

**V.E.**

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Hartford**

**TO BE PROPOSED:**

May 2, 2018

**RESOLVED**, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (g) of Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes, renews the charter of Stamford Academy from July 1, 2018, through June 30, 2019, subject to the Commissioner's May 2, 2018, memorandum to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Approved by a vote of \_\_\_\_\_, this second day of May, Two Thousand Eighteen.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Secretary  
State Board of Education

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Hartford**

**TO:** State Board of Education

**FROM:** Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner of Education

**DATE:** May 2, 2018

**SUBJECT:** Renewal of State Charter – Stamford Academy, Stamford

**Executive Summary**

**Introduction**

In accordance with subsection (g) of Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.), charters may be renewed, upon application, in accordance with the provisions for the granting of new charters. The State Board of Education (SBE) may renew a charter for a period of up to five years. The SBE makes renewal decisions based on evidence of the following performance standards:

1. *School Performance:* Is the school a successful model resulting in strong student outcomes and a positive school climate?
2. *Stewardship, Governance and Management:* Is the school financially and organizationally healthy and viable?
3. *Student Population:* Is the school promoting equity by effectively attracting, enrolling and retaining students, particularly among targeted populations?
4. *Legal Compliance:* Is the school acting in compliance with applicable laws and regulations?

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) and the SBE carefully evaluate qualitative and quantitative evidence, and longitudinal data aligned to the four performance standards outlined above when making charter renewal decisions. The charter performance framework drives the CSDE's charter school accountability systems and processes, including initial approval decisions, annual monitoring and renewal determinations. From inception to renewal, charter schools must abide by the CSDE's charter school accountability procedures and performance framework. Charter monitoring takes place through annual reporting, meetings, correspondence and site visits, as appropriate. In accordance with C.G.S. § 10-66bb(g), a charter may be renewed upon application, if the charter school has demonstrated satisfactory performance relative to the four performance standards.

## **History/Background**

Stamford Academy (SA) opened in the fall of 2004 and serves 147 students in grades 9-12, 80 percent reside in Stamford (the host district), 17 percent reside in Bridgeport and the remaining students come from three area towns. Table 1, on page 15, of the attached Charter Renewal Report provides 2016-17 student enrollment and demographic data. 88.5 percent of SA's students qualify for free or reduced price meals and 28.4 percent of the students receive special education services. SA's mission states, in part, to "...re-engage and guide students in acknowledging and developing their educational strengths while acquiring the skills to contribute positively to themselves and their community." The school seeks and attracts students who have not been successful in the traditional school setting. The profile for the average SA student involves a history of the juvenile justice system and/or Department of Children and Families involvement, truancy, attendance issues, behavioral challenges and mental health needs.

Historically, students enter SA under credited and below grade level achievement in literacy and numeracy. On average, according to its STAR benchmark assessments, SA's students enter three or more grade levels behind in reading and mathematics. To address student needs, the school utilizes small class sizes for increased individualized attention. Through the Sanctuary Model and restorative justice models, teachers are trained to mediate and address student behavioral issues and provide incentives to students for good behavior. The school employs a part-time social worker and two full-time special education teachers to serve students and their needs.

In May 6, 2015, the school received a three-year charter renewal with probation due to SA not adequately demonstrating student progress and having high rates of student chronic absenteeism and student suspensions. As part of the shortened renewal period and probation, the school submitted a corrective action plan to remedy the issues.

To address student performance and strengthen its educational program, the school contracted with a private education consulting firm. Over the last three years, the firm has supported the school in the following areas: curriculum and assessment design, classroom coaching, leadership coaching and professional development. To improve chronic absenteeism and student retention, the school employs Family Advocates, which review daily attendance and make calls home when students are absent or tardy, and review student attendance data for changes in attendance. To address student social and emotional needs the school conducts a detailed intake assessment, trauma assessment, and creation of student success plans with individualized student driven goals around attendance, behavior, and academics.

Despite these efforts, since its last renewal in 2015, the school has not adequately demonstrated student progress or improved chronic absenteeism. SA was identified by the CSDE in March 2016 as a Category 5 Turnaround school. A Category 5 Turnaround school is a school that is among the lowest performing schools in Connecticut, identified in 2014-15 and remains on the list in 2016-17. The school has not met participation rate thresholds on state testing in ELA and Mathematics over the last three years 2016-17. As no students met proficiency on the 2016-17 SAT, the school received no performance index points on sections 1a - 2d of the Next Generation Accountability Report. SA's 2016-17 Accountability Index is among the lowest in the state and has remained so over the last three years.

The school culture and climate data (Table 2) indicate the school has serious student attendance and retention issues. SA's average daily attendance rate of 57.6 percent in 2016-17 falls well below the state goal of 95.0 percent and has decreased from 68.0 percent in 2014-15. Its chronic absenteeism rate of 97.5 percent in 2016-17 is among the highest in the state, and has increased from 86.6 percent in 2014-15. This has been an ongoing issue at the school in the face of repeated attempts to effectively address this area of concern. Table 2 also shows that student mobility has been high at the school over the last two years. In 2016-17, 51 students or 34 percent left during the school year, in 2015-16, 46 students or 28.0 percent left during the school year.

## **Charter Renewal Process**

*Application for Renewal of Charter:* The CSDE accepted an application for the renewal of SA's charter on October 20, 2017. The application detailed the charter school's progress, operations, and achievement in relation to the CSDE's charter school performance standards: (a) school performance; (b) stewardship, governance and management; (c) student population; and (d) legal compliance. SA submitted data and evidence to substantiate the charter school's written responses.

A renewal team comprised of CSDE staff with expertise in curriculum, assessments, special education, English learners, school management, finance, and school governance reviewed the renewal application and requested clarification and additional information, where necessary.

*Renewal Site Visit:* On December 12, 2017, the CSDE renewal team conducted an on-site visit at SA. The purpose of the on-site visit was to observe SA's programs, policies, practices, and procedures to assess their efficacy and fidelity to the school's charter and aligned operating systems. On January 24, 2018, the CSDE conducted an unannounced site visit to the school to make classroom visits and renew student attendance. Evidence was collected through the on-site visit observations, document reviews, interviews, and focus groups. The team spoke with board members, administrators, staff, parents, and community members. The team used this process to ensure that the school is functioning in compliance with the law and the school's mission. The team verified the responses detailed in the renewal application regarding compliance with the law and the CSDE's performance framework and accountability plan.

*Invitation for Written Comment:* The CSDE solicited written comments on the renewal of SA from the Superintendent of Stamford Public Schools and from contiguous school districts: Darien, Greenwich, and New Canaan. The CSDE received two letters one from the Superintendent of Greenwich and one from New Canaan, both indicated they have no affiliation or students attending the school and have no comment on its renewal (see Attachments A and B).

*Public Hearing:* Allan B. Taylor, Chairperson of the SBE, and CSDE staff held a public hearing on November 16, 2017, in the city of Stamford, and heard from 31 individuals on the potential charter renewal of SA and the impact it is having on the community. Public hearing participants included members of the SA community, including family members, students, school staff and community members. Over 80 people attended the public hearing. Thirty-one individuals offered testimony supporting the school's efforts and the renewal of the charter. No one spoke out against the renewal of the school's charter.

## **Site Visit Findings**

The most recent available data and information contained in the Charter Renewal Report and Next Generation Accountability Report 2016-17 (see attached), indicates SA's performance according to the four performance standards. The report highlights school strengths and areas for continued growth.

### **Strengths include:**

- No significant findings, conditions, or internal weaknesses were uncovered in SA's last three certified financial audits.
- School website and Governing Board documents demonstrate that the Governing Board meetings are open and accessible to the public.
- SA has decreased its suspension rate by 18.0 percentage points, from 30.4 percent in 2014-15 to 12.4 percent in 2016-17.

### **Areas of concern include:**

- SA's 2016-17 Accountability Index stands at 29.2, extremely low in comparison to the state which is 73.2 percent.
- SA's 2016-17 Four-Year Graduation Rate for all students is 28.3 percent, compared to the state's, which is 87.4 percent.
- SA's 2016-17 Six-Year Graduation Rate for high needs students is 44.4 percent, compared to the state's, which is 82.0 percent.
- The school did not meet the 2016-17 Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) participation rate threshold in any category.
- No SA student met proficiency targets on the 2016-17 SAT in English Language Arts (ELA).
- No SA student met proficiency targets on the 2016-17 SAT in Mathematics.
- The average daily attendance rate of students in 2016-17 of 57.6 percent is well below the state goal of 95 percent and has dropped from 68.0 percent in 2014-15.
- The student chronic absenteeism rate of 97.5 percent in 2016-17 is almost ten times the state average of 9.9 percent and has increased from 86.6 percent in 2014-15.
- A review of the Dean of School Culture/ Dean of Students job description has determined that the position is responsible for duties that require certification, the position is currently filled by non-certified staff.
- The school currently has a waitlist of 10 students.

## **Charter Renewal Recommendation**

The pervasiveness of poor student achievement and high chronic absenteeism raises serious concerns about the schools ability to positively impact the skill deficits of the student body. On average, 42.4 percent of the students are not in attendance at the school on any given day, close to 100 percent of its students are chronically absent and roughly, a third of its students may decide to leave during the school year. Stamford Academy has been in operation for 14 years, working with high need, high-risk populations and should have a well-developed program that gets its students to school on a daily basis so students have an opportunity to address their skill deficits and demonstrate student achievement. The data shows quite the contrary.

SA must focus on providing increased services in the development of foundational skills as evidenced by the severe deficits in student achievement. SA must seek out and pay for relevant technical assistance to develop a corrective plan focusing on student achievement:

- Implementation of a comprehensive assessment plan with continued usage of pre- and post-assessment of basic skills. The pre-assessment will indicate whether future diagnostic testing is required and the level of intervention that is necessary to improve student achievement. The post assessment will provide evidence of the rate of growth, determine student competency, and the achievement of growth targets.
- Decision making that is data driven involving student growth and performance relative to peers. The data will help inform long-range goals, instruction, and efficacy of interventions for each student.
- Adjustment of school schedule to provide additional targeted, intensive 1:1 Literacy and Mathematics intervention to ensure students learn to read, do arithmetic and higher level Mathematics for the neediest students. This time needs to be in addition to the core Mathematics and English language arts instruction.
- Incorporation of skills-based scientific, research-based instruction and interventions on decoding, fluency, and numeracy in order to increase students' achievement levels in reading and mathematics.
- Utilization of high interest/low readability texts in multiple content areas that are matched to students' independent reading level/Lexile score to enable practice of reading more fluently, therefore increasing comprehension. While not sufficient to remediate students' reading problems, it will engage students in course content.
- Continued evaluation and revamping of curricular materials, instructional strategies and practices to ensure alignment to the Connecticut Core Standards and the inherent level of rigor. Specific efforts need to focus on differentiation in order to support student access to content.
- Professional development focused on Early Literacy and Mathematics.

Based on Stamford Academy's performance indicators and acknowledging the students served and its mission, the CSDE recommends that the SBE renew the school's charter for a period of one year, with the knowledge that pursuant to subsection (h) of Sec. 10-66bb, of the C.G.S., the Commissioner will place SA on probation and require the charter school to file a corrective action plan within the statutorily-prescribed timelines.

While the Commissioner recommends the renewal of SA form July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019, the Commissioner's letter of probation, separate from this action, will include the following provisions:

1. By May 7, 2018, as required by C.G.S. § 10-66bb(h), the Commissioner shall provide written notice to SA of the length and reasons for probation.
2. By May 7, 2018, as required by C.G.S. § 10-66bb(h), the Commissioner shall notify parents and guardians of students attending the school of the probationary status and the reasons for such status.
3. By June 5, 2018, SA shall submit a plan for CSDE review and approval to minimize behavioral incidents resulting in suspensions and by adopting a restorative discipline model for the school including: (a) pre-teaching and re-teaching expected behaviors; (b) isolating the root causes of behavioral issues; (c) identifying interventions to target root causes; (d) strengthening school behavior/school climate policies and procedures; (e) monitoring interventions, and applying midcourse corrections, as necessary; (f) establishing suspension targets to ensure dramatic improvement; and (g) detailed plans to engage school stakeholders, particularly parents, teachers and administrators, in developing a corrective action. Additionally, SA shall submit its year-to-date number of suspensions, and the concentration of students with one or more suspension to the CSDE twice annually, once in September via the annual reporting process and again at the midyear in January. SA shall implement the corrective actions within thirty days following the Commissioner's acceptance of the plan.
4. By June 5, 2018, SA shall submit a corrective action plan acceptable to the Commissioner. The corrective action plan must target and address chronic absenteeism by: (a) isolating the root causes of chronic absenteeism; (b) identifying interventions to target root causes; and (c) monitoring interventions and applying midcourse corrections, as necessary. SA shall implement the corrective actions within thirty days following the Commissioner's acceptance of the plan.
5. By June 5, 2018, SA shall submit a corrective action plan acceptable to the Commissioner. The corrective action plan must include measures to improve student academic achievement. SA shall implement the corrective actions within thirty days following the Commissioner's acceptance of the plan.
6. CSDE will, on a monthly basis, review and monitor SA's year-to-date number of suspensions and students at or approaching chronic absenteeism.
7. CSDE will conduct an interim site visit in August and November of 2018, and February of 2019 to review academic progress, and monitor year-to-date number of suspensions and students at or approaching chronic absenteeism.
8. In the spring of 2019, SA will be required to appear before the State Board of Education to give an update on the status of SA's probation and for the State Board of Education to determine the renewal of the school.

The CSDE will notify SA of action taken by the SBE following its meeting on May 2, 2018. The CSDE will conduct follow-up visits to ensure that SA is addressing the issues raised in this memorandum.

Prepared by: Robert E. Kelly, Charter School Program Manager  
Turnaround Office

Approved by: Desi D. Nesmith, Chief Turnaround Officer  
Turnaround Office

## CHARTER RENEWAL REPORT | 2018

Charter School Information:		
Charter School Name:	Stamford Academy (SA)	
School Director:	Andrea Weller	
School Board Chairperson:	Noah Lapine	
Location (City/Town):	Stamford	
Rating Key:		
<b>Meets</b>	The school demonstrates effective policies and practices, resulting in positive outcomes.	
<b>Pending Action</b>	The school requires minor modifications to its policies and/or practices. The school is taking satisfactory measures to remedy and address these issues in a timely manner.	
<b>Does Not Meet</b>	The schools falls below performance expectations with significant concerns noted, which require immediate attention and intervention.	
Standard 1: School Performance Indicators	Points/Max	% Points Earned
Accountability Index:	189.9/650	29.2
Notes and Evidence:		
<p>The 2016-17 SA Accountability Index score of 29.2 is below average when compared to the state school Accountability Index score of 73.2. Schools that meet Standard 1: School Performance Indicators are schools earning an accountability index score that is in the state’s top three quartiles. SA’s accountability score of 29.2 places its performance in the bottom quartile, which <b>does not meet Standard 1</b>. SA’s 2016-17 Next Generation Accountability Report shown in detail on the next page.</p>		



## Next Generation Accountability Report: 2016-17

Choose a District

Stamford Academy District

No:	Indicator	Index/Rate <sup>1</sup>	Target	Points Earned	Max Points	% Points Earned	State Avg Index/Rate
1a.	ELA Performance Index – All Students		75	0.0	0		67.1
1b.	ELA Performance Index – High Needs Students		75	0.0	0		55.9
1c.	Math Performance Index – All Students		75	0.0	0		62.2
1d.	Math Performance Index – High Needs Students		75	0.0	0		50.5
1e.	Science Performance Index – All Students		75	0.0	0		55.3
1f.	Science Performance Index – High Needs Students		75	0.0	0		45.2
2a.	ELA Avg. Percentage of Growth Target Achieved – All Students		100	0.0	0		55.4%
2b.	ELA Avg. Percentage of Growth Target Achieved – High Needs Students		100	0.0	0		49.8%
2c.	Math Avg. Percentage of Growth Target Achieved – All Students		100	0.0	0		61.7%
2d.	Math Avg. Percentage of Growth Target Achieved – High Needs Students		100	0.0	0		53.7%
4a.	Chronic Absenteeism – All Students	97.5%	<=5%	0.0	50	0.0%	9.9%
4b.	Chronic Absenteeism – High Needs Students	97.2%	<=5%	0.0	50	0.0%	15.8%
5	Preparation for CCR – % taking courses	0.0%	75%	0.0	50	0.0%	70.7%
6	Preparation for CCR – % passing exams	0.0%	75%	0.0	50	0.0%	43.5%
7	On-track to High School Graduation	13.6%	94%	7.3	50	14.5%	87.8%
8	4-year Graduation All Students (2016 Cohort)	28.3%	94%	30.1	100	30.1%	87.4%
9	6-year Graduation - High Needs Students (2014 Cohort)	44.4%	94%	47.3	100	47.3%	82.0%
10	Postsecondary Entrance (Class of 2016)	46.2%	75%	61.5	100	61.5%	72.0%
11	Physical Fitness (estimated part rate) and (fitness rate)	100.0%   18.2%	75%	12.1	50	24.2%	92.0%   51.6%
12	Arts Access	38.0%	60%	31.6	50	63.3%	50.5%
<b>Accountability Index</b>				<b>189.9</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>29.2%</b>	

<sup>1</sup> Unrounded index/rates are used in calculations. Values rounded to 1 decimal are displayed

These statistics represent the results from the third year of Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability Model for districts and schools. For detailed information and resources about every indicator including the rationale for its inclusion, the methodology used as well as links to resources, research, and evidence-based strategies, please consult the document titled [Using Accountability Results to Guide Improvement](#).

This model is the direct result of an extensive consultation process over a two year period. The CSDE sought feedback from district and school leaders, Connecticut educators, state and national experts, CSDE staff, and many others. This model was originally outlined in Connecticut's flexibility application to the U.S. Department of Education and formally approved by the USED in August 2015 and is now included in Connecticut's state plan for the Every Student Succeeds Act.

Gap Indicators	Non-High Needs Rate*	High Needs Rate	Size of Gap	State Gap Mean + 1 Stdev**	Is Gap an Outlier?
Achievement Gap Size Outlier?					N
ELA Performance Index Gap				N/A	
Math Performance Index Gap				N/A	
Science Performance Index Gap				N/A	
Six-Year Graduation Rate Gap (2014 Cohort)		44.4%		12.0%	N

If the Non-High Needs Rate exceeds the ultimate target (75 for Performance Index and 94% for graduation rate), then the ultimate target is displayed and used for gap calculations. If size of gap exceeds the state mean gap plus one standard deviation, then the gap is an outlier.

Participation Rate	Rate
ELA – All Students	72.2%
ELA – High Needs Students	72.2%
Math – All Students	72.2%
Math – High Needs Students	72.2%
Science – All Students	79.4%
Science – High Needs Students	80.6%

Standard 2: Stewardship, Governance and Management Indicators:	Rating
2.1. Fiscal Management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
2.2. Financial Reporting and Compliance	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
2.3. Financial Viability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
2.4. Governance and Management	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
2.5. School Facility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM

**Notes and Evidence:**

- Indicator 2.1:** CSDE site visit staff reviewed SA’s last three certified financial audits and uncovered no significant findings, conditions or internal control weakness.
- Indicator 2.2:** CSDE site visit staff reviewed SA’s last three certified financial audits, Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual (APPM) and budgets, interviewed the school business manager, school director and governing board members. The reviewers determined SA completed on-time submission of certified audits and annual budgets. Staff from CSDE’s Office of Internal Audit determined the APPM lacks standard sections of an APPM. The missing items include credit card statement review, daily cash receipts, employee salary advances and employee school facility user, differentiation between school and CMO staff. The CSDE has received and is currently reviewing SA’s corrective action plan and draft revisions to its APPM and expects it to be completed by July 1, 2018.
- Indicator 2.3:** Staff from CSDE’s Office of Internal Audit reviewed SA’s last three certified financial audits and determined SA’s debt to asset ratio (total liabilities/total assets), total margin (net income/revenue) current asset ratio (current assets / current liabilities) and days of unrestricted cash (unrestricted cash / ((total expenditures – depreciation) / 365 days)) meets or exceeds the ranges recommended by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA), signifying overall financial health.
- Indicator 2.4:** A review of SA’s school policies regarding anti-nepotism and conflict of interest were found to not be in complete compliance with CSDE administrative oversight guidelines. The school is in the process of making changes to its policies. The CSDE expects the policy to be revised, reviewed and in compliance by the start of the 2018-19 school year. SA’s policies and procedures regarding background checks of staff and board members, open board meetings and board membership training were reviewed and found to comply with state and federal laws, rules and regulation. This finding supported by a review of background check and board training records and the review of the schools website and governing board meeting minutes.
- Indicator 2.5:** As evidenced by the site visit, SA has a safe and well-maintained school facility to support teaching and learning. The facility is Stamford owned and has been approved by the Stamford Fire Marshal and Building Department. The school has proof of property insurance.

Standard 3: Student Population Indicators	Rating
3.1. Recruitment and Enrollment Process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
3.2. Waitlist and Enrollment Data	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
3.3. Demographic Representation	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
3.4. Family and Community Support	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
3.5. School Culture and Climate	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DNM

**Notes and Evidence:**

- Indicator 3.1:** SA currently serves 147 students, 80 percent reside in Stamford (the host district), 17 percent reside in Bridgeport and the remaining students come from three area towns. A review of the school’s student enrollment policy, and interviews with school staff, board members and parents determined all students are admitted through a blind lottery.
- Indicator 3.2:** A review of SA’s waitlist information (Table 3 page 15) determined it maintains a positive waitlist of families beyond the available number of seats. In 2017-18, 10 students were on the waiting list. The waitlist has included students each year for the past three years. The Eligible October 2017 Student Enrollment (147) is one seat below the 2017-18 projected student enrollment.
- Indicator 3.3:** A review of SA’s 2016-17 Public School Information System (PSIS) data reports students from minority groups represent 92.6 percent of SA’s student population and 88.5 percent of the students qualify for free and reduced-price meals. SA does not have any English learners (ELs) currently enrolled nor did they have any at the time of the schools last renewal three years ago. The percentage of special education students at SA is 28.4 percent. While its special education population is over two times the state average, to better reflect the demographics of the surrounding community, the school must seek to enroll more EL students.
- Indicator 3.4:** SA demonstrates strong community support as evidenced by oral testimony provided by Mr. Earl Kim, Superintendent of Stamford Public Schools, who spoke in support for the schools renewal. During the on-sites visit, CSDE staff interviewed five parents of students attending the school. All described the strong commination between the school and families as a key component. Parents conveyed overwhelming support for what they perceive is a school that provides a quality alternative educational experience for their children. Over 80 individuals attended the November 16, 2017, renewal public hearing, and 31 individuals offered testimony supporting the school’s efforts and the renewal of its charter. No one spoke out against the renewal of the school’s charter.
- Indicator 3.5:** A review of SA’s student average daily attendance, chronic absenteeism and suspension rates (Table 2, page 15) are of serious concern. The average daily attendance rate of students in 2016-17 is 57.6 percent, well below the state goal of 95 percent, and has decreased from 68.0 percent in 2014-15. Student chronic absenteeism rate of 97.5 percent in 2016-17 is almost ten times the state average of 9.9 percent and has increased from 86.6 percent in 2014-15. The suspension rate of 12.4 percent is well above the 2016-17 state average of 6.7 percent, down from the 30.4 percent in 2015-16. SA must take measures to remedy student attendance and continue to address behavior management going forward.

Standard 4: Legal Compliance Indicators	Rating
4.1. Open Meetings/Information Management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
4.2. Students with Disabilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
4.3. English Learners	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DNM
4.4. Rights of Students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
4.5. Teacher/Staff Credentials	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
4.6. Employee Rights	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
<b>Notes and Evidence:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>Indicator 4.1:</b> The school website and Governing Board documents demonstrate that Governing Board meetings are open and accessible to the public. The Governing Board meeting schedule for the year and meeting agenda are posted on the school’s website. Education records and testing data are secured in locked file cabinets in the school director’s office.</p> </li> <li> <p><b>Indicator 4.2:</b> A review of SA 2016-17 Public School Information System (PSIS) data reports the percentage of special education students at the school was 28.4 percent. Many of these students have emotional and behavioral disorders, including mood disorders, ADHD, some with a learning disability affecting their comprehension skills, and or have a 504 plan. To address student needs, SA has recently hired a second full-time Special Education Teacher to provide more intensive instruction and individualized services to these students. Special education staff conference with each student, create academic goals and review student progress, push into classrooms, and co-teach or assist with behavioral needs. Students are pulled out of class to complete individualized or small group instruction focused on specific skill building. The school also employs a part-time social worker who provides services as identified in student Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).</p> <p>SA uses different approaches to address student behaviors and or emotional concerns. SA utilizes a “sanctuary model” and staff are trained to assess and de-escalate problematic or disruptive situations. The school also develops Student Success Plans (SSP) and SSP mentor which address social/emotional, academic and career goals. SSPs are written in September and reviewed in January with emphasis on each student’s social and emotional functioning.</p> <p>Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meetings are joint endeavors including an SA administrator, district of residence administrator and other appropriate staff from SA and the district of residence. Dialogue regarding the development and revisions of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are common practice at SA and include meetings with parents.</p> <p>Student education files are kept in locked file cabinets. All files reviewed had individual sign-in access sheets. The reviewed files were well organized and maintained.</p> <p>File reviews and staff interviews indicate the special education students attending the charter school are receiving specialized instruction and related services as set forth in their IEPs. As evident in the review of student files, the school monitors student progress toward short-term IEP objectives and annual goals.</p> </li> </ul>	

- **Indicator 4.3:** Classroom observations and staff interviews by the CSDE English Learner consultant during the site visit determined that the school does not currently have any identified English learners nor has it in the past. A review of SA’s English learner (EL) policies and procedures determined amendments were required to fully align to federal and state guidelines. SA anticipates EL policies and procedures to be reviewed by the CSDE and in place by the 2018-19 school year.
- **Indicator 4.4:** SA student rights policies and procedures include admissions, handling of student information, due process protections and state nondiscrimination laws. Interviews with parents and staff at the school supported the proper implementation and use of the policies.
- **Indicator 4.5:** Staff from the CSDE Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification reviewed the state certified staff file and the school’s employee roster and found the Dean of School Culture/ Dean of Students is not properly certified for the position. The school will need to rectify the situation prior to the start of the 2018-19 school year.
- **Indicator 4.6:** A review of SA employment policies and procedures and an interview with the school director determined the school’s hiring and employment practices ensure protections under the Family Medical Leave Act, Americans with Disabilities Act and the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

<b>Prepared by:</b>	<b>Approved by:</b>
Robert Kelly, Charter School Program Manager	Desi D. Nesmith, Chief Turnaround Officer

## STAMFORD ACADEMY SCHOOL DATA

<b>Table 1: 2016-17 Student Enrollment and Demographic Information</b>	
Grades served:	9-12
Total enrollment:	147
Percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced price meals:	88.5%
Percentage of special education students:	28.4%
Percentage of students with limited English proficiency:	0%
Percentage of minority students:	92.6%
Percentage American Indian or Alaska Native:	0%
Percentage of Asian students:	0%
Percentage of Black students:	54.1%
Percentage of Hispanic students:	38.5%
Percentage of Two or More Races:	*
Percentage of Caucasian students:	*

\*N<=5. Data suppressed to ensure student data privacy.

<b>Table 2: School Culture and Climate Data</b>				
<b>Performance Metric:</b>	<b>2014-15:</b>	<b>2015-16:</b>	<b>2016-17:</b>	<b>STATE</b>
Average daily attendance rate:	68.0%	62.0%	57.6%	
Chronic absenteeism rate:	86.9%	99.3%	97.5%	9.9%
Number of in-school suspensions:	23	15	0	
Number of out-of-school suspensions:	35	30	27	
Suspension rate (% students with 1+ suspension):	30.4%	21.6%	12.4%	6.7%
Number of expulsions:	0	0	0	
Cohort graduation rate (if applicable):	24.6%	33.3%	28.3%	87.4%
Six Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (if applicable):	69.0%	58.3%	44.4%	82.0%

\*N<=5. Data suppressed to ensure student data privacy.

<b>Table 3: Student Waitlist and Mobility Information</b>			
<b>Performance Metric:</b>	<b>2015-16:</b>	<b>2016-17:</b>	<b>2017-18:</b>
Waitlist number:	5	15	10
Number of enrolled students who left during the school year:	46	51	
Number of students who did not re-enroll the next year and had not completed the highest grade at the school:	15	13	



Havemeyer Building  
290 Greenwich Avenue  
Greenwich, Connecticut 06830-6521  
Tel: (203) 625-7400

**Dr. Jill Gildea**  
Superintendent of Schools

Jill\_Gildea@Greenwich.k12.ct.us

August 30, 2017

RECEIVED

Mr. Desi Nesmith  
Chief Turnaround Officer  
State of CT Department of Education  
P.O. Box 2219  
Hartford, CT 06145

SEP 5 - 2017  
Chief Turnaround Office  
CT State Dept. of Education

Dear Mr. Nesmith,

Please be advised that the Greenwich Public Schools have no affiliation with Stamford Academy in Stamford, CT; therefore we do not have any comments to share regarding the potential renewal of Stamford Academy's charter.

Sincerely,

Jill Gildea, Ed.D.  
Superintendent  
Greenwich Public Schools



New Canaan Public Schools

Bryan D. Luizzi, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

September 1, 2017

Mr. Desi D. Nesmith  
Chief Turnaround Officer  
State Department of Education  
PO Box 2219  
Hartford CT 06145

Dear Mr. Nesmith:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding Stamford Academy.

Since there are no New Canaan residents attending, I do not have any feedback at this time.

I hope the renewal process goes smoothly for you and the school.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Bryan Luizzi'.

Bryan D. Luizzi, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

RECEIVED

SEP 8 - 2017

Chief Turnaround Office  
CT State Dept. of Education