

## VII.A.

### Connecticut State Board of Education Hartford

#### **To Be Proposed:**

April 6, 2022

**Resolved**, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (g) of Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes, renews the charter of The Bridge Academy from July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2025, subject to the Commissioner's April 6, 2022, 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 April, Two Thousand Twenty-Two.

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:** April 6, 2022

**SUBJECT:** Renewal of State Charter–The Bridge Academy, 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**

The Bridge Academy (The Bridge) opened in the fall of 1997. The latest CSDE audited student enrollment data from 2020-21 reported 281 students in Grades 7-12 with 98.9 percent residing in Bridgeport (the host district), and the remaining 1.1 percent of students coming from 3 area towns. The Bridge has a maximum approved student enrollment of 280 seats serving Grades 7-12 in fiscal year 2022-23. Table 1, on page 14, of the attached Charter Renewal Report provides 2020-21 student enrollment and demographic data. Seventy-seven point nine percent of The Bridge's students qualify for free or reduced-price meals and 21.4 percent of the students receive special education services. On May 18, 2021, The Bridge Executive Director/High School Principal appeared before the State Board Accountability and Support Committee to discuss the school's corrective action plan, progress implementation, and student outcome improvement. On November 4, 2021, the State Board of Education Member, Erin Benham and the Division Director, Lisa Lamenza visited The Bridge to observe and discuss the school's corrective action plan, progress implementation, and student outcome improvement. The mission of The Bridge is to be "a small, caring public charter school with a rigorous learning environment. All members of the Bridge Academy community listen to and communicate with each other, are able to respond to diverse needs, and give the consistent effort necessary for personal and academic growth."

## **Charter Renewal Process**

*Application for Renewal of Charter:* The CSDE accepted an application for the renewal of The Bridge's charter on November 1, 2021. 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. The Bridge 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, English learners, school management, finance, and school governance reviewed the renewal application and requested clarification and additional information, where necessary.

*Renewal Site Visit:* On January 10, 2022, the CSDE renewal team conducted an onsite visit at The Bridge. The purpose of the onsite visit was to observe The Bridge's programs, policies, practices, and procedures to assess their efficacy and fidelity to the school's charter and aligned operating systems. Evidence was collected through the 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 The Bridge from the Superintendent of Bridgeport Public Schools and from contiguous school districts: Fairfield, Stratford, and Trumbull. The CSDE did not receive any responses to the solicitation.

**Public Hearing:** Erin Benham, member of the SBE, and the CSDE staff held a public hearing on November 30, 2021, in the city of Bridgeport, and heard from individuals on the potential charter renewal of The Bridge and the impact it is having on the community. Public hearing participants included members of The Bridge community, including family members, students, school staff and community members. Over 144 people attended the public hearing. Forty-five 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 The Bridge’s performance according to the four performance standards. The report highlights school strengths and areas for continued growth.

### **Special Considerations and Analyses Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic**

When viewing and interpreting the results for summative assessments administered in 2020-21 in comparison to 2018-19 and earlier exam administrations, it is important to note the similarities and differences. While the 2020-21 assessments used the same test blueprint, item bank, test forms, and in-person testing protocols as in 2018-19, there were many marked differences:

- schools were fully remote from mid-March to mid-June 2020;
- in March 2020, Connecticut received a waiver from the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) to be exempt from both administering state academic assessments in 2019-20 and holding schools and districts accountable using the Next Generation Accountability System;
- in 2020-21, school learning models changed throughout the school year and students were remote to varying degrees due to factors beyond educator control;
- in 2020-21, some students tested remotely, which was a new construct;
- in-person school changed including the emergence of new instructional approaches such as concurrent teaching;
- students and educators expressed increased feelings of stress, anxiety, and trauma;
- 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.

Considering these differences, and to best support the use of 2020-21 assessment results to inform the charter renewal process in 2022, the CSDE conducted specialized analyses for Smarter Balanced Assessments.

- The CSDE used “matched cohort growth” (i.e., growth of same students from one grade to another) when feasible to evaluate how growth during the pandemic was different from growth before the pandemic.
- All results are disaggregated by a student’s learning model: in-person (more than 75 percent of days in-person); hybrid (between 25 percent and 75 percent of days in-person); or remote (less than 25 percent of days in-person). At The Bridge, about 55 percent of students in Grades 7-8 learned in a hybrid format during 2020-21; the remaining 45 percent of students learned remotely.
- In most cases, only those scores from students who tested in-person were included.

### **Strengths Include**

- The school's suspension rates over the three most recent years reported, 2018-19 through 2020-21, have remained below the host district and state.
- A review of the school's chronic absenteeism over the two most recent years show a decrease of 5.1 percentage points, from 17.5 percent in 2019-20 to 12.4 percent in 2020-21, which is below the state rate of 19.0 percent, and the host district 28.9 percent. In the 2020-21 school year, students attended school in-person to varying degrees; some learned fully/mostly remotely for the entire school year. Understanding that chronic absenteeism has been an issue in the past, it's important that the school continue to use its systems and supports to identify students and families with attendance issues, determine root causes, and provide supports and resources to address barriers that negatively affect student attendance.
- Each month, the CSDE recognizes two schools for their month-to-month growth in Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion rates. The Bridge was recognized in November 2021 for their 26.7 percentage point growth in FAFSA completion over the previous month and led the state with the highest FAFSA completion rate of all public high schools in the state of 42.1 percent. In December 2021, The Bridge was recognized again for increasing its FAFSA completion rate by 21.1 percentage points over the previous month and continued to lead the state with 63.2 percent.
- No significant findings, conditions, or internal weaknesses were uncovered in The Bridge's last three certified financial audits.
- The school demonstrates strong community support as evidenced by testimony provided by individuals at the public hearing and interviews with parents and students during the site visit.
- School website and Governing Board documents demonstrate that the Governing Board meetings are open and accessible to the public.
- Among The Bridge hybrid students in Grades 7-8 who had a prior ELA score in 2018-19 (N=48), their ELA proficiency rate increased from 27.1 percent in 2018-19 to 35.4 percent in 2020-21. Among matched remote students (N=36), a similar increase was observed (i.e., from 19.4 percent in 2018-19 to 27.8 percent in 2020-21). Prior to the pandemic, a similar matched student analysis from 2016-17 and 2018-19 (N=95) revealed that the ELA proficiency rate increased from 25.3 percent in 2016-17 to 32.6 percent in 2018-19.
- A review of the school's teacher and staff credentials determined 100 percent of staff are compliant with teacher certification. Further, the review determined The Bridge is in compliance with Educator Evaluation and Support Plan (EESP) and Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM).

### **Areas for Continued Growth**

- Among The Bridge hybrid students in Grades 7-8 who had a prior math score in 2018-19 (N=43), their math proficiency rate decreased from 7.0 percent in 2018-19 to 4.7 percent in 2020-21. Among matched remote students, even when results of in-person and remotely taken tests were combined (N=41), their proficiency rate decreased from 7.3 percent in 2018-19 to 4.9 percent in 2020-21. By contrast, prior to the pandemic, a similar matched student analysis from 2016-17 and 2018-19 (N=94) revealed that the proficiency rate increased from 6.5 percent in 2016-17 to 12.8 percent in 2018-19.

- A review of the school's suspension rate, particularly its baseline pre-pandemic year, 2018-19 rate of 10 percent while 2 percentage points below the host district is 3 percentage points above the state average. It is important that the school continue its efforts to minimize student behavioral incidents resulting in suspensions.
- The Bridge's baseline pre-pandemic year, 2018-19 Discipline Tier Based on Suspension/Expulsion Data was Tier two. A Tier two designates a school with consistently medium disproportionality: not in Tiers 4 or 3 and either black or Hispanic RRI  $\geq 2$  in 2 recent years.
- A review of The Bridge's Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual (APPM) determined the APPM requires policy amendments concerning annual budget approval by Governing Board, check signatories identified by job title and business office roles and responsibilities delineated by job title. School administration in cooperation with the Governing Board are preparing the required policy amendments.
- A review of the school's latest certified financial audit for fiscal year ending June 30, 2021, determined that the school operates on a limited budget. It's important that the school take steps to secure additional revenues going forward.
- While a review of the school website determined that the Governing Board meeting minutes are posted. The meeting minutes for subcommittees of the Governing Board are not posted and must be posted. School administration, in cooperation with the Governing Board, are working together to post the meeting minutes of Governing Board subcommittees.
- A review of The Bridge's Multilingual learners/English learners (MLs/ELs) policies and procedures determined policy amendments concerning annual English language screening, staff professional development, and family notifications are necessary. The school is working with members of the CSDE to develop the required policy changes.

### **Charter Renewal Recommendation**

On March 4, 2020, The Bridge received a one-year charter renewal with probation. Conditions stated in the 2020 renewal required The Bridge to develop corrective action plans to minimize behavioral incidents resulting in student suspensions, address chronic absenteeism, bring the school's special education program into compliance, and include measures to improve student academic achievement. In addition, The Bridge was required to submit regular data in these areas to the Turnaround Office and participate in relevant technical assistance.

Since its last renewal on March 4, 2020, The Bridge has complied with such conditions. The school's suspension rates are below the host district and state averages and have remained so over the last two years reported (2019-20 through 2020-21). Tier 1 Discipline designation is representative of a school that equitably implements clear and consistent behavioral policies and procedures across the students it serves. The school's chronic absenteeism witnessed a 5.1 percentage point decrease falling below the host district and state for the 2020-21 school year. Compared to statewide declines in proficiency rates during the pandemic for matched students who learned in a hybrid format (approximately six to seven percent in ELA and 16 to 17 percent in math) or in a remote format (approximately eight to nine percent in ELA and 18 to 19 percent in math), ELA achievement at The Bridge Academy increased slightly for both hybrid and remote students and was like a pre-pandemic period. The declines in math were unlike a pre-pandemic period when proficiency increased. Although the amount of decline is not as large as those seen statewide, it should be noted that the 2018-19 proficiency rate for The Bridge Academy of around 7.0 percent is significantly lower than the state overall (around 27 percent for high needs students).

Acknowledging that The Bridge's performance indicators are not without weakness, the CSDE recommends that the SBE renew the school's charter for a period of three years, subject to the following conditions:

1. By May 9, 2022, The Bridge shall submit a corrective action plan acceptable to the Commissioner. The corrective action plan must include strategies and action steps to improve student academic achievement. Additionally, The Bridge 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. The Bridge shall submit to the CSDE, on a bi-monthly basis, beginning October 2022, 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. The Bridge shall implement the corrective actions within thirty days following the Commissioner's acceptance of the plan.

The CSDE will notify The Bridge of action taken by the SBE following its meeting on April 6, 2022. 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 The Bridge is addressing the issues raised in this memorandum.

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

Reviewed by: Lisa Lamenzo, Division Director  
Turnaround Office

Approved by: Desi D. Nesmith, Deputy Commissioner

## CHARTER RENEWAL REPORT | 2022

Charter School Information			
Charter School Name:	The Bridge Academy		
School Director/ Principal:	Tyrone Elliot		
School Board Chairperson:	Celeste Markle		
Location (City/Town):	Bridgeport		
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:		803.8/1350	59.5
Notes and Evidence:			
The Bridge Academy’s (The Bridge’s) 2018-19 Accountability Index of 59.5 is 14.7 percentage points below the state school Accountability Index of 74.2 percent. Schools that meet <b>Standard 1:</b> are schools earning an accountability index from 85 to 100 ( <b>Category 1</b> ), schools earning an accountability index from 70 to 84.9 percent, ( <b>Category 2</b> ) and schools earning an accountability index of 69.9 percent or lower and have not been identified as a Turnaround or Focus School ( <b>Category 3</b> ). The Bridge’s Accountability Index score of 59.5 percent places its performance in Category 3, <b>which earns a does not meet for Standard 1.</b> The Bridge’s 2018-19 Next Generation Accountability Report is shown in detail on the next page.			



**Next Generation Accountability, 2018-19-The Bridge Academy (Grades: 7-12)**  
**School Category 3**

Indicator	Index/Rate	Target	Points Earned	Max Points	% Points Earned	State Average % Points Earned
1a. ELA Performance Index - All Students	53.1	75	35.4	50	70.8	90.2
1b. ELA Performance Index - High Needs Students	51.5	75	34.3	50	68.6	77.5
1c. Math Performance Index - All Students	44.2	75	29.5	50	59.0	84.1
1d. Math Performance Index - High Needs Students	43.5	75	29.0	50	58.1	70.2
1e. Science Performance Index - All Students	47.6	75	31.7	50	63.4	85.0
1f. Science Performance Index - High Needs Students	46.7	75	31.1	50	62.3	72.2
2a. ELA Academic Growth - All Students	51.9%	100%	51.9	100	51.9	59.9
2b. ELA Academic Growth - High Needs Students	49.8%	100%	49.8	100	49.8	55.1
2c. Math Academic Growth - All Students	54.5%	100%	54.5	100	54.5	62.5
2d. Math Academic Growth - High Needs Students	55.5%	100%	55.5	100	55.5	55.2
2e. Progress Toward English Proficiency - Literacy	.	100%	.	.	.	60.0
2f. Progress Toward English Proficiency - Oral	.	100%	.	.	.	52.1
4a. Chronic Absenteeism - All Students	17.8%	<=5%	24.3	50	48.7	78.3
4b. Chronic Absenteeism - High Needs Students	19.1%	<=5%	21.9	50	43.7	55.7
5. Preparation for CCR - Percent Taking Courses	5.8%	75%	3.9	50	7.7	100.0
6. Preparation for CCR - Percent Passing Exams	5.8%	75%	3.9	50	7.7	56.7
7. On-track to High School Graduation	87.9%	94%	46.7	50	93.5	93.6
8. 4-year Graduation: All Students (2018 Cohort)	78.0%	94%	83.0	100	83.0	93.9
9. 6-year Graduation: High Needs Students (2016 Cohort)	87.1%	94%	92.7	100	92.7	88.6
10. Postsecondary Entrance (Graduating Class 2018)	80.0%	75%	100.0	100	100.0	94.5
11. Physical Fitness (estimated participation rate = 100.0% )	34.1%	75%	22.7	50	45.4	70.6
12. Arts Access	2.4%	60%	2.0	50	4.1	86.5
<b>Accountability Index</b>	.	.	803.8	1350	59.5	74.2

**Gap Indicators**

Indicator	Non-High Needs Rate	High Needs Rate	Size of Gap	State Gap Mean +1 Stdev	Is Gap an Outlier?
ELA Performance Index Gap	60.0	51.5	8.6	15.3	N
Math Performance Index Gap	47.1	43.5	3.6	17.4	N
Science Performance Index Gap	.	46.7	.	16.3	
Graduation Rate Gap (2016 Cohort)	.	87.1	.	8.0	

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 type="checkbox"/> M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
2.4. Governance and Management	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
2.5. School Facility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
<b>Notes and Evidence:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Indicator 2.1:</b> The CSDE site visit staff reviewed The Bridge's last three 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 The Bridge's last certified financial audit, Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual (APPM), Board Policies and Procedures Manual (BPPM) and budgets, and interviewed the school Executive Director, Principals, Business Office Manager, and governing board members. Staff from the CSDE's Office of Internal Audit determined the APPM and BPPM contains the standard sections of such documents. However, the APPM requires some amendments including Governing Board annual budget approval, specify check signatories by job title, specify business office roles and responsibilities by job title. The reviewers determined The Bridge completed on-time submission of certified audits and annual budgets. School administration, in cooperation with its Governing Board, are preparing the required policy amendments.</li> <li>• <b>Indicator 2.3:</b> Staff from the CSDE's Office of Internal Audit reviewed The Bridge's latest certified financial audit and determined The Bridge's debt to asset ratio (total liabilities/total assets), 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. The school's days of unrestricted cash (20 days) is below NACSA minimum threshold of 60 days and a low total margin (net income/total revenue) indicate that the school operates on a tight budget. It is important that the school take steps to secure additional revenues going forward.</li> <li>• <b>Indicator 2.4:</b> A review of The Bridge's school policies regarding conflict of interest and nepotism were found to be in compliance with the CSDE administrative oversight guidelines. The Bridge's policies and procedures regarding background checks of staff and board members, open board meetings and board membership training were reviewed and found to comply with state and federal laws, rules, and regulations. This finding is supported by a review of policies and procedures, background checks, board training records and school website. A review of the school website determined the Governing Board meeting minutes are posted. However, the meeting minutes for subcommittees of the Governing Board must also be posted. A review of The Bridge's Bylaws found them to comply with state and federal laws, rules, and regulations. School administration, in cooperation with the Governing Board, are working together to post the meeting minutes of Board subcommittees.</li> <li>• <b>Indicator 2.5:</b> As evidenced during the site visit, The Bridge 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 type="checkbox"/> M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
3.4. Family and Community Support	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
3.5. School Culture and Climate	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
<b>Notes and Evidence:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Indicator 3.1:</b> The latest CSDE audited student enrollment data from 2020-21 reported 281 students in Grades 7-12 with 98.9 percent residing in Bridgeport (the host district) and the remaining 1.1 percent residing in three surrounding 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. </li> <li> <b>Indicator 3.2:</b> A review of The Bridge's waitlist information (Table 2, page 14) determined it maintains a waitlist of families beyond the available number of seats. In 2021-22, 235 students were on the waiting list. The waitlist has included more than 179 students each year for the past three years. </li> <li> <b>Indicator 3.3:</b> A review of The Bridge's 2020-21 Public School Information System (PSIS) data reports 77.9 percent of students qualify for free and reduced-price meals. The percentage of special education students at The Bridge is 21.4 percent. The Bridge's English Learner (EL) population is 3.2 percent. To better reflect the demographics of the surrounding community, the school must seek to enroll more students who are English learners. </li> <li> <b>Indicator 3.4:</b> The Bridge 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, 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 rigorous 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. Students testified during the public hearing and student interviews conducted by the CSDE renewal team on the day of the site visit that they are happy with the educational choice opportunity the school provides. Over 144 individuals attended the November 30, 2021, renewal public hearing, and 45 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. </li> <li> <b>Indicator 3.5:</b> A review of the school's suspension rate, particularly its baseline pre-pandemic year, 2018-19 rate of 10 percent while two percentage points below the host district is three- point three percentage points above the state average. It is important that the school continue its efforts to minimize student behavioral incidents resulting in suspensions. The Bridge's baseline pre-pandemic year, 2018-19 Discipline Tier Based on Suspension/Expulsion Data was Tier two. A Tier two designates a school with consistently medium disproportionality: Not in Tiers 4 or 3 and either black or Hispanic RRI <math>\geq 2</math> in 2 recent years. A review of the school's chronic absenteeism in 2018-19 of 17.8 percent and 2019-20 of 17.5 percent, trended down to 12.4 percent in 2020-21, outperforming the host district 28.9 percent and the state average 19.0. It is important that the school continue to use its systems and supports to identify students and families with attendance issues, determine root causes, and provide supports and resources to address barriers that negatively affect student attendance. </li> </ul>	

Standard 4: Legal Compliance Indicators	Rating
4.1. Open Meetings/Information Management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
4.2. Students with Disabilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
4.3. English Learners	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
4.4. Rights of Students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
4.5. Teacher/Staff Credentials, TEAM and EESP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
4.6. Employee Rights	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> DNM
<b>Notes and Evidence:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Indicator 4.1:</b> The school website and Governing Board documents demonstrate that Governing Board meetings are open and accessible to the public. The Governing Board meeting schedule for the year and meeting agendas are posted on the school's website. Education records and testing data are kept in locked file cabinets in a secure room.</li> <li>• <b>Indicator 4.2:</b> A review of The Bridge 2020-21 Public School Information System (PSIS) data reports the percentage of special education students at the school is 21.4 percent. The Bridge directly employs three special education teachers, two social workers and one 1:1 paraeducator to serve a student with physical disabilities. The majority of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) reviewed noted that students receive academic support in the general education classroom. Related services are generally provided in the general education classroom. The school's philosophy of the provision of special education services in the general education classroom, except when a student requires instruction in a more restrictive setting are good examples of implementing the tenets of Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) as determined by the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).  The related services include physical and occupational therapy and social work services are sent from the district of residence as required.  Student education files are kept in locked file cabinets in a secure room. The school is ensuring that all files have individual sign-in access sheets. The reviewed files were well organized and maintained. The Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meetings are scheduled and held by the school district in which the student resides. The Bridge sends invitations to Parents/Guardians, students (as appropriate) and required PPT members to participate in the meetings.  Staff reported they plan to receive training on serving students with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) attention deficit disorder (ADD) later in the school year. In addition, the CSDE has suggested school administration arrange for the provision of professional development and technical assistance for all instructional staff in differentiated instruction and the provision of modifications and accommodations in supporting students with special needs in the classroom.</li> <li>• <b>Indicator 4.3:</b> A review of The Bridge's 2021-21 PSIS data reports the percentage of students identified as ELs at the school is 3.2 percent. Through an analysis of the renewal materials and meetings with stakeholder groups, it became evident that The Bridge is committed to ensuring the success of Multilingual learners/English learners (MLs/ELs) at the school. The school has taken some action that affirms this commitment to MLs/ELs by demonstrating the integration of ML/EL supports in the core curriculum and by developing policies and procedures that pertain to ML/EL identification, testing and instruction. The school is commended for taking these actions and providing the ML/EL forms, procedures and assessments in its Charter Renewal Application materials.</li> </ul>	

The following information must be included in school policy and procedures:

- ensure that all potential MLs/ELs that enter at the beginning of the school year are screened to determine English language proficiency within 30 calendar days;
  - ensure that all potential MLs/ELs that enter during the school year are screened to determine EL proficiency within 15 calendar days;
  - ensure that parents/families/guardians are informed about a student's identification as an ML/EL and given the right to select language supports or decline services upon the student's identification as an ML/EL; and
  - ensure that all MLs/ELs are annually administered the LAS Links English Language Proficiency Assessment.
- 
- **Indicator 4.4:** The Bridge 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 on January 14, 2022 and determined 100 percent of staff are compliant with teacher certification. Further, the review determined that The Bridge is in compliance with Educator Evaluation and Support Plan (EESP) and Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM).
  - **Indicator 4.6:** A review of legal actions brought against The Bridge determined that no government agency alleged the violation of any law by the school or undertaken any investigation of any violation of law by the school.

Prepared by:	Reviewed by:	Approved by:
Robert Kelly, Charter School Program Manager	Lisa Lamenzo, Division Director Turnaround Office	Desi Nesmith, Deputy Commissioner

## THE BRIDGE ACADEMY DATA

**Table 1: 2020-21 Student Enrollment and Demographic Information**

Grades served:	7-12
Total enrollment:	281
Percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced-price meals:	77.9
Percentage of special education students:	21.4
Percentage of students with limited English proficiency:	3.2
Percentage of American Indian or Alaska Native students:	0
Percentage of Asian students:	*
Percentage of Black students:	58.0
Percentage of Hispanic students:	40.6
Percentage of Two or More Races:	*
Percentage of Caucasian students:	*

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

**Table 2: Student Waitlist and Mobility Information**

Performance Metric:	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Waitlist number:	230	180	235
Number of enrolled students who left during the school year:	12	15	27
Number of students who did not re-enroll the next year and had not completed the highest grade at the school:	14	29	0

Indicator		Host District			Host District			Host District				
Accountability Index		59.3			62.4			61.2				
Performance Index (Target 75)		51.5			54.3			54.3				
Academic Growth Average Percentage of Target Achieved (Target 100%)		48.8			59.8			53.4				
Performance Index (Target 75)		44.8			46.1			46.4				
Academic Growth Average Percentage of Target Achieved (Target 100%)		55.8			53.7			52.6				
Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (Target 94%)		74.5			75.1			76.0				

**Table 4: School Performance-High Needs Students**

	2016-2017			2017-2018			2018-2019		
Indicator	School	Host District	State	School	Host District	State	School	Host District	State
<b>ELA-High Needs Students</b>									
<b>Performance Index</b> (Target 75)	49.4	47.5	55.9	54.6	52.2	57.5	51.5	52.3	58.1
<b>Academic Growth</b> Average Percentage of Target Achieved (Target 100%)	47.4	47.1	49.8	62.2	58.8	55.6	49.8	52.4	55.1
<b>Math-High Needs Students</b>									
<b>Performance Index</b> (Target 75)	47.0	41.1	50.5	44.6	44.2	52.0	43.5	44.6	52.7
<b>Academic Growth</b> Average Percentage of Target Achieved (Target 100%)	64.1	53.4	53.7	53.5	53.3	55.4	55.5	51.8	55.2

**Table 5: School Culture and Climate**

\*Data are suppressed to ensure confidentiality

	2018-2019			2019-2020 <sup>1</sup>			2020-2021 <sup>2</sup>		
Indicator	School	Host District	State	School	Host District	State	School	Host District	State
<b>Chronic Absenteeism Rate</b>	17.8%	18.8%	10.4%	17.5%	19.7%	12.2%	12.4%	28.9%	19.0%
<b>Suspension Rate</b>	10.0%	12.0%	6.7%	2.4%	9.4%	4.9%	N/A	1.3%	1.4%
<b>Discipline Tier</b>	2	4	3	1	2	3	1	2	1

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> In the 2020-21 school year, students attended school in-person to varying degrees; some learned fully/mostly remotely for the entire school year.