.

GCVS implements many forms of assessments, such as Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy (DIBELS) (in grades K-6), Fountas & Pinnell benchmarks, Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM) assessments, Lexia, as well as Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) and ACCESS testing. During the certificate term, the Department gathered evidence that GCVS has improved the school’s ability to use the gathered data to inform instructional choices and identify students in need of further intervention. GCVS has a student intervention team (SIT) to examine student academic data and determine appropriate strategies. There is a similar team (engagement team) that examines student attendance data to intervene as needed with student engagement issues. Across the certificate term, the Department gathered limited data that GCVS systematically uses data to evaluate the quality or effectiveness of its programming to make adjustments as necessary. For example, there are no formal evaluation processes in place to assess the effectiveness of the school’s programs for students with disabilities or ELs.

Sources: *Renewal Inspection (October 2018), Accountability Reviews (February and December 2017), Certificate Renewal Application (June 2018)*

**5d. Program delivery – Diverse learners**

**Partially meets** 

GCVS is working towards integrating systems to identify, assess, and serve English learners. The school has more clearly implemented systems to support students with disabilities. Lesson observations demonstrate few implemented supports for diverse learners during instruction.

During the certificate term, GCVS was not identifying, assessing, or serving English learners (ELs) appropriately. After the imposition of a probationary condition in March 2018, (similar to one imposed during the first certificate term) the school again drafted a plan to serve ELs. During the renewal inspection in October, the team found that GCVS was just beginning the process to identify ELs with a WIDA screener.

Processes for the identification and assessment of students potentially in need of special education were more clearly integrated during the certificate term, and GCVS employs staff or external consultants to provide special education services. As noted above, GCVS has clear systems for staff to identify students potentially in need of intervention or special education testing through the student intervention team. Team members observed few supports or resources (such as break out rooms, computer based interventions, or sheltered English immersion strategies) used during lessons during the certificate term.

Sources: *Renewal Inspection (October 2018), Accountability Reviews (February and December 2017), GCVS plan for serving English Learners, Certificate Renewal Application (June 2018)*

**6. Culture and family**

**engagement – Social, emotional, and health needs and family and community engagement**

**Meets** 

GCVS provides an emotionally safe learning environment. The school consistently communicates with students and families and provides opportunities for family and community engagement.

GCVS continues to employ staff to address the physical, social, emotional, and health needs of its students. The school employs a school nurse, who also serves as the engagement team leader; two high school guidance counselors; and three family engagement coordinators. GCVS also contracts outside staff to provide students counseling services, speech and language, and physical therapy. The school has structures that result in a respectful learning environment, including Acceptable Use policies that outline appropriate online behavior for students, processes to monitor and report cyberbullying, as well as technology guards for ways to monitor student browsing habits and interactions. A majority of observed instruction was characterized by clear routines, respectful speech, tone, and relationships.

Faculty and staff communicate information about student progress to families and engage families/learning coaches in supporting online learning. GCVS sponsors regular opportunities for students and learning coaches alike to interact in-person; examples include orientation for new students and families, outings/field trips, monthly web-based “Parent Power Hour” for parents of K-5 students. Students and learning coaches interviewed by review teams consistently reported a safe learning environment, positive interactions with teachers, and supportive school practices.

Sources: *Application Renewal Inspection (October 2018), Accountability Reviews (February and December 2017), Certificate Renewal Application (June 2018)*

**Organizational viability**

**7a. Capacity – School leadership**

**Partially meets** 

School Leadership experienced high turnover during the first year of the certificate term. The recently retired executive director established stability and systems and structures. The school is currently led by an interim executive director.

The first year of the school’s certificate term, the 2016-2017 school year, GCVS experienced high turnover of its senior leadership team. At the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year, a majority of the senior leadership team (executive director, director of curriculum and instruction, and the business manager) was new to the school. In mid-September 2016, the executive director left GCVS and within 10 days the board hired an interim executive director. During that school year the director of curriculum and instruction as well as the business manager both left the school and were replaced with new individuals. In March 2017, GCVS hired a new executive director. During that year, staff and teachers expressed concern about the many changes in school leadership. By the next accountability visit (December 2017), the executive director had begun to develop the school leadership team, define clear roles and responsibilities, and implement a shared decision-making model; stakeholders expressed appreciation for a stable leadership team. By the renewal inspection visit (October 2018) school leadership had defined and delineated roles and established common understanding for decision-making and communication. The school, however, experienced another transition in leadership as the executive director retired in November 2018 and was replaced by a new interim executive director. The retiring executive director continues to consult with the school in order to assist with the leadership transition.

Sources: *Application Renewal Inspection (October 2018), Accountability Reviews (February and December 2017), Certificate Renewal Application (June 2018)*

**7b. Capacity – Professional**

**Climate**

**Partially meets** 

Over its second three-year certificate term, GCVS has created processes for educator evaluation and staff collaboration; formal professional development remains infrequent.

As reported above, significant changes in leadership caused disruption to systems for teacher evaluation, collaboration, and professional development during the first year of the certificate term. Further, introduction of a new learning management system and curricula in the 2017-2018 school year was reported to lessen formal professional development and collaboration time, as well as delay teacher observation processes until the latter half of the year. The renewal inspection team found that GCVS now provides teachers with opportunities to collaborate and has implemented a system to monitor instruction. Collaboration structures include monthly professional learning communities, weekly grade level meetings, and all faculty meetings. The GCVS evaluation processes mirror the Massachusetts Model Educator Evaluation Framework. At the time of the renewal inspection (October 2018) no formal or informal observations had been conducted, but teachers reported that they had been observed during the last school year (2017-2018). The renewal inspection team found that opportunities for formal professional development are infrequent, with five days devoted to professional development for the current school year.

Sources: *Application Renewal Inspection (October 2018), Accountability Reviews (February and December 2017), Certificate Renewal Application (June 2018)*

**7c. Capacity – Contractual relationships**

**N/A**

GCVS terminated its contract between the school and K12 Inc. during the certificate term.

For the first certificate term, and for the first year of the second term, educational courses and teaching services, including management software, learning materials, and technical support services were provided by K12, Inc. a virtual school provider based in Herndon, Virginia. In June 2017, citing concerns for financial sustainability as well as dissatisfaction with academic results, the school requested an amendment to its certificate to terminate its contractual relationship with K12, Inc., and to enter into partnerships (rather than contracts) to provide the Learning Management System (via Canvas by Instructure, Inc.) and curriculum (Florida Virtual School Global and EngageNY as well as other sources). The Commissioner approved this change in the certificate in October 2017

Sources: *Application Renewal Inspection (October 2018), Accountability Reviews (February and December 2017), June 2017 Amendment request, Certificate Renewal Application (June 2018)*

**8. Governance**

**Meets** 

The GCVS board of trustees continues to govern in accordance to its bylaws. During the past certificate term, the board has implemented some systems to govern and sustain the school. The board has overseen significant changes in the school’s operation, but has not yet begun strategic planning processes.

As required by statute and its bylaws, GCVS is governed by an all-volunteer, five-member board of trustees. One new member was approved in August 2018; he possesses informational technology expertise. The board meets monthly. The board amended its bylaws in October 2017 to eliminate its committee structure.

The board has some systems in place to govern the school and ensure sustainability. During the certificate term, the board has overseen four different individuals in the role of executive director (two as interim). The board developed a process for evaluating the school leader during the 2017-2018 school year. Board minutes demonstrate that the recently retired executive director was evaluated during the June 2018 board meeting. The board also amended the school’s accountability plan, setting new academic targets, during the 2017-2018 school year. However, board members reported that they only review annual MCAS results in order to assess the school’s academic performance. Key school staff, such as the executive director and business manager, attend monthly board meetings to provide reports on school events, policy issues, and monthly financials.

The board has engaged in significant changes to the school’s operation during the certificate term. The board oversaw the termination of the contract with K12 Inc.; the implementation of a new learning management system and curricula; multiple hiring processes for the executive director; the increased per pupil tuition and related salary increase; and revision of various policies or goals. Board members, however, reported that they do not engage in strategic planning processes.

Sources: *Application Renewal Inspection (October 2018), Accountability Reviews (February and December 2017), June 2017 Amendment request, Certificate Renewal Application (June 2018)*

**9. Finance**

**Meets** 

GCVS has primarily maintained a sound and stable financial condition over the past two years.

The school has had unmodified opinion audits for the last two fiscal years. There were no findings in the FY17 audit. In FY18, there was one non-compliance finding regarding MTRS payments. For the past two fiscal years (FY17 and FY18), GCVS operated at a loss, but in each year the school had enough cash to cover the deficits.

Sources: *FY17 and FY18 Financial Audits*

# Appendix A: Accountability plan performance

Consistent with [603 CMR 52.02](http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr52.html?section=02), GCVS submitted an accountability plan to ESE, approved by the GCVS board on April 6, 2015, that articulated the goals it has set to measure success. During the February 2017 site visit, the executive director noted that the school’s accountability plan needed revision. GCVS’ board of trustees approved a new accountability plan as of December 11, 2017. The ESE approved this plan on January 30, 2018.

Provided below is the school’s assessment of whether each goal was met, not met, or no data was available, and evidence provided by the school to support this assessment.

***Accountability Goal #1*:** Ensure that the GCVS written and enacted curriculum align to the standards of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education curriculum frameworks.

***Rationale***: A move to a new learning management system and curriculum curation has changed the accountability from a pre-packaged vendor to GCVS. As a result, GCVS is responsible for ensuring that both the written and enacted curriculum align to the frameworks, with the target of ensuring mastery of competencies within said frameworks.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Annual Goals** | **2017-18** | **Evidence** |
| 1.a. Develop curriculum modules in line with Massachusetts frameworks.  1.b. Review curriculum modules for adherence to curriculum frameworks and give feedback to teachers for areas of improvement. | 1a. Met  1b. Not Met | 1a. School reports that in 2017-2018: Review of modules in Canvas show 90% or better scoring 3 out of 4 on the rubric.  1b. School reports that in 2017-2018: Ongoing reviews do not yet show 100% of modules scoring 3 out of 4 on the rubric. |
| 2.a. Develop walk-through and clinical supervision observation protocols in line with expected online teaching practices rubric delineated by ESE  2.b. Train teachers in the rubric/observation protocols  2.c. Conduct observations of lessons, provide feedback, and document growth | 2a. Met  2b. Met  2c. Met | 2a. School reports that in 2017-2018: GCVS developed observation templates aligned with the ESE rubric on teachpoint.  2b. School reports that in 2017-2018: GCVS developed a Canvas course for educator evaluation and devoted professional development to train teachers on these protocols.  2c. School reports that in 2017-2018: observations were conducted and 90% or more staff received a proficient or higher on standards 1 and 2 of the educator evaluation rubric. |

***Accountability Goal #2***: Develop a comprehensive assessment system and analysis protocols designed to measure and improve competencies in relation the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks, to be measured by increases in the percentage of student meeting/exceeding expectations on MCAS by closing gaps between the school’s average and the state average in all subgroups.

***Rationale***: Conditions in the GCVS certificate for improvement in student outcomes, coupled with the move to a new curriculum requires that we develop and implement a comprehensive school-based assessment system, along with measures for gathering and analyzing data for the purposes of curricular and instructional improvement.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Annual Goals** | **2017-18** | **Evidence** |
| 1.a. Get Data dashboard system into place for analysis of assessment data.  1.b. Train all educators on the use of the system to inform curriculum and instruction decisions.  1.c. Implement data protocols for examination of data and their impact on the teaching and learning process | 1a. Met  1b. Met  1c. Not Met | 1a. School reports that in 2017-2018 it purchased 4CSolutions data dashboard and populated it with available data.  1b. School reports that it held a training on March 2018 on use of data dashboard.  1c. School reports that it held an introductory training for using the Data Wise protocols in March 2018 and will continue training staff on these protocols during the 2018-19 school year. |
| 2. Implement system for assessing student achievement in all content areas | 2. Not Met | 2. School reports that in 2017-2018 it introduced the mastery learning outcomes system in Canvas to staff, but the school needed to keep developing processes to assess all competencies in the 2018-2019 school year. |
| 3.a. Review 2017 assessment data for trends and areas to target and as a baseline for setting measurable targets for future reviews.  3.b. Implement systematic reviews of data with action plans for addressing challenges in identified standards (e.g., measurement and data, writing anchors) and increasing growth in those standards over the remainder of the term of the certificate | 3a. Met  3b. Not Met | 3a. School reports that in 2017-2018 data were presented to board members, faculty, staff, and school council to show baseline data on Next Gen MCAS assessment.  3b. School reports that in 2017-2018 it introduced protocols to review data, but implementation of systems to inform instruction would be implemented by PLCs during the 2018-2019 school year. |
| 4.a. GCVS Instructional Leadership Team will lead a study to implement changes to GCVS grading system to reflect mastery of competencies, with the goal of revising the grading system. | 4. Not Met | 4. School reports that in 2017-2018 it introduced these concepts to the school community, but work on development of competencies, rubrics, and aligning to assessments, grading system, and reports cards would take place during the 2018-2019 school year. |
| 5. Close the percentage gap of students meeting or exceeding expectations on MCAS between local and state averages for each reportable subgroup in grades 3-8 and 10 in all areas by June 2019. Decrease the gap by 50% in 2018 and by 25% in 2019. | 5. Not Met for 2018 | 5. MCAS data show that GCVS students declined in 2018 across every subject area and grade level when compared to 2017 (with the exception of grade 10 ELA, which showed a one percent increase in proficiency in 2018). Gaps increased for the “all students” group between 2017 and 2018 results. |

***Accountability Goal #3***: Increase faculty & staff/student/family/community engagement in the life of the school through the personalized learning and activities designed to increase input into the school.

***Rationale***: The school has experienced a history of varying degrees of engagement with families, agencies, and the broader community. Increased engagement leads to increased student learning/achievement, an overarching goal that drives this plan.

| **Action Step** | **2017-18** | **Evidence** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Engage with appropriate state/regional entities (ESE, Digital Learning Advisory Council, MAPLE Consortium, MassCUE, Superintendent Networks, Collaboratives, state legislative representatives, etc.) | 1. Met | 1. School reports that in 2017-2018, the ED attended a variety of meetings noted in the measure. |
| 2. Engage with families/community through the establishment of a School Council as established by the Education Reform Act of 1993. | 2. Met | 2. School reports that in 2017-2018 it established a school council and it met. |
| 3.a. Ensure 90% or more of students are engaged in live lessons and asynchronous work  3.b. Increase engagement with students and families through virtual and face-to-face outings and Learning Coach activities designed to extend/enrich the curriculum offered through the school. | 3a. Not Met  3b. Met | 3a. School reports that in 2017-2018 it put structures in place to assess engagement, but did not meet 90% of engagement.  3b. School reports that in 2017-2018 it conducted virtual and face-to-face outings; some outings demonstrated 20% attendance from high school students. |
| 4.a. Increase engagement with students through the development of personalized learning plans in grade 9.  4.b. Extend the development of personalized learning plans to the middle school | 4a. Not Met  4b. Not Met | 4a. School reports that in 2017-2018 personalized learning plans were developed for 75% of students in grade 9.  4b. School reports that development of personalized learning plans for middle school students will begin in the 2018-2019 school year. |
| 5. Add blended learning possibilities for small/rural districts that enable expansion of curriculum offerings to both full- and potential part-time students. | 5. Not Met | 5. The school reports that this may be considered as part of a future amendment to the certificate. |

# Appendix B: Demographic information

**Enrollment by grade, 2018-2019**

| **K** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10** | **11** | **12** |  | **Total** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 11 | 24 | 26 | 27 | 33 | 50 | 43 | 49 | 72 | 86 | 73 | 51 | 45 |  | 590 |

**Enrollment by race/ethnicity, FY2019**

| **Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity** | |
| --- | --- |
| **Race/Ethnicity** | **Percentage of Student Body** |
| African-American | 11.0 |
| Asian | 4.2 |
| Hispanic | 17.8 |
| Native American | 0.3 |
| White | 60.0 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | 0.7 |

**Enrollment by selected populations, FY2019**

| Multi-Race, Non Hispanic | 5.9 |
| --- | --- |
| **Selected Populations** | |
| **Title** | **Percentage of Student Body** |
| First Language not English | 4.2 |
| English Language Learner | 0.2 |
| Students with Disabilities | 21.2 |
| High Needs | 57.6 |
| Economically Disadvantaged | 48.5 |

# Appendix C: Academic data

The purpose of the statewide accountability system is to provide clear, actionable information about school performance. The accountability indicators used for each school depend on the grades served and the assessments administered. Following is summary information for GCVS over the past four years, with any areas of significant concern described in further detail. More detailed information related to student performance is included on the Department’s website (<http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/accountability/report/school.aspx?linkid=31&orgcode=39010900&orgtypecode=6&>). Please note that in general, caution is required when making comparisons across years when there were changes to the state accountability system. As a result of significant changes to the state’s accountability system in 2018, comparisons between 2018 accountability results and historical accountability data should not be made.

*Accountability and Assistance Level/Overall Classification*

Prior to 2018, all Massachusetts schools and districts with sufficient data were classified into one of five accountability and assistance levels (1-5), with the highest performing in Level 1 and lowest performing in Level 5. Beginning in 2018, all Massachusetts districts and schools with sufficient data were classified into one of two accountability categories: districts and schools requiring assistance or intervention, and districts and schools without required assistance or intervention.

| **Accountability and Assistance Level** | | | **Overall Classification** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** |
| **Level 3**: Among lowest performing 20% of schools and subgroups  Very low assessment participation (Less than 90%) | **Level 3**: Among lowest performing 20% of schools and subgroups  Low assessment participation (Less than 95%) | **No Level**: Students in this school participated in 2017 Next-Generation MCAS tests | **Requiring assistance or intervention**:  In need of focused/targeted support: Low graduation rate and low participation rate  **Progress Toward Improvement Targets**:18% |

*School Percentile/Accountability Percentile*

Prior to 2018, a school percentile between 1 and 99 was reported for schools with at least four years of data. This number is an indication of the school's overall performance relative to other schools that serve the same or similar grades.

| **School Percentile** | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **2015** | **2016** | **2017** |
| 8 | 7 | -- |

Beginning in 2018, an accountability percentile between 1 and 99 is reported for most schools. This number is an indication of the school's overall performance relative to other schools that serve similar grades, and is calculated using data for all accountability indicators. The 2018 accountability percentile should not be compared to school percentiles calculated in 2015-2017 because they represent different calculations. GCVS did not have sufficient data to calculate growth percentiles for high school grades in 2018, hence the school did not receive an accountability percentile in 2018.

| **Accountability Percentile** |
| --- |
| **2018** |
| Insufficient Data |

*Next-Generation MCAS Tests*

Next-Generation MCAS tests were given in English language arts and mathematics in grades 3 through 8 starting in 2017. Scaled scores range from 440 to 560. Students meet expectations in the scaled score range of 500 to 529 and exceed expectations in the scaled score range of 530-560.

| **Next-Generation MCAS Tests** | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grade and Subject** | **2017** | | | | **2018** | | | |
| **Percent of Students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations** | | **Avg. Scaled Score** | | **Percent of Students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations** | | **Avg. Scaled Score** | |
| **School** | **State** | **School** | **State** | **School** | **State** | **School** | **State** |
| **Grades 3-8 English Language Arts** | 29 | 49 | 489 | 499 | 26 | 51 | 489 | 500 |
| **Grades 3-8 Mathematics** | 20 | 48 | 483 | 499 | 19 | 48 | 482 | 498 |

*Composite Performance Index*

The Composite Performance Index is a 100-point index that serves as a measure of the extent to which all students are progressing toward proficiency. When all students score Proficient or Advanced on the legacy MCAS assessment, the CPI will be 100.

| **Composite Performance Index** | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grade and Subject** | **2015** | | **2016** | | **2017** | | **2018** | |
| **School** | **State** | **School** | **State** | **School** | **State** | **School** | **State** |
| **Grade 5 Science and Tech/Eng** | 72.5 | 78.2 | 61.0 | 76.4 | 62.8 | 75.3 | 54.1 | 76.5 |
| **Grade 8 Science and Tech/ Eng** | 64.4 | 72.4 | 56.0 | 71.3 | 60.7 | 70.6 | 54.5 | 68.3 |
| **Grade 10 English Language Arts** | 93.2 | 96.7 | 100 | 96.7 | 96.2 | 96.5 | 95.6 | 96.2 |
| **Grade 10 Mathematics** | 80.7 | 89.9 | 80.6 | 89.7 | 81.8 | 89.9 | 77.6 | 89.5 |
| **Grade 10 Science** | - | 88.2 | 90.0 | 89.0 | 86.8 | 89.4 | 60.5 | 89.3 |

*Student Growth Percentile*

The Department uses Student Growth Percentiles (SGPs) to demonstrate progress in student achievement each year. SGPs are generated based on student performance on statewide assessments, including MCAS and/or PARCC in 2015 and 2016 and the Next-Generation MCAS in 2017 and 2018. In 2015 and 2016, transitional SGP was calculated based on PARCC and prior MCAS scores. In 2018, DESE began including average SGP in all assessment and accountability reports instead of median SGP. In general, SGPs in the range of 1-39 are associated with lower growth, SGPs in the range of 40-60 are associated with moderate growth, and SGPs in the range of 61-99 are associated with higher growth.

| **Student Growth Percentile** | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grade and Subject** | **PARCC** | | **Next-Generation MCAS** | |
| **Transitional SGP** | | **Median SGP** | **Average SGP** |
| **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** |
| **Grades 3-8 English Language Arts** | 40.0 | 41.5 | 37.0 | 43.2 |
| **Grades 3-8 Mathematics** | 45.0 | 35.0 | 31.5 | 42.9 |
| **Grade and Subject** | **MCAS** | | | |
| **Median SGP** | | | **Average SGP** |
| **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** |
| **Grade 10 English Language Arts** | - | 59.5 | 35.0 | 47.2 |
| **Grade 10 Mathematics** | - | 47.0 | 34.0 | 33.4 |

*Graduation and Dropout Rates*

The 4-year graduation rate is the percentage of students in an annual cohort who graduate with a regular high school diploma within 4 years.

|  | **2014 cohort** | **2015 cohort** | **2016 cohort** | **2017 cohort** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **GCVS** | #N/A | 22.2 | 40.0 | 31.6 |
| **Statewide** | 86.1 | 87.3 | 87.5 | 88.3 |

The 5-year graduation rate is the percentage of students in an annual cohort who graduate with a regular high school diploma within 5 years. Data for the 2016 cohort is the most recent available because it includes students in that cohort who graduated as late as 2017.

| **5-Year Graduation Rate (Percent Graduated)** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2014 cohort** | **2015 cohort** | **2016 cohort** |
| **GCVS** | #N/A | 59.3 | 46.7 |
| **Statewide** | 88.5 | 89.4 | 89.8 |

Dropout rates are reported for high school students who drop out of high school.

| **Dropout Rate (Percent Dropout)** | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** |
| **GVCS** | 11.2 | 9.6 | 28.7 | 24.9 |
| **Statewide** | 2.0 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 1.8 |

# Appendix D: Five-year Financial Summary

Greenfield Commonwealth Virtual School 5 Year Financial Summary 

# Greenfield Commonwealth Virtual School (GCVS) logoAppendix E: School’s Response to Summary of Review

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February 12, 2019

Alison Bagg, Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

75 Pleasant Street

Malden, MA 02148-4906

RE: Response to Summary of Review Report (February 2018)

Dear Director Bagg,

The Greenfield Commonwealth Virtual School (GCVS) acknowledges receipt of the Summary of Review Report (February 2019). Once again, we wish to thank the review team and DESE for their collaboration, guidance and assistance. We believe that the report will provide us with a solid road map for moving forward with the appropriate strategies and action to ensure that all goals will be met in the near future.

In the following response we offer further details on each of the unmet targets. We also offer some updates since the review was performed.

We look forward to seeing you at the Board of Education meeting. In. the meantime, should you have any question or need for clarification, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Salah Khelfaoui, Interim Executive Director

In collaboration with:

Dr. Judith Houle, Consultant to the Interim Executive Director

***Faithfulness to Certificate***

1. **Mission and key design elements:**

A new mission statement was adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2018 and the school’s certificate was amended to reflect that change in March 2018. The new mission statement reads as follows:

*The Greenfield Commonwealth Virtual School, a public school of choice, serves students from across Massachusetts who need a learning community that is accessible and flexible. We give our students and their families choices in what, how, when, and where they learn.*

*As a pioneer of online personalized learning, we empower our educators to tailor learning experiences to each student’s strengths, interests, and challenges. We redefine and change how students and teachers engage through innovative technology, while ensuring mastery of competencies embedded in a rigorous curriculum.*

GCVS utilizes a number of innovative technology tools that increase students’ interaction with the curriculum both during lives and asynchronously. These include:

* Nearpod – Interactive, collaborative slide presentation tool that enables student to work and interact directly within PowerPoint-like presentations. This is utilized at all grade levels at GCVS and is a very dynamic way of presenting material.
* Kami – Interactive annotation and mark-up software that enables students to edit, collaborate, and receive feedback from instructors on documents.
* Blackboard Collaborate – Live interactive video and audio platform that includes interactive whiteboards, screensharing, breakout small group work, formative assessment tools, and text chat.
* Canvas – Comprehensive online Learning Management System (LMS) that includes interactive access to the curriculum, embedded course work and assessments. Including submission of assignments, discussion with teachers and peers, and communication email system for students, Learning Coaches, teachers, and all staff.
* Kahoot – Formative assessment tool that makes it easy to create, play, and share fun learning games tied to the curriculum.
* Gynzy – Interactive whiteboard technology that enables teachers to engage students collaboratively in live lessons.
* Supplemental instructional technologies including: MobyMax, Learning A-Z, BrainPop, GSuite.

GCVS continues to work with its marketing firm to communicate the message of the ways in which the school can personalize the educational experience of its students. Students who have been able to use the opportunities that our school has to offer to pursue lifelong dreams (particularly athletic and artistic pursuits) have been highlighted on the school’s website and through social media.

GCVS has been working with staff and the Board of Trustees to implement competency-based, personalized learning as an overarching framework with several components that will comprise the steps to a full realization of strong learning outcomes, coupled with student agency and voice. Through ongoing professional development over the last 2 years, teachers have identified competencies for learning and aligning instruction, assessment, and feedback practices. To that end, the school has implemented a data dashboard to warehouse data from a variety of sources. This will be the first of several steps to map data from assessments to standards, revise our student/family report card system to a standards-based model, and to explore the ramifications of moving in this direction on instructional practice. GCVS has also joined the International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL, <https://www.inacol.org/>), which serves as a clearinghouse for competency-based education and offers a number of resources to our faculty and administration, of which we are beginning to take advantage as we begin to reshape our work. In October 2018, our Director of Teaching and Learning and the three grade level Team Leaders attended their annual Symposium and brought back information to the rest of the faculty with regard to the national work in this area.

The GCVS Board of Trustees approved a new accountability plan on December 11, 2017, which was revised after receiving feedback, and approved by ESE in March 2018 as a certificate amendment. This, along with this accountability report, will provide a roadmap for necessary improvements to the school.

The work of the faculty to curate content and resources within our Canvas Learning Management System in alignment with the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks is continuing on as the school is now in its second year of this system. Informed by the enactment of the curriculum in year 1, teachers have worked to strengthen the learning modules within Canvas to ensure that the standards are fully met.

In its January meeting, the board of trustees has approved the expansion of the asynchronous offering. Currently, student can access online material prepared or recorded by their teachers at any time for their review. This model is being expanded with the addition of more structured online material well aligned with Massachusetts standards and managed by a robust learning management system to track student engagement accurately. The school will be using Edgenuity to complete its live sessions. GCVS has had a positive experience with Edgenuity for summer classes. Students with records of poor engagement through live online sessions have been identified and selected for this complementary asynchronous model to improve their engagement.

1. **Access and equity.**

GCVS has established a School Council, consisting of two administrators (Executive Director and Director of Teaching and Learning), three faculty representatives (one each from elementary, middle, and high school), a high school student representative, and two parents. The Council’s role is in accordance with the Education Reform Act of 1993, providing input to the school on its operations. Our SEPAC, working with our Director of Student Services, is a vibrant community of stakeholders who are providing feedback on our programming in that regard.

GCVS is responding to the growing number of students with disabilities enrolled at GCVS (currently 23%) by diversifying our program services and placement options. We currently have students in full inclusion, partial inclusion and substantially separate options throughout the grade levels. We have increased our assistive technology services through the acquisition of several innovative G-suite tools, such as Math formula conversions, text to speech and speech to text. We have increased our special education staffing, hiring a .5 FTE for the high school students We have also revised our website description of the Student Services program for parents of current and prospective students.

GCVS acknowledges that we need to strengthen our programming for ELs. We have hired two ESL teachers who are working to build curriculum content in our Canvas LMS to support EL students, working with teachers on instructional support, and providing direct services as needed.

We have two well-established systems for identifying students in need of intervention, whether for disabilities or language access. We have a Student Intervention Team (SIT) which meets regularly with general ed and special ed staff, guidance counselors and family engagement coordinators, to discuss students who are struggling and to implement a tiered system of supports. We also convene an engagement team weekly, with membership from guidance, family engagement, nursing and special ed to consider students who are struggling to maintain engagement in the virtual setting.

Further, our Canvas Learning Management system allows for Special Education and ESL teachers to create alternative assessments within the courses and push out tools (graphic organizers, rubrics, reference sheets and videos) to increase the access of students to the curriculum.

1. **Compliance**

GCVS is currently participating in training and preparing for the tiered focused monitoring visit from the Department’s Office of Public School Monitoring during the 2019-2020 school year.

***Academic and Program Success***

1. **Student performance**

GCVS conducted an analysis of the MCAS results in the fall of 2018. Issues persist with regard to overall achievement and the closing of achievement gaps in our subgroups. As the curriculum alignment process continues and as we continue to harness innovative technologies for instructional engagement, we are confident that this will help us move forward in that regard.

During the process of content curation within Canvas, we found that the new curriculum, most especially mathematics, is more rigorous than the prior curriculum from our all-in-one provider. Our upper elementary teachers reported that they have had to fill skill gaps and parents have reported that the new math curriculum is more rigorous and challenging as well. We believe that it will take a couple of years for us to meet state averages for proficiency or higher, but we believe that we are on the path to realizing this goal with the understanding that our small sample size can have some impact on those numbers.

Another area of impact on our student performance is student engagement. We noted anecdotally in 2018 that approximately 20% of our students and families were not fully engaged in the school and meeting our expectations for live lesson attendance and successful completion of asynchronous assignments. As a result, the school’s Accountability Plan is focused on engaging with stakeholders and, in particular, with families. The FY19 budget included funding for an extra Family Engagement Coordinator and an increase in the School Nurse from 0.8 to 1.0 FTE. An Engagement Team with a staff Team Leader was established and includes the Nurse, the 3 Family Engagement Coordinators, and the two High School Guidance Counselors who meet weekly to discuss ways to better engage with families and intervene more intensely with those who are not meeting these expectations.

GCVS also purchased a plug-in for Canvas called Dropout Detective, from AspireEDU. This tool pulls data from several points within the LMS and presents them as risk factors for students. The data are pulled daily and include a trend analysis to determine risk levels and interventions needed.

GCVS serves a unique population of students that may have very little experience with high-stakes testing in an unfamiliar environment outside the home. We have exerted considerable effort over the years to improve participation and ensure secure testing environment at sites around the state. Regardless, our students are still required to travel up to an hour to unfamiliar places. This results in students testing in a setting that is dramatically different from their typical instructional environment.

We continue to learn and refine our strategy and delivery of administering the MCAS assessment. The administration of MCAS in so many different communities around the state and the complex logistics in terms of facilities and staffing require special consideration during budget planning.

1. **Program delivery**
   1. **Program delivery – Curriculum**

As the school entered into year 2 of its implementation of the Canvas LMS and curated curriculum, teachers are refining instructional units to ensure alignment with the Massachusetts Frameworks. The Senior Leadership Team continues to monitor this work along with the alignment of assessments to competencies. This provides a beginning step toward better vertical alignment as we move to a competency-based, personalized learning model.

In grades K through 5, EngageNY and Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) form the foundation of the curriculum. Both of these programs are aligned to the common core. In grades 6-12 we utilize curriculum from the Florida Virtual School. This curriculum is aligned to the common core. FLVS provides a tool that can specifically map Massachusetts curriculum standards to specific lessons and content within their courses. By virtue of using an LMS such as Canvas, our teachers enhance the curriculum to ensure all Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks are met.

* 1. **Program delivery – Instruction**

In effort to ensure consistency and reduce variability in instructional practice, we recognize the need to establish clear expectations. Some strategies we are implementing include:

* Encouraging team goals for both student learning and professional practices.
* Implementing more comprehensive and consistent mentoring
* Establishing peer review protocols.

As result of the considerable change in moving away from K12 and implementing a new Learning Management System the focus of professional development has been on gaining competency in the use of the tools to deliver instruction in the virtual environment. Going forward, professional development is focusing more on consistency of instructional delivery and the use of technology tools to support that delivery.

To that end, GCVS is continuing its work in the area of understanding and implementing high-impact instructional practices based on the work of John Hattie, author of several works detailing meta-analyses of 1,400 studies involving the impact of instruction of over 300 million students (<http://visiblelearningplus.com/content/250-influences-student-achievement>). A fall professional development session focused on practices that have shown to be ones with impacts that can increase student growth in learning at a rate of one year or better over a year’s worth of time. Time has been allotted at faculty meetings for follow-up on these practices.

The Director of Teaching and Learning and Director of Student Services are observing lessons for evidence of implementation and giving feedback to teachers on how to improve their practice. Evaluators will establish well-calibrated evaluation criteria which will be communicated through ongoing professional development and faculty meeting time.

* 1. **Program delivery – Assessment and program evaluation**

GCVS is currently using a data dashboard. Using Tableau Reader as the backbone, 4CSolutions has taken our MCAS, DIBELS, CBM, Lexia, and Benchmark Assessment System data and brought them together in one dashboard that allows for school-wide, grade-level wide, teacher-specific, and student-specific data that is easy to visualize and allows teachers and administrators to examine the data, looking for overall trends within the data, as well as drill down to individual students in order to provide systematic and individual supports.

As part of our professional development work, the Director of Teaching and Learning has provided training in the use of data protocols, stemming from the DataWise project at Harvard University. Teachers are using an inquiry-based approach in their teams to analyze the data they have, what they mean, and how they can use them to improve instruction.

Teachers are currently mapping course assessments to competencies within the Canvas LMS. As data are being populated, teachers can access a data dashboard within Canvas to look at trends within their classes to determine who may be ready to move on or move into more enrichment activities as well as those who will require additional support to master the content. These progress monitoring measures, coupled with benchmark data, and observations of practice will serve as a springboard to increase the examination of practices that should be changed or improved in order to increase student learning and, as a result, improve achievement levels on all data measures implemented by the school.

All teachers and staff attended their first training of the Tableau based data warehouse. Several other live training sessions will be scheduled. In addition, asynchronous training material will be made available to all teachers and staff for their review. The focus is clearly shifting toward using assessment data to refine program delivery. Until a time when teachers and staff reach proficiency in the use of the data dashboard, a consultant will be engaged to generate the relevant data reports. CGVS will also be introducing training in Edwin Analytics.

* 1. **Program delivery – Diverse Learners**

GCVS recognizes that this is an area of struggle for the school that needs to be addressed. As noted in the report, the new LMS has afforded teachers expanded opportunities to support student learning who are eligible for accommodations under these plans. The school’s Student Intervention Team (SIT) has also become an integral part of the life of the school. Processes were more clearly defined during the spring of 2017 and have been implemented with meetings taking place on an almost weekly basis. Students who are concerning to the staff are brought forward and plans made to implement interventions, which are part of a check-in process with the SIT.

We acknowledge our need to increase supports in place for our ELs, which is an area in which we need to work vigorously to ensure that our ELE program is more robust. As noted above, 2 ESL teachers have been hired and are working with the Director of Student Services and the faculty to ensure proper identification, assessment, and services delivery for our EL students.

In the Fall of 2019, GCVS reviewed the Home Language Surveys of all current students. In total, 136 current and new students were identified from the HLS as having a language other than English spoken in the home. 49 students opted out. 21 students were unresponsive to our repeated outreach efforts. 8 students still to be screened. A total of 58 students were screened at 10 sites across the Commonwealth, and 31 students qualified as EL students. Currently, all EL students are taking the ACCESS test in locations across the State.

Additionally, we are currently at a higher rate of students with disabilities as part of our population versus the state. As we continue to grow in this area, we have added new staff and reorganized staff responsibilities to ensure that we are doing all we can at Tier 3, including additional 1:1 supports and the establishment of some substantially separate classes for those students who need that level of support. In addition, to support diverse during instruction we have added assistive technology tools such as G-suite TextHelp (commented upon in Access and Equity above) and have modified course content and assessments through the Canvas LMS (commented upon in Curriculum above).

1. **Culture and family engagement – social emotional, and health needs and family and community engagement**

Goal met

***Organizational Viability***

1. **Capacity**
   1. **Capacity – School leadership**

As noted in the report, the school leadership has stabilized after a year of significant turmoil. The relationship between the Board of Trustees and Executive Director has truly become a collaborative one. Taking on all the operations of the school caused us to add staff (Enrollment and Data Specialist, Administrative Assistant for Data and Business Services) and to take on the job of ensuring that our students were receiving the materials necessary to learn. This included procurement and shipment of student computers as well as additional materials requested by teachers to ensure students had the hands-on items needed to fully engage with the curriculum.

Currently the leadership team includes:

* Director of Student Services/Special Education – Bob Kumin is in his fifth year with the school.
* Director of Teaching and Learning – Greg Runyan is in his third year.
* Business Manager (contracted through TMS) – Marc Richard is in his third year.
* Executive Director – Dr. Salah Khelfaoui is in his first year.

In the summer of 2018, Dr. Judith Houle announced her intent to retire from public school administration by the end of the calendar year. By then, Dr. Houle had been with the school for two years, first as the Interim Executor Director and then as the permanent Director. The Board of Trustees hired Dr. Salah Khelfaoui as Interim Executive Director for the remainder of the 2018-19 school year, as they await the ESE’s decision on the renewal of the school’s certificate. Dr. Houle has been retained as a consultant to Dr. Khelfaoui and the school to ensure a seamless transition and positive trajectory moving forward. At its next meeting on February 11, the Board of Trustees will decide on how to proceed for a permanent executive Director conditional on the outcome of its certificate renewal decision.

As a part of our restructuring, several avenues have been put in place to share decisions among stakeholders. As noted in the report, these include our Senior Leadership Team (administrators), Instructional Leadership Team (administrators and Team Leaders), and our School Council. In addition to the Board of Trustees, information is shared across these groups and decisions made at the appropriate level with feedback from all stakeholder groups. Weekly team meetings and monthly faculty meetings ensure that open dialogue remains in place.

Additionally, GCVS has a School Council made up of a parent, community, student, teacher representatives in addition to the Director of Teaching and Learning and the Executive Director. The School Council meets to inform and advise school leadership on initiatives within the school.

* 1. **Capacity – Professional climate**

As noted above, the organizational structure at GCVS is designed to bring the whole school together on a more frequent basis to address the issues that need attention. A key component of these gatherings at all levels is to increase the discourse around curriculum, instruction, assessment, and engagement in a problem-solving model. As team time is becoming more aligned with the principles of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), three driving forces, adapted from the work of Chris Sturgis, have become the overarching focus of these gatherings:

* 1. We accept learning as the fundamental purpose of our school and therefore are willing to examine all practices in light of their impact on learning.
  2. We are committed to working together to achieve our collective purpose. We cultivate a collaborative culture through the development of high-performing teams.
  3. We assess our effectiveness on the basis of results rather than intentions. Individuals, teams, and schools seek relevant data and information and use that information to promote continuous improvement.

Throughout the 2018-2019 school year, the number of professional development days was increased to 9 days. In addition, formal professional development is offered to teachers and staff when a new tool is introduced.

During the current three-year certificate term, teacher and staff turnover has been low. Over the three years there was a turnover of only 6 teachers. In the first year, one teacher left. In the second year, following the transition away from K12, four teachers left. In the current year, one teacher has left. During certificate term, the average number of teachers and staff is approximately 45.

1. **Governance**

Goal met

1. **Finance**

Goal met

**Summary**

This school year has proven to be an extraordinary one for GCVS. The process of redefining who we are and how we deliver a quality online educational program to our students has been arduous, iterative, and rewarding. We are grateful to the members of the site visit team for their thorough, thoughtful review and feedback. This report has provided us with clear guidance on the steps we need to take, moving forward.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Interim Commissioner Wulfson, Commissioner Riley, and the members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education for your continued support of online education for students who are in need of this alternative, most especially for the increase in funding that will help us further strengthen the school and our work. We look forward to our continued partnership with DESE in this endeavor.

**Response to assessment of GCVS Accountability Plan Goals for 2017-19**

We appreciate the feedback received on the progress of GCVS in achieving the goals of its accountability plan. However, we feel some further explanation of our progress is necessary. While the plan was written to cover the last 2+ years of the school’s certificate, the process of approvals was such that the plan has been fully approved for less than a year at this point. To that end, we wish to clarify some areas that were deemed as not met below. We also see this plan as one that is aimed at June 2019, therefore, many of the items deemed not met are actually in progress with our attention focused on assessing their status in June 2019.

***Accountability Goal #1*:** Ensure that the GCVS written and enacted curriculum align to the standards of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education curriculum frameworks.

***Rationale***: A move to a new learning management system and curriculum curation has changed the accountability from a pre-packaged vendor to GCVS. As a result, GCVS is responsible for ensuring that both the written and enacted curriculum align to the frameworks, with the target of ensuring mastery of competencies within said frameworks.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Annual Goals** | **2017-18** | **Evidence** |
| 1.a. Develop curriculum modules in line with Massachusetts frameworks.  1.b. Review curriculum modules for adherence to curriculum frameworks and give feedback to teachers for areas of improvement. | 1a. Met  1b. Not Met | 1a. School reports that in 2017-2018: Review of modules in Canvas show 90% or better scoring 3 out of 4 on the rubric.  1b. School reports that in 2017-2018: Ongoing reviews do not yet show 100% of modules scoring 3 out of 4 on the rubric. |
| 2.a. Develop walk-through and clinical supervision observation protocols in line with expected online teaching practices rubric delineated by ESE  2.b. Train teachers in the rubric/observation protocols  2.c. Conduct observations of lessons, provide feedback, and document growth | 2a. Met  2b. Met  2c. Met | 2a. School reports that in 2017-2018: GVCS developed observation templates aligned with the ESE rubric on Teachpoint.  2b. School reports that in 2017-2018: GVCS developed a Canvas course for educator evaluation and devoted professional development to train teachers on these protocols.  2c. School reports that in 2017-2018: observations were conducted, and 90% or more staff received a proficient or higher on standards 1 and 2 of the educator evaluation rubric. |

**GCVS Response:**

While we have met most of the action items associated with this goal, we feel that action item #1b has been partially met. Most of the curriculum modules have been shown to meet the criteria used to measure that alignment. Where they were deemed to have not fully met the requirements, teachers have been given feedback on what they can do to strengthen the modules. Additionally, teachers are using data from the first year of implementation to revise modules and assessments this year to ensure that the students are able to demonstrate mastery of the standards therein.

***Accountability Goal #2***: Develop a comprehensive assessment system and analysis protocols designed to measure and improve competencies in relation the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks, to be measured by increases in the percentage of student meeting/exceeding expectations on MCAS by closing gaps between the school’s average and the state average in all subgroups.

***Rationale***: Conditions in the GCVS certificate for improvement in student outcomes, coupled with the move to a new curriculum requires that we develop and implement a comprehensive school-based assessment system, along with measures for gathering and analyzing data for the purposes of curricular and instructional improvement.

| **Annual Goals** | **2017-18** | **Evidence** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1.a. Get Data dashboard system into place for analysis of assessment data.  1.b. Train all educators on the use of the system to inform curriculum and instruction decisions.  1.c. Implement data protocols for examination of data and their impact on the teaching and learning process | 1a. Met  1b. Met  1c. Not Met | 1a. School reports that in 2017-2018 it purchased 4CSolutions data dashboard and populated it with available data.  1b. School reports that it held a training on March 2018 on use of data dashboard.  1c. School reports that it held an introductory training for using the Data Wise protocols in March 2018 and will continue training staff on these protocols during the 2018-19 school year. |
| 2. Implement system for assessing student achievement in all content areas | 2. Not Met | 2. School reports that in 2017-2018 it introduced the mastery learning outcomes system in Canvas to staff, but the school needed to keep developing processes to assess all competencies in the 2018-2019 school year. |
| 3.a. Review 2017 assessment data for trends and areas to target and as a baseline for setting measurable targets for future reviews.  3.b. Implement systematic reviews of data with action plans for addressing challenges in identified standards (e.g., measurement and data, writing anchors) and increasing growth in those standards over the remainder of the term of the certificate | 3a. Met  3b. Not Met | 3a. School reports that in 2017-2018 data were presented to board members, faculty, staff, and school council to show baseline data on Next Gen MCAS assessment.  3b. School reports that in 2017-2018 it introduced protocols to review data, but implementation of systems to inform instruction would be implemented by PLCs during the 2018-2019 school year. |
| 4.a. GCVS Instructional Leadership Team will lead a study to implement changes to GCVS grading system to reflect mastery of competencies, with the goal of revising the grading system. | 4. Not Met | 4. School reports that in 2017-2018 it introduced these concepts to the school community, but work on development of competencies, rubrics, and aligning to assessments, grading system, and reports cards would take place during the 2018-2019 school year. |
| 5. Close the percentage gap of students meeting or exceeding expectations on MCAS between local and state averages for each reportable subgroup in grades 3-8 and 10 in all areas by June 2019. Decrease the gap by 50% in 2018 and by 25% in 2019. | 5. Not Met for 2018 | 5. MCAS data show that GVCS students declined in 2018 across every subject area and grade level when compared to 2017 (with the exception of grade 10 ELA, which showed a one percent increase in proficiency in 2018). Gaps increased for the “all students” group between 2017 and 2018 results. |

**GCVS Response:**

Action item 1c, in the school’s view, is partially met. At the time of the visit, an initial training of staff on the data dashboard and Datawise protocols had been completed. The process of using protocols to analyze data, reflect on their meaning, and use them to improve both asynchronous curriculum and live lesson instruction is ongoing. The grade level and engagement teams have established times to engage in this work as PLCs.

Action item 2 is in progress. Teachers were paid stipends for summer assessment work after training on competency-based education and measuring outcomes held in June 2018. Teachers met in K-12 vertical teams to determine the competencies they would measure based on the Massachusetts standards. These competencies were uploaded into Canvas and the teachers have been working continuously throughout this year to align their assessments with the competencies they have determined as critical to student success. Our goal is to have the initial work completed by June 2019 and to begin to use the data generated to further inform curriculum and instruction.

Action item 3b is also a work in progress. The target, as stated above, in the plan is to work toward a June 2019 date of completion. The evidence cited by the site visit team are active steps the school is taking this year.

Action item 4 has been partially met. The faculty have been trained in the principles of competency-based, personalized learning; have identified competencies that will be assessed within Canvas and have begun the process of mapping course assessments to those competencies. That work will, in turn, result in data in Canvas that will assist teachers in tracking students’ progress toward mastery. Discussions of how this will impact grading practices and what changes need to be made is in its early stages and will continue throughout the remainder of the school year.

GCVS acknowledges that action item 5 has not been met and is fully aware of the work that lies ahead to meet this challenging goal. As noted above, this involves a focus on engagement as well as academics to achieve.

***Accountability Goal #3***: Increase faculty & staff/student/family/community engagement in the life of the school through the personalized learning and activities designed to increase input into the school.

***Rationale***: The school has experienced a history of varying degrees of engagement with families, agencies, and the broader community. Increased engagement leads to increased student learning/achievement, an overarching goal that drives this plan.

| **Action Step** | **2017-18** | **Evidence** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Engage with appropriate state/regional entities (ESE, Digital Learning Advisory Council, MAPLE Consortium, MassCUE, Superintendent Networks, Collaboratives, state legislative representatives, etc.) | 1. Met | 1. School reports that in 2017-2018, the ED attended a variety of meetings noted in the measure. |
| 2. Engage with families/community through the establishment of a School Council as established by the Education Reform Act of 1993. | 2. Met | 2. School reports that in 2017-2018 it established a school council and it met. |
| 3.a. Ensure 90% or more of students are engaged in live lessons and asynchronous work  3.b. Increase engagement with students and families through virtual and face-to-face outings and Learning Coach activities designed to extend/enrich the curriculum offered through the school. | 3a. Not Met  3b. Met | 3a. School reports that in 2017-2018 it put structures in place to assess engagement but did not meet 90% of engagement.  3b. School reports that in 2017-2018 it conducted virtual and face-to-face outings; some outings demonstrated 20% attendance from high school students. |
| 4.a. Increase engagement with students through the development of personalized learning plans in grade 9.  4.b. Extend the development of personalized learning plans to the middle school | 4a. Not Met  4b. Not Met | 4a. School reports that in 2017-2018 personalized learning plans were developed for 75% of students in grade 9.  4b. School reports that development of personalized learning plans for middle school students will begin in the 2018-2019 school year. |
| 5. Add blended learning possibilities for small/rural districts that enable expansion of curriculum offerings to both full- and potential part-time students. | 5. Not Met | 5. The school reports that this may be considered as part of a future amendment to the certificate. |

**GCVS Response:**

Action item 3a was not met in 2017-18, as the school did not have the resources to work toward that end. With the increase in per pupil funding, starting in FY19, staffing was increased in this area and a monitoring system for asynchronous engagement in Canvas was purchased. With these resources in hand, the school is working to find ways to meet this goal through targeted interventions with Learning Coaches and students who are not meeting the school’s requirements for engagement.

Action items 4a and 4b were in the early stages of implementation at the time of the site visit. During the 2017-18 school year, GCVS used a school-generated form to work with students on personalized learning plans. This was a laborious process that did not result in a database that would allow for careful monitoring. In the fall of 2018, GCVS purchased Naviance for its high school guidance counselors to use in creating personalized learning plans for high school students, as well as a way to help them move toward college and career goals. The license that was purchased also included middle school students, so they could create personalized learning plans. This system allows GCVS to gather data on these plans and better track students’ progress toward achieving them.

Action item 5 has been one that the Board of Trustees has expressed a great interest in achieving as a school. Due to the geographic area in which the administrative offices are housed, they see a possibility for an affordable solution that could be offered to small, rural districts for blended learning that could help them increase their collective capacity for offering more options to their students. The Board realizes that this possibility hinges on the school’s certificate being renewed and has decided to pursue this as an amendment to a new certificate, should one be granted.

1. <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr52.html?section=04> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <http://www.doe.mass.edu/odl/cmvs/PerformanceCriteria.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2012/Chapter379> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. These terms were described in the Commissioner’s June 18, 2013 memo to the Board: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/docs/fy2013/2013-06/item3.html>. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)