

# VII.B.

## Connecticut State Board of Education Hartford

### To Be Proposed:

March 6, 2024

**Resolved**, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (g) of Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes, renews the charter of Capital Preparatory Harbor School, Bridgeport from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2028, subject to the conditions and recommendations set forth in the Commissioner's March 6, 2024, memorandum to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Approved by a vote of \_\_\_\_\_, this sixth day of March, Two Thousand Twenty-Four.

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 6, 2024  
**Subject:** Renewal of State Charter: Capital Preparatory Harbor School, Bridgeport

**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**

Capital Preparatory Harbor School (CPHS) opened in the fall of 2015. CPHS has the maximum approved student enrollment of 778 seats. The latest CSDE audited student enrollment data from 2022-23 reports 772 students in Grades K-12, with 92.7 percent residing in Bridgeport (the host district) and 7.3 percent from 12 area towns. Of those students, 70.2 percent qualify for free or reduced-price meals, 10.8 percent receive special education services, and 9.1 percent of students are identified as English Learners/Multilingual Learners (ELs/MLs). Table 1 on page 16 of the attached Charter Renewal Report provides the latest available audited 2022-23 student enrollment and demographic data. The mission of CPHS is to “provide historically disadvantaged students with the college and career readiness skills needed to become responsible and engaged citizens for social justice.”

On June 3, 2020, CPHS received a three-year charter renewal with conditions. Conditions stated in the 2020 renewal required CPHS to develop three corrective action plans; 1) to improve student academic achievement; 2) to bring its staff into certification compliance by October 31, 2020; and 3) to implement the Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM) Program with fidelity to the statutory requirements by October 31, 2020. Due to implications of the pandemic, the SBE approved a one-year extension on July 14, 2020; the school’s charter will expire June 30, 2024.

## **Charter Renewal Process**

*Application for Renewal of Charter:* The CSDE accepted an application for the renewal of CPHS’s charter on September 8, 2023. 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. CPHS 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, ELs/MLs, school management, finance, and school governance reviewed the renewal application and requested clarification and additional information where necessary.

*Renewal Site Visit:* On October 25, 2023, the CSDE renewal team conducted an onsite visit at CPHS. The purpose of the onsite visit was to observe CPHS 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 CPHS from the Superintendent of Bridgeport Public Schools (BPS) the host district and from contiguous school districts: Fairfield, Stratford, and Trumbull. The CSDE received multiple letters of support (see Attachment A) from State House of Representatives, Andre Baker, Antonio Felipe, and Christopher Rosario, and State Senate Representatives, Rev. Dr. Herron Gaston, Douglas McCrory, and Marilyn Moore. The CSDE received a letter supporting the renewal of CPHS’s charter from Michael J. Testani, Superintendent of Fairfield Public Schools, and Benjamin Dix, Special Education Department Chair, Emmett O’Brien Technical High School (see Attachment B). The CSDE received no letters against the renewal of the school’s charter.

*Public Hearing:* Dr. Karen DuBois-Walton, Chairperson of the SBE, and the CSDE staff held a public hearing on December 19, 2023, in the City of Bridgeport and heard from individuals on the potential charter renewal of CPHS and the impact it is having on the community. Public hearing participants included members of the CPHS community, including members of the governing board, family members, students, graduates, school staff, and community members. Over 340 people attended the public hearing. Fifty 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 8) indicates CPHS's performance according to the four performance standards. The report highlights the school's strengths and areas for continued growth.

#### **Areas of Strengths Include:**

- CPHS's 2022-23 Accountability Index score has increased 7.5 index points over the three years reported from 60.9 in 2018-19 to 68.4 in 2022-23 and outperformed BPS' score of 56.7 percent by 11.7 index points and was within 0.9 percentage points of the state average score of 69.3 in 2022-23.
- CPHS's English language arts (ELA) Performance Index – All Students has exceeded the host district over the three years reported (2018-19, 2021-22, and 2022-23) and experienced an increase of 1.2 index points, from an index of 53.5 in 2021-22 to an index of 54.7 in 2022-23.
- CPHS's ELA Performance Index – High Needs Students has exceeded the host district over the three years reported (2018-19, 2021-22, and 2022-23) and experienced an increase of 2.4 index points, from an index of 51.1 in 2021-22 to an index of 53.5 and within 0.6 index points below the state in 2022-23.
- CPHS's Mathematics Performance Index – All Students has exceeded the host district over the three years reported 2018-19, 2021-22 and 2022-23 and experienced an increase of 1.1 index points, from an index of 46.2 in 2021-22 to an index of 47.3 in 2022-23.
- CPHS's Mathematics Performance Index – High Needs Students has exceeded the host district over the three reporting periods 2018-19, 2021-22 and 2022-23 and experienced an increase of 1.9 index points, from an index of 43.8 in 2021-22 to an index of 45.7 and within 3.2 index points below the state in 2022-23.
- CPHS's ELA Academic Growth – All Students has trended up over the three reporting periods (51.3 percent in 2018-19, 60.3 percent in 2021-22, and 62.5 percent in 2022-23) exceeding the host district and state in 2022-23.
- CPHS's ELA Academic Growth – High Needs Students has trended up over the three reporting periods (51.9 percent in 2018-19, 59.9 percent in 2021-22, and 63.6 percent in 2022-23) exceeding the host district and state in 2021-22 and 2022-23.
- CPHS's Mathematics Academic Growth – All Students exceeded the state and host district in 2018-19 and the host district in 2021-22 and 2022-23.
- CPHS's Mathematics Academic Growth – High Needs Students has exceeded the host district and state over the three reporting periods 2018-19, 2021-22, and 2022-23.
- CPHS's Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate of 96.6 percent exceeded the host district and the state average in 2021-22, and has increased 28.9 percentage points from 67.7 percent in 2018-19.
- CPHS's Six-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate of 100.0 percent in 2018-19 exceeded the host district and state average.
- A review of the school's College and Career Readiness indicators showed that the percentages of students taking college courses and passing exams were amongst the highest in the state.

- A review of CPHS’s chronic absenteeism rate of 7.7 percent in 2019-20 showed they were below the host district and state average. In 2021-22, during the midst of the pandemic, the school’s chronic absenteeism rate experienced an increase of 27.7 percentage points to 35.4 percent, 7.6 percentage points above the host district of 27.8 percent and 11.7 percentage points above the state average of 23.7 percent. In 2022-23, the school reduced its chronic absenteeism rate by 10.3 percentage points to 25.1 percent, 3.5 percentage points below the host district average of 28.6 percent and 5.1 percentage points above the state average of 20.0 percent.
- CPHS 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.
- A review of CPHS’s Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM) Program and Educator Evaluation and Support Plan (EESP) determined CPHS to be in compliance.
- CPHS’s website and governing board documents demonstrate that the governing board meetings are open and accessible to the public.
- No significant findings, conditions, or internal weaknesses were uncovered in CPHS’s two most recent certified financial audits.
- A review of the school’s finances found it to be financially viable.

**Areas for Continued Growth Include:**

- Whereas CPHS’s ELA Performance Index – All Students has exceeded the host district for the three years reported, it has decreased 2.4 index points from an index of 57.1 in 2018-19 to an index of 54.7 in 2022-23 and has performed below the state over the three years reported 2018-19, 2021-22, and 2022-23.
- Whereas CPHS’s ELA Performance Index – High Needs Students increased last year, CPHS’s ELA Performance Index – High Needs Students has decreased 2.8 index points over the three reporting periods from an index of 56.3 in 2018-19 to an index of 53.5 in 2022-23.
- While CPHS’s Mathematics Performance Index – All Students has exceeded the host district over the three years reported, CPHS’s Mathematics Performance Index – All Students has decreased 4.4 index points from an index of 51.7 in 2018-19 to an index of 47.3 in 2022-23 and has performed below the state over the three years reported 2018-19, 2021-22, and 2022-23.
- Whereas CPHS’s Mathematics Performance Index – High Needs Students exceeded the host district over the three years reported, CPHS’s Mathematics Performance Index – High Needs Students has decreased 5.2 index points over the three reporting periods from an index of 50.9 in 2018-19 to an index of 45.7 in 2022-23.
- While CPHS’s Mathematics Academic Growth – All Students exceed the state and host district in 2018-19 and the host district in 2021-22 and 2022-23, CPHS’s Mathematics Academic Growth – All Students has trended down each of the three years reported from 64.5 percent in 2018-19 to 61.4 percent in 2021-22 to 59.3 percent in 2022-23.
- Whereas CPHS’s Mathematics Academic Growth – High Needs Students exceed the host district and state over the three reporting periods, CPHS’s Mathematics Academic Growth – High Needs Students has trended down from 64.1 percent in 2018-19 to 61.4 percent in 2021-22 to 58.1 percent in 2022-23.
- CPHS should explore opportunities to integrate artistic experiences into the Lower school and expand opportunities at the Upper school for Arts Access.
- CPHS’s suspension rates of 8.5 percent in 2019-20 increased 7.3 percentage points during the midst of the pandemic to 15.8 percent in 2021-22, and decreased 1.2 percentage points to 14.6 percent in 2022-23. Their 2022-23 suspension rate is 7.4 percentage points above the host district’s 7.2 percent and 7.6 percentage points above the state average of 7.0 percent.

- CPHS's 2022-23 Discipline Tier Based on Suspension/Expulsion data was Tier 4. A Tier 4 designates a school with Consistently High Suspension Rates (may also have high disproportionality): Overall, Black or African American or Hispanic/Latino suspension rate  $\geq 15$  percent in two recent years. CPHS had a high overall suspension rate in 2021-22 and high suspension disproportionality among Black or African American students in 2021-22 and 2022-23. While the disproportionality of Black student suspensions was reduced between 2021-22 and 2022-23, the disproportionality remains an issue as evidenced by the school's Discipline Tier results for 2022-23. It is important that the school continues to develop its restorative approach to minimize student behavioral incidents resulting in suspensions and review its discipline policies and processes to ensure that they increase alternatives to exclusionary discipline.
- A review of CPHS's Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual (APPM) by staff from the CSDE's Office of Internal Audit determined the APPM required some edits to ensure APPM policies and procedures are exclusive to CPHS only and do not include the policies of additional schools managed by the Charter School Management Organization (CMO). The school has developed amendments to its Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual to address these recommendations. The item was placed on its school's governing board agenda for February 27, 2024, for consideration and approval.
- The CPHS governing board has specific roles and responsibilities for oversight of school operations, including financial management, management team, and CMO. However, their roles and responsibilities are not formally documented in a Board Policies and Procedures Manual (BPPM) to ensure consistency and continuity. To ensure the continuity of key oversight activities, the roles and responsibilities of the Board should be written into a BPPM, including the duties of each subcommittee. CPHS will develop a board policy to define the roles and responsibility of its governing board, including the board's committees. The school anticipates that this policy will be drafted and submitted to the governing board during the spring of 2024, for approval.
- As of February 20, 2024, CPHS had no certification compliance errors noted on its Educator Certification Compliance Report for the 2023-24 school year. However, the school is not in compliance with having at least 50 percent of their staff with a Full Certificate (Initial, Provisional, Professional, 44.2 percent). There are 52 staff requiring certification, 23 staff members or 44.2 percent hold a full certificate (initial, provisional, professional), 29 or 55.8 percent hold other permits or authorizations.

## **Conclusion**

Capital Preparatory Harbor School provides 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 2022-23 Accountability Index exceeded the host district and was on par with the state. CPHS's 2022-23 ELA Academic Growth – All Students and High Needs Students surpassed the host district and the state averages. Its 2022-23 Mathematics Academic Growth – All Students and High Needs Students exceeded the host district and was on par with or exceeded the state average. The school's 2022-23 Performance Index ELA and Mathematics – High Needs Students have increased in student performance from 2021-22 and exceeded the host district and are near the state averages. While CPHS's 2022-23 ELA and Mathematics Performance Index – All Students performance increased in student performance from 2021-22 and exceeded the host district it performed below state averages. A review of the school's suspension rate shows that while students experienced an increase in the suspension rate during the midst of the pandemic to 15.8 percent in 2021-22, it decreased 1.2 percentage points to 14.6

percent in 2022-23, remaining above the host district and state averages. While the disproportionality of Black student suspensions was reduced between 2021-22 and 2022-23, the disproportionality remains an issue as evidenced by the school's Tier 4 identification. The school's Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate of 96.6 in 2021-22 exceeded the state and host district. The school's Six-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate of 100.0 in 2018-19 exceeded the state and host district.

### **Charter Renewal Recommendation**

Acknowledging that CPHS's academic performance levels have increased, and College and Career Readiness indicators are amongst the highest in the state, 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 8, 2024, CPHS 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, CPHS 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. CPHS shall submit to the CSDE, on a bi-monthly basis beginning October 2024, a report monitoring its year-to-date progress of improving student academic achievement. The plan shall be developed in consultation with the CSDE Turnaround Office. CPHS shall implement the corrective actions within thirty days following the Commissioner of Education's acceptance of the plan.
2. By April 8, 2024, CPHS 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 to ensure they increase alternatives to exclusionary discipline; (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 that is effective and ensures that they increase alternatives to exclusionary discipline. The CSDE will review the school's discipline data through its data collections on or about December 1, March 6, and July 10. The plan shall be developed in consultation with the CSDE's Turnaround Office. CPHS shall implement the corrective actions within thirty days following the Commissioner's acceptance of the plan. It's important that the work the school has undertaken to improve student behavior continues, with an emphasis on reducing student behavior that results in removal from class and reviewing its discipline policies and procedures.

3. By April 8, 2024, CPHS shall submit a plan for the CSDE review and approval to bring its staff into certification compliance by October 31, 2024, 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) including monitoring and interventions for non-compliance; and (d) reporting of non-compliant staff including certification targets, schedules, and action steps, including responsible school staff, on August 1, 2024, to ensure compliance. The plan shall be developed in consultation with the CSDE Talent Office. CPHS shall implement the corrective actions within thirty days following the Commissioner of Education's acceptance of the plan.

In October of 2024, CPHS administrative staff will meet with the Accountability and Support Committee of the SBE and provide a status update of its corrective action plan to address student achievement, student discipline, and teacher certification. At that time the Accountability and Support Committee members and department staff will analyze the performance data and teacher certification data to determine if the prioritized strategies in the corrective action plans are making a positive impact on student outcomes, teacher practice, and all staff providing instruction are properly certified. Dependent on the status of the issues discussed, CPHS administrative staff may be called back to meet with the Accountability and Support Committee to provide a second update in the spring of 2025, and bring forth an analysis of performance data and other metrics specific to each corrective action plan.

Recognizing that CPHS must adequately address student achievement, behavior, and teacher certification through corrective actions, pursuant to Section 10-66bb(h) of the C.G.S., the Commissioner of Education may, at any time, place a charter school on probation if the school has failed to adequately demonstrate student progress or comply with applicable laws and regulations.

The CSDE will notify CPHS of action taken by the SBE following its meeting on March 6, 2024. 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 CPHS is addressing the issues raised in this memorandum.

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

Approved by: Charles E. Hewes, Ed.D.  
Deputy Commissioner for Academics & Innovation



## CHARTER RENEWAL REPORT | 2022-23

Charter School Information		
Charter School Name:	Capital Preparatory Harbor School	
School Director/ Principal:	Dr. Ayanna Carter	
School Board Chairperson:	Robert Morton	
Location (City/Town):	Bridgeport	
Rating Key		
<b>Meets</b>	The school demonstrates effective policies and practices, resulting in positive outcomes.	
<b>Pending Action</b>	The school requires minor modifications to its policies and/or practices. The school is taking satisfactory measures to remedy and address these issues in a timely manner.	
<b>Does Not Meet</b>	The school 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:	992.4/1450	68.4
Notes and Evidence:		
<p>Capital Preparatory Harbor School’s (CPHS) 2022-23 Accountability Index of 68.4 percent is 0.9 percentage points below the state’s Accountability Index of 69.3 percent. Schools that meet <b>Standard 1:</b> are schools earning an accountability index score from 85 to 100 (<b>Category 1</b>), schools earning an accountability index score from 70 to 84.9 percent (<b>Category 2</b>), and schools earning an accountability index score of 69.9 percent or lower and have not been identified as a Turnaround or Focus School (<b>Category 3</b>). CPHS’s Accountability Index score of 68.4 percent places its performance in Category 3, <b>which earns a does not meet for Standard 1.</b> CPHS’s 2022-23 Next Generation Accountability Report is shown in detail on the next page.</p>		

**Next Generation Accountability, 2022-23 – Capital Preparatory Harbor School (Grades: K-12)**  
**School Category: 3**

Indicator	Index/Rate	Target	Points Earned	Max Points	% Points Earned	State % Points Earned
1a. ELA Performance Index - All Students	54.7	75	36.5	50	73.0	85.2
1b. ELA Performance Index - High Needs Students	53.5	75	35.7	50	71.3	72.1
1c. Math Performance Index - All Students	47.3	75	31.5	50	63.1	79.6
1d. Math Performance Index - High Needs Students	45.7	75	30.4	50	60.9	65.2
1e. Science Performance Index - All Students	50.6	75	33.7	50	67.4	82.1
1f. Science Performance Index - High Needs Students	49.6	75	33.1	50	66.1	68.2
2a. ELA Academic Growth - All Students	62.5%	100%	62.5	100	62.5	57.2
2b. ELA Academic Growth - High Needs Students	63.6%	100%	63.6	100	63.6	52.5
2c. Math Academic Growth - All Students	59.3%	100%	59.3	100	59.3	61.8
2d. Math Academic Growth - High Needs Students	58.1%	100%	58.1	100	58.1	55.5
2e. Progress Toward English Proficiency - Literacy	32.2%	100%	16.1	50	32.2	55.3
2f. Progress Toward English Proficiency - Oral	64.6%	100%	32.3	50	64.6	56.1
4a. Chronic Absenteeism - All Students	25.1%	<=5%	9.9	50	19.7	39.8
4b. Chronic Absenteeism - High Needs Students	27.0%	<=5%	5.9	50	11.9	6.0
5. Preparation for CCR - Percent Taking Courses	84.6%	75%	50.0	50	100.0	100.0
6. Preparation for CCR - Percent Passing Exams	87.9%	75%	50.0	50	100.0	59.0
7. On-track to High School Graduation	90.4%	94%	48.1	50	96.2	87.7
8. 4-year Graduation: All Students (2022 Cohort)	96.6%	94%	100.0	100	100.0	94.6
9. 6-year Graduation: High Needs Students (2020 Cohort)	100.0%	94%	100.0	100	100.0	91.1
10. Postsecondary Entrance (Graduating Class 2022)	84.8%	75%	100.0	100	100.0	88.2
11. Physical Fitness (estimated participation rate = 97.8%)	7.2%	75%	4.8	50	9.6	60.6
12. Arts Access	37.1%	60%	30.9	50	61.9	90.9
<b>Accountability Index</b>			992.4	1450	68.4	69.3

**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	58.6	53.5	5.1	17.0	N
Math Performance Index Gap	52.6	45.7	6.9	18.6	N
Science Performance Index Gap	53.7	49.6	4.1	18.6	N
Graduation Rate Gap (2020 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
<b>Notes and Evidence:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Indicator 2.1:</b> The CSDE site visit staff reviewed CPHS’s last two certified financial audits and uncovered no significant findings, conditions, or internal control weakness.</li> <li>• <b>Indicator 2.2:</b> The CSDE site visit staff reviewed CPHS’s last three certified financial audits, Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual (APPM), Board Policies and Procedures Manual (BPPM), budgets, and interviewed the school’s executive director, principals, director of operations, and governing board members. Staff from the CSDE’s Office of Internal Audit determined the APPM contained the standard sections of an APPM. However, the APPM requires the following amendments: revise APPM policies exclusive to CPHS only and not include policies of additional schools managed by the Charter School Management Organization (CMO); include only the roles and responsibilities that pertain to services the CMO provides the school and remove any policies and procedures that pertain to CMO operations, or operations of other schools managed by the CMO. The school has developed amendments to its Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual to address these recommendations. This item was placed on its school’s governing board agenda for February 27, 2024, for consideration and approval. The governing board has specific roles and responsibilities for oversight of school operations, including financial management, the management team, and CMO. However, the roles and responsibilities are not formally documented in a Board Policies and Procedures Manual (BPPM) to ensure consistency and continuity. To ensure the continuity of key oversight activities, the roles and responsibilities of the Board must be written into a BPPM, including the duties of each subcommittee. CPHS will develop a board policy to define the roles and responsibility of its governing board, including the board’s committees. The school anticipates that this policy will be drafted and submitted to the governing board during the spring of 2024, for approval. The Board does not have a Finance and Audit subcommittee that reviews financial matters and provides recommendations to the Board. The Board should establish a Finance and Audit subcommittee. The governing board is reviewing, updating, and approving the following documents: APPM, BPPM, Personnel and Student Handbooks and should do so on an annual basis.</li> <li>• <b>Indicator 2.3:</b> Staff from the CSDE’s Office of Internal Audit reviewed CPHS’s latest certified financial audit and determined its debt-to-asset ratio (total liabilities 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)), debt service coverage ratio (net income + depreciation + interest expense)/(principal + interest payments), and 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.</li> <li>• <b>Indicator 2.4:</b> A review of CPHS’s school policies regarding conflict of interest and nepotism were found to comply with the CSDE administrative oversight guidelines. CPHS’s policies and procedures regarding background checks of staff and board members, open board meetings, 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 including board meeting minutes. A review of CPHS’s bylaws found them to comply with state and federal laws, rules, and regulations. As indicated in Indicator 2.2, it is important that going forward the board establishes and follows its oversight responsibilities of school policy review on an annual basis.</li> <li>• <b>Indicator 2.5:</b> As evidenced during the site visit, CPHS has safe and well-maintained school facilities to support teaching and learning. The facility has been approved by the Bridgeport Fire Marshal and Building Department. The school has proof of property insurance.</li> </ul>	

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
3.5. School Culture and Climate	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DNM

**Notes and Evidence:**

- Indicator 3.1:** The latest CSDE audited student enrollment data from 2022-23 reports 772 students in Grades K-12, with 92.7 percent residing in Bridgeport (the host district) and 7.3 percent from 12 area towns. A review of the school’s student enrollment policy and interviews with school staff, board members, and parents determined all students are admitted through a blind lottery.
- Indicator 3.2:** A review of CPHS’s waiting list information (Table 5, page 18) determined that the school maintains a waiting list of families beyond the available number of seats. The waiting list has included more than 385 students each year for the past three years.
- Indicator 3.3:** A review of CPHS’s latest CSDE audited Public School Information System (PSIS) data from 2022-23 reported 70.2 percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price meals. The percentage of special education students is 10.8 percent. CPHS’s English Learners/Multilingual Learners (ELs/MLs) population is 9.1 percent.
- Indicator 3.4:** CPHS 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 on December 19, 2023, 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 340 people attended the public hearing. Fifty 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.
- Indicator 3.5:** CPHS’s suspension rate of 8.5 percent in 2019-20 increased 7.3 percentage points during the midst of the pandemic to 15.8 percent in 2021-22, decreased 1.2 percentage points to 14.6 percent in 2022-23, 7.4 percentage points above the host district’s 7.2 percent and 7.6 percentage points above the state average of 7.0 percent. It is important that the school continues to develop its restorative approach to minimize student behavioral incidents resulting in suspensions and review its discipline policies and processes to ensure that they increase alternatives to exclusionary discipline.

- CPHS's 2022-23 Discipline Tier based on Suspension/Expulsion data was Tier 4. A Tier 4 designates a school with Consistently High Suspension Rates (may also have high disproportionality): Overall, Black or African American or Hispanic/Latino suspension rate  $\geq 15$  percent in two recent years. CPHS had a high overall suspension rate in 2021-22 and high suspension disproportionality among Black or African American students in 2021-22 and 2022-23. While the disproportionality of Black student suspensions was reduced between 2021-22 and 2022-23, the disproportionality remains an issue as evidenced by the school's Discipline Tier results for 2022-23. It is important that the school continues to develop its restorative approach to minimize student behavioral incidents resulting in suspensions and review its discipline policies.
- A review of CPHS's chronic absenteeism rate of 7.7 percent in 2019-20 showed they were below the host district and state averages. In 2021-22, during the midst of the pandemic, the school's chronic absenteeism rate experienced an increase of 27.7 percentage points to 35.4 percent, 7.6 percentage points above the host district of 27.8 percent and 11.7 percentage points above the state average of 23.7 percent. In 2022-23 the school achieved a 10.3 percentage point reduction to 25.1 percent, 3.5 percentage points below the host district average of 28.6 percent and 5.1 percentage points above the state average of 20.0 percent. It is important for the school to continue to refine and develop systems and resources to identify and address barriers that negatively affect student attendance.

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 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
<b>Notes and Evidence:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>Indicator 4.1:</b> 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 secure rooms.</p> </li> <li> <p><b>Indicator 4.2:</b> A review of CPHS’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. At the time of the site visit there were 73 special education identified students. Many of the students with special education and related service needs reside in Bridgeport. However, in 2022-23, there were 13 sending districts of students attending CPHS. To meet the needs of identified students, CPHS employed seven full-time special education teachers and an Executive Director of Special Populations. Speech and language services, school-based counseling, occupational therapy, and physical therapy are all sent by the sending districts to provide related services in accordance with the student’s IEP. Capital Prep directly employs two social workers which provide regular education support and special education support as required. Related service providers from the sending districts sign in and out of the buildings and staff complete an electronic service log. The Executive Director of Special Populations monitors the service log and communicates with sending districts and parents as needed regarding missed services. CPHS works in collaboration with the LEAs when support is needed by a paraeducator. Capital Prep hires the paraeducator and bills the sending district for reimbursement. Currently there are no special education paraeducators at Capital Prep. All the IEPs reviewed noted that students receive specialized instruction services via push-in and pull-out methods in accordance with the student’s IEP.</p> <p>General education and special education teachers provide reading instruction to students. Specialized instruction in the area of reading is provided by the special education teachers. It was noted that reading instruction includes (but is not limited to) the use of Wilson Reading System, Just Words, Lindamood-Bell, Core, Lexia, i-Ready, and Foundations. The Wonders Reading Program was also just approved for use at Capital Prep. Differentiated instruction is collaboratively planned at weekly meetings. Benchmark data, grades, exit tickets, and other sources of data collection are all utilized in the lesson planning process.</p> <p>Students were observed working with special education staff in the general education classroom (push-in) and the resource classroom (pull-out) setting across the two buildings. Push-in support was observed as special education staff provided support to students to meet the general education classroom lesson’s objectives. Pull-out services were observed in small groups and in a one-on-one setting within a resource classroom. The lessons had a clear purpose and progression and progress monitoring was completed. Instruction is differentiated based on the students’ individual needs and can include the use of stations, centers, individualized work folders, and reviewing new vocabulary, as well as access to speech-to-text, text-to-speech, visuals, and headphones. The Assistant Superintendent for curriculum works on a network level to provide support and guidance on materials, modifications, lesson planning, differentiated standards, and translatable differentiation for English Learners. Special education teachers work with and are familiar with all curricula.</p> </li> </ul>	

PPTs are scheduled by the sending district/LEA who creates the PPT invitation. Capital Prep uses the CT-SEDS system. Special education teachers and related service providers enter student information directly into the system in collaboration with the LEA. The sending district finalizes the IEP. The Capital Prep staff that attend the PPT meetings include the general education teacher/illuminator, the special education teacher/inclusion illuminator, building administrator, school social worker, related service providers as applicable, scholar, parent, and the Executive Director of Special Populations. A representative from the LEA also attends the PPT and is typically a supervisor. PPT meetings continue to be held virtually but the parent is invited to Capital Prep to attend the meeting with their scholar.

The files were neatly organized and kept in locked file cabinets. They contained completed sign-out sheets, progress reports with narratives, transition goals when applicable, and an internal document labeled special education checklist.

The school is aware of their Child Find responsibilities. The school uses academic and behavioral data to drive their decisions. They involve their school social worker when concerns arise. Students are reviewed in the Student Assistance Team (SAT) process which includes weekly data and progress monitoring of individualized goals. If concerns continue, specialists are consulted, and parents are contacted. In collaboration with the sending district, Capital Prep will go through the special education referral process with the LEA as needed.

- **Indicator 4.3:** A review of CPHS's latest audited 2022-23 PSIS data reports indicated that the percentage of students identified as English Learners/Multilingual Learners (ELs/MLs) at the school is 9.1 percent. Through an analysis of the renewal materials and meeting with school staff, it became evident that Capital Prep Harbor is committed to ensuring the success of ELs/MLs at the school. The school has taken actions that affirm this commitment to ELs/MLs by employing knowledgeable and passionate TESOL certified staff members focused on supporting the language instruction program needs of students and by building capacity of general educators to serve ELs/MLs. Capital Prep Harbor is commended for its participation in the Seal of Biliteracy work to assure language access for families through translation and interpretation, and its assets orientation to multilingualism in the school community. The school is also commended for its compilation of EL/ML guidance in its extensive EL/ML Handbook. Additionally, the school has built strong recruitment partnerships in Puerto Rico, resulting in the hiring of qualified, linguistically diverse staff, including certified TESOL illuminators. The school's population of EL/ML students is growing, and the school has worked to develop scheduling for the TESOL illuminators to enable the students to receive language instruction in addition to core instruction. Despite posting for a bilingual certified teacher, the school has not been able to hire a person in this role but has submitted the required TESOL in lieu letter with the mandatory components included. The TESOL illuminators provide language instruction through push-in and pull-out supports based on scholars' language proficiency level, particular needs, and academic schedule. Some ELs/MLs also receive support after school through a supplemental grant funded program with a retired certified bilingual teacher. Capital Prep Harbor works to provide training to teachers to enable them to integrate supports for ELs/MLs in the core curriculum, and TESOL staff often provide training and collaborate with general educators on Friday professional learning opportunities and on an ongoing basis. The school has applied for both the Title III grant funds and bilingual grant funds for which it is eligible, as it has done in preceding years. It is evident that the school has worked hard to align its practices with state and federal requirements and to build a culturally and linguistically sustaining climate. Additionally, there is clear evidence of work to better understand each EL's/ML's language needs across domains and to provide targeted support to address them. A review of the school's EL/ML Screening Guidance determined minor amendments are required. The school has indicated that the necessary policy amendments have been made.

EL/ML Data Review and Observations

- LAS Links Literacy Average Percentage of Target Achieved (APTA) decreased from 91 percent in 2021-22 to 32.2 percent in 2022-23.
- LAS Links Growth data indicates that ALL grade levels experienced a decrease in the average percentage of target achieved for the Literacy portions of the exam. Oral LAS Links Growth scores also show a slight decline, with at least 6 grade levels showing a decrease in the APTA. Overall, the decline in Oral Scores are not as significant as Literacy.

Recommendations

- Review individual student data to identify skills that need more attention.
  - Compare the LAS Scores with student performance on other assessments, and past LAS Links scores (if available).
  - Develop personalized learning plans for students.
  - Use diverse teaching methods.
  - Ensure that all staff and students understand and value the LAS Links assessment and its implications.
  - Note that these students were cohorted (all the students who tested in 2022-23 also tested in 2021-22. Students who arrived during the 2022-23 year are not included).
  - As a reference, please refer to the document [English Learners in Connecticut’s Public Schools: Guidelines for Administrators](#).
- **Indicator 4.4:** CPHS 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:** As of February 20, 2024, CPHS had no certification compliance errors noted on its Educator Certification Compliance Report for the 2023-24 school year. However, pursuant to Section 10-66dd subsection (b)(2), 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, temporary certificate, permit, or authorization. There are 52 staff members requiring certification, 23 staff members or 44.2 percent hold a full certificate, 29 or 55.8 percent hold other permits or authorizations.

CPHS is in compliance with the Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM) Program.

CPHS is in compliance with the Educator Evaluation and Support Plan (EESP).

- **Indicator 4.6:** A review of legal actions brought against CPHS 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.

<b>Prepared by:</b>	<b>Reviewed by:</b>
Robert E. Kelly Charter School Program Manager	Charles E. Hewes, Ed.D. Deputy Commissioner for Academics & Innovation



## CAPITAL PREPARATORY HARBOR SCHOOL DATA TABLES

Table 1: 2022-23 Student Enrollment and Demographic Information	
Grades served:	K-12
Total enrollment:	772
Percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price meals:	70.2
Percentage of students with disabilities:	10.8
Percentage of students identified as English Learners:	9.1
Percentage of American Indian or Alaska Native students:	*
Percentage of Asian students:	*
Percentage of Black or African American students:	67.1
Percentage of Hispanic or Latino students:	31.1
Percentage of Two or More Races:	*
Percentage of White students:	*

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

<b>Table 2: School Performance: All Students</b>									
	<b>2018-19</b>			<b>2021-22</b>			<b>2022-23</b>		
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Host District</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Host District</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Host District</b>	<b>State</b>
<b>Accountability Index</b>	60.9	61.2	74.2	67.8	59.8	69.7	68.4	56.7	69.3
<b>ELA-All Students</b>									
<b>Performance Index (Target 75)</b>	57.1	54.3	67.7	53.5	50.1	64.2	54.7	49.5	63.9
<b>Academic Growth Average Percentage of Target Achieved (Target 100%)</b>	51.3	53.4	59.9	60.3	60.5	60.4	62.5	49.5	57.2
<b>Math-All Students</b>									
<b>Performance Index (Target 75)</b>	51.7	46.4	63.1	46.2	42.1	58.6	47.3	41.8	59.7
<b>Academic Growth Average Percentage of Target Achieved (Target 100%)</b>	64.5	52.6	62.5	61.4	56.6	65.2	59.3	50.3	61.8
<b>Graduation-All Students</b>									
<b>Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (Target 94%)</b>	67.7	76.0	88.5	96.6	74.2	88.9	N/A	N/A	N/A

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									
	2018-19			2021-22			2022-23		
Indicator	School	Host District	State	School	Host District	State	School	Host District	State
<b>ELA-High Needs Students</b>									
Performance Index (Target 75)	56.3	52.3	58.1	51.1	48.2	54.2	53.5	48.0	54.1
Academic Growth Average Percentage of Target Achieved (Target 100%)	51.9	52.4	55.1	59.9	59.5	56.2	63.6	48.9	52.5
<b>Math-High Needs Students</b>									
Performance Index (Target 75)	50.9	44.6	52.7	43.8	40.4	47.7	45.7	40.6	48.9
Academic Growth Average Percentage of Target Achieved (Target 100%)	64.1	51.8	55.2	61.4	55.1	59.1	58.1	49.9	55.5
<b>Graduation – High Needs Students</b>									
Six-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (Target 94%)	100.0	79.9	85.2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

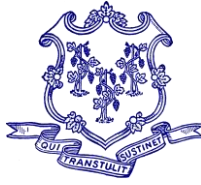
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Table 4: School Culture and Climate									
	2019-2020 <sup>1</sup>			2021-2022			2022-2023		
Indicator	School	Host District	State	School	Host District	State	School	Host District	State
Chronic Absenteeism Rate (%)	7.7	19.7	12.2	35.4	27.8	23.7	25.1	28.6	20.0
Suspension Rate (%)	8.5	9.4	4.9	15.8	7.0	6.5	14.6	7.2	7.0
Discipline Tier	2	2	3	1	2	1	4	1	3

Table 5: CPHS Student Wait List and Mobility Information				
Performance Metric:		2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Waiting number:		749	811	386
Number of enrolled students who left during the school year:		73	62	N/A
Number of students who did not re-enroll the next year and had not completed the highest grade at the school:		87	100	118

<sup>1</sup> For the 2019-20 school year, chronic absenteeism calculations are based only on in-person school days until mid-March 2020. See the [Report Notes](#) for additional information.



**State of Connecticut**  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
STATE CAPITOL  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

**REPRESENTATIVE ANDRE BAKER**  
124TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
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**DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP AT LARGE**

**MEMBER**  
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
BANKING COMMITTEE  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

August 30, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my support for the full five-year renewal of the Capital Preparatory Harbor Charter School, located in Bridgeport, CT.

The purpose of Capital Prep is to reshape the narrative that a child's potential is defined by their race, zip code, or economic background. Its mission centers on a curriculum infused with social justice values, complemented by rigorous college preparatory offerings, with the aim of equipping scholars for success in higher education and beyond. Since 2015, Capital Prep Harbor has been fundamental in the Bridgeport community, delivering year-round, college preparatory education to K-12 students. Those entering Capital Prep have often faced disappointment in previous educational settings, leaving them with little hope to transcend their circumstances. However, upon joining Capital Prep Harbor, students experience an immediate shift in their academic trajectory, a bolstered self-esteem, and a commitment to a future enriched with higher learning opportunities.

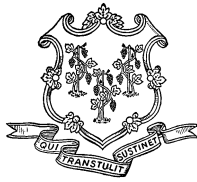
Capital Prep's distinctive methodology has yielded remarkable outcomes, with a consistent record of 100% acceptance to four-year colleges for its low-income, minority, and frequently first-generation high school graduates every year since the inaugural class of 2006.

We should celebrate and support an institution that's so dedicated to its children and overall community. I am excited at the prospect of renewing this charter school for five more years and keep giving all students access to great education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andre Baker".

Representative Andre Baker



**State of Connecticut**  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
STATE CAPITOL  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

**REPRESENTATIVE ANTONIO FELIPE**

130TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT  

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DEPUTY MAJORITY SPEAKER  
VICE CHAIR, BLACK AND PUERTO RICAN CAUCUS

**MEMBER**  
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

To Whom It May Concern:

September 1st, 2023

I am writing to express my support for the full five-year renewal of the Capital Preparatory Harbor Charter School, located in Bridgeport, CT.

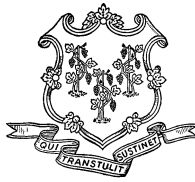
Capital Prep Harbor has been instrumental for hundreds of K-12 scholars in the Bridgeport community, many who have often been failed by their previous educational experiences. Upon entering Capital Prep, they are immediately shown that there is a clear pathway to college, and that their trajectory of success is limitless. In fact, since 2006, 100% of Capital Prep seniors have secured admission to a 4-year college or university.

A continued mission that I have, as a legislator who represents a district where the majority of my constituents are black, brown and low income, is the closing of what we call the educational achievement gap. National and Statewide studies have shown that the most damning factors in a student receiving an inadequate representation are socio-economic status, their zip code and the color of their skin. In the years that I have seen Capital Prep work with these students, I have seen opportunities created, I have seen families feel safe and I've seen students truly feel supported. No school is perfect and no system can help every individual child but this school is moving us in a wholly positive direction in the city of Bridgeport.

Continuing to support and celebrate schools that guide our youth toward success is of utmost importance. I am excited for the opportunity to see this school continue to do tremendous work in the next 5 years. I urge you to please see what I see and allow Capital Preparatory Harbor Charter School to continue to provide hope and support to our students.

Regards,  
Sincerely,

Antonio Felipe  
State Representative, CGA 130<sup>th</sup> District



**State of Connecticut**  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
STATE CAPITOL  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

**REPRESENTATIVE CHRISTOPHER ROSARIO**

128TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT  

---

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
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DEPUTY SPEAKER

**MEMBER**

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE  
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

To Whom It May Concern:

August 31, 2023

I am writing to express my support for the full five-year renewal of the Capital Preparatory Harbor Charter School, located in Bridgeport, CT.

Capital Prep Harbor has been instrumental for hundreds of K-12 scholars in the Bridgeport community, many who have often been failed by their previous educational experiences. Upon entering Capital Prep, they are immediately shown that there is a clear pathway to college, and that their trajectory of success is limitless. In fact, since 2006, 100% of Capital Prep seniors have secured admission to a 4-year college or university.

At Capital Prep, a child's potential is never defined by their race, zip code, or economic background. By infusing a social justice curriculum with a rigorous college preparatory model and whole-child approach, Capital Prep consistently fulfills its commitments by developing children beyond the textbook scholar into agents of change in their communities and beyond.

Continuing to support and celebrate schools that guide our youth toward success is of utmost importance. I am enthusiastic about the opportunity to extend this charter school for another five years, ensuring that all students continue to have access to excellent education.

Regards,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "CR", written in a cursive style.

Christopher Rosario  
State Representative, CGA 128<sup>th</sup> District

SENATOR HERRON KEYON GASTON

*Twenty-third District*

Legislative Office Building  
Room 2000  
Hartford, CT 06106-1591  
Office: 860-240-0591  
Herron.Gaston@cga.ct.gov



State of Connecticut

SENATE

DEPUTY MAJORITY LEADER

*Chair*  
Public Safety & Security Committee  
*Vice Chair*  
Human Services Committee  
*Member*  
Environment Committee  
Judiciary Committee  
Transportation Committee

Date: 9/1/2023

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing to express my strong support for the renewal of Capital Prep Harbor School in Bridgeport. Capital Prep has consistently provided the children of Bridgeport with a valuable educational experience that caters to their academic, social, and emotional needs. Founded and operated by dedicated community leaders, its commitment to a social justice curriculum has had a profoundly positive impact on our local community.

Since its establishment in 2015, Capital Prep has achieved an impressive milestone, sending 100% of its students, primarily from minority, low-income, and first-generation college backgrounds, to four-year colleges. Along this journey, its scholars have engaged in college-level courses at Housatonic Community College and have actively contributed to impactful social justice projects, thereby enriching our downtown area.

Given the substantial contributions Capital Prep has made and will continue to make to our community, I wholeheartedly urge you to consider granting a full five-year renewal for Capital Prep Harbor School in Bridgeport.

I deeply appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this request and the positive impact it will have on the education and future prospects of our children. Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rev. Dr. Herron Gaston".

Rev. Dr. Herron Gaston  
CT State Senator- 23<sup>rd</sup> District



**State of Connecticut**  
**SENATE**  
**SECOND DISTRICT**

**SENATOR DOUGLAS McCrORY**  
DEPUTY PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

**LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING**  
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**CHAIRMAN**  
EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
INTERNSHIP COMMITTEE  
**VICE-CHAIRMAN**  
ENERGY COMMITTEE  
**MEMBER**  
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
BANKING COMMITTEE  
GOVERNMENT, ADMINISTRATION & ELECTIONS  
COMMITTEE

August 30, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my support and recommendation for the full five-year renewal of Capital Preparatory Harbor School, located in Bridgeport, CT.

Since 2015, Capital Prep Harbor has been instrumental for historically underserved, minority children in Bridgeport by delivering a year-round, college preparatory education infused with a social justice lens. As an advocate for school choice, I see and value the impact that Capital Prep Harbor has had on its students and the entire community. The essence of social justice is interwoven throughout every phase of the students' educational journey, and I value that sense of empowerment and confidence needed to develop agents of change in our world today.

Year over year, Capital Prep delivers on its promise to provide students - many of whom represent the first generation to even graduate high school - a clear pathway to college. Since inception, 100% of Capital Prep seniors have been accepted to four-year colleges and universities.

We should continue to celebrate and support institutions like Capital Prep that not only give students hope for a bright future but equip them with the tools and resources they need to achieve success. I look forward to working with you on the full five-year renewal of this charter school and continuing to provide all students with access to quality education.

Sincerely,

Douglas McCrory  
State Senator – 2<sup>nd</sup> District



**SENATOR MARILYN MOORE**

*Twenty-second District*

Legislative Office Building

Room 2000

Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Tel. 860-240-0425

Toll-free 1-800-842-1420

[www.senatedems.ct.gov/Moore](http://www.senatedems.ct.gov/Moore)



**State of Connecticut**

**SENATE**

**DEPUTY PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE**

**Chair**

Housing

General Bonding

**Vice Chair**

Finance, Revenue & Bonding

**Member**

Executive & Legislative Nominations

Internship

Legislative Management

September 5, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my support for the five-year renewal of Capital Preparatory Harbor School in Bridgeport, CT.

Since 2015, Capital Prep Harbor has been delivering a rigorous, well-rounded education to hundreds of historically underserved, minority children in Bridgeport. Year over year, Capital Prep delivers on its promise to provide all students with a clear pathway to college. In fact, every year since 2006, 100% of Capital Prep seniors have been accepted into 4-year colleges and universities, despite the fact that many of these students come to Capital Prep representing the first generation in their families to attend college.

Additionally, the school's commitment to instilling principles of social justice into every aspect of a student's educational journey plays a pivotal role in fostering empowerment and confidence. These qualities are instrumental in nurturing the next generation of individuals who can actively drive positive change in our world.

I support the five-year renewal of Capital Prep Harbor and believe we should continue to celebrate these types of educational institutions that equip students with the tools and resources they need to achieve success in college and beyond.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Senator Marilyn Moore

Michael J. Testani  
Superintendent of Schools



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August 22, 2023

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for Capital Prep's application to continue operating a charter school in the Bridgeport community. As the former superintendent, I firmly believe that a charter school of this nature has a profoundly positive impact on our educational landscape and the students it serves.

Having worked with Capital Prep's leadership, I am inspired by the commitment to provide a unique and innovative learning environment. The emphasis on providing students with a high-quality learning experience is evident in their performance outcomes. They strive to address the diverse needs and learning styles of all students. In a world where education is evolving rapidly, a charter school with such a forward-thinking approach is essential to prepare our students for success in the 21st century.

Furthermore, the collaboration with local businesses and community organizations showcases a dedication to fostering real-world connections and experiential learning opportunities. This not only enhances the educational experience but also reinforces the charter school's role as a vital community resource.

As a member of the Bridgeport community in some capacity for over 50 years, I wholeheartedly support Capital Prep's mission to provide a high-quality, innovative, and inclusive education to students. I firmly believe that the continued operation of this charter school will continue to enrich the community and ensure the success of its students.

Thank you for considering my endorsement of Capital Prep's application. Please feel free to contact me if you require any further information or support.

Sincerely,

*Michael Testani*

Michael J. Testani  
Superintendent of Schools



To whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of Capital Preparatory Harbor School in Bridgeport, Connecticut. I have worked collaboratively with specifically the Student Support Administration and Student Support Staff (Special Education and related services). I have been impressed with the entire school's commitment to the diverse needs of all their students. I have noticed the dedication to providing what is right for the individual academic and social/emotional needs of all students.

School Administration and Staff is committed to and knowledgeable in all areas of Special Education Legislation and Collaboration. For example, I have observed the commitment to holding PPT's in time, completing the required CSDE documentation (eg: IEP's, PPT invitations, Manifestation Determination worksheets, PPT notes, and eligibility documents) and an overall atmosphere of working together to benefit students and families.

The area of instruction and assessment is a strength of the Capital Preparatory Harbor School staff. School personnel are able to collect appropriate data and engage in meaningful assessment in order to provide differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students. This is then communicated in a meaningful, student/parent friendly manner to improve the educational benefit for all involved.

Working closely with the Administration and staff of Capital Preparatory Harbor School, I fully support their mission and endeavors in providing the highest quality education for all. I have enjoyed partnering with this Charter School and am excited about continuing to work with them. Please reach out to me directly if you would like to discuss anything further. (203) 308-4204 -Office or email is [benjamin.dix@cttech.org](mailto:benjamin.dix@cttech.org)

*Benjamin Dix*

Benjamin Dix

Special Education Department Chair