

IX.C.

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford**

TO BE PROPOSED:

June 3, 2020

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (g) of Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes, renews the charter of Highville Charter School from July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2023, subject to the Commissioner's June 3, 2020, memorandum to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Approved by a vote of _____, this third day of June, Two Thousand Twenty.

Signed: _____
Dr. Miguel A. Cardona, Secretary
State Board of Education

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Miguel A. Cardona, Commissioner of Education

DATE: June 3, 2020

SUBJECT: Renewal of State Charter – Highville Charter School, New Haven

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

Highville Charter School (Highville) opened in the fall of 1998 and is completing its 22nd year in operation. The latest CSDE audited student enrollment data from 2019-20 reported 460 students in Grades PK-12 with 60.0 percent residing in New Haven (the host district), 25.0 percent residing in Hamden, 9.8 residing in West Haven and the remaining 5.2 percent from 11 area towns. Highville has a maximum approved student enrollment of 502 seats. Table 1, on page 12, of the attached Charter Renewal Report provides 2019-20 student enrollment and demographic data. Seventy-three point five percent of Highville students qualify for free or reduced price meals and 5.2 percent of the students receive special education services. The mission of Highville is to provide “an enterprising and caring community with strong parent and community involvement, which prepares and instills a desire for all learners to confidently use technology, think globally and develop into globally conscious citizens...”

Charter Renewal Process

Application for Renewal of Charter: The CSDE accepted an application for the renewal of Highville’s charter on September 6, 2019. 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. Highville 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 (ELs), school management, finance, and school governance reviewed the renewal application and requested clarification and additional information, where necessary.

Renewal Site Visit: On December 12, 2019, the CSDE renewal team conducted an on-site visit at Highville. The purpose of the on-site visit was to observe Highville’s programs, policies, practices, and procedures to assess their efficacy and fidelity to the school’s charter and aligned operating systems. 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 Highville from the Superintendent of New Haven Public Schools and from contiguous school districts: East Haven, Hamden, North Haven, Orange, West Haven and Woodbridge. The CSDE received a letter from Mr. Robert F. Gilbert, Superintendent, Woodbridge School District (see Attachment A), which provided no reason or comment that reflects poorly on the school. The CSDE received no letters against the renewal of the school’s charter.

Public Hearing: Erin D. Benham, member of the SBE, and CSDE staff held a public hearing on January 14, 2020, in the city of New Haven, and heard from individuals on the potential charter renewal of Highville and the impact it is having on the community. Public hearing participants included members of the Highville community, family members, students, school staff and community members. Over 144 individuals attended the public hearing, and 26 individuals offered testimony supporting the school's efforts and the renewal of its charter. No one spoke against the renewal of the school's charter.

Site Visit Findings

The most recent available data and information contained in the Charter Renewal Report (beginning on page 6) indicates Highville'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 Highville's last three certified financial audits.
- The school demonstrates strong community support as evidenced by testimony provided by individuals at the public hearing and interviews with parents during the site visit.
- Highville's website and Governing Board meeting schedule and agendas demonstrate that the Governing Board meetings are open and accessible to the public.
- Highville's 2018-19 school culture and climate data (Table 2) reports a chronic absenteeism rate of 9.1 that has remained steady over the last three reporting periods, and is 1.3 percentage points below the state rate of 10.4 percent and 10.2 percentage points below New Haven's 19.3 percent. Its average daily attendance rate over the last three years has remained above the CSDE's goal of 95 percent.
- Highville's 2018-19 Accountability Index of 72.7 percent places its performance in Category 2, which earns a Meets for Standard 1 School Performance.
- The school has exceeded the 2018-19 state testing participation rate of 95 percent in English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and Science for all students and high needs students.
- According to the 2018-19 Next Generation Accountability Index, Highville's 4-year Graduation – All Students (2018 Cohort) rate of 100 percent is above the state average of 88.3 percent.
- Highville's college entrance (graduating class 2018) of 71.4 percent is above the state average of 70.9 percent.
- Highville's 2018-19 Smarter Balanced average percentage of growth target achieved in ELA for all students in Grade 6 is 60.9 percent, exceeding the state's 56.7 percent and New Haven's 57.9 percent.
- Highville's 2018-19 Smarter Balanced average percentage of growth target achieved for all students in Grade 7 is 61.5 percent in ELA, exceeding the state's 59.5 percent and New Haven's 53.1 percent, and in Mathematics 68.9 percent, exceeding the state's 59.6 percent and New Haven's 47.0 percent.

Areas of Concern:

- Highville's 2018-19 student suspension rate of 11.8 percent is 5.1 percentage points above the state rate of 6.7 percent and 4.5 percentage points above New Haven's rate of 7.3 percent. It is noted that Highville has decreased 6.3 percentage points from 18.1 percent in 2017-18.
- The 2018-19 Smarter Balanced percentage of Highville students achieving at or above proficiency (level 3 and 4) in ELA for Grade 4 (Table 4) is 24.2 percent, 8.1 percentage points below New Haven's 32.3 percent.
- The 2018-19 Smarter Balanced percentage of Highville students achieving at or above proficiency (level 3 and 4) in ELA for Grade 6 (Table 4) is 30.8 percent, 6.8 percentage points below New Haven's 37.6 percent.
- The 2018-19 Smarter Balanced percentage of Highville students achieving at or above proficiency (level 3 and 4) in Mathematics for all students (Table 4) is 13.6 percent, 8.9 percentage points below New Haven's 22.5 percent.
- The 2018-19 Smarter Balanced percentage of Highville students achieving at or above proficiency (level 3 and 4) in Mathematics for Grade 3 (Table 4) is 18.9 percent, 11.7 percentage points below New Haven's 30.6 percent.
- The 2018-19 Smarter Balanced percentage of Highville students achieving at or above proficiency (level 3 and 4) in Mathematics for Grade 4 (Table 4) is 18.2 percent, 3.4 percentage points below New Haven's 21.6 percent.
- Highville's 2018-19 Smarter Balanced average percentage of growth target achieved in ELA and Mathematics for all students in Grade 4 are 50.7 and 56.8 percent, respectively, below New Haven's 56.7 and 57.3 percent respectively.
- Highville's 2018-19 Smarter Balanced average percentage of growth target achieved in ELA and Mathematics for all students in Grade 5 are 54.2 and 56.2 percent, respectively, below New Haven's 57.4 and 59.7 percent respectively.
- Highville's 2018-19 Smarter Balanced average percentage of growth target achieved in Mathematics for all students in Grade 6 is 52.9 percent, below the state's New Haven's 59.2 percent.
- Highville's 2018-19 Smarter Balanced average percentage of growth target achieved in ELA and Mathematics for all students in Grade 8 are 49.6 and 42.0 percent, respectively, below New Haven's 50.7 and 44.5 percent, respectively.
- Highville is not in compliance with the teacher certification statute. A review of Highville's staff file of April 30, 2020, reports 87.5 percent of staff in compliance with certification. It is the responsibility of the school to take steps to ensure that 100 percent of the staff holds appropriate certificates, permits, or authorizations for their positions. Current legislation requires that at least 50 percent of educators serving in a charter school must hold a valid certificate (Initial, Provisional, or Professional Certificate) and the remaining 50 percent may hold other interim certificates, permits or authorizations. Of the 40 staff members requiring certification, 32 staff or 80.0 percent hold a valid certificate, 3 staff or 7.5 percent hold other permits or authorizations and 5 staff or 12.5 percent are out of compliance with no active certificate or permit on file.

Charter Renewal Recommendation

Highville's 2018-19 chronic absenteeism rate has remained steady the last three reporting periods and falls below the state rate. Highville has exceeded the 2018-19 state testing participation rate of 95 percent in all required areas tested for all students and high need students. Highville's 4-year Graduation (2018 Cohort) rate of 100 percent exceeded the state average, and its college entrance rate exceeded the state average. However, when looking at academic performance, Highville shows inconsistencies. While Highville's 2018-19 Smarter Balanced average percentage of growth target achieved in ELA for Grades 6 and 7 and Mathematics for Grade 7 were higher than the state and New Haven, they are below the state and New Haven in ELA for Grades 4, 5, and 8 and Mathematics for 4, 5, 6, and 8. Also, Highville must take action to ensure it is fully compliant with the teacher certification statute. Acknowledging that Highville's performance indicators are not without weakness, the CSDE recommends that the SBE renew the school's charter for a period of three years, subject to the following condition:

1. By July 6, 2020, Highville shall submit a corrective action plan acceptable to the Commissioner. The corrective action plan must include measures to improve student academic achievement. Additionally, Highville shall submit to the CSDE, on a bi-monthly basis, beginning October 2020, a report monitoring its year-to-date progress of improving student academic achievement. The plan shall be developed in consultation with the CSDE's Turnaround Office. Highville shall implement the corrective action within thirty days following the Commissioner's acceptance of the plan.
2. By July 6, 2020, Highville shall submit a plan for CSDE review and approval to bring its staff into certification compliance by October 31, 2020 by: (a) ensuring staff responsible for hiring clearly understand the certification requirements of each position; (b) providing a clear pathway and support to certification with established milestones and timelines; (c) implementing monitoring and interventions for non-compliance; and (d) reporting of non-compliant staff, including certification targets, schedules, action steps, and responsible school staff, on August 3, 2020, to ensure compliance. The plan shall be developed in consultation with the CSDE's Talent Office. Highville shall implement the corrective actions within thirty days following the Commissioner's acceptance of the plan.

The CSDE will notify Highville Charter School of action taken by the SBE following its meeting on June 3, 2020. The school will be advised to take advantage of relevant technical assistance opportunities designed to improve its educational program. The CSDE will conduct follow-up visits to ensure that Highville Charter School addressed the issues raised in this memorandum.

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

Reviewed by: Lisa Lamenzo, Division Director
Turnaround Office

Approved by: Desi D. Nesmith, Deputy Commissioner
of Academics and Innovations

CHARTER RENEWAL REPORT | 2020

Charter School Information:		
Charter School Name:	Highville Charter School	
School Director:	Janet Brown-Clayton	
School Board Chairperson:	Linda Baylor	
Location (City/Town):	New Haven	
Rating Key:		
Meets	The school demonstrates effective policies and practices, resulting in positive outcomes.	
Pending Action	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.	
Does Not Meet	The schools falls below performance expectations with significant concerns noted, which require immediate attention and intervention.	
Standard 1: School Performance Indicators		% Points Earned
Accountability Index:	908.8/1250	72.7
Notes and Evidence:		
<p>The 2018-19 Highville Charter School Accountability Index of 72.7 percent is 1.5 percentage points below average when compared to the state school Accountability Index of 74.2. Schools that meet Standard 1: are schools earning an accountability index from 85 to 100 (Category 1), schools earning an accountability index from 70 to 84.9, (Category 2) and schools earning an accountability index of 69.9 or lower and have not been identified as a Turnaround or Focus School (Category 3). Highville's Accountability Index score of 72.4 places its performance in Category 2, which earns a Meets for Standard 1. Highville's 2018-19 Next Generation Accountability Report shown in detail on the next page.</p>		

Next Generation Accountability, 2018-19
 Highville Charter School (Grades: PK-12)
 School Category: 2

Indicator	Index/Rate	Target	Points Earned	Max Points	% Points Earned	State Average	% Points Earned
1a. ELA Performance Index - All Students	59.0	75	39.4	50	78.7		90.2
1b. ELA Performance Index - High Needs Students	57.5	75	38.3	50	76.7		77.5
1c. Math Performance Index - All Students	50.4	75	33.6	50	67.2		84.1
1d. Math Performance Index - High Needs Students	48.9	75	32.6	50	65.1		70.2
1e. Science Performance Index - All Students	52.6	75	35.1	50	70.2		85.0
1f. Science Performance Index - High Needs Students	51.5	75	34.3	50	68.7		72.2
2a. ELA Academic Growth - All Students	55.4%	100%	55.4	100	55.4		59.9
2b. ELA Academic Growth - High Needs Students	56.6%	100%	56.6	100	56.6		55.1
2c. Math Academic Growth - All Students	55.0%	100%	55.0	100	55.0		62.5
2d. Math Academic Growth - High Needs Students	55.1%	100%	55.1	100	55.1		55.2
2e. Progress Toward English Proficiency - Literacy	.	100%	.	.	.		60.0
2f. Progress Toward English Proficiency - Oral	.	100%	.	.	.		52.1
4a. Chronic Absenteeism - All Students	9.1%	<=5%	41.9	50	83.7		78.3
4b. Chronic Absenteeism - High Needs Students	10.7%	<=5%	38.6	50	77.2		55.7
5. Preparation for CCR - Percent Taking Courses	81.5%	75%	50.0	50	100.0		100.0
6. Preparation for CCR - Percent Passing Exams	7.4%	75%	4.9	50	9.9		56.7
7. On-track to High School Graduation	93.3%	94%	49.6	50	99.3		93.6
8. 4-year Graduation: All Students (2018 Cohort)	100.0%	94%	100.0	100	100.0		93.9
9. 6-year Graduation: High Needs Students (2016 Cohort)	.	94%	.	.	.		88.6
10. Postsecondary Entrance (Graduating Class 2018)	71.4%	75%	95.2	100	95.2		94.5
11. Physical Fitness (estimated participation rate = 98.3%)	77.4%	75%	50.0	50	100.0		70.6
12. Arts Access	51.7%	60%	43.1	50	86.2		86.5
Accountability Index			908.8	1250	72.7		74.2

If the Non-High Needs Rate exceeds the ultimate target (75 for Performance Index and 94% for Graduation Rate), the ultimate target is used for gap calculations.

If the size of the gap exceeds the state mean gap plus one standard deviation, the gap is an outlier.

Gap Indicators

Indicator	Non High Needs Rate	High Needs Rate	Size of Gap	State Gap Mean +1 Standard Deviation	Is Gap an Outlier?
ELA Performance Index Gap	65.2	57.5	7.7	15.3	N
Math Performance Index Gap	56.4	48.9	7.6	17.4	N
Science Performance Index Gap	.	51.5	.	16.3	
Graduation Rate Gap (2016 Cohort)	

Assessment Participation Rates

Indicator	Participation Rate (%)
ELA - All Students	99.5
ELA - High Needs Students	99.4
Math - All Students	99.5
Math - High Needs Students	99.4
Science - All Students	97.4
Science - High Needs Students	96.8

Minimum participation standard is 95%.

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:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator 2.1: CSDE site visit staff reviewed Highville last three certified financial audits and uncovered no significant findings, conditions or internal control weakness. • Indicator 2.2: CSDE site visit staff reviewed Highville's last three certified financial audits, Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual (APPM) and budgets, and interviewed the school principals, Finance Manager and Governing Board members. Staff from the CSDE's Office of Internal Audit determined the APPM contains the standard sections of an APPM. However, the APPM requires some policy amendments in the areas of thresholds for contract approvals, school facilities use by public and employees. The amendments when complete must be voted on and approved by the Governing Board. The Highville Governing Board has specific roles and responsibilities for financial oversight of the school that are formally documented in a Board Policies and Procedures Manual (BPPM). The reviewers determined Highville completed on-time submission of certified audits and annual budgets. • Indicator 2.3: Staff from the CSDE's Office of Internal Audit reviewed Highville's latest certified financial audit and determined Highville's total margin (net income / total revenue), debt to asset ratio (total liabilities / total assets), current asset ratio (current assets / current liabilities), days of unrestricted cash (unrestricted cash / ((total expenditures – depreciation) / 365)) and cash flow 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 Highville's school policies regarding anti-nepotism, conflict of interest and supervisory relationships require amendments to be in compliance with the CSDE administrative oversight guidelines. Highville'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 regulations. Board meetings and subcommittee minutes while posted through July 2019, have not been posted for subsequent meetings, and must be posted. These findings are supported by a review of background checks, board training records, school website and governing board meeting minutes. • Indicator 2.5: As evidenced during the site visit, Highville has safe and well-maintained school facilities to support teaching and learning. The facilities have been approved by the 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM

Notes and Evidence:

- **Indicator 3.1:** The latest CSDE audited student enrollment data from 2019-20 reported 460 students in Grades PK-12 with 60.0 percent residing in New Haven (the host district), 25.0 percent residing in Hamden, 9.8 residing in West Haven and the remaining 5.2 percent from 11 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 conducted by New Haven Public Schools and sibling preference.
- **Indicator 3.2:** A review of Highville's waitlist information in Table 3 determined it maintains a waitlist of families beyond the available number of seats. In 2019-20, 200 students were on the waiting list. The school has experienced steady waitlist growth up from 25 students in 2017-18 and 100 in 2018-19.
- **Indicator 3.3:** A review of Highville's 2019-20 Public School Information System (PSIS) data reports students of color represent 98.7 percent of Highville's student population and 73.5 percent of the students qualify for free and reduced-price meals. The percentage of special education students at Highville is 5.2 percent. Highville's EL population data is suppressed to ensure student confidentiality. To better reflect the demographics of the surrounding community, the school must seek to enroll more students who are English learners.
- **Indicator 3.4:** Highville demonstrates strong community support, as evidenced by parent interviews conducted by the CSDE renewal team. Parent focus groups described the communication between the school and families as fast, strong and attentive. Parents expressed support for what they perceive is a rigorous educational model that addresses their child's educational needs. Parents indicated they were satisfied with the school's commitment to serving students with diverse needs. Parents and students testified during the public hearing that they are happy with the educational choice opportunity the school provides to students and their families. Over 144 individuals attended the public hearing, and 26 individuals offered testimony supporting the school's efforts and the renewal of its charter. No one spoke against the renewal of the school's charter.
- **Indicator 3.5:** School culture and climate policies reviewed by CSDE site visit staff were clear and concise. Classroom observations revealed consistent implementation of behavior management model. A review of Highville's 2018-19 school culture and climate data reports a chronic absenteeism rate of 9.1 percent which has remained steady over the last three reporting periods. This is 1.3 percentage points below the state rate of 10.4 percent and 10.2 percent percentage points below New Haven's 19.3 percent. Its average daily attendance rate over the last three years has remained above the CSDE's goal of 95 percent. Highville's 2018-19 student suspension rate of 11.8 percent is 5.1 percentage points above the state rate of 6.7 percent and 4.5 percentage points above New Haven's rate of 7.3 percent. However, suspensions have decreased 6.3 percentage points from 18.1 percent in 2017-18. Highville must continue its efforts to reduce its suspension rate 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 type="checkbox"/> M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
4.3. English Learners	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PA <input 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 type="checkbox"/> PA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DNM
4.6. Employee Rights	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM

Notes and Evidence:

- **Indicator 4.1:** The school website and Governing Board documents demonstrate that Governing Board meetings are open and accessible to the public. The Governing Board meeting schedule and meeting agendas are posted on the school's website. Education records and testing data are secured in locked file cabinets in the school director's office.
- **Indicator 4.2:** A review of Highville's 2019-20 Public School Information System (PSIS) data reports the percentage of special education students at the school as 5.2 percent. Highville provides special education supports and services within the least restrictive environment continuum as determined by the identified student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). To address student needs, Highville has a special education director, one full-time and one part-time certified special education teachers and a part-time tutor. Instructional models include push-in, pull-out and small group instruction within the class. The school makes available speech, language, occupational therapy, physical therapy and social work services to meet student needs. A sign-in verification system for the provision of related services was not found. The school was instructed to develop a sign-in system to document when related services are provided and monitor to ensure that all missed services are scheduled to be made up.

Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meetings are conducted by the School District in which the student resides and the majority of meetings are held at Highville. This allows for more robust participation of the school's staff. Parents/Guardians, students (as appropriate) and required PPT members from the host district and Highville are invited to participate in the meeting. The PPT develops, reviews, and revises the IEP based upon the student's individualized needs.

Highville has scheduled training in the provision of accommodations and modifications to special education students for all teaching staff with the State Education Resource Center (SERC), facilitated by the CSDE Bureau of Special Education.

Student education files are kept in locked file cabinets and there are access logs in each file.

- **Indicator 4.3:** Highville has historically had a small number of students identified as English learners (ELs), which is currently the case. A review by the CSDE staff of Highville's EL policies and procedures determined areas that require amendments to bring the school's EL policies into compliance with state and federal requirements. The Parent Notification Letter and English Learner Identification Procedure documents contained misunderstandings about the provision of English as a Second Language (ESL) supports to students that have been identified from parents that have requested them. The school understands that while it is not required to provide a bilingual program, as it does not enroll 20 or more ELs with the same non-English native language, the school is preparing to ensure that all ELs whose parents have opted them into EL services, receive language supports beyond the typical general educational program. The services will be provided by grade level teachers or other staff that receive annual ongoing training on EL strategies, pedagogy, second language acquisition and related topics.
- **Indicator 4.4:** Highville 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:** A review of Highville's staff file of April 30, 2020, reports 87.5 percent of staff in compliance with certification. It is the responsibility of the school to take steps to ensure that 100 percent of the staff holds appropriate certificates, permits, or authorizations for their positions. Current legislation requires that at least 50 percent of educators serving in a charter school must hold a valid certificate (Initial, Provisional, or Professional Certificate) and the remaining 50 percent may hold other interim certificates, permits or authorizations. Of the 40 staff members requiring certification, 32 staff or 80.0 percent hold a valid certificate, 3 staff or 7.5 percent hold other permits or authorizations and 5 staff or 12.5 percent are out of compliance with no active certificate or permit on file.

Of the 50 percent allowed to serve under other certificates, permits or authorizations, legislation also allows for the issuance of a Charter School Educator Permit (CSEP) for no more than 30 percent of the educators serving in a charter school. Other options to bring staff into compliance for certification, pending they met criteria for each option, include a Long-Term Substitute Certificate, a Durational Shortage Area permit (DSAP), a Temporary 90-Day Certificate, an Interim Educator Certificate or a Resident Educator Permit.

Highville is in compliance with Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM) Program. However, based on the number of beginning teachers at the school, it is recommended that the school train additional mentors and Reflection Paper Reviewers.

Highville is in compliance with the Educator Evaluation and Support Plan (EESP), but is required to complete and submit the EESP checklist.

- **Indicator 4.6:** A review of legal actions brought against Highville determined that no government agency alleged the violation of any law by the school, or undertaken any investigation of any violation of law by the school.

Prepared by:	Reviewed by:	Approved by:
Robert Kelly Charter School Program Manager	Lisa Lamenzo Turnaround Office, Division Director	Desi. D. Nesmith Deputy Commissioner of Academics and Innovations

HIGHVILLE CHARTER SCHOOL DATA

Table 1: 2019-20 Student Enrollment and Demographic Information (latest audited student data)	
Grades served:	PK-12
Total enrollment:	460
Percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced price meals:	73.1
Percentage of special education students:	5.2
Percentage of students with limited English proficiency:	*
Percentage American Indian or Alaska Native:	*
Percentage of Asian students:	N/A
Percentage of Black students:	92.6
Percentage of Hispanic students:	4.3
Percentage of Two or More Races:	*
Percentage of Caucasian students:	1.3

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

Table 2: School Culture and Climate Data				
Performance Metric:	School 2016-17:	School 2017-18:	School 2018-19:	State 2018-19:
Average daily attendance rate:	95.6%	95.2%	95.1%	
Chronic absenteeism rate:	8.6%	10.4%	9.1%	10.4%
Number of in-school suspensions:	66	106	51	
Number of out-of-school suspensions:	97	72	54	
Suspension rate (% students with 1+ suspension):	14.9%	18.1%	11.8%	6.7%
Number of expulsions:	0	0	0	
Cohort graduation rate (if applicable):	*	100.0%	N/A	N/A
Six Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (if applicable):	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 3: Student Waitlist and Mobility Information			
Performance Metric:	2017-18:	2018-19:	2019-20:
Waitlist number:	111	106	141
Number of enrolled students who left during the school year, or who did not re-enroll the next school year and did not complete the highest grade at the school:	114	122	N/A

HIGHVILLE CHARTER SCHOOL STATE TEST DATA

Table 4: Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) - Percentage of students at level 3 and 4 (met/exceeded)

	School 2017-18	School Average Score	School 2018-19	School Average Score	District 2018-19	District Average Score	State 2018-19	State Average Score
ELA	*	*	*	*	34.3	444	61.6	514
MATH	*	*	*	*	12.1	423	40.6	500

Grades 3-8: Smarter Balanced Assessment - Percentage of students at level 3 and 4 (met/exceeded)

GRADE	ELA				MATH			
	School 2017-18	School 2018-19	District 2018-19	State 2018-19	School 2017-18	School 2018-19	District 2018-19	State 2018-19
All Grades Combined	25.5	35.9	34.4	55.7	14.3	13.6	22.5	48.1
3	33.3	*	30.1	54.3	25.0	18.9	30.6	55.0
4	29.4	24.2	32.3	54.6	17.6	18.2	21.6	52.5
5	*	*	35.5	58.1	*	*	19.6	46.5
6	*	30.8	37.6	55.3	*	*	24.0	45.4
7	*	*	36.7	56.1	*	*	20.5	46.1
8	*	*	33.8	55.8	*	*	19.4	43.5

Highville Charter School Next Generation Science Standards Assessment Data

**Table 5: Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)
Assessment-Percentage of students at level 3 and 4 (met/exceeded)**

GRADE	School 2018-19	District 2018-19	State 2018-19
All Grades Combined	24.3	26.6	51.2
5	*	31.2	53.6
8	31.0	29.2	52.2
11	*	17.2	47.7

*The data are suppressed to ensure confidentiality.



WOODBRIDGE SCHOOL DISTRICT

40 Beecher Road – South
Woodbridge, Connecticut 06525

Robert F. Gilbert — Superintendent

Cheryl Mammen — Special Services Director | Alfred Pullo, Jr. — Director of Business Services/Operations

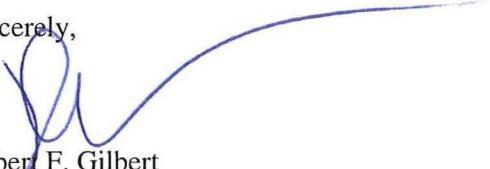
September 27, 2019

Mr. Robert Kelly
Charter School Program Manager
Connecticut State Department of Education
P.O. Box 2219
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Mr. Kelly:

I am responding to the request from Lisa Lamenco soliciting comments on the charter renewal of Highville Charter School in Hamden. I know of no reason nor can I provide any comments, which reflect poorly on Highville Charter School. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,


Robert F. Gilbert
Superintendent

RFG/med