*****Massachusetts Department of***

***Elementary and Secondary Education***

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| Jeffrey C. Riley*Commissioner* |  |

# MEMORANDUM

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| **To:** | Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education |
| **From:**  | Jeffrey C. Riley, Commissioner |
| **Date:**  | January 13, 2022 |
| **Subject:** | Renewal of Charters – Notification of Intended Actions for Academy of the Pacific Rim Charter Public School; Brooke Charter School; Community Day Charter Public School - Gateway; Community Day Charter Public School - R. Kingman Webster; Global Learning Charter Public School; Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School; Pioneer Charter School of Science; and Sizer School: A North Central Charter Essential School |

At its meeting in February 2013, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) authorized 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.” Under this authority, I intend to renew the charters of the following eight schools, without conditions: Academy of the Pacific Rim Charter Public School; Brooke Charter School; Community Day Charter Public School - Gateway; Community Day Charter Public School - R. Kingman Webster; Global Learning Charter Public; Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School; Pioneer Charter School of Science; and Sizer School: A North Central Charter Essential School. Further, I intend to remove the condition on the charter of Sizer School: A North Central Charter Essential School because the school has met the condition.

The superintendents of the districts sending students to these schools were invited to submit written comment regarding the charter renewals. No comment from superintendents was received for any of the schools.

Please let me know by **Thursday, January 20**, if you wish to have any of these proposed actions brought to the full Board for review and vote at the January meeting.

**Charter School Performance Criteria and Considerations for Renewing Charters**

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) uses the Charter School [Performance Criteria](http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/acct.html?section=criteria) (Criteria) to report evidence in the three areas of charter school accountability. These areas are faithfulness to the terms of a school’s charter, academic program success, and organizational viability. Renewal decisions for these charter schools are made in accordance with the charter school statute and the process outlined in the memorandum dated October 7, 2013, regarding [Considerations for Charter School Renewal.](http://www.doe.mass.edu/news/news.aspx?id=7802)

The Criteria and the Considerations for Charter School Renewal outline performance expectations for charter schools but do not dictate accountability decisions formulaically, including renewal decisions. A charter school must demonstrate affirmative evidence of success in all three areas of charter school accountability, and renewal decisions are made based upon the totality of evidence as indicated in Summaries of Review. Student academic achievement and improvement in student achievement for all student groups are of paramount importance. A rating system is used to communicate how well each school is meeting expectations of the Criteria. Failure to meet individual performance criteria will not necessarily result in a non-renewal; the Criteria set a high standard for performance. Performance relative to the Criteria is considered within the context of the school's performance trends and stage of development. The Commissioner and the Board consider all qualitative and quantitative factors when making these decisions.

**Presentation of Evidence for Charter Renewal**

This memorandum summarizes the evidence related to each school’s performance on a subset of the Criteria that are directly related to the statutory and regulatory requirements for renewal.[1](#_bookmark0) This subset includes evidence related to Criterion 1: Mission and Key Design Elements; Criterion 2: Access and Equity; Criterion 3: Compliance; Criterion 4: Dissemination; Criterion 5: Student Performance; and Criterion 9: Governance. The Department continues to gather evidence regarding all of the Criteria through ongoing monitoring.

The chart on page 7 of this memorandum provides a dashboard with a summary of ratings for the eight schools whose charters I intend to renew. Beginning on page 8 of the memorandum, I provide a brief summary of the evidence on which I based my decisions. Below, I provide further information regarding each Criterion contained in the Summaries of Review that may be of particular interest and provide context for the ratings of each school.

1 The charter school regulations, at 603 CMR 1.11(2), provide as follows.

The decision by the Board to renew a charter shall be based upon the presentation of affirmative evidence regarding the faithfulness of the school to the terms of its charter, including the extent to which the school has followed its recruitment and retention plan and has disseminated best practices in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 89(dd); the success of the school's academic program; and the viability of the school as an organization. The Department will gather evidence regarding these issues from the renewal application and from other information, including but not limited to, a school's annual reports, financial audits, test results, site visit reports, and the renewal inspection report.

All charter schools will be evaluated on the same performance criteria as provided in the guidelines, provided, however, that the criteria will take into account each school's charter and accountability plan. Evidence of academic success for all students is essential for charter renewal.

**Criterion 1: Mission and Key Design Elements**

The charter school statute states that the Board shall consider whether the school has met its obligations and commitments under the charter. G.L. c. 71, § 89(dd). Further, the charter school regulations state that the decision by the Board to renew a charter shall be based upon the affirmative evidence regarding the faithfulness of the school to the terms of its charter. 603 CMR 1.11(2). The degree to which a charter school is implementing its mission, vision, and key design elements is assessed through charter school accountability site visits and a renewal inspection visit. Additionally, each charter term, schools create Accountability Plans to articulate their own mission-driven goals and measures. Charter schools report on the Accountability Plan annually and aim to meet the goals by the end of each charter term. Each Summary of Review reflects the school’s performance on its Accountability Plan and includes the Accountability Plan in Appendix A to each Summary of Review.

**Criterion 2: Access and Equity**

All charter schools are required to ensure program access and equity for all students eligible to attend the school. New statutory provisions related to Criterion 2 were added in 2010.

The Summaries of Review contain multiple data sources for Criterion 2 such as comparative enrollment data; comparative attrition data; comparative stability rates; the status of each school’s recruitment and retention plan; and, if relevant, any enhancements made to each school’s strategies to recruit and retain certain populations of students more effectively. Criterion 2 also provides evidence about the accessibility of the school’s programming and contains data pertaining to suspension rates, both for all students and for subgroups.

Appendix B to each Summary of Review provides enrollment data for subgroups and attrition and stability data for all students and the high needs subgroup at the charter school. Each Summary of Review then compares this data to that of other public schools in the municipality or region from which the charter school draws students. The information presented is derived from the Department’s School and District Profiles and the [Charter Analysis and Review Tool](http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/finance/chart/) (“CHART”). Appendix B to the Summaries of Review is intended to provide context for a charter school’s recruitment and retention effort, is presented for reference only, and primarily examines trends within the charter school itself.

The subgroup composition of a charter school is not required to be a mirror image of the schools in its sending districts and region. The Department urges caution in drawing any conclusions regarding comparability of subgroup populations between schools and districts based upon aggregate statistics alone. The enrollment process in traditional public schools differs significantly from enrollment of students in charter schools. In particular, charter schools are required by law to use a lottery process when admitting students; traditional public schools must accept all students who live within the municipality or region that they serve. It is important to note that student demographics for a charter school, particularly in the aggregate, will not reflect recruitment and retention efforts immediately; charter schools must give preference in enrollment to siblings of currently attending students and are permitted to limit the grades in which students may enter the school.

The charter school statute requires charter schools to develop and implement Recruitment and Retention Plans. Charter schools must receive Department approval for Recruitment and Retention Plans and must report on and update these plans annually. When deciding on charter renewal, the Commissioner and the Board consider the extent to which the school has followed its Recruitment and Retention plan by using deliberate, specific strategies to recruit and retain students from targeted subgroups; whether the school has enhanced its plan as necessary; and the annual attrition rate of students.

**Criterion 3: Compliance**

In order to assess whether the school has met its obligations and commitments under its charter, the Department monitors whether each school is operating in accordance with the provisions of the charter school statute and regulations and all other applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, required trainings and deadlines, and such additional guidance as the Department may from time to time establish. In each Summary of Review, the Department reflects where schools may have, from time to time, been out of compliance with these requirements.

The Summaries of Review do not provide a rating for Compliance. Due to the number of items required for a public school and charter school to be in compliance with state and federal regulations and guidance, the Department does not rate this category as a composite. The Department, however, does highlight areas of compliance that a school must address and provides oversight if and when schools’ charters are renewed. If a school’s failure to comply is significant or sustained, additional actions may be warranted including, but not limited to, imposing conditions on a school’s charter.

**Criterion 4: Dissemination**

Dissemination is required for renewal of charters of Commonwealth charter schools. The charter school statute requires charter schools to provide “models for replication and best practices . . . to other public schools in the district where the charter school is located.” G.L. c. 71, § 89(dd) (“a commonwealth charter shall not be renewed unless the board of trustees of the charter school has documented in a manner approved by the board that said commonwealth charter school has provided models for replication and best practices to the Commissioner and to other public schools in the district where the charter school is located”). The Department takes into consideration the age of the school for this requirement; schools in their first charter term are still in the process of developing best practices.

Because dissemination requires two willing partners, the Department also considers efforts made by the charter school to disseminate innovative models for replication and best practices to other schools, districts, and organizations beyond the district where the charter school is located. There are multiple forums and activities through which a charter school may disseminate effective practices. These include, but are not limited to:

* partnerships with other schools implementing key successful aspects of the charter school’s program,
* assisting with district turnaround efforts,
* sharing resources or programs developed at the charter school,
* hosting other educators at the charter school, and
* presenting at professional conferences about its innovative school practices.

**Criterion 5: Student Academic Performance**

Charter schools, like all public schools, must administer state assessments. Schools currently seeking renewal of their charters have administered a number of different statewide assessments during the past charter term. The Department has reviewed each charter school’s academic performance on the Legacy MCAS and Next Generation assessments in order to illustrate “progress made in student academic achievement” as required by the charter school statute at G.L. c. 71, § 89(dd). Likewise, during the past five years, as required by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, Massachusetts created a new statewide accountability system which went into effect in September 2018.

In November 2015, the Board voted to approve the development of Massachusetts's Next Generation MCAS assessment. Starting in the spring of 2017, Massachusetts public schools administered the Next Generation MCAS assessment to grades 3 through 8. Starting in the spring of 2019, Massachusetts public schools also administered the Next Generation English language arts (ELA) and mathematics MCAS assessments to students in grade 10. In spring 2019, grade 10 students continued to take the Legacy MCAS science assessment.

In September 2018, the Department introduced the results of its new statewide system of accountability aligned to requirements of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act. The Summaries of Review present the data and determinations made by the new statewide system of accountability. The data presented for charter school academic performance include each school’s historical data from statewide assessments administered in 2018 and 2019. Statewide assessments were not administered in spring 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Statewide assessments were administered in spring 2021, but results were not used to issue accountability determinations.

**Criterion 9: Governance**

The boards of trustees of charter schools are public agents authorized by the Commonwealth to supervise and control the charter school. G.L. c. 71, § 89(c). The regulations require renewal of a charter to be based upon “the viability of the school as an organization.” 603 CMR 1.11(2). The membership of boards of charter schools is tracked through the Department’s Board Member Management System, and the Department reviews and rates governance during accountability and renewal inspection visits. The Summary of Review reflects whether the board of a charter school has been active and engaged, fulfilled its legal responsibilities and fiduciary duties of care and loyalty, followed the board’s approved bylaws, and acted in the best interests of the school. A board’s established decision-making and communication processes must demonstrate appropriate oversight and that the board engaged in strategic and continuous improvement planning to ensure the sustainability of the school.

The dashboard summarizing the performance of the eight schools that I intend to renew follows.

**Summary of Performance[[1]](#footnote-2) and Intended Commissioner Action**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Area of Charter School Accountability** | **Criterion** | **Academy of the Pacific Rim Charter Public School** | **Brooke Charter School** | **Community Day Charter Public School- Gateway** | **Community Day Charter Public School- R. Kingman Webster** | **Global Learning Charter Public School** | **Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School** | **Pioneer Charter School of Science** | **Sizer School: A North Central Charter Essential School** |
| **Faithfulness to Charter** | Mission and Key Design Elements |  Meets |  Meets | **** Exceeds | **** Exceeds |  Meets |  Meets | **** Exceeds |  Meets |
| Access and Equity | **** Partially Meets | **** Partially Meets |  Meets |  Meets |  Meets |  Meets |  Meets | **** Partially Meets |
| Dissemination |  Meets |  Meets | **** Exceeds | **** Exceeds |  Meets |  Meets |  Meets |  Meets |
| **Academic Program Success** | Student Performance[[2]](#footnote-3) | Not requiring assistance or intervention47th percentile | Not requiring assistance or intervention96th percentile | Not requiring assistance or intervention86th percentile | Not requiring assistance or intervention87th percentile | Not requiring assistance or intervention45th percentile | Not requiring assistance or intervention51st percentile | Not requiring assistance or intervention86th percentile | Not requiring assistance or intervention17th percentile |
| **Organizational Viability** | Governance |  Meets |  Meets | **** Partially Meets | **** Partially Meets |  Meets |  Meets |  Meets | **** Partially Meets |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Intended Commissioner Action** | Unconditional Renewal | Unconditional Renewal | Unconditional Renewal | Unconditional Renewal | Unconditional Renewal | Unconditional Renewal | Unconditional Renewal | Remove Condition; Unconditional Renewal |

**Academy of the Pacific Rim Charter Public School**

| **Academy of the Pacific Rim Charter Public School** |
| --- |
| **Type of Charter** | Commonwealth  | **Location** | Boston |
| **Regional or Non-Regional** | Non-Regional | **Districts in Region** | N/A |
| **Year Opened** | 1997 | **Year(s) Renewed** | 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017 |
| **Maximum Enrollment** | 545 | **Current Enrollment** | 510 (October 2021) |
| **Chartered Grade Span** | 5-12 | **Current Grade Span** | 5-12 |
| **Students on Waitlist** | 528 (March 2021) | **Current Age of School** | 25 |
| **Mission Statement:** To empower urban students of all racial and ethnic backgrounds to achieve their full intellectual and social potential by combining the best of the East – high standards, discipline and character education – with the best of the West – a commitment to individualism, creativity and diversity. |

During its fifth charter term, Academy of the Pacific Rim Charter Public School (APR) has demonstrated progress in student achievement.[[3]](#footnote-4) In 2019, APR was classified as not requiring assistance or intervention.[[4]](#footnote-5) According to the statewide accountability system, the school made substantial progress toward targets and is in the 47th percentile when compared to other schools administering similar assessments.

During the charter term, the school has been faithful to the terms of its charter. The school is faithful to its mission and implements its key design elements. In 2018-19, the school reported that it met a majority of the goals in its Accountability Plan. The school reported that it did not meet a majority of the goals in its Accountability Plan in 2020-21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The school implemented an approved Recruitment and Retention Plan and has disseminated its best practices to other public schools in its district and across the state.

The school’s rates of out-of-school suspension, however, are of moderate concern. During the charter term, the school consistently assigned students to out-of-school suspension at rates higher than the third quartile for comparison schools.[[5]](#footnote-6) The school has taken steps to reduce discipline rates, including redesigning its approach to discipline to incorporate more restorative practices. Rates of out-of-school suspension steadily declined during the charter term.

Throughout the charter term, members of the APR board of trustees have been active and engaged in their roles as public agents, providing competent and appropriate governance and oversight of the school.

Given all of the evidence, I intend to renew the charter of APR.

**Brooke Charter School**

| **Brooke Charter School**  |
| --- |
| **Type of Charter** | Commonwealth | **Location** | Boston |
| **Regional or Non-Regional** | Regional | **Districts in Region** | Boston and Chelsea |
| **Year Opened** | 2002 | **Year(s) Renewed** | 2007, 2012, 2017 |
| **Maximum Enrollment** | 2,221 (with a limit of 1,960 from Boston) | **Current Enrollment** | 2,145 (1,792 from Boston) (October 2021) |
| **Chartered Grade Span** | K-12 | **Current Grade Span** | K-12 |
| **Students on Waitlist** | 2,752 (March 2021) | **Current Age of School** | 20 |
| **Mission Statement:** To provide an academically rigorous public education to students from the cities of Boston and Chelsea that will ensure that they are prepared to enter into and succeed in college. |

During its fourth charter term, Brooke Charter School (Brooke) has demonstrated progress in student achievement.[[6]](#footnote-7) In 2019, Brooke was classified as not requiring assistance or intervention.[[7]](#footnote-8) According to the statewide accountability system, the school exceeded targets and is in the 96th percentile when compared to other schools administering similar assessments.

During the charter term, the school has been faithful to the terms of its charter. The school is faithful to its mission and implements its key design elements. The school reported that it did not meet a majority of the goals in its Accountability Plan. The school set ambitious goals and fell just short of meeting several of them during the charter term. The school implemented an approved Recruitment and Retention Plan and has disseminated its best practices to other public schools in its district, across the state, and outside the state.

The school’s rates of out-of-school suspension, however, are of moderate concern. During the charter term, the school consistently assigned students to out-of-school suspension at rates higher than the third quartile for comparison schools.[[8]](#footnote-9) The school has taken steps to reduce discipline rates, including making changes to the discipline policy to limit the types of behaviors that result in suspensions. Rates of out-of-school suspension steadily declined during the charter term.

Throughout the charter term, members of the Brooke board of trustees have been active and engaged in their roles as public agents, providing competent and appropriate governance and oversight of the school.

Given all of the evidence, I intend to renew the charter of Brooke.

**Community Day Charter Public School - Gateway**

| **Community Day Charter Public School-Gateway** |
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| **Type of Charter** | Commonwealth | **Location** | Lawrence |
| **Regional or Non-Regional** | Non-Regional | **Districts in Region** | N/A |
| **Year Opened** | 2012 | **Year(s) Renewed** | 2017 |
| **Maximum Enrollment** | 400 | **Current Enrollment** | 401 (October 2021) |
| **Chartered Grade Span** | PK-8 | **Current Grade Span** | PK-8 |
| **Students on Waitlist** | 608 (March 2021) | **Current Age of School** | 10 |
| **Mission Statement:** The mission of Community Day Charter Public Schools is to provide a kindergarten through grade eight school that will draw upon our considerable experience in working together as a community to develop and implement a curriculum that discovers and supports the special characteristics and unique learning styles of each student. We will engage that student in meaningful learning experiences for the purposes of clearly stated goals in the areas of understandings, knowledge, skills, habits, and social competencies. The school will reinforce the positive aspects of our city: its culture, art and economy, working class history, and strong work ethic. Our educational philosophy, curriculum, and teaching methods are informed by an understanding that learning takes place in the context of family and that family must be supported in ways that make learning for the child possible. |

During its second charter term, Community Day Charter Public School-Gateway (Gateway) has demonstrated progress in student achievement.[[9]](#footnote-10) In 2019, Gateway was classified as not requiring assistance or intervention.[[10]](#footnote-11) According to the statewide accountability system, the school made substantial progress toward targets and is in the 86th percentile when compared to other schools administering similar assessments.

During the charter term, the school has been faithful to the terms of its charter. The school is faithful to its mission and implements its key design elements, providing an exemplary program that supports the needs of all students, draws on the strengths of the community, and leads to strong academic outcomes. The school reported that it met a majority of the goals in its Accountability Plan. The school implemented an approved Recruitment and Retention Plan and has disseminated its best practices in an exemplary manner to other public schools in its district and across the state.

Members of the school’s board of trustees have been active and engaged in fulfilling many of their responsibilities. The board demonstrates generally competent and appropriate oversight of the school’s financial health, administration, and alignment with the mission. The board, however, has provided inconsistent oversight of the school’s academic performance and limited oversight of the performance of The Community Group (TCG, the school’s educational management organization) and the school’s selection, hiring, evaluation, and termination of network administrators. The board of trustees fosters a culture of collaboration but engages in limited strategic and continuous improvement planning. Department staff plan to work with the school to ensure that the school’s board of trustees addresses areas of concern.

Given all of the evidence, I intend to renew the charter of Gateway.

**Community Day Charter Public School - R. Kingman Webster**

| **Community Day Charter Public School-R. Kingman Webster** |
| --- |
| **Type of Charter** | Commonwealth | Location | Lawrence |
| **Regional or Non-Regional** | Non-Regional | Districts in Region | N/A |
| **Year Opened** | 2012 | Year(s) Renewed | 2017 |
| **Maximum Enrollment** | 400 | **Current Enrollment** | 394 (October 2021) |
| **Chartered Grade Span** | PK-8 | **Current Grade Span** | PK-8 |
| **Students on Waitlist** | 608 (March 2021) | **Current Age of School** | 10 |
| **Mission Statement:** The mission of Community Day Charter Public Schools is to provide a kindergarten through grade eight school that will draw upon our considerable experience in working together as a community to develop and implement a curriculum that discovers and supports the special characteristics and unique learning styles of each student. We will engage that student in meaningful learning experiences for the purposes of clearly stated goals in the areas of understandings, knowledge, skills, habits, and social competencies. The school will reinforce the positive aspects of our city: its culture, art and economy, working class history, and strong work ethic. Our educational philosophy, curriculum, and teaching methods are informed by an understanding that learning takes place in the context of family and that family must be supported in ways that make learning for the child possible. |

During its second charter term, Community Day Charter Public School - R. Kingman Webster (Webster) has demonstrated progress in student achievement.[[11]](#footnote-12) In 2019, Webster was classified as not requiring assistance or intervention.[[12]](#footnote-13) According to the statewide accountability system, the school met or exceeded targets and is in the 87th percentile when compared to other schools administering similar assessments.

During the charter term, the school has been faithful to the terms of its charter. The school is faithful to its mission and implements its key design elements, providing an exemplary program that supports the needs of all students, draws on the strengths of the community, and leads to strong academic outcomes. Webster was named a National Blue Ribbon School in 2019. The school reported that it met a majority of the goals in its Accountability Plan. The school implemented an approved Recruitment and Retention Plan and has disseminated its best practices in an exemplary manner to other public schools in its district and across the state.

Members of the school’s board of trustees have been active and engaged in fulfilling many of their responsibilities. The board demonstrates generally competent and appropriate oversight of the school’s financial health, administration, and alignment with the mission. The board, however, provides inconsistent oversight of the school’s academic performance and limited oversight of the performance of TCG and the school’s selection, hiring, evaluation, and termination of network administrators. The board of trustees fosters a culture of collaboration but engages in limited strategic and continuous improvement planning. Department staff plan to work with the school to ensure that the school’s board of trustees addresses areas of concern.

Given all of the evidence, I intend to renew the charter of Webster.

**Global Learning Charter Public School**

| **Global Learning Charter Public School** |
| --- |
| **Type of Charter** | Commonwealth | **Location** | New Bedford |
| **Regional or Non-Regional** | Non-Regional | **Districts in Region** | N/A |
| **Year Opened** | 2007 | **Year(s) Renewed** | 2012, 2017 |
| **Maximum Enrollment** | 500 | **Current Enrollment** | 504 (October 2021) |
| **Chartered Grade Span** | 5-12 | **Current Grade Span** | 5-12 |
| **Students on Waitlist** | 164 (March 2021) | **Current Age of School** | 15 |
| **Mission Statement:** The mission of Global Learning Charter Public School is to ensure that all students achieve academic excellence, are ready for the rigors of higher education, and master essential skills that prepare them for the economic, social and civic challenges of a 21st century, global society. Our central mission is to teach and inspire the mind, body, and spirit of our students so that they can succeed in any cultural or academic setting. |

During its third charter term, Global Learning Charter Public School (GLCPS) has demonstrated progress in student achievement.[[13]](#footnote-14) In 2019, GLCPS was classified as not requiring assistance or intervention.[[14]](#footnote-15) According to the statewide accountability system, the school made substantial progress toward targets and is in the 45th percentile when compared to other schools administering similar assessments.

During the charter term, the school has been faithful to the terms of its charter. The school is faithful to its mission and implements its key design elements. In 2019-20, the school reported that it met a majority of the goals in its Accountability Plan. The school reported that it did not meet a majority of the goals in its Accountability Plan in 2020-21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The school implemented an approved Recruitment and Retention Plan and has disseminated its best practices to other public schools in its district, across the state, and outside the state.

Throughout the charter term, members of the GLCPS board of trustees have been active and engaged in their roles as public agents, providing competent and appropriate governance and oversight of the school.

Given all of the evidence, I intend to renew the charter of GLCPS.

**Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School**

| **Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School**  |
| --- |
| **Type of Charter** | Commonwealth  | **Location** | Sturbridge |
| **Regional or Non-Regional** | Regional | **Districts in Region** | Brimfield, Brookfield, Holland, Monson, North Brookfield, Palmer, Southbridge, Spencer-East Brookfield, Sturbridge, Tantasqua, Wales, and Webster |
| **Year Opened** | 2017 | **Year(s) Renewed** | N/A |
| **Maximum Enrollment** | 360 | **Current Enrollment** | 320 (October 2021) |
| **Chartered Grade Span** | K-8 | **Current Grade Span** | K-7 |
| **Students on Waitlist** | 297 (March 2021) | **Current Age of School** | 5 |
| **Mission Statement:** Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School will provide K-8 students with rigorous, real world learning experiences in a supportive and nurturing school community, helping all students to become reflective inquisitors, articulate communicators, critical thinkers, and skilled problem solvers. Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School, an EL Education school working in partnership with Old Sturbridge Village, will foster a learning environment that represents all aspects of the diversity spectrum where our students will meet or exceed grade-level expectations in all subject areas. The school will be distinguished by four key elements of EL Education: a commitment to community, a commitment to high-quality work, a commitment to real-world applications, and a commitment to imagination, exploration, and immersion. A culture of quality will permeate the school and our students will graduate with an understanding of how they learn best and how to advocate for the resources they need when they are challenged. |

During its first charter term, Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School (OSACPS) has demonstrated progress in student achievement.[[15]](#footnote-16) In 2019, OSACPS was classified as not requiring assistance or intervention.[[16]](#footnote-17) According to the statewide accountability system, the school made substantial progress toward targets and is in the 51st percentile when compared to other schools administering similar assessments.

During the charter term, the school has been faithful to the terms of its charter. The school is faithful to its mission and implements its key design elements. The school reported that it met a majority of the goals in its Accountability Plan. The school implemented an approved Recruitment and Retention Plan and has disseminated its best practices to other public schools in its district and across the state.

Throughout the charter term, members of the OSACPS board of trustees have been active and engaged in their roles as public agents, providing competent and appropriate governance and oversight of the school.

Given all of the evidence, I intend to renew the charter of OSACPS.

**Pioneer Charter School of Science**

| **Pioneer Charter School of Science** |
| --- |
| **Type of Charter** | Commonwealth | **Location** | Everett |
| **Regional or Non-Regional** | Regional | **Districts in Region** | Chelsea, Everett, and Revere |
| **Year Opened** | 2007 | **Year(s) Renewed** | 2012, 2017 |
| **Maximum Enrollment** | 780 (with a limit of 400 from Everett) | **Current Enrollment** | 775 (279 from Everett) (October 2021) |
| **Chartered Grade Span** | K-12 | **Current Grade Span** | K-12 |
| **Students on Waitlist** | 966 (March 2021) | **Current Age of School** | 15 |
| **Mission Statement:** The mission of Pioneer Charter School of Science (PCSS) is to prepare educationally under-resourced students in Chelsea, Everett, and Revere for today’s competitive world. PCSS will help them develop the academic and social skills necessary to become successful professionals and exemplary members of their community. This goal will be achieved by providing the students with a rigorous academic curriculum with emphasis on math and science, balanced by a strong foundation in the humanities, a character education program, career-oriented college preparation, and strong student–teacher–parent collaboration. |

During its third charter term, Pioneer Charter School of Science (PCSS) has demonstrated progress in student achievement.[[17]](#footnote-18) In 2019, PCSS was classified as not requiring assistance or intervention.[[18]](#footnote-19) According to the statewide accountability system, the school met or exceeded targets and is in the 86th percentile when compared to other schools administering similar assessments.

During the charter term, the school has been faithful to the terms of its charter. The school is faithful to its mission and implements its key design elements. The school provides a rigorous academic curriculum with an emphasis on mathematics and science and fosters strong collaboration among students, teachers, and parents. The school reported that it met a majority of the goals in its Accountability Plan. The school implemented an approved Recruitment and Retention Plan and has disseminated its best practices to other public schools in its district, across the state, and outside the state.

Throughout the charter term, members of the PCSS board of trustees have been active and engaged in their roles as public agents, providing competent and appropriate governance and oversight of the school.

Given all of the evidence, I intend to renew the charter of PCSS.

**Sizer School: A North Central Charter Essential School**

| **Sizer School: A North Central Charter Essential School** |
| --- |
| **Type of Charter** | Commonwealth | **Location** | Fitchburg |
| **Regional or Non-Regional** | Regional | **Districts in Region** | Ashburnham-Westminster, Clinton, Fitchburg, Gardner, Leominster, Lunenburg, Nashoba, North Middlesex, and Wachusett |
| **Year Opened** | 2002 | **Year(s) Renewed** | 2007, 2012, 2017 |
| **Maximum Enrollment** | 400 | **Current Enrollment** | 350 (October 2021) |
| **Chartered Grade Span** | 7-12 | **Current Grade Span** | 7-12 |
| **Students on Waitlist** | 5 (March 2021) | **Current Age of School** | 20 |
| **Mission Statement:** Sizer School, a North Central Charter Essential School, is a public school where students are known personally, challenged intellectually, and participate actively in their learning. Guided by its commitment to diversity and inclusiveness, the school seeks to send graduates into the world who THINK for themselves, CARE about others, and ACT creatively and responsibly. |

During its fourth charter term, Sizer School: A North Central Charter Essential School (Sizer) has demonstrated progress in student achievement.[[19]](#footnote-20) In 2019, Sizer was classified as not requiring assistance or intervention.[[20]](#footnote-21) According to the statewide accountability system, the school made moderate progress toward targets and is in the 17th percentile when compared to other schools administering similar assessments. In 2018, the school was in the 13th percentile.

During the charter term, the school has been faithful to the terms of its charter. The school is faithful to its mission and implements its key design elements. The school reported that it met a majority of the goals in its Accountability Plan. The school implemented an approved Recruitment and Retention Plan and has disseminated its best practices to other public schools in its district and across the state. In 2017, Sizer’s charter was renewed with a condition to reduce its enrollment of students from outside its chartered region below 20 percent, as required by the charter school statute, G.L. c. 71, § 89(n). The school met this condition related to enrollment. In fiscal year (FY) 2020, Sizer’s enrollment from the chartered region was 86 percent; in FY21 it was 85 percent, and in FY22 it was 91 percent.

Student attrition is an area of moderate concern. During the charter term, the rate of attrition for all students was consistently above the third quartile in relation to comparison schools.[[21]](#footnote-22) Most attrition takes place after grade 8. According to the school, students have attractive options in the area for the high school grades. The rate of attrition declined during the charter term, and the school reports it is committed to strengthening the school’s program, culture, and community in order to further reduce attrition.

The school’s rates of out-of-school suspension are also an area of moderate concern. During the charter term, the school consistently assigned students to out-of-school suspension at rates higher than the third quartile for comparison schools. The school has participated in the Department’s Rethinking Discipline Professional Learning Network (RD PLN) since 2016. The RD PLN works to reduce the inappropriate or excessive use of long-term suspensions and expulsions, including disproportional rates of suspensions for students with disabilities and students of color. The school has taken steps to reduce discipline rates and disparities, including revising its discipline model and increasing communication with families about student behavior. Rates of out-of-school suspension declined during the charter term.

Throughout the charter term, members of the Sizer board have been active and involved in their roles as public agents. Board members have fulfilled most of their legal responsibilities and obligations and have provided appropriate governance and oversight of the school’s administration, financial health, and alignment with the mission. The board, however, has provided somewhat limited oversight of the school’s academic performance. Department staff plan to work with the school to ensure that the school’s board of trustees addresses areas of concern.

Given all of the evidence, I intend to renew the charter of Sizer and to remove the condition from the school’s charter.

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If you have any questions regarding my intended actions, require additional information, or would like a copy of any Summaries of Review, please contact Alison Bagg, Director (781-338-3218); Cliff Chuang, Senior Associate Commissioner (781-338-3222); or me.

1. Rating Key follows.

**Exceeds:** The school fully and consistently meets the criterion and is a potential exemplar in this area.

**Meets:** The school generally meets the criterion and/or minor concern(s) are noted.

**Partially Meets:** The school meets some aspects of the criterion but not others and/or moderate concern(s) are noted.

**Falls Far Below:** The school falls far below the criterion and/or significant concerns are noted. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Accountability information represents determinations from 2019. The Department did not issue accountability determinations for the 2019-20 school year due to the cancellation of state assessments and school closures related to COVID-19. The Department also did not issue accountability determinations in 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. The Department has reviewed each charter school’s academic performance on the Legacy MCAS and Next Generation assessments in order to illustrate “progress made in student academic achievement” as required by the charter school statute at G.L. c. 71, § 89(dd). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. The Department did not issue school, district, or state accountability determinations for 2020 due to the cancellation of state assessments and school closures related to COVID-19. The Department also did not issue accountability determinations in 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Comparison schools include all of the public schools in the charter school’s district or region (if the school is a regional school) that serve at least one grade level of students that overlaps with the grade levels served by the charter school. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. The Department has reviewed each charter school’s academic performance on the Legacy MCAS and Next Generation assessments in order to illustrate “progress made in student academic achievement” as required by the charter school statute at G.L. c. 71, § 89(dd). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. The Department did not issue school, district, or state accountability determinations for 2020 due to the cancellation of state assessments and school closures related to COVID-19. The Department also did not issue accountability determinations in 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Comparison schools include all of the public schools in the charter school’s district or region (if the school is a regional school) that serve at least one grade level of students that overlaps with the grade levels served by the charter school. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. The Department has reviewed each charter school’s academic performance on the Legacy MCAS and Next Generation assessments in order to illustrate “progress made in student academic achievement” as required by the charter school statute at G.L. c. 71, § 89(dd). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. The Department did not issue school, district, or state accountability determinations for 2020 due to the cancellation of state assessments and school closures related to COVID-19. The Department also did not issue accountability determinations in 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. The Department has reviewed each charter school’s academic performance on the Legacy MCAS and Next Generation assessments in order to illustrate “progress made in student academic achievement” as required by the charter school statute at G.L. c. 71, § 89(dd). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. The Department did not issue school, district, or state accountability determinations for 2020 due to the cancellation of state assessments and school closures related to COVID-19. The Department also did not issue accountability determinations in 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. The Department has reviewed each charter school’s academic performance on the Legacy MCAS and Next Generation assessments in order to illustrate “progress made in student academic achievement” as required by the charter school statute at G.L. c. 71, § 89(dd). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. The Department did not issue school, district, or state accountability determinations for 2020 due to the cancellation of state assessments and school closures related to COVID-19. The Department also did not issue accountability determinations in 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. The Department has reviewed each charter school’s academic performance on the Legacy MCAS and Next Generation assessments in order to illustrate “progress made in student academic achievement” as required by the charter school statute at G.L. c. 71, § 89(dd). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. The Department did not issue school, district, or state accountability determinations for 2020 due to the cancellation of state assessments and school closures related to COVID-19. The Department also did not issue accountability determinations in 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. The Department has reviewed each charter school’s academic performance on the Legacy MCAS and Next Generation assessments in order to illustrate “progress made in student academic achievement” as required by the charter school statute at G.L. c. 71, § 89(dd). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. The Department did not issue school, district, or state accountability determinations for 2020 due to the cancellation of state assessments and school closures related to COVID-19. The Department also did not issue accountability determinations in 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. The Department has reviewed each charter school’s academic performance on the Legacy MCAS and Next Generation assessments in order to illustrate “progress made in student academic achievement” as required by the charter school statute at G.L. c. 71, § 89(dd). [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. The Department did not issue school, district, or state accountability determinations for 2020 due to the cancellation of state assessments and school closures related to COVID-19. The Department also did not issue accountability determinations in 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. Comparison schools include all of the public schools in the charter school’s district or region (if the school is a regional school) that serve at least one grade level of students that overlaps with the grade levels served by the charter school. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)