

VII.B.

Connecticut State Board of Education Hartford

To Be Proposed:

March 1, 2023

Resolved, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (g) of Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes, renews the charter of Brass City Charter School from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2027, subject to the Commissioner's March 1, 2023, memorandum to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Approved by a vote of _____, this first day of March, Two Thousand Twenty-Three.

Signed: _____
Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Secretary
State Board of Education

**Connecticut State Board of Education
Hartford**

To: State Board of Education
From: Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education
Date: March 1, 2023
Subject: Renewal of State Charter: Brass City Charter School, Waterbury

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, data submissions, 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

Brass City Charter School (Brass City) opened in the fall of 2013. The latest CSDE audited student enrollment data from 2021-22 reports 360 students in Grades Pre-Kindergarten-8 with 100 percent residing in Waterbury (the host district). Brass City has the maximum approved student enrollment of 360 seats. Table 1 on page 13 of the attached Charter Renewal Report provides the latest available audited 2021-22 student enrollment and demographic data. Fifty-five percent of Brass City students qualify for free or reduced-price meals and 10.8 percent of the students receive special education services. The mission of Brass City is “to provide a rigorous academic and holistic social-emotional learning program that eliminates the achievement gap for under-resourced students and ensures all students soar academically and develop as people of character who lead meaningful and productive lives, and contribute to their community.”

Charter Renewal Process

Application for Renewal of Charter: The CSDE accepted an application for the renewal of Brass City’s charter on September 9, 2022. 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. Brass City submitted data and evidence to substantiate the charter school’s written responses.

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

Renewal Site Visit: On October 25, 2022, the CSDE renewal team conducted an onsite visit at Brass City. The purpose of the onsite visit was to observe Brass City 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 onsite visit observations, document reviews, interviews, and focus groups. The team spoke with board members, administrators, staff, students, 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 Brass City from the Superintendent of Waterbury Public Schools (WPS) and from contiguous school districts: Cheshire, Middlebury, Naugatuck, Plymouth, Prospect, Thomaston, Watertown, and Wolcott. The CSDE did not receive any responses to the solicitation. The CSDE received letters supporting the renewal of the charter school from State Senator, Joan V. Hartley, (see Attachment A), and State Representative, Deputy Speaker, Geraldo Reyes, Jr., (see Attachment B).

Public Hearing: Allan Taylor, member of the SBE, and the CSDE staff held a public hearing on November 17, 2022, in the city of Waterbury, and heard from individuals on the potential charter renewal of Brass City and the impact it is having on the community. Public hearing participants included members of the Brass City community, including members of the governing board, family members, students, graduates, school staff, and community members. Over 110 people attended the public hearing. Thirty-four 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.

Review of Documents and Site Visit Findings

The most recent available data and information contained in the Charter Renewal Report and the state student data (beginning on page 7) indicates Brass City's performance according to the four performance standards. The report highlights school strengths and areas for continued growth.

Areas of Strengths Include:

- While Brass City's 2021-22 Accountability Index score of 66.4 percent, outperformed Waterbury Public Schools' score of 59.9 by 6.5 percentage points and is within 3.3 percentage points of the state average of 69.7 percent, Brass City's 2021-22 Accountability Index score decreased by 15.2 percentage points over the three reporting periods (2017-18, 2018-19, and 2021-22), from 81.6 percent in 2017-18 to 66.4 percent in 2021-22, trending down over the last three reporting periods.
- While Brass City's English language arts (ELA) Performance Index-All Students has exceeded the host district and the state over the three reporting periods (2017-18, 2018-19, and 2021-22), it has decreased by 11.3 index points, from an index of 76.2 in 2017-18 to an index of 64.9 in 2021-22.
- While Brass City's Mathematics Performance Index-All Students has exceeded the host district over the three reporting periods (2017-18, 2018-19, and 2021-22) and the state in 2017-18 and 2018-19 and is within 0.5 index points of the state average in 2021-22, it has decreased 15.0 index points from an index of 73.1 in 2017-18 to an index of 58.1 in 2021-22.
- Brass City's 2021-22 ELA Academic Growth-All Students of 69.9 percent exceeded the host district and the state and has increased 19.0 percentage points from 50.9 percent in 2018-19.
- Brass City's 2021-22 Mathematics Academic Growth-All Students of 76.9 percent exceeded the host district and the state and has increased 23.9 percentage points from 53.0 percent in 2018-19.
- While Brass City's ELA Performance Index-High Needs Students has exceeded the host district and the state over the three reporting periods (2017-18, 2018-19, and 2021-22), it has decreased 15.7 index points over the three reporting periods, going from an index of 74.5 in 2017-18 to an index of 58.8 in 2021-22.
- While Brass City's Mathematics Performance Index-High Needs Students has exceeded the host district and the state over the three reporting periods (2017-18, 2018-19, and 2021-22), it has decreased 18.9 index points over the three reporting periods, going from an index of 71.7 in 2017-18 to an index of 52.8 in 2021-22.

- Brass City’s 2021-22 ELA Academic Growth-High Needs Students of 69.3 percent exceeded the host district and the state and has increased 18.1 percentage points from 51.2 percent in 2018-19.
- Brass City’s 2021-22 Mathematics Academic Growth-High Needs Students of 76.3 percent exceeded the host district and the state and has increased 27.4 percentage points from 48.9 percent in 2018-19.
- A review of Brass City’s chronic absenteeism rates of 8.8 percent in 2018-19, and 10.4 percent in 2019-20 are below the host district and state. In 2021-22, during the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the school’s chronic absenteeism rate experienced an increase of 27.0 percent. While above the state average of 23.7 percent by 3.3 percentage points, Brass City’s chronic absenteeism rate is in keeping with the state and below the host district of 39.5 percent.
- Brass City’s suspension rates of 4.8 percent in 2019-20 and 3.5 percent in 2021-22 have trended down and have remained below the state and host district averages.
- Brass City’s 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2021-22 Discipline Tier based on suspensions/expulsions data has remained at Tier 1, the highest designation achieved by districts with low suspension rates and low racial/ethnic disparities in discipline data compared to all other districts.
- Brass City demonstrates strong community support as evidenced by testimony provided by individuals at the public hearing and interviews with parents and students during the site visit.
- Brass City’s website and governing board documents demonstrate that the governing board of directors’ meetings are open and accessible to the public.
- No significant findings, conditions, or internal weaknesses were uncovered in Brass City’s three most recent certified financial audits.
- A review of the school’s finances found it to be financially viable.

Areas for Continued Growth Include:

- Brass City’s Accountability Index has decreased 15.2 index points over the three reporting periods (2017-18, 2018-19, and 2021-22), from an index of 81.6 in 2017-18 to an index of 66.4 in 2021-22.
- The school’s ELA Performance Index-All Students has decreased 11.3 index points over the three reporting periods (2017-18, 2018-19, and 2021-22), from an index of 76.2 in 2017-18 to an index of 64.9 in 2021-22.
- Brass City’s Mathematics Performance Index-All Students has decreased 15.0 index points over the three reporting periods (2017-18, 2018-19, and 2021-22), from an index of 73.1 in 2017-18 to an index of 58.1 points in 2021-22.
- The school’s ELA Performance Index-High Needs Students has decreased 15.7 index points over the three reporting periods (2017-18, 2018-19, and 2021-22), from an index of 74.5 in 2017-18 to an index of 58.8 in 2021-22.
- Brass City’s Mathematics Performance Index-High Needs Students has decreased 18.9 index points over the three reporting periods (2017-18, 2018-19, and 2021-22), from an index of 71.7 in 2017-18 to an index of 52.8 in 2021-22.
- A review of Brass City’s Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual (APPM) by staff from the CSDE’s Office of Internal Audit determined the APPM lacked some of the standard sections of an APPM. The missing items include: special education billing rate, thresholds and signatories of checks and contracts, inventory list, and bidding thresholds for certain purchases. The governing board indicated it plans to develop and approve the policy changes by the end of this school year.

- A review of Brass City’s state certified staff file and employee roster determined two staff are not properly certified. The school has issued a plan to attain certification for the staff by end of this school year.
- A review of Brass City’s Teacher Education and Monitoring (TEAM) Program determined it must train additional TEAM Reviewers. The school has identified three additional staff that will be trained by the end of this school year.
- A review of Brass City’s Educator Evaluation and Support Plan (EESP) determined that the school’s principal must be evaluated based on the full System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED) model. The school has put forward a plan to comply with this requirement by the end of this school year.
- A review of the governing board meeting minutes and interviews of focus groups determined Brass City must reinstitute the Audit/Finance Committee and include subcommittee meeting minutes to the website. The governing board has initiated these changes since its January 18, 2023, meeting.

Conclusion

Brass City Charter School is providing its students, families, and community with a viable public school choice option, achieving its mission, and making strides in closing Connecticut’s achievement gap. The school’s suspension rates over three reporting periods have remained below the host district and state averages and have trended down from 2019-20 to 2021-22. Brass City’s Tier 1 Discipline designation over the last three reporting periods are representative of a school that equitably implements clear and consistent behavioral policies and procedures across the students it serves. The school’s chronic absenteeism rates have remained low in the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years. While during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021-22 the school experienced an increase, the increase was not as significant as that experienced by the host district and is within 3.3 percentage points of the state average. To meet student needs, school administration and staff have developed systems and supports to identify students and families with attendance issues, determine the root causes, and provide supports and resources to address barriers that negatively affect student attendance. Brass City’s Academic Growth for ELA and Mathematics-All Students and High Needs Students from, 2018-19 to 2021-22, has increased, exceeding the host district and the state in 2021-22. While Brass City’s ELA and Mathematics Performance Index-All Students and High Needs Students rates over the three reporting periods have remained above the host district and state or near the state, the decrease over time in these rates must be addressed.

Charter Renewal Recommendation

Acknowledging that Brass City’s performance indicators are not without weakness, the CSDE recommends that the SBE renew the school’s charter for a period of four years, subject to the following conditions:

1. By April 3, 2023, Brass City shall submit a corrective action plan acceptable to the Commissioner of Education. The corrective action plan must include strategies and action steps to improve student academic achievement. Additionally, Brass City must utilize the CSDE Acceleration Cycle as a framework for developing and implementing an improvement plan to address learning acceleration, learning recovery, and student enrichment because of the pandemic. The school must convene a team to develop and monitor the implementation of a plan that intentionally addresses unfinished learning while focusing on the teaching of prioritized, essential content, and maintaining a high level of rigor for all learners. Brass City shall submit to the CSDE, on a bimonthly basis beginning October 2023, 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. Brass City shall implement the corrective actions within thirty days following the Commissioner of Education’s acceptance of the plan.

The CSDE will notify Brass City of action taken by the SBE following its meeting on March 1, 2023. The school will be advised of relevant technical assistance opportunities designed to improve its educational program. The CSDE will conduct follow-up visits to ensure Brass City is addressing the issues raised in this memorandum.

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

Reviewed by: Irene E. Parisi, M.Ed.
Chief Academic Officer

CHARTER RENEWAL REPORT | 2022

Charter School Information		
Charter School Name:	Brass City Charter School	
School Director/ Principal:	Dr. Barbara Ruggiero	
School Board Chairperson:	Annie Scott	
Location (City/Town):	Waterbury	
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:	597.8/900	66.4
Notes and Evidence:		
<p>Brass City Charter School’s (Brass City) 2021-22 Accountability Index of 66.4 percent is 3.3 percentage points below the state’s Accountability Index of 69.7 percent. Schools that meet Standard 1: are schools earning an accountability index score from 85 to 100 (Category 1), schools earning an accountability index score from 70 to 84.9 percent (Category 2), and schools earning an accountability index score of 69.9 percent or lower and have not been identified as a Turnaround or Focus School (Category 3). Brass City’s Accountability Index score of 66.4 percent places its performance in Category 3, which earns a does not meet for Standard 1. Brass City’s 2021-22 Next Generation Accountability Report is shown in detail on the next page.</p>		

Next Generation Accountability, 2021-22 – Brass City Charter School (Grades: PK-8)
School Category: 3

Indicator	Index/Rate	Target	Points Earned	Max Points	% Points Earned	State % Points Earned
1a. ELA Performance Index - All Students	64.9	75	43.3	50	86.6	85.6
1b. ELA Performance Index - High Needs Students	58.8	75	39.2	50	78.4	72.3
1c. Math Performance Index - All Students	58.1	75	38.8	50	77.5	78.2
1d. Math Performance Index - High Needs Students	52.8	75	35.2	50	70.4	63.6
1e. Science Performance Index - All Students	59.8	75	39.9	50	79.8	81.9
1f. Science Performance Index - High Needs Students	51.9	75	34.6	50	69.2	68.4
2a. ELA Academic Growth - All Students	69.9%	100%	69.9	100	69.9	60.4
2b. ELA Academic Growth - High Needs Students	69.3%	100%	69.3	100	69.3	56.2
2c. Math Academic Growth - All Students	76.9%	100%	76.9	100	76.9	65.2
2d. Math Academic Growth - High Needs Students	76.3%	100%	76.3	100	76.3	59.1
2e. Progress Toward English Proficiency - Literacy	.	100%	.	.	.	64.9
2f. Progress Toward English Proficiency - Oral	.	100%	.	.	.	57.4
4a. Chronic Absenteeism - All Students	27.0%	<=5%	5.9	50	11.8	25.1
4b. Chronic Absenteeism - High Needs Students	29.4%	<=5%	1.2	50	2.4	0.0
5. Preparation for CCR - Percent Taking Courses	.	75%	.	.	.	100.0
6. Preparation for CCR - Percent Passing Exams	.	75%	.	.	.	58.0
7. On-track to High School Graduation	76.9%	94%	40.9	50	81.8	87.9
8. 4-year Graduation: All Students (2021 Cohort)	.	94%	.	.	.	95.3
9. 6-year Graduation: High Needs Students (2019 Cohort)	.	94%	.	.	.	90.6
10. Postsecondary Entrance (Graduating Class 2021)	.	75%	.	.	.	88.2
11. Physical Fitness (estimated participation rate = 97.0%)	39.8%	75%	26.5	50	53.1	61.1
12. Arts Access	.	60%	.	.	.	87.4
Accountability Index	.		597.8	900	66.4	69.7

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	75.0	58.8	16.2	16.6	N
Math Performance Index Gap	67.3	52.8	14.6	18.5	N
Science Performance Index Gap	71.6	51.9	19.8	17.9	Y
Graduation Rate Gap (2019 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	100.0
ELA - High Needs Students	100.0
Math - All Students	100.0
Math - High Needs Students	100.0
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input 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"> <p>Indicator 2.1: The CSDE site visit staff reviewed Brass City’s last three certified financial audits and uncovered no significant findings, conditions, or internal control weakness.</p> <p>Indicator 2.2: The CSDE site visit staff reviewed Brass City’s last three certified financial audits, Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual (APPM), Board Policies and Procedures Manual (BPPM), and budgets, and interviewed the school’s executive director, principals, business office manager, and governing board members. Staff from the CSDE’s Office of Internal Audit determined the APPM and BPPM contained the standard sections of such documents. However, the APPM required amendments including the special education billing rate agreement with Waterbury Public School (WPS), thresholds and signatories of checks and contracts, to establish and maintain an inventory list, and bidding quotation thresholds for purchases. The school and its governing board plan to draft and approve the policy changes in the coming months and will forward them to the CSDE when completed. The reviewers determined that Brass City completed on-time submission of certified audits and annual budgets.</p> <p>Indicator 2.3: Staff from the CSDE’s Office of Internal Audit reviewed Brass City’s latest certified financial audit and determined its debt to asset ratio (total liabilities/total assets), total margin (net income/total revenue), current asset ratio (current assets/current liabilities), days of unrestricted cash (unrestricted cash/((total expenditures – depreciation)/365)), and debt service coverage ratio (net income +depreciation + interest expense)/(principal + interest payments) meets or exceeds the ranges recommended by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA), signifying overall financial health.</p> <p>Indicator 2.4: A review of Brass City’s school policies regarding conflict of interest and nepotism were found to comply with the CSDE administrative oversight guidelines. Brass City’s policies and procedures regarding background checks of staff and board members, open board meetings, and board membership and membership training were reviewed and found to comply with state and federal laws, rules, and regulations. This finding is supported by a review of school policies and procedures, background checks, board training records, and the school’s website. A review of Brass City’s bylaws found them to comply with state and federal laws, rules, and regulations. A review of governing board minutes determined that voting results need to be clearly stated. While the minutes for governing board meetings are complete and posted, the minutes for subcommittee meetings are not and must be. Additionally, the governing board must re-establish the Audit/Finance Committee and hold regular meetings to monitor and review the school’s financial matters. The governing board has instituted these changes, beginning with its meeting convened on January 18, 2023, and each meeting thereafter.</p> <p>Indicator 2.5: As evidenced during the site visit, Brass City has safe and well-maintained school facilities to support teaching and learning. The facility has been approved by the Waterbury Fire Marshal and Building Department. The school has proof of property insurance.</p> 	

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM

Notes and Evidence:

- Indicator 3.1:** The latest CSDE audited student enrollment data from 2021-22 reported 360 students in Grades PK-8 with 100 percent residing in Waterbury (the host district). 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 Brass City’s waiting list information (Table 5, page 14) determined that the school maintains a waiting list of families beyond the available number of seats. In 2022-23, 324 students were on the waiting list. The waiting list has included more than 267 students each year for the past three years.
- Indicator 3.3:** A review of Brass City’s latest CSDE audited Public School Information System (PSIS) data from 2021-22 reported 55.0 percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price meals. The percentage of special education students is 10.8 percent. Brass City’s Multilingual learners/English learners (MLs/ELs) population is 2.8 percent. To better reflect the demographics of the surrounding community, the school must seek to enroll more students who are MLs/ELs.
- Indicator 3.4:** Brass City demonstrates strong community support, as evidenced by parent interviews conducted by the CSDE renewal team on the day of the site visit. The parent focus group described various communication methods between the school and families, including texts, phone calls, emails, and written communication including translations in second languages, when necessary. Currently, parents report receiving regular updates from the school that detail student academics and behavior. Parents expressed support for what they perceive is a good educational model that prepares their children for high school and beyond. Parents indicated they were satisfied with the school’s commitment to serving students with diverse needs, while providing a safe and nurturing environment. Students and graduates, who testified during the public hearing and student interviews conducted by the CSDE renewal team on the day of the site visit, reported they were generally happy with the school and choice opportunity that the school provides. Over 110 individuals attended the November 17, 2022, renewal public hearing, and 34 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:** School culture and climate policies reviewed by the CSDE’s site visit staff were clear and concise. Classroom observations revealed consistent implementation of the school’s behavior management model. Brass City’s chronic absenteeism rate of 10.4 percent in 2019-20 was below the host district and the state. In 2021-22, during the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the school experienced a rate increase of 27.0 percent. While above the state average of 23.7 percent, Brass City’s chronic absenteeism rate is below the host district of 39.5 percent. Brass City’s 2019-20 student suspension rate of 4.8 percent and 2021-22 suspension rate of 3.5 percent were below the host district and state averages.

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 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, TEAM and EESP	<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"> <p>Indicator 4.1: The school’s website and governing board documents demonstrated that the governing board meetings are open and accessible to the public. The governing board’s meeting schedule for the year and meeting agendas are posted on the school’s website. Education records and testing data are kept in locked file cabinets in a secure room.</p> <p>Indicator 4.2: A review of Brass City’s latest audited 2021-22 Public School Information System (PSIS) data reported the percentage of special education students at the school is 10.8 percent. All special education identified students reside in Waterbury. To meet the needs of identified students, Brass City employed a special education coordinator, two full-time certified special education teachers, and five paraprofessionals. Four of the paraprofessionals provide 1:1 assistance and one paraprofessional served the needs of two students. Waterbury Public Schools (WPS) provides any required related services outlined in the student’s Individualized Education Plan (IEP) including any psychological services provided through an outside contractor. The special education teacher maintains a log of related services provided. WPS also maintains a separate log. Any missed related services are made up. All the IEPs reviewed noted that students receive specialized instruction services in a pull-out, small group, or individual instruction in accordance with the student’s IEP.</p> <p>The special education coordinator reviews each student’s IEP with the student’s general education teacher. This includes the review of the accommodations and modifications for each identified student. The special education teacher follows up with the general education teachers to provide support, answer questions, and ensure accommodations and modifications are being implemented per the student’s IEP. The charter school schedules and holds all the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meetings. A special education coordinator from WPS attends all the PPT meetings. The special education coordinator works with WPS representatives to ensure IEPs are completed and finalized by WPS.</p> <p>Student education files are kept in locked file cabinets in a secure room. All files reviewed were found to be well-organized and maintained. Some files were found to not have required individual sign-in access sheets. The school has corrected this and now meets the requirement.</p> <p>The CSDE site visit team encouraged the administration to consider training regarding the PPT decision-making process as it relates to Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).</p> 	

- **Indicator 4.3:** A review of Brass City’s latest audited 2021-22 PSIS data reports indicated that the percentage of students identified as MLs/ELs at the school is 2.8 percent. Through an analysis of the renewal materials and meeting with stakeholder groups, it became evident that Brass City is committed to ensuring the success of MLs/ELs at the school. The school serves a small population of MLs/ELs but a larger population of multilingual families. The school ensures that families are engaged and informed through regular communication and written information in the language that they understand. The school is committed to providing training to teachers to enable them to integrate ML/EL supports in the core curriculum. The school has applied for the Title III grant funds for which it is eligible, as it has done in preceding years. Per the CSDE request, Brass City has revised its Identification/Continuation of Services Letter to contain all required language provided in the CSDE template letter. The school is commended for taking these actions and providing a collection of the ML/EL forms, procedures, and assessments in its Charter Renewal Application materials.
- **Indicator 4.4:** Brass City 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. A review of Brass City’s staff file determined 93.5 percent of its staff are in certification compliance with all but 2.0 full-time equivalent staff not in certification compliance. School administration is working with the CSDE Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification to ensure that staff members who are not in compliance fully comply with teacher certification requirements by the end of the 2022-23 school year.

A review of the school’s Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM) Program determined that the school requires a minimum of two additional trained TEAM Program Reviewers to review reflection papers from the CSDE TEAM Program Reviewer Dashboard. The school has identified three teachers that have signed up to receive the TEAM Program Reviewer training, to be completed by the end of this school year.

A review of the school’s Educator Evaluation and Support Plan (EESP) determined that the school’s principal be evaluated based on the full System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED) model, including all four Domains of the CT Leader Evaluation and Support Rubric, and setting/attaining Student Learning Indicators and Stakeholder Feedback (parents and staff) goals. The school will put forward a plan to comply with this requirement by the end of this school year.

- **Indicator 4.6:** A review of legal actions brought against Brass City 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:
Robert Kelly Charter School Program Manager	Irene Parisi Chief Academic Officer

BRASS CITY CHARTER SCHOOL TABLES

Table 1: 2021-22 Student Enrollment and Demographic Information

Grades served:	PK-8
Total enrollment:	360
Percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price meals:	55.0
Percentage of students with disabilities:	10.8
Percentage of students identified as English Learners:	2.8
Percentage of American Indian or Alaska Native students:	*
Percentage of Asian students:	*
Percentage of Black or African American students:	31.7
Percentage of Hispanic or Latino students:	51.4
Percentage of Two or More Races:	5.6
Percentage of White students:	7.5

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

Table 2: School Performance: All Students

Indicator	2017-18			2018-19			2021-22		
	School	Host District	State	School	Host District	State	School	Host District	State
Accountability Index	81.6	61.4	74.9	69.5	64.6	74.2	66.4	59.9	69.7
ELA-All Students									
Performance Index (Target 75)	76.2	53.9	67.6	71.6	55.6	67.7	64.9	51.3	64.2
Academic Growth Average Percentage of Target Achieved (Target 100%)	66.7	50.8	60.7	50.9	57.8	59.9	69.9	58.6	60.4
Math-All Students									
Performance Index (Target 75)	73.1	47.8	62.7	66.7	48.6	63.1	58.1	42.3	58.6
Academic Growth Average Percentage of Target Achieved (Target 100%)	79.9	50.9	61.9	53.0	53.8	62.5	76.9	54.6	65.2

In 2019-20, Connecticut received a waiver from the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) to be exempt from administering state academic assessments and holding schools and districts accountable using the Next Generation Accountability System.

In 2020-21, Connecticut secured a waiver from the USDOE to be exempted from implementing the Next Generation Accountability System for schools and districts; and while districts made their best effort to assess as many students as possible, there was not a requirement to test at least 95 percent of students as in past years. Additionally, school learning models changed throughout the school year and students were remote to varying degrees due to factors beyond educator control. Also, some students tested remotely, which was a new construct. As such, 2020-21 testing data is not being used as part of this analysis.

Table 3: School Performance-High Needs Students									
	2017-18			2018-19			2021-22		
Indicator	School	Host District	State	School	Host District	State	School	Host District	State
ELA-High Needs Students									
Performance Index (Target 75)	74.5	52.1	57.5	68.8	54.1	58.1	58.8	49.7	54.2
Academic Growth Average Percentage of Target Achieved (Target 100%)	69.6	49.9	55.6	51.2	57.0	55.1	69.3	58.0	56.2
Math-High Needs Students									
Performance Index (Target 75)	71.7	46.0	52.0	64.0	47.1	52.7	52.8	40.8	47.7
Academic Growth Average Percentage of Target Achieved (Target 100%)	79.0	50.1	55.4	48.9	53.3	55.2	76.3	54.1	59.1

In 2019-20, Connecticut received a waiver from the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) to be exempt from administering state academic assessments and holding schools and districts accountable using the Next Generation Accountability System.

In 2020-21, Connecticut secured a waiver from the USDOE to be exempted from implementing the Next Generation Accountability System for schools and districts; and while districts made their best effort to assess as many students as possible, there was not a requirement to test at least 95 percent of students as in past years. Additionally, school learning models changed throughout the school year and students were remote to varying degrees due to factors beyond educator control. Also, some students tested remotely, which was a new construct. As such, 2020-21 testing data is not being used as part of this analysis.

Table 4: School Culture and Climate									
*Data are suppressed to ensure confidentiality									
	2018-19			2019-20 ¹			2021-22		
Indicator	School	Host District	State	School	Host District	State	School	Host District	State
Chronic Absenteeism Rate (%)	8.8	15.6	10.4	10.4	21.0	12.2	27.0	39.5	23.7
Suspension Rate (%)	4.0	14.6	6.7	4.8	10.8	4.9	3.5	13.4	6.5
Discipline Tier	1	4	3	1	4	3	1	1	1

Table 5: Student Waitlist and Mobility Information				
Performance Metric:		2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Waiting list number:		564	268	324
Number of enrolled students who left during the school year:		14	12	3
Number of students who did not re-enroll the next year and had not completed the highest grade at the school:		41	25	25

¹ In the 2019-20 school year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person classes were cancelled in mid-March; all districts switched to fully remote instruction for the remainder of the school year.

SENATOR JOAN V. HARTLEY*Fifteenth District*

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 Hartford, CT 06106-1591

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Regulation Review

November 17th, 2022

Alan B Taylor-State Board of Education
 Felicia Canty -State Department of Education
 Connecticut State Department of Education
 450 Columbus Boulevard
 Hartford, CT 06103

For the record my name is Joan Hartley State Senator from the 15th district representing Waterbury and the Greater Waterbury area. I first of all want to thank you for the opportunity to participate in this Public Hearing and to recognize the vitally important work of the State Department of Education and State Board of Education.

Thank You.

Mr. Taylor and Mrs. Canty, It has been an honor to know, to work with, and to support the Brass City Charter School since its inception in 2013 when the school first opened its doors in the Willow Plaza NRZ having acquired the former St. Margaret's Parish campus.

From its start of pre-K and 1st grade totaling 113 students, to date, now, fully rolled-out to 8th grade with an enrollment of 360 students and a wait list of approximately 600 BCCS has been transformative on every level.

It has brought stability to this Neighborhood Revitalization Zone but most importantly it has been a beacon of hope and opportunity to now hundreds of underserved children, their parents and community. It has offered academically competitive pre-K through Eight learning alternatives, where students are taught to be life-long learners, that they can excel beyond their zip code, can achieve their dreams, and can bring about social and cultural change to their world.

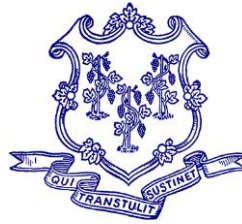
One walk through the Brass City Charter School Halls will bear witness to a school culture of respect - respect for each other - respect for teachers and staff - for community and most of all a respect for self.

Several years ago a parent once described Brass City Charter School to me as "the miracle on Willow Street." I speak on behalf of all those families who have experienced "the miracle on Willow Street" and for the many others who hope to be here, in support of the BCCS Charter Renewal, as well as, any material Charter expansion.

Again, Thank You for your distinguished dedication and service to our children in the pursuit of excellence in education.

Sincerely,

Joan V. Hartley
 State Senate 15th District



State of Connecticut
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November 17, 2022

Re: *Brass City Charter School Renewal*

Dear Members of The State Board of Education,

I am extremely pleased to voice my strong support regarding the Brass City Charter School renewal application. I am proud to say that the school educates 100% of Waterbury students. It serves a high percentage of minorities as well as having a high state success rate in reading and comprehension for 2nd and 3rd graders.

The school has a smaller child to teacher ratio, which is a good model compared to public schools with 20 plus children to one teacher. It also has a proven track record of success in state and in the nation.

Logistically, it's just as important where the school is currently located as it's not in the best area of Waterbury, yet it is thriving. It's bringing stability to that neighborhood and quality of life improvements. I am 100% in support of all charter schools but am particularly fond of Brass City Charter School as it resides in my district in Waterbury.

I am proud to say that there have now been two BCCS graduating classes and I've had the honor of visiting and participating in the program since it's infancy.

I wish continued success for the school and many congratulations for their accomplishments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Geraldo C. Reyes Jr." in a cursive script.

Geraldo Reyes Jr.