

IX.F.

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 Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication, 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 – Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication, New London

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

Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication (ISAAC) opened in the fall of 1997 and is completing its twenty third year in operation. The latest CSDE audited student enrollment data from 2019-20 reported 279 students in Grades 6-8 with 71.3 percent residing in New London (the host district), 6.5 percent residing in Groton, 5.7 percent residing in Montville, 6.5 percent residing in Norwich, 5.0 percent residing in Waterford, and the remaining 5.0 percent from 8 area towns. ISAAC has a maximum approved student enrollment of 276 seats. Table 1, on page 12, of the attached Charter Renewal Report provides 2019-20 student enrollment and demographic data. Sixty-five point two percent of ISAAC's students qualify for free or reduced price meals and 18.3 percent of the students receive special education services. ISAAC's mission states, "We inspire our students through the arts, communication, and exploration in a collaborative, multicultural community to be courageous citizens who are difference makers."

Charter Renewal Process

Application for Renewal of Charter: The CSDE accepted an application for the renewal of ISAAC'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. ISAAC 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 January 15, 2020, the CSDE renewal team conducted an on-site visit at ISAAC. The purpose of the on-site visit was to observe ISAAC'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 ISAAC from the Superintendent of New London Public Schools and from contiguous school districts: Groton and Waterford. The CSDE received a letter from Dr. Michael H. Graner, Superintendent of Groton Public Schools (see Attachment A), which supports ISAAC's charter renewal. The CSDE received no letters against the renewal of the school's charter.

Public Hearing: Malia Sieve, member of the SBE, and CSDE staff held a public hearing on March 11, 2020, in the city of New London, and heard from individuals on the potential charter renewal of ISAAC and the impact it is having on the community. Public hearing participants included members of the ISAAC community, family members, a student, school staff and community members. Over 80 individuals attended the public hearing. Twenty-two 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. Two adults and a student expressed concern about the newly appointed Director while serving as Principal at the former school, and urged school staff and school Board to maintain strong oversight of the Director's conduct and duties. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic a notice was sent to the school community encouraging individuals to in-lieu of physically attending the public hearing to submit written testimony regarding the school's renewal to CSDE. This solicitation resulted in 6 responses, two in support of the school's charter renewal and four expressed concerns about the new Director.

Site Visit Findings

The most recent available data and information contained in the Charter Renewal Report (beginning on page 6) indicates ISAAC'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 ISAAC'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.
- ISAAC's website and Governing Board meeting schedule and agendas demonstrate that the Governing Board meetings are open and accessible to the public.
- ISAAC's 2018-19 Accountability Index of 60.0 percent has increased 9.4 percentage points from 50.6 percent in 2017-18.
- Overall, the student body reflects the demographics of the surrounding community.
- A review of ISAAC's school culture and climate data in Table 2 reports an average daily attendance rate for 2018-19 of 95 percent, which meets the CSDE's goal. The school's chronic absenteeism rate of 10.2 percent is 0.2 percentage points below the state's average of 10.4 percent and has decreased 8.5 percentage points from the schools 2017-18 chronic absenteeism rate of 18.7 percent.
- 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.
- ISAAC's 2018-19 Smarter Balanced average percentage of growth target achieved in ELA for all students in Grade 7 is 61.5 percent, exceeding New London's 45.8 percent and exceeding the state's 59.5 percent.

Areas of Concern:

- ISAAC's 2018-19 student suspension rate of 14.4 percent, while trending downward from 20.8 percent in 2017-18, remains 7.7 percentage points above the state average of 6.7 percent.
- The 2018-19 Smarter Balanced percentage of ISAAC students achieving at or above proficiency (level 3 and 4) in ELA for all students (Table 4) is 30.2 percent, 1.3 percentage points below New London's 31.5 percent and 25.5 percent below the state's 55.7 percent.
- The 2018-19 Smarter Balanced percentage of ISAAC students achieving at or above proficiency (level 3 and 4) in Mathematics for all students (Table 4) is 10.6 percent, 12.4 percentage points below New London's 23.0 percent and 37.5 percentage points below the state's 48.1 percent.
- The 2018-19 Smarter Balanced percentage of ISAAC students achieving at or above proficiency (level 3 and 4) in Mathematics for all students in Grades 7 and 8 (Table 4) are 9.5 percent and 7.4 percent, respectively below New London's by 8.2 percentage points and 6.6 percentage points respectively.
- ISAAC's 2018-19 Smarter Balanced average percentage of growth target achieved in Mathematics for all students in Grade 7 is 35.0 percent below New London's 50.5 percent and below the state's 59.6 percent.

Charter Renewal Recommendation

ISAAC's 2018-19 Accountability Index of 60.0 percent has increased 9.4 percentage points from 50.6 percent in 2017-18. ISAAC has successfully decreased its 2018-19 chronic absenteeism rate to below the state average. While ISAAC's 2018-19 Smarter Balanced average percentage of target achieved exceeded New London and the state for Grade 7 in ELA, Grade 7 was below New London and the state in Mathematics. Furthermore, while the student suspension rate has trended down, it remains above the state average. Acknowledging that ISAAC'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 conditions:

1. By July 6, 2020, ISAAC shall submit a plan for the CSDE to review and approve 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 discipline policies and procedures; (e) monitoring interventions and applying midcourse corrections, as necessary; (f) establishing suspension targets to ensure dramatic improvement; and (g) formulating detailed plans to engage school stakeholders, particularly parents, teachers and administrators in developing a corrective action. Additionally, ISAAC shall submit its year-to-date number of suspensions, and the concentration of students with one or more suspensions to the CSDE at year-end, June 30, 2020, and on a bi-monthly basis beginning October 2020. The plan shall be developed in consultation with the CSDE's Turnaround Office. ISAAC shall implement the corrective actions within thirty days following the Commissioner's acceptance of the plan.
2. By July 6, 2020, ISAAC shall submit a corrective action plan acceptable to the Commissioner. The corrective action plan must include measures to improve student academic achievement. Additionally, ISAAC shall submit to the CSDE, on a bi-monthly basis beginning October 2020, a report monitoring its year-to-date progress at improving student academic achievement. The plan shall be developed in consultation with the CSDE's Turnaround Office. ISAAC shall implement the corrective actions within thirty days following the Commissioner's acceptance of the plan.
3. ISAAC will be required to annually appear before the State Board of Education's Accountability and Support Committee to give an update on the status of ISAAC's academic progress and school culture and climate.

The CSDE will notify ISAAC 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 ISAAC is addressing 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 Innovation

CHARTER RENEWAL REPORT | 2020

Charter School Information:		
Charter School Name:	Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication (ISAAC)	
School Director:	Dr. Nicholas J. Spera	
School Board Chairperson:	Mr. Christopher Jones	
Location (City/Town):	New London	
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/Max	% Points Earned
Accountability Index:	600.0/1000	60.0
Notes and Evidence:		
<p>The 2018-19 ISAAC School Accountability Index of 60.0 percent is 14.2 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) schools earning an accountability index of 69.9 or lower and have not been identified as a Turnaround or Focus School (Category 3). ISAAC's Accountability Index score of 60.0 places its performance in Category 3, which earns a Pending Action for Standard 1. ISAAC's 2018-19 Next Generation Accountability Report shown in detail on the next page.</p>		

Next Generation Accountability, 2018-19
 Interdistrict School For Arts And Communication (Grades: 6-8)
 School Category: 3

Indicator	Index/Rate	Target	Points Eamed	Max Points	% Points Eamed	State Average % Points Eamed
1a. ELA Performance Index - All Students	57.3	75	38.2	50	76.4	90.2
1b. ELA Performance Index - High Needs Students	54.6	75	36.4	50	72.8	77.5
1c. Math Performance Index - All Students	46.8	75	31.2	50	62.4	84.1
1d. Math Performance Index - High Needs Students	44.5	75	29.7	50	59.4	70.2
1e. Science Performance Index - All Students	52.2	75	34.8	50	69.6	85.0
1f. Science Performance Index - High Needs Students	49.2	75	32.8	50	65.7	72.2
2a. ELA Academic Growth - All Students	50.4%	100%	50.4	100	50.4	59.9
2b. ELA Academic Growth - High Needs Students	50.6%	100%	50.6	100	50.6	55.1
2c. Math Academic Growth - All Students	43.6%	100%	43.6	100	43.6	62.5
2d. Math Academic Growth - High Needs Students	47.2%	100%	47.2	100	47.2	55.2
2e. Progress Toward English Proficiency - Literacy	58.0%	100%	29.0	50	58.0	60.0
2f. Progress Toward English Proficiency - Oral	67.5%	100%	33.7	50	67.5	52.1
4a. Chronic Absenteeism - All Students	10.2%	<=5%	39.7	50	79.4	78.3
4b. Chronic Absenteeism - High Needs Students	13.5%	<=5%	32.9	50	65.8	55.7
5. Preparation for CCR - Percent Taking Courses	.	75%	.	.	.	100.0
6. Preparation for CCR - Percent Passing Exams	.	75%	.	.	.	56.7
7. On-track to High School Graduation	93.2%	94%	49.6	50	99.2	93.6
8. 4-year Graduation: All Students (2018 Cohort)	.	94%	.	.	.	93.9
9. 6-year Graduation: High Needs Students (2016 Cohort)	.	94%	.	.	.	88.6
10. Postsecondary Entrance (Graduating Class 2018)	.	75%	.	.	.	94.5
11. Physical Fitness (estimated participation rate = 100.0%)	30.1%	75%	20.1	50	40.2	70.6
12. Arts Access	.	60%	.	.	.	86.5
Accountability Index	.	.	600.0	1000	60.0	74.2

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	65.7	54.6	11.1	15.3	N
Math Performance Index Gap	53.8	44.5	9.2	17.4	N
Science Performance Index Gap	61.1	49.2	11.9	16.3	N
Graduation Rate Gap (2016 Cohort)

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.

Assessment Participation Rates

Indicator	Participation Rate (%)
ELA - All Students	99.6
ELA - High Needs Students	99.5
Math - All Students	99.6
Math - High Needs Students	99.5
Science - All Students	100.0
Science - High Needs Students	100.0

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 ISAAC’s last three certified financial audits and uncovered no significant findings, conditions or internal control weakness. • Indicator 2.2: CSDE site visit staff reviewed ISAAC’s last three certified financial audits, Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual (APPM) and budgets, and interviewed the school Interim Director, Finance Director and Governing Board (Board) members. Staff from the CSDE’s Office of Internal Audit determined the APPM contains standard sections of an APPM. However, the APPM has not been amended since 2014 and while the school has begun revising the document, certain areas must be revised to ensure consistency and continuity of accounting functions and the internal controls of them. The APPM requires policy amendments in the following areas: purchasing and contracting procedures, bidding requirements for purchases, handling of cash receipts, bank deposits, budgeting, financial reporting, debit card usage, and travel reimbursements. The ISAAC Board and its Finance and Audit Committee have specific roles and responsibilities for financial oversight of the school. However, these roles and responsibilities are not formally documented to ensure consistency and continuity. The Board must clearly define, in a Board Policy and Procedures Manual (BPPM), the roles, duties, policies and procedures of the Board and each of its sub-committees. ISAAC has been informed of these policy issues and is in the process of addressing them. The amendments when complete must be voted on and approved by the school Board. The reviewers determined ISAAC completed on-time submission of certified audits and annual budgets. • Indicator 2.3: Staff from the CSDE’s Office of Internal Audit reviewed ISAAC’s latest certified financial audit and determined ISAAC’s debt to asset ratio (total liabilities / total assets), debt service coverage ratio (net income + depreciation + interest expense) / (principal + interest payments), current asset ratio (current assets / current liabilities), days of unrestricted cash (unrestricted cash / (total expenditures – depreciation) / 365), cash flow (change in cash balance 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 ISAAC’s school policies regarding anti-nepotism, conflict of interest and supervisory relationships were determined to be in compliance with the CSDE administrative oversight guidelines. ISAAC’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. It was noted to the school and Board that the minutes of Board subcommittee meetings must be posted to the school website, which the school and Board have agreed to do. 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, ISAAC has a 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
3.4. Family and Community Support	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input checked="" 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:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Indicator 3.1: The latest CSDE audited student enrollment data from 2019-20 reported 279 students in Grades 6-8 with 71.3 percent residing in New London (the host district), 6.5 percent residing in Groton, 5.7 percent residing in Montville, 6.5 percent residing in Norwich, 5.0 percent residing in Waterford and the remaining 5.0 percent from 8 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.</p> <p>Indicator 3.2: A review of ISAAC’s waitlist information in Table 3 determined it maintains a waitlist of families beyond the available number of seats. In 2019-20, 36 students were waitlisted. The waitlist has included more than 35 students each year for the past three years.</p> <p>Indicator 3.3: A review of ISAAC’s 2019-20 Public School Information System (PSIS) data reports students of color represent 82.4 percent of ISAAC’s student population and 65.2 percent of the students qualify for free and reduced-price meals. The percentage of special education students at ISAAC is 18.3 percent. ISAAC’s EL population is 19.7 percent.</p> <p>Indicator 3.4: ISAAC 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 very good. Parents indicated that teachers are responsive and attentive to student needs and the response time of school staff to parent questions or concerns is prompt. Parents stated that they have many opportunities to be involved in their child’s education and participate in school functions. Parents expressed support for what they perceive is a strong curriculum with a focus on the arts, where students are encouraged to do more with appropriate supports. 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 80 individuals attended the public hearing, and 22 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. Two adults and a student expressed concern about the newly appointed Director while serving as Principal at the former school, and urged school staff and school Board to maintain strong oversight of the Director’s conduct and duties. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic a notice was sent to the school community encouraging individuals to in-lieu of physically attending the public hearing to submit written testimony regarding the school’s renewal to CSDE. This solicitation resulted in 6 responses, two in support of the schools renewal and four against the appointment of the new director.</p> <p>Indicator 3.5: A review of ISAAC’s school culture and climate data in Table 2 reports an average daily attendance rate for 2018-19 of 95 percent which meets the CSDE’s goal of 95 percent. The school’s chronic absenteeism rate of 10.2 percent is 0.2 percentage points below the state’s average of 10.4 percent and has decreased 8.5 percentage points from the school’s 2017-18 chronic absenteeism rate of 18.7 percent. ISAAC’s 2018-19 student suspension rate of 14.4 percent is 7.7 percentage points above the state rate of 6.7 percent and 5.9 percentage points above New London’s rate of 8.5 percent. The suspensions have decreased 6.4 percentage points from 20.8 percent in 2017-18. ISAAC must continue its efforts to reduce its suspension rate going forward.</p> 	

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input 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 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
Notes and Evidence:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicator 4.1: The school website and Board documents demonstrate that Board meetings are open and accessible to the public. The 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 administrative offices. Indicator 4.2: A review of ISAAC’s 2019-20 Public School Information System (PSIS) data reports the percentage of special education students at the school as 18.3 percent. ISAAC 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, ISAAC has a special education supervisor, four full-time special education teachers, and three one-to-one special education instructional assists. Classes with students with IEPs are co-taught by a special education and general Education teacher. Some special education services are provided as pull-out in a resource room. All sending districts provide related service providers as required by student IEPs. The services provided include speech, language, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and social work services to meet student needs. Currently, there is no formal verification system in place at the school to insure that all required IEP related services are provided. The school is in the process of developing formal system of verifying the delivery of related services and securing the provision of any services that are missed. <p>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 ISAAC. This allows for more robust participation of the school’s staff. Parents/Guardians, students (as appropriate), and required PPT members from the district of residence and ISAAC are invited to participate in the meeting. The PPT develops, reviews, and revises the IEP based upon the student’s individualized needs.</p> <p>ISAAC is currently in the process of arranging staff training with the State Education Resource Center (SERC), facilitated by the CSDE Bureau of Special Education. The training will help to familiarize staff with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), their responsibility for the implementation of IEPs, PPT participation and the provision of accommodations and modifications to special education students. Student education files are kept in locked file cabinets and there are access logs in each file.</p>	

- **Indicator 4.3:** Through an analysis of the renewal materials and meeting with stakeholder groups, it is evident that ISAAC is working to ensuring the success of English Learners (ELs). The school has developed an EL service model, employing a TESOL teacher, and demonstrating the integration of EL supports in the core curriculum. The school is commended for taking these actions and providing a comprehensive collection of the EL forms, procedures and assessments in its Charter Renewal Application materials. The school is in the process of making minor adjustments to their policies to reflect the statewide identification procedures.
- **Indicator 4.4:** ISAAC’s 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 ISAAC’s staff file of May 5, 2020, reports 93.3 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 30 staff members requiring certification, 26 staff or 86.6 percent hold a valid certificate, 2 staff or 6.7 percent hold other permits or authorizations, and 2 staff or 6.7 percent are out of compliance with no active certificate or permit on file. The school is working with these staff ensure certification compliance is achieved.

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.

ISAAC is in compliance with Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM) Program. However, it is recommended that the school train additional reflection paper reviewers that is equivalent to the number of reflection papers submitted by the school’s beginning teachers.

ISAAC 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 ISAAC 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 Innovation

INTERDISTRICT SCHOOL FOR ARTS AND COMMUNICATION DATA

Table 1: 2019-20 Student Enrollment and Demographic Information (latest audited student data)

Grades served:	6-8
Total enrollment:	279
Percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced price meals:	65.2
Percentage of special education students:	18.3
Percentage of students with limited English proficiency:	19.7
Percentage American Indian or Alaska Native:	*
Percentage of Asian students:	2.2
Percentage of Black students:	15.1
Percentage of Hispanic students:	62.4
Percentage of Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander:	*
Percentage of Caucasian students:	17.6

*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:	95.4%	93.8%	95.0%	
Chronic absenteeism rate:	7.7%	18.7%	10.2%	10.4%
Number of in-school suspensions:	59	88	50	
Number of out-of-school suspensions:	9	28	31	
Suspension rate (% students with 1+ suspension):	15.6%	20.8%	14.4%	6.7%
Number of expulsions:	0	*	*	
Cohort graduation rate (if applicable):	N/A	N/A	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:	113	55	36
Number of enrolled students who left during the school year, or who did not re-enroll the next year and did not complete the highest grade at the school:	26	24	N/A

INTERDISTRICT SCHOOL FOR ARTS AND COMMUNICATION STATE TEST DATA

Table 4: Grades 3-8 Smarter Balanced Assessment - Percentage of students at level 3 and 4 (met/exceeded)								
	ELA				MATH			
GRADE	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	29.7	30.2	31.5	55.7	9.3	10.6	23.0	48.1
6	*	23.3	23.2	55.3	10.2	14.4	11.8	45.4
7	26.4	*	23.6	56.1	10.3	9.5	17.7	46.1
8	28.6	33.3	27.1	55.8	7.1	7.4	14.0	43.5

Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication 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	25.9	24.6	51.2
8	25.9	25.2	52.2

*The data are suppressed to ensure confidentiality.



GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ADMINISTRATION OFFICES

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PHONE (860) 572-2100 • FAX (860) 572-2107

October 8, 2019

Ms. Lisa Lamenzo
State of Connecticut
State Department of Education
Box 2219
Hartford, CT 06145

Dear Ms. Lamenzo:

Thank you for soliciting my input regarding Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication (ISAAC) in New London, Connecticut. The school provides a welcome choice option for parents in Southeastern, Connecticut, and I would encourage the State Department of Education to renew its charter. Groton has 18 students attending ISAAC, and we hope the school will continue to serve our students.

Sincerely,

Michael H. Graner, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

MHG/jem